Óbuda University

Ph.D. Dissertation

The Effect of International Mobility on Conflicts as Perceived Phenomena in Europe

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Statement

I, Péter Holicza, hereby declare that I have written this PhD thesis myself, and have only used sources that have been explicitly cited herein. Every part that has been borrowed from external sources (either verbatim, or reworded but with essentially the same content) is unambiguously denoted as such, with a reference to the original source.

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to measure the effects of international student mobility on conflicts as a perceived phenomenon based on quantitative primary research data collected from five European countries' students. The related literature on conflict and cultural studies was introduced and discussed using a top-down approach. The review began with the well-known debate on the global issues of international (cultural) relations between F. Fukuyama and S. Huntington, followed by the current European events. Thirdly, the most important conflict theories on group and macro level, such as conflict motives and symbolic threats, were elaborated in depth. The study focused on young people, primarily students who were participants of mobility programmes, the next generation of responsible citizens and leaders. The survey responses were divided into a non-mobile (without international experience) and a mobile group in order to compare future plans, cultural skills, tolerance and attitudes towards diversity. Seven assumptions were postulated and analysed using the K-means cluster analysis, Spearman correlation, Mann-Whitney U, MANOVA, Chi-square test and Structural Equation Modelling.

The findings reveal that the effect of international mobility is significant on cultural skills and attitudes towards conflict resolution. Also, mobile students have intentions to return to their home countries as well as to take advantage of their more advanced skills primarily on the domestic labour market. Further, mobile students tend to participate in the social and political life of their community, which show that active citizenship is associated with participation in mobility. Cross-civilizational mobility did not show significant improvement on participants' intercultural skills and attitudes. This confirms Huntington's thesis on civilizational fault lines as potential source of future conflicts, where not even exchange programmes could result in considerable changes. Additionally, the significantly higher intention to improve cultural skills for future career success might explain Fukuyama's view on the (cultural) melting power of common economic interests.

The research results and specific recommendations on improving the participation in international mobility, its implementation and impact as well as the students' point of view – have been included in several policy papers such as The Erasmus+ Generation Declaration published by the European Commission.

Key Words: Conflicts, Cultural Studies, International Mobility, Erasmus, Impact Study

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Introduction

"Culture is a more common source of conflict than synergy. Cultural differences are a nuisance at best and often a disaster." — *Prof. Geert Hofstede*

Security and (multi)cultural issues are among the hot topics in the world and Europe nowadays. This is not a recent phenomenon as several international events focused the attention to prejudice and racism in these decades such as the ethno-nationalistic tensions in the former Yugoslavia, genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo or the ethnic conflict in the Middle-East and Africa. In a search for better lives, huge number of immigrants coming to the EU countries which triggers nationalism, as well as the economic crises that tend to turn people to right-wing powers (Augoustinos, Reynolds, 2001). Past and recent events, legal and illegal immigration to Western-Europe, social and political conflicts (re)radicalise Europe, that highlight multicultural issues and call for effective conflict management practices such as intercultural education through mobility programmes.

One of the well-known debates on international (cultural) relations begun more than 20 years ago, between F. Fukuyama and S. Huntington (Georghiou, 2014). The thesis begins with the explanation of their views as well as the different conflict levels through a top-down approach, starting from the global issues in international relations characterized and predicted by political scientists. After the review and the discussion of conflicts on global and European level, fundamental theories on macro level are explained, such as cultural and symbolic threats. At the end the literature review, the role of youth in conflict prevention and resolution is determined in view of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 and active citizenship.

Based on the cultural difference theory and their perceived consequences, the European Union targets at decreasing negative effects on cultural differences. According to their understanding, Europe needs more cohesive and inclusive societies which allow citizens to play an active role in democratic life (EU Regulation, 2013a). For this reason, the Erasmus Programme was established in 1987, to foster understanding and accepting cultural differences through mobility programmes. However, within central and local authorities, the number of researches with conflict mitigating point of view, focused on the cultural and other effects of these programs, is still limited. The thesis therefore intends to provide research results that will – in line with the suggestions gathered from

relevant international literature – enable better understanding of the effect of international mobility on conflicts as perceived phenomena in Europe.

Based on primary data collected through surveys on a snowball sampling method from non-mobile and mobile students' in five countries were compared, and the effects of mobility were tested through seven hypotheses. In the conclusion, the effects of mobility from different but related aspects are presented, followed by specific recommendations to improve participation in (Erasmus) mobility programmes.

The first and most important objective of the dissertation is to identify whether the participation in international student mobility contributes to the reduction of perceived conflicts rooted in intolerance and cultural differences. The following research objectives are related and linked to the security aspect of mobility as well; and contribute to more specific conclusions. The post-mobility effects, such as openness to learn more about different cultures and participate in similar international programmes again, are measured (Objective 2). The effects of background variables on cultural skill development and attitudes are targeted by Objective 3, then the employability and integration into the working environment is compared between non-mobile and mobile students (Objective 4). The association of mobility participation and active citizenship is identified under the Objective 5, while the 6. Objective focuses on whether Huntington's civilizational gap lines can be bridged by international student mobility. Finally, the emigration effect of mobility participation is measured according to the Objective 7.

Structural Equation Modelling was employed in uniformly testing the hypotheses and visually analysing the links between (latent) variables. Based on the results, the seven areas are ranked based on the strength of impact. Following the conclusions, specific recommendations are intended to improve the participation in international mobility as well as its implementation strategy and impact.

Motivation of Topic Selection

> *"Studying culture without experiencing culture shock is like practicing swimming without experiencing water."* ― *Prof. Geert Hofstede*

The ambition to conduct research on the effects of international student mobility is based on a lot of personal and professional experience in the field. Since 2012, the author has been part of this phenomena, firstly as an Erasmus student in Portugal, then Erasmus+ trainee in Malta. The three semesters spent studying, practically experiencing and

networking abroad resulted in great motivation to do more and engage in the organization of mobility programmes. Having a position at the international office of alma mater provided the opportunity to meet with the most supportive mentors that guaranteed professional development and interest in field-related research.

Thanks to the Erasmus+ and Campus Mundi mobility programmes, other project and research grants, the foreign learning and working experiences continued in the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Russia and Kosovo. Besides the mobility and extensive (field) experiences in different countries, roles and positions, additional interest was developed in international affairs, European and cultural studies. The intersection of a mobility impact study and security sciences seemed to be a very actual and interesting topic to cover.

The timing of this study, is an important factor, as this research is written in times when the EU, its bonds and funding values are on test by migration crisis, uprising right wing powers and polarisation (Langenbacher, Schellenberg, 2011). On the other hand, the funding of Erasmus Programme is dramatically increasing in order to promote cultural acceptance and multiculturalism (European Parliament, 2018). The new cycle of the EU's most successful international mobility programme will begin in 2021, therefore several working groups aim to improve its policies and implementation strategy on different levels. The results of this research study, including the recommendations, are in line with these efforts; and potentially contribute to the education policy of the European Commission as well as the youth, peace and security policy of the United Nations. The creation of necessary and impactful content based on scientific measures has been the original goal which is believed and proved to be completed.

1 World of Conflicts: Global, European and Micro-level Analyses

The first chapter introduces and explains different conflict levels through top-down approach, starting from the global issues in international relations characterized and predicted by Francis Fukuyama in The End of History? (1989) and Samuel P. Huntington's The Clash of Civilizations (1993). The discussion on the contemporary application of these theories is followed by European affairs, one of the most pressing contradiction of the continent: the rise of nationalism due to the massive immigration and the expansion of the European Union towards the Balkan States. On the bottom line, the conflicts as perceived phenomena are explained on micro and group level based on the most important theories that help identify the source of conflicts that arose from the feeling of threat, cultural differences, interests and limited resources.

The first chapter serves as problem-statement, introduction of conflict theory and the contemporary events, where international student mobility is expected to contribute positively by decreasing the level of perceived conflicts and promoting tolerance and cultural understanding – according to the hypotheses. The following Figure 1 shows the connection of each sub-chapter – reviewed literature to the relevant research objectives.

O4: To measure mobility participants' experience whether employability and integration into the working environment became easier.
O5: To determine the relationship between participating in international mobility and the promotion of active citizenship.

O6: To examine if the Huntington's civilizational gap lines can be bridged by international student mobility experience.

Chapter 1.1.
Global Conflicts: Huntington (Clash of Civilizations) vs. Fukuyama (Melting Pot)

Chapter 1.4.
Youth Participation in Conflicts and Peace-Building

Literature Review

Chapter 1.2.
European Situation - Rise of Nationalism and Expansion of the EU

O1: To identify if international student mobility contributes to the reduction of perceived conflicts rooted in intolerance and cultural differences.
O2: To analyse post-mobility effects, such as openness to learn more about different cultures and participate in international programs again.
O3: To explore the different reactions on mobility experience among participating countries and cultures.

Chapter 1.3.
Group and Micro level - Perceived Conflicts

O5: To determine the relationship between participating in international mobility and the promotion of active citizenship.
O7: To ascertain if international student mobility facilitates emigration from the home country to the host or another foreign state after mobility.

Figure 1: The Relation of Literature and Research Objectives

Mobility is understood as an activity within the higher education sphere that allows a person to move beyond national borders for educational purposes. The length of the

period at abroad is not defined. However, in case of short-term student mobility such as Erasmus+, it can last from 3 months (trimester) to a whole academic year (12 months).

1.1 The Clash of Civilizations vs. Hegemony of Liberal Democracy

We are in an unprecedented idyllic era, although the world is considerably less violent, there are regions plagued by protracted conflicts. Sectarian violence within regions and countries have spilled over into the west resulting in a migration crisis. Along with highlighting the weakness of the European Asylum System it has brought forward the emerging battle of ideals between the Muslim world and Western democracies (Holicza, 2016c). Considering Francis Fukuyama's and Samuel P. Huntington's arguments for global relations – We are at the nexus of these two ideas; Either liberal democracy has finally become the global hegemony establishing economic cooperation and an era of peace, or alternatively, a multi-polar and civilization-divergent order could characterize the state of the world. The debate between Fukuyama and Huntington began nearly 30 years ago. In light of current affairs in Europe and processes in the Middle East, their concepts have become even more relevant.

Fukuyama argues that because of the rise of modernization, the worldwide spread of Western consumer culture, and liberal democracy as the prevailing political system, that the evolution of human ideology is at its endpoint and in the absence of a better alternative (Fukuyama, 1989). In contrast, Huntington, argues that the biggest threat to Western civilization is a coming period that will be characterized by conflicts erupting as the world's civilizations reach their breaking points (Huntington, 1993).

Following the destruction of the Berlin Wall, American Political Scientist, Francis Fukuyama published arguments derived from Hegel's description of history as the final end of history. He described the world as a place where "...The cooperative restaurants and clothing stores opened in the past year in Moscow, the Beethoven piped into Japanese department stores, and the rock music enjoyed alike in Prague Rangoon, and Tehran." (Fukuyama, 1989) Fukuyama also, observed that western culture has seemingly integrated in societies that were once plagued by communist and fascist philosophies. Even in Islamic societies, western culture seemed to infiltrate global borders. This observation was his basis of implying that the world is evolving into its final stage of history, a chapter that will be characterized by universal western values and liberal democracy (Fukuyama, 1989).

Samuel Huntington, Fukuyama's professor, responded to his student theory with a warning about his assumption regarding the global westernization (Burns, 1994). Huntington described this assumption as arrogant and dangerous. He agreed that the world was moving towards a different phase in history but this would not be characterized by the end of conflict and global cooperation due to the spread of liberal democracy. He posited that conflict will continue, and it will be due to culture and identity. The conflicts of the future will occur along the cultural lines separating civilizations (Figure 1). According to Huntington: "A civilization is thus the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species. It is defined both by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people." (Huntington, 1993, p. 24)

Huntington categorised countries in terms of their culture and civilization, not their political or economic systems or development. He defines the following world regions as Civilizations: Western (Christian), Orthodox (Christian), Islamic, Islamic/Hindu, Hindu, African, Latin American, Sinic (Chinese), Buddhist and Japanese. The fault lines between civilizations seem to replace the political and ideological boundaries of the Cold War. Europe is divided between the Western Christianity, Orthodox Christianity and Islam today. Differences among civilizations are not only real; they are basic. The civilization identity will play more and more important role in the future, and the world will be shaped by the interactions of the major civilizations (Holicza, 2016a).
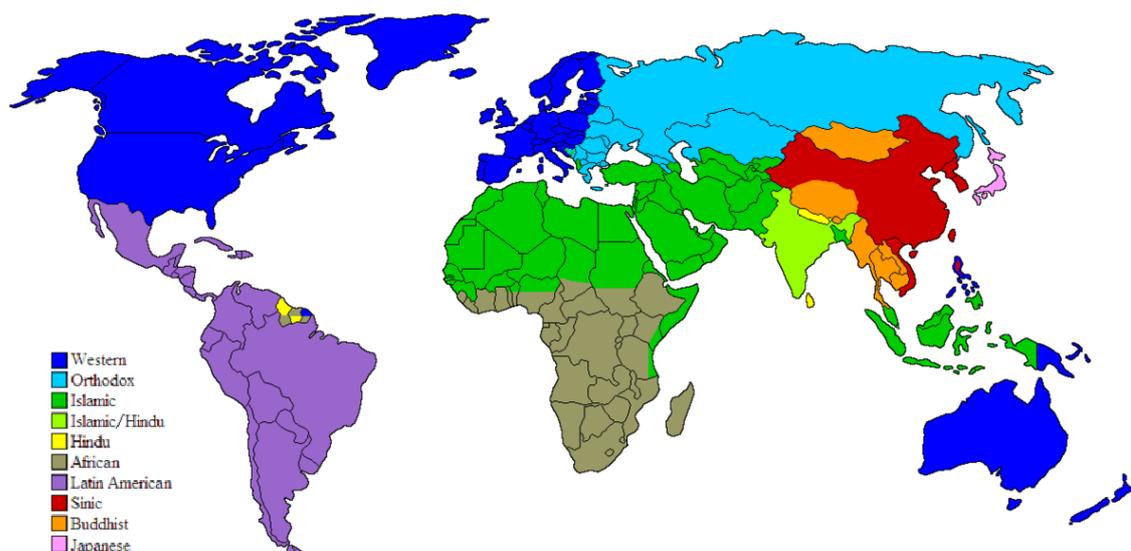

Figure 2: The Fault Lines between Civilizations (Huntington, 1997)

Yet the nature of conflict and international liberal order has evolved. Fukuyama has amended his initial theory several times in response to global developments. This much is true – the intensity of conflicts within civilizations remain as high as it was in the cold-war. However, the occurrence of conflict between civilizations has been extremely low (Tusicisny, 2004, Bettz, 2013).

Huntington's response to Fukuyama's theory has sparked an ongoing debate regarding the two paradigms (Georghiou, 2014). There is a rich amount of scholarship that synthesizes the conflicting viewpoints. In fact, Fukuyama, as history has progressed, has altered his theory to elaborate on its aspects as a world that was reeling from the cold-war has now entered a new phase characterized by the clash of Islam and the West, Russia's growing influence in the Middle-East and the future of Asian relations with the West become less and less predictable (Ericsson, Norman, 2011, Collet, Inoguchi, 2012).

1.1.1 Review of Fukuyama and Huntington

Does the end of history mean the end of events? Fukuyama argues on three points regarding the state of the world and human society. First, history is an evolutionary process where human society is repeatedly refined as it moves from objectively worse to objectively better in terms of 'freedom'. Second, the driving force behind history's evolution is the liberal democratic state. The liberal democracy is the only political system that allows for citizens to hold governments accountable fostering efficiency and mitigating corruption, something that Marxism and fascism failed to do. Third, the end point of historical evolution and the emergence of the last man is characterized by society that is constantly refining itself but amidst an era of greater peace due to the spread of liberal democracy (Bertram, Chitty, 1994).

Fukuyama speaks of history in terms of Hegel's notion of the end of history concerning the French Revolution and the adoption of freedom and equality being permanently adopted following the French Revolution and into the Industrialization of society. "This did not mean that the natural cycle of birth, life, and death would end, that important events would no longer happen, or that newspapers reporting them would cease to be published. It meant, rather, that there would be no further progress in the development of underlying principles and institutions, because all of the really big questions had been settled." (Fukuyama, 1992, p. 12) Therefore, the last man lives in a perfected state, his thymus is satisfied and his desire to improve the system is spent (Fukuyama, 1989).

Fukuyama, at a time saw the end of the cold war, predicted that the aforementioned factors were at play and would lead to the end of all major conflicts. "Liberal democracy replaces the irrational desire to be recognized as greater than others with a rational desire to be recognized as equal. A world made up of liberal democracies, then, should have much less incentive for war, since all nations would reciprocally recognize one another's legitimacy." (Fukuyama, 1992, p. 20) Fukuyama is heavily influenced by neo-conservative colleagues and the ideology that American democracy and free-market economies should be spread to the rest of the world. The major point of contestation between Fukuyama and Huntington is that Fukuyama sees economy as a driving force for cooperation, where in contrast Huntington places more value on identity.

The nexus of the two is that Fukuyama's theory is an argument that posits future peace and Huntington will not substantiate this claim, instead he will only say that conflict will be rooted in culture and linguistic differences. To Huntington, the end of the Cold War ushered in a new era where nations made alliances and declared their enemies along cultural lines, not ideological ones. States that share cultural values, such as religion and governance styles, would form civilizations. As a result, the formed civilizations would compete for power. In contrast to Fukuyama, conflict is a historical norm that isn't cooperative, isn't liberal, and will not result in peace (Abbinnett, 2003).

The debate between the two comes down to competing schools of thought on international relations, liberalism vs. realism. Realism is the belief that states will be in conflict and will prefer to maximize gains relative to one another, while liberalism is a belief in states cooperating and preferring to maximize overall gains. The point of understanding their points of contestation and points of convergence is to help form an understanding and to predict how countries behave towards one another (Aydin, Özen, 2010).

1.1.2 Westernization vs. Modernization

An assumption that Fukuyama makes, is that credit to the success of liberal democracy is rooted in the human desire to achieve equality. Historically, or in the context of Hegel's time, this meant that the elimination of a traditional monarchy and aristocracy opened the door for upward mobility and economic success for all (Manikoth et al., 2011). In contemporary society, this is the emergence of a middle class, albeit, Fukuyama's theory claims to be global. In practice, an emergence of a middle class is only seen in the West, and if we examine the context of the American economy, exclusively, this middle class was short lived (Holicza, 2016c). As Thomas Piketty argues in the Capital in the Twenty-

First Century, free market has not only enlarged the gap between rich and poor, but have also reduced average incomes across the developed and developing worlds (Piketty, 2015). Nevertheless, he makes the assumption that everyone wants to be equal, not superior to everyone else, and when we achieve this state of equality universal peace will be accomplished.

This assumption is also in conflict with the aggressive practice of the spread of liberal democracy conducted by western governments, the U.S. in particular, which achieves this through military means (Holicza, 2016c). Without overtly claiming to be superior, the spread of western values and democracy to other civilizations through military actions is not transposition or adoption of new ideologies by other civilizations, it is a pluralistic viewpoint that supports intervention. This assumption in practice is inherently orientalist. This is Huntington's case and point in his rejection of Fukuyama's initial claims. He noted that this assumption could lead to a rift between civilizations rather than foster cooperation. Fukuayama's lens of the world through the economic sense does little to address the complex makeup of human behaviour. Huntington throws more weight on identity, over political ideology.

These two theories converge at the nexus of modernization and westernization and what these two concepts mean. Huntington agrees with Fukuyama's observation, the world has indeed become 'modern'. Western culture has infiltrated the world diverse civilizations, however, that does not mean these civilizations are westernized (Petito, 2016). They are experiencing modernization while retaining deep rooted cultural identity and values. It is a grave mistake for the west to take the modernization of the world as a sign where values such as justice, rule of law, governance and the western interpretation of equality will just as easily be adopted or to a greater extent even work.

After the publication of Huntington's, Clash of Civilizations, to a degree, predicted the current rise of terrorism. Did Huntington predict 9/11 and in the context of a world post-9/11 what does Huntington and Fukuyama's theories say about modernization and westernization? Iraq's Saddam Hussein and Al Qaida's Osama Bin Laden were western educated and trained (Holicza, 2016c). The past decade reveals that at the reception of western education, cooperating in global trade and participating in western democratic systems does not indicate that participation implies the adoption of values. Furthermore, to say that people who are born and bred in the west will agree with these values

(Neumayer, Plümper, 2009). If these was the case, the recruiting success of ISIS would not be as high in western countries.

Huntington is right to reject the world view posited by Fukuyama. By Fukuyama's standards, modernization and westernization are one in the same (Georghiou, 2014). For some countries, the westernization of their economies and cultures would mean a step back from the modernity (Smith et al., 2012). Material success (modernization) makes a culture and ideology attractive to itself, and that decrease in economic and military success leads to self-doubt and crisis of identity. Therefore, both Huntington and Fukuyama agree on the concept of modernization and even agree on each other's assertion. Huntington acknowledges the global power of technological and economic modernization but stresses the fact that this development will drive a global rise of fundamentalist reaction. To further examine this notion, it could be said that this occurrence actually has led to the destabilization of democracy (Buncak, 2002). Subsequently, this prediction came true when looking at the rise and fall of stable regimes in the Middle East. Fukuyama also makes these assertions that modernization may be met with a negative reaction. Yet, it is also important to consider the emigrants from Muslim countries that have assimilated within the western context quite well. If there is an inevitable reaction for the Islamic world, what then motivates the generations of those who derive from it to merge the conflicted norms of two opposing cultures?

1.1.3 World-Wide Acceptance or Rejection of Liberal Democracy?

Georghiou (2014) recognized that the question concerning the possible spread of liberal democracy is most contested in the Middle East. He makes note that prior to the Arab Spring in 2011, among the 47 countries with a Muslim majority, only a quarter are electoral democracies – and none of the core Arabic-speaking societies fall into this category; in fact, non-Islamic countries are more likely to be democratic than an Islamic state (Georgiou, 2014). If Fukuyama's theory holds, why has democracy remain non-popular in the Middle East? Huntington's response would be that the Muslim world lacks the core political values that gave birth to the representative democracy in Western Civilization (Georghiou, 2014). Inglhart and Norris support this claim (Inglhart, Norris, 2003). Huntington argues that "ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, (and) the separation of church and state" often have little resonance outside the West. Fukuyama

says that although this may be true, if people were given the option of having democracy in these states then democratic institutions would develop and prosper.

Shortly after the Arab Spring and a few weeks before the attacks in Norway in July 2011, Fukuyama altered his thesis. He admitted that there are reasons to posit that liberal democracy may not be the fate of all of humanity (Kampmark, 2002). He observed something he called the emergence of political decay, he predicted the collapse of democratic institutions and was astounded by the unique case of China.

Another aspect of this is to look at the strategic development of post-communist countries, particularly in the Eastern Bloc. Croatia was examined by Mislav Kukoč in 1995, long before its accession to the EU. His findings were that Croatia's motivation to join the West to participate in economic cooperation and liberal order is nether fully explained by Huntington or Fukuyama's theory. The same could be said for other post-Soviet countries that now face cultural and social challenges when trying to align interests with the current state of the European Union (Kukoč, 1995, Lazányi, 2012a).

China's "Marxist capitalism" suggests you can have wealth without freedom. Originally, Fukuyama claimed the success of illiberal societies such as China is nothing more than a temporary setback (Fukuyama, 1992). Now, Fukuyama views China as evidence that the threat to liberal democracy is the potential rise of regimes resembling China – a strong authoritarian state, without much political participation by its citizens – a regime with efficient capitalism, but without democracy (Enfu, Chang'an, 2016).

China is not the only challenge to liberal democracies; in countries hardest hit by the crises – such as in several European countries – voters have turned away from precisely that conception of liberalism that Fukuyama believed they would embrace with open arms. In the past decade, we have seen the rise of illiberal democracy, as not all societies are mobilizing under a liberal democratic government and may actually be redefining the concept (Müller, 2013). The drawbacks and casualties of capitalism, such as mass surveillance, violent suppression of protests, from the 2005 French riots to the 2011 England riots, attacks on minorities, the expanding military-industrial complex etc. have turned democracy against liberalism (Holicza, 2016c).

As a result of a post-9/11 world, Western democracies have the freedom to choose from a variety of products or lifestyles but have compromised the guarantee of personal and political freedom (Stiks, Horvat, 2012). Yet, Fukuyama still insists that there is no serious

threat to his hypothesis. After all, mass protests still occur in the forms of the Occupy Movement and pockets of civil organizations demanding more transparency and political change (Holicza, 2016c).

1.2 Contradictions in the European Union: Nationalism and Expansion

The establishment of the European Economic Community in 1957 implied the end of internal divisions based on national and ethnic sense of belonging, and it was seen as the ground for building a universal European identity. The German Chancellor at the time, Konrad Adenauer, defined this supranational integration as "the modern antidote to nationalism" (Haas, Dinan, 1958). The French stand on the issue was also clear as Jean Monnet stated that the integration would create a "silent revolution in men's minds" to finally "go beyond the concept of nation". These statements by the important decision-makers at the time implied that the goal of the further European integration will replace the old identities with a new European identity, which would eventually result in a more peaceful Europe.

Furthermore, the scholars and the modernization theorists at the time also predicted that the Western capitalist development would lead to more homogeneous population, diminishing the intra-national differences. Marx foresaw that the pressure of capitalism and a global cosmopolitan culture would result in the demise of many minority nations within Europe. Haas (1958, p. 16) also envisioned this identity shift as he noted that political integration can be seen as "the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre". This shift in loyalties implies that the stronger devotion to the new centre results in a weaker bond with the old identity.

Even though the European Union has some parallels in other regions, such as Mercosur in South America, the African Union in Africa and ASEAN in Asia, it is evident that contrary to these enlisted, only in European Union integration implies the extensive and deep inclusion of the established EU policies such as trade, monetary policy and foreign policy. Regionalist movements in Europe imply decentralization of previously established national ethnic and linguistic rights and a more centre-dependent commitment (Jolly, 2015).

Ever since the European Coal and Steel Community establishment in 1952 by the Treaty of Paris, the further European integration has been designed as an open access model.

Every European State had the right to join, at least in theory. This implies that the term "European" has not been officially defined. It combines elements which contribute to the European identity such as geographical, historical and cultural elements. The European values are subject to review by every succeeding generation and its contours will be shaped over many years to come (Tatham, 2009). Even though the EU has been receiving mixed reviews from its citizens over the past years (Eurobarometer, 2018), those states that are not yet among the members continuously work on their EU enlargement and express remarkable and sustained attractiveness. The reasoning behind this is undoubtedly the EU success in its primary mission, and that is to bring peace and prosperity to a regularly torn apart by violent conflict continent. The EU has grown from 6 Western founding members to 28 current members, today encompassing a large portion of the continent. Additionally, 5 countries are holding a candidate status, while 2 are holding a potential candidate status (European Commission, 2018a).

