

## INVESTIGATION OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

**Erzsébet Hetesi** (*University of Szeged, Hungary*)<sup>1</sup>

**Noémi Vizi** (*University of Szeged, Hungary*)<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract:**

The study examines the relationship between global citizenship and social responsibility by comparing the datasets of two primary researches. In the first research, it was measured environmental awareness, conscious consumption, and global citizenship, and in the second, it was examined aspects of global citizenship along the three dimensions defined in the literature: social responsibility, global competence, and global civic engagement. The purpose of the study is to examine whether a correlation can be demonstrated between the results of both researches. The research was carried out using an online questionnaire. In this study, the evaluation of the answers refers to the Z generation during the comparative analysis of the data. An interesting result of the comparison of the two surveys is that in the environmental awareness survey, the social responsibility dimension of global citizenship reached a higher value than in the "general" global citizen survey. Based on the results of the analysis of the two independent primary researches, it can also be concluded that the context of the survey has a significant impact on the relationship between global citizenship and social responsibility among young Hungarians, therefore grasping the connections proves to be a very difficult task.

**Keywords:** *social responsibility, responsible consumption, global citizenship*

**JEL Classification:** M14

### **Resumen:**

El estudio examina la relación entre la ciudadanía global y la responsabilidad social, comparando los conjuntos de datos de dos investigaciones primarias. En la primera investigación, se midió la conciencia ambiental, el consumo consciente y la ciudadanía global, y en la segunda, se examinaron aspectos de la ciudadanía global a lo largo de las tres dimensiones definidas en la literatura: responsabilidad social, competencia global y compromiso cívico global. El propósito del estudio es examinar si se puede demostrar una correlación entre los resultados de ambas investigaciones. La investigación se realizó mediante un cuestionario en línea. En este estudio, la evaluación de las respuestas se refiere a la generación Z en el análisis comparativo de los datos. Un resultado interesante de la comparación de las dos encuestas es que en la encuesta de conciencia ambiental, la dimensión de responsabilidad social de la ciudadanía global alcanzó un valor más alto que en la encuesta ciudadana global "general". Sobre la base de los resultados del análisis de las dos investigaciones primarias independientes, también se puede concluir que el contexto de la encuesta tiene un impacto significativo en la relación entre la ciudadanía global y la responsabilidad social entre los jóvenes húngaros, por lo que comprender las conexiones demuestra ser una tarea muy difícil.

<sup>1</sup> Economics and Business Administration Faculty, 6720 Szeged, 1Kálvária street. Hungary,hetesi.uj@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0001-8518-407X

<sup>2</sup>Economics and Business Administration, 6720 Szeged, 1Kálvária street, Hungary vizinoemi2@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-9162-7372

**Palabras clave:** responsabilidad social, consumo responsable, ciudadanía global.

## 1. Introduction

The idea of responsible consumption and production became increasingly prominent in the 2000s, as people, decision-makers, and organizations began to realize that "something" had changed. It was the natural environment. Environmental pollution, global climate change, overconsumption, and the resulting mountains of waste have become more and more noticeable in all areas of life. International organizations are also actively involved in making production and consumption more responsible, thereby slowing down environmental impact and environmental degradation. For example, 12 of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals are Responsible Consumption and Production. The recognition of the problem and the objective are there, but the implementation faces difficulties, because no rules to be followed have been made in order for all organizations and consumers to perceive the gravity of the problem.

People as consumers are also active participants in action and the promotion of sustainability. In the globalized world, it has already been recognized that every individual action adds up to a global one, so positive change can be brought about at the individual level as well. The boundlessness of globalization has made it possible to talk not only about citizens belonging to countries, but also about global citizens belonging to the global world. After all, all people are also part of the global economy. The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between responsible consumption and global citizenship.

The study was written in two different periods of the same year (2020) motivated by the results of a questionnaire survey with a different base population but with a similar topic. The first primary research focused on sustainability and responsible consumption (reusability) and only partially touched on issues of social responsibility and global citizenship, while the second research specifically examined attitudes towards global citizenship. In the first case, the basic population was the whole population (no limiting conditions were applied), and the second research was conducted among Hungarian university students. From the two researches, it was used the data set that pertains to issues related to social responsibility, global citizenship, environmental protection and responsible consumption, and the answers of Generation Z in the samples were compared. The results of both researches drew attention to the fact that, contrary to international literature, the issue of global citizenship does not necessarily belong to the interests of young Hungarians, and their social responsibility depends significantly on the context, for example, their commitment to environmental issues is higher. In the first parts of the study, there is a brief review of the specialized literature of the examined categories, and then explained the circumstances and the most important results of the two researches.

