

COVID-19: Human Crisis and Challenge

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Abstract

*Today, humanity faces the millennium challenge. Those challenges always require the development of new agenda and solutions. The same time, different states and society are making the certain programs. States usually undertake to develop problem-solving plans, as well as to lead the implementation of the effective measures. While the states often consider each other as partners, sometimes the contradictions between them raise. It depends on various political and economic factors. Currently, the case is different. The whole world, and not any certain regime, whether democratic or totalitarian/authoritarian, has to solve a common problem. There was a strangeness at the beginning of the pandemic that neither the whole world was together nor separately. Everyone seemed to be withdrawn into oneself and was trying to solve 'their' problem themselves. There was and, you could say, it is now an alienation between the nations. The solution of the problem needs the understanding and vision, determination of the perspectives. The strangeness continues with the fact that nowadays neither the definition nor the real plan is fully given. And it's about the human lives. Since this threat is all-encompassing, the strangeness of this crisis is in the fact that, as it was already said, the world does not still hold together. And this danger/crisis is named after COVID-19. The paradox chain continues: today we, the humanity, do not know **when** will this crisis end. We also do not know **how** it will end; in the long-term perspective, we also do not know with **what** and **which** political and economic results will it end. **What** and **which** is very important because it wouldn't be a little hard, and it is necessary to define **what** will it look like, since we will proceed from this **'what'** in the long-term operational and decisional perspective.*

Keywords: pandemic, COVID-19, uncertainty, unsustainability

I. Introduction

All crisis periods are characterized by uncertainty and unsustainability. The contradiction is that as much as millions of people are infected with this virus, so much the world community is obsessed with uncertainty and a sense of fragility that will have more negative consequences than this virus. In all times of crisis, and not only after the crisis, the opinion must be expressed in order, to get out of this situation, on the one side, and to adequately analyze it further, to understand its lessons in future better. This, unfortunately, in most cases, does not happen for the simple reason that the state and society are satisfied by self-sufficiency and uses every crisis overcome to prove its strength and to prove its impact on others. And this provision is now deprecated.

Since this crisis is different from others, we still have the opportunity for its preliminary analysis. In this case, one can especially highlight a few major issues.

a) Role and designation of the state. During the economic crises of various years, the attitude of citizens and civil society to the state was different. During the financial crisis 2008-2009, many specialists believed that faith in the government of the state would grow, but finally, this did not happen. The views of increasing faith in the state were confirmed by the Great Economic Depression Facts 1929, when the civil society demanded from the state strong, decisive steps to save the market economy (consumer and industrial market) through the big governmental economic interventions.

During the pandemic, the society demands and expects total intervention from the state to manage this crisis and asks it to give it not only the perfect protection from the given situation, but also to save the entire economy (both industry and agriculture).

It can be mentioned that the paradox 2008-2009 was that distrust in the market economy did not lead to further encouragement of economic interventions from the most of states. It had its own explanation because the states differ from each other in their structure/arrangement/constitution. This difference is not only observed among the democratic and totalitarian/authoritarian states, but also among the democratic states. One of the main factors is what their attitude to the market economy is. The market economy, without any regulations or restrictions, is an unbreakable postulate of the existence of a free society for the liberal democratic or neoliberal states. In fact, without certain social "limitations", a market economy can become the best opportunity for the labor exploitation, in which case the principle of the distributed equality is completely violated and not equal recognition of each other from people is carried out. In contrast, a democratic state is indeed a guarantor of the freedom when it is constitutional and social, when equal and fair principles of redistribution of goods are carried out for all citizens: e.g. such as an equal availability of the education and medical insurance for health for all citizens. Therefore, this crisis in the unrestricted absolute/total market economy truth can cause or has probably already caused serious doubts. For the totalitarian/authoritarian states and for the right-wing populist governments existing in the democratic space, this challenge can cause a destroy of their foundation, because the faith in authority, totality is shaken when the authority is no longer able to solve problems for the masses. Right now, while overcoming this crisis, a forceful government seems as helpless as, a liberal democratic society.

The above is important to consider because during this crisis in the nearest future all governments can face a terrible dilemma: either to carry out fast and maximum localization of the epidemic as soon as possible, which can lead to the collapse of the economy, or to pay a big price and to sacrifice the lives of people for the development of the economy. However, it is probably early and difficult to talk about the consequences of the epidemic. Anyway, whatever decisions they make, this should come in full agreement with the interest of the civil society and individual/individuals and individual public groups should not place make decisions, which will aggravate this crisis situation.

b) A turn toward the idea of nationalism or a national state. It is particularly important that this problem, which has created as a result of the pandemic, is taking place not in the world in general but within the EU. Even those types of countries, for which the internationalism and interstate solidarity is a cornerstone of core values and foreign policy, took a step back in favor of national states. Maybe it is a manifestation of a temporary defensive instinct? Anyway, after the states within the EU closed their borders in order to protect against the epidemic, it seems that in the process of overcoming the danger and getting out of this hard situation with as little loss as possible, the world and the EU have chosen to strengthen the role of the national states.

Indeed, in these circumstances, from today's point of view, it seems that each state is only concentrated on its citizens, and the intergenerational principle of solidarity is not completely lost but it has been moved back. However, moving to the front of the national states' role should not cause (and probably will not cause) the economic, social, cultural and academic disintegration of the world, which, in turn, can cause even more and more severe crises in future, as long as there is a little step from the national states to nationalist and chauvinistic states if the balance of nationality, internationality and solidarity is not kept.

The real fact is that the European states in the relatively better position noticed the above risks in timely manner and, after the first shock caused by the pandemic, effective mechanisms for expressing solidarity with those in a more serious situation were engaged again actively (e.g. the treatment of Italian and French/Elsassian patients in the clinics in Germany and Switzerland, support with doctors, medical equipment, huge financial resources prepared to ensure economic stability in the post-crisis period, announced by EU, etc.)

At the same time, catches the eye that the leaders of few EU member states, in fact try to practice their authoritarian inclination and to strengthen it by bringing the idea of a national state to the front, which requires attention and a corresponding reaction to it.

Since the current epicenter of the corona-crisis is in Europe, we might also express a cautious assumption that this crisis may not only be a catalyst for strengthening centripetal processes from Brussels, but also a specific unified EU policies (e.g. such as financial, military and military/political), which may be in the interests of all EU countries. Historically, such was large crises of similar scale allowed to make a large jump, which, in the common case, remained an unachievable goal.

c) Globalization/anti-globalization. The coronavirus crisis has also put the problem of globalization/anti-globalization on the agenda. The anti-globalists may today, at first glance, have the truth on their side when they present closed borders, airports, sea ports and various means of land traffic as a means of saving the nations during this period. But, if the anti-globalists' truth is based on the correctness of the temporary measures taken at this stage, they still do not have the substantive visions/ways to solve the problem. What is or what was understood under the globalization? How can we talk about the globalization, when the world is divided into three or four parts opposing each other, independent of each other? If that's the case, so what is the basis that allows us to talk about the globalization? May be in fact the globalization is an attempt of the world's ruling camps to impose their ideology and economic models on the countries that are under their influence? And to increase their spheres of influence further? Will this escalate the confrontation in the future, which, in its essence, is against the globalization? In our view, it won't be so if the positive connotation of the globalization will be based on the idea of equal redistribution of intergenerational equality, recognition and kindness. It must be mentioned that the main ideologists of the opposing camps of the world 'globalization' have been withdrawn from this process during the corona-crisis and locked themselves. It should also be taken into consideration that despite these ideological controversies, for their economic benefit, these camps not only cooperate, but actually (implicitly and latently, at least) strengthen each other in the fight for strengthening and expanding spheres of influence. It turns out that this problem should be considered completely newly (especially for small states, which mostly have to fight these and other crises with their limited powers). Since we all live in one world, on the Earth, separation from each other, long-term closure of borders to each other, can't stop the spread of the virus because the virus is also part of the unified ecosystem.