The further EU expansion depends not only on the candidate countries progress, but also on the current events and general circumstances which shape the member state's willingness to support their enlargement. The general attitude and public opinion of the EU citizens is very much influenced by the eastern enlargement and the recent migrant crisis. It is evident that the negative attitudes and levels of immigration are related to decreasing support for European integration (Toshkov, Kortenska 2015) and that those who believe that the nation-state is in danger have a more negative attitude towards further integration. Similarly, citizens with stronger national identity tend to not support the integration as well (Carey, 2002). Some claim that immigration is one of the central actors that might endanger the nation-state since the increased numbers of immigrants threaten the national identity. EU also might be perceived by these sceptics as limiting in terms of disabling the member states in regulation of immigration to individual states (Kriesi et al., 2008). It can be concluded that issues with immigration are directly connected to the EU integration. The sole levels of immigration in a particular country play a significant role in shaping attitudes towards EU integration through increasing the political focus of immigration and there are three paths through which this is accomplished. First way is through citizen's perception of direct effect of immigration on their own neighbourhood, secondly through media response, that is immigration issues coverage (Sides, Citrin, 2007); and thirdly through exploitation of the immigration issues

focus by the newly established parties as means of breaking into the party system (De Vries, Marks, 2012).

1.2.1 The EU and EU citizenship

The concept of European Union has changed through the time. From the beginning of the idea of the Union, which had only limited concerns related to coal and steel industry, to the Union of the 21st century with much broader and expanding portfolio that includes environmental policy, transport, regional development, education and training, cultural affairs, and significantly enhanced control over economic matters whose daily changes and different legislatures and policies are adopted and influence the lives of its citizens. Considering the 2008 financial crisis, which stroke the whole Europe, and the post-crisis period, which is still evident, it can be said that more developed countries have become the only option and the only hope-to be under the protection and in a safe environment which the EU promotes and stands for (European Commission, 2015).

The definition and concept of citizenship has changed through time and had different importance and implications throughout history. In order of further analysis of the importance of EU citizenship and its expansion, the following definition of citizenship will be used: "Formally understood, citizenship refers to a status legally ascribed to a certain group of individuals that binds them together and distinguishes them from other individuals of the same or a different citizenship status. This status is conferred (or not) on an individual by the political community that constitutes the sovereign power" (Dunkerley et al., 2003, p. 10). This means that the EU citizenship holders have to have commonalities that bind them and separate them from others; and a political community which is guaranteeing them this status.

Ever since the Maastricht Treaty of 1993, the EU citizenship has a formal legal status and is granted to all the citizens of the EU member countries and it is an addition to their national citizenship. All the following treaties have reclaimed this citizenship and mostly defined it in terms of rights granted to all the EU citizens. Today, the EU citizenship guarantees certain rights to its holders. In the Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union, it is stated that the EU recognizes following fundamental citizens' rights: Right to vote and to stand as a candidate at elections to the European Parliament, Right to vote and to stand as a candidate at municipal elections, Right to good administration, Right of access to documents, Right to petition, Freedom of movement and of residence, Diplomatic and consular protection (Treaties of the

European Union, 1999, 2003, 2009; Charter of Fundamental Rights, 2000). These rights belong exclusively to the EU citizens and exclude all the others and are very important in everyday life of the individuals since it provides them more transparency and are the proof of democratic society which is deeply concentrated on the rights of its citizens.

1.2.2   Nationalism in the EU

Group identities are based on common values and beliefs, where face-to-face interaction with other members plays an important role (Fligstein, 2008). Based on Deutsch's theory (1966) Fligstein suggests that "national identity is a peculiar kind of identity that implies that a group of people decide on some bases of pre-existing solidarities to express its collective identity in the context of creating a state to enforce rules to preserve that identity" (Fligstein, 2008, p. 126). Gellner and Breuilly (1983, p. 1) explained nationalism in a following way: "Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent. Nationalism as a sentiment, or as a movement, can be best defined in terms of this principle. Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by fulfilment. A nationalist movement is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind".

By using this definition, Gellner is explaining the strong bond between political and national and implies that without this bond, nationalism is impossible. He further explains that the nationalist sentiment can occur in a situation when the rulers of the political unit belong to a nation different than the nation of ruled people, he defines this phenomenon as an ultimate intolerable breach of political property (Dunkerley et al., 2003). If we apply Gellner's idea of the cause of nationalist sentiment to the EU, we can say that the multinationalism of the EU and therefore the ability of other member states to have impact on the political property can be a cause of the rise of nationalism. Also, the "rulers" of the EU are mostly rich countries which persuade their "national interests" and ideas-and are often different nationals. All these facts may be referred to as causes of rise of nationalism in EU member states.

The analysis of 2009 elections by (Langenbacher, Schellenberg, 2011), who emphasize the number of seats won by the extreme right-wing parties in European Parliament and their results in the national elections, serves as a proof of the rise of nationalism. The number of elected candidates to the European Parliament, which are the only directly elected by the citizens of the member states, is 29; and in Sweden, Denmark, the

Netherlands, Austria and Eastern Europe-they won the elections. These numbers confirm the study Langenbacher and Schellenberg (2011) used in research, which showed that about 50 percent of the residents from EU countries believe that there are too many immigrants in their country that are a threat to an employment prerogative for locals in times of crisis. Up until 2016, immigration indeed prevailed as the leading cause for concern amongst EU citizens, trumping other serious threats such as terrorism (Eurobarometer, 2016). The situation has been echoed likewise in Malta ever since, perhaps more vehemently in 2015 when immigration from non-EU countries, in particular, evoked a very negative feeling amongst 76% of the population (Eurobarometer, 2015). This was the highest percentage registered among all Member States. Public opinion however changed significantly in the following two years, where immigration was displaced from being the most critical issue faced by Malta (Holicza, Chircop, 2018).

The strategy of the extreme right-wing parties, to use the fears of the European citizens in a way that they usually offer simple answers to the important questions by organizing parades and revisionist commemorations which promote their discriminating attitudes, is very much effective. They also show in their book that the supporters of the right-wing parties are usually young, male and come from lower or lower middle class. The cause of such support, they say, is the economic crisis in Europe since 2008 which resulted in higher unemployment rates. Due to this crisis, the anti-immigrant sentiments rose and extreme-right parties used this situation in a sense that they claimed that the immigrants have a negative influence on salaries, that their presence increases unemployment rates and welfare benefits (Langenbacher, Schellenberg, 2011).

1.2.3   Reasons Behind the Rise of Nationalism in the EU

In his writings about "Justice as a larger loyalty", Rorty analyses this rise of the right-wing party in the EU countries and the anti-immigrant sentiment. Rorty explains the bonds individuals tend to develop with people who are closer to them and with which they have some similarities. He says that in the times of conflict, people might be torn between loyalty and justice and that conflict intensity is reciprocal to the intensity of the identification with the other side (Rorty, 2007). In this sense, the sentiment in the EU and the fear of immigrants can be explained in a way that the Europeans are more likely to identify themselves with other Europeans and citizens with which they share the citizenship of the EU. The Europeans evidentially don't see the immigrants as "one of

them", and that sentiment is, according to Rorty, key to developing bonds among humans (Rorty, 2007). So, if one is not "one of us", he does not deserve the right to have right-EU citizenship.

The term "Fortress Europe" has been again mentioned in recent immigrant crisis. This term was officially created in 1994, when the Council of Ministers of the interior and Justice approved the resolution which seriously restricted the entrance of the foreigners in all the EU member states (Koff, 2008). However, this concept proved to be a failure since illegal and legal immigrants kept coming to Europe. This trend is repeating itself and some of the EU member states see the solution of the crisis in a similar manner-keeping the immigrants outside of their borders.

The economic and migrant crisis is making EU citizens turn to nationalism and right-wing parties. It also causes them to build walls of the EU fortress and now even put a wire around it. Several EU Member States have constructed fences along their borders and increased border controls, including internal border controls within the Schengen area in response to concerns regarding increased numbers of refugees and migrants arriving at their borders (UNHCR, 2017). This phenomenon can also be explained by Rorty's idea about how ties among people are slacked in the times of crisis. He says: "The tougher things get, the more ties of loyalty to those near at hand tighten and those to everyone else slacken" (Rorty, 1997, p. 139). He also emphasizes the human tendency to be more loyal to "our own species". From his perception, we can see how Europeans don't see non-Europeans as the same species and "one of them". Rorty also raises the question about contracting the circle for the sake of loyalty and expanding it for the sake of justice (Rorty, 2007). The recent migrant crisis happening in Europe, and the spread of nationalism, show how Europeans choose to build the "European Fortress" and therefore, contract the circle.

Hadžiristić, in her paper on post-2015 EU accession of the Western Balkans, says that the ongoing migrant crisis tests the bonds between member states and suggests that the control over the enlargement process is becoming increasingly nationalized due to the increase in the impact of the member state national governments and national legislatures (Hadžiristić, 2015). This fact is another proof of how the EU and its member states are closing their borders and it is another proof of Rorty's theory about contracting the circle.

1.2.4 Nationalism and EU Citizenship for the Balkans, Immigrants in the European Union

The two possible ways for the EU citizenship to expand is to enlarge or to give the national citizenship of the member country to immigrants residing in the EU. Since the last enlargement in 2013, when Croatia joined the EU, the process has been stalled. The willingness for the enlargement has been affected by the economic crisis and a recent wave of immigrants, which turned the focus from the Western Balkans towards some internal issues and the ways of coping with overall situation (Hadžiristić, 2015).

In the recent issued paper by The European Policy Center, which is a think tank dedicated to fostering European integration through analysis and debate, "EU member states and enlargement towards the Balkans", we can see all the obstacles the Balkan states might face on their way towards the enlargement and therefore expansion of the EU citizenship to this region (Balfour, Stratulat, 2015). They examine the increase of the impact of the member states and the control they have over the enlargement policy and they call this trend the "nationalization of the enlargement". They also state that, since now member states have such a control over the enlargement, the process might depend more on the political situation in the member states rather than progress made by the Balkan States. Region might also be confused by the message coming from Brussels since the member states have different stands and opinions on further enlargement. This present dynamic, according to their paper, is a clear show of how politics can get in the way of progress (Balfour, Stratulat, 2015). This situation makes the process unclear and the potential role of the Balkans in the EU and presents an obstacle on planning the policy agendas and advocacy activities.

It seems that the European Commission, which is the supranational institution of the EU, is losing control to European Council, which is an intergovernmental institution (Hadžiristić, 2015). This leaves space for the member states, such as Germany, Denmark, Sweden, UK, France, the Netherlands and Austria to strengthen their control over the enlargement process. All these, and other member states, have different interests and therefore different stands on the EU enlargement towards the Balkans (Hadžiristić, 2015). In some of these countries, as mentioned earlier, nationalism, that is the extreme right-wing parties, have won the recent elections which means that nationalism is playing a big part in further enlargement which contradicts their basic ideas. The member states can be categorized as pro-enlargement and anti-enlargement. Through these stands on the

enlargement of the member states, we can clearly see how the "national interest" of the stakeholders is playing a great role on the further EU enlargement and therefore the expansion of the EU citizenship which some consider their exclusive belonging and don't want to share it with those who are not "one of them" (Rorty, 2007).

The other way of expanding the EU citizenship is to give it to the immigrants residing in the member countries. The issue is that the only way to obtain the EU citizenship is to acquire the national citizenship of a member country and nationality in those states is defined according to the domestic nationality laws (Kostakopoulou, 2001). As Dunkerley et al. (2003) argue, this situation creates the group of second-class citizens and non-citizens who are excluded and denied basic human rights. They also emphasize the strengthened role in determining the nationality laws of neo-fascist and far-right parties in several member countries. Even though the initial idea of the EU citizenship was to strengthen the Union identity, it can be concluded that only specific type of identity is being fostered and that excludes the third country immigrants and economically destitute residents (Dunkerley et al., 2003, Holicza et al., 2019).

1.3 Conflict and Critical Theories on Micro-level

Cultural claims thrive as a result of the current global circumstances, but are challenged due to the fact that they create differences which then often lead to conflicts (Brigg, Muller, 2009). Attitudes towards the minority groups and immigrants, along with the long existing racial and immigration intolerance, have recently been highlighted by various important confrontations on social and political levels (Zarate et al., 2004). The public is more and more concerned about these topics and in response empower the right-wing political parties nearly in every European country (Langenbacher, Schellenberg, 2011). After the analyses and discussion of international trends, movements as problem statement, it is important to break down to group and individual level in order to understand the source, causes and the nature of conflicts.

According to the definition of Lewis Coser, conflict is "a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate their rivals" (Coser, 1961). He categorized conflicts into four groups: within an individual, between two individuals, within a team of individuals and between two or more teams within an organization. Conflict can easily evolve into competition when there is an interest involved. As argued by Xanthopoulou et al. (2009), the

Conservation of Resources (COR) theory can be used to explain how conflict arises at the workplace when the necessary resources are in competition, threatened or not obtained at all.

Consequently, the competition for mentioned resources may result in issues only related to the specific task, rather than become interpersonal conflict (Martinez-Corts et al., 2015; Simons and Peterson, 2000). In order for interpersonal conflict to arise, they must involve "perception of interpersonal incapability" (Martinez-Corts et al., 2015). Contrary to DeChurch, Hamilton, and Hass (2007), who offer that interpersonal conflict can either better the within-group interaction, or completely destroy the team-spirit among the members, Bradley et al., (2015) argue that interpersonal conflicts are completely distinguishable from task conflicts. Jehn (1997) further explains that, task conflicts emerge over idea on how to achieve a goal, as opposed to in-between differences that are the main cause of interpersonal conflict.

As a potential advantage of this phenomenon, it is offered in the literature that conflicts, especially task conflicts, can be employed as a resource if used as an opportunity for introduction and development of new, creative and innovative problem-solving solutions that lead to goal achievement (Bradley et al., 2015; de Witt et al., 2012; Jehn, 1997; Martinez et al., 2015). In addition, the sole perception of conflict has a significant effect on the analysis of the conflict, its potential resolution and its utilization for useful purpose (Bradley et al., 2015; Jehn, 1997; Le, Jarzabkowski, 2015; Martinez et al., 2015; Xie et al., 2014).

1.3.1 Understanding Cultural Differences with a Special Focus on Research-Participant Countries

Several theories have been formulated to explain what culture is. Some authors relate the culture with patterns: "Learned and shared human patterns or models for living; day- to-day living patterns. These patterns and models pervade all aspects of human social interaction" (Damen, 1987, p. 367). Culture is the invisible bond which ties people together. The importance of culture lies in its close association with the ways of thinking and living (Holicza, 2016b). Culture is related to the development of our attitude and values which serve as the founding principles of our life. They shape our thinking, behaviour and personality (Lazányi, Holicza, Baimakova, 2017). Culture is important for a number of reasons because it influences an individual's life in a variety of ways, including values, views, desires, fears and worries. Belonging to a culture can provide

individuals with an easy way to connect with others who share the same mindset and values (Chhokar, et al., 2007). John Useem defined it as learned and shared behaviour: "Culture has been defined in a number of ways, but most simply, as the learned and shared behaviour of a community of interacting human beings" (Useem, 1963, p. 169.). Professor Geert Hofstede defined culture as "the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 1).

Various theories have been developed to classify countries in cultural differences. The following models and measurement methods are the most appreciated and widely used (Bik, 2010; Blizzard, 2012).

- Edward T. Hall anthropologist and cross-cultural researcher has a background context approach that highlights the differences between the proxemics, low context vs. high context cultures (explicit messages, little attention for the status of the person, task oriented vs. not just the message is important, relation oriented) and Monochronic vs. Polychronic Time (straight to the point vs. going in circles) (Hall, 1959, 1968).

- House et al. (2002) use the following dimensions in their GLOBE study to compare cultures: Power Distance, Uncertainty avoidance, Assertiveness, Institutional Collectivism, In-Group Collectivism, Future Orientation, Performance Orientation, Humane Orientation, Gender Egalitarianism.

- The Seven Dimensions of Culture were identified by management consultants Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner, and the model was published in their book, "Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business" (1997). The authors distinguish one culture compared with another according to the following indicators: Universalism vs. Particularism, Individualism vs. Collectivism, Neutral vs. Emotional, Specific vs, Diffuse, Achievement vs. Ascription, Sequential vs. Synchronic, Internal vs. External Control (Trompenaars, Hampden-Turner, 2011).

- Schwartz's cultural values are in three pairs, usually arranged in a circle as the following: Embeddedness vs. Autonomy, Mastery vs. Harmony, Hierarchy vs. Egalitarianism (Smith, Schwartz, 1997).

- Geert Hofstede's 6-D Model includes the following dimensions: Power Distance, Individualism vs. Collectivism, Masculinity vs. Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long Term Orientation, Indulgence (Hofstede, 2011).

Cultural difference theories are developed to classify countries based on their cultural characteristics, hence they create a basis for identifying differences between various cultures. In order to define major cultural differences, Geert Hofstede conducted one of the most comprehensive studies (Holicza, 2018a). His 6-D Model is formed to measure national cultures through six dimensions; however, the scores are generalisations based on the law of the big numbers and do not describe reality. The most meaningful use of the received values is through comparison (Hofstede, 2011). In view of this, the five research participant country profiles have been added to demonstrate and better understand it the Hofstede Model as depicted in Figure 3 below.
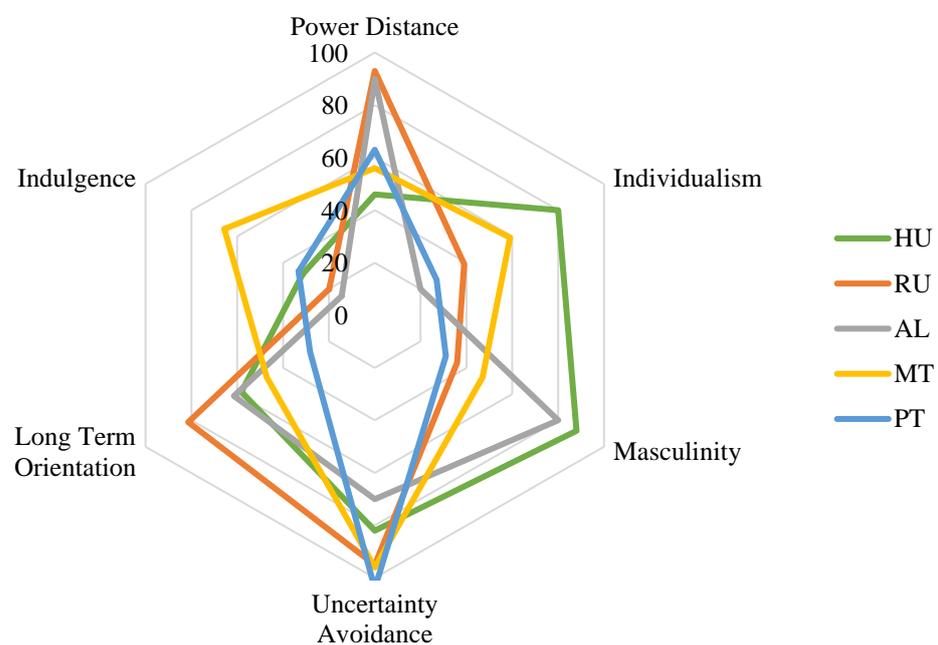

Figure 3: Hofstede's 6D-model of Participating Countries in the Primary Research (Hofstede, 2018)

Based on their deep drivers, the Hofstede Model shows significant differences among the Albanian, Hungarian, Maltese, Portuguese and Russian cultures. All dimensions are explained with country-specific features.

Power Distance: Russia and Albania have high-power distance society. Based on the extreme centralized power society, huge discrepancies exist between the have and the have nots with regards to power as well as the status roles in all areas of (business) interactions (Holicza, 2018a). The rest of the cultures seem to be more flexible, power is less, but moderately still centralized, hierarchy is for convenience only, control is disliked and attitude towards superiors are more informal (Lazányi, Holicza, Baimakova, 2017).

Individualism versus Collectivism: Albania is a collectivist society, they are known for having strong family and kinship feelings. Portugal has similarly low individualism

index, in these cultures family and friendship come first, common business requires personal, authentic and trustful relationship. Malta represents the middle way, while Hungary is more of an individualistic one. Hungary has a loosely-knit social framework, where people take care of themselves and their immediate families only, and the employer/employee relationship is a contract based on mutual advantage (Holicza, 2018a).

Masculinity versus Femininity: Portugal and Russia are the most feminine societies, they talk modestly about themselves when meeting a stranger or in professional environment, and they often understate their personal achievements or contributions. Malta is moderately masculine, but Albania and Hungary fall to the masculine category, where people lay emphasis on money, success, and competition. These cultures consist of a need for power, assertiveness, dominance, and wealth and material success (Hofstede, 2001).

Uncertainty Avoidance: With Portugal, Malta and Russia leading the way, all countries have high uncertainty avoidance indices. This means that they feel threatened by ambiguity. To prevent this, detailed planning and briefing is practiced (in business) including context and background information. The Hungarians and the Albanians have lower values as compared to the other countries, but need rules as well, and they like being busy with work, as time means money for them. Precision and punctuality are important, innovation may be resisted, and security is an important element in individual motivation (Holicza, 2016d).

Long Term Orientation: Russia has the highest index, Hungary and Albania represent similarly moderate values, while the Maltese are slightly less long-term oriented. This dimension is related to the teachings of Confucius (Nevins, Bearden, Money, 2007) that includes pragmatic mindset, search for virtue, where people consider the truth based on the situation, context and time. They show an ability to adapt to changed conditions, and a strong propensity to save and invest in long-term achievements. Portugal has the lowest value in this case, it means more short-term orientation that extends a greater respect for traditions, fulfilling social obligations, impatience for achieving quick results, and a strong concern with establishing the normative truth (Preda, 2012).

Indulgence: Apart from Malta with the highest indulgence indices, all countries have restrained cultures; Russia and Albania share the lowest values. They tend to be more pessimistic; they do not lay emphasis on leisure time and control the gratification of their

desires. Their actions are restrained by strict social norms, positive emotions are less freely expressed, and freedom and leisure activities are not given the priority (Lazányi, Holicza, Baimakova, 2017).

This dissertation is based on quantitative research that measures espoused values, but important to note its significant difference from the enacted values introduced by Argyris and Schon (1974; 1978) as the "Espoused theory" and "Theory-in-use". They suggested that there are two distinct theories consistent with what people say and with what they do. It does not imply the difference between theory and action, but "between two different theories of action" (Argyris et al., 1985, p. 82). Espoused theory includes the values and world views people believe their behaviour is based on, while values implied by their behaviour can be explained by the Theory-in-use. In other words, it determines all deliberate human behaviour (Argyris, Schon, 1987).

In order to identify the difference between the two theories or actions, the GLOBE Study by House et al. (2004) can provide relevant data. For each cultural dimension, country scores were identified in two categories: "as is" – the values' scores in practice that relate to the "Theory-in-use" of the Argyris and Schon; and the "should be" – values as to what the people aspire to be (House et al., 2004). The following figure presents the difference (%) between normative ("should be") values and the practices along various cultural dimensions in the countries that participate in the primary research of the Thesis. Malta did not participate in the GLOBE Study, therefore it is missing from this analysis. The measurement was based on a 7-point Likert-scale, where 1 is very low, 4 is medium and 7 is very high. The difference was calculated based on the mean values in the two categories, expressing the change that occurred on the practical "as is" side compared to the "should be" side. Negative change mean that people performed lower practice score than value score, so based on their cultural deep drivers, they rate the particular scale higher than according to their actual behaviour. Positive change mean that the particular cultural value/dimension is more present, plays more important role in their daily life, than in their culture. The presented significant differences mean distinct behaviour from the cultural value; and the higher the score is – the greater the difference between value and practice is (Figure 4).
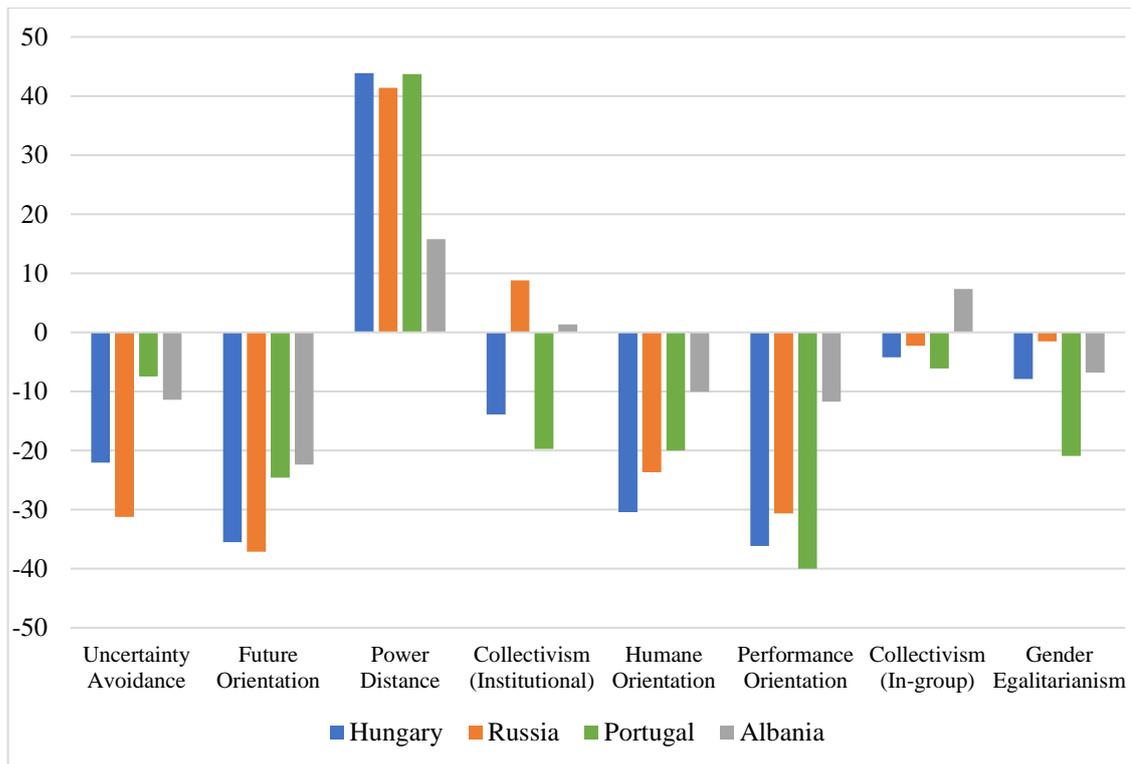
Figure 4: Society Culture Scale Differences (%): Values vs. Practices based on the Data of Globe Study (House et at., 2004)

As the figure shows, on most indicators, all countries rate their cultural values higher than the ones they are actually following. The highest and only positive change was measured on the Power Distance indicator, more than 36% in average. It means that the community perceives, accepts and endorses authority, power differences and status privileges in a much higher extent than culturally it would suppose or like to. The rest of the indicators performed lower practical than value scores; therefore, negative changes occurred on the figure above. The second biggest average change was measured on Future Orientation, the engagement of individuals in planning, investing in the future. According to these results, Russians and Hungarians act the least traditionally, but the Portuguese and Albanian samples show very different practical extent as well. Each participant cultures considered more performance oriented as it is nowadays, especially the Portuguese by 40% difference.

In country-specific setting, Hungarians act the most differently (-13,28% in average) compared to their original cultural values, mostly in case of power distance which is perceived too high and the performance orientation that is much lower than expected by their culture. Secondly, the Portuguese practices differ from their "cultural codes" by 11,29% in average. The difference in Russia is measured -9,53%, while Albanians seem to be the most traditional (-4,73%). They are rated to be even more collectivist practically

than culturally, their humane orientation (encouragement and rewards for being generous, caring, and kind to others) is the highest among all, and the least different from the value score. Considering the civilizational context, the Western – Hungary and Portugal, tend to move away from their cultural values in a greater extent than the non-Western – Orthodox Russia and (mostly) Muslim Albania.

1.3.2 Cultural and Symbolic Threats Defined: Cause and Effects

In the age of political correctness, the Western scientists started using terms such as subtle discrimination (Quillian, 2008), barely perceptible racism (Aronson, 2012), benevolent sexism (Glick, Fiske, 2002) and implicit prejudice (Oskamp, Schultz, 2005). These terms are results of the fact that people have systematic preferences in each of the following diversity categories: gender, race and ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation and identity, religion (Risberg, Pilhofer, 2018). The preferences within these socially constructed categories represent the norms that are maintained by social and organizational practices. This is the major source of societal discrimination and power inequalities against those who aren't perceived as the "norm" (Primecz et al., 2016). Among the six major diversity categories, the dissertation focuses on the race, ethnicity, and partly the religion – as these are the most related to the international mobility experience and cultural skill development, contributing to the cultural aspect of diversity management by awareness.

The desire to be perceived as non-prejudiced person, and be presented in a more positive light, is what seems to replace the fear of the unknown as the main source of anxiety towards an out-group or individuals (Dovidio, Gaertner, 2004). This does not mean that the forms of hostility toward the out-groups have disappeared, they have rather evolved to a degree that requires much more sophisticated measurement tools and approaches (Tetlock, Mitchell, 2008).

The interest in group conflict in Europe was especially intense in the mid-20th century, during the dictatorship years, World War II and Holocaust. All these phenomena induced a need to understand what was behind massively occurring prejudice, discrimination and intergroup conflicts (Hogg, 2006). The recent influx of refugees from the Middle East and North Africa to the Western world, regarded as the largest-scale movement of people since the World War II, has again brought the issue of intergroup conflict into the centre of public discourse and academic research. Inevitably, the public attitude towards the

incoming groups of refugees from the last century and more recent one taking place fifty years after, has been compared.

In the current context, a popular response to immigrants is the belief and fear that their influx will change the existing cultural structure in the Western world. Stephan et al. (1998) propose that threat to cultural identity is consistent with the integrated threat theory and further identify four distinct types of threat: realistic threat, cultural or symbolic threat, intergroup anxiety; and negative stereotypes. For the previously mentioned immigrant situation and perception, the cultural threat is most relevant framework. Stephan et al. (1998) define cultural threat as the fear of potential harm caused by immigrants' introduction of distinct and different values, norms and morals. On an individual level, when one feels threatened that their culture might potentially be influenced by immigrants, that person responds more negatively to the group those immigrants belong to. On the interpersonal level, different language and generally different style of forming interpersonal relationships will provoke more negative attitudes in contrary to immigrants' integration to the host country (Zarate et al., 2004).

As causes of threat have been elaborated, it is further important to explain its consequences. The increase in intergroup threat perception is proportional to the rise of ethnocentrism, intolerance and the opposition to policies that favour the out-group. Moreover, the occurrence of more extreme behaviours to protect the ingroup and justification of violence in that favour are presumably outcomes of the perceived threat (Stephan et al., 2009). The moral exclusion, projected through fear, anger, resentment, contempt and disgust, is also one of the emotional outcomes of the threat increase (Stephan et al., 2009). When these emotions are broadly experienced by the majority of a group and perceived as group-based emotions, they can lead to the harm of out-group members, and eventually to their complete exclusion. In fact, in cases where the group-based emotion is anger, it can completely mediate the relationship between two groups and result in collective support of offensive behaviour (Mackie, Devos, Smith, 2000).

The adaptation and threat perception avoidance are always a two-way process between groups. In other words, the effectiveness of adaptation depends on the immigrants' predisposition and willingness to adapt, but also on the conditions set by the host culture (Kim, 1988). There are many factors influencing the host environment receptivity and conformity pressure toward immigrants (Berry, 2005; Gudykunst, Kim, 2003). The expectancy of the host environment for the immigrant conformation to existing values

and cultural norms is defined as conformity pressure. The more liberal and less ideological societies generally allow more freedom to the immigrants than the more conservative and more totalitarian ones (Kim, 1988). The conformity pressure is related to receptivity, or to how accepting and open one group is to other groups. Some of the factors affecting this phenomenon are what the mass media portrays, pre-existing notions of groups, social identity strengths, economic situation and political rhetoric (Kim, 1988).

Many nations, or cultural groups, show prejudice and hostility toward minority groups, including immigrants. Some of these nations are France, Canada, Spain, the United Kingdom, Singapore and the United States (Bagnall, 1995; Bokhorst-Heng, 2003; Croucher, 2009b; Dickinson, Young, 2003; Doyle, 1996; Hargreaves, 2000; McIlwain, Johnson, 2003). The increase in prejudice and hostility toward a minority group decreases the chance for integral component of cultural adaptation, that is for communication between groups (Kim, 1988). The public display of mentioned hostilities and prejudices is often related to perceived threats from minority and immigrant groups (Gonzalez et al., 2008; Stephan, Stephan, 1996). Nations where hostility and prejudice are identified earlier, often do not perceive migrant groups as actively assimilating and simultaneously feel threatened by immigrant groups (Croucher, 2009a); Croucher, Cronn-Mills, 2011). Essentially, the less receptive the host group is toward the immigrant group, the less likely the immigrant groups' desire to adapt and the less likely the dominant host group is to accept their adaptation efforts (Croucher, 2009a; Kim, 1988, 2001).

The threat becoming symbolic or realistic depends on the threat-invoking group (Stephan et al., 2009). Economic status plays the key role; where the economically powerful out-groups, or groups associated with disease spreading, might provoke realistic threats (Stephan et al., 2005). The socially marginalized groups which are against the traditional values such as sects (Stephan et al., 2009), generate symbolic threats. In certain cases, however, drawing a clear line between symbolic and realistic threat can be challenging due to certain instances of overlapping (Riek et al., 2006). For instance, if the religious group is considered to be treat-evoking out-group, the symbolic threat it introduces might involve realistic threat, or eventually evolve into one (Riek et al., 2006).

1.3.3 Realistic Group Conflict Theory and Practice

There are two distinct conceptions of realistic threat, one stems from realistic group conflict theory (RGCT) (LeVine, Campbell, 1972; Sherif, 1966) and the other from integrated threat theory (ITT) (Bobo, 1988a). The difference is that RCTG limits itself to

competition for basic resources, whereas ITT threat concept is much wider and encompasses power, status and well-being (Stephan, Stephan, 2000). Furthermore, RCTG deals with more objective threats and ITT focuses on individuals' subjective perception.

Similarly at the interpersonal level of conflicts, the perceived realistic group conflict theory suggests that competition for access to limited resources leads to conflict between groups (Sherif et al., 1961). In order for potential competitors to take resources, they must be perceived as similar to the ingroup on the relevant dimensions. One of the best examples is the perception that foreigners are "stealing" jobs from the local people – such opinion leads to more negative and hostile attitude towards immigrants, however this is not a correct representation of the reality.

If we look into the Maltese case, those positions can be fulfilled by immigrants only if they have the same, or more competitive skills, not to mention those industries, where foreigners often cater for the lack of specialized labour (Holicza, Chircop, 2018). On the other hand, jobs tedious, repetitive tasks, or hard physical activities such as; employment in catering and building industries, have opened up opportunities in low wage jobs as well as in fields where qualifications or training background are not essential. This occurs most times if the wages earned are higher than what is earned in their home country. Further, it can be argued that employers have come to realise that jobs in certain unappealing sectors like hospitality and construction are more likely to be sought after by foreigners rather than by the local citizens (Holicza, Stone, 2016). Keeping in mind that foreigners are more likely to accept remunerator packages close to the minimum wage, employers have sought to take advantage of this trend by keeping wages low deliberately (Holicza, Chircop, 2018).

1.3.4 Group Conflict Motives in Racial Context

As previously elaborated, group conflict can arise at multiple levels, and therefore, its resolution and prevention must be considered at multiple levels as well (Christie et al., 2008). Depending on the level of approach, different strategies may be used in order of resolving the conflict and those can range from working with individuals and communities to promoting broader social policies (Lederach, 1997).

It is inevitable that strategies implemented at one level can have an effect on another level but it is not always the case. For example, efforts of solving conflict at micro-

interpersonal level between the members of unequal status groups can lead to lack of members' motivation for social change due to unintentional inequalities reinforcement (Dixon et al., 2010), while promoting conflict resolution at societal level may not be fully accepted by individuals whose legacy is still not allowing them to work toward complete societal integration (Bekerman, 2009).

One of the oldest causes of conflict, on all levels, is race. Even in the eighteenth century, the ethnologists divided human beings into three or five races and usually considered different races as varieties of a single human species. However, some maintained that races constitute separate species and use this fallacious belief as a fundament in slavery-pro argument (Fredrickson, 2003). What makes this classification even more complicated, dangerous and difficult to overcome is the fact that racism does not require support by the state or the law, it can exist long persist under the illusion of non-racism (Fredrickson, 2003).

In order of understanding the racial conflict background, many theorists have their explanation to thoughts, feelings, attitudes and behaviours leading to such bigotries. Racial Formation theory says that race is a socially constructed identity where the content and importance of racial categories are determined by social, economic, and political forces (Omi, Winant, 2014). In contrary to the ideas from the past, that race is scientific or genetic entity, this framework promotes the idea that race simply exists because humans perpetuate it. Intergroup Relations theory says that prejudice may be an inevitable aspect of human life (Allport, 1954); meaning that humans will always look for differences to separate themselves from others. This phenomenon can be explained as the human minds' tendency to categorize people into social groups which can often result in the us vs. them mentality.

When it comes do Europe specifically, racial-based group conflict and the "us and them" division is mostly grounded on the division between native Europeans and immigrants. A new trend in migrations was introduced in the late 1990's when the governments began listening to experts coming from various spheres, such as economists, demographers and migration experts (Sassen, 1996, p. 95). In this period, the business community and the employers expressed their concern with the shortcomings in (primarily the vocational) workforce, defining it as shrinking, ageing and expensive (Schuster, 2003). Although many countries in Europe began planning the "managed migration", anti-immigration

propaganda coming from the far-right political parties see this plan as a threat, regardless of its span (Schuster, 2003).

Realistic group conflict theory suggests that discourse filled with tensions expresses actual conflict of interest between ethnic groups (Bobo, 1988a, 1988b; Levine, Campbell, 1972). This theory explains that the blame for social problems directed toward a different ethnic group is related to conflicts of interest with that group. A research conducted in multi-ethnic Philadelphia showed that high portions, approximately 60%, of residents report that they blame other ethnic groups for neighbourhood problems such as youth violence, crime and in general neighbourhood deterioration. Consequently, residents exposed to ethnic blame were also more likely to report ethnic tension in neighbourhoods. In line with discourse theory, ethnic groups blaming is associated with tensions that go beyond neighbourhood problems and are more related to conflicts of interest between the ethnic groups (Romer et al., 1997).

There is also an important hypothesis that media plays a major role in perpetuating ethnocentric discourse (van Dijk, 1991, 1993). Considerable research has been dedicated to persons of colour as the ethnic group that is subject to blame to a great extent due to the fact that United States and northern Europe are largely Caucasian. Content analysis of U.S. press (Lester, 1994; Smith, 1991) and TV news (Entman, 1992; Klite, Bardwell, Salzman, 1995, 1997) shows a greater presence of person of colour in stories about crime, than in the rest of the news. Journalists also confirmed that they frame stories differently when they are about persons of colour (Hartman, Husband, 1974; van Dijk, 1991). British journalists put it as follows: "Everything to do with coloured people takes place against an underlying premise that they are the symbols or the embodiments of a problem. Whether we like it or not, that is the state of public opinion as perceived by news editors; and that is what tends to influence professional news judgment" (Hartman, Husband, 1974, p. 164).

Another question that arises from this phenomenon is whether the overrepresentation of persons of colour in negative stories is related to ethnocentric discourse introduced by news professionals or to function of problem behaviour as reported to the authorities. The discourse explanation would be that when journalists report to largely White audience, they form reportages in such a way that it is more newsworthy than stories about White people. Moreover, most interesting stories are those that include White victims and non-White perpetrators (Romer et al., 1998). Realistic conflict theory explanation for this

issue would be that, on average, persons of colour are poorer and more likely to live in high poverty and in urban neighbourhoods, and therefore are more likely to be involved in criminal activities (Massey, Denton, 1993).

The importance of the effect of media cannot be neglected. Although there is no real evidence that viewers can form their opinions about other groups from television news, laboratory simulations of the effect of receiving information about fictitious groups of people showed that people can form their impression of the group based on this information (Hamilton, Trolier, 1986). It is also evident that TV news enables viewers to define problems (Iyengar, Kinder, 1987), and that these defined opinions have important effect on intergroup conflict (Kinder, Sanders, 1996). It is inevitable that the outcome of these reporting practices might be perpetuation of fear of people of colour in urban setting (Romer et al., 1998). A study showed that exposure to news about Black person committed crime indicates rise in fear of crime among White viewers and activates unfavourable stereotypes of Black men (Gilliam et al., 1996).

1.4 The Role of Youth in Conflicts and Peace-Building

This research measures the effects of international (youth) mobility that involved mostly Generation Y students in the higher education, therefore their main characteristics, engagement in conflicts and peacebuilding should be introduced and discussed.

Some populations, especially the youth, are more vulnerable if they do not have strong family connections, feel hopeless, and have no confidence in future prospects. The generational gap brings even more risk into the case: the difference of opinions between one generation and another regarding beliefs, politics, or values (Subramanian, 2017). The world, classical roles and norms are changing; old practices do not work anymore, the schools, media, marketing, etc. need different approaches trying to reach the new generations (Williams, Page, 2011). It has its security aspects. While the older generations are barely prepared (them) for such changes, i.e. the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has started its psychological warfare delivered by their recruiters and social media platforms (Farwell, 2014; Blaker, 2015). They succeed to engage young people, just like extreme right and racists groups, while authorities are unable to react potentially. Awareness should be raised among educators, youth leaders, parents, help them to offer a better and more attractive way or group to join, belong to.

1.4.1 The Mobilized Millennials

It is evident that society enters the digital age, physical presence and personal relations are getting less and less important. The differences in opinions between generations regarding beliefs, political views, or values, are referred to as "generation gap". As the whole world is facing new challenges, in terms of changes in classical roles and established norms, which result in traditional practices being less effective and often inapplicable; it is inevitable that certain adaptations in educational system, marketing, media, security and other fields related to Generation Y are necessary. The Millennials, Digital Natives, the "we want it now" – many names have been used to describe this young generation (born between 1980 and 2000), who are characterized as technology savvy, dexterous, open to new things and able to work in team (Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017). It is evident how these characteristics make this generation more critical about technical issues as well as impatient; and the skill of creating "instant", but effective solutions is being more and more appreciated and desirable in all life spheres. The values and characteristics of the Y Generation have been widely researched, explained and grouped (Noble et al., 2009). The most important psychological phenomena that is associated with this generation as follows.

Speed: Millennials were born in an era of technological development, and the usage of information technology novelties comes naturally to them. The information resources are today much easier to reach and the search is less time consuming, instead of going to the library, one can just "Google it" and find as much relevant information within seconds, while their predecessors did not have this luxury and would not be able to gather that amount of data through their whole lifetime. The social media enables them to be informed in real-time about the latest trends, daily events and lives of their peers and opens a platform in which they can communicate and exchange information in their private and social lives (Holicza, Kadena, 2018).

Decline of personal relationships: It is evident that online communities transformed personal relationships. Most everyday life activities are simplified and more instant, which makes the actual human contact less important. Instead of writing a letter and waiting for it to reach the recipient, or even making a call, it is enough to just send a few words and emojis on Messenger. Planning and making arrangements is also simplified as we are now able to simply log into a website or an App and check who shared their location with us-we can know who is where and with whom. Living our lives online

means sharing a lot of personal information and we are often expected to do so in order of keeping up with the contemporary world, otherwise one who decides to keep their personal life offline might become non-existent to others as the live interaction loses its value (Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017).

Freedom and adventure: This generation is multilingual and the internet provided such opportunities, allowing them to roam the world virtually and made it easier to do so even in reality, as the formerly known barriers are gone (Lazányi, 2015). The advanced technology enabled us to be online everywhere nowadays and it made it possible to travel freely to almost every corner of the world, and even working from the most exotic places, that is to be what is referred to as "digital nomads" (Prensky, 2001).

Uniqueness and individualism: They try to define themselves through their appearance and to stand out from the crowd. It is easy to shape their virtual personality and image in any way that they want and present themselves to the world in a way they are comfortable with. This freedom of "choosing" the whole life, as one present to the online community, requires the increase of consciousness. Digital technology has the ability of transforming identities (Perillo, 2007). These platforms are well organized and enable users to control what they want others to see, which leads to only the best moments being uploaded and shown. According to some research, it might cause significant self-esteem problems as the audience (followers) compare only these moments to their life. On the other hand, the positive or negative feedbacks on the posts raise or decrease social self-esteem and well-being of the uploaders (Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017).

Simplicity, Simplification: They prefer the simple, fast and more concise information, which explains the spread of image sharing web pages, apps and platforms (Instagram, Flickr, Tumblr, and Snapchat) where the text content is minimal. Members of the Y generation are reading less and less and the number of people struggling with reading comprehension is growing – if a text does not fit the mobile display, it seems to be too long to read.

FoMo: This completely new phenomenon, which is the FoMO (fear of missing out) defined as the anxiety that someone feels when others are engaged in a rewarding, cheerful activity, while he/she is away (Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017). It has a relevant impact on the psychological state of young people and on the quality of their lives by generating a lot of negative feelings and making individuals compete on a regular basis

through social media. Because of the strong impact, it is not surprising that several marketing campaigns are based on this fear, and using the following words, expressions: "do not miss it", "join us" amongst others. This also pre-empts young adults to constantly be online feeling like a part of a community and in track with the latest trends (Holicza, Kadena, 2018).

1.4.2 The Youth Profile of the Research-Participant Countries

Youth is a familiar term, but there is no universally recognised definition for this (transition) period between childhood and adulthood, while young people are still dependent on parents or the state, but they are in a process to achieve personal autonomy. 1,8 billion people fall into this category globally, between the ages of 15 and 29. The 90% of them lives in less developed countries, the one-third in fragile and conflict-affected regions. The number of youth population in world is higher than it ever was, it makes up nearly one quarter of humanity (Commonwealth, 2016). National governments and international organizations use different age ranges to define and categorise youth. For instance, the Commonwealth (that the following section is based on) classifies youth between 15 and 29 years; the World Health Organization (WHO) 10–29; the United Nations Habitat (Youth Fund) 15–32; while the European Union is 15 to 29. In this study, based on the survey sample distributed, the average age is 24,6 years with the median of 24. This value is in consonance and can be compared to all standards used by international organizations and other databases cited in the dissertation.

1.4.2.1 Secondary Data on National Youth Development

The Global Youth Development Index (YDI) is a widely used and recognized measurement system to compare youth development in different countries based on 5 distinct domains: Political Participation and Civic Participation, Education, Health and Well-being, Employment and Opportunity. The YDI score ranges from 0 (no development) to 1, that reflects the highest, perfect youth development (Commonwealth, 2016). The following Figure 5 compares the 5 participating countries that are in the primary research of this dissertation.
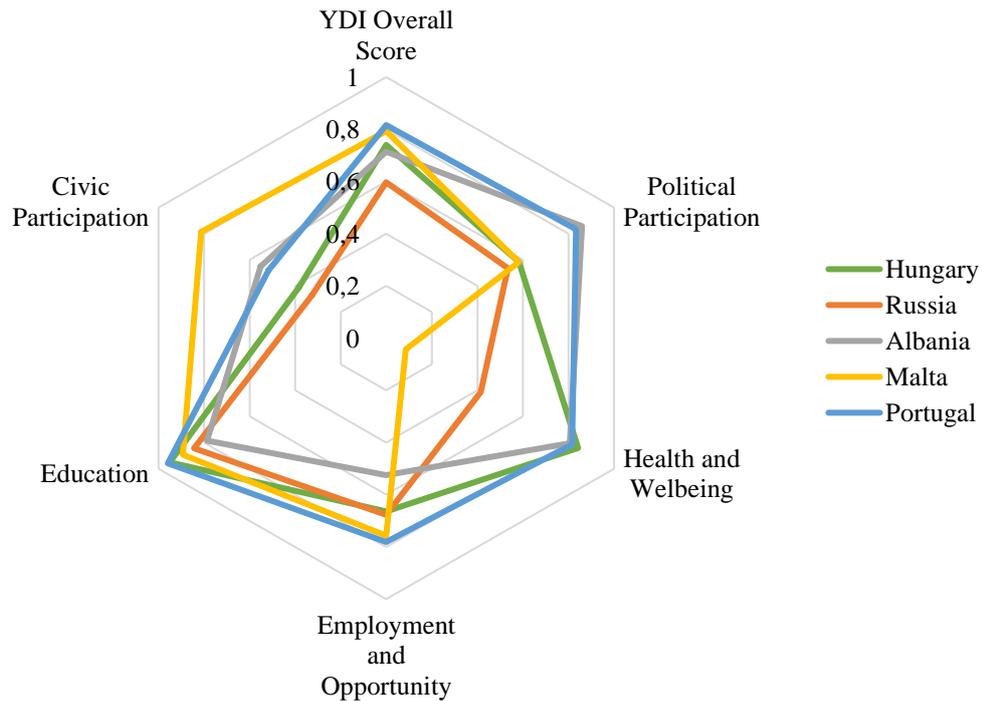
Figure 5: The Youth Development Index of the Research Participant Countries (Commonwealth, 2016)

Political Participation shows the extent to which young people are engaged in political processes and the development of their community. It promotes social integration, connects generations and decreases exclusion. Based on the YDI scores, the Albanians and Portuguese are the most active in this field, while the Russian youth is the least represented in the national political processes. The Hungarian and Maltese scores are low as well. The Health and Wellbeing domain includes indicators such as mental health, mortality rate, alcohol and drug abuse rates. Hungarian youth performed the best in these cases, followed by the Portuguese and Albanians. The Russian and Maltese situation is significantly worse as visible on the figure. Youth (un)Employment and Opportunities are critical issues in several European countries. Portugal seems to perform the best score as the youth unemployment rate falls continuously since 2013 February, when the highest 41,4% was measured. The actual rate accounts for 17,6%, however this significant change can be linked to the mass youth emigration as well. According to the Portuguese INE Statistics, half of the unemployed young people left the country to abroad in search of employment and better living conditions. Albania represents the other end in this case, where the youth unemployment is still a serious issue. Russia and Hungary are in the middle class. The Education is the most successful index, where all countries achieved high scores led by Portugal and Hungary. It means that the literacy, digital skills and high school enrolment rates are relatively high. Civic Participation or active citizenship is a

very important factor, this research puts a lot emphasis on its contribution to human development, socio-political inclusion and democracy. The results significantly differ in this field, as the highest Maltese score is more than double of the Russian one. The Hungarian youth show also very low civic participation, while the Portuguese and Albanian scores are in the middle category.

The Overall YDI Scores rank the countries based on their youth development, where Portugal represents the highest level (0,816). The outstanding Maltese civic participation compensated the low Health indicator and ranked on the second place (0,793). Hungary is between the West and the East on the third place with a score of 0,74 followed by Albania (0,714). The Russian YDI is the lowest among the 5 countries, mostly effected by the weak civic participation and health. In attempt to find the reasons for such diverse results on this secondary data, the national youth profiles are further analysed and explained based the available literature.

1.4.2.2 Cultural Identity and Attitudes – Hungary, Malta and Portugal

As Huntington's theory on the clash of civilizations was employed as one of the bases of the research, the Hungarian, Maltese and Portuguese youth profiles are presented together in this section. These countries aren't just connected by the common Western-Christian Civilization, but their European Union membership as well. Huntington defines a civilization as a cultural entity. He acknowledges that individual villages, regions, ethnic groups, nationalities, religious groups all have different cultures at various levels of cultural heterogeneity. Regardless of these differentiations, he claims that European communities still share cultural features that distinguish them from "the rest" with whom they are not a part of any broader cultural entity (Huntington, 1993). From the technical aspect, the common EU databases and other regional surveys make these countries more comparable along the same indicators and statistical metrics. The non-EU member Albania as Muslim Civilization and Russia as Orthodox are presented in the following sections.

According to Eurobarometer (2017) data, EU citizens consider the peace among the Members States as the most important and positive achievement, followed by the free movement of people, goods and services. Student exchange programmes such as Erasmus are on the third place. However, another study shows that a large majority of young Europeans (61%) do not want to study, complete professional training in another EU country, while only 32% would like to do so. The Special Eurobarometer on European

Youth also shows, that the 88% of the EU youth (aged from 16 to 30 years) have never travelled to another EU country for such purposes (Jacques, 2016). In country-specific breakdown, the Figure 6 indicates that the Maltese are the most open for such experiences among the countries this dissertation involves.
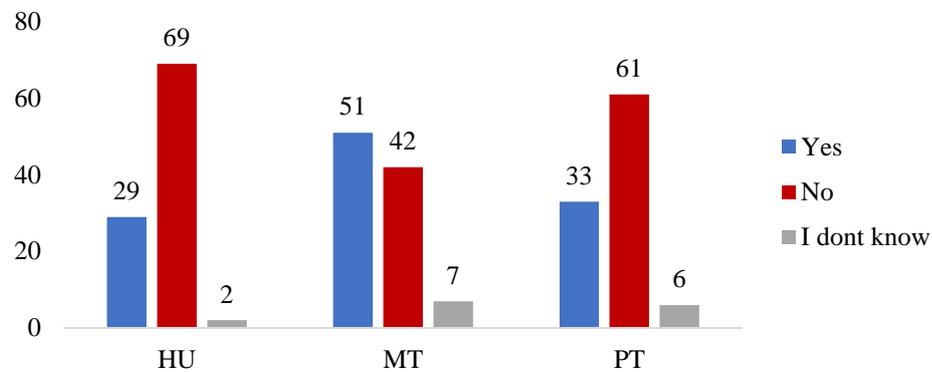
More than the half of them are interested in international mobility programs, followed by the one-third of Portuguese young people. Hungarians are the least opened for mobility, nearly the 70% of them are not interested in these opportunities. The dropping tendency of Hungarian student mobility participation is confirmed by national data (Holicza, 2018b), its reasons and proposed solutions for higher student/youth engagement – are addressed by another research studies (Holicza, Helmerson, Pichlbauer, 2018; Holicza, Pásztor, 2019) as well as the recommendations of this dissertation.