## 2. Social Responsibility, Responsible Consumption and Global citizen

Sustainability, environmental protection, equal opportunities, digitization, robotization have become real buzzwords and objectives in the 2020s. It is already clear that resources are finite and the way of life currently experienced is not sustainable, especially in developed countries. This includes waste, unnecessary purchases, the worldwide spread of throwaway culture, which is directly linked to climate change, and many other factors. Years ago, pessimistic prognoses primarily warned of the ecological dangers threatening our earth, where global climate change has been at the top of the trends for years. Stern (2007) drew attention to the economic effects of climate change and the necessary measures, when he stated that as a result of climate change, the basic living conditions, such as the availability of water and food, will change significantly, but our lives will also be affected by the appearance of new diseases. As a result of climate change, sustainability has become a key concept, and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) is integrated into corporate strategies.

Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without reducing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland, 1987). The unsustainability and potentially self-destructive nature of the current socio-economic processes have become aware of both the public opinion and the researchers dealing with environmental issues.

The basis of responsible consumption is the sense of social, environmental and ethical responsibility, that is, the fact that consumers consciously make their economic decisions after considering the appropriate aspects (which may vary individually). The fact that they consider the social consequences of consumption (from whom and how often they buy, how the product was produced, what social, ethical and environmental aspects arise) and try to use their money and thus their purchasing power to bring about positive social changes (Lim, 2017). Both organizations and consumers must adapt to this trend, and this naturally affects corporate marketing strategies and consumer behavior as well.

In relation to sustainability and responsible consumption, it is no coincidence that in recent years the concept of ecosystem has also appeared in the business world, which expands the approaches that apply to sustainability. Ecosystem is one of those terms that if you ask a hundred people what it means, you'll probably get a hundred different answers. There are many different ecosystems that have a common principle: the principle is the long-term sustainability of the ecosystem's production of goods and services (Stuart Chapin III, Matson & Vitousek, 2011).

Other authors also raise the issue of sustainability and responsibility. Cavagnaro & Curiel (2017) use a holistic approach to sustainable development. The authors argue that this approach begins and ends with humans. They believe that the personal dimension of sustainable development has been neglected, and it is clear that sustainable societies cannot be realized without committed individuals who are convinced that they must participate in the sustainability project. Human well-being depends primarily on material well-being, health, good social relations, security and freedom. However, these factors presuppose a value system where individuals are able to subordinate their individual interests to global interests, i.e. they contribute to the mitigation of global problems based on a unified value system. Based on the above, the authors believe that it is worth examining the characteristics of the global citizen.

Citizenship was already actively used by the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations (Bianchi and Stephenson, 2013), the relationship between the individual and the state, which status was associated with rights and obligations (Law, 2007). Because it was a status, a privilege that was not available to everyone. This had to be earned or born into it, and for a long time only men could get it (Lianaki-Dedouli & Plouin, 2017). This approach to citizenship has evolved a lot, and nowadays it belongs to everyone in the world, even if in different ways and degrees. Because of the well-defined geographical areas, the people living in the given area share their values, language, culture, and historical events (Puncheva-Michelotti, Hudson & Michelotti, 2018), and they live and operate according to the rules of the same political and economic system. In addition to belonging to a nation-state (as citizenship in the traditional sense), the approach of global citizenship has also developed as a result of globalization. It could also be interpreted as a cross-border citizenship (UNESCO, 2014). However, this is no longer determined by gender, social status, income situation, or occupation, but rather by a person's way of thinking, awareness, sense of responsibility, and actions in given situations.

The global citizen approach is a kind of commitment to cultural diversity, respect for human rights and the needs of others, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, social status and attachment to the nation-state (Lyons, Hanlex, Wearing & Neil, 2011). But we can also define it as a person who is able to express himself without limiting others in their self-expression (Lianaki-Dedouli & Plouin, 2017). Based on the study by Esteves (2015), we can consider a global citizen (regardless of his country and culture) who is aware and feels responsible not only for his environment in the narrower sense, but also for his impact on the planet. This aspect can be an economic, social or environmental.