d) It is important not which, but what kind of states have found themselves resistant to the virus. From today's point of view, it is obvious that those on the basis of which are social equality and whose industry and agriculture are properly developed; those whose social security systems are more or less highly represented, which also belong to the medical system of health insurance. Therefore, it is important for all countries to determine their socio-economic development priorities for future correctly.

e) Trust in professional experts and professionals. Coronavirus has put another issue on the agenda: hope, faith and demand for scientists-scholars have increased not in one certain country but in the world society. If the opinions of the scientific experts during the previous economic and refugee crises caused resentment in large or certain parts of the population based on the propaganda of right-wing populists, and now the situation is different, because the humanity expects help from the scientific experts. This is directly related to the definition of the scientific-research and educational priorities, which is primarily carried out in the academic space. The academic space, like never before, has become in demand. The case here is not only about the medical field, but also the fields that play a direct role in overcoming of the crisis. These include the agrarian, engineering-technological, fundamental natural sciences, but at the same time, since the corona virus epidemic is a common human problem, and humanity is an organism of moral communication with each other, it is in demand or there should be a social and humanitarian sciences that are engaged in the research of justice and morality. Engineering technological and natural sciences have been in demand at different times with more or less intensity. But, after the World War II, it became clear that their popularity was determined only by the benefits and increased financial gain caused by the technological development, which, often, was not only in connection, but also in complete confrontation with the basis for the existence of humanity – morality. Anyway, academic professionalism still "comes into fashion," which requires new definitions of the education system and in this case, the functioning of the higher education system and the right priorities. But the **education must be educational and therefore it must be humanistic, and not only available for**

the individual social groups, but also available for everyone, so that these and similar problems end in timely manner and with the correct humanistic results.

II. Georgia and Corona Virus

How has Georgia met the coronavirus and what priorities have the country defined for the solid and long-term development in order to meet the future challenges of the world/humanity more prepared? As for the current problem, the management of the crisis both at the beginning of the crisis and in the present day, in this regard, the actions of the government of Georgia are adequate and the same time goals are defined correctly. Every step the government took after the world-delayed response in general was well thought out, organized and timely. In this regard, it will be difficult even for an opposing side to make a complaint within the reasonable limits. Medical and political leadership works professionally and efficiently, but despite the difference between the social and political systems, all countries of the world struggle against this challenge with the same methods, however, with the different indicators of the efficiency and timeliness. It is more important that both the government and the society begin to think seriously, and moreover, to develop for the country development in the post-crisis period, in which case the number of mistakes that can hamper the country's possible rapid progress in the event of a continuing crisis and after its completion. The first and most important thing is to develop a strategic plan for the development of industry and agriculture, and the country should be able to have self-sufficient existence not only during the global and local crises, but also during the normal condition. In this regard, it is very notable and hopeful that the Georgian government has already started to formulate and implement relevant plan.

It should be taken into account that such strategic plans require a deep scientific research analysis, and therefore high-ranking scholar-experts from the academic space should be involved in its development, as far as, as we mentioned above, the crisis has caused demand for them worldwide.

In addition, the improvement of the legal and political system should facilitate the effective implementation of measures necessary for the rapid development of the industry and agriculture. The current crisis has directly or indirectly raised the demand for rapid and reasonable development and reform of education and especially higher education (which includes research) all over the world and especially in our country. Instead of the marginal destinations which, according to the time requirement, were at the forefront as a result of populist propaganda, such as, for example, the sectoral direction of tourism, or business administration. It should quickly turn the academic spectrum towards the development of such fields that are not only crucial and important for the crisis period, but also for the long-term and sustainable development of the country in general, such as engineering technological directions, agricultural sciences, medical direction and all the fields that are the basis for the creation of the country's economic and social space. This does not mean that a number of academic fields are affected by this, but the priorities should be defined clearly. And also, the priority directions should be accurately determined not only according to the temporary need, but also from a fundamental point of view. Also, the structure and legal status of public and private high schools will be determined, which will support the proper operation of this field.

This crisis has once again clearly showed the world that the economic and social development of the country is possible only on the basis of knowledge. Therefore, the industry, agriculture or other directions that are necessary for the development of the country and for in long term proper existence should be discussed in constant link with the academic space of education and research.