Peace and student mobility are among the top EU achievements (Eurobarometer, 2017) and are significantly linked on perceptive level according to the hypotheses of this research. Therefore, the available and comparable conflict-related secondary data is presented in this sub-section based on the European Quality of Life Survey results (Eurofound, 2016). The level of perceived tensions towards different racial, ethnic and religious groups are presented on Figure 7 and 8 among Hungarian, Maltese, Portuguese and Albanian youth. Russia is not represented in this research; therefore, the related facts and figures are introduced based on the available literature in its dedicated section.
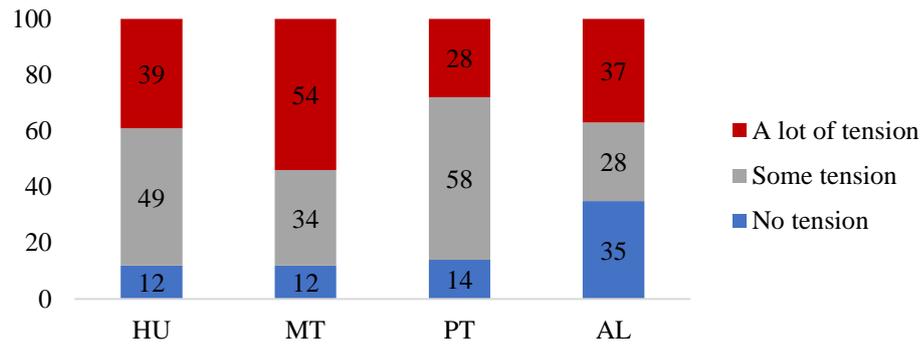
Figure 7: Perceived Tensions between Different Racial and Ethnic Groups (Aged 18-24): National Comparison (%) (Eurofound, 2016)

The Maltese youth are measured to have a lot of tension at 54%, followed by some tension at 34%. Among the youth under study, the Maltese youth represent the group with the highest level of tension. The reason for this may be attributed to the heavy migration-pressure and the growing number of refugees on the island (Holicza, Stone, 2016; Holicza, Chircop, 2018). With regards to the Portuguese youth, 58% of the population were found to have some level of tension and 28% with a lot of tension. These statistics can be linked to their extremely high uncertainty avoidance score of 99 according to Hofstede's (2018) findings. Ribeiro et al., (2012) explain that as a result of the increasingly multicultural society, the ability to cope with the unknown as well as maintain, rigid codes and orthodox behaviour this community is used to conflicts may arise.

The statistics on racial and ethnic tensions for the Hungarian youth group show that the percentage of youth with some tension is higher at 49% than that with a lot of tension at 39%. However, the overall percentage on tensions is still high at 88%. This result cannot be linked to the same reasons as in the Maltese or Portuguese cases, therefore these attitudes are more likely to be associated with local minorities. Albanians have the highest percentage of youth group with no tension at 35% in comparison to the other countries in this study. However, the percentage of youth showing lots of tension stood at 37% which may probably be connected to the Kosovar-Serb situation and the Macedonian minority issues (Ortakovski, 2001).

In Figure 8 below, a different but closely related issue is presented. The figure thus attempts to measure the inter-religious tensions within the countries. As compared to the ethnic tensions' statistics, the figure depicts that the percentage of youth with a lot of tension are smaller in all countries.
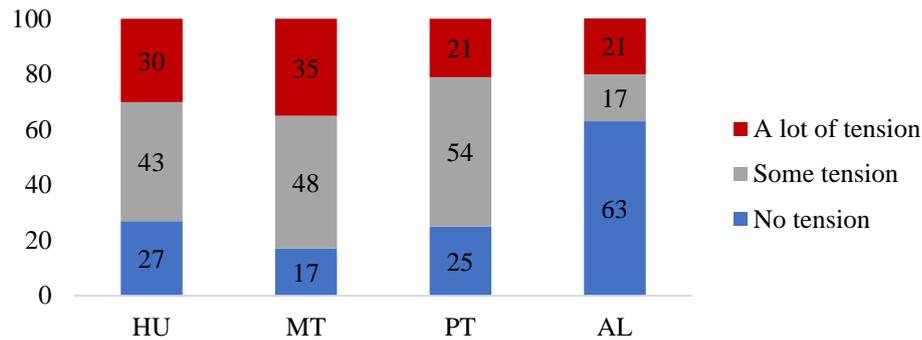
Figure 8: Perceived Tensions between Different Religious Groups (Aged 18-24): National Comparison (%) (Eurofound, 2016)

For instance, about 63% of the Albanian youth do not feel any tension when it comes to religious differences which is outstanding in this case. Even if the northern part of the country is considered very traditional, the Muslim (major), Orthodox and Catholic communities can live together peacefully. In spite of the presence of three faith groups, quoting from a European Council study, the religion in Albania appears "more of a social than a spiritual role" and so not a potential source of conflict (Williamson, 2010).

Most of the religious tension is perceived by the Maltese youth, overall 83%. Most of the European foreigners who live and work in Malta don't belong to another faith group or civilization in the context of Huntington, but the inflow of asylum seekers mostly from Africa is considered differently (Holicza, Stone, 2016; Holicza, Chircop, 2018). They represent potential source of tensions because of symbolic threats, especially as a socially marginalized group (Stephan et al., 2009).

The case of Portugal might have some similarities as Western-Christian civilization, Catholic community. The largest religious minority in Portugal is the Muslim for around 30 years, which is connected to the post-colonial movement. The presence of Islam is therefore quite a new phenomenon in the Portuguese society, mostly with Indian-Mozambican and Guinean backgrounds (Tiesler, Cairns, 2010). The Hungarian statistics are similar to the Maltese, the perception to the Portuguese, but without post-colonial movements and considerable non-Christian minority. The relatively high perceived tension therefore, might be explained by the first flow of the "migration crisis" at the time when the Eurofound Survey was conducted in 2016. Hungarians, especially the youth, never experienced such happenings. Due to the ethnically relatively homogeneous society and the culture that is quite sensitive for uncertainty, the reaction of locals is not surprising.

Connecting the figures, the majority of the Hungarian youth have tensions, and they are generally less interested in international mobility. On the other hand, the Maltese have the most of the perceived tensions and treats from different ethnic and religious groups, but they are much more open to move abroad for education and training purposes. The majority (51%) is confident about the participation, 42% don't consider it, while 7% are uncertain. This is significantly higher interest than in the other two EU countries.

The analysis of the conflicts and mobility associations is addressed by the second part of the dissertation based on primary data. In order to understand what's more behind these statistics however, the perceptions of the youth, their identity as well as their actual trends are explained in the literature-based sections following this.

Hungarian Youth

The research study by Kadlót (2016) shows that Hungary is a unique country in the Central and Eastern European region as well as the entire European Union when it comes to the political participation of youth. The respondents, even though very reserved vis-à-vis politics, answered that they would primarily vote for right-wing parties and keep their distance from left-wing and liberal parties. However, the high ratio of non-voters and undecideds suggests that it cannot be simply concluded that Hungarian Generation Y is predominantly right-wing, and the regional differences are significant within the country as well. According to Szabó (2012, p. 100), the political interest is significantly higher among males, as well as the residents of Budapest compared to the ones who live in other cities or smaller towns, villages. The higher the social class of the young person is, the more interested they are in politics.

Hungarian youth has a high level of political awareness, but only 6% expressed strong interest, while 70% find politics unappealing or uninteresting. About 60% of respondents would turn out to vote and one fifth of all respondents said that they would not vote – it explains the low YDI scores on civic and political participation. The most popular reason for electoral abstention is lack of trust in politicians and one third of them dislike all possible electoral options (Kadlót, 2016).

Reflecting to Figure 7, literature shows, that Hungarian young people perceive most of the cultural threat from the Roma minority and immigrants. They connect the Roma minority to increasing criminal activity rates and consider that their presence is undermining the Hungarian culture (Szabó et al., 2012). When it comes to foreigners,

their thoughts are in line with the RGCT, competition for access to limited resources between groups (Sherif et al., 1961), in this case jobs and economic interests. They aren't so negative towards the historical minority groups of the country, and the findings of Szabó also emphasize that beside the sociocultural factor and family background, the advanced education plays a very important role in integration processes and the development of conflict coping strategies.

The life priorities are related to happiness, good health and leisure, while earning money, freedom to do and say as they want, family time and success are also on the top of the priority list (Kadlót, 2016). To achieve all of these, nearly the half of the Hungarian young people see the solution in emigration and foreign life, they are the dominant portion of the commuters. The (youth) emigration is already a pressing issue in Hungary considering the domestic labour market and the sustainability of welfare systems (Bodnár, Szabó, 2014).

Maltese Youth

Malta, an island nation in the Central Mediterranean Sea, is mainly populated by descendants of Phoenician, Arab, British and Italian people (Holicza, Chircop 2018). Throughout the years, the increasing number of immigrants has brought about new realities mostly impacting the young Maltese generation. This topic represents a wide range of debate within the Maltese society (Holicza, Stone, 2016) and considerable tensions as Figure 7 and 8 indicated previously.

This change also can predominantly be felt in schools. In fact, today's classrooms are embracing an increasingly rich diversity of cultures (Faas, 2013). Local projects aim at educating for open-mindedness and multi-ethnic educational experiences (Calleja et al., 2010). Nowadays, intercultural competences amongst youth have become as crucial as other academic subjects, predominantly as a result of globalisation and international mobility which have consequently led to the need to embrace cultural diversity (Azzopardi, 2008). In this respect, youths have become cognisant of the fact that intercultural competence does not solely comprise nurturing his own culture, but it extends to a situation whereby one is also aware, comprehends and accepts other diverse cultures and ethnic backgrounds (Calleja et al., 2010). All this has to be seen in the light of the fact that Malta's state school sector is influenced to a large extent by the British educational system owing to Malta's colonial past (Mifsud, 2011).

Most Maltese young people appear to believe that pluralistic broadcasting has resulted in greater awareness among the youth about the options and choices available in terms of consumer products and even new ideas that came from contact with a range of different lifestyles and belief systems. (Grixti, 2006). Furthermore, this research shows that most of the young people see this as positive development in terms of openness to global perspectives and more freedom of choice. They frequently associate being young, modern, forward looking, technologically advanced and enlightened with being in tune with what comes from overseas. Being "old fashioned" tends to be linked with an inability to move beyond traditional and locally produced goods. Though they often remain proud of their country's history, many of them distance themselves from what they consider "traditional" Maltese way of life (Grixti, 2006).

In a study conducted by the Agenzija Zghazagh in (2012), the emergence of independent decision making and the changing relationship among youth and their parents were seen as the most important features of emerging adulthood. Nevertheless, job satisfaction was ranked consistently high as one of life's most desired outcomes by all participants. Furthermore, half of those employed felt secure in their jobs. While generally healthy, the lack of physical exercise was still a common reality amongst a significant minority of young people. Exposure to smoking, drinking and substance abuse was not alarmingly high, but the YDI scores indicated significantly worse situation on Figure 5, than in the other four countries. Due to the belief that majority of youngsters live with their parents throughout their adolescent years and most of their adulthood, spending patterns of Maltese youth are centred mainly around recreation, shopping and travel, with a limited proportion actually being deployed towards essentials such as food, housing and transport (Inguanez et al., 2012).

Portuguese Youth

In the past century, the studies related to youth were mainly based on "deficit perspective" and the concept of positive development was defined as absence or decrease of problems (Geldhof et al., 2014). Lately, the focus on positive youth development among researchers imply that perspective in different cultures and countries vary and addressing this uniqueness is very important in order of developing and translating research into context-sensitive interventions and policies (Petersen et al., 2016; Matos et al., 2018).

Multiculturalism as a political project has captured much attention since, according to United Nations (2017) reports, around 258 million people are residing outside their countries of birth globally. When talking about Portugal, it is inevitable to mention it as a multicultural society that resulted from large change from emigration to immigration, which had enormous influence within the country. This phenomenon started after the independence of former Portuguese colonies (late 1970's) and after Portugal EU integration (1986), resulting in some ethnic and religious tensions among the locals (Figure 7 and 8) who seek to preserve the status quo. Even if the tensions are perceived towards different or influencing cultures, unpredictable events, in the collectivist and feminine Portuguese culture, conflicts are resolved by compromise. Consensus is a key word, people value equality, therefore polarization is not well considered according to Hofstede (2018). However, reflecting on the data provided by House et al. (2004), these high collectivist values "as it should be" are significantly lower on the practical "as is" institutional level. Figure 4 shows this score approximately 20% lower – the highest difference among the four countries, while the related in-group indicators barely change. Institutional collectivism expresses "the degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action" (House et al., 2004).

Although there is a gap in literature on the Portuguese youth (Cairns et al., 2014) existing studies however, highlights the existence of differences and inconsistences between the supportive national integration policy and multicultural education system vs. the success of implementation, practical experiences assessed by Ribeiro et al. (2012). Multicultural education has been viewed as an ideal way to facilitate interaction between cultures and way of promoting the immigrant minority's integration. Regardless of its history of multiculturalism, Portugal only started introducing this matter to schools at the end of 1980's in a top down approach (Souta, 1997). This education system, even after introducing some changes, continues centred in nationhood and in promotion of "national consciousness" and development of the "knowledge and appreciation of the characteristic values of Portuguese identity, language, history and culture". This centrality also reflects in "teaching of the Portuguese language and culture to the emigrant workers and their sons" (Almeida, 2005). All the claims for identity recognition by various groups need to be mirrored by politics of pluralism, which are not compatible with dilution of differences

within single national culture. The cultural assimilation is, therefore, contradictory to the challenges and demands of modern Portugal (Almeida, 2006).

Portuguese young people performed very well on YDI, the only lower score was measured on their civic participation which has been a central concern of research and public policy as well (Ribeiro et al., 2015). The youth seem to be more engaged in everyday issues relating to their educational experience and career expectations (Tiesler, Cairns, 2010). They have to face with major challenges, especially on labour market, that often results in a huge waste of educational capital (Cairns et al., 2014). Similarly to the Hungarian case, literature shows that family, education and close friends' company have a great impact on their of political interest (DostieGoulet, 2009), moreover they are very attached to their home city as well (Tiesler, Cairns, 2010). The Portuguese however tend to express themselves only when lot is at stake for them personally (Mota, Santinha, 2012) and they are confidently aware of the particular issues. The role of social media is significant here, some studies consider the traditional practices of civic participation shifting to online activities. Harris et al. (2010) suggest that there is no luck of youth commitment in exercising citizenship, „but rather a change in the way of expressing it". Ribeiro et al. (2015) expressed this phenomenon as "new forms of participation", confirmed by Cabral (2009) who has also shown that the public involvement of Portuguese youth is concentrated in the period of 20 to 26 years old age.

1.4.2.3   The Sociocultural Profile of Albanian Youth

The national and cultural trajectories among Albanians were marked by various factors, such as countries geographical location and political happenings on all levels (Morgan, 2002). The national and ethnic self-perception and identification continues to be intertwined in the contemporary discourse. The cliché of defining Albania as a country between East and the West (Winnifrith, 1992) is now being challenged as the countries' need for economic recovery and major political reforms head West (Brisku, 2006; Saltmarshe, 2017).

According to the most recent data, approximately the 24% of the total population is between the age of 15 and 29 years with the unemployment rate of 23% in 2018 (INSTAT, 2019). Even though Albania has one of the highest birth rates, and it is the second youngest country in Europe, its youth population was not always considered amongst the country's current challenges and issues (Williamson, 2010). This reflects in their exclusion from the political and social processes and various challenges they face such as

unemployment – as clearly demonstrated on the YDI scores, mobility issues, lack of updated educational resources, low living standards, corruption, juvenile delinquency, lack of consistent youth policies or programs that would actively include them in various processes. (Spiridon, Kosic, Tuci, 2014). Nowadays this paradigm seems to change, as the youth issue cannot be neglected anymore, considering their current demonstrations for significant improvements in the higher education and political systems.

The Albanian tradition of youth representation relates with the culture, history and political systems inherited from their ancestors and in this still patriarchal society, freedom of speech and the decision is limited by age (King, Vullnetari, 2003, p. 19). Nevertheless, the importance of youth is portrayed through some features, which make them the target group of the political parties, such as strength, energy and willingness to accept innovative ideas. Active youth in societies such as Albanian, their contribution to political decision-making processes and countries governance is vital. On the other side, the economic and social instability in the country contribute to high emigration during the transition period and it is natural that the Albanian youths' attitudes on social values, economic and inherited political system are unstable (Fjerza, Gega, Memaj, 2014).

Many young Albanians see a solution in emigration in the phase in life when they transition from education to work. Statistics show that labour market participation in 2011 of the youngest youth, aged between 15 and 19 was very low, while only the oldest youth category, aged 25 to 29, reach considerable level of employment of 60%. Even though these numbers might look discouraging, low youth participation in the labour market might be indicator of prolonged involvement in education and training (de Bruijn et al., 2015). The 50% of those students who graduate at abroad through full degree-mobility programs, do not intend to return to Albania in the near future (Gedeshi, King, 2018). It means that the country suffers brain-drain mostly to the West, their surveyed scholars would return only if the economic and social conditions were significantly better (Gedeshi, Black, 2016).

When it comes to trust in the public institutions of their country, the research shows that only 4% of young people trust them, while 75% trust them very little or does not trust them at all. This is a concerning fact, taking into consideration that this lack of trust has roots in Albanian political parties' history and their role in the transition period. The Albanian parliament also does not enjoy the public trust among youth, 68.7% of the respondents trust this institution, that is of crucial importance of liberal democratic

system, very little or not at all. Consequentially, only 3.3% of them are very satisfied with the overall state of democracy (Çela et al., 2015).

As already mentioned, most recent Albanian efforts are directed to the West. The crucial step in this process is the EU integrations as a goal and since June 2014, when Albania was officially granted the candidate status, major reforms which correspond to EU Commission requirements, have taken place. The research shows that Albanian youth is very pro-European and strongly supports the EU integration of their country, as 87% of respondents said that they would vote in favour of Albania joining the EU, while only 5% would vote against. The majority of youth, 62% to be exact, also responded that they believe that integration would bring a development on both economic and political front, 22% highlights the economic development as major benefit, while only 4% think that it would bring no benefits at all. All this optimism among Albanian youth regarding EU integration strengthens the image of Albania as an obviously pro-European country (Çela et al., 2015).

1.4.2.4   Characterization of Russian Youth

Representatives of the Russian Millennials are the first real consumers in their country. There were no brands back in the USSR, but after its collapse, foreign products begun to flow from the international market in the same time (late 80s and 90s) with the birth of the first generation of consumer society. They have never experienced the shortages of the Soviet Union, but were influenced by the sudden rise in consumption by their parents. Russian youth prefer international products with higher quality than that available in domestic markets; this is linked to the fact that from post-communist times, possession of good quality and famous international brands has become a kind of status symbol (Khodyreva, 2017, Holicza, 2018a).

Accustomed to economic uncertainty and volatility, Russian millennials value short-term enjoyment, achievement and products over potential gains down the line. However, not all of them are convinced about the value of renting or having something for a short period of time. Material values such as cars and apartments still matter as they represent stability and social status. Similarly to the rest of the world, Russian Millennials live in big cities, overwhelmed by their daily routines. The work-life imbalance is a usual phenomenon, but they have embraced the trends of healthy lifestyle and community building to connect with like-minded people and engage in activities that don't require too much effort (Holicza, Pásztor, 2018a).

These changes in Russian youth lifestyle are some of the influences of globalization, economic interdependence, intensification of migration flows, cultural unification and global connectivity, which are evident in other countries among this population as well. The positive effects of these global processes, such as spread of knowledge and modern technologies, are often challenged by issues that inevitably occur, such as increased inter-ethnic tension and changes in national identities (Ariely, 2012). Some authors consider globalization as national identity weakening force (Norris, Inglehart, 2009), while others perceive it as national feelings intensifier (Calhoun, 2007; Guibernau, 2001).

The Russian governmental institutions are putting great efforts into reconstructing national identity, perceived as crucial factor of state integrity, which has been challenged due to Russia's specific geopolitical disposition, its historically determined multinationalism and political and economic reforms consequences from the past. In these processes, young people become most exposed and sensitive to global tendencies and political elite ideological pressure, national identity becomes controversial and produces social practices transformed under contemporary influences of the internet and global trends (Svensson, 2011).

Regarding the above-mentioned government efforts to preserve national identity, the role of youth and their perception of identity is one of the key factors of the whole process since they are the future of nations. Therefore, the research conducted by Omelchenko et al. (2015) among Russian youth, portrays a picture of their actual attitudes, beliefs, values and reveals the extent to which new generations are impacted by overall globalization. Firstly, it is interesting to mention that out of 2400 participants, 89% defined themselves as Russians, but only 59% of respondents gave priority to the state identification over regional, soviet, supranational or ethnic identification. Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that young people with higher education level highlighted the importance of knowledge of history, culture and traditions as rational justifications of patriotism as opposed to abstract and more uncritical love for the Motherland. Despite the multiple difficulties they face in their everyday life, such as economic and social crisis or political instability, national identification still takes the central place in their identity. The majority of Russian young people would stay and live in Russia; however, their emigration intention is continuously growing. The following Figure 9 shows the latest statistics from the Levada Analytical Center, (2018) December.
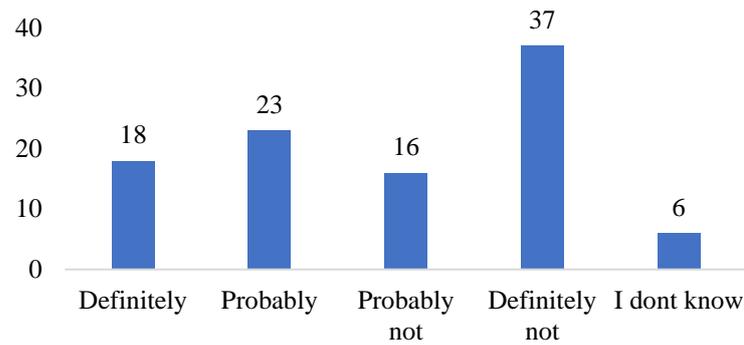
Figure 9: Emigration Intention of Russian Youth (Age: 18-24) (Levada Analytical Center, 2018)

Approximately 40% of the Russian youth aged between 18 and 24 are planning to leave the country because of the above-mentioned conditions. Their top target countries are Germany, the US and Spain. On the other hand, the 37% won't leave, 16% will probably stay as well, while 6% is uncertain. This group of youngsters is either lacking the realistic opportunity to move abroad or definitely fit into the characterization of Omelchenko et al. (2015) with their patriotic feeling that has the source in love, respect, pride and loyalty, willingness to defend and sacrifice life for the country. These traditional values among youth are matched with the lowest civic and political participation measured by the YDI (Figure 5.) compared to the four other countries. Despite the various governmental initiatives, they don't seem to have role in such activities and processes. Ultimately, their representation based on media propaganda largely differs from their self-image of citizens and patriots.

1.4.3   Active Citizenship and Youth Participation in Conflict Resolutions

A shared concern in peacebuilding is to reach out to marginalised and isolated groups of young people. Youth led organizations and movements play a vital role when it comes to reaching out to these members of the society (Oosterom, 2018). In order to stabilize world peace and security, individuals should be aware of its challenging conditions. It is evident that young people are increasingly involved in informal, politically relevant actions through civic engagement, activism and volunteerism in every aspect of their societies, as students, workers or even entrepreneurs or citizens (Barzegar, Karhili, 2018).

Many crises can be rooted in ignorance and the lack of (cultural) understanding which could be solved through citizenship education, particularly in higher education (Farahani, 2014). According to the UNESCO (1995), education should promote knowledge, values, attitudes and skills conducive to an active commitment to the defence of human rights and to the building of a culture of peace and democracy. Nobel Peace Prize winner

Laureate Betty Williams believes that each active citizen has a role to play in the paradigm shift from the "I don't have to do it. Let them do it." – mindset to social and political responsibility that brings peace to the world. This education and idea is referred to as active citizenship, or global citizenship – on an international level. It comes from the early twentieth century and brought together those concerned with peace and disarmament (Dower, Williams, 2016), and expanded to other critical issues such as environment, youth empowerment, democratic processes etc.

Active and global citizenship is the glue that keeps the society together. Democracy cannot function properly without it; otherwise it would just mean placing a mark on a voting slip (European Union, 2012). The importance of active citizenship stands not only in the Western, but in the Arab world as well. As Davids and Waghid (2018) states, the democratic promises of the Arab Spring in 2011 in North Africa can be fulfilled only by socially and politically interested and engaged citizens, public participation. From the governmental point of view, active citizens perform mutual obligation with the intention to shape inclusive society.

Apart from the marginalization of the youth in several regions and communities, there are other factors to discuss in line with the use of active citizenship. Young adults need to find their place in society, where they can be useful and effective. Considering the high level of youth unemployment in many countries as well as EU Members States, it may be a difficult task given the current economic climate. In many cases, however, it is the cause of the socially unpopular feeling of the young adults that might result in radicalization and other destructive behaviours. A famous proverb says: 'idle hands are the devil's workshop'. The labour market has been suggested to affect the arrest rates among juveniles and young adults (Allan, Steffensmeier, 1989), unemployment rate is a significant factor in the raise of criminal activities (Raphael, Winter-Ebmer, 2001). Based on different research studies, the increase in youth unemployment rate is positively related to higher arrest rates of youth for robbery, burglary and larceny (Britt, 1994; Hagan, 1993). Active citizenship can therefore serve as a tool for involving these people in constructive contribution to community actions, fill the gap in their lives and engage them in volunteering where they gain new skills, experiences, personal and professional network that help their present and future employability (European Union, 2012).

According to Hoskins et al. (2012) there are two ways of youth participation and active citizenship: engagement in the decision-making process in a representative institution's

system at local, national and international level; and engagement in social society activities, such as actions taken in non-formal education. For every action taken, the aim is to make a change and influence society, which means that youth participation, cannot be considered as a single project or event, but as an approach or attitude in daily life that enables young people to become active citizens, through expressing opinions, being involved and being part of decision-making process (Council of Europe, 2010). The main pre-conditions for active citizenship are the presence of a democratic system, respect for fundamental human rights, freedom of expression and association and the rule of law (Huber, 2004).

This therefore implies that institutional protection of youth inclusion is one of the key factors in their active citizenship. Since 1980's, governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations have expressed growing interest in youth inclusion through several conventions, recommendations and programs. In 1989, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child protected children's right to express their views and have them taken into account on all matters that affect them. The UN Conference on Environment and Development's Agenda 21 Declaration (Rio Declaration) (1992) required the youth to participate actively in all the relevant levels of the decision-making processes. In 1995, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership emphasized the importance of Barcelona Declaration and its focus on the education and training of young people, their contribution to civil society and the importance of encouraging contacts and exchanges between young people. The Recommendations 1286 and R (97)3 by Council of Europe from 1996-1997, establish the status of young people as individuals with particular rights and recommends their active participation in decision-making process. The Resolution of the EU from 1998 recognizes youth participation as an essential challenge in forming society in Europe and states that young people should be given wider opportunities for participation through youth organizations and associations. The White Paper of the European Union on Youth from 2001, developed in collaboration with young people, presents participation as one of the priorities for youth politics in the EU.

Following with 2003-2004 EU Youth Programme that supports local networks of youth participation projects and international networks of local youth participation projects and 2006 EU Youth Action that makes youth participation a major criterion by which a project might be judged support-worthy. In 2003, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

of the Council of Europe's Revised Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life states that the active citizenship is about having the right, the means, the space, opportunity and support to participate and influence decisions and engage in building better society. In 2008, it was added that the active participation of young people in the political and social life of a region and municipality is a fundamental factor in the overall development of democratic institutions and essential contribution to social cohesion (Council of Europe, 2010).

One of the most important recent examples of institutional support for young people active citizenship and involvement in decision making process is the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (UNSCR 2250), emphasizing that: "Recognizing the important and positive contribution of youth in efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security..." and "Affirming the important role youth can play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and as a key aspect of the sustainability, inclusiveness and success of peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts" (United Nations, 2015). In the future, the empowerment and recognition of young people, their initiatives and networks at the local level has to be supported through increased investment – as Ms. Federica Mogherini EU High Representative / Vice-President commented in line with the proposal of double funding for Erasmus Program at the closing session on Conference on "Youth, Peace and Security" on 24. May 2018 in Brussels. Youth movements have high potential and very important role in accessing more isolated young people, vulnerable and exposed part of the society. For the recognition of these efforts and results in conflict prevention and sustaining peace, youth organizations should be involved in high-level decision-making processes (EEAS, 2018). To make sure about the political and financial support towards these goals, the EU budget 2019 – focusing on the young, innovation and migration – has been approved in December, 2018. For next year's budget, better support for students and researchers is secured by €490 million more for Erasmus+ and €150 million more for research programmes, and additional funds allocated for tackling migration and youth unemployment (European Parliament, 2018). Having the EU and the United Nations on board, including multilateral relations of major organizations for youth empowerment and recognition for preventing/countering violent extremism, marginalization which begins with engagement in civil society actions etc., serve as a significant evidence of active participation and citizenship involvement to this research.

In line with the above-mentioned theories, practices and potential preventive mechanisms, the European Social Survey (2016) and the remarks of Messing and Ságvári, (2018) summarize the factors that increase or decrease the chance of having extreme intolerance, hostile perception on migration and people with different cultural background. The following table presents the most important factors that affect such attitudes.

INCREASE the extreme negative perception	DECREASE the extreme negative perception
Less advanced education	Tertiary level education
Low level of interpersonal trust	High level of trust
Importance of security-focused personal values	Importance on humanitarian personal values
Political alienation: no influence on politics at all	Active citizenship
Resident of a small town or village	Resident of a city or capital
Older age	Younger age
Having serious financial difficulties	Feeling happy, having active social life
Lack of personal experience with foreigners	Having foreign born ancestry

Table 1. Factors that Increase and Decrease the Level of Extreme Intolerance (European Social Survey, 2016; Messing, Ságvári, 2018).

The listed factors relate to the previously discussed role of education, personal values – as cultural background, the importance of active citizenship vs. political alienation. To unlock the potential of youth, the lower age appears as decreasing factor, counting on the flexibility and ambitions of the generation. Financial issues – crises trigger nationalism (Augoustinos, Reynolds, 2001) as stated in the introduction, which is linked to increasing factors as well. The lack of personal intercultural and personal experience with foreigners, are connected with strong negative emotions towards multicultural values and migration, especially among people who lack the feeling of safety and control (Messing, Ságvári, 2018).

In order to compensate most of the factors that have high potential to develop extreme negative perception, this research proposes international mobility experience as conflict preventive mechanism.

1.4.4   General Outlook on International Student Mobility

"Travelling is an act of humbleness. He who is convinced he knows everything prefers not to move. Travels bewilder our certainties; show how little we know, and how much we have to learn." (Severgnini, 2005)

Travelling for education is highly supported by the well-known Erasmus Programme (European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students), that is the most successful student exchange programme of the European Union. It has been

established in 1987 in order to increase the intercultural competencies and the better understanding among various nations (Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017). "Students rebuild their social circles abroad, from perceived similarities and differences, which goes hand in hand with the (re-)definition of group boundaries." (Van Mol, 2014a) The program helps students to study outside their own country, where they can learn about other cultures and practice social integration, languages, develop new relations and friendships without borders that may help them in their future either on a professional or personal level. According to Krzaklewska and Krupnik (2008), these friendships and collaborations last much longer than the period spent at abroad as 91% of the students stayed in touch with their international network, more than half of them with at least five friends. This implies that mostly sharing news online, keeping each other updated about their life, but one third of the Erasmus students have visited their (former) mates after the end of the exchange period. Based on the successful and valuable outcomes, mobility budgets tend to grow and fund more international opportunities in order to support skill development and cultural awareness, contribute to more competitive labour market in the globalising business world (Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017).

Considering the European grants for international student mobility, opportunities are expanding, as the Erasmus+ Programme is not limited to the European Union Member States or the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). After the Tempus Programme, the new Erasmus+ Credit Mobility Program became available for non-EU universities, academic staff and students as well as the EEA Grants and Norway Grants, further state supported scholarships such as the Stipendium Hungaricum or the DAAD in Germany (Lazányi, Holicza, Baimakova, 2017).

Unlike the international full-degree mobility, the availability of funded short-term (non-degree) mobility programs is quite recent and still limited in the EU's surrounding area compared to the Member States, therefore the popularity and participation is relatively low (Ziyatdinova et al., 2018). The further development and effective implementation of the programs require measuring early-stage effects, how participants react on particular cultural impulses, main differences in attitudes between them and their peers who are graduating from the domestic education system without international experience (Holicza, 2018a). These mobility impact studies are missing from the scientific literature, especially in case of Albania and Russia, that are among the participating countries in this primary research.

2 Research Objectives, Hypotheses and Methodology

This chapter begins with the problem statement based on the conflicts explained previously, then presents the proposed tool for potential solution, elaborates on the research objectives and states the hypotheses. The second part of the chapter introduces the source of the collected quantitative data including its reliability (quality), the employed statistical methods and analyses.

2.1 Problem Statement – Direction of the Research

In the previous chapter the world's most pressing contemporary conflicts was introduced and discussed using the top-down approach from international level through European affairs to the perception and source of conflicts between groups and individuals. According to Samuel P. Huntington (1993), the biggest threat of Western civilization is the coming period that will be characterized by conflicts erupting as the world's civilizations reach their breaking points and the conflicts of the future will occur along fault lines separating civilizations. Europe and the (future) European Union member states are divided between Western Christianity, Orthodox Christianity and the Islam civilizations. Considering the past Balkan wars, the actual Ukrainian situation, the tense relationship between Russia and the NATO, the Turkish international relations, the Europe-wide rising nationalism as respond for the migration flow in parallel with the multiplying terrorist attacks, the Huntington theory seems to transform into practice.

The source of these conflicts can be identified on micro and personal level related to the feeling of intercultural threat, intolerance, anxiety and fear of (socio) economic disadvantages. As such it seems pertinent to propose international student mobility as a preventive mechanism and (partial) solution in which the EU invests, in an attempt at decreasing the levels of perceived conflict and support social cohesion (beside the educational purposes) (EU Regulation, 2013a).

According to the EU regulations, the objectives of the Erasmus programme (the most successful international student exchange program) shall be as follows: to create a sense and strengthen the spirit of European citizenship based on understanding and respect for human rights and democracy, and encouraging tolerance and respect for other peoples and cultures; to draw on the cultural heritage of each Member State; establish greater understanding and solidarity between the peoples; support the building up of knowledge skills and competences likely to foster active citizenship and employability that result in

greater social cohesion (EU Regulation, 1987, 1989, 1995, 2000, 2006). "Europe needs more cohesive and inclusive societies which allow its citizens to play an active role in democratic life. Education, training, youth work and sport are keys to promote common European values, foster social integration, enhance intercultural understanding and a sense of belonging to a community, and to prevent violent radicalisation. Erasmus+ is an effective instrument to promote the inclusion of people with disadvantaged backgrounds, including newly arrived migrants." (EU Regulation, 2013b)

Based on the official objectives of the programme, Erasmus clearly targets those areas and skills that would contribute to more cultural awareness, tolerance, and in this way less conflicts among its (former) participants. participants. This research is intended to measure the impact on participants and examine the effectiveness of the program from cultural perspective.

2.2 Research Objectives and Hypotheses

Most of the studies focus on international students' motivations, professional skill development, preference for destination, overall experience etc. This research intends to link conflict studies and Huntington's theory with the effects of international student mobility programs in order to find out what we can expect from the so-called Erasmus-generation, the future citizens and decision makers who have to live and deal with the consequences of today's happenings.

Considering the nationalist movements in politics and public opinion in view of the recent migration crises, the gravity of this issue has changed; it exceeds the inner relations of the fragmented Europe and its nation states. The comparative analyses between non-mobile and mobile (international) students who participated the Erasmus+, Erasmus+ Credit Mobility, Campus Mundi, CEEPUS, Tempus, Stipendium Hungaricum or other short-term international mobility programs provides the answer and make such expectations clear. The primary data sample has been collected throughout the European Higher Education Area and covers five countries' Western Christian, Orthodox Christian and the Islam civilizations according to Huntington's categorization.

The research objectives and hypotheses were formulated using a deductive framework based on the information gained through theoretical research, practical field-experience, observations and preliminary consultations. Connected to the relevant research objectives (O1-7), the outcomes of the seven hypotheses (H1-7) draw a complex picture on the

effects of mobility on the key areas that are related to the level of perceived conflicts. Together with the database and employed statistical methods, the following Figure 10 presents each of the research objective and assumption pairs.

| **O1**: To identify if international student mobility contributes to the reduction of perceived conflicts rooted in intolerance and cultural differences.	**H1**: International student mobility contributes to the reduction of perceived conflicts rooted in intolerance and cultural differences.	Quantitative data analysis ⬇ Descriptive & Inferential Statistics	Spearman correlation Cluster analysis Crosstabulation Phi and Cramer's V Mann-Whitney U
O2: To analyse post-mobility effects, such as openness to learn more about different cultures and participate in international programs again.	**H2**: Mobility makes participants eager to learn more about different cultures and participate in international programs again.	Quantitative data analysis ⬇ Descriptive & Inferential Statistics	Spearman correlation Mann-Whitney U
O3: To explore the different reactions on mobility experience among participating countries and cultures.	**H3**: The extent of the intercultural skills development after mobility is most influenced by the participants national culture.	Quantitative data analysis ⬇ Descriptive & Inferential Statistics	Structural Equation Modeling Mann-Whitney U Kruskal-Wallis Two-Way MANOVA
O4: To measure mobility participants' experience whether employability and integration into the working environment became easier.	**H4**: After mobility, the employability and integration into the working environment becomes easier.	Quantitative data analysis ⬇ Descriptive & Inferential Statistics	Spearman correlation Mann-Whitney U
O5: To determine the relationship between participating in international mobility and the promotion of active citizenship.	**H5**: International student mobility promotes active citizenship – participation in the social and political life of the community.	Quantitative data analysis ⬇ Descriptive & Inferential Statistics	Spearman correlation Mann-Whitney U

Figure 10: Research Objectives, Hypotheses and Statistical Methods Employed

The primary objective of this study is to examine if participation in international student mobility contributes to the reduction of perceived conflicts rooted in intolerance and cultural differences. According to the associated hypothesis (H1), there is a statistically significant difference between the cultural skills of non-mobile and mobile students. To test this assumption, the study employed quantitative data from a survey using various statistical techniques: The K-mean cluster analysis with cross tabulation and Phi and Cramer's V, which revealed statistically significant differences between the two target groups by the most important cultural competences. Taking into consideration the non-parametric properties of the data, the Spearman rank correlation and Mann-Whitney U test were employed to test the association as well as to confirm the findings of statistically significant differences between the particular variables.

The following research objectives are related to the socio-cultural aspect of conflicts and linked to the participation in international mobility as well. In the second objective of the study, the post-mobility effects were measured toward openness to learn more about different cultures and participate in similar international programmes again. The confirmatory data analysis was done by Mann-Whitney U test.

The third assumption of this study (H3) suggests that national culture has the highest impact on the change in cultural scores measured after mobility participation. Various univariate statistical techniques were employed to test the interaction of demographic variables such as nationality, gender, age with mobility participation and cultural skill development. Using structural equation modelling, background variables were ranked based on their strength of impact on increasing cultural scores. The Mann-Whitney U and

Kruskal Wallis tests confirmed the findings, while MANOVA tested the significance of interaction between the most relevant variables.

According the reviewed literature and secondary data introduced in the first chapter, youth (un)employment is a serious issue in several European countries - especially in Albania within the scope of this research. As it is one of the most significant drives of youth emigration and can be associated with the raise of criminal activities as well, it is crucial part of this research trough the Objective 4. The associated assumption is that mobility participation has a significant positive effect on youth employment (H4). Spearman correlation and Mann-Whitney U tests were used to analyse the related variables.

By employing the same statistical methods as H4 above, the association of mobility participation and active citizenship is identified under the Objective 5. The importance of raising the civic and political youth participation issue is inevitable based on the EU directives and in the times of the European Parliamentary elections in 2019. Accordingly, mobility participation has a significant positive effect on youth participation in the social and political life of the community.

With the sixth objective of this study, a novel approach was introduced to test the Huntington theory by focusing on the effects of cross-civilizational mobility. This is achieved by separating the sample based on the European civilizations belonging and tests their cultural skill development after mobility experience. The participants who travelled to another civilization for their mobility period, are expected to perform in the same positive manner as was measured on the intra-civilizational mobility sample (H6).

A contemporary issue, the emigration intention of youth was linked to mobility participation (as seen in O7). Similarly, Hypothesis 7 posits that participation in international mobility does not have an increasing impact on emigration intention. To test this assumption while accounting for the statistical properties of the data (nominal), the Pearson Chi-square test as well as the Phi and Cramer's V were used. With ordinal variables, the Spearman's rank presented the statistically significant relationships.

2.3 Primary Research Sample – Source of Data and Method of Collection

Two separate data samples are employed in the dissertation. The main primary data sample is to test hypotheses, then an additional research was conducted to define specific recommendations in line with the improvement of the mobility programs, their popularity

and participation. The source of data and the related projects for the recommendations are described in the section 2.3.2.

2.3.1 Primary Data for Hypothesis Testing

Among the research techniques, the study used the survey method through close structured questionnaires to obtain data from the two major target groups: non-mobile higher education students without international experience and mobile higher education students who participated in a short-term international learning mobility program such as Erasmus+. Based on the group differences and the data associations, the effect of mobility can be determined (Brandenburg et al., 2014). The survey was shared online in Hungarian (in Hungary), English (in Albania, Malta and Portugal) and Russian (in Russia) languages in order to get the highest possible number of responses and ease the proper filling in case of less advanced language skills. The three different Google Forms were active for approximately 2 months, from the 26th of June, 2018 to the 30th of August 2018.

The survey was adapted from the European Commission's EU Survey, the official (Erasmus+) Participant Report Form – Call 2017 – KA1 – Learning Mobility of Individuals – Student Mobility for Studies in Higher Education (Document code: EP-KA1-HE-Studies-2017) and augmented to suit to the research objectives of this study. The distributed questionnaire consisted of 15 questions which included questions relating to demography of research participants, future plans and orientations, a control question to identify and divide the two major target groups. The three matrix/rating scale questions was intended to gauge attitudes, values, and opinions on Likert scale – that is the most commonly used type of measurement tool in such cases.

The survey began by asking the respondents their demographic characteristics such as; gender, age, nationality, ongoing or highest completed degree program. This was accompanied by questions which focused on the future plans (employment, residence, participation in mobility) and finally, attitudinal self-assessment through three matrixes which represented three different categories in the following way. The first matrix rated the outcomes of higher education studies (domestic or international) along attitudinal, educational and cultural values. The second matrix measured the worth of studies on the labour market, the ease of getting a job or trainee position. The third matrix assessed those skills, where participants think that they need further development in order to succeed in their professional life in the future.

The study employed snowball sampling (also known as chain-referral sampling) method to reach a wider range of respondents including Hungarian and other foreign higher education institutions all over and even beyond Europe thanks to fellow researchers and international student organizations such as the Erasmus Student Network.

The 5 most represented countries have been included in the research which accounts for 1339 respondents in total. The less represented countries have been excluded from the analyses in order to provide more meaningful country specific research results. From the 50 countries of Europe (European Union, 2018), it means 10% representativity, while each of the European civilizations (Huntington, 1993) is represented: Western Christian: Hungary, Portugal, Malta; Orthodox Christian: Russia; Islamic: Albania (Islamic majority with considerable Orthodox Christian minority) (Fox, 2002).

The downloaded data sheets have been merged into one dataset, transformed and coded to a convenient computer-ready form. The coding techniques used are presented in Table 2 below. Apart from the first section that used scale and nominal measurement for age and multiple-choice questions, the matrixes had five (Likert scale) statements which was ranked from 1 to five as described below:

Answers	Value
No	0
Maybe	0,5
Yes	1
Missing data	111
Strongly agree	5
Rather agree	4
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Rather disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

Table 2: Rating Scale Used in the Survey

2.3.2 The Source of Data for Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the demands of the target group and other stakeholders of international mobility. The data was collected from several sources and contributed to different targeted projects and consultations on local, national and European levels to improve mobility participation, experience and impact where the researcher participated actively to arrive at the data collected. The processes are explained below:

1. Specific policy recommendations were drawn within the framework of the Erasmus+ Generation Declaration project of the European Commission. The data was collected using the online platform "Erasmus+ Generation Online Meeting Point" (EGOMP, 2017), where thousands of former Erasmus+ participants were actively debating the necessary changes of the Programme from 19.09.2017 to 31.10.2017. The appointed national discussion leaders organized, discussed and concluded the collected data, then formed into 30 concrete proposals that reflect the Erasmus+ Generation's vision and priorities for the future of the programme beyond 2020 (European Commission, 2017a).

   The results were presented in the European Parliament (30.11.2017. in Brussels, Belgium), published as The Erasmus+ Generational Declaration (Holicza et al., 2017; European Commission, 2017b) and embedded in the recommendations of the dissertation.

2. Online questionnaire was distributed and structured dialogue consultations were organized with the involvement of over 1000 participants: European higher education students who are experienced or interested in international mobility participation. The research was conducted with the direct involvement of the author, within the framework of the Erasmus Upgrade project of the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) and the Flemish National Agency for Youth in Action in 2017. The goal of the international project was to create a Manifesto, a document with clear objectives and recommendations for the future of student mobility and the Erasmus Programme (ESN, 2017).

   The results were presented on the Erasmus Upgrade Conference (6-12.10.2017. in Brussels, Belgium), published in the Manifesto (ESN, 2018) and embedded in the recommendations of the dissertation.

3. The online working group meetings (carried out in April, 2018) with the representatives of associations that are interested in the improvement of international mobility such as Erasmus Mundus Association, Erasmus Student Network, garagErasmus Foundation etc. contributed to several points of recommendations. The outcomes were introduced on the Erasmus: What's next? European States General 2018 organized by the Agenzia Nazionale Erasmus+ Indire on 09.05.2018 in Rome,

Italy, where 200 university students from all over Europe participated and voted on the best proposals (INDIRE, 2018).

2.4 Methodology of Data Analysis

The Cronbach Alpha was computed to measure the reliability and validity of the collected data. The alpha value thus refers to a reliability coefficient that identifies the degree to which items are correlated positively to one another measures the internal consistency of the instrument (Gliem, Gliem, 2003). Hence the nearer the Cronbach alpha is to 1, the better the internal consistency (Sekaran, 2003). The data is considered reliable and valid if the alpha value exceeds 0,7. In table 3 below, all the Cronbach Alpha coefficients are above 0.83 which indicates a good internal consistency for the variables under study.

Items	Values
Matrix 1.: Because of studying in my home/host country	
Average interitem covariance:	.3177927
Number of items in the scale:	14
Scale reliability coefficient (α):	**0.8786**
Matrix 2.: Thanks to my studies in the home/host country	
Average interitem covariance:	.6184283
Number of items in the scale:	4
Scale reliability coefficient (α):	**0.8329**
Matrix 3.: Fields where you think you need the most development for your future carrier	
Average interitem covariance:	.6156047
Number of items in the scale:	9
Scale reliability coefficient (α):	**0.8984**

Table 3: Results of the Data Quality Analyses (Cronbach's Alpha Test)

Univariate statistical methods were employed to examine the statistical properties of the variables such as demographic dataset: position indicators: mean, median, standard deviation, variance; the shape of the distribution: vertices, skewness. The descriptive statistics are extended with cluster analysis based on the reciprocal relationships of the most important conflict-preventive variables in the study.

In testing the hypothesis, several multivariate statistical methods were used to examine the relationship between the variables of interest. Since the Likert-scale variables are categorised as ordinal and do not satisfy the normality assumptions, non-parametric

techniques have been used (Sawilowsky, 2007). These include the Spearman rank correlation and Mann-Whitney U test, which are suitable alternative in examining differences between group means instead of T-test (Sawilowsky, 2007). The study also employed the Pearson Chi-square and by Phi and Cramer's V test in validating findings.

The tendency-based methods included cross-table analysis, variance analysis, and while in the case of more dependent variables, multivariate variance analysis: Two-Way MANOVA test and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) have been employed in uniformly testing all postulated assumptions. This was done to determine which variables/areas international mobility contributed to the most. Partial Least Square approach to SEM was chosen specifically for this research because of its explanatory features, ability to comprehensively test models statistically as well as the fact that it tests each hypothetical assumption at the same time (Cheng, 2001). It also visually analyses the links between variables often referred to as latent variables (Chin, 1998; Haenlein, Kaplan, 2004; Wong, 2013). The composite reliability was applied to measure the validity in this Partial Least Squares-based research (Garson, 2016), where the value varies from 0 to 1. According to Chin (1998), an exploratory model should have a value of at least 0,6 while the equal or greater than 0,7 fall to the confirmatory category. Values greater than or equals to 0,8 are considered as highly reliable confirmatory research (Henseler, Ringle, Sarstedt, 2012). According to Chin (1998), an exploratory model should have a value of at least 0,6 while the equal or greater than 0,7 fall to the confirmatory category. Values greater than or equals to 0,8 are considered as highly reliable confirmatory research (Henseler, Ringle, Sarstedt, 2012).

The quantitative research data has been processed by Microsoft Excel, IBM SPSS Statistics 20 and SmartPLS 3 software.

3 Descriptive Analysis of the Data

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected in an attempt at answering the research hypotheses. The first two sections present the descriptive statistics to explain the sample and to characterize the two major groups of participants. The comparative mean value analysis presents the difference (%) of the non-mobile and mobile groups measured on five-point Likert scale in three matrixes. Finally, the K-Means Cluster Analysis identifies the role of the two main target groups in the change of the most important inter-cultural variables.

3.1 Demography of Respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the data. All invalid or incomplete responses as well as the countries with minimal representation have been excluded from the dataset. The final dataset therefore is made up of 1339 responses from five countries to include: 603 responses from Hungary, 316 from Russian Federation, 254 from Portugal, 105 from Albania and 61 from Malta respectively. The survey was distributed among Hungarian participants in Hungarian language, among Russian participants in Russian language, and in English language among Portuguese, Albanian and Maltese participants. Figure 11 below represents the distribution of responses expressed in percentages.
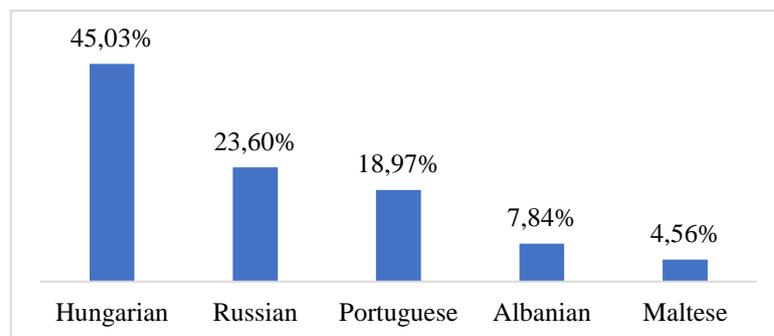
Figure 11: The Distribution of Survey Respondents (%)

The two major target groups include; 657 non-mobile students (49,07%) i.e. without international experience and 682 mobile students (50,96%) who have participated in a short-term international mobility program such as Erasmus+. The country-specific ratios are presented in Table 4 below. Some imbalances are visible between the groups: the mobile group is significantly smaller in Russia, Albania and Malta as compared to Hungary and Portugal where the ratio of mobile students is higher. 42,94% of the respondents were male and 56,83% were female. 0,22% preferred not to state their

gender. The average age of the survey participants is 24,6 years with a standard deviation of 5 and median: 24.

Participating countries		Non-mobile	Mobile
Hungarian (HU)	Count	261	342
	% within HU	43,3%	56,7%
Russian (RU)	Count	246	70
	% within RU	77,8%	22,2%
Portuguese (PT)	Count	22	232
	% within PT	8,7%	91,3%
Albanian (AL)	Count	84	21
	% within AL	80,0%	20,0%
Maltese (MT)	Count	44	17
	% within MT	72,1%	27,9%
Total	Count	657	682
	% of Total	49,1%	50,9%

Table 4: The Ratio of Non-mobile and Mobile Students in the Participating Countries

Majority of the respondents were students who had B.Sc. as their highest degree. This represented 63,6% of the sample. M.Sc. students were the second most represented with 28,45%. The participation of vocational students was 4,33%, and Ph.D. students represented 3, 66% of the sample of respondents.

3.2 Future Plans – Emigration and Intention to Participate in Mobility

The findings from the survey revealed that 72,6% of the students plan to live at home while 27,4% want to move abroad. Considering the two different groups divided by mobility experience, Figure 12 below shows that non-mobile students are more interested in leaving their home county, while majority of experienced students plan to return and live in their home country. The ratio in favour of emigration is approximately 50% lower in the mobile group which invariably implies less willingness to live abroad at 13,4%. Explanations for these findings can be attributed to realistic foreign experiences the mobile group faced, such as the differences between home and host country, being out of the comfort zone and so-called "mama-hotel", administrative difficulties etc. (Malovics et al., 2015). Their unexperienced peers do not have basis for comparison, (practically) they are not aware of these issues and challenges, therefore it is easier to imagine themselves abroad, where everything seems to be more convenient, especially through the representation from (social) media (Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017).
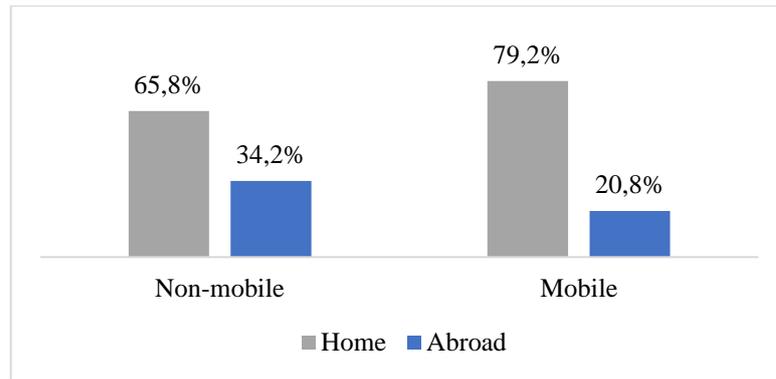
Figure 12: Future Living Plans – Comparison by Mobility Experience

At Hypothesis 7, additional measurements such as Chi-Square Test have been employed to analyse data associations and further determinants of emigration plans. The country comparison as presented in Figure 13 shows that within the countries, the Hungarian respondents had the highest percentage (84,2%) in favour of staying in their home country. The Maltese and Portuguese youth were more opened to foreign life. However, approximately two-third of them had no intentions of moving abroad. The 42,7% of the Russian respondents indicated interest in long-term future plans abroad where they expect better living conditions – which is in line with the secondary data introduced in the first chapter. Similarly, more than half (52,3%) of the Albanian respondents had intentions of living abroad, which in light of the country's candidacy for EU membership, may cause serious (economic) migration flow in the future.
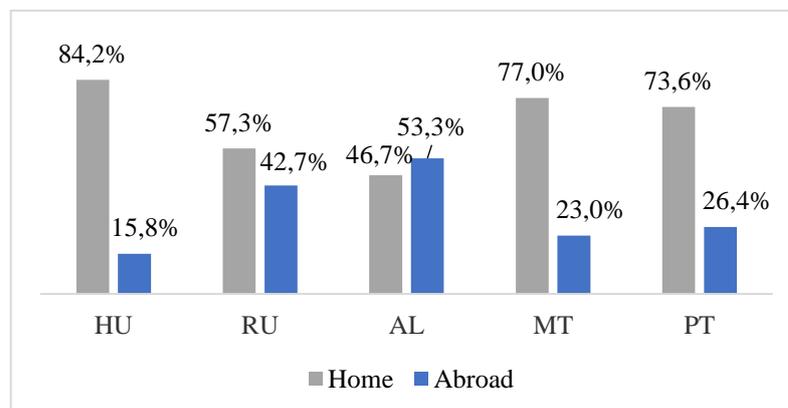
Figure 13: Future Living Plans – Country Comparison

With the intention to participate in international mobility programs, 41,3% were uncertain, 32,3% were not interested, while 26,4% highlighted plans to participate. It shows much higher ratio for uncertainty and lower for rejection among students, than in the Eurobarometer (2017) survey. Also, for intentions to live in a foreign country, age had a negative and significant relationship (r= -.313, p< ,001). This implies that as

participants grew older, their interests to live abroad decreased. Mobility experience is associated with further interest and openness towards mobility (r= ,317**, p< ,001) as well as active citizenship and following European, global news regularly. According to the correlation table, more advanced skills and openness towards international topics show significant and positive association with the intention to participate in international mobility in the future.

Similarly, majority (77,8%) of respondents (total sample) confirmed that they could gain extra knowledge and new skills through mobility. 15,6% were uncertain about the positive effects and about 6,6% did not think that mobility could contribute to their personal and professional development. The crosstabulation shows that the mobile group responded more positively, based on their experience and were convinced about benefits accrued to participating in mobility. The significance of the correlation test further confirmed the positive relation between these variables (r = ,157**, p< ,001). Different nationals performed nearly the same ratios in each category, except in the one, where the Albanian group shows approximately 10% higher uncertainty than the group average. 28,6% of them were unsure as they ticked "maybe" which implies that that they were less convinced about the use of mobility than any other nationals.

3.3 Comparative Mean Value Analyses – Effects of Mobility on Different Nationals
The overall satisfaction of the survey participants was expressed with the mean of the Likert scale values similarly to EU studies such as the Erasmus Mundus Graduate Impact Survey, the Erasmus impact study of the Slovenian National Agency amongst others (Erasmus Mundus, 2015; Klemenčič, Flander, Žagar, 2013). Therefore, the effects of mobility in this chapter were measured using the comparison of means test.

The respondents were divided into non-mobile and mobile groups and ranked from 1 to 5 in the following skills and attitudes (variables). The mean values of each variable were counted and compared between the two groups, where table 4 presents the occurred changes (%) after mobility period per country. The first section includes the skill and attitude related variables, while the employment related ones belong to the second section. The "international average" column indicates the result on the total sample. Positive values imply positive reactions and more advanced skills, negative values mean decreased, negative experience or opinion, less trust or confidence. Table 5 below presents the changes of skill and attitude related variables based on the average scores of

the first matrix. Increase in self-confidence and adoptability were the most significant, resulting in the greatest progress on the international (total) sample by 7,1%.

Variables	Mean value changes (%)					
	HU	RU	AL	MT	PT	International average
Skills and attitudes						
I am confident and convinced of my abilities	15,6	7,5	3,3	3,9	5,2	7,1
I know my strengths and weaknesses	7,7	0,2	1,2	5,6	7,8	4,5
I am able to adapt to and act in new situations	11,6	2,5	1,7	12,2	7,8	7,1
I am able to think and analyse information critically	5,4	-3,8	-1,2	4,4	1,3	1,2
I am tolerant towards other persons' values and behaviour	8,3	0,6	2,4	6,9	0,4	3,7
I am open-minded and curious about new challenges	7,7	-0,9	-1,9	9,5	9,0	4,7
I intend to participate actively in social and political life of my community	3,0	5,2	3,1	16,2	5,5	6,6
I am interested in knowing what happens in the world daily	8,4	4,3	-5,2	2,2	-0,1	1,9
I am able to reach decisions	-4,6	-1,1	-2,6	5,7	-5,6	-1,6
I am able to cooperate with people from other backgrounds and cultures	6,5	2,8	2,9	-3,2	-0,7	1,7
I am interested in European topics	4,9	4,5	4,8	9,9	-0,8	4,6
I feel European	-2,4	4,3	4,8	7,0	-4,7	1,8
I am aware of social and political concepts like democracy, justice, equality, citizenship, civil rights	-10,2	-3,3	5,2	3,9	-8,7	-2,6
I have increased my sector- or field-specific skills	-1,7	1,6	0,0	5,1	-6,6	-0,3
Average difference	4,3	1,7	1,3	6,4	0,7	2,9

Table 5: The Change of Mean Values After Mobility (%): Skills and Attitudes

In a more detailed breakdown, the highest confidence increase (15,6%) was measured among Hungarians, and 12,2% higher adoptability skills on the Maltese sample, the foreign experience contributed to their abilities and self-esteem. Mobility also promotes active participation in social and political life of the community, especially in Malta, where the mean value increased with 16,2%, which was much higher than among other nationals (at 3-5%). The interest in European affairs increased in most countries, except on the Portuguese sample. Russians, Albanian and especially Maltese international

students feel more European after mobility, but the Hungarian and Portuguese values decreased slightly. Interestingly, most of the participants (except the Maltese) reported lower decision-making skills after mobility (variable: I am able to reach decisions) where the correlation test shows significant negative links (r = -,154**, p< ,001). Students seem to lose confidence in their knowledge about social and political concepts such as democracy, justice, equality, citizenship, civil rights abroad, where only the Albanian and Maltese values increased. This did not however, change the negative correlation on the total sample (r = -,223**, p< ,001). In the Maltese sample, the sector-specific skill development did not show improvement, the possible explanations might be attributed to the type of mobility in this research. The learning mobility for studies is less practical and profession oriented than a foreign traineeship – which would result in different trends most probably.

Comparing country-specific results on each variable of Table 6, the highest positive change, 10,1% was measured on Russian participants. They consider mobility the most helpful to increase their advantage on the labour market and have better chance for a new or more advanced position.

Variables	Mean value changes (%)					
	HU	RU	AL	MT	PT	International average
Labour market implications, employability						
My chances to get a new or better job have increased	7,3	12,3	-7,6	0,7	10,6	4,7
I have a clearer idea about my professional career aspirations and goals	0,1	11,1	1,2	3,6	0,5	3,3
I have good opportunities for traineeships or student jobs	5,4	11,6	-0,5	0,5	9,8	5,4
I am capable of taking over work tasks with high responsibility	1,5	5,5	0,5	5,2	5,0	3,5
Average difference	3,6	10,1	-1,6	2,5	6,5	4,2

Table 6: The Change of Mean Values After Mobility (%): Employability

International experience must be very much appreciated on the Russian labour market as they performed the best results in the whole section: 11,6% increase of traineeship opportunities, much clearer idea about professional and career goals (11,1%) and capability of taking over high responsibility tasks (5,5%). Notable result within the section is the zero-percentage change in career aspirations of the Hungarian group, but more interesting is the negative change among Albanian students at the job (-7,6%) and

traineeship (-0,5%) variables: they don't think that their international education helps them to get a job. Considering their high ambitions to leaving the country, their number one issue as a non-EU country is most probably having the resident and work permit, not the higher education degree. As the average Albanian mean value change in this section is negative, they are the exception, where mobility does not seem to improve the situation presented on the Employment and Opportunity indicator of YDI (Figure 5).

In Table 7 the mean values have been evaluated with different logic as these values refer to skills requiring further improvement for future career success. Therefore, higher values mean that participants discovered certain skill shortages during mobility and they are ambitious to develop themselves on the respective areas in order to succeed in their professional life. Smaller values and negative differences after mobility experience mean less skill shortages which can be the positive effect of mobility or higher self-confidence and on the other hand, less ambition to improve more.

Variables	Mean value changes (%)					
	HU	RU	AL	MT	PT	International average
In order to succeed in my future career…						
I need to improve my analytical skills	12,5	-8,2	-4,3	-5,9	8,3	0,5
I need to improve my problem-solving skills	17,9	-4,4	-6,9	-1,2	8,5	2,8
I need to perform better in individual learning activities	16,9	-2,3	3,1	0,6	12,2	6,1
I need to improve my IT and social media skills	18,2	-4,3	0,5	0,8	16,9	6,4
I have to work more on the practical application of my ideas	7,8	-2,3	-5,5	-1,9	3,0	0,2
I need to see the value of different cultures, improve cultural skills	25,6	9,3	3,3	1,9	25,7	13,2
I need to plan and organise my tasks more efficiently	16,0	-3,6	1,7	-3,9	10,7	4,2
I need to be more co-operative (teamwork)	12,8	-1,9	-9,0	-2,1	3,5	0,6
I need to express myself more creatively	11,5	2,0	6,2	1,6	6,2	5,5
Average difference	15,5	-1,8	-1,2	-1,1	10,6	4,4

Table 7: The Change of Mean Values After Mobility (%): Further Need for Improvement

The highest positive changes in mean values are performed by the Portuguese (25,7%) and Hungarians (25,6%), they consider further improvement in cultural skills the most important after mobility. They are still eager to learn more, mobility experience made

them realize it as a crucial condition for future career success. Russian respondents performed nearly 9,3% positive change, while Albanians and Maltese are the most satisfied with their current stage of development. This variable shows the highest average value on international level in the Table 7., it means that among all fields of further self-development, the cultural factor is the most crucial. It is followed by the IT skill which is not a surprise in the digital age, especially considering the lifestyle and priorities of this generation (Holicza, Kadena, 2018). In this field, Hungarian and Portuguese students are engaged in further improvement, the rest of the nationals consider their skills advanced enough.

Extreme values in the positive range are visible in the Hungarian and Portuguese columns, where the average change is 15,5 % (HU) and 10,6 % (PT). Respondents from these countries think that they still need extra efforts towards a successful career, while most of the Russian, Albanian and Maltese values are negative, which means, they consider their skills competitive enough on the (national) labour market. Russians with international experience are much more convinced about their analytical skills, they rated the need for this skill 8,2% less important than before mobility. The second highest change on the negative value range was the problem-solving skills of Albanians, the mobility experience and its challenges trained them well, therefore they consider it less important field for further self-development by 6,9%. The average difference after mobility at the Russian-Albanian-Maltese group is similarly small, except the analytical, problem-solving and the cultural variables, where foreign experience has more significant effect. The average change in the international sample is positive, 4,4 % think that further self-development is necessary for future career success.

In tables 5, 6 and 7 the changes after mobility experience through variables measuring skills and attitudes, employability and areas for future self-development have been presented. The highest positive effect has been measured on the participants' confidence, ability to act in new situations, openness and interest towards international topics and different cultures, employability, ambitions to improve analytical and IT skills. Considering skills and attitudes, foreign experiences contributed the most to the development of Maltese and Hungarian participants. Employability-wise, the Russians benefited the most and Albanians the least. Hungarians and Portuguese are eager to improve much more, while the rest of the nationals consider themselves advanced enough to succeed in the future professionally. Such significant differences between the

participating countries provide base for Hypothesis 3, where the dependency of skills development is tested on demographic variables after mobility.

3.4 K-Means Cluster Analysis

K-means is a method used to cluster large data sets into pre-defined number of groups. This is a suitable classification technique based on binary categorical data (Werrij, Kaptein, 2016) and performs well in testing ordinal variables (Ruff, 2014). In this study mobility participation is the binary categorical data where the ordinal variables – e.g. tolerance and intercultural cooperation are the focus of this research.

The cases of four cultural skill and attitude related variables have been classified into two clusters where the label case is the binary mobility participation. After the presentation of cluster centres, the Spearman and Cramer's V test the association between the variables of participation and cluster membership. As evidenced in Figure 14 below, each case has been divided into two clusters: Cluster 1: represents high(er) level of skills and attitudes on adaptability, tolerance, intercultural cooperation and intention to learn more about different cultures to succeed in professional life; and Cluster 2: includes the cases with lower values.
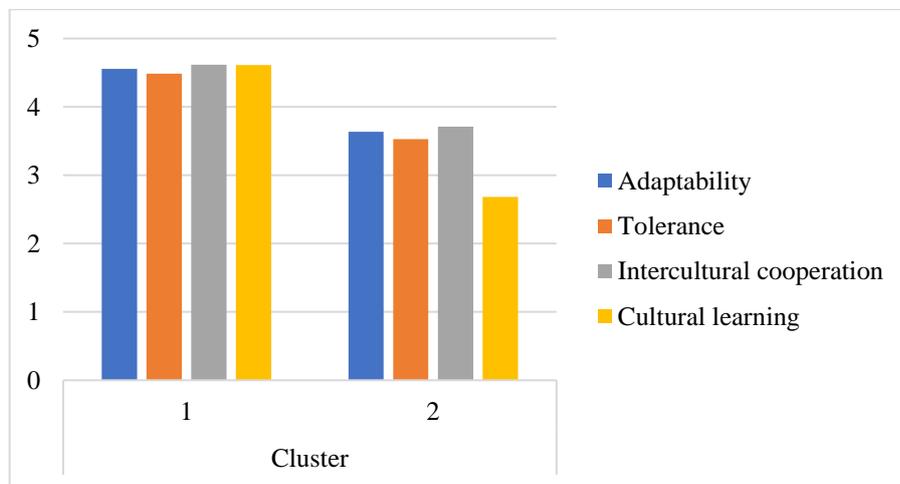
Figure 14: K-Means Cluster Analysis: Final Cluster Centres

The cluster membership of the cases provides further information to identify whether Cluster 1 represents the mobile students with higher values and Cluster 2 the non-mobile students. Crosstabulation on the mobility participation and cluster membership variables resulted in the following ratios presented on Figure 15 below. The cluster membership of each case is presented on the non-mobile and mobile sample. According to the distribution, the non-mobile sample has nearly equal, 54,9% - 45,1% ratio in the cases'

clusters membership. On the other hand, the mobile sample depicts a different image, as 83,3% of its cases belong to Cluster 1, which has more advanced skills and higher values on cultural variables. Only the 16,7% of the cases represent Cluster 2.
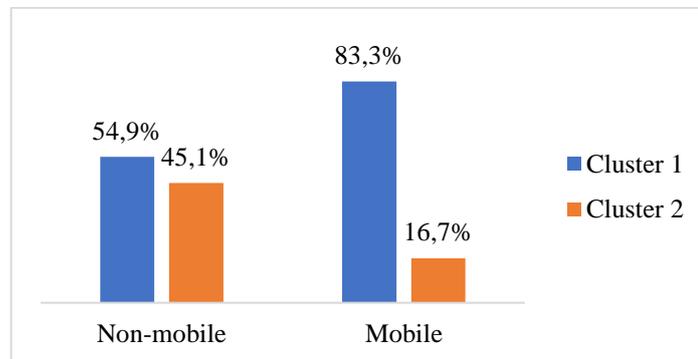
Figure 15: Crosstabulation on Cluster Memberships

The difference is considerable within the mobile group and between the two samples. Phi coefficient expresses the association between the nominal variables: in this case the mobility participation and cluster membership. As shown in Table 8 below, the relationship between these variables are negatively significant (Phi= -,307, p<, 001). This implies that increased participation correlates with the decrease in cluster membership value. As such, international student mobility participants have higher cultural skills and have more tolerant attitude towards people from different backgrounds.

Tests		Value	Asymp. Std. Error	Approx. T	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	-,307			,000
	Cramer's V	,307			,000
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	-,307	,025	-11,810	,000
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	-,307	,025	-11,810	,000

Table 8: Association of Mobility Participation and Cluster Memberships

According to the findings, mobility participation significantly contributes to higher adaptability skills, cultural acceptance, skills and the will to cooperate with people from different socio-cultural background. Mobile students have discovered the need of cultural learning for (present and) future professional successes and they value cultural differences more than their non-mobile peers – which results highly contribute to the confirmation of H1 and H2.

4 Research Results Related to the Hypotheses

This chapter elaborates on the data results and discusses them by assessing their significance towards the research objectives and hypotheses of the study and towards the already established theoretical knowledge in the field, as discussed in the previous chapters. The main goals of this study were to identify the contribution of international student mobility to conflict-preventing attitudes and behaviour.

4.1 Hypothesis 1: International student mobility contributes to the reduction of perceived conflicts rooted in intolerance and cultural differences.

The following variables were selected to test Hypothesis 1: adaptation skills, tolerance, ability for intercultural cooperation, intention to improve in cultural skills and understanding. The descriptive statistics provided a good base to express the differences between the two target groups on the mentioned fields. As described in the section 1.4.2., mobility generated the highest mean value difference $(13,2\%)$ on the intention to improve cultural skills, which is presented on the Figure 16 in a different setting.
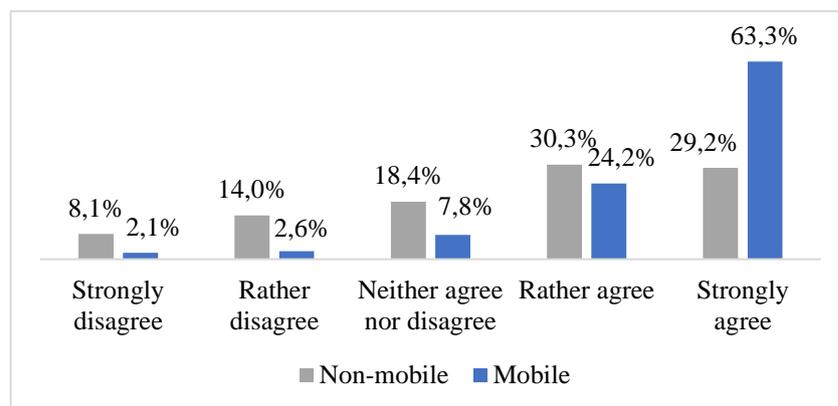
Figure 16: "I need to see the value of different cultures and improve my cultural skills"

In comparison to the non-mobiles, twice as many mobile students agreed strongly, that they needed to see the value of different cultures and improve their skills in order to succeed in the future. Adaptation skills show improvement after mobility as well, the difference on the "strongly agree" scale is +22,2 percentage points, while the mean value of the variable has changed by +6,8%. The tolerance and intercultural cooperation variables showed smaller, but positive changes on the total sample. The K-means Cluster Analysis provided further evidence about the more advanced cultural skills and cooperative attitude of the mobile team as well.

Considering the data associations among these variables, according to the Spearman Correlation test, mobility participation has significant relationship with increasing

adaption skills, tolerance, intercultural cooperation and the intention to improve cultural skills (Table 9).

Variables	Participation in mobility	
	Spearman Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Adaptability	,245**	,000
Tolerance	,070**	,010
Intercultural cooperation	,078**	,004
Cultural learning	,379**	,000

Table 9: Spearman Correlation Table of Hypothesis 1

In line with the previous findings, the correlation is the strongest between the mobility participation and improvement of cultural skills (r= ,379**, p< ,001), secondly the adaptation skills, and weaker but significant association has been measured towards higher tolerance and intercultural cooperation. Further investigating the data, Mann-Whitney U test is employed for estimating the effect of mobility on each variable (Table 10).

Variables		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)
Adaptability	Non-mobile	657	581,54	382068,5	165915,5	382068,5	-8,98	,000
	Mobile	682	755,22	515061,5				
Tolerance	Non-mobile	657	644,43	423392	207239	423392	-2,567	,010
	Mobile	682	694,63	473738				
Intercultural cooperation	Non-mobile	657	642,25	421956	205803	421956	-2,858	,004
	Mobile	682	696,74	475174				
Cultural learning	Non-mobile	657	530,48	348523	132370	348523	-13,847	,000
	Mobile	682	804,41	548607				

Table 10: Mann-Whitney U Test on Hypothesis 1

From this data, it can be concluded that students have significantly higher values on each variable after mobility. The mobile group has higher mean ranks and statistical significance on the adoptability in new situations, higher tolerance level towards people from different cultures and backgrounds, developed intercultural cooperation skills and motivation to value and learn more about different cultures.

Based on the significant differences, this research rejects the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis.

Thesis 1: The participation in international student mobility contributes to the reduction of perceived conflicts and cultural clashes.

Published in: Holicza, 2018a; Holicza, Pásztor, 2018; Lazányi, Holicza, 2019

The research results comply with the writings of Van Roey and Eyckmans (2016) who found that students become more empathetic towards others from different cultural backgrounds, that helps to maintain a feeling of well-being (Reygaerts, 2017) and become more effective leader in the professional context (Deng, Gibson, 2009; Ismail, Reza, Mahdi, 2012). Some studies also suggest that culturally intelligent people are more likely to form cooperative relationships, they are more flexible and agreeable (Groves, Feyerherm, Gu, 2015). Erasmus Program participants performed significant increase on all factors of cultural intelligence and behavioural skills (Gökten, Emil, 2018), they have the ability to adapt their verbal and non-verbal behaviour according to the local cultural or multicultural requirements (King, Findlay, Ahrens, 2010). Participation in international mobility carries the potential to question and reflect upon prejudices and stereotypes that fosters a decrease of preconceptions when it comes to people from other nations and cultures (Noorderhaven, Halman, 2003).

4.2 Hypothesis 2: Mobility makes participants eager to learn more about different cultures and participate in international programs again.

According to the descriptive statistics, internationally experienced students are more opened for further participation in mobility programmes. The 45,5% of the non-mobile group answered "no" for the interest in participation, while only the 19,5% of their mobile peers would not join again. The ratio of the uncertain ones is nearly equal, but the ones who answered "yes", show great differences with 15,1% vs. 37,4% non-mobile – mobile ratio. Mobile students are more eager to learn about other cultures and accept different values as the 63,3% of them strongly agree with its necessity, while less than half of the non-mobile students (29,2%) agreed on the same. Data associations are in line with these findings (Table 11), mobility experience positively and significantly correlates to further participation (r = ,317**, p< ,001) as well as to the learning outcomes – the professional worth of mobility (r = ,157**, p< ,001) and the intention to learn more and improve cultural skills (r = ,379**, p< ,001).

Variables	Participation in mobility	
	Spearman Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Further participation	,317**	,000
Extra knowledge & skills gained	,157**	,000
Cultural learning	,379**	,000

Table 11: Spearman Correlation Table of Hypothesis 2

Further investigating the data associations, Mann-Whitney U test is employed (Table 12). The statistically significant results prove that the mobile group of students has higher values on the three variables to test Hypothesis 2.

Variables		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)
Further participation	Non-mobile	657	553,20	363452,00	147299,00	363452,00	-11,58	0,00
	Mobile	682	782,52	533678,00				
Extra knowledge & skills	Non-mobile	657	625,31	410827,50	194674,50	410827,50	-5,73	0,00
	Mobile	682	713,05	486302,50				
Cultural learning	Non-mobile	657	530,48	348523,00	132370,00	348523,00	-13,85	0,00
	Mobile	682	804,41	548607,00				

Table 12: Mann-Whitney U Test on Hypothesis 2

It implies that international mobility has a positive effect on further participation in the program, moreover they believe that it gives them the potential to acquire extra knowledge and skills that they could not gain in their home country (Holicza, 2018a). Mobile students have significantly higher mean ranks for further cultural learning as well; they value more and engage in learning about different cultures. Based on the statistical results, this research rejects the null hypothesis and prove the alternate hypothesis.

Thesis 2: International student mobility makes participants eager to learn more about different cultures and participate in international programs again.

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This result is in accordance with the qualitative impact study of the European Commission (2014) which showed that regardless of the country of origin and the type mobility students participated in, they remained enthusiastic supporters and promoters of (Erasmus) mobility.

4.3 Hypothesis 3: The extent of the intercultural skills development after mobility is most influenced by the participants national culture.

In testing hypothesis 3, which is based on the notion that the cultural impact of international student mobility experience mostly depends on the nationality of participants, the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) technique was employed. To achieve this, the study measured the relationship between the background variables and cultural skills. The degree of impact is organised into order of ranking based on their beta

coefficients. The results of the analysis are presented in Figure 17 below which shows that in addition to participation in mobility, the model also controlled for nationality – cultural background, gender, age and emigration intention from the home country. Based on the composite reliability test, the values of the latent variables are confirmatory and highly reliable (0,788 to 1) (Chin, 1998).
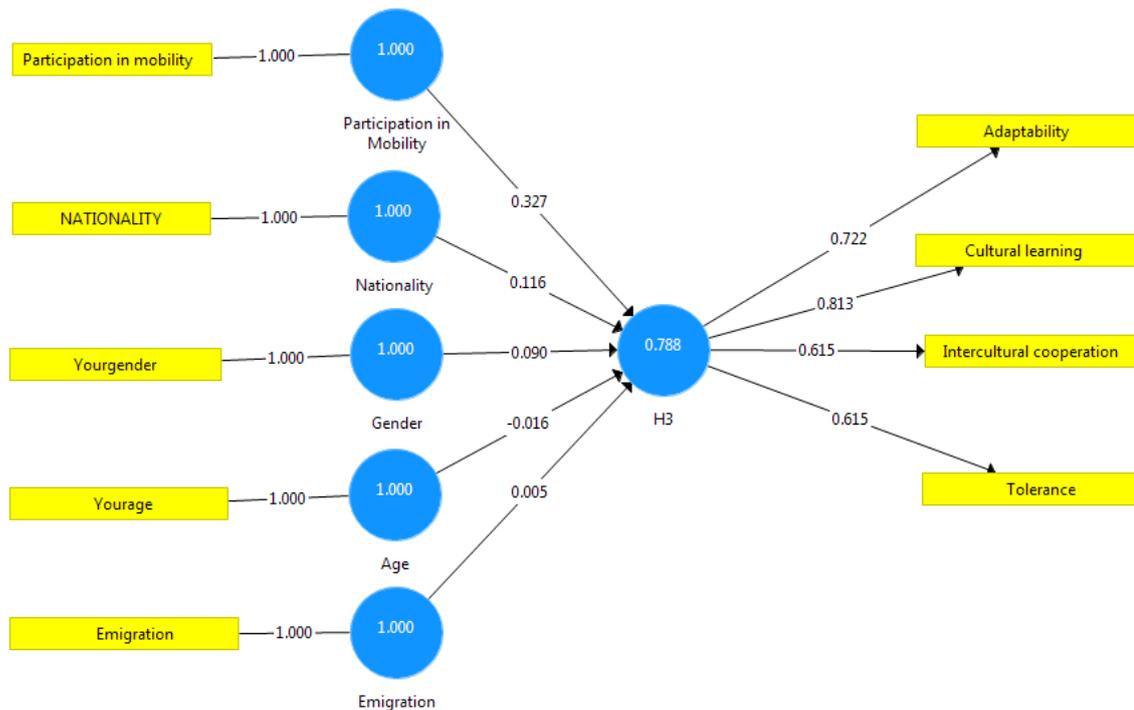

Figure 17: Structural Equation Model of Hypothesis 3

The path coefficient was used to examine the links between the estimated variables in the structural model as presented. A positive coefficient means that a unit increase in the explanatory variable leads to a direct increase in the structure of dependent variables it projects to (Bollen, 1989). The effect size is proportional to the size of the coefficient (McIntosh, Gonzalez-Lima, 1994). If the coefficient is negative, it means that the explanatory variable has a direct decreasing effect on the dependent variable.

Mobility participation had the strongest effect on the 4 cultural variables with a beta coefficient (β= 0,327) and corroborates the findings in Hypothesis 1. The second strongest path coefficient was measured on the nationality-variable (β= 0,116). This finding proves that nationality also contributes significantly to the change of cultural skills and attitudes as the most important background variable in this model. With respect to the control variables, gender ranked on the second place (β= 0,09), while the increase of age suggests even smaller effect size on decreasing cultural scores (β= -0,016). The future plans – emigration variable had very low impact on cultural skills and attitudes (β= 0,005).

To confirm the findings, the Mann-Whitney U test was used to account for variables that had binary categories, and Kruskal-Wallis to account for three or more categories. The results indicate that the female respondents had significantly higher tolerance level and were more cooperative with people from other cultures than males. Also, the participants who had intentions of living abroad were more cooperative than the ones who preferred to stay. On the other hand, they aren't more tolerant, adaptable or interested in cultural learning. The results showed that the tolerance level of participants increased until the age of 26-29-year bracket where it dropped significantly and then began increasing from age of 35. Adaptability, intercultural cooperation and cultural learning/interest increase until 26-29 as well, then continuously decreases as the age brackets of participants grew, which corroborates the negative path coefficient in the SEM model.

In view of the hypothesis, the nationality variable is tested further, as the most significant background variable. It shows significant difference on all cultural variables, meaning that there are great cultural differences between the participating countries in the research. The Two-Way MANOVA technique was used to describe the connection between the nationality and participation in mobility as independent (fixed factor) variables, and the 4 cultural dependent variables. The nature and association of the data was suitable for the Two-Way MANOVA Test, as the non-parametric (ordinal) assumptions of the dependent variables are not affecting the quality the output (Glass at al., 1972).

According to the results, there was a statistically significant interaction effect between nationality and participation in mobility on the combined dependent variables: F= ,983, p= ,000; Wilks' Λ= ,953. This implies that the effects of mobility experience are significantly different among the five participating nationals or national cultures on adaptability, tolerance, intercultural cooperation and cultural learning that support the alternate hypothesis.

Thesis 3: The extent of the intercultural skills development after mobility is most influenced by the participants national culture.

Published in: Lazányi, Holicza, Baimakova, 2017; Lazányi, Holicza, 2019

On global level, Dake's analyses (1991) highlight that advanced education is associated with the rejection of racial stereotypes among Caucasians, Blacks and Hispanics, but no impact occurred on the negative preconceptions of Asians. At the same time, similarly to other groups, their awareness increased about discrimination against minorities. In most

of the related European mobility studies, the effects are tested on the whole international sample, without country-specific analyses or the measurement of background variables. Therefore, this thesis point is an important contribution to the scientific literature in the field of study. As elaborated at Hypothesis 1, the intercultural education leads to cultural enhancement, more tolerance towards people from other cultures (Jacobone, Moro, 2015), but according to the presented findings and global example, to a significantly different extent. A European education policy and implementation strategy that takes country-specific peculiarities into account would result in better impact on local and national levels.

4.4 Hypothesis 4: After mobility, the employability and integration into the working environment becomes easier.

As previously discussed in the section 1.4., employment is among the most crucial issues of youth which can be connected to increasing uncertainty, poverty, and criminal activities, that have a negative impact on sustainable peace and economic development (Ali, 2014). Mobility programs aim to improve the employability of participants by developing range of personal and professional skills and competences. From the students' point of view, mobility is expected to improve their CV and chances on the labour market, they name these reasons among the most important ambitions when they apply to participate in one of the programs (Holicza, Tóth, 2018).

This research objective seeks the contribution of mobility to youth employment and in this way the potential to counter the negative effects of unemployment. According to the alternate hypothesis, mobility significantly increases the employability status of participants. Seven relevant variables were selected to test Hypothesis 4. The mean value of the variable that deals with employment directly ("I believe that my chances to get a new or better job have increased") is 11,23% higher in the mobile group on the total sample. As the Figure 18 presents, the mobile group has 16,9 percentage points more votes from those, who strongly agree, that mobility improved their situation on the labour market.
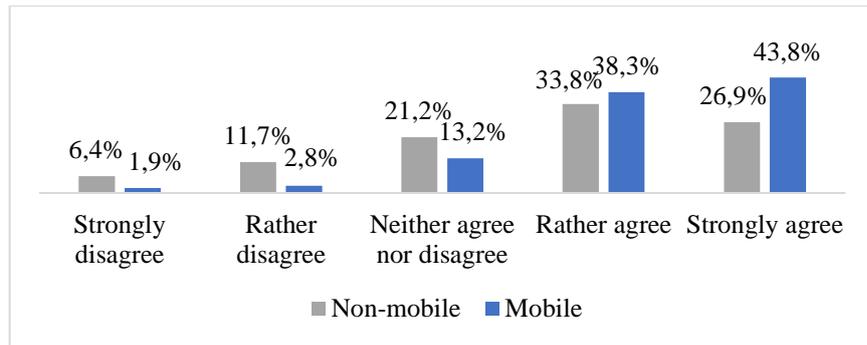
Figure 11: Comparison of Non-mobile and Mobile Samples: Employment

The selected variables to determine the effect of international mobility on labour market integration are presented in Table 13 below. The Spearman Correlation test 5 of 7 times show significant positive association between the test variables and participation in international mobility.

Variables	Participation in mobility	
	Spearman Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Confidence	,274**	,000
Aware of strengths and weaknesses	,134**	,000
Open minded for new challenges	,136**	,000
Higher chance for a better job	,248**	,000
Clearer idea about career goals	,037	,171
Higher chance for a traineeship	,167**	,000
Capability to deal with high responsibility	,051	,064

Table 13: Spearman Correlation Table of Hypothesis 4

The two insignificant variables are less applicable in case of learning mobility experience, students have more chance to define their career goals and develop skills to deal with high responsibility after a traineeship (at abroad). Therefore, the insignificant relationship in such cases is not surprising. The strongest associations are measured on the increase of confidence about abilities (r = ,274**, p< ,001), higher chances to get a better a new job (r = ,248**, p< ,001) and traineeship position (r = ,167**, p< ,001).

The Mann-Whitney U Test has been employed to further investigate the data, which resulted similar output with the previous analyses (Table 14). The same variables show significant difference between the non-mobile and mobile group of students.

Variables		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)
Confidence	Non-mobile	657	568,72	373647,50	157494,50	373647,50	-10,02	,000
	Mobile	682	767,57	523482,50				
Aware of strengths and weaknesses	Non-mobile	657	621,32	408208,50	192055,50	408208,50	-4,91	,000
	Mobile	682	716,89	488921,50				
Open minded for new challenges	Non-mobile	657	622,44	408945,50	192792,50	408945,50	-4,96	,000
	Mobile	682	715,81	488184,50				
Higher chance for a better job	Non-mobile	657	577,12	379169,00	163016,00	379169,00	-9,08	,000
	Mobile	682	759,47	517961,00				
Clearer idea about career goals	Non-mobile	657	655,94	430950,00	214797,00	430950,00	-1,37	,170
	Mobile	682	683,55	466180,00				
Higher chance for a traineeship	Non-mobile	657	606,83	398685,50	182532,50	398685,50	-6,11	,000
	Mobile	682	730,86	498444,50				
Capability to deal with high responsibility	Non-mobile	657	651,28	427893,50	211740,50	427893,50	-1,85	,060
	Mobile	682	688,03	469236,50				

Table 14: Mann-Whitney U Test on Hypothesis 5

The mobile group has significantly higher mean ranks in five cases that are crucial to step up and succeed on the labour market: confidence about abilities, awareness of strength and weakness, flexibility and open-minded attitude towards new challenges, higher chances to get traineeship and full-time position. The statistically significant difference measured on test variables rejects the null hypothesis, and support the alternate hypothesis.

Thesis 4: International student mobility significantly facilitates youth employment.

Published in: Holicza, Stone, 2016; Holicza, 2018a; Holicza, Tóth, 2018; Holicza, Pásztor, 2018; Holicza, Chircop, 2018; Holicza, Pásztor, 2019

The positive results are in line with the Erasmus Impact Study of the European Commission (2014), moreover Brandenburg et al. (2016) named personality traits and qualities of mobile students that most of the employers found important, such as "tolerance of ambiguity", "curiosity", "confidence", "serenity", "decisiveness" and "vigour". On the other hand, Teichler and Janson (2007) found that the distinct

professional value of short-term international mobility is declining over time, especially in Western European Countries. "In the Central and Eastern European countries, study experience in another European country is still a more exclusive experience, ensuring a higher professional reward." (Teichler, Janson, 2007, p. 494) In accordance, the primary research results show that Russian mobile students report the highest positive change on the employment-related variables in this study. In general, it can be concluded that international mobility is more of a successful "door-opener" for the European youth into the labour market, than guarantee for high-level career (Janson et al., 2009).

4.5 Hypothesis 5: International mobility contributes to global citizenship, a basic element of democratic governance, peace and security.

As previously explained in chapter 1.4., powerful democracies, youth, peace and security are all interconnected with active citizenship. Therefore, H5 seeks to discover the contribution of international student mobility this crucial condition for conflict prevention. According to the alternate hypothesis, there is a significant difference between the non-mobile and mobile group on the test variables that define active citizenship. The mobile group has higher mean values, they are more participative, but the awareness of socio-political concepts – variable has decreased mean value after mobility, it means that internationally experienced students are less confident and convinced about their knowledge in this field. It might be explained with the Socratic paradox: "I know that I know nothing", or a similar quote from Albert Einstein: "The more I learn, the more I realize how much I don't know". As the Table 15 presents below, the output of Spearman correlation concludes the same significant positive relations between the dependent and independent variables, except the decreasing awareness of socio-political concepts, which appears as negative coefficient.

Variables	Participation in mobility	
	Spearman Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Intention to be active citizen	,090**	,001
Interest in global affairs	,091**	,001
Interest in European affairs	,063*	,021
Awareness of socio-political concepts	-,223**	,000

Table 15: Spearman Correlation on the Hypothesis 5

In order to confirm the significant differences between the groups, Mann-Whitney U test has been employed (Table 16). The mobile group has significantly higher mean ranks

than the non-mobile group. Each variable has significant differences; therefore, this study rejects the null and accepts the alternate hypothesis of a statistically significant link between participation in international mobility and increasing active citizenship.

Variables		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)
Intention to be active citizen	Non-mobile	657,00	635,80	417722,00	201569,00	417722,0	-3,30	,000
	Mobile	682,00	702,94	479408,00				
Interest in global affairs	Non-mobile	657,00	636,05	417882,50	201729,50	417882,5	-3,34	,000
	Mobile	682,00	702,71	479247,50				
Interest in European affairs	Non-mobile	657,00	646,42	424698,00	208545,00	424698,0	-2,31	,002
	Mobile	682,00	692,72	472432,00				
Awareness of socio-political concepts	Non-mobile	657,00	752,31	494270,00	169957,00	402860,0	-8,14	,000
	Mobile	682,00	590,70	402860,00				

Table 16: Mann-Whitney U test on Hypothesis 5

Thesis 5: The participation in international mobility has positive effect on active citizenship: it engages young people to participate in the social and political life of their community.

Published in: Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017; Holicza, 2018a; Holicza, Pásztor, 2018; Holicza, Kadena, 2018

The positive results are in line with the Erasmus Impact Study of the European Commission (2014) and the study of Golubeva, Gomez Parra and Espejo Mohedano (2018) who found the tendency of positive change in Erasmus students' values and attitudes linked to active citizenship. Mobility fosters active citizenship, however the participation in the civil, political or social activities is lower in the host country during exchange, and more typical in the home country after mobility (Altuna, Suárez, 2013). Mobility experience (positively) changes one's attitude towards the EU. However, exchange students do not consider it among the most important gains of their participation in the programme. There is no significant increase in their European feeling compared to their non-mobile peers which confirms the findings of Bergmann (2015), Kuhn (2012) and Wilson (2011). This does not imply that (exchange) students do not feel European, in fact they do, more than other groups of the population, but international mobility does not seem to increase it (further) (Kuhn, 2012; Van Mol, 2018). In literature, international

friendships, amorous and other quality relationships are found to be stronger determiner of European identity which definitely can be the result of interactions during mobility (Bergmann, 2015; Delhey 2004; Fligstein, 2008).

4.6 Hypothesis 6: In the Huntington context, cross-civilizational mobility has a significant impact on participants' cultural skills and attitudes.

According to Huntington's map of civilizations, in this research the Western Christian (HU, MT, PT), the Orthodox (Russia, minority of Albania) and the Muslim (majority of Albania) are represented. The Huntington theory suggests the division of the sample into two groups: "the West and the rest". According to Huntington, the polarization of "East" and "West" culturally is a consequence of calling European civilization Western civilization. However, it is more appropriate to distinguish between the "the West and the rest", which implies the existence of the many non-Wests (Huntington, 1993). Triandis (1990) uses the similar "West and other civilizations" division when discussing the differences in economic and institutional power struggle for military as a primary source of conflict. Cultural values and beliefs are secondary sources of future conflicts. The future world politics and international relations are likely to be shaped by the conflict between "the West and the Rest": the responses of non-Western civilizations to balance or overcome Western influence, power and values (Mahbubani, 1992).

In testing Hypothesis 6 on measuring the effect of mobility across civilizational fault lines, the research sample was limited to participants who moved from one civilization to another to complete their mobility period. Although the survey does not provide information about the host country, based on the current rules of Erasmus+, it is assumed that Russian and Albanian students moved to a host country that belongs to the EU – Western Christian civilization. Erasmus+ mobilities from Partner Countries (in this case Russia and Albania) can be completed only to Program Countries that are the EU Member States (European Commission, 2018b). Participants from Program Countries typically remain in other EU Member States, therefore they do not pass civilizational fault line, and their experience is not representative in the case of Hypothesis 6.

Based on "the West and the rest" polarisation theories and Huntington's categorization countries, the primary research sample has been divided into the Western group (Group 1, n= 918): Hungary, Malta, Portugal; and to the "rest", which includes the (Eastern) Orthodox, Muslim civilizations: Russia and Albania (Group 2, n= 421). Same as at Hypothesis 1, the adaptability, tolerance, intercultural cooperation and cultural learning

variables have been used to test Hypothesis 6. The table of mean differences below (Table 17) that the mobile group has higher values on each test variable. The Russian and Albanian sample (Group 2) show positive, but relatively low or at some point no changes at all. It is significantly lower than the measured effects of mobility participation on the Western Christian Civilization Group 1.

Variables	Group 1			Group 2	
	HU	MT	PT	RU	AL
Adaptability	11,6	12,2	7,8	2,5	1,7
Tolerance	8,3	6,9	0,4	0,6	2,4
Intercultural cooperation	6,5	-3,2	-0,7	2,8	2,9
Cultural learning	25,6	1,9	25,7	9,3	3,3

Table 17: Change of Mean Values: Mobile vs. Non-mobile Group on Hypothesis 6

The highest positive change is the nearly 10% increase in the Russian intentions to learn more about different cultures. The rest of the values vary from 0,6% to 3,3%, that mean nearly no change in attitude. Among the Albanian results, the cultural learning for future career success shows the highest change as well. To further investigate the significance of the relationship between the mobility participation and test variables, Spearman correlation (Table 18) and Mann-Whitney U test has been employed.

Variables (Group 2.)	Participation in mobility	
	Spearman Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Adaptability	,056	,255
Tolerance	,012	,800
Intercultural cooperation	,082	,094
Cultural learning	,171**	,000

Table 18: Spearman Correlation Table of Hypothesis 6: Group 2

The correlation analysis shows significant relationship only with intercultural learning (for future career success) variable which has been highlighted in the previous section as well. The values for the other variables do not change significantly for mobility participation.

Considering the Mann-Whitney U output (Table 19), the mean ranks are higher at the mobile group, but the difference is insignificant at 3 variables out of 4. Similar to the correlation results, only the cultural learning has significantly increased, which means that skills and attitudes did not improve significantly when students moved from one civilization to another.

Variables (Group 2.)		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)
Adaptability	Non-mobile	330	207,76	68560,50	13945,5	68560,5	-1,13829	,255
	Mobile	91	222,75	20270,50				
Tolerance	Non-mobile	330	210,30	69397,50	14782,5	69397,5	-0,25323	,800
	Mobile	91	213,55	19433,50				
Intercultural cooperation	Non-mobile	330	206,40	68112,50	13497,5	68112,5	-1,67498	,094
	Mobile	91	227,68	20718,50				
Cultural learning	Non-mobile	330	200,79	66262,00	11647	66262	-3,50536	,000
	Mobile	91	248,01	22569,00				

Table 19: Mann-Whitney U test on Hypothesis 6: Group 2

In contrast, the Group 1 – Western countries (Hungary, Malta, Portugal) have been separated and measured (n= 918). These countries are EU Member States and Erasmus+ Programme Countries, therefore the destination (host) countries of the student mobility are not limited to the EU. However, the number of Credit Mobilities to Partner Countries (out of the EU) is minimal compared to the simple Erasmus+ mobilities among the Program Countries (Eurostat, 2018). Therefore, in this analysis the whole group is supposed to remain within the EU boundaries and the Western Christian civilization of Huntington (intra-European mobility). They are not moving to another civilization like Russians or Albanians, so the experience is limited to cultural differences within their own civilization.

Variables (Group 1.)	Participation in mobility	
	Spearman Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Adaptability	,358**	,000
Tolerance	,177**	,000
Intercultural cooperation	,129**	,000
Cultural learning	,511**	,000

Table 20: Spearman Correlation Table of Hypothesis 6: Group 1

Unlike the correlation results of the Group 2, all variables show significant association with participation in mobility (Table 20). Cultural learning shows the strongest link which is the only variable that is significant in Group 2. Adaptability is the second most important factor that is explained by mobility experience, while tolerance and intercultural cooperation is weak but still significant. In order to compare the groups, Mann-Whitney U test has been performed and presented (Table 21).

Variables (Group 1.)		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)
Adaptability	Non-mobile	327	342,87	112118,50	58490,5	112118,5	-10,8328	0,00
	Mobile	591	524,03	309702,50				
Tolerance	Non-mobile	327	400,71	131031,50	77403,5	131031,5	-5,35201	0,00
	Mobile	591	492,03	290789,50				
Intercultural cooperation	Non-mobile	327	417,65	136570,00	82942	136570	-3,91284	0,00
	Mobile	591	482,66	285251,00				
Cultural learning	Non-mobile	327	289,14	94547,50	40919,5	94547,5	-15,4697	0,00
	Mobile	591	553,76	327273,50				

Table 21: Mann-Whitney U Test on Hypothesis 6: Group 1

The Mann-Whitney U test results are in line with the correlation output, all variables have statistically significant relation with participation in mobility. The mobile group has significantly different, higher mean ranks in each case. Compared to the Group 2 where only 1/4 variable is significantly different, Group 1 show significance in 4/4 cases, which clearly separates the two samples. This means that skills, attitudes and future intentions tested in this model improved within the same civilization as a result of mobility. According to the findings, there is no significant improvement in cultural skills and attitudes on international student mobility participants who moved to another civilization.

Thesis 6: International student mobility does not significantly affect cultural skills and attitudes across Huntington's civilizational fault lines.

Published in: Lazányi, Holicza, Baimakova, 2017; Lazányi, Holicza, 2019; Holicza, Yaroson, Muminovic, 2019

It supports the thesis of Huntington about fundamental differences that will always remain as potential source of conflicts in the future. However, the intention to value and learn more about different cultures for future career purposes shows significant increase among participants – which supports Fukuyama's melting pot theory – when the economic interests play an important role. Based on findings on Group 2, this study fails to reject the null hypothesis.

4.7 Hypothesis 7: International student mobility does not facilitate emigration from the host country.

As explained in sub-chapter 1.2. migration, nationalism and the raising right-wing populism are among the most critical and debated issues in Europe nowadays. In the current context, a popular response to immigrants is the belief and fear that their influx will change the existing cultural structure in the Western world as well as the perception that "foreigners are stealing jobs" from the local citizens (Holicza, Chircop, 2018). The

threat to cultural identity is the fear of potential harm caused by immigrants' introduction of distinct and different values, norms and morals (Stephan et al., 1998). When an individual feels threatened by this potential influence, the response will be much more negative to the group those immigrants belong to.

Cultural threat and struggle over (economic) resources (Coser, 1961) are significant factors of increasing tensions among locals and foreigners. In view of these phenomena, this research objective intends to examine if Erasmus and other mobility programs contribute to emigration from the home country of participants – and according to the present perceptions, increase the level of perceived threats in the host countries.

Using the Chi-square as a statistical tool, the future living plans of non-mobile and mobile students is presented in Table 22 below. The findings demonstrated distinct differences between the groups: decreasing emigration intention after mobility experience. This is because other forms of correlation techniques (Spearman and Pearson) fail to take into account the dichotomous properties of the data (Agresti, 1996). Once the relationship proved to be significant, the Phi and Cramer's V measures the effect size, in other words, it expresses the strength of association between the two variables (Liebetrau, 1983). Both variables are explained by dichotomous data, it allows Phi to indicate negative relationships as well. It does not apply in case of Cramer's V as it does not consider which is the independent (column) variable. The Table 23 presents the test results.

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30,315	1	,000		
Continuity Correction	29,644	1	,000		
Likelihood Ratio	30,493	1	,000		
Fisher's Exact Test				,000	,000
Linear-by-Linear Association	30,292	1	,000		

Table 22: Chi-Square Test on Hypothesis 7

Test		Value	Asymp. Std. Error	Approx. T	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	-,150			,000
	Cramer's V	,150			,000
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	-,150	,027	-5,565	,000

Table 23: Phi and Cramer's V on Hypothesis 7

The Pearson Chi-square test and the Phi and Cramer's V confirm the negative links between the variables (Phi = -,150, p< ,001) and suggests that international mobility have

a decreasing effect on emigration plans of students by 15% in favour of living in their home country. Moreover, based on Spearman correlation, mobility experience is associated with increasing self-confidence (r= ,274**, p< ,001), but higher self-confidence is negatively associated to foreign plans (r= -,085**, p= ,002): more confidence is connected to less desire to live abroad. Students with higher age (r= -.313, p< ,001), self-confidence and international experience tend to be more engaged with their home country (in long term).

The findings show that participation in international student mobility has a statistical and significant impact on the future plans regarding residence – living home or abroad: participants to return to their home country and stay as residents (Holicza, Pásztor, 2018). Non-mobile students who do not have international experience are more likely to imagine themselves in a foreign country on permanent bases. Based on the findings, this study fails to accept the null hypothesis and accepts the alternate hypothesis.

Thesis 7: The participation in international student mobility does not contribute to youth emigration from the home country, it rather effects it negatively.

Published in: Holicza, 2018a; Holicza, Pásztor, 2018

The empirical evidence on the links between student mobility and future migration aspirations is surprisingly limited (Crossman, Clarke, 2010; Van Mol, 2014b). The findings in this study therefore address this research gap in the field of migration studies. The presented research results confirm Feyen and Krzaklewska (2013) who found that short-term student mobility does not have a long-term pull-factor to abroad, neither contribution to brain-drain (Holicza, 2018a). Likewise, Wiers-Jenssen (2008) and Van Mol (2014c) showed that former participants of mobility programmes hold more international jobs than their non-mobile peers, but they tend to find employment in the domestic labour market, unlike those students who completed their whole degree abroad.

4.8 Structural Equation Modelling

The hypotheses of the dissertation are were ranked based on the strength of impact from mobility using Structural Equation Modelling. Composite reliability was applied to measure the validity of the model (Figure 19 below), that resulted in confirmatory and highly reliable (0,745 to 0,871) values of the (latent) variables.
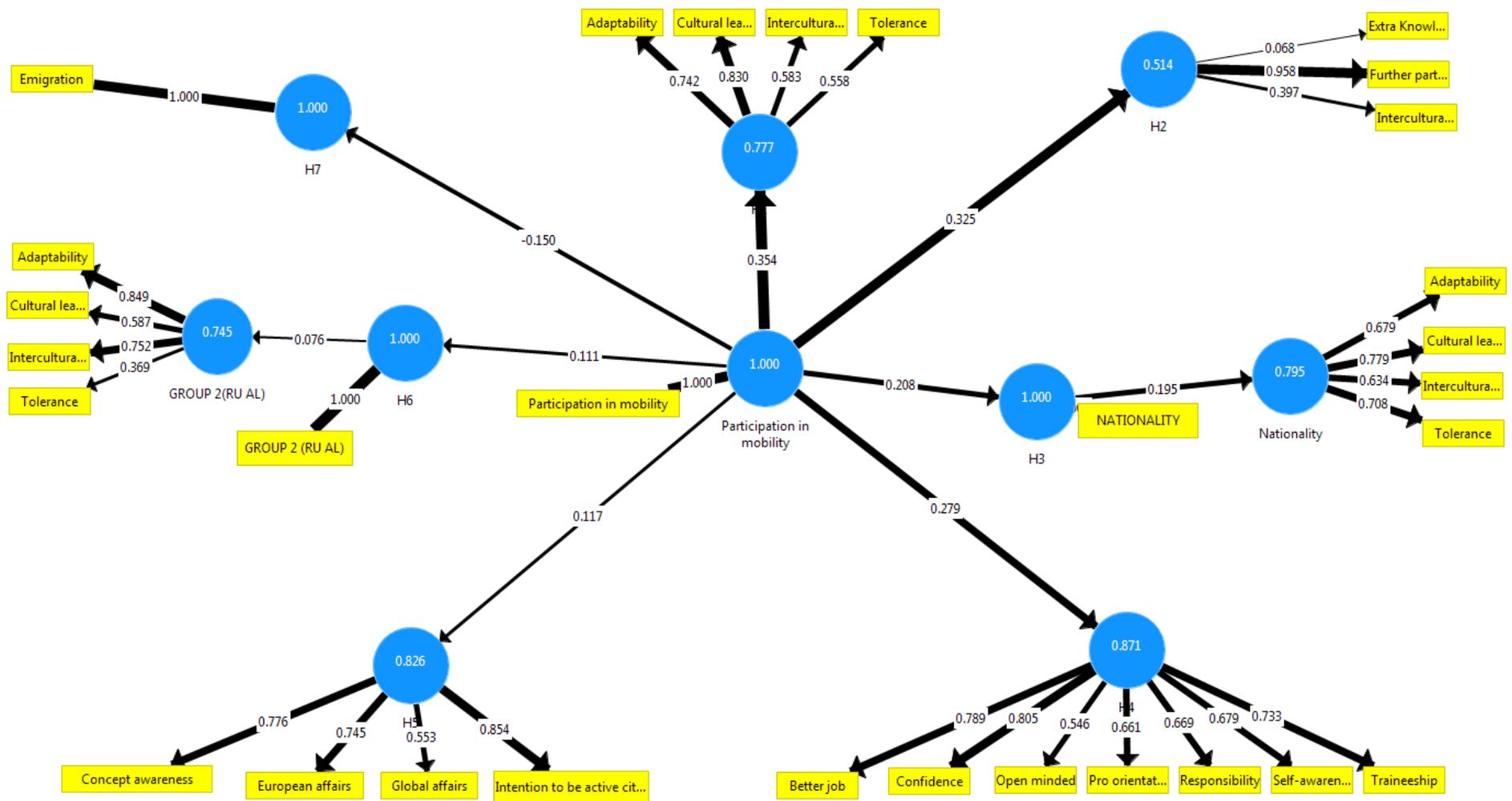
Figure 12: Conceptual Framework: The Impact of Mobility on Tested Hypotheses

An exception can however be seen in Hypothesis 2, with a value of 0,514 which is less than the estimated exploratory levels. The reason might be the differently scaled variables in the model, as the intention to participate in mobility and extra knowledge gained – variables range from 0 to 1, while the cultural learning is measured on a five-point Likert scale.

The path coefficient was used to examine the links between the estimated variables in the multivariate system. Accordingly, all the values follow the a priori expectation of positive impact from participation in mobility to postulated hypothesis. The only exemption can be seen in Hypothesis 7 (H7) which deals with future living plans, intention to emigrate from the home country. The bolded arrows indicate the hypothesis that has the strongest impact from mobility participation.

The Figure 20 below shows the path coefficients of each Hypothesis, where 700 iterations and 8 stop criterions were used in calculating the partial least squares. The participation in mobility have the strongest positive impact on the first two Hypotheses that involve cultural variables and measure the worth of mobility as well as intentions of further participation.
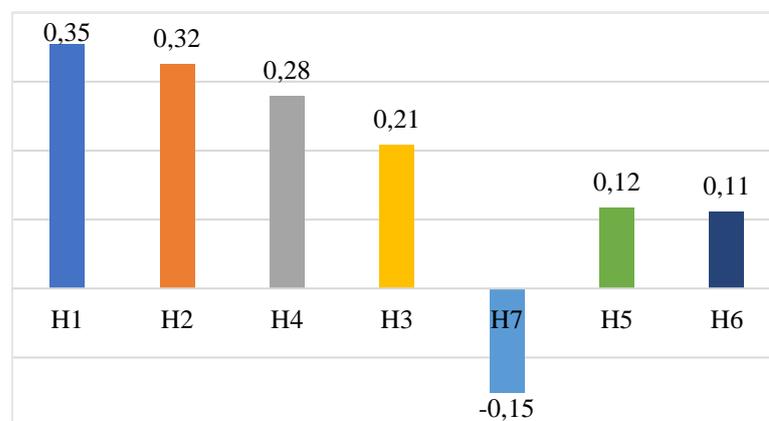
Figure 3: Path Coefficient of each Hypothesis

The third strongest effect in model is measured by Hypothesis 4 – successfully tackling youth unemployment. The impact of international mobility significantly differs according to the nationality/cultural background of the participants (H3) – which is the fourth strongest statement in the thesis with the path coefficient 0,208. H7 shows a different direction, as mobility participation has significant decreasing effect on emigration plans of participants, with the absolute value 0,150 which is the fifth strongest among the seven hypotheses. Mobility has significant positive effect in the promotion of active citizenship, but in a less extent compared to other benefits of the participation in this study. Finally,

mobility has the weakest contribution to the variables of H6 which confirms the previous findings about the non-significant skill development trough cross-civilizational mobility.

In conclusion, the hypotheses of the study have been ranked based on the impact from mobility participation using Structural Equation Modelling. It further confirms the previous findings and suggests that the most significant contribution of mobility was measured on the set of cultural skills and attitudes such as adaptability, tolerance, intercultural cooperation, secondly on the extra knowledge gained at abroad and intentions of further participation. Improving the employment situation is the third most important relationship in the model and in the lives of young people in Europe.

5 Conclusions and New Scientific Results

"The survival of mankind will depend to a large extent on the ability of people who think differently to act together." – Prof. Geert Hofstede

This chapter concludes the main scientific results and provides a summary on the most important effects of international mobility related to perceived conflicts, peace and security. The implications show that the youth empowerment with international mobility is the best interest of Europe and its states in a modern society. Therefore, recommendations are made based on additional (primary) research to foster the participation in international mobility programmes such as Erasmus+, as well as to improve its implementation and impacts in the future. The different points are considered on both policy and more practical – local level in order to support all actors and participants of mobility.

To reflect on the Hofstede quote, based on the research results, it can be concluded that international student mobility develops the skills and abilities of participants who come from different cultural backgrounds to act together. However, the level of this development is dependent on the participants' national culture, as well as on their destination – host country of their mobility where they gain international experience. Based on quantitative primary research, the seven hypotheses have been tested and research objectives achieved. Out of the seven postulated hypotheses, six alternate hypotheses were accepted as a result of the significant differences that mobility experience made. Accordingly, the following statements are made.

– **Thesis 1: The participation in international student mobility contributes to the reduction of perceived conflicts and cultural clashes.**

   Published in: Holicza, 2018a; Holicza, Pásztor, 2018; Lazányi, Holicza, 2019

– **Thesis 2: International student mobility makes participants eager to learn more about different cultures and participate in international programs again.**

   Published in: Holicza, 2018a; Holicza, 2018b; Holicza, Pásztor, 2018; Holicza, Kadena, 2018; Holicza, Pásztor, 2019

– **Thesis 3: The extent of the intercultural skills development after mobility is most influenced by the participants national culture.**

   Published in: Lazányi, Holicza, Baimakova, 2017; Lazányi, Holicza, 2019

- **Thesis 4: International student mobility significantly facilitates youth employment.**

  Published in: Holicza, Stone, 2016; Holicza, 2018a; Holicza, Tóth, 2018; Holicza, Pásztor, 2018; Holicza, Chircop, 2018; Holicza, Pásztor, 2019

- **Thesis 5: The participation in international mobility has positive effect on active citizenship: it engages young people to participate in the social and political life of their community.**

  Published in: Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017; Holicza, 2018a; Holicza, Pásztor, 2018; Holicza, Kadena, 2018

- **Thesis 6: International student mobility does not significantly affect cultural skills and attitudes across Huntington's civilizational fault lines.**

  Published in: Lazányi, Holicza, Baimakova, 2017; Lazányi, Holicza, 2019; Holicza, Yaroson, Muminovic, 2019

- **Thesis 7: The participation in international student mobility does not contribute to youth emigration from the home country, it rather effects it negatively.**

  Published in: Holicza, 2018a; Holicza, Pásztor, 2018

These experiences facilitated participants in dealing with the challenges and demands of a modern, multicultural society, being opened to learn more and improve intercultural skills, without leaving their home country permanently. This invariably implies that mobility enabled students possess the capacity to adapt to new situations, more tolerant towards as well as cooperative with people from different countries and cultures. They perceive less threat and frustration which leads to less conflict situations.

Further, mobility develops critical thinking and interest in European topics, engages young people to participate in the social and political life of their community, which are key conditions of democracy. According to Farahani (2014), most of today's crises that are challenging the peace and security of the world – such as war, environmental pollution, terrorism etc. – are solvable through citizenship education. In his views, especially the higher education has the potential to educate individuals and allow them to go beyond geographical boarders to participate actively in solving international problems.

Considering the issue of the current youth unemployment rates in Europe as well as its general link to criminal activities, international mobility significantly improves the

situation. According to the participants, more developed skills and the mobility experience in their CV help the employment and integration in the labour market. After mobility, they tend to imagine their future in their home country, much more than before. The illusions of an easier and more favourable foreign life seemed to be changed for motivations to take advantage of mobility experience and the extra knowledge gained on the domestic labour market.

Apart from the proven generally positive and developing effects of mobility, it has to be noted, that the country and civilization-specific analyses have measured significant differences in effect size. Most of the cultural variables show significant positive links with participation only in case of intra-EU mobility: among EU nationals who went abroad, but stayed within the bond of EU Members States, the Western-Christian civilization. Namely, the Hungarian-Maltese-Portuguese group members are more affected by mobility experience than their peers from Albania and Russia. The Albanian and Russian participants completed cross-civilizational mobility since their home county and culture belong to the Muslim and/or Orthodox-Christian civilizations, but their host country was an EU Member State/Erasmus+ Programme Country – in the Western-Christian civilization.

According to Huntington (1993; 1997), different civilizations and civilizational fault lines will always remain potential sources of conflicts, that seem to be confirmed by the research results, as no significant improvement occurred on tolerance level and other cultural variables after mobility experience. On the other hand, Fukuyama's views (1992) provide some hope when professional and economic interests are taken into account. In this case, independently from origin and culture, the intention to learn more about different cultures and gain intercultural skills for future career successes – significantly increased after mobility. The two groups had the same (no) reaction on the variable "I feel European". In fact, the common European identity building is one of the main missions of the Erasmus Programme, but it does not seem to work – as none of the groups passed the significance test on increasing values after mobility. Participants are generally more interested and even start to follow European news and happenings, but they don't consider themselves more European than the ones without mobility experience.

Even if the current global and European events support Huntington's thesis, the question whether his culture clash or Fukuyama's pax liberal democratica is the world's most plausible future, still cannot be answered with full confidence (Kurtz, 2002). Economic

interests and motives seem to make different people more flexible and cooperative than international mobility does. However, the former is just a temporary solution, highly dependent on actual global or regional political agenda and financial situation. Even though it is evident in history that economic crisis is a propellant of nationalism (Augoustinos, Reynolds, 2001) which leads back to bottom-line group conflict theory: competition for access to limited resources.

Contributing to the long-term solution – international mobility including cultural and civic education is proved to improve one's perception and tolerance level towards others with different background and improve skills to cooperate effectively. It opposes discrimination, raise the questions of cultural pluralism and equal access to resources that are key conditions to decrease group conflicts according to fundamental conflict theories and practices (Fedyunina, Slepukhin, 2013).

Even though there is no doubt about the positive effects of mobility and that more intra-European contact lead to less exclusive nationalism, there is an issue to be addressed. Theresa Kuhn (2012) suggests that mobility programmes, particularly Erasmus, should approach and involve people with lower levels of education. Previously discussed studies based on empirical evidence, as well as examples from the US (Schuman et al., 1997) show that highly educated people are more likely to reject negative racial stereotypes, and endorse principles of equal treatment. Lower educated people tend to lack the opportunity or the interest to participate in mobility and interact with people who are "not like them". Unlike the managers, and other white-collar workers, the service and blue-collar workers are less able to afford international experiences which would develop curiosity and understanding of different cultures. This group is less likely to learn other languages and follow news from different sources, or to change the favourable (political) views of their neighbourhood (Fligstein, 2008). Therefore, beside "preaching to the converted" (Kuhn, 2012), different European mobility programmes should aim to reach the less privileged layers of society – which would have even greater effects than on the ones with originally higher level of European identity and acceptance of cultural diversity (Sigalas, 2006).

6 Recommendations

The research results as well as the concluding remarks, suggests that it is inevitable that the participation in international mobility should be increased. Considering the new Erasmus Programme after 2020, the EU is supportive budget-wise, however, in order to keep the Erasmus+ attractive for the future generations, its strategy, policies and approach should meet the demands of its target groups. This calls for clear and simple structures and targeted actions in proportionate sizes. All new initiatives should be facilitated by simple and user-friendly tools, improved strategies for information, communication and support (Holicza, Helmerson, Pichlbauer, 2018).

Specific recommendations have been formed in order to facilitate this transition and maximize the positive effects of mobility participation. The following guidelines, required actions and advices are the result of additional, targeted research projects and primary data collected among the (former and future) participants of the Erasmus+ programme, members of international associations working in the field of mobility, vocational education and training and youth, international department staff of higher education institutions and other stakeholders.

6.1 Policy Recommendations: Simplification of the Erasmus Participation

According to the collected primary data and experts' consultations, the following recommendations are necessary in order to promote and simplify the participation in the new Erasmus Programme after 2020 (Holicza et al., 2017; Holicza, Helmerson, Pichlbauer, 2018).

− The same rules should apply in all Programme Countries. Following the Erasmus+ framework should be the unique criteria for using the grants. Adaptations to comply with the different national frameworks counteract efficient use of the programme and create confusion as to which regulations apply. If its regulations were to stand above national law, the same rules would apply for everyone – in all participating countries.

− Appoint regional Erasmus+ ambassadors with different expertise as information-brokers and networkers for internationalisation to ensure local representation and information flow. The European Commission has already developed and provided a lot of information on how to get involved in Erasmus+, however, local stakeholders are not reached to a satisfactory extent. Increased access to the programme can be achieved through specialized campaigns targeting local level stakeholders, using

simple rational language and stressing the enhanced career opportunities the programme holds.

– Provide a wider range of opportunities, simple co-operations and kits for schools/organisations with less experience and resources. Adjust the application procedure according to the complexity of the project. More support for less complex co-operations between teachers, schools and young people. A less competitive procedure would favour an increased number of applicants. It would also make it more difficult for deal-maker companies to play on the applicants' need of support. Very simple "prêt-à-porter" cooperation types are suggested for inexperienced applicants or for schools, organisations or associations with low time budget.

– Integrate and synchronize all tools with the EU Login platform or a similar mutual online portal to ensure compatibility, easy access and secure exchange of information. A single online platform will reduce the overall number of IT tools to be used by organisations. In addition to the obvious simplification, its aim is to ensure full compatibility, easy access and prevent double funding of similar project topics. All documents, e.g. applications and manuals, mobility agreements and certificates etc., found on the platform should be standardized, available and printable directly. The digitalization and unification of applications, reports and other procedures will both facilitate the transparency and decrease the administration.

– The introduction of new tools such as the Online Linguistic Support, the Online Learning Agreement, the Erasmus apps etc. would make the programme more attractive to new generations. The integration and mobile optimization of all these tools would increase the use of Erasmus services (Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017; Shaw, Fairhurst, 2008). Connect Online Linguistic Support with the Erasmus+ Mobile App and open it to all Erasmus+ participants.

– Provide shared e-application and reports, editable by all project partners. Avoid repetitions. Use simple language, drop-down menus, a community help-desk and digital annotations for information. Emphasize user feedback in an updated database where Erasmus+ stakeholders are rated and archived. Furthermore, the online services, documents and templates are shared online in order to feed project partners during the whole process. Simplification of the entire process – from searching for partners, project ideas, in-service training (IST) courses, European Voluntary Service

(EVS) opportunities, University student exchanges etc. to the application, report and dissemination. E.g. facilitate application procedures through digital annotations, policy guidelines, sharing possibilities, students' mobility etc.

- Enable chartered, accredited organisations to apply on all levels of education – with simplified application and reporting procedures, similar to the ones used for Higher Education and VET (Vocational Education Training) mobilities.

- Increase budget flexibility in granted projects for beneficiaries to fully use allocated funding. Enable transfers within budget according to needs. Combine the budget parts for travel and accommodation since it is all part of one project grant (Holicza, Helmerson, Pichlbauer, 2018).

6.2 Recommendations Focused on the Higher Education Sector

Beside the general policy recommendations for the overall Erasmus+ Programme, specific points have been developed for the advantage of higher education students – with or without exchange experience – and teaching staff. Based on additional research, their main wish was to simplify and facilitate particular procedures, therefore in this section the main challenges and expected solutions have been addressed for improved mobility experiences (Holicza, Toth, 2018; Holicza, Helmerson, Pichlbauer, 2018).

- A lot of work is already being done to push for better recognition of exchange periods, but the fear of non-recognition of exchange studies remains one of the main obstacles for international mobility. The European and national authorities should encourage higher education institutions to have a better communication with their partners to improve transparency and achieve full credit recognition for their Erasmus+ students. No participant should face disadvantages at his/her home university because of exchange studies (Holicza, 2018b).

- Reorganize the countries within the three Erasmus+ scholarship categories, or consider the development of a region-based scheme as capitals have much higher accommodation fees and living expenses than less centrally located university towns under the same country-category (Holicza, Pásztor, 2019).

- Combine Erasmus+ opportunities in the higher education: enable and support learning and trainee mobilities within one semester. The combined work placement and study

programme would serve highly motivated applicants with increased scholarship rate and recognition.

− Recognize and empower student associations that are working for international mobilities, such as the Erasmus Student Network, and support their activities, the so called "Buddy System" on the local level, at higher education institutions (HEIs) in order to help them solve the initial challenges of incoming students (Holicza, Helmerson, Pichlbauer, 2019).

− Introduction of an online platform to allow higher education exchange students to comment on the quality and their overall experience at the host institution. Students generally request better language skills from the teachers at the host institutions as well as the possibility to add vocational language courses to their study plan.

− More collaborations between HEIs and businesses to strengthen the career perspective of the Erasmus+ exchange participation. The students' incentive for applying for an exchange is to gain skills. These skills should be useful and an advantage for their future career, hence they expect more professional development and direct opportunities, linked to their (international) education as an added value during their studies (Lazányi, 2012b).

− Development of a continuously updated database with trusted, Erasmus+ certified companies for traineeship opportunities.

− All host institutions should provide the exchange students with a checklist and guidelines before arrival. The comprehensive information package should also include an updated course list with valid ECTS values (Holicza, Helmerson, Pichlbauer, 2018).

6.3 Practical Advices for Institutions to Attract International Students

Even though the Generation-Y students are tech-savvy (Holicza, Kadena, 2018) and the virtual/digital mobility getting more and more popular (Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017), it does not mean that they prefer their education to be entirely delivered online. They are used to mix their online and offline lives, and they expect their environment to do so. In order to maintain the flow of international exchange students, marketers required to communicate through the right channels, means a constant presence online. As a Google study estimated in 2013, 40% of education search queries will happen on mobile devices

within a year. "Seeing is believing" according to Google, based on the success of a university's campaign on YouTube with 2,4 million watch within a week (Holicza, Erdei, 2018). Search trends playing key role in the marketing of international education. "Being more specific about what you offer and capturing them earlier in the cycle is really important" notes one Google analyst. It means the use of "geo terms" – geographic keywords, and in order to have high-quality browsing experience, the mobile optimization is more important than ever.

Beside search engine optimization, social networks of friendship and kinship are critical determinants for international students to make their decision, choose their destination (Beech, 2015). Every former mobility participant mentioned how social networks influenced them in some way either by direct advice, or through shared experiences of others concerning the geographies of their mobility (Brooks, Waters, 2010). The Social Admissions Report shows, almost 70% of the US students are extremely" or "moderately" influenced by online social media when they choose their future educational institution (Pratt, Dalfonso, Rogers, 2014). The ICEF I-graduate Agent Barometer confirms that the quick response times and investment in digital marketing are the most effective tactics available to any institution or school in order to reach and engage their future students (James-MacEachern, Yun, 2017). "The student decision journey has moved online", Google said in 2013 (Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017).

Universities' international relation offices (IROs) are key players in the management of both incoming and outgoing international student mobility. They are in the pro-active position to develop the most important areas to enhance student experiences. For example, to comply with the above-mentioned technical concerns of Generation Y incoming students which is crucial at the first stage – as determinant of students (host) university choice (Holicza, Erdei, 2018). It demands - first of all, having an easily-found website tailored to the target audience (simple, inspiring, search engine optimized, mobile-friendly, synchronised with interactive and updated social media accounts etc.) (Holicza, Kadena, 2018). Is the incoming and outgoing section clearly separated and fully translated, including the connected services info pages (ICT, sport, etc.)? Well-structured course-list and information about available virtual classes. The webpage and online/offline promotion materials are better to make the available technological infrastructure visible that the institution can offer. Testimonials uploaded not only by the local outgoing students, but former incomings as well. Are the (anonymously collected)

feedbacks taken into account? Make the partner student associations available and put enough information about "buddy" or mentoring system that offers informal support for future guest students (Holicza, Fehér-Polgár, 2017).

6.4 Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Further Research

Like any other research, this study has several limitations. The first is the absence of any form of exploratory study using qualitative techniques which would have made the study more robust. Lucarelli and Cerutti (2008) suggested that the complementary qualitative research should prevail over the quantitative technique due to the thoroughness it can give in the analysis by capturing the participants' genuine standpoint. Further, constructing and collecting qualitative data in a research can be one of the most difficult parts of the process due to the fact that, in order of collecting the valuable and relevant material, the researcher must remain completely impartial and offer the participants enough space to express their attitudes, while remaining in the scope of useful data gathering. The use of mixed methods would be an asset, where e.g., focus groups, interviews might provide possible insights to reasons why for instance Albanian students do not think that mobility would help their employment. This method could uncover the reasons behind the weaker connections on the SEM presented by the Figure 19 (H5 and H6) – which would help to eliminate the possible reasons of inefficiency, increase the impact of mobility and lead to a better "profit on (EU) investment".

Qualitative primary research would also provide the opportunity to process not only the espoused cultural values – in line with the mobility experience, but the change of enacted values as well.

Ideally, the longitudinal panel study method could fully grasp the attitudinal change of participants returning from a foreign experience. In this case, most accurate results would be acquired if three surveys were designed and distributed: one before mobility, one after mobility and one for a control group of non-mobile students without international experience.

Lucarelli and Cerutti (2008) also emphasize the importance of content analysis of the media coverage and political debates. It can be said that youth mobility has had a big coverage over the past years, and the stakeholders have been supporting projects through funding and promoting its benefits. However, there is not enough research done on the topic of how student mobility can be used as a (conflict) preventive mechanism. It is

undeniable that this field deserves much more attention since together with the EU budget (European Commission, 2018), interests in mobility are growing and its impact can be used for even greater causes.

Analysing country-specific peculiarities, the imbalance of responses between the non-mobile and mobile groups is significant in every case except the Hungarian sample, where the ratio is nearly fifty-fifty. The reason is that certain groups are less represented and the related conclusions are less fundamental in these cases such as the Albanian, where the 80% of the national sample is non-mobile.

The four common stages of the culture shock (Winkelman, 1994) are not considered in this research due to the missing information about the exact length of the mobility periods. These culture shock stages may have an impact on the results, as well as the actual phase of the cultural adjustment process or the level of social integration. However, the role of participants' preparedness, social support in the host country/institution (Chang, 1997; Yildirim, Ilin, 2013) and the "knowledge how" – quality information (Krzaklewska, Skórska, 2013) have a significant effect on the course of culture shock and the development of successful coping strategies. The perceived conflicts and stress in each stage of the culture shock could be explored by a different, targeted survey and research project.

Regarding the suggestions for further research, a study that analyses the effects of international student mobility between particular countries which have historical hostility or significantly different socio-economic situation – would add a lot of value. As the EU uses the NUTS classification for subnational territories, the effects of mobility could be measured not only on national, but on regional level, with a special focus on those participants who live nearby national frontiers. For this purpose, the host country/city of the mobility participant should be included in the survey as well or targeted sampling technique employed in the research.

In the civilizational context, this research is focusing only on those conflicts that occur along civilizational fault lines. However, there are serious conflicts within the same (Western) civilization as well, such as the case of Northern-Ireland or Catalonia. The regional approach would be appropriate solution to expand this research towards the inner conflicts of Huntington's civilizations, as well as towards those countries, where more civilizations are (not) living together e.g. in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo or Cyprus.

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Appendix I.: Survey

The effects of higher education studies

1. **Your gender:** *
   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Male

   ◯ Female

   ◯ I prefer not to say

2. **Your age:** *

   _____

3. **Your nationality:** *

   _____

4. **Your ongoing or highest degree program:** *
   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Vocational education/training

   ◯ Bachelor

   ◯ Master

   ◯ Doctoral (Ph.D.)

5. **Your university:** *

   _____

6. **The field of your studies:** *
   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Technical

   ◯ Business/Economics

   ◯ Legal

   ◯ Medical

   ◯ Other

7. **The language of your studies:** *
   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ I studied in my native language.

   ◯ I studied in a foreign language.

8 **Employment plans for the future:** *

- ( ) Small and medium sized enterprises, start-ups
- ( ) Multinational companies
- ( ) Public/Governmental sector
- ( ) NGOs

9. **Future plans - living home or abroad?** *

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) I will stay in my home country.
- ( ) I will move to abroad.

10. **Have you ever participated in any international mobility programme (e.g. Erasmus+, DAAD, ...)?** *

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No

11. **Are you planning to take part in any international mobility programme (e.g. Erasmus+, DAAD, ...)?** *

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Maybe

12. **Do you think you could gain knowledge and skills through mobility that you could not gain if staying in your home country?** *

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Maybe

13 Because of my studies: *

per row.

	Strongly agree	Rather agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Rather disagree	Strongly disagree
I am confident and convinced of my abilities	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I know my strengths and weaknesses	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am able to adapt to and act in new situations	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am able to think and analyse information critically	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am tolerant towards other persons' values and behaviour	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am open-minded and curious about new challenges	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I intend to participate actively in social and political life of my community	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am interested in knowing what happens in the world daily	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am able to reach decisions	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am able to cooperate with people from other backgrounds and cultures	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am interested in European topics	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I fee European	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am aware of social and political concepts like democracy, justice, equality, citizenship, civil rights	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I have increased my sector- or field-specific skills	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

14 **Thanks to my studies:** *

per row.

	Strongly agree	Rather agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Rather disagree	Strongly disagree
I believe that my chances to get a new or better job have increased	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I have a clearer idea about my professional career aspirations and goals	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I have good opportunities for traineeships or student jobs	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am capable of taking over work tasks with high responsibility	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

15. **Please mark the fields where you think you need the most development for your future carrier:** *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly agree	Rather agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Rather disagree	Strongly disagree
think logically and draw conclusions (analytical skills)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
find solutions in difficult or challenging contexts (problem-solving skills)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
plan and carry out my learning independently	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
use the internet, social media and PCs , e.g. for my studies, work and personal activities	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
develop an idea and put it into practice	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
see the value of different cultures	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
plan and organise tasks and activities	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
cooperate in teams	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
express myself creatively	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

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