To sum up what has been said, it is important for a global citizen to be aware of global issues, so he is aware; socially responsible; and is socially committed and actively participates in local/regional/national/global community "actions" (Stoner, Perry, Wadsworth, Stoner & Tarrant, 2014). So he is not only a global citizen "in thought", but also in practice, which he makes visible with his actions. You can convey this to your environment and the outside world not only by volunteering for an organization, but also by organizing attitude-shaping actions or by asserting your social responsibility during your consumption decisions. Precisely because of this, by definition, not everyone can be considered a global citizen to the same extent, but everyone participates in some form in the global economy, but only the level of their awareness, responsibility, and civic engagement is different.

Global citizens have three sets of characteristics: knowledge and understanding; the skills/abilities; and values/attitude (UNESCO, 2018), and it is important to their coordinated operation in theory and practice. Based on the above, the characteristics can be grouped as follows:

- 1) knowledge, awareness – global competences, awareness, sustainability (Morais & Ogden, 2011; Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013; Goren & Yemini, 2017)
- 2) mutual acceptance, equality – cultural diversity, racial equality, social justice (Oxfam, 2015),
- 3) inherent rights - freedom of self-expression, access to education, voting (Lyons et al., 2011; Teo, 2015)
- 4) active involvement/action – social commitment, civic involvement, caring (Stoner et al., 2014; Lyons et al., 2011)

### 3. Primer researches

The primary results presented in this study were carried out as a pilot study, where the first pilot project was implemented between October 2020 and November 2020, and the second study was completed between October and December 2020. Both times, the authors used an online questionnaire procedure, and the results were analyzed using statistical methods, in order to find relationship between the results of the two researches.

#### 3.1. Primary research I. - Environmentally conscious consumption, reuse, global citizenship

In this research, the research goal was to assess environmental awareness in 8 areas of life: eating (7 aspects), shopping (5), entertainment (5), trips/holidays (7), shopping for clothes (4), buying hygiene products (4), mode of transport (6) and other areas of life (5). With 43 variables, it was examined the attitudes towards reuse, and with 13 statements the social responsibility dimension of global citizenship (based on the 2011 study by Morais and Ogden) in the available online communities. In all cases, it was used 6-point scale for the questions evaluations. The questionnaire - which was only available in Hungary - was filled out by 152 people, in terms of its composition the sample cannot be considered representative: women were overrepresented (80%), more than 37.5% of respondents were between 18-25 years old, 26-40 years old appear in the sample with 41.45%, while those aged 41-55 represented 11.84%, and the proportion of those over 55 was 8.55%.

The analysis was performed with Microsoft Excel and SPSS programs. The points of the 8 sub-areas of environmental awareness were aggregated into a total environmental awareness score (the maximum value was 258), and the scores of the three sub-dimensions of global citizenship and social responsibility were merged (the maximum value was 78 points). During the analysis, it was used these values, not the evaluations which received for the 43+13 factors separately. First, a Cronbach's Alpha indicator was run on the 43 variables measuring environmental awareness, and the value was 0.854. The acceptance range is above 0.7, so it has verified that the scale can be considered consistent in terms of environmental awareness, so it makes sense to add the scores given to the factors. The same procedure was applied to the 13 questions measuring global citizenship, where the Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.808, so this scale can also be considered consistent.

One of the important questions of the research was whether there is an identifiable relationship between the environmental awareness total score and the global citizenship total score. The measurement-level of both variable are scales, correlation and rank correlation can also be used between them. In the case of correlation, the value of the Pearson's correlation coefficient is  $r_{xy}=0.567$ , which can be identified as a positive, moderately strong relationship. In the case of Spearman's rank correlation, a positive, weak relationship can be measured between these two ranks (based on the value of  $r_s=0.401$ ).

This research was conducted previously than the questionnaire research aimed at the global citizen attitude, however, from the point of view of examining the correlations that are important to us, it was selected from the research the dataset that relates to questions related to social responsibility, responsible consumption and global citizenship. We analyzed the answers of Generation Z in a small number of participants.

In the first table, there can be find the average score, which is 51.9 points, and the total scores of individual respondents differ from the main average by of 10.24 points an average. In the case of the groups, it can be observed that those under the age of 40 had higher average points than those who was over the age of 41. The results indicate that younger people can be considered "higher" global citizens who are more socially responsible (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Total global citizenship mean scores and deviations of standard deviations by age

Age groups	Frequencies (capita)	Relative frequencies (%)	Average scores (points)	Std. deviation (points)
Under 18 years	1	0,66	59,00	-
Years between 18-25	57	37,50	53,54	8,35
Years between 26-40 év	63	41,45	52,14	8,74
Years between 41-55 év	18	11,84	46,50	13, 73
Over the age of 55	13	8,55	50,54	16,42
Total	152	100,0	51,9	10,24

Source: own construction

Although the number of elements in the age cells is low, the results are indicative, because according to the literature review, young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 are more likely to think of themselves as global citizens. Using data from World Value Surveys, Bramlett (2016) concluded that this is especially true for young adults who have socialized in the age of globalization in recent decades, which supports the focus on Generation Z in our analyses.

And although it is not closely related to Generation Z, but it can be an interesting question whether the level of income affects the level of global citizenship. The characteristics of a global citizen include acceptance of justice, caring, and sensitivity to the problems of others. It could also follow that the global citizenship attitudes of those with higher incomes are more positive. It was examined whether it can be verified that the total score obtained in the area of global citizenship will also be higher at a higher income level. As a result of comparing the group averages, the relationship indicator ( $H=0.226$ ), showed a weak relationship between the variables. Those who earn at least twice the Hungarian average of net income have the lowest average score. They scored 45 points out of 78. The highest average score (54.05) was achieved by those who earn approximately one and a half times the average net salary (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Difference in Total Global Citizenship Scores by Income Groups

Income groups	Average (points)	Frequencies (capita)	Relative frequencies (%)	Std. deviation (points)
Slightly worse than the average (up to approx. 60% of the average salary, net 168,000 HUF)	52,724	69	45,4	9,49
Average salary (net 280 500 HUF)	51,81	48	31,5	9,49
Slightly better than the average (one and a half times of the average salary, net 452,000 HUF)	54,04	21	13,8	5,64
Significantly above the average (at least twice of the average salary, more than net 560,000 HUF)	45,00	14	9,3	17,593
Total	51,90	152	100,0	10,24

Source: own construction

This result can be indicative even though the group item numbers are very different, and those with the highest average earnings are listed with the lowest scores.

### 3.2 Primary research II. - Global citizenship attitudes among young people

It was also examined the attitude of university students of Generation Z towards global citizenship using an online questionnaire, where the goal was to find out which of the three dimensions of global citizenship is dominant among the Generation Z Hungarian university students. The questionnaire of

Morais & Ogden (2011) was adapted for the research. This questionnaire follows the three dimensions of global citizenship (social responsibility, global competence (knowledge), global civic involvement) and formulates 41 related statements. The authors tried to reach as many young people as possible, so they used the snowball method; in order to get fillings to the questionnaire between October and December 2020. We reached nearly 4,000 students, but the willingness to complete was very low: only 143 applications were received, of which 117 belonged to Generation Z, 93% of them are participating in university education, and 73% are studying at a bachelor's degree. The sample is not representative. The low number of completions also indicates that, contrary to the literature, the topic is not necessarily of interest to young Hungarians (Udvari, Vizi & Szabó Hangya, 2021).

Since the main goal was to make the dimensions comparable, to find out in which area the Generation Z fillers perform better, i.e. where they achieve the highest average score and the smallest standard deviation. SPSS statistical program was used for the analysis, including factor analysis and descriptive statistics. The three dimensions were examined by mean scores and standard deviations. The results are shown in Table 3. Comparing the average scores to the total score, it can be seen that this ratio is the highest in the case of global competence, which indicates that the respondents performed best in this global citizen dimension. Comparing the standard deviations, we could see significant differences, in the case of social responsibility this value was 3.98, and 11.44 for global civic engagement, which reflected how different the respondents think about the questions which measure global citizenship.

**Table 3.** Mean score and standard deviation of dimensions of global citizenship

Dimension of global citizen	The number of statements of a dimension (piece)	Maximum scores which can be obtained (point)	Average score (point)	The average score is the ratio of the total score (%)	Std. deviaton (point)
Social responsibility	13	78	37,63	48,24	3,98
Global competence	12	72	37,29	51,79	7,24
Global civic engagement	16	96	37,84	39,42	11,44

Source: own construction

The responses narrowed down to Generation Z, and we were further examined using factor analysis (Udvari et al., 2021). During the factor analysis, we were able to classify the elements of the 3 dimensions, i.e. the 41 variables, into 4 categories with the help of this method, which are connected to the dimensions describing global citizenship (social responsibility, global competence, global civic engagement) (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Factors related to the dimensions of global citizenship

Dimension	Factor	Meaning
Social responsibility	Social justice	A világ igazságos, és mindenki azt kapja, amit megérdemel.
	Exploitation	No one can be exploited, but violence is allowed in times of deprivation.
	Poverty	The poor people need to be helped, and the reason they are poor is not because they don't work enough.
	Responsibility	He/She is interested in and deals with other people's problems.
Global competence	Involuntary adaptation	Involuntarily adopts the behavior of a person from another culture.
	Multikulturalism	He/She can live anywhere, speaks several languages and understands people from other cultures.
	Communication	Tud és mer a globális problémákról beszélni. He/She knows and dares to talk about global problems
	Individual competence	He/She feels the possibility of being able to influence how the world works.

Global civic engagement	Personal and active participation	Within 2 years, participate in a civic event serving a global cause.
	Responsible product consumption	Priority is given to the purchase of fair-trade and products supporting the disadvantaged.
	Volunteering	Within 2 years, he/she plans to carry out some kind of voluntary activity.
	Expression of opinion	Within 6 months, you will share your opinion on global problems in some forum.

Source: Udvari et al. 2021, p.1215.

The authors also examined which of the individual factors were stronger among our respondents. Based on this, the global civic commitment dimension is outstanding: all four factors achieved better results than the factors of the other two dimensions. This indicates that Generation Z really wants to do something for the world and is willing to undertake voluntary work, as well as trying to take care of their own product consumption. Based on the results, it seems that our respondents are willing and confident to move around the world (multiculturalism), but they seem uncertain about issues concerning social responsibility (Udvari et. al., 2021).

### 3.3 Conclusions that can be drawn from the comparative analysis

The two surveys were conducted independently, but they examined the global citizenship of university students in the same way. One of the most interesting results of the primary analysis conducted on the basis of research data narrowed down to the Hungarian Generation Z is that, while in the case of the global citizenship examination, based on the average scores, global civic commitment proved to be the strongest factor, but if we compare the average to the total score of the given dimension, the value of global competence is higher. It can be observed that the average score of each of the 3 dimensions of Morais & Ogden (2011) is between 37 and 38. On the other hand, when it was analyzed the relationship between environmental awareness and global citizenship, the average of the total global citizenship score for the dimension of social responsibility calculated for the entire sample was 51.9 points, for those who were at the age of 18-25 it was 53.50, which is the highest among the groups if we take out the 1 person who was under 18 and was placed in a separate age group. Based on this, it can be said that if we "activated" the "role" which aimed at environmental awareness and social responsibility, the average score in the area of social responsibility was significantly higher (by 37.9%) than in that case when the dimensions of global citizenship were examined alone.

## 4. Conclusions

Based on the two researches, it can say that there is generally little interest and knowledge in the area of the global citizen in Hungary, but this was unfortunately also confirmed in the case of young people. The main conclusions also draw attention to the fact that, while the members of Generation Z who filled out our questionnaires are committed to active action and environmental awareness (e.g. volunteering, responsible product consumption, sharing and exchanging opinions), this is more apparent when the authors asked them in the topic of environmental awareness, and after that, the statements about social responsibility emerged, with which global citizenship becomes measurable.

Of course, the authors are also aware of the limitations of our research: the online survey resulted in non-representative samples, the low number of sample elements, and consequently also the reliability of our results. Moreover, this analysis also draws attention to the methodological problem of validity. When it could see that completely different results were obtained for the dimensions of global citizenship, if the central problem was global citizenship itself, than when we examined all of this together with the topic of environmental awareness, then we must also paid attention to the circumstances in which the data collection took place. With investigations, it is therefore not only about "how" we ask something, but also about how the content environment of the investigated problem can influence the respondents.

At the same time, the authors are confident that, despite the limitations, our conclusions can be indicative. Many literature researches deal with issues related to the implementation, measurement and success of Global Citizenship Education (GCE) (Schattle, 2009; Pacho, 2020). GCE aims to promote peaceful,

inclusive, tolerant, sustainable and socially just societies; however, despite its central role in international political discourse and academic research, the impact of GCE on young people's attitudes towards social inequality or human rights remains relatively unexplored. There is a work in the field of education as well: if we develop global civic engagement and the area of social responsibility, many goals can be achieved by building on the active role felt in relation to global competence.

Further research directions are abundantly available precisely because the question remains unexplored. Under the auspices of the GCE, UNESCO addresses several specific themes: preventing violent extremism through education, languages in education, and promoting the rule of law through global citizenship education (UNESCO, 2022). There are also many opportunities in the field of marketing. Our future plans include researching the appearance of social responsibility and responsible consumption in fashion industry consumption (fast fashion), as well as examining the relationship between the global citizen and fast fashion.

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