

DESCRIPTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

The proposed research project aims to investigate broader strategies of crises management which surface in a context marked by controversies and hot negotiations, and even by preoccupation with lack of consensus on how the common coping with the crisis should look like. This is an issue which began to be taken up by sociologists two-three decades ago. It was then when social scientists in general became concerned with the dynamics of the debates of various side-effects of technological innovations or of public policies on social life. Sociologists, science and technology scholars, as well as political scientists noticed the tendency that such discussions are more and more difficult to contain. And that the increasing heterogeneousness of the actors involved in these discussions makes the reaching of the consensus an intricate process.

Hence, the question posed by this project is whether in such contexts do certain strategies that would allow or push towards a consensus emerge, and if yes, of what kind are these? The project postulates that we can expect the emergence of tendencies such as *fostering ownership*, *ensuring access to decision-making processes*, and *enforcing consensus*. Fostering ownership is the strategy aimed at cultivating the political support and engagement of actors for certain public policies and programs. Ensuring access to decision-making processes is the strategy aimed at giving assurance that the political will of actors is not being curbed, and that these are not being "bullied" by others into participating in some programs. Eventually, enforcing consensus is the strategy of use, or of suggestion of use, of sanctioning power in order to pressure the actors into consensus.

In order to test this hypothesis, the project will investigate the strategies of developing or of maintaining consensus which become observable in the coping with the European refugee crisis, which erupted in 2015. The managing of the European refugee crisis is a relevant research site because of the obvious preoccupation with the lack of consensus regarding various plans, such as the redistribution of asylum seekers from the frontline states Italy, Greece and Hungary between EU countries. The project will look at how the plan of redistribution of asylum seekers is negotiated between the EU actors. It will zoom in on the role played in these negotiations by Poland, Hungary and Romania. All these countries are situated at the border of the European Union. Yet, their distinct relations to the Schengen area (Hungary and Poland in the area, while Romania outside of it) renders that these are affected differently by the crisis. The three countries also diverge if it comes to the attitude towards the plan to distribute the asylum seekers. Poland is associated with agreement with the plan, Hungary with disagreement, while Romania with a somewhat inertial position built on disagreement with its compulsory character.

There is also the fact that the position taken by various countries evolves, a fact which finds its cues in the very nature of the processes which are subjected to the hot negotiations – for example, in the course of writing this project, such an additional factor which had an impact on the course of negotiations were the coordinated terrorist attacks in Paris on 13.11.2015.