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**UNIVERSITY OF SARAJEVO
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MASTER'S THESIS

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MASTER'S THESIS

**THE ROLE OF MARKETING IN BUILDING THE RESILIENCE OF
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO CRISES: THE CASE OF CANTON
SARAJEVO GOVERNMENT DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BiH – Bosnia and Herzegovina
COVID-19 – Coronavirus disease 2019
MERS – Middle East respiratory syndrome
PR – Public relations
UK – United Kingdom
US – United States
WHO – World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

Globalization transformed the business world over the past few decades and despite many environmental and human disasters during these years, the Earth has always managed to come back stronger. However, as the Coronavirus disease 2019 (hereinafter: COVID-19) pandemic spread across the globe, with exceptional speed since the beginning of 2020, it was evident that this unique case would have a chaotic effect on economies, governmental institutions, businesses, and individual companies. With most nations turning to a stand-still state as borders closed and lockdowns began to tackle the virus spread, the pandemic caused significant uncertainty at all levels in society (Sharma, Leung, Kingshott, Davcik & Cardinali, 2020). The market structures for economic development and welfare that were effective for the past thirty years are of questionable relevance now (Jenny, 2020). The outbreak has rattled the government foundations and intensified the burden on all of its levels to adjust and provide services to people at a pace and scale that was not seen before (Assi, Dib, Fine & Isherwood, 2020).

The pandemic has put a significant test on government disaster preparedness on both global and national levels, but most notably at the local level. Several municipal councils worldwide have already experienced the management of natural disasters caused by weather, as severe winters, earthquakes and floods have been frequent occurrences in the past few years. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, local governments have been struck by a disaster that does not fit neatly into the category of their previous experience, making it difficult to adapt to new market conditions (Dzigbede, Gehl & Willoughby, 2020). As a result, the pandemic outbreak required governments to search for alternative methods of managing the occurred issues. To reduce uncertainty and make prognoses for the industries, the policy-makers and financial experts frequently compare the effects of COVID-19 with previous recessions. Although the comparison with the Recession in 2008 and Great Depression still riddles with many measuring challenges, specific approximate methods were quickly accepted and adapted to many countries' new market rules (Wheelock, 2020).

In addition to the previous recessions, the governments looked at the failure of response during the 2015 Middle East respiratory syndrome (hereinafter: MERS) outbreak. Despite the increase of infected cases during this epidemic, the South Korean government did not reveal details to the media to prevent panic and reduce hospital reputation damage. However, this situation caused public protest and tensions with central and local governments. Hence, the policy-makers importance of being transparent to the citizens is one of the crucial lessons from this situation (Moon, 2020). Furthermore, as we live in the age of massive digitalization, information availability is much easier today than during the MERS outbreak. Therefore, the COVID-19 increased government pressure to transparently serve the public and have an adaptive and agile approach to slowing down the contagion spike and creating more resilient governments and communities (Assi et al., 2020).

The concept of resilience is described as "the ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to adverse events" (National Research Council, 2012). The simplified definition of resilience is "adaptation in the face of adversity," as used by the American Psychological Association (2012). In other words, after a big shock, individuals, firms and institutions should be able to find a way to survive, adjust and deal with the turmoil(s) around them (Williams, 2014).

Resilience is widely understood to represent withstanding or rebounding from a threat or catastrophe. However, citizens can create a societal collapse without government procedures' stability that could deepen the chaos and extend the recovery time. In poorly controlled societies, instability resulting from destructive activities negatively affects the decision-making environment, frequently stalling decisions and disabling decision makers' best interests (Wakeman, Contestabile, Knatz & Anderson, 2017). Central government leadership is necessary to maintain the political, social and economic balance between taking steps to reduce the pandemic's effects while preserving the availability of essential services. Good leadership in this type of situation is a key to maintaining the confidence of people in government. Simultaneously approaching different overlapping policy agendas involves a dual government-wide solution. It is essential to support well-being through agile and creative responses at the highest level and coordinate and engage with lower government levels while transparently promoting national stability (Jacobzone, Ostry, Stola, Klein, Badr, Phillips & Fuquene, 2020).

When it comes to promoting national stability to the citizens, the primary tool used by policy-makers globally is marketing. Kotler and Armstrong (2017, p. 28) define marketing as "the process by which companies engage customers, build strong customer relationships, and create customer value to capture value from customers in return." Likewise, the American Marketing Association (2017) offers the following definition: "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large."

Marketing government strategies are the essential policy tools for government action to digitalize the public sector, especially during pandemics. When adapted to the country-specific institutional context and building on previous efforts, a government marketing strategy can set targets and align objectives, define priorities, and identify implementation-oriented actions across the administration. Moreover, in a time in which digital technologies are a big part of citizens' daily lives, businesses and governments, digital governance strategies are needed to embody the vital paradigm shift brought about by digital transformation (OECD, 2019a).

In addition to the COVID-19 outbreak, a pandemic of false information is more than ever undermining trust, amplifying fear and often leading to dangerous citizens' behavior. Therefore, global and local governments use online communication to combat misinformation and promote policy at the highest rate in history. The marketing tools usage is of the highest importance at these times, as it helps build public institutions' confidence in the values of open government, especially transparency (Bellatoni, Badr & Alfonsi, 2020). In addition, governments worldwide are reacting to the COVID-19 pandemic with steps that involve introducing awareness campaigns to encourage actions to reduce the virus's spread. These include hand hygiene, physical distance, disinfection and masks wearing, and special steps for specific populations, such as vulnerable isolation (Curtis et al., 2020).

The importance of establishing a common purpose and clear communication, among other characteristics in building resilient government during COVID-19, has been recognized by many countries globally. Compared to others, France, Colombia, New Zealand and Ireland used the most effective and coherent public communication during the pandemics (Jacobzone et al., 2020). Having citizen confidence as one of the main goals of 2021, the Australian Federal Government is investing almost \$ 24 million in an advertising campaign to promote COVID-19 vaccination. This campaign results from governments reducing exposure to misleading information and building confidence in the system (Cameron, 2021).

In addition to the mentioned countries, both the United Kingdom (hereinafter: UK) (Chong, Handscomb, Williams, Hall & Rooney, 2020) and the United States (hereinafter: US) (Dzigbede et al., 2020) have already researched the pandemic implications for local government resiliency, both agreeing on the importance of transparency in communication towards citizens. Furthermore, these articles provided the transfer of knowledge and support and insight into what long-term market conditions would look like post-crisis, enabling them to determine how to facilitate growth in industries and emerge as responsible governments.

Unlike the countries mentioned above, in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereinafter: BiH), national and local authorities' communication was not transparent after the initial outbreak, leading to a very intense public reaction and criminal prosecution. In addition, overpaid medical ventilators were imported from China without pre-approved technical specifications and import permissions, which caused a significant shift in trust towards the government (Health System Report Monitors, 2020). Keeping in mind that the national government has issues providing vaccines to its citizens almost a year after the situation mentioned above. Thus, the government has not gained citizens' trust back yet (Euronews, 2021).

Even though ventilators and vaccines are national-level problems, Canton Sarajevo has a disrupted relationship with its citizens' most extensive sub-national government level in BiH because of the previous transparency issues. Additionally, rapidly changing market conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic combined with massive digitalization result in the government feeling particularly vulnerable. To ensure resilience and better

governments and citizens' relationships, some of the world's most powerful countries have already presented research findings and proposed communication channels for achieving communication goals. However, BiH experts have still given little to no guidance for the public sector resilience during the crisis.

Hence, keeping in mind that the pandemic is still ongoing, this master's thesis topic is essential for policy-makers. It focuses on the role of marketing and communication in building a resilient Canton Sarajevo government during the COVID-19 pandemic. This topic's primary purpose is to supply the government with the necessary knowledge, measures, and responses to overcome current environmental obstacles and ensure long-term recovery and growth. In addition to the role of marketing during the crisis, this thesis focuses on successful global examples of marketing tools synergy and educates local government on how to reflect, plan and rethink their marketing strategies during and post COVID-19 world.

To resolve the defined issue and answer the research questions, this master's thesis objectives are as follows:

- to evaluate and assess the research perspective on the role of marketing and transparent communication in the public sector during crisis globally and locally,
- to define trends and opportunities and identify best marketing practices to shape a more resilient government during the crisis,
- to investigate marketing strategies and techniques used by the government Canton Sarajevo in fighting against COVID-19 impacts, and
- to provide recommendations regarding decision-makers marketing strategies during and post-COVID-19 pandemic to ensure government resilience.

Within this master's thesis, an empirical examination of the following research questions helps with gaining a better insight into the Canton Sarajevo government:

- RQ1: Why is government resilience essential in times of crisis, and how can Canton Sarajevo ensure it during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- RQ2: What is the role of marketing and communication in building the resilience of local governments?
- RQ3: Which marketing channels Canton Sarajevo currently uses to communicate with citizens and promote the actions taken?

To provide a baseline for determining the significance of this masters' thesis as a future standard for other studies and their findings (Creswell, 2009), it commences with a literature review. The mentioned literature review focuses on marketing within the public sector and summarizes studies closely related to public sector marketing. Additionally, the examination consists of findings of the impact of COVID-19 globally to provide a direction for the research questions and analysis of the problem locally.

A primary research method for this master's thesis is a qualitative approach. This method provides the ability to receive answers to specific questions developed within the pre-empirical phase and gain descriptive data regarding the importance of marketing in the resilience of government. In-depth interviewing of nine Canton Sarajevo representatives allows the collection of necessary data within qualitative research. These interviews are systematically carried out with both Canton Sarajevo marketing representatives and ministries within the government to identify the resilient capabilities of the public sector during the pandemic and gain insight into the marketing strategies conducted. An essential step within the data collection and analysis process is to ensure the accuracy and reliability of data to ensure validation.

The final step of the methodology is arranging and organizing data from the interviews to interpret the results. After identifying the necessary data, manual coding will occur via open, axial, and selective coding and constant comparison. Finally, the analysis process concludes with a presentation of results, research limitations, followed by a conclusion and recommendations for the government representatives, providing them with guidelines for building a resilient government with the help of marketing tools.

1 MARKETING OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR

1.1 The concept and evolution of marketing

To adequately understand the role of marketing in the public sector and establish a shared reference point, the first step is to comprehend the basic concept of marketing itself. Even though the role of marketing is to aid in the identification, satisfaction and retention of customers, there is still no universally accepted definition of marketing (Burnett, 2008). This issue arose in the 1960s when the American Marketing Association proposed an official marketing definition, "the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producers to consumers or users." Many academics widely panned this definition due to its narrow breadth and significant focus on utility (Gamble, Gilmore, McCartan-Quinn & Durkan, 2011).

Over the years, the marketing discipline has continued to evolve due to evolutionary changes, emerging the evolution of numerous marketing definitions (Brunswick, 2014). Therefore, shortly after the American Marketing Association proposal, Buskirk (1961) discussed three main marketing concepts: distributing goods and services, delivering a standard living concept, and revenue generation approach. Ten years later, Gist (1971, p. 11) defined marketing as "the purposeful management of products and services, prices and promotional and distribution activities of a business organization according to the preferences of some market or market segment and in a manner calculated to achieve the

objectives of the business." In the mid-1970s, Baker (1976) provided a more straightforward definition, stating that marketing is a trade process between persons and organizations completed to the mutual profit and satisfaction. By 1985, American Marketing Association had proposed a new marketing definition, which was revised few times during the past decades, with the latest version confirmed in 2013. The American Marketing Association (2017) currently offers the following definition: "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large." During this period, Philip Kotler, commonly acknowledged as the father of modern marketing, has developed and revised several marketing definitions (Brunswick, 2014).

Today, in addition to American Marketing Association, Kotler and Armstrong's description is widely used by students and scholars. Kotler and Armstrong (2017, p. 28) define it as "the process by which companies engage customers, build strong customer relationships, and create customer value to capture value from customers in return." As seen from the definitions above, in the last 50 years, the marketing concept has evolved significantly. Therefore, even though, at first glance, they seem different and somewhat exclusive of one another, all the definitions mentioned above have a deep connection – they provide a socially relevant and unique viewpoint on their current cultural awareness concerns. Additionally, they provide information on how they may be modified and improved for diverse economies, linking to corporate social responsibility and technology advances (Gamble et al., 2011).

Marketing's initial development began in a revenue-making-focused industry, whose economic goals highly influenced marketing purposes. As most companies focused on sales and profits, management theories primarily focused on companies' obligations to their shareholders, with only some attention to employees and consumers. Therefore, at the time, marketing's main goal was to generate revenue for the companies. However, with the changing market conditions, new technologies, and globalization, modern thought started focusing on marketing to generate value instead of only focusing on profits. As a result, shareholders were no longer seen as only interest groups by the companies, who then began producing value for all stakeholders to keep their loyalty and involvement for many years to come (Proctor, 2009).

These new market conditions significantly affected the purposes of profit-driven organizations through the years and introduced new business models to better align with market demands. These models are also known as Marketing Orientation Approaches and present an organization's core offer to market (hence its marketing strategy). They revolve around five fundamental areas: (1) production orientation – focusing on low prices; (2) product orientation – focusing on producing a better product, (3) sales orientation – focusing on good sales techniques, (4) societal orientation – focusing on satisfying customers' wants and needs; and (5) market orientation – production in society's best interests (Roberts, 2011). These models are presented below in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Marketing Orientations



Adapted from Roberts (2021).

Even though any of the mentioned marketing orientations can be effective on their own, their chance of success is highly dependent on the market setting. For example, product orientation has little if customers are not interested in purchasing inexpensive mass-produced goods. Likewise, if the market is saturated with high-quality products, there is a very slim chance to produce something better and focus marketing strategy on benefits (Proctor, 2009).

To better understand this transformation through the years, Kotler presented the evolution of the marketing concept. It consisted of the Marketing 1.0 concept (**product-driven**), which focused on selling a relatively modest number of items to a large set of customers, as seen in the mid-1900s. The second feature, Marketing 2.0 (**customer-centric**), came with a new technology era and focused on fulfilling consumers' needs and wants. This era had many more challenges than the previous one, as customers were much better informed. Marketing 3.0, also known as the **value-driven** era, has focused on switching from treating people as simple consumers to delivering values with human aspects. This shift prompted companies to take stands and present their human sides to appeal and connect to the consumers (Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan, 2010, p. 17-28). Finally, Marketing 4.0 is the newest concept presented in 2017 and combines online and offline communication of individuals and businesses, promoting **human-to-human** connection. This concept enables giving "voices" to customers to express and share their opinions regarding the organization and its values (Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan, 2017). Characteristics of marketing concepts are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of Marketing 1.0, 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0.

The Feature	Marketing 1.0	Marketing 2.0	Marketing 3.0	Marketing 4.0
Concentration	Product-driven marketing	Consumer-centric marketing	Values-driven marketing	Human-centered marketing
Objective	Selling products	Customer satisfaction & retention	Making world a better place	Inspiring co-creation of new products & services
Enabling forces	Industrial Revolution	Information technology	A new wave of technologies	Digital economy
Companies market perception	Mass buyers with material needs	Savvy customers driven by logic and heart	Human with mind, heart and soul	Netizen man (citizen of the network)
Key concept	Product development	Diversification	Significance	Humanization
Marketing guidelines	Product specification	Product and company positioning	Company values, vision & mission	Creating content and brands
Value proposition	Functional	Functional and emotional	Functional, emotional and spiritual	Commitment and trust
Consumers' interaction	One-to-many approach	One-to-one approach	Many-to-many approach	Networking

Adapted from Kotler et al. (2010) and Kotler et al. (2017).

Even though marketing is constantly evolving, it's important to note that Marketing 1.0 and 2.0 are still relevant as positioning, market segmentation, branding and customer relationship development are still crucial. Nonetheless, corporate environment changes such as recession, climate changes, new technologies and increased customer influence will continue to drive the progressive transition of marketing methods in all sectors (Kotler et al., 2010).

1.2 Development of public sector marketing

As marketing applies to all types of organizations, to adequately understand public sector marketing, it is necessary to understand the meaning of public organizations. The public sector (essentially a non-profit-making sector) is best defined as the non-private part of economic activity, specializing in producing, distributing, and transferring public goods and services at local and national levels. Its methods and procedures might consist of direct governance, public companies and partial outsourcing (Serrat, 2010). Non-profit

organizations can range from big companies providing public services (such as local governments) to humanitarian institutions and other groups of different sizes and objectives (Proctor, 2009).

When it comes to marketing, the first traces of public sector marketing were seen in 1792 legislation that required "openings for mail routes be advertised in one or more newspapers for at least six weeks before contracts could be awarded" (Yarwood & Enis, 1982, p.37). According to Serrat (2010), marketing aspects have always existed in the public sector but were considered secondary to delivering public goods and services. Nonetheless, significant underlying potential has emerged in the previous 20 years, coinciding with the rise of commercialization and implementation of marketing orientation and promotional strategies. Today, marketing is an integral component in public sector management, embracing some private-sector tools and approaches. Therefore, the lines between private and public sector marketing models are blurring, as their core values are building trust and relationships.

However, it is essential to highlight that the public sector is a specific market in itself, so the classic market factors, such as demand and supply, may not always be relevant. The reason for this is because the customer of most services is not the end consumer, unlike the conventional business model. As a result, public sector marketing could be more complicated and requires a different strategy than those utilized in the private sector (Bean & Hussey, 2011). This difference between marketing in two sectors is visible when considering services in which relationships are limited to accepting and not accepting related conditions, such as connection to electricity or telephone network, when the operator selection is not always available. As a result, there is usually some enforcement of exchange conditions. The ability and desire of public organizations to employ marketing methods lay in bringing differentiation to the offer and the possible engagement of beneficiaries in the transaction. These differentiation elements can be introduced in the form of: (1) services - universities adapting course offer, (2) price - differentiation in pricing system of public transport and (3) access to the service - providing options for completing forms (Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2018).

Unlike private organizations, public sector marketing mainly focuses on consumer satisfaction, even though there is usually no direct competition. A supply monopoly does not necessarily eliminate the necessity of marketing. In public organizations, marketing has an essential role in fulfilling the interests of several and often opposing parties. This sector uses four forms of marketing that vary in their underlying purposes. The first form presents "marketization," which refers to transforming public-sector operations components into marketing activities by introducing services and goods to the competitive forces of the marketplace. The main goal is to lower the price point while raising the quality standard to meet consumer needs. Organizations use the second marketing form to promote their self-interest. In the public sector, this is apparent when organizations use stakeholder marketing to ensure their continued survival through the market and societal support. Third, when it

comes to municipal governments, marketing can be used for advertising the region within the government's jurisdiction, such as city tourism activities. Finally, advertising may help support essential political goals, such as the achievement of social impacts (Proctor, 2009).

Like the marketing forms mentioned above, Pasquier and Villeneuve (2018) state that three trends are visible regarding the marketing of the public sector. Firstly, if looking at marketing as generally understood from the definitions above, all interactions between social entities are to be encompassed. As a result, public sector marketing allows the promotion of all public services (economic, environmental, healthcare, education, sports, etc.). However, as scholars were skeptical of this view, another trend has been established in the public sector marketing. It states that it is necessary to look at both exchange (goods, services, price) and relationship requirements before applying the associated tools. Finally, the third method focuses entirely on using proper marketing methods to the dynamics of public bodies without considering the relevance of the goal and context.

1.3 Public sector marketing characteristics

Before discussing public sector marketing characteristics, it is necessary to present a central element of marketing used by both sectors to obtain and persuade organizations' target audiences – **the marketing mix**. Borden (1965) first introduced this concept, suggesting that, similarly to the cake mix, only the right mix of ingredients can lead to a satisfactory result. McCarthy (1960) formalized the marketing mix notion by adding the **four Ps**, which stand to the fundamental tools available: product, price, promotion and place. These tools are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Ingredients in the marketing mix



Adapted from Pasquier & Villeneuve (2018).

Even though both sectors use the marketing mix to revolutionize their stakeholder communications, increase their performance and provide a favorable return on their given assets, as stated previously, in various ways, the public sector varies from the private industry. Therefore, the distinguishment of the public sector marketing aspects from private goods and services is necessary. Pasquier and Villeneuve (2018) have identified four characteristics of public sector marketing to help with the differentiation from the private sector. They present characteristics linked to **the market** (factors relating to supply and demand), **organization** (factors relevant to the opportunities and challenges of organization's marketing activity development), **exchange** (characteristics about exchange components) and **relationship** (features related to the interaction between organizations and recipients of public services).

According to Pasquier and Villeneuve (2018), the characteristics linked to the market and the relationship between supply and demand are very particular, so the elements are not always present. This relationship is visible in the case of an ID card, as the demand is determined not only by individual needs but also by the state's delegation of some individual rights. Market access is restricted on both supply and demand levels, as the legislation sets access rights. The second characteristic is related to the organization, where the legislation establishes the structure and restrictions of the entity delivering the service. There is restricted independence and flexibility in creating services and determining rates and access to services in this case. The organization usually addresses a variety of objectives, the majority of which are noncommercial. Marketing actions and metrics are hard to assess, and there is significant political power over the organization.

On the other hand, marketing characteristics linked to the exchange are usually government services that are communal entities with non-rival, non-exclusive, and unitary qualities. Offer is generally unique and non-competitive, with minor distinctions combined with few to none competitors. There is no restriction on services, so fair trade is difficult to determine and achieve. Finally, the relationship characteristics linked to numerous target groups sometimes cannot be distinguished by defining traits. For example, relationships in the public sector are not often commercial, but personal participation is frequently intense. Negotiations are not individual but collective (Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2018).

Similar to characteristics developed by Pasquier and Villeneuve, Judith Madill has presented four forms of public sector marketing in her studies. According to Madill (1998), many government agencies are using marketing strategies to overcome two primary challenges: completing requirements and meeting client demands in the face of severely reduced resources and reaching stated revenue objectives. One of the most significant barriers to employing marketing in government organizations is a lack of awareness of the various forms of marketing used and how each may assist create social capital. Consequently, government employees frequently adapt traditional business-oriented marketing techniques to their specific demands. However, public sector marketing differs fundamentally and

identifying and understanding these differences is critical for marketing to be used successfully in the public sector. Therefore, Madill inspects four main marketing branches in the public sector: marketing of products and services, social marketing, policy marketing and demarketing or don't-use-our-programs marketing. These four types of marketing are explained in detail below.

Type A: Marketing of products and services

According to Madill (1998), marketing of products and services is usually the first choice for marketing in the public sector. Serrat (2010) additionally states that many government institutions provide products and services for free or a fee (either on cost recovery or a for-profit basis to finance essential public benefit activities). This type of marketing is similar to the products and services marketing in the private sector, as the governments engage in designing, developing, producing, and distributing promotional materials. However, as many government institutions have created communications plans outside of a marketing framework, they are considerably more familiar with promotion than with the other Ps of the marketing mix, such as product (or service), place and pricing.

Type B: Social marketing

According to Kotler and Zaltman (1971), the second form of marketing typically used by public entities is social marketing, which aims to modify the behaviors and attitudes of certain groups. It consists of strategizing, executing, and managing programs to influence the acceptance of social concepts and it includes the product, planning, price, communication, distribution, and marketing research concerns. For example, when Medical Directory introduces a marketing campaign to prevent young people from smoking, they participate in social marketing. Even though the private industry participates in social marketing (for example, campaigns to prevent driving while under the influence or smoking while pregnant), such initiatives are minimal compared to traditional marketing of products and services.

Type C: Policy marketing

The third type of public sector marketing is called policy marketing. This type of marketing is common when governments conduct marketing campaigns to persuade specific segments of society to embrace their policies or new legislation. For example, when the government tries to convince the public about the benefits of the free trade agreement or improvements to the pension plan, it engages in policy marketing. Government policy marketing is akin to private firms' "advocacy advertising," when corporations promote their values as responsible corporate citizens (Madill, 1998).

Type D: Demarketing

Governments conduct demarketing (or Don't-use-our-programs marketing) efforts to advise and encourage specific groups not to use government services previously available. In recent years, governments created demarketing initiatives in combination with downsizing attempts. As a result, many departments, for example, that historically offered financing to community-based groups have seen significant reductions in such funding. As a result of this change, departments had to notify such groups of their lost revenue. In addition, some have offered marketing training to impacted organizations' personnel to aid them in developing other funding bases. In the private sector, there is minimal demarketing, as corporations are primarily concerned with encouraging the consumption of goods and services (Madill, 1998).

1.4 Public communications

According to Van Riel (1995), public sector organizations use many different methods to express ideas, advantages and values regarding the goods and services they offer to stakeholders. As every idea is static until adequately communicated, communication is critical for efficient marketing activities. Public communication (communication used in a public sector setting) defines the actions involved in controlling and coordinating all internal and external communications to provide clear general guidelines. Public communication centers on disseminating information by a diverse group of specialists and generalists inside an organization. It's about people, business operations, actions and media (NCERT, 2020). Similarly, Rice and Atkin (2009) and Rogers and Storey (1987) define public communications as intentional attempts to inform or influence behavior in a broad audience within a set timeframe. They represent this through an organized set of communication operations and an array of mediated messages delivered through multiple channels, intending to produce noncommercial advantages to individuals and society.

According to Pasquier and Villeneuve (2018), although the tasks of commercial organizations extend beyond simple purchase and sale, the activities of public organizations are far more varied and complicated. The first role is to **inform**. The government must first notify the public of all choices made by political leaders and public bodies, clarifying the reasoning behind these choices. With the increase of public services, this function became more vital since everyone affected by the government's actions and services must be notified or have quick access to transparent, reliable information. A lack of knowledge about a public activity might have significant ramifications. Another role of communications – one with substantial quantities of money invested – **influences** or seeks to modify people's behavior. The government or predetermined groups attempt to warn against risky behaviors that endanger people and society through various communications events and activities. Such preventative approaches, which primarily target minimizing risk behavior, are becoming

increasingly common. These include alcohol and tobacco use, driving behavior, the battle against illegal substances and other addictions, and many more risk behaviors.

Another public communications function is to explain, **confirm**, and certify completed activities and objectives. Accountability requires public entities to record their acts, attest to their legitimacy, and respond to inquiries about them. These kinds of communications initiatives take up an increasing amount of time for public sector management. Because various governmental agencies have more autonomy or well-defined specialized functions, they have created communications efforts geared at giving them a profile and reputation different from the government as a whole. By so doing, they make their own brand identity, values and beliefs, and communications strategy. The Space Agency (NASA) is an excellent example. The goal is for the agency to be able to **position** itself without relation to other public organizations. Finally, public institutions focus on promoting the fundamental principles of the sociopolitical framework in which they function. In a democratic society, public sector organizations must advocate for and **promote values** of equity, honesty, openness, and respect for the rule of law by their actions and behavior and in their communications (Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2018).

In addition to public communication activities, van Riel (1995) suggests that public communication within an organization exists within three forms – management, marketing and organizational communication. The first form, **management communication**, refers to messages transmitted by senior managers to internal and external stakeholder groups. This model is considered the most crucial form by the author. On the other hand, **marketing communication** is concerned with communication that supports the sales of products and services. It directly addresses the customer through promotion, direct mail, personal sales and sponsorship, and it often is the one with the highest budget. The final form, **organizational communication**, encompasses all other forms of communication within an organization, including public relations (hereinafter: PR), public affairs, environmental communication, investment relations and internal communication. While these concepts are not in dispute, it is evident in one way that communication values to stakeholders emerge through a mixture of all three communication models. Furthermore, the viewpoint represented is that all types of persuasive communication, in one way or another, entail marketing (Proctor, 2009).

1.4.1 Public communications principles

As the goals and purposes of an open society emphasize various social and economic dimensions, it is sometimes essential to highlight, balance, or de-emphasize certain concepts. Principles, rather than particular policy instruments and objectives, are intended to drive policy formulation and communicate various challenges and activities. The considerations influencing these decisions should be obvious, transparent, and justifiable. To adequately

communicate public sector fundamental messages, values and interests, Picard and Pickard (2017) discuss the following principles:

1. Meeting fundamental communication and content needs
 - encouraging free expression and other communication rights,
 - providing framework for emergency and crisis communications,
 - identifying and addressing market failures in systems and infrastructures,
 - facilitating the creation of public goods, the material of public interest, knowledge, and entertainment, and
 - encouraging public engagement in debates on societal concerns and trends.

2. Providing the effective ability for public use of media and communications
 - ensuring that infrastructure is accessible to all,
 - ensuring the availability of low--cost basic--use technologies and service standards,
 - promoting equality and social inclusion by providing services to those with visual and hearing impairments, as well as individuals with special access requirements, and
 - enabling interconnection and interoperability of all technologies and services via open architectures.

3. Promoting diversity/plurality in ownership of media and content availability
 - pursuing diversity in content providers and content varieties and
 - preventing the expansion and misuse of monopolistic power in media and communications.

4. Affording protection for users and society
 - keeping children and vulnerable individuals safe from adult and upsetting materials,
 - protecting consumers' personal data privacy and security from intrusive corporate and government monitoring or exploitation,
 - providing proper consumer protections and enforcement measures in the media and communications, and
 - defending against instigation to disruption, crime commission, and racial hostility.

5. Providing transparency and accountability
 - providing transparency and fairness in terms of the service price and data collecting,
 - providing openness in media ownership,
 - providing information to ensure that customers comprehend algorithms and other automated technology impacts on content selection, and
 - increasing media and communications accountability through legal and self-regulation methods.

6. Pursuing developmental and economic benefits
 - promoting private investment in infrastructure, services, and innovation and
 - increasing economic rivalry among media/communications product and service suppliers.

7. Pursuing equitable and effective policy outcomes
 - promoting genuine public dialogue and engagement in policymaking and
 - employing multiple policy mechanisms and tools to achieve objectives.

The fundamental principles outlined above guide how to respond to new issues and concerns and make appropriate policy choices relevant to media and communications platforms and activities addressed at the local and national levels (Picard and Pickard, 2017).

1.4.2 Communication tools

Most public campaign designers continue to rely on conventional broadcast and print channels to disseminate messages such as public service announcements, entertainment–education placements, and news coverage. However, websites presenting prepared informative pages have also been a key campaign tool since the late 1990s, and in recent years, campaigns have increasingly included interactive technology, online and via mobile devices (Rice & Atkin, 2012). In addition to this, the OECD (2019b) created a robust 'toolkit' of resources to transmit communication messages correctly. This toolkit may contain various content types intended to guarantee the presentation of statements in a way that connects with audiences. It consists of content development and communication channels.

According to the OECD (2019b), **content development** consists of key messages developed and adapted in different target audiences' interests to support the public sector campaign. As the campaign proceeds, this information may be updated and expanded to include:

- **Case studies** – these compelling tales of how government changes have a measurable and long-term impact must present "stories" that highlight human narratives alongside more significant data points to indicate influence on a larger scale. Case studies can be included on websites or brochures, speeches and presentations, or shared through social media platforms.
- **Impact stories** – to reinforce crucial ideas, it is critical to back up communications initiatives with specific data points. Data can visually display the impact of government policies. These graphics, like the case studies, may be utilized in a variety of communications materials.
- **Spokespeople** – official spokespeople should be given talking points that expand on the core concepts and include components from the case studies. As the program progresses, spokespeople can add new data and numbers.

- **Audio-visual content** – creating short movies and infographics including comments, interviews, and project summaries will supplement case studies and bring information to life. This content is then added on websites, displayed during presentations, and distributed via social media.
- **Marketing elements** – a logo and branding components (fonts, colors, style guide) may be created and used to guarantee that all communication on open government plans or initiatives is immediately identified and reflects the campaign's ideals. In addition, these can be used in publications to bring awareness to events that share a common subject.

After content development, the following step in the creation of an effective public communication strategy is to adapt the content for usage via a range of **communication channels**, which could include (OECD, 2019b):

- **Press kit** – provides concise material that the media may utilize to supplement their coverage of government policies. It should have visual components (pictures and graphics) and contact information for media spokespeople accessible for interviews. It should also be regularly updated to incorporate the most recent press releases and other pertinent news.
- **Website** – a specialized web platform for government communication can include reports, case studies, updates, announcements, and forthcoming events. It may also contain references to specific initiatives and programs. For example, existing websites (those of government ministries) can include a page with detailed information on their engagement with open government reforms and a connection to the leading site.
- **Brochure** – during events and meetings, stakeholders can receive a pamphlet that summarizes the essential features of the public sector messages.
- **Presentation template** – to guarantee consistency in communication across public bodies, a template presentation with basic messaging and design components may be created and adjusted with material appropriate to the individual consumers.
- **Social media content** – quotes, video clips, and visuals can be compiled into a social media package and distributed through the social networks of government agencies and partners.
- **Mass communication tools** – billboards, radio, television advertising, and pamphlets may be helpful in specific campaigns that target a large number of consumers.
- **Interactive communication means** – governments realized that trust is a precondition for successful communication – and that this necessitates the development of new forms for engaging citizens. Therefore, communicators started using citizen panels, Google Hangouts, and online or offline deliberative conversation formats.

Similar to the marketing channels discussed by OECD, Salmon and Atkin (2003) discuss channel differences in terms of reach (a portion of individuals exposed to the message), specializability (tailoring to people), interactivity (receiver involvement and stimulus adjustment during processing), meaning modalities (array of sensory experiences used in

expressing messages), personalization (human relational nature of source-receiver dialogue), decodability (mental work required processing), depth (the capacity of the channel to convey complex and detailed content), credibility (the validity of the material shared), agenda-setting (the power of the medium to raise the salience priority of issues), accessibility (the ease messages placement in the channel) and economy (low cost for producing).

1.5 Importance of marketing in the public sector

According to the specialized literature, there are two schools of thought on the importance of integrating marketing in the public sector. Some practitioners use the following arguments to argue against the use of marketing in public services: (1) marketing is unnecessary; (2) marketing intrudes too profoundly into the lives of prospective consumers and invades their privacy; (3) marketing casts public companies in a negative light by emphasizing their desire to attract customers - associated with incapacity to provide high-quality public services; (4) marketing is unjust; and (5) marketing is an impediment to innovation (Sargeant, 1999). On the other side, Grigorescu (2006) states that public sector marketing and public-private partnerships can result in happier people and employees and a greater understanding of the risks involved. In addition to this, Day, Reynolds and Lancaster (1998) believe that marketing is beneficial to the public sector in developing a loyal client base and acquiring new ones and positioning in a new market. Its advantages are visible in its internal clients and partners, pricing strategy, and the mix of services given and promoted to existing and new customers.

Pasquier and Villeneuve (2018) note that public sector organizations are nowadays also looking at the direct competition. It is visible when nations, towns and regions compete to attract and retain citizens and businesses by hosting sports and cultural events, conferences, etc. Even though public services are not the same as commercial ones, beneficiaries' attitudes as customers are becoming more comparable. Also, the government's economic duties are becoming increasingly broad – the banking sector, energy, tourism, transportation, postal, telecommunications, etc. Therefore, government entities are attempting to enhance their relationships with recipients, as they are rated based on their interactions with the general public. Consumers' possible reactions, such as rallies or public support, may justify the organization's activity and services. As a result, public entities have excellent reason to undertake marketing operations to raise the awareness of service beneficiaries and increase support for the organization's actions. The main benefits of public sector marketing are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Main benefits in the marketing of the public sector

Cluster Topic	Benefits
Educational Higher education, health education, marine education, educational systems	Maternal education development, equality of opportunity promotion, and public health education campaigns
Public Health Health behavior, public health, health politics, health promotion, health sciences, legal restrictions	Increased breast cancer prevention programs, availability of genetically modified foods, promotion of physical exercise benefits, and pesticide reduction
Social Economy Social services, social policy, social structure, social values	More significant social inclusion and social awareness for domestic violence victims
Urban Politics Urban development, political economy, political science, urban political research	Advances in the urban economy, increased political legitimacy, and increased political involvement

Adapted from Matos, Correia, Saura, Menendez & Baptista (2020).

Whether a public sector organization sells physical or service products, it is critical to practice external and internal marketing to successfully develop long-term and financially viable customer relationships (Caruana, Ramaseshan & Ewing, 1998). Considering the above, many governments and local bodies began to recognize the importance of incorporating marketing into their activities. As a result, they began to develop marketing activities to attract investors, encouraging energy sustainability and environmental protection, helping to fight smoking and alcohol consumption, and ensuring traffic law compliance (Barbu, 2011).

1.6 The importance of dialogue between citizens and the public sector

Arendt (1958) describes the basis for citizens' engagement in the public sector through considering citizenship as a separate and intentionally accepted function. This function, performed by citizens engaging and discussing in a unique public domain where everyone can be seen and heard, has the broadest possible publicity. However, in the 80s and 90s, the discussion on citizen engagement in their governance tends to shift away from Arendtian rigidities and explore and apply more flexible and nuanced alternatives. In the last three decades, there has been an increase in theoretical and practical initiatives to ensure a more substantial role for public participation in democratic government (Holmes, 2012). According to Dryzek (2000), the newest deliberative shift represents a revived concern with the legitimacy of democracy: the extent to which democratic governance is substantive rather than symbolic and engaged by competent individuals.

Nowadays, public-sector theory and practice are increasingly concerned with putting citizens at the center of policy-makers thoughts, not merely as a target but also as participants. To that aim, public officials are encouraged to co-operate rather than consult, to reach out rather than reply. This method entails interacting with more well-educated individuals, aware of their citizens' and voters' rights, have easy access to information, and extensive exposure to the voices of opinion leaders, experts, and activists (Holmes, 2012). The European Institute for Public Participation (2009) identifies three key prerequisites for successful citizen participation in the public sector:

- a well-defined constitutional framework for citizen engagement, as only via a clear, shared understanding between politicians and citizens can trust be built and public participation's democratizing promise realized,
- a systematic approach to citizens participation methods to assist process organizers in selecting the most appropriate and effective techniques, and
- thorough and demanding evaluation of public involvement in practice to foster a learning culture about participation and progress the systematization of participatory methods.

In addition to benefits, European Institute for Public Participation (2009) emphasizes three significant participation challenges:

- the cost challenge – which includes time, money, and possibly political consequences for poorly managed involvement,
- the complexity challenge – determining which participatory practices are appropriate for the scope of a problem and the technicalities involved, and
- the representativeness challenge – involving a "mini-public" that reflects the larger society and appropriately considers the interests of those with the most at risk.

Governments recognize that they require greater direct engagement from citizens to rule effectively – to preserve stability, assist people's well-being, and handle environmental, health, security, and energy challenges in the future. In addition, they recognize the need to use the ideas, information, wisdom, and abilities of the non-government sector – business, education, the professions, and non-profit organizations. Failure to participate will waste resources and limit opportunities (Holmes, 2012). Therefore, according to Olphert and Damodaran (2015), governments and political organizations worldwide investigate the potential benefits of enhancing communication with individuals and encouraging involvement and interaction in political and civic processes through ICT. The key benefits expected to be a result of services delivered with the help of ICT are:

- increased participation / decreased social exclusion,
- enhanced information sharing across services and agencies,
- more diversity, variety, and convenience of access for consumers, and

- increased speed and efficiency of the procedures that support services (Olphert & Damodaran, 2015).

As shown, the literature on citizen participation focuses heavily on what individuals desire and how they might achieve it from the government. This focus is critical, as putting the citizen at the government center has enormous transformative potential for how the public sector operates. However, for involvement to be meaningful and practical, the state must recognize the importance of engagement and be willing to capitalize on it (UNDP, 2016).

1.7 Public marketing challenges

According to Proctor (2009), marketing skills and tactics acquired in the commercial sector can promote and provide non-profit-motivated services in the public sector. However, Gelders, Bouckaert and van Ruler (2007, p. 329-334) believe that nowadays, public communication entails much more than simply conveying information or convincing audiences. It is increasingly becoming a tool that different players utilize to create meaning in governmental processes. Therefore, they state that we are currently dealing with the significant contrasts between the public and private sectors and the implications of applying private-sector ideas in public communication. They believe that crucial challenges of public sector marketing (in comparison to the private sector) are (1) more complicated, unstable environment, (2) additional legal and formal constraints, (3) more rigid procedures, and (4) more diverse products and objectives.

Although there is no actual research on this topic, many believe that the public sector's environment is **more complex and unstable** than the private sector (Boyne, 2002). The tumultuous environment consists of complex networks of society participants that decide on the organization's validity and goals through political policymaking procedures. The government's task is to resolve intractable and unsolvable situations. In this setting, public organizations use 'interactive policymaking' to achieve their policy goals (Alford, 2001). There is a thorough blueprint governing the transmission of information (such as monetary policy) in the private sector. Still, it is not subject to the freedom of information act or **analogous accountability** procedures as the public sector (Scholten, 1999). Additionally, Boyne (2002) discovered experimentally that governmental organizations are **more bureaucratic** than private businesses. Finally, as the last key challenge, Maes (1996) states that private sector objectives are produced internally with the stock market in mind, while public sector objectives are frequently achieved externally through the political system. Public organizations seek societal consequences in an economic environment, but private corporations aim to maximize profits while considering societal restrictions.

Pasquier and Villeneuve (2018) also state that if marketing techniques – or even a comprehensive marketing approach – are to be considered for public services, it is necessary to understand significant limitations regarding marketing in the public sector. Public entities

frequently operate in the absence of an actual market, yet supply and demand can hardly match a traditional model. It is also challenging to achieve a **fair transaction** between the parties concerned. The public body benefits immensely from the link between information and power. The administration's responsibilities go beyond just delivering services to beneficiaries. They also involve the creation of public policy, for which marketing is only marginally useful. In addition to the lack of commercial features in the interaction between the public entity and the recipient, examination of other limitations is necessary. These main limitations of the public sector are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Main limitations in the marketing of the public sector

Cluster Topic	Limitations
Educational	Troublesome relationships between schools, communities, organizations and cultures, and the impact of social media platforms on public services
Higher education, health education, marine education, educational systems	
Public Health	Limited organ donors, high financial expenses, socially accepted alcoholism, stringent legal restrictions for market entry, and a lack of e-regulation
Health behavior, public health, health politics, health promotion, health sciences, legal restrictions	
Social Economy	Lack of market invention, a low degree of social responsibility, an increase in economic marginalization, aversion to social change, political influence pressure, and continuous political instability
Social services, social policy, social structure, social values	
Urban Politics	City development constraints, a lack of faith in the city's brand and image, and a sluggish adoption of new behaviors
Urban development, political economy, political science, urban political research	

Adapted from Matos et al. (2020).

According to Proctor (2009), the additional problem can arise in addition to the challenges mentioned above, which is crucial to the marketing philosophy - always **honoring the customer's wants**. Even though private sector marketers adhere to the "customer is always right" ideal, an occasional violation of this principle in the public sector occurs. The consumer can be wrong at times, and the public sector organization must always follow best professional practices, whether the consumer agrees or not. Many public-sector organizations provide public-benefit services that are frequently limited and controlling in character. In such circumstances, the user is dissatisfied with the service. In contrast to the private sector, the public sector does not rely on individual customers for survival. Many organizations exist as a result of laws, government regulations, and other factors.

2 GOVERNMENT RESILIENCE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

2.1 Key terms and definitions

In December 2019, a citizen of Wuhan, China, became ill with an unknown illness, heralding the start of a global pandemic in the early 2020's (Kirk & Rifkin, 2020). In the next few months, the entire world watched in disbelief as the Chinese government used all of its resources to combat this new virus called SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome-coronavirus-2) and the consequent disease, known as **COVID-19** by World Health Organization (hereinafter: WHO) (Barua, 2020). COVID-19 virus first seemed to be comparable to MERS and, in particular, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). However, after an initial outbreak, it was quickly evident that this virus is more contagious and has a higher significant influence on causing economic and social instability and instilling psychological anxiety in individuals than earlier infectious illnesses (Moon, 2020).

The COVID-19 crisis erupted with exceptional speed across the globe from March 2020, wreaking havoc on social, economic, governmental and healthcare institutions and individual businesses. While the COVID-19 crisis quickly struck several countries simultaneously, it resembled natural catastrophes, defined as severe and sudden occurrences collectively experienced and resulting in a disastrous loss of resources. However, whereas most natural challenges are long-term and necessitate years-long, coordinated efforts from corporations, governments, charities, and other nonprofit organizations, the rapid expansion of the deadly virus COVID-19 emerged as an urgent challenge without any clear solution (Bacq, Geoghegan, Josefy, Stevenson & Williams, 2020).

With most nations turning to a stand-still state as borders closed and lockdowns began to tackle the virus spread, the pandemic caused significant **uncertainty** at all levels in society (Sharma et al., 2020). On a day-to-day basis, both private and public sectors deal with some level of risk and uncertainty as it forces them outside their comfort zone (Mascarenhas, 1982). However, there is still some misunderstanding about the difference between risk and uncertainty. Risk is usually defined as an uncertain condition or event that can negatively impact a company (Miller, 1992). On the other hand, uncertainty presents a lack of information about the possibilities of future occurrences influencing the company (Knight, 1921). A key distinction between risk and uncertainty is that most risks can be predicted and measured with varying accuracy levels, while uncertainty varies on its source and experience degree - and thus is extremely difficult to quantify. The COVID-19 outbreak presents an excellent example of how this difference manifests itself in practice (Sharma et al., 2020).

COVID-19 pandemic and uncertainty surrounding it triggered a worldwide crisis that represented both the immediate and destructive character of a natural catastrophe and the broad reach and long-term magnitude of a significant issue (Bacq et al., 2020). Thus, even

though daily organizations tackle significant issues such as climate change, severe economic downturns, and political insecurity representing an immediate danger to the viability and existence of businesses, it urges firms to stay flexible and agile in their structure (George, Howard-Grenville, Joshi & Tihanyi, 2016). However, with the current spread of COVID-19, companies confront a great challenge of unprecedented dimensions, one that compels them to dive into and actively manage unfamiliar territory. At the same time, they focus on transforming their workforce in technological, physical, and socio-psychological ways, making this task much harder than previous day-to-day activities (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020).

A few months after the virus outbreak, COVID-19 created a detrimental impact on global economic growth by decreasing corporate activity, lowering output, and rising unemployment and income instability. Moreover, as the virus spread, limits on movement limited economic activity, resulting in an economic shock that has triggered a global recession. Therefore, less funding, mass unemployment, and disrupted national and worldwide commerce and supply networks have prompted governments to take the required steps and collaborate to ensure a healthy global recovery (Berawi, 2020). Dzigbede et al. (2020) also believe that the pandemic has put a significant test on government disaster preparedness on both global and national levels, but most notably at the local level. Several municipal councils worldwide have already experienced the management of natural disasters caused by weather, as severe winters, earthquakes and floods have been frequent occurrences in the past few years. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, local governments have been struck by a disaster that does not fit neatly into the category of their previous experience, making it difficult to adapt to new market conditions. Moreover, although numerous studies on crisis management were conducted in the past (Comfort, Waugh & Cigler, 2012), COVID-19 brought unique problems to governments worldwide due to the magnitude and speed of infections (Moon, 2020).

The emergence of COVID-19 has significantly changed the local government landscape, and governments found themselves in uncharted territory. Local governments had to learn from others quickly, adjust internal operations to National Government policy directions, and reprioritize budgets, tax collection, and allocation of resources. Furthermore, governments had to cope with potential civil society disobedience to lockdown rules and to adjust to a "new normal." These circumstances may cause severe consequences for the resilience and operation of local political and administrative systems (Van der Walddt, 2020). However, if not managed properly, the crisis may have severe implications for companies and governments while simultaneously providing an opportunity, as long as decision-makers ensure to interpret it right (Brockner & James, 2008).

Goffin and Mitchell (2010) also believe that crises and uncertainty have always been a catalyst for opportunity and growth if looking at business history. Similarly, Bernstein (1996) states that environmental catastrophes have frequently fueled human progress throughout history, demonstrating how they may provide possibilities if exploited and

managed correctly. Looking at the challenge of COVID-19, Carnevale & Hatak (2020) state that it gives an excellent opportunity for management to combine research efforts and translate them into usable insights to assist both private and public sectors in addressing one of modern history's most significant issues. Despite the relevance of crises in driving business model change, the literature on business models has previously primarily ignored the role of crises in driving business model innovation. The shortage of understanding on this critical issue has been especially apparent during the current coronavirus epidemic, as many firms have found themselves unexpectedly in need of significant business model modification (Ritter & Pedersen, 2020).

As a result, the pandemic outbreak required governments to search for alternative methods of managing the occurred issues. To reduce uncertainty and make prognoses for the industries, the policy-makers and financial experts frequently compare the effects of COVID-19 with previous recessions. Although the comparison with the Recession in 2008 and Great Depression still riddles with many measuring challenges, specific approximate methods were accepted and adapted to many countries' new market rules (Wheelock, 2020). Nenonen and Storbacka (2020) state that even though making a significant strategic shift amid a crisis is a difficult concept, it is, nevertheless, both possible and essential. In addition to producing new business opportunities, they believe companies and governments should use crisis as COVID-19 to present adaptiveness and resilience to address the future crisis.

Kimhi, Eshel, Marciano & Adini (2021) indicate various definitions of **resilience** (from the Latin *resiliere*, i.e., rebound or recoil). They believe that resilience is a theoretical notion that allows us to understand and even anticipate variations in humans' capacity to deal with adversity. WHO (2017) also state that the scientific literature has several definitions of resilience. Regardless of their variations, they all testify to the notion that resilience is associated with processes and abilities that result in positive individual and community health outcomes in the face of adversity, significant risks, and dangers. In addition to several definitions, Van der Waldt (2020) states that resilience is an encompassing notion that serves as an umbrella concept for multidisciplinary viewpoints. For example, when looking at sustainable development, the emphasis is on ecological systems' ability to adapt to a perturbation or disturbance by resisting harm and recovering quickly. Windstorms, fires, flooding, and insect population booms are examples of stochastic occurrences that can cause ecological damage.

The simplified definition of resilience is "adaptation in the face of adversity," as used by the American Psychological Association (2012). In other words, after a big shock, individuals, firms and institutions should be able to find a way to survive, adjust and deal with the turmoil(s) around them (Williams, 2014). The concept of resilience is also described as "the ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to adverse events" by individuals, communities or nations (National Research Council, 2012). Van der Waldt (2020) agrees with this theory. She looks at resilience utilization in a sociological and

psychological context to issues affecting societies (economic resources, social capital, democracy, risk reduction, employment, and health) and people (mental, physical, emotional). WHO (2017) also attempts to understand how resilience impacts health and well-being at the individual, community, and system levels and strategies to improve at all levels. Therefore, according to Kimhi et al. (2021), this literature differentiation defines three levels of resilience: individual, community and national resilience. Furthermore, a term of social resilience sometimes presents the latter two stages in the literature.

Individual resilience is defined as an individual's capacity to successfully cope with adversity and recovery following the incident. A variety of biological and environmental variables impact personal resilience, and it is the area of resilience that has received the most attention (Kimhi, Eshel, Marciano & Adini, 2020). Individual resilience is also sometimes defined as the ability of an individual to sustain a steady level of functioning following traumatic events and a path of healthy functioning through time (Bonanno, 2005). As a result, somebody's level of resilience is a critical factor in mitigating the negative psychological repercussions of potentially traumatic situations. It is believed individuals subjectively judge security and insecurity, so resilience should be viewed as a quality of the individual (Kimhi, 2014). However, resilience is not a permanent personality feature at the individual level but rather a developmental attribute that may improve or decline over life and is influenced by relationships, experiences, and opportunities (WHO, 2017).

Community resilience refers to how a community handles damage and destruction that affects inhabitants, housing, infrastructure, industry, societal facilities, and services in a geographical region that includes political authorities and an effective response mechanism to adversity (Kimhi et al., 2021). Previously, community resilience was described as the ability to develop, participate in, and sustain healthy connections and withstand and recover from life stresses and social isolation (Kimhi, 2014). However, over the last decade, the definition has shifted from the ability of a community to develop and adjust to changing and withstand and recover quickly from disruptions also to include prevention of the effects or implications, as well as long term uncertainty (Koliou et al., 2020). According to these authors, community resilience is inherently multilevel and includes three characteristics: (1) interpersonal relationships, (2) interpersonal capabilities and resources and (3) mutual resources and capacities (Kimhi, 2014).

The term community resilience refers to both objective and subjective factors. On the one hand, it entails supplying physical requirements like food and water and physical safety. On the other side, it represents personal attitudes, beliefs, and sentiments about one's community, such as perceived dangers, local community availability, social cohesiveness, and trust in government (Obrist, Pfeiffe & Henley, 2010). Therefore, governments must include community resilience as a crucial resource in their recovery strategy. It may help enhance and sustain recovery in various ways, including extra financial resources, public trust, and support from the public for initiatives. Because community resilience necessitates

social capital, it is frequently used to proxy for community and regional social capital (Jewett, Mah, Howell & Larsen, 2021). WHO (2017) agrees with this theory, stating that a public sector cannot grow indefinitely on its own. As a result, sectors such as education, the environment, and economic development are increasingly examining how policy on community resilience could impact success in their particular areas.

National resilience refers to a country's capacity to deal with misfortune and recover as fast as feasible (Kimhi et al., 2021). National resilience is the level of resilience that received the least attention in the past (Kimhi et al., 2021). However, since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, the topic of national resilience has received much interest, intending to determine a country and government's ability to deal with a multifaceted problem such as pandemic (Kimhi et al., 2020). National resilience is a complex condition that integrates the characteristics of every element of a nation's and state's life. National resilience is essentially a nation's capacity and resilience to ensure its survival. Strong national development will inspire further national growth (Firdaus, Waluyo & Madalina, 2020). Furthermore, the idea of national or social resilience is broad, covering the question of society's long-term viability and strength in various contexts (Obriest et al., 2010). Kimhi et al. (2021) also suggest that national resilience symbolizes a country's ability to effectively manage various crises (wars, bad socioeconomic situations, or neglect) while still preserving society's overall function.

According to the research, there are two ways of examining the national degree of resilience. On the one hand, national resilience reflects society's ability to face misfortune while retaining its ideals and institutions. On the other hand, resilience may be represented in the novel and inventive ways of readjusting and adapting, such as behavioral adjustments assisting in bridging the gap between the current pressure and the community's requirements and capacities (Canetti, Waismel-Manor, Cohen & Rapaport, 2013). Furthermore, according to Elran (2006), in addition to new behavioral patterns arising in response to danger, political and social attitudes and views also affect a nation's ability to survive crisis circumstances and continuous conflicts at the national level. Therefore, he emphasizes four key social components of national resilience: patriotism, optimism, community involvement, and faith in political and public institutions. He argued resilient society participants demonstrate long-term stability in preserving these elements in the face of intractable conflict.

Simply put, research shows that rather than relying entirely on behavioral and mental aspects of individuals in society, national resilience should be assessed based on political–psychological views such as democratic strength and trust in leadership (Canetti et al., 2013). Resilience is widely understood to represent withstanding or rebounding from a threat or catastrophe. (Wakeman et al., 2017). However, while national resilience is a broad phrase that describes a nation's capacity to adapt to changing environmental conditions, **government resilience**, on the other hand, relates to local government's organizational, administrative, management, and leadership characteristics. In other words, the emphasis is on the structural, systemic, and administrative solutions that a nation employs when

confronted with shocks and stressors that may impact and challenge its resilience (Van der Waldt, 2020). Without government procedures' stability, citizens can create a societal collapse that could deepen the chaos and extend the recovery time. In poorly controlled societies, instability resulting from destructive activities negatively affects the decision-making environment, frequently stalling decisions and disabling decision makers' best interests (Wakeman et al., 2017).

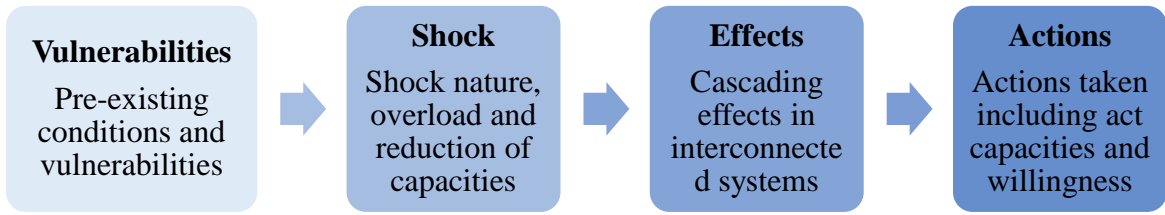
2.2 Government resilience strategies and opportunities

Central government leadership must maintain the political, social and economic balance between taking steps to reduce the crisis effects while preserving essential services. Good leadership in this type of situation is a key to maintaining the confidence of people in government. Simultaneously approaching different overlapping policy agendas involves a dual government-wide solution. It is essential to support well-being through agile and creative responses at the highest level and coordinate and engage with lower government levels while transparently promoting national stability (Jacobzone et al., 2020). Van der Waldt (2020) also highlights the importance of adaptability, enabling governments to recover and arise from a crisis stronger. However, she notes that it is essential to stress that this type of flexibility is dependent on specific capacities, routines, practices, and procedures that a government uses to orient itself conceptually. To become more resilient, governments should meet four key criteria:

- understanding what has occurred (to learn from experience),
- understanding what to expect (anticipating future events, risks, and opportunities such as prospective changes, disruptions, pressures, and their repercussions),
- understanding what to do in response to regular and irregular disturbances, and
- understanding how to monitor what is or might become a hazard in the future.

Similarly, Linkov and Trump (2019) state that resilient government: (1) detects dangers and possibilities for preparation, prevention, and protection before disruption (preventive resilience), (2) successfully responds in the case of an emergency to minimize, internalize, and adapt to disturbances (reactive resilience), and (3) mobilizes resources to repair, recover, and transform following interruption (recovery resilience). To summarize these points, Antulov-Fantulin, Biller-Andorno, Böttcher & Berezowski (2021) emphasize that the analysis of resilience drivers in governments is dependent on (1) pre-existing conditions and weaknesses in various government systems, (2) the nature of the shock and how it overburdens and reduces the capacities of systems, (3) spiraling effects in globally connected systems, and (4) measures taken by governments, including their capacities and willingness to act. This roadmap of resilience drivers in government is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Resilience drivers in government

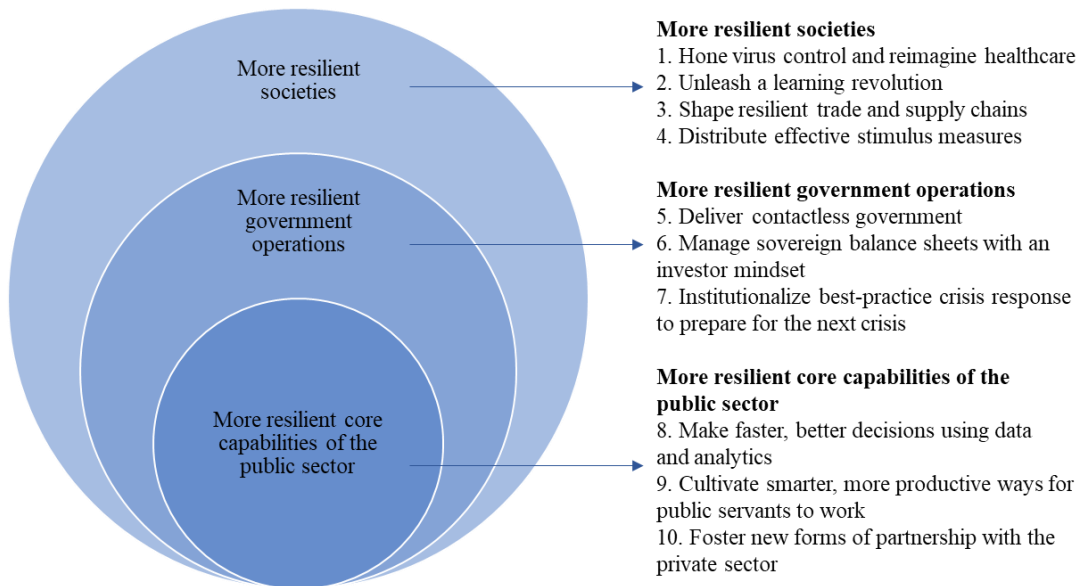


Adapted from Antulov-Fantulin et al. (2021).

This perspective to resilience implies that governments that recognize and exploit complexity are critical for better crisis responses (Young, 2017). As such, this refers to the conventional method of legislating and addressing a problem, and it entails complex legislation and sanction-based rules originating from established institutions. While governments must respond to urgent demands, such as assisting the most impacted individuals and activities, a longer-term approach that accounts for systemic changes is required. This strategy necessitates developing governance structures and policies that promote resilience in governments and societies (Antulov-Fantulin et al., 2021).

To shape and build more resilient governments during the pandemic, backed by critical enablers to reinvigorate the public sector's fundamental competencies, Assi et al. (2020) highlight ten priorities for governments. They highlight excellent practices that have evolved or accelerated as a result of the crisis within these opportunities. They also propose revolutionary methods that leaders may adopt to rethink government for the long run, demonstrating how the crisis's shocks and innovations have made these longer-term changes more critical and achievable. These priorities are presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Ten priorities for governments



Adapted from Assi et al. (2020).

Honing virus control and reimagining healthcare presents a first approach suggested by Assi et al. (2020) to help governments create a more resilient society. This approach recognizes utilizing digital technology to aid in containment and preparedness as an effective strategy during the pandemic. It also states that governments can unleash the potential of the digital and telehealth sectors, making these services the first option for patients and internationally accessible. **Unleashing a learning revolution** presents practices in the education system, including hybrid learning methods and online courses. Governments and employers may also help create a thriving reskilling environment, including micro-credentialing for lifetime learning. **Shaping resilient trade and supply chains** concerns regionalizing supply chains and securing food and health equipment for citizens. Governments may need to examine the policy consequences of remote working in the knowledge economy. As the export of highly skilled services grows, these talents will become more mobile and unbound by the location of their employers or clients. Finally, **distributing effective stimulus measures** includes increasing renewable energy and energy efficiency, speeding government digitalization and providing incentives for businesses to adopt new technologies, and molding the future workforce to enhance resilience in the face of increased automation.

As a first key opportunity to make government operations more resilient, Assi et al. (2020) recognize **delivering contactless governments**. In the past years, citizens increasingly prefer digital platforms, which have grown in importance. Governments must comprehend the end-to-end customer experience in services to adopt technology that responds to citizens' demands faster and at a cheaper cost than the existing, manually handled approach. Governments can also allow contactless transactions outside of public services by promoting cross-cutting enablers such as digital IDs. **Managing sovereign balance sheets with an investor mindset** includes standard debt issuance, income optimization, and spending management. Governments might monetize assets on their balance sheets in the next few years, with a technique that provides an essentially new and possibly more significant opportunity to collect more income and decrease deficits. Lastly, **institutionalizing best-practice crisis response to prepare for the next crisis** features establishing a plan-ahead crisis unit that looks ahead and analyzes simulations of many scenarios. Therefore, in the future, government officials, aided by a resilience team, can plan and invest in building resilience and readiness for possible disasters.

Consequently, **making faster and better decisions using data and analytics** presents the first of three key opportunities to reinvigorate the core capabilities of the public sector. First, governments may employ sophisticated data and analytics use of cases to assist policy and decision making, such as forecasting the near future using regularly monitored indicators. Secondly, **cultivating smarter and more productive ways for public servants to work** highlights the necessity of automation to boost public-service productivity and shift a significant number of public servants from back-office jobs to more valuable and meaningful citizen-facing roles. However, this shift is only possible if governments prioritize the citizen

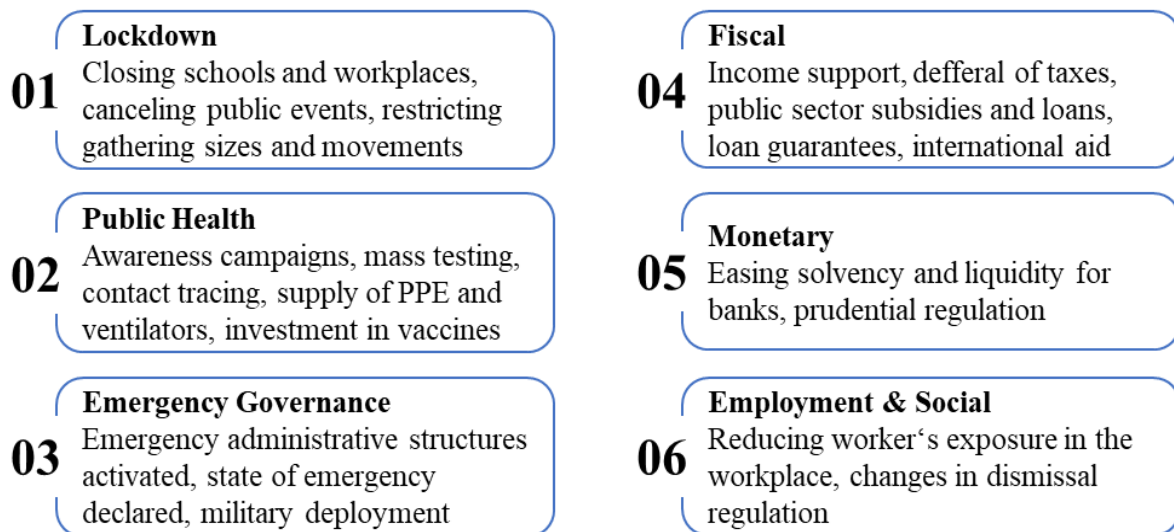
experience and effective change management, including developing the capabilities needed to implement the necessary changes. The last opportunity for governments is in **fostering new forms of partnership with the private sector**. Governments may assist in preparing workforces for a technology-focused future and boost important sectors' long-term competitiveness and resilience by collaborating with the private sector to create and implement well-structured stimulus measures. By defining its position and adopting the long-term view, the public sector collaborations with the private sector can improve service delivery, understanding that there is a natural confluence between the function of governments and that of corporations' broader societal purpose (Assi et al.,2020).

In conclusion, local governments must constantly strengthen their resilience. The complementary priorities and opportunities contribute to developing a theoretical framework for government resilience and, more practically, to depict local government's adaptive ability. However, to fulfill the government's developmental purpose, it should anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and adapt to incrementally changing urban realities and abrupt shocks. In this sense, the corpus of information on government resilience gives valuable insight. It is critical that municipalities swiftly build the required ability to cope with and recover from crises. Municipal personnel should focus on the required cognitive and psychological coping capabilities while adapting to a "new normal" through good crisis leadership (Van der Waladt, 2020).

2.3 Pandemic impact on global government resilience

Since the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, governments worldwide had to make strict health security measures in their countries. How individuals respond to COVID-19 prevention recommendations is as important as how they govern. As a result, in a pandemic crisis, the government plays a critical role in immediately adjusting and maintaining the appropriate policies to prevent pandemics from spreading rapidly (Dewi et al., 2020). Because of limited information and limited time to recognize the gravity of the growing pandemic, several governments implemented various policies, including public health and social initiatives. However, with the number of incidents increasing at an alarming rate in the first half of 2020, public health officials could not undertake timely and efficient testing, early detection, and quarantine/isolation. As a result, governments in several countries enforced partial or total lockdowns to prevent healthcare systems from being overburdened, including the economic shutdown and physical separation measures (Antulov-Fantulin et al., 2021). Mostly used government measures during the COVID-19 crisis are presented below in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Government measures during the pandemic



Adapted from Antulov-Fantulin et al. (2021).

Challenged with an unparalleled public health issue and its socio-economic consequences, governments worldwide had to respond quickly and efficiently to various challenges. These included coordinating emergency responses, managing the urgent economic fallout from lockdown methods, and assessing a timeframe and applicability for lifting lockdown policies (Jacobzone et al., 2020). On the other hand, Childress, Jefferson, Spencer and Wintner (2020) believe there is a recipe for more effortless government transformation during the pandemic crisis. It involves establishing a lofty goal, guaranteeing timely implementation, and maintaining transformative change. This approach includes the following:

- commencing with a complete diagnostic across all areas and functions to uncover the entire potential for change,
- establishing clear and quantifiable objectives,
- accelerating important initiatives,
- moving projects through a well-defined stage-gate procedure, and
- creating a rigorous "execution engine" to accelerate implementation, promote mass capability development, and overcome hurdles.

However, even though this approach is possible and recommended today, according to several studies, the pandemic has a detrimental impact on global economic growth by slowing corporate operations, lowering output, and rising unemployment and income instability. As the virus spread, limits on transportation caused a financial shock, resulting in a global recession. Reduced investment, job losses, interrupted national commerce, and supply networks have prompted many governments to take steps and collaborate to ensure a healthy global recovery (Berawi, 2020). Also, many countries used similar tactics due to having little to no experience dealing with a public health disaster. However, there has been a significant difference in the degree to which regulations, ranging from suggestions to requirements, have been adopted and enforced in different world regions (Antulov-Fantulin

et al., 2021). According to Dewi et al. (2020), some of the most prepared countries during pandemics included Australia, South Korea, Slovenia and France. The UK, US, Italy, and China were less ready for the pandemic, while Libya, Angola, Monaco, and Tunisia were the least prepared. To gain better insight into the pandemic impact on the Canton Sarajevo government, research commences with examples from four countries worldwide (Australia, China, UK and US). These countries are identified as some of the most prepared countries within four continents and therefore serve as benchmarks for determining local impact and measures effectiveness.

2.3.1 Pandemic impact on the Australian government

Australia's early physical separation measures, stable political structure, relatively high national income, and geographic isolation may have contributed to the country's remarkable effectiveness in handling the COVID-19 epidemic. The public widely supported physical separation measures, and the government's financial assistance to people and companies affected by the epidemic meant swift implementation. On the other hand, government efforts to control its actions were hampered by unclear and inconsistent information, particularly in the early phases of the pandemic. In addition, inadequate content in languages other than English hampered public communications (O'Sullivan, Rahamathulla & Pawar, 2020).

However, having citizen confidence as one of the main goals of 2021, the Australian Federal Government is investing almost \$ 24 million in an advertising campaign to promote COVID-19 vaccination. This campaign results from the government's decision to reduce citizens' exposure to misleading information and build confidence in the system (Cameron, 2021). Although Australia is in a better position than nearly any other industrialized country to reconstruct its society and economy, the social and economic effects of the COVID-19 epidemic have been severe. The pandemic worsened existing socioeconomic disparities, brought to light public racism, and revealed a probable excessive reliance on some export businesses. There is also a danger that apathy may increase the likelihood of a second viral epidemic (O'Sullivan et al., 2020).

2.3.2 Pandemic impact on China government

As the first nation to detect the virus, China experienced severe setbacks due to its dense population, frequent internal movement, and inadequate expertise in addressing a significant healthcare crisis in the early phases of the pandemic. In addition, the stoppage of many economic operations due to the pandemic significantly impacted the private sector in the first quarter of 2020. Due to the disruption of supply and capital networks, many businesses suffered debt and even went bankrupt (Hu, Flahault, Temerev & Rozanova, 2021). Therefore, Chinese citizens and the government made significant sacrifices to prevent and manage the pandemic. Subsequently, China had to quickly halt the pandemic spread,

investigate efficient travel prevention and control methods, and amass extensive expertise in urban health management (Xing & Zhang, 2021).

As a result, since late January 2020, the Chinese government has initiated a series of reaction actions that have had a significant impact on slowing the spread of the pandemic. The epidemic has posed a danger to human well-being and the Chinese economy. However, with the signal to begin production at the end of March 2020, domestic supply and demand have improved. In terms of Chinese GDP performance, despite the Chinese government's financial and monetary policy assistance, the economic rebound is still constrained by domestic and global economic conditions. During the post-epidemic period, future measures to prevent and manage the epidemic while maintaining the economy should consider each intervention's impact (Hu et al., 2021).

2.3.3 Pandemic impact on UK government

The coronavirus pandemic has a wide-ranging impact on the economy. The economic impact on the UK has been significant, ranging from lockdown limitations that have forced numerous firms to close to movement restrictions. For example, during the first shutdown, the UK GDP in April 2020 was 25% lower than in February of the same year (Harari & Keep, 2021). In addition, the UK government mobilized a broad response to COVID-19 in five areas in March 2020. They included answers to the pandemic in health and social care (including delivery of services, materials, testing, and vaccine development), multiple public services and emergency procedures, assistance to people affected by the disease outbreak (including benefits and direct assistance to communities), aid to businesses, and other aid (Ahrens & Ferry, 2020). Governments enacted these actions to minimize some of the negative economic consequences of the coronavirus epidemic and assist companies and workers. Additionally, these policies keep businesses solvent and as many people employed as feasible. They include financial assistance for businesses, employees, and the general public during the epidemic, as well as efforts to minimize economic uncertainty (Harari & Keep, 2021).

2.3.4 Pandemic impact on US government

As a result of COVID-19, many US residents became unemployed and therefore more reliant on the government for essential services. This economic fragility usually leads to increased housing and food insecurity, susceptibility to health hazards, and other urgent requirements (Childress et al., 2020). Therefore, to combat the COVID-19 epidemic, the US government has organized massive reactions inside and beyond borders. Government executive orders in response to the virus include personal protective equipment distribution and inventory management, utility management, and crisis protocols encompassing education, labor, politics, natural resources, public security, the justice system and housing (Dzigbede et al., 2020).

According to Weinstock (2021), governments passed six key legislations during the pandemic to address the impacts of COVID-19 and give immediate aid to homes and businesses. They also reduced the federal funds rate (the overnight government debt rate), boosted asset purchases, reactivated and created new emergency credit facilities, and promoted the use of the discount window. In the near run, these initiatives helped to facilitate the decrease in aggregate economic circumstances. Local governments have addressed all difficulties with perseverance and leadership, learning from one another and previous tragedies. COVID-19 has compelled local officials to adopt a resilience management approach that necessitates determination and relatively quick actions, resulting in increased operational efficiencies, employee and public participation and improved government transparency (Moon 2020).

2.4 Pandemic impact on Canton Sarajevo government

Canton Sarajevo responded quickly to the COVID-19 epidemic, closely following worldwide recommendations, by implementing mitigation measures to prevent, halt, and control viral spread (European Commission, 2020). Canton Sarajevo is a component of the Federation of BiH, one of its two states, and Sarajevo is the capital city of BiH, with a population of 438,443 inhabitants. After the first few COVID-19 cases in late March 2020, the government proposed self-isolation of contacts, followed by a complete lockdown for all its citizens (Joguncic et al., 2020). According to Softic, Ibisevic, Jasarevic and Hodzic (2020), some of the additional measures by the Canton Sarajevo government included:

- funding to assist the economy in the aftermath of the coronavirus epidemic,
- 50% decrease of Canton Sarajevo-owned commercial properties lessees,
- securing salary payments to commercial firms that could not operate, have not laid-off employees and have no unresolved tax liabilities,
- increasing social benefits to the beneficiaries, and
- assisting businesses impacted by the coronavirus, eliminating administrative, court, utility, and tourist fees, and implementing essential measures for minimizing negative economic repercussions.

The COVID-19 issue necessitated close cooperation at all levels of government, which proved difficult in practice. The established crisis management organizations worked within their domains, with no national coordination of decisions and actions. However, despite initial success in preventing and controlling the virus's transmission, early relaxation of the restrictive measures resulted in an epidemic peak over the summer and winter months (European Commission, 2020). Also, in BiH and Canton Sarajevo, communication was not transparent after the initial outbreak, leading to a very intense public reaction and criminal prosecution. In addition, overpaid medical ventilators were imported from China without pre-approved technical specifications and import permissions, which caused a significant shift in trust towards the government (Health System Report Monitors, 2020).

As a result, the COVID-19 crisis significantly impacted public sector revenue in Canton Sarajevo, with financial results falling by 4% in the first nine months of 2020 (European Commission, 2020). In addition, pay and benefits for Canton employees were cut by 4%, while funding for political parties and parliamentary groupings cuts were 50%. Approximately 20 million BAM was transferred into the fund to help mitigate COVID-19 Impacts, while 7.9 million BAM was for co-financing the debt fund to support cantonal SMEs (Health System Report Monitors, 2020).

While the impact of the pandemic on the government of Canton Sarajevo has been evidently challenging at all levels, UNDP (2020) states that Canton Sarajevo may emerge stronger and more resilient by identifying and investing in its local economy's potential. Nonetheless, this new reality necessitates a "new deal" response, unified by all government areas and critical stakeholders, which might present a challenge if looking at the past examples. As the literature review is quite limited on the impact of the pandemic on the government of Canton Sarajevo, this topic is a part of further investigation within the methodology section of this master's thesis.

3 MARKETING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

3.1 Marketing role in governments during the crisis

A crisis is a significant occurrence for any organization that can risk the employment of its leaders and possibly the company's survival. As a result, crisis management must be separate from the organization's regular operations (Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2018). The COVID-19 pandemic has an unprecedented impact on people's lives, resulting in a global crisis impacting families and businesses, including marketing and advertising. The implications for marketing differ by industry and country, but there is one consistent thread: decreased marketing and ad investment. Approximately 80% of big multinationals postponed planned campaigns, and more than 50% reduced spending (World Federation of Advertisers, 2020).

Although the COVID-19 crisis has forced businesses and organizations to reconsider their plans and finances, research suggests marketing is an essential element of crisis strategy. The experience of governments in crisis demonstrates that communication and PR are critical in regaining citizens' trust and reinforcing activities promoting government measures and recommendations. The significance of communication and marketing in crisis management stems from the necessity to regulate human perceptions and prevent the spread of fake information (Jimenez-Sanchez, Margalina & Vayas-Ruiz, 2021). Similarly, Pasquier and Villeneuve (2018) highlight that a crisis needs expert management and marketing to identify and adequately communicate acceptable solutions.

However, Sarpong (2018) states that because governments rely on the efficacy of their marketing activities to further their cause, marketing strategies should adjust to situations involving a crisis. According to Roberts (1994), there are four stages:

- preliminary phase – governments can take actions to prevent or mitigate the problem,
- emergency phase – disaster is already taking place and government action is necessary to rescue lives and property,
- intermediate stage – governments need to take care of citizens basic needs, and
- long-term phase – governments are taking measures to secure resilience.

During the **preliminary or pre-event phase**, the government sends the first alert signals. It can start with information indicating the intensity of an event, mostly seen with details regarding the first cases of COVID-19. However, this phase usually sparks yet another crisis fueled by claims and rumors. Governments, therefore, must be able to recognize potentially harmful information by keeping a strategic eye on their citizens. The **acute or emergency phase** begins when the consequences of the events – the news of first local cases, deaths, the lockdown measure become apparent to the citizens. In regards to COVID-19, this phase keeps returning with new virus variants every few months. After the crisis eruption, the **chronic or emergency phase** begins, as seen during the summer of 2020 and 2021. The media's interest slowly diminishes because there is no fresh material or because other issues have emerged to capture the media's attention. However, the interest remains, and citizens are still looking for new information. Finally, the **healing or recovery phase** occurs when the crisis is no longer front-page news, and the media is no longer aggressively reporting the problem (Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2018).

Similarly, He and Harris (2020) believe that in the case of the COVID-19 situation, governments and organizations must develop marketing strategies for pre-, during- and post-pandemic. They also think it is critical to provide sufficient information to the media and impacted parties to minimize misinformation and gossip, common in the early stages. Therefore, Hyland-Wood, Gardner, Leask and Ecker (2021) present ten recommendations for effective marketing strategies to elicit the governments' most significant support and participation. These recommendations are as follows:

- use clear communication,
- strive for the highest level of credibility,
- empathize when communicating,
- communicate with transparency, openness, and sincerity,
- accept that uncertainty is unavoidable,
- consider health literacy and numeracy levels,
- encourage individuals to take action by appealing to societal standards,
- consider community needs, and
- take a proactive approach to fight disinformation.

To effectively tailor marketing tactics to the various stages of a crisis, similarly to Hyland-Wood et al., Curtis et al. (2020) highlight recommendations for effective government marketing strategy during the COVID-19:

- establish a crisis communication team and appoint a national focal individual,
- mobilize resources and incorporate the private sector,
- define which behaviors need to adjust and by whom,
- review international and local activities previously taken,
- review knowledge about the drivers of these behaviors and quickly fill in gaps in knowledge,
- develop a creative brief and theory of change,
- create a unified national brand,
- create executions using the most appropriate channels for the target audiences,
- fast pretest and constantly modify content, and
- deliver, monitor, analyze, and share learning.

Sarpong (2018) agrees that it is critical for governments to establish a crisis communication team and grasp what is going on locally and in the larger environment in which they operate. For example, if local governments only consider their citizens and not the cultural environment, their messages during the crisis may come out as insensitive. And during an emergency, a key challenge is to reduce unfavorable media publicity that might damage citizens' trust. Therefore, crisis communication and marketing are essential in providing government information to citizens and promoting them as a reliable source during the crisis.

However, while there is no “one size fits all” government marketing strategy for effective crisis communication during the COVID-19 pandemic, marketing is a two-way process that includes clear and transparent information provided through suitable media and shared by trustworthy individuals. Ultimately, long-term success is dependent on establishing and sustaining public trust in governments (Hyland-Wood et al., 2021).

3.1.1 Crisis communication

Communication is an essential social requirement during catastrophes, whether personal or preparing a whole society for the pandemic. Moreover, communication availability is critical during natural disasters such as fires, floods, storms, and pandemics (Picard and Pickard, 2017). National Democratic Institute (2020) also states that communication during a crisis is one of the most critical instruments that governments may employ to manage perceptions and mitigate the impact of a catastrophe. However, regular government and crisis communication differ in numerous ways. Regular government communication primarily tries to garner attention by good work and is proactive in shaping people's opinions of a subject. Crisis communication, on the other hand, deals with unwanted and unanticipated consequences. It is first reactive, attempting to alter or change current perceptions of crisis

events that have already occurred. Its goal is to reduce unfavorable views and connections. Crisis communication accomplishes four objectives:

- providing accurate and timely information about the issue to citizens,
- controlling public opinions of a crisis and how politicians, parties, or governments are responding to it,
- limiting the crisis impact by offering clear directions on what to do or how to help, and
- restoring trust and giving forward-thinking ideas.

Effective crisis communications are dependent on connections at all levels of government and between the public and private sectors. It entails communicating early, explicitly, frequently, and with a consistent message. Local governments must understand what they are up against and expectations; their function must be defined (Allain-Dupre, Taylor, 2020). To explain this in detail, National Democratic Institute (2020) highlights ten fundamental principles that apply to crisis communication. These principles are:

- responding quickly (making statements demonstrates leadership, fosters confidence, minimizes rumors, and may save lives),
- focusing on facts (usage and referencing data, statistics, and visuals demonstrates objective, independent, and evidence-based government decisions),
- building trust and providing logical reassurances (without trust, the people will not believe or act on data supplied by governments),
- showing empathy (citizens need optimism amid a crisis, therefore providing instances of resilience, togetherness, and the good news is essential),
- being honest and open (discussing the crisis's ongoing uncertainty and hazards),
- enabling media to report on the problem (treating media as an ally and providing up-to-date information to the media on a regular and active basis),
- involving communities and affected stakeholders (allowing citizens to feel a sense of ownership is critical to sustaining better support and compliance with measures),
- communicating frequently (it is crucial to repeat messages during crisis communication),
- transitioning from reactive to proactive communication (thinking about possible scenarios and building a communications plan to respond to such developments), and
- consolidating communication channels and message content (the platform and the speaker impact who is listening and whether they believe the message).

In conclusion, effective public communication by the government center is critical to ensure the coherence of official messages both internally and towards the public. Behavioral communication programs play a significant role in aiding regulatory enforcement by educating the public to comply with needed procedures - from washing their hands to obeying lockdown and social separation rules. In addition, effective and transparent communication strengthens citizens' faith and is critical in the battle against deception and misinformation, and it can assist in reaching particular segments (Jacobzone et al., 2020).

3.1.2 Transparency in communication

Strategic and open communication should be among the first lines of action at all levels of government. In practice, public communication includes disseminating information for the public good that is truthful, transparent, and distinct from partisan communication. Any efforts performed in this regard must follow the values of openness, honesty, accountability, and stakeholder involvement to be effective and promote public trust in government (Bellatoni et al., 2020). In the literal meaning, transparency allows seeing through something or what is happening inside something. However, in the context of public institutions, transparency implies making an organization's procedures and internal choices visible to other people, regardless of whether they are participating in the organization (Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2018). To further describe the concept of transparency, Meijer (2013) states that transparency is the access to information about an actor that permits other actors to monitor the first actor's functioning and actions. Thus, this concept comprises an institutional relationship and exchange of information about an actor's workings or performance.

According to Pasquier and Villeneuve (2018), transparency may take one of four forms when applied to public institutions. First, access to material maintained or compiled by the government is **documentary transparency**. It is the most common and well-documented type of administrative transparency. Active information, which is made available to the public through the internet, must be distinguished from passive information given in response to a citizen's request. Second, access to information about the organization and its operation - procedures, norms, and decisional criteria – is what **organizational transparency** entails. The objective is to demonstrate not just the product but also the production process. This sort of openness applies to government-managed election procedures and the opening of different government commissions' proceedings to public scrutiny. Third, **accounting and budgetary transparency** aim to connect the source of money to usage in public action. Administrations accomplish this by creating an official communication of financial information to political authorities or external auditing procedures. Finally, **transparency of action and administrative duties** rest with the government, informing and explaining the implications of its choices and acts. It must also guarantee that public servants and the civil service as a whole fulfill their responsibilities.

When it comes to the COVID-19 crisis, the significance of maintaining adequate compliance with COVID-19 measures and recommendations has placed communication at the core of pandemic management during the duration of the epidemic. As a result, there is a compelling need for underpinning effective crisis communication (Petersen, Bor, Jorgensen, & Lindholt, 2021). Because of this, the governments looked at the failure of response during the 2015 MERS outbreak. Despite the increase of infected cases during this epidemic, the South Korean government did not reveal details to the media to prevent panic and reduce hospital reputation damage. However, this situation caused public protest and tensions with central

and local governments. Hence, the policy-makers importance of being transparent to the citizens is one of the crucial lessons from this situation (Moon, 2020).

Furthermore, as we live in the age of massive digitalization, information availability is much easier today than during the MERS outbreak. Consequently, the COVID-19 increased government pressure to transparently serve the public and have an adaptive and agile approach to slowing down the contagion spike and creating more resilient governments and communities (Assi et al., 2020). During the early stages of the pandemic, as questions about the COVID-19 disease and its treatments arose, it was critical to focus on how health officials and researchers could transparently reveal what was not yet known. Also, the high importance was on the evidence that such uncertainties should be released to the public without jeopardizing public trust. However, as information grows, debates are increasingly moving toward whether and how to reveal what authorities know but can be a barrier to general compliance with government recommendations (Petersen et al., 2021). In conclusion, accurate, consistent, timely, and transparent information and collaboration at all levels of government are crucial in taking the proper actions and responding to the negative impacts of a pandemic and economic crisis (UNDP, 2020).

3.1.3 False information

In addition to the COVID-19 outbreak, a pandemic of false information is more than ever undermining trust, amplifying fear and often leading to dangerous citizens' behavior. Although disinformation is the more frequently used word to refer to inaccurate, damaging, and misleading content in media and information networks, the debate on this topic focuses on key ideas capturing complexities behind it, as shown in Table 4 (Bellatoni et al., 2020).

Table 4: Main types of false information

	Definition	Example
Misinformation	When false information is shared, but no harm is meant	A terror assault on the Champs Elysees created much disinformation on social media, disseminating rumors and unverified facts. People who shared such information had no intention of causing damage.
Disinformation	When false information is knowingly shared to cause harm	A replica edition of the daily news was published during the presidential elections, with a fake article stating that Saudi Arabia was funding a candidate.
Malinformation	When factual information is shared to cause harm	The deliberate disclosure of a politician's private correspondence, as occurred during the French presidential elections.

Adapted from Colomina, Sanchez Margalef & Youngs, 2021.

Colomina et al. (2021) classify three categories of information disorders to distinguish between actual messages and those that are false and generated, produced, or transmitted by 'agents' with malicious intent and which are not. The main distinction between disinformation and other misleading or erroneous content is the intent to hurt or profit.

However, as Bellatoni et al. (2020) state, problematic information flowing about the COVID-19 virus is increasingly complex. Unlike past instances of widespread misinformation, less of the present content is entirely fabricated. Instead, data is frequently twisted, and yet-to-be-proven ideas are heralded as ground-breaking findings, taking advantage of existing scientific uncertainty. According to a Reuters Institute examination of a sample of misleading content on Covid-19, up to 59% is truthful information that was altered, while 38% is entirely invented (Brennen, Simon, Howard & Nielsen, 2020). During the pandemic, misinformation and disinformation included mischaracterizing the disease and protective measures, false therapies and treatment options and conspiracy theories focused on the pathogen, profit and politics. These misinformation and disinformation forms have spread fast and come from individual persons, government officials, and foreign groups (Sell et al., 2021).

Therefore, global and local governments used online communication to combat misinformation and promote policy at the highest rate in history. The usage of marketing tools is of the highest importance at these times, as it helps build public institutions' confidence in the values of open government (Bellatoni et al., 2020). In addition, governments worldwide are reacting to the COVID-19 pandemic with steps that involve introducing awareness campaigns to encourage actions to reduce the virus's spread. These include hand hygiene, physical distance, disinfection and masks wearing, and special steps for specific populations, such as vulnerable isolation (Curtis et al., 2020). However, while some countries emphasized the transmission of factual information to combat COVID-19 disinformation, others, on the other hand, imprisoned and punished individuals and journalists who openly addressed the virus or government officials' handling of the epidemic. Thus, governments harmed public health by creating uncertainty and violating human rights (Pomeranz & Schwid, 2020).

Hence, Bellatoni et al. (2020) highlight activities that can effectively fight false information and prevent human rights issues that may occur. These activities are:

- delivering truthful and accurate information to citizens,
- pre-bunking or debunking incorrect or misleading information,
- educating individuals on responsible content consumption and sharing,
- promoting a better understanding of public views, including worries, fears, and expectations, and
- involving citizens in a collaborative response to the information crisis.

Pomeranz and Schwid (2020) agree with these activities. They conclude that the objective of combating COVID-19 disinformation is best achieved by preserving free expression, providing correct information, maintaining substantial whistleblower rights, and promoting an independent media environment.

3.2 Government digitalization

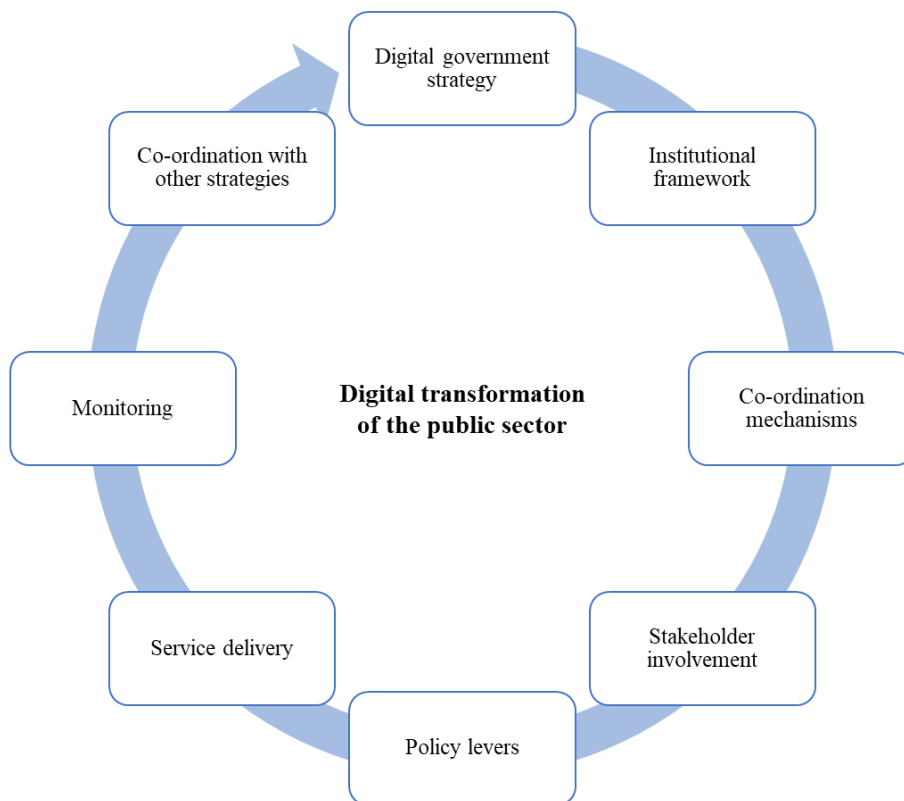
An extreme society and economic transformation in the past years results from the increasing integration of digital technology. Because of this transformation, citizens and businesses expected governments to reinvent themselves in the same way that corporations have done with digital technology (OECD, 2019c). The digitalization phenomena began to develop in the 1990s, with the use of ICTs in public sector organizations as a means of achieving the changes envisioned and striving to make public organizations more efficient, transparent, and customer-oriented. The use of websites and other digital technologies had a significant influence not just on the processing and storage of information for decision making but also on developing a more open communication atmosphere and the promotion of collaboration across organizational boundaries (Lovari & Valentini, 2019). Many governments have made significant digital advancements over the last two decades, from early e-government attempts during the dot-com era to the user-experience-driven creation of government digital service units and the adoption of commercial IT techniques (Eggers, Manstorf, Kishnani & Barroca, 2021).

Despite having digital advancements, most governments were still focusing on digitizing front-end services while putting off the more difficult task of completely reengineering underlying government operations, procedures, and systems (Eggers et al., 2021). Everything changed, however, when the COVID-19 epidemic struck. Digital was no longer a nice-to-have for the government; it was a requirement. As the epidemic spread throughout the world, residents looked to their governments for economic relief, viral containment, and a continuous information supply. As a result, the government has become the most trusted organization globally for the first time in two decades (Canning, Eggers & McGrath, 2021).

But meeting these new expectations presented a significant problem for governments (OECD, 2019c). According to Hyland-Wood et al. (2021), when officials in government support the use of new tools during a crisis, they confront at least three obstacles. For starters, there is a desire to use technology to assist policy decisions that affect many people. However, the difficulty is that technologies quickly evolve; many are unstable and frequently released with known and undiscovered flaws. Second, software systems are inherently complicated and, when extensively implemented, have unforeseen repercussions, and the "rule of unintended consequences" always applies to software. Third, it is impossible to predict how people will react to new technology. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that public health data is frequently imprecise, leading to bias in deploying public health resources.

To meet these challenges, governments must adapt how they work and organize themselves and ensure they have the necessary skill sets to use new digital technologies, collaborate, and connect with citizens and companies (OECD, 2019c). Because there is no one-size-fits-all strategy, evaluation of these characteristics is necessary in light of contextual considerations such as institutional culture and history, current political backing and mandate, and the competencies and capabilities of the various national contexts (OECD, 2019a). Some of the governance elements to consider when analyzing and supporting a country's attempts to digitalize the public sector are presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Governing the digital transformation of the public sector



Adapted from OECD (2019a).

According to Corydon, Ganesan & Lundqvist (2016), governments' digitization efforts generally focus on four capabilities: services, procedures, choices, and data exchange. Firstly, understanding the user's point of view is critical to providing excellent **digital services**. As governments implement digital technologies to improve relationships with citizens and companies, they must be willing to redesign goods, procedures, and regulations based on residents' desires. Secondly, behind-the-scenes **process** digitization provides the most significant efficiency benefits while also posing the most challenging difficulties. Governments should digitalize labor-intensive, costly procedures first, just as they should digital high-volume services first. Simply put, digitalizing processes should begin with simplifying them. Thirdly, big data and analytics in defense, public safety, healthcare, and other sectors may help the public sector make better **decisions**. Data from several sources feed algorithms that alter operations in real-time via advanced analytics systems. Finally,

transparency can boost public trust in government and civic participation. Unifying public information registries is an essential step toward **data sharing**.

In conclusion, governments should capitalize on the present momentum and lessons acquired over the last year and a half to continue on the path to becoming a genuinely digital enterprise, one that can flourish in a fast-changing and unpredictable environment (Eggers et al., 2021). Digital technology should be used for more than merely digitalizing current government procedures and providing online public services. Governments should prioritize using digital technology and data to rethink public services, policies' development and execution processes to achieve more citizen-driven methods (2019c).

3.3 Social media role during the pandemic

The phrase "social media" refers to computer-mediated interactive technologies that enable the production or sharing of information, ideas, professional interests, and other kinds of expression through virtual communities and networks (Wong, Ho, Olusanya, Antonini & Lyness, 2020). Collaboration projects (Wikipedia), weblogs (online diaries, Tumblr), microblogs (Twitter), video/photo sharing (YouTube, Instagram, TikTok), social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn), virtual game worlds (Minecraft), and virtual social worlds are examples of social media (SecondLife). Social media varies from conventional media and other forms of digital media in that it focuses on social connectedness and user-generated content (Lovari & Valentini, 2019).

As a result of the pandemic, social media is quickly becoming the preferred forum for public opinions, perceptions, and attitudes concerning specific COVID-19 events or public health policy. Social media has become a critical communication tool for governments, organizations, and institutions to distribute essential information to the public (Tsao, Chen, Tisseverasinghe, Yang, Li & Butt, 2021). Citizens utilize social media at a higher rate than usual because they rely on online news sources for health information for themselves and their loved ones. Social media platforms have made it very easy to get health information, empowering people to assess health risks and address global health issues (Abbas, Wang, Su & Ziapour, 2021).

Pang, Cai, Jiang and Chan (2021) emphasize the significance of using government social media to promote communication between the public and governments. In some instances, Facebook is favored above other social media platforms for participation in local government issues, implying that Facebook is a vital instrument for efficient communication between the public and governments during public health situations. Government social media sites can entice people to share and spread public health information. These authors state many different types of information shared on social media during the pandemic, as presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Categories of COVID-19 social media content

Category	Definition
Plans and Measures	Plans and actions by the government to tackle the epidemic
Public Health Messages	Messages aimed at educating the public, convincing them to modify their behavior, and avoiding COVID-19 infection
Rumor Control	Posts to dispel rumors or correct false information
Latest News	The recent pandemic update, with frequent numerical updates
Appreciation	Thanking messages to front-line workers and government employees for their efforts in containing the epidemic
Community Resilience	Community (non-government groups and people) actions (donations) to battle the pandemic
Live Press Conference	Live video of the government's press conferences about the pandemic and its latest development

Adapted from Pang et al., 2021.

Similarly, Tsao et al. (2021) highlight six key social media topics promoted by governments during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- infodemics (rapid and broad transmission of both correct and incorrect information about a pandemic outbreak).
- public attitudes (reflections regarding the public perceptions)
- mental health (thoughts on the pandemic's mental health consequences)
- identifying or forecasting COVID-19 instances (COVID-19 detection or prediction investigations including standard surveillance studies)
- government actions (increasingly crucial in combatting infodemics and promoting accurate and reliable data for citizens), and
- the quality of health information in preventative education videos (educating citizens on proper mask-wearing, hand washing, physical distancing, etc.).

In addition to different types of topics on social media, Pang et al. (2021) found that participation in government social media is related to crisis stages. Participation is lower during the prodromal stage (before the crisis), increases during the acute stage, and gradually declines during the chronic stage (just before the recovery phase). These authors state that government social media usage is a helpful tool for informing the public and connecting with communities. Furthermore, it can help with misinformation control and community cohesiveness. Tsao et al. (2021) agrees with the states and add that real-time surveillance of COVID-19 via social media can be a powerful instrument in building public trust and cutting marketing costs.

3.3.1 Social media opportunities

Until recently, many governments did not consider social media to be a strategic advantage. When governments initially started posting on social media, they viewed it as one of several communication channels to disseminate news releases and other information. However, in recent years governments realized that, when addressed strategically, social media can play a critical role in promoting their goal. Social media can help governments develop citizen trust, offer more effective services, and acquire fresh insights into the needs of the communities they serve by enabling them to interact with constituents in ways never previously conceivable (GovLoop, 2021).

Joanne Sweeney, Chief Executive Officer of the Public Sector Marketing Institute, believes that today's major social media platforms will be just as important in the following years. She adds that incorporating social media while rotating its features to fight the popularity of emerging channels and reacting to trends to prevent misinformation and engage socially conscious consumers is highly important (Open Access Government, 2020). As a result, for the government and public sector, establishing a solid presence is generally recommended on the following social media networks:

Facebook

Facebook, the market leader, was the first social network to reach one billion registered accounts and now has more than 2.79 billion monthly active members. The firm also controls four of the most popular social media platforms, all of which have over one billion active monthly users: Facebook, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and Instagram (Statista, 2021). In addition, Facebook users may choose from various emotions, such as love, anger, and sadness, which can help assess the number of multiple forms of interaction on government social media (Ping et al., 2021).

Twitter

Twitter is an online social media and microblogging service founded in 2006 that allows users to publish text-based status updates and messages of up to 280 characters in length. Twitter has 192 million monetizable daily active users globally as of the fourth quarter of 2020 (Statista, 2021). For example, when the city of Austin intended to enhance public participation at a televised town hall meeting, municipal personnel attempted to incorporate a social media component in addition to the traditional modes of interaction. They developed a Twitter hashtag and used it to collect citizen input during and after the meeting. This usage of their Twitter feed, which was already a valuable source of information, earned them a Golden Post Award for Citizen Engagement on Social Media (GovPilot, 2021).

Instagram

Instagram is a photo-sharing social networking software that allows users to capture photos and modify them using various digital effects. According to an October 2020 prediction, there will be approximately 1.2 billion Instagram users globally by 2023 (Statista, 2021). Although social media is primarily online, it does not have to stay that way. Governments may host Instameets, in which Instagram users gather in person and exchange images and videos about a similar subject. They can be used to highlight a local landmark, advertise an event, or even commemorate a city (GovPilot, 2021).

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a business-focused social networking platform that facilitates business interactions and increases industry ties between employers and working individuals. It enables businesses to market themselves through digital portfolios, and it allows individual users to locate job postings and strengthen their connections in their fields of expertise (Statista, 2021). The World Health Organization, for example, increased its presence on LinkedIn by 200% in 18 months after realizing that the LinkedIn Network was a powerful advocacy voice for public health messaging and that people on LinkedIn occupied top leadership positions (Open Access Government, 2020).

TikTok

TikTok is a social media video-sharing software that lets users make, edit, and share short videos spiced up with filters and the newest music trends. TikTok has become one of the fastest-growing applications globally and a global viral phenomenon in only a few months since its international launch in 2017 (Statista, 2021). Short films are an eye-catching method for government agencies to provide information, and they're also one of the most shared items on social media. While low-production video communication methods are growing more popular, high-production video material may also have a significant influence (GovPilot, 2021).

YouTube

Since its inception in 2005 and purchase by Google a year later, YouTube has evolved from a library of amateur films to the world's largest online video platform. With a vast selection of corporate and user-generated material ranging from music and gaming videos to DIY and instructional films, the video behemoth has become a prominent online destination for millions of people worldwide (Statista, 2021). Governments may use YouTube to make all information available to citizens to stay informed. Engaging videos that connect with residents go a long way toward boosting community togetherness, pride, public involvement, and raising knowledge of current events (GovPilot, 2021).

3.3.2 Social media challenges

Government organizations are increasingly using social media to communicate with the individuals they serve. These linkages can improve decision-making and problem-solving by extending government services, soliciting new ideas, and improving decision-making and problem-solving. On the other hand, interacting on social media brings additional problems regarding privacy, security, data management, accessibility, social inclusion, governance, and the realms of conspiracy theories and disinformation (Bertot, Jaeger & Hansen, 2012).

According to Colomina et al. (2021), platforms are opaque about how they acquire personal data, what they do with it, and how their algorithms operate, leaving room for micro-targeting and misinformation. The majority of activities done by the leading social media platforms are linked to content curating, as seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Actions taken by online platforms

Facebook	Any advertiser who wishes to run political or issue commercials must be vetted on the platform and provide 'paid for' disclosures with the advertising. Machine learning helps response teams in detecting fraud and enforcing our regulations against inauthentic spam accounts. A media literacy program featuring fact-checkers has started.
Twitter	False or misleading material is labeled or removed in order to erode public trust in an election or other democratic process (misleading information, disputed claim, unverified claim).
YouTube	Removing content that is technically altered or doctored in a way that misleads people (other than clips taken out of context) and may represent a substantial risk of severe damage. Channels that seek to mimic another person or medium or intentionally boost the number of views, likes and comments should be terminated.
Instagram	Content that is evaluated as false or partially false by a third-party fact-checker is labeled. If anything is marked as fake or partly fraudulent on Facebook, it is labeled the same way on Instagram (and vice versa).
WhatsApp	Message forwarding is restricted.

Adapted from Colomina et al., 2021.

The capacity to establish an instantaneous and participatory discussion is what distinguishes social media technologies and underpins their widespread appeal and power as a government instrument. However, when these technologies become more widely utilized by governments and the general public, they pose significant security concerns. Furthermore, since social media platforms enable the combination of previously inaccessible and separately kept data, there are now cross-dataset problems that influence various policy issues. Finally, social media sites are private businesses with acceptable usage, data use, accessibility, and privacy rules that do not align with government policies. However, none

of these policy gaps or problems are cited as grounds for the government to limit or avoid using social media. Instead, they are presented as challenges to examine and solve as social media becomes an increasingly important part of delivering government information, linking citizens to government services, and engaging citizens in governance and civic debate (Bertot et al., 2012).

3.3.3 Social media trends

In their annual report on the latest global trends in social media, Hootsuite (2020) highlights five key trends for governments. The first trend is **government agencies providing individualized services through both commercial and public channels**. Direct communication has become a vital means for delivering personalized experiences. Still, it should not decrease the value of public social media feeds, which continue to be an important area for community trust and education. The second trend is **employers taking center stage in a divided society**. Progressive governments will seize the chance to strengthen their internal cultures, magnify their agency's mission via employee advocacy, and put the explicit connection between employee and community experience to work. The third trend is **new social networks coming to focus**. Governments should keep an eye on the steady growth of platforms like TikTok and Reddit to determine whether to adjust their social media presence or use information and insight from these platforms to adapt their strategies to established networks like Facebook and Instagram next generation of social media. The fourth trend is the **merging of paid and organic social media**. While social media is well established for brand recognition and community involvement, organic reach is diminishing. The challenge will be to develop comprehensive skill sets capable of driving both short-term ad conversions and long-term brand-building tactics that contribute to community trust and education. The final trend is the **closing of the social proof gap**. Best creative governments are making an effort to define goals and metrics linked with the objectives. They engage with analytics teams and other colleagues and develop a uniform system of content tags across all social.

In addition to these trends, Joanne Sweeney states that the development of the socially conscious audience will have a significant impact on social media in 2021 (Open Access Government, 2020). Furthermore, being authentic and honest with citizens is critical to developing a solid connection, just as it is with a business. Governments can therefore use social media to stay as honest and straightforward with their citizens as possible. Ultimately, social media is a tremendous tool for government entities to build community, fulfill their missions, and engage the public in meaningful ways (GovLoop, 2021).

4 EMPIRICAL STUDY: THE CASE OF CANTON SARAJEVO GOVERNMENT DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

4.1 Methodology

Keeping in mind that this thesis focuses on the case of the Canton Sarajevo government during COVID-19, in addition to the literature review, a further empirical study was carried out. This thesis' methodological approach is founded on qualitative research. Qualitative research is a method for investigating and comprehending the significance that individuals or groups assign to a social or human situation. The research process includes developing questions and selecting methods, data collection in the participant's environment, data analysis empirically developing from particular to general themes, and the researcher generating interpretations of the data's meaning (Creswell, 2009). In response to the stated subject of this research, an empirical examination of the following research questions helped with gaining a better insight into the Canton Sarajevo government during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- RQ1: Why is government resilience essential in times of crisis, and how can Canton Sarajevo ensure it during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- RQ2: What is the role of marketing and communication in building the resilience of local governments?
- RQ3: Which marketing channels Canton Sarajevo currently uses to communicate with citizens and promote the actions taken?

A series of semi-structured in-depth interviews with Canton Sarajevo representatives were conducted between July and September 2021. The semi-structured interview, which is undertaken conversationally with one or more responders, utilizes a mix of closed- and open-ended inquiries, frequently supplemented by follow-up why or how questions (Adams, 2015). This type of in-depth interview was chosen as it allows data collection within qualitative research. Reminder questions are developed based on RQs and the full in-depth interview reminder is outlined in the Appendix 2. In-depth interviews were systematically carried out with both Canton Sarajevo marketing representatives and ministries within the government to (1) provide insight into the government activities, tools and responsibilities and define the importance of government resilience, (2) evaluate the role of marketing and transparent communication and define trends in building resilient governments, and (3) investigate current marketing strategies and techniques used by the Canton Sarajevo government and provide recommendations to ensure government resilience.

The recruiting procedure for the interviews included identifying suitable (non-random) candidates in conjunction with the Canton Sarajevo government Chief of Staff. Rather than improving statistical validity, the goal of non-random sampling is to engage individuals who

can offer a detailed explanation of their ideas and thoughts (Chase & Murta, 2019). However, it was quickly apparent that only five persons were in charge of all protocol and PR activities within the government and ministries and had sufficient knowledge of marketing activities within the government of Canton Sarajevo. Therefore, to maximize the diversity in the sample, additional interviews were conducted with the key ministries and offices that helped ensure government resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. This combination of PR representatives, Ministers and Heads of Offices, including the Prime Minister, enabled the collection of crucial data necessary for answering the research questions adequately.

Keeping in mind that the research took place right before the start of the fourth COVID-19 wave in Canton Sarajevo, most interviewees were extremely busy trying to prevent a new crisis and promote vaccination. This government goal, combined with the summer holidays, has resulted in a more extended waiting period for interviews than expected. Additionally, when presented with the topic, some of the interviewees declined their participation, as they believed they did not have enough insight into the marketing role in the government of Canton Sarajevo. However, with the help of the Chief of Staff, it was possible to get in touch with the Prime Minister, relevant Ministers and Head of Offices, and Press departments.

As many interviewees were slightly unfamiliar with government resilience or marketing concepts within the Canton Sarajevo government, the interviews commenced with few general questions about their role and insights about research topics. This way, the interviewees had a better understanding of research questions and provided more comprehensive answers. On some occasions, it was apparent that the interviewees had shifted from the conversation topic, but the interviewer did not interfere. However, the semi-structured interview guide, made up of open-ended questions, enabled the interviewer to receive essential information for the research questions and further analysis.

As Bosnian is the official language of the Canton Sarajevo government, the interview guide was adapted and translated, and interviews took place in the local language. The interviews had a duration of 30 – 45 minutes, depending on interviewees' availability. As previously mentioned, as the Press department consists of only five employees who work together on all projects within the government sectors and believe they would all have the same answers, this interview took place with a group of participants instead of a one-on-one consultation. Even though this is not considered ideal within the research, this approach yielded data that would not have been accessible otherwise in this situation. On the other hand, all interviewees allowed voice recording, enabling more straightforward and consistent preparation of transcripts. As a result, the interviews were transcribed in Bosnian language and successfully translated into English for further research analysis.

To prevent social and business pressure concerning the current political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, partial anonymity of interviewees is secured by using department codes in the form of letters (A – E) and interviewees' roles instead of their first and last names.

Department's code letter will guide the interviewees' discussions and interpretations in the following material, as seen in Table 7. Moreover, a detailed description of government departments is provided below to understand the context of their activities and roles within the government of Canton Sarajevo better.

Table 7: Interview sample description

Department's Code	Interview / Employee*	Interviewee role in the government	Description of department**
A	1/1	Prime Minister	The Cabinet sets the broad direction of the government's operations and ensures that the Cabinet of Ministers works in a coordinated and purposeful manner.
B	1/5	Head of Office 3 Senior Advisors Social Media Advisor	The Department performs and organizes PR activities for the Assembly, Government and Ministries of Canton Sarajevo.
C	1/1	Minister	The Ministry performs administrative and professional tasks determined in the field of economy in Canton Sarajevo.
D	1/1	Minister	The Ministry performs administrative and professional tasks in the field of internal affairs in Canton Sarajevo.
E	1/1	Head of Office	The Office focuses on the fight against corruption in Canton Sarajevo, quality management and cooperation with the non-governmental sector.

Notes: * - A total of 5 interviews with a total of 9 respondents were conducted; ** - The information was obtained from the departments' websites.

Source: own work.

4.2 Results

After creating detailed transcripts from conducted interviews, these documents further serve as a basis for the content analysis. As a first step in analyzing the transcripts collected from the interviews, the analysis commences with getting familiarized with data and looking for trends or similarities in data throughout all transcripts. Next, the process continues with marking relevant parts of the text and constructing keyword lists. To do so, participants' most

commonly used words are thoroughly counted. Then, to further evaluate these terms, connecting words are reviewed and summarized into one of the three labels. These labels are a part of the cross-case matrix and serve to bring to light relationships that might otherwise go undetected. Table 8 presents the resultant cross-case matrix.

Table 8: Cross-case comparison: The most commonly discussed terms

Label: Government (84)	Label: Communication (55)
citizens (62)	
society (57)	
activities (47)	marketing (28)
Canton Sarajevo (47)	reporting (19)
economy (45)	media (17)
COVID-19 pandemic (41)	social media (17)
institutions (34)	PR services (15)
consequences (33)	trust (15)
legal framework (33)	management (15)
challenges (31)	misinformation (14)
measures (28)	awareness campaign (13)
resilience (24)	information (13)
business (22)	reputation (12)
crisis (21)	channels (11)
health system (21)	crisis communication (11)
politics (21)	digitalization (11)
stability (20)	transparency (11)
projects (18)	truth (10)
infrastructure (18)	two-way communication (10)
budget (18)	Facebook (5)
countries (17)	TV (5)
public health (15)	billboards (5)
implementation (14)	Instagram (4)
infection (14)	website (4)
support (14)	videos (4)
public sector (13)	Twitter (2)
performance (13)	Linkedin (1)
recovery (13)	Viber (1)
fight (12)	
responsibility (10)	

Source: own work.

Within the scanning the transcripts from the interviews with Canton Sarajevo government representatives for words and phrase repetitions, over 120 terms with three or more occurrences were discovered. However, to categorize this wide range of data, the most commonly used terms were found and defined as two labels for further analysis. The most used word by interviewees was “government,” and it was mentioned 84 times. Compared to the second most said term “citizens,” the term “government” was used 35% more. Keeping in mind the fact that all interviewees are government employees, the topic of the master thesis and the research questions, it is reasonably expected to see this correlation with the most used term. This statement can also be considered as relevant for the sixth and eighth most used phrases, “Canton Sarajevo” and “COVID-19 pandemic”.

However, what is quite interesting is that the second and third most used words, “citizens” and “society,” are very interlinked, as citizens present the individual aspects of the society. When combined, these words total 119 mentionings, surprising the most commonly used term by 35 times. While it’s early to make any conclusions just from the cross-case comparison, it is also evident that the words “activities” and “economy” are in fifth and seventh places of the most commonly used terms. Therefore, the first insight from this comparison is that the government of Canton Sarajevo's great focus during the COVID-19 pandemic was the public and their wellbeing. Within this analysis, it is also apparent that this pandemic presents a considerable problem for the government of Canton Sarajevo, as the term “consequences” is mentioned 33 times, “challenge” 31 times, and “measures” 28 times. Similarly, many interviewees mentioned “institutions” as an essential aspect of government resilience and the necessity of a “legal framework” to reduce the negative pandemic effect. Keeping in mind that some of the interviewees were Ministers, “business” was mentioned 22 times, while “politics” was mentioned 21 times, indicating their importance to the government representatives.

Even though the term “communication” was ranked as the fourth most commonly mentioned word in interviews, it presents a second label highlighting terms such as “marketing,” “media,” “social media,” “PR services,” etc. Interviewees mostly used these terms to explain the importance of marketing within the government of Canton Sarajevo during the COVID-19 pandemic. Keeping in mind that not all the interviewees were familiar with government marketing activities, the mentioning numbers are much lower than the first label. However, it is possible to gain quite an insight from cross-case comparison, as the interviewees highlighted that “trust” (mentioned 15 times) and government good “reputation” (mentioned 12 times) are one of the main goals of communication with citizens. In their opinion, these goals are achievable only with “truth” said ten times and “transparency” 11 times. Even though “reporting” is one of the most used terms within this label, the interviewees expressed their fears of “misinformation” 14 times, followed by the necessity of a good “awareness campaign” and share of “information,” which were both mentioned 13 times each.

To further evaluate this label, even though marketing “channels” were mentioned 11 times, interviewees also mentioned individual methods. Keeping in mind that this master thesis focuses on the COVID-19 pandemic during the age of massive globalization, interviewees focused on said “crisis communication” and “two-way communication” as essential aspects of public sector marketing and the necessity of “digitalization” within all government sectors. When it comes to highlighting individual social media networks, Facebook and TV are highlighted as the most mentioned tools that government uses for promoting activities.

Even though billboards were mentioned the same amount of times as these two methods, it was used in the context of the previous government and not welcome strategies by the new government of Canton Sarajevo. Following Facebook and TV, Instagram and government website are platforms that the interviewees have mostly mentioned. As interviewees explained, government representatives post informational posts, pictures, videos, and infographics within these platforms. However, it is pretty interesting to note that none of the interviewees mentioned marketing strategy or the analysis of marketing activities as an essential aspect of communication within government. Further insights regarding this topic are presented cross-case presentation, in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Cross-case presentation: A synopsis of interviewees’ insights on interest topics

Construct	RQ1: Why is government resilience essential in times of crisis, and how can Canton Sarajevo ensure it during the COVID-19 pandemic?	RQ2: What is the role of marketing and communication in building the resilience of local governments?	RQ3: Which marketing channels Canton Sarajevo currently uses to communicate with citizens and promote the actions taken?
A	To provide help to those in need; subordinating all resources and human capacities to the fight against COVID-19; raising awareness about vaccination and the implementation of the measures	Essential for sharing government activities and changes with the public so that they give their support	PR activities (press releases, press conferences, media contacts), social networks, website; would like to include more TV in the future

(Table continues)

(Continued)

Table 9: Cross-case presentation: A synopsis of interviewees' insights on interest topics

Construct	RQ1: Why is government resilience essential in times of crisis, and how can Canton Sarajevo ensure it during the COVID-19 pandemic?	RQ2: What is the role of marketing and communication in building the resilience of local governments?	RQ3: Which marketing channels Canton Sarajevo currently uses to communicate with citizens and promote the actions taken?
B	To respond to the crisis in an adequate manner and bring quality solutions for citizens; responsible management of public finances, engaging all necessary forces, regular reporting to the public, concrete proposals for successful overcoming and resolution, analysis of activities and steps taken	The prime importance of constant and transparent informing of the public about activities, especially those related to mitigating and stopping the spread of the pandemic	The government website, media and media agencies, social networks (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), TV
C	To provide citizens with trust and security; the government must prove an ability to overcome difficulties and be there for its citizens; maintain functional health systems, guarantee continuity of education, preserve companies and jobs, as well as maintain the stability of financial markets	A timely and well-communicated message is more than half the solution to a particular problem; it leads to the strengthening of public confidence in public institutions, which is essential for the government reputation and a healthy political and social climate	Social networks (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) and the Viber community

(Table continues)

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Table 9: Cross-case presentation: A synopsis of interviewees' insights on interest topics

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D	To manage the area of responsibility in times of crisis and prevent chaos and anarchy; reorganization, intensifying activities, accelerating government digital transformation and communication with citizens	Improving and accelerating the Canton Sarajevo government's response to citizens' needs	No information is available regarding the use of marketing channels for communication and promotion of activities
E	The speed and efficiency of the government's response to crisis affects the size and depth of the scar left on a society post-crisis; provide timely support to healthcare professionals; strengthen the supply with necessary medicines, equipment and products; provide funds for building the resistance of the health system to future infectious diseases; improve the quality of health care	Extremely important as a good decision or political move, if not adequately communicated to the public, can produce a counter-effect and create additional problems	No information is available regarding the use of marketing channels for communication and promotion of activities

Source: own work.

The first overall conclusion drawn from the cross-case presentation is that government resilience is necessary during all times, and particularly during crises such as the COVID-

19 pandemic. While all interviewees agree with the statement mentioned above, insight shows that they highlighted different government roles as the most important ones during a crisis. In their opinion, the prominent roles of government during an emergency are to provide help, trust and security for citizens and prevent further chaos during times of crisis.

- *“Some of the general key responsibilities of the Government during the crisis are: responsible management of public finances, engaging all necessary forces to remedy the crisis, regular reporting to the public on the steps taken, concrete proposals for its successful overcoming and resolution, analysis of activities and steps and informing the public about its results.”* – Department B,
- *“The responsibilities of the Canton Sarajevo government are linked to institutional arrangements for managing the political, economic, social, educational, health and security responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, with special emphasis on coordination and strategic planning, decision-making and use of information for unhindered and objective information and communication to the public.”* – Department C.

The interviewees also commented on the Canton Sarajevo government's resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting past and current government actions. While all interviewees state that the current government has done everything to ensure resilience, they still had recommendations for the future. Interviewees believe their future focus should be on building an awareness campaign to promote vaccination and providing support to the healthcare system and infrastructure in Canton Sarajevo.

- *“I think that the Canton Sarajevo government has done everything that could be done in this fight, which is in line with its current capabilities. The government is coherent, organized, policies are clear, communication channels are improved. We learned a lot. We know how to proceed. We are ready to wait for the continuation of this challenge and the potential new challenges that lie ahead.”* – Department D,
- *“To become more resistant to a pandemic, it is necessary for the Canton Sarajevo government to provide timely support to health workers in the form of equipment and training for the treatment of people suffering from infectious diseases. The COVID-19 crisis has shown the importance of public health, and the obligation to continuously invest in this sector is imposed as an imperative, through the education of staff and management, and the construction of new and improvement of existing health infrastructure.”* – Department E.

Following the insights mentioned above, one of the most critical insights for the topic of this master thesis is found within the second research question. What was interesting to discover is that all interviewees quickly highlighted the importance of communication in building a resilient government, focusing on transparency, two-way communication and building government reputation. However, when it came to marketing, two departments explained that their work scope is not related to marketing, so they could not explain the marketing

role. This unfamiliarity with the public sector marketing within government representatives is also noticed during the interviews regarding the RQ3 and will be discussed in more detail within the conclusion section of the thesis.

- *“Governments do not do marketing. Governments promote their activities that are closest in some commercial sense to advertising, campaign management and advocacy. We do not produce new needs for people or satisfy our products. What is crucial is not only to provide people with a better service and to implement projects that are of public importance.”* - Department A,
- *“Marketing generally sells an idea or product and has no interest in connecting. But, on the other hand, communication is connecting, and that is why we prefer to use this term instead of the other.”* – Department C.

The final conclusion from the cross-case presentation focuses on marketing channels that the Canton Sarajevo government currently uses to communicate with citizens. The research shows that social networks Facebook and Instagram are mostly mentioned, followed by government website and PR activities. Surprisingly, the previous governments did not use any social media for promotion or communication, so this is relatively new for Canton Sarajevo. Unfortunately, two departments did not provide any information regarding the marketing channels used. However, what was even more interesting is that the Canton Sarajevo government does not have a marketing strategy to communicate key issues. Also, the Canton Sarajevo government does not process and analyze the data collected by marketing channels.

- *“On social media, it is easier and cheaper to target audience than to make billboards and TV commercials. However, if we received a better budget, we would like to include more TV and other types of communication channels for promotion.”* – Department A,
- *“The idea and one of the basic goals of social networks of the Government of Sarajevo Canton, in addition to information, is interaction with citizens. Therefore, the government must be accessible, available and at the service of citizens, and effectively and quickly influence the solution of problems.”* – Department B.

To gather information from the interviews, comprehend links that may exist between interviewees' opinions, and refine and build concepts regarding these opinions, the cross-case analysis is developed. The cross-case analysis is a research technique that allows evaluating similarities and differences in the events, actions, and processes that serve as the units of study in case studies (VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2007). For easier visualization and comparison of all different interviewees' opinions regarding three research questions, insights are displayed in the format of a meta-matrix. As seen in Table 10, meta-matrix furtherly presents the comparison of insights within three research questions, revealed through the following dimensions:

- RQ1: Why is government resilience essential in times of crisis, and how can Canton Sarajevo ensure it during the COVID-19 pandemic (dimension: relevance of government resilience; dimension: current government actions; dimension: government plans)?
- RQ2: What is the role of marketing and communication in building the resilience of local governments (dimension: marketing and communication role; dimension: social media role; dimension: transparency)?
- RQ3: Which marketing channels Canton Sarajevo currently uses to communicate with citizens and promote the actions taken (dimension: most frequently used marketing channels; dimension: type of content; dimension: two-way communication)?

Table 10: Meta-matrix explaining research questions

Explanation	Insights
RQ1: Why is government resilience essential in times of crisis, and how can Canton Sarajevo ensure it during the COVID-19 pandemic?	
Dimension: relevance of government resilience	“Government resilience is essential because only resilient governments can respond to the crisis in a quality and adequate manner.” – Department B
	“Government resilience is always essential as people need trust and security or at least a sense of security. The government must prove that it can overcome difficulties and be there for its citizens.” – Department C
	“A government that is not resilient to shocks and challenges cannot manage the crisis, or it is making it much more difficult. If the government is not able to manage the area of responsibility in times of crisis, it can easily slip into chaos and anarchy.” – Department D
Dimension: current government actions	“We have subordinated all our resources and human capacities to the fight against COVID-19 pandemic, especially focusing on the health response and the economic response.” – Department A
	“The Canton Sarajevo government decided that for 2020 and 2021, most of the program will be of a stabilization and rehabilitation nature, to facilitate this transition period that we are going through due to and with the pandemic.” – Department C
	“The Government passed several legal regulations, including the Law on Mitigation of Negative Economic Consequences and Savings, as the most important regulation which seeks to mitigate the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Sarajevo Canton economy.” – Department E

(Table continues)

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Table 10: Meta-matrix explaining research questions

Dimension: government plans	<p>“We currently need to work on raising awareness about vaccination and implementing existing measures. We may need an additional information campaign to raise awareness.” – Department A</p> <p>“It is necessary to strengthen the supply chains with the necessary medicines, equipment and products, to provide funds for building the resistance of the health system to future infectious diseases, to improve the quality of health care and the efficiency and effectiveness of its provision.” – Department E</p>
Explanation	Insights
RQ2: What is the role of marketing and communication in building the resilience of local governments?	
Dimension: marketing and communication role	<p>“I think it is crucial to describe to the public what you are doing and will do, and give the public a perspective, so that they, following the facts you present to them feel the change and give you support.” – Department A</p> <p>“The roles of communications and marketing are of primary importance in building the resilience of any government. Constant and transparent informing of the public about all undertaken activities, especially those related to mitigating and stopping the spread of the pandemic.” – Department B</p> <p>“Marketing and PR, especially crisis PR, play a crucial role. A timely and well-communicated message is already more than half of the solution to a certain problem, and of course, the image of the Government in public depends on communication.” – Department C</p>
Dimension: social media role	<p>“We were aware that social networks as a communication tool, especially as an interactive communication tool, were already sufficiently important and developed, and we immediately put it into operation.” – Department A</p> <p>“Social media dictates the position in society, both of individuals and institutions, so it is essential in the resilience of the government. It is also important as feedback from followers helps us monitor the echo of our actions in public.” – Department C</p> <p>“Social media allows us to inform the public in real-time about the activities of the government. It is important for the population to know what is happening, to be familiar with the actions.” – Department D</p>

(Table continues)

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Table 10: Meta-matrix explaining research questions

Dimension: transparency	<p>“Transparent and open communication allows the government to maintain good status and reputation among the citizens and thus significantly affects its resilience.” – Department B</p> <p>“The role of transparency is huge in government resilience. Transparency is what we have lacked for years, and this separation of politics from people is the result of non-transparency in both action and communication.” – Department C</p> <p>“Transparency is the key; nothing can be hidden today.” – Department D</p>
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Explanation	Insights
RQ3: Which marketing channels Canton Sarajevo currently uses to communicate with citizens and promote the actions taken?	
Dimension: most frequently used marketing channels	<p>“The government always uses its Press Service, government website and social media networks, which is new.” – Department A</p> <p>“In addition to the Canton Sarajevo government website, which publishes information related to the work of Prime Ministers and Ministers, and which is sent to all media and media agencies, the government is also active on social networks, where it reports to the public through its official Facebook, Twitter and Instagram profiles.” – Department B</p>
Dimension: type of content	<p>“Sometimes it is a promotion of the work of the Government, sometimes politically, but we also used them as a public service, which the media should sometimes do - to amplify some information that is important for any citizen, whether it follows politics or not.” – Department A</p> <p>“As short as possible information, infographics, videos, live videos, guest appearances of prime ministers and ministers in the media, publishing stories. The number of announcements depends on the activities of the Government and the ministries on that day.” – Department B</p>
Dimension: two- way communication	<p>“The Canton Sarajevo government actively communicates with citizens through social networks, considering that we receive a large number of inquiries daily. Citizens mostly write to us via the Facebook page, which has almost 46,000 followers.” – Department B</p> <p>“We communicate in two directions; as we distribute information, we also send feedback on inquiries and proposals and suggestions from citizens and businessmen, as well as other representatives of the civil sector.” – Department C</p>

Source: own work.

CONCLUSION

This master thesis's primary purpose is to examine the role of marketing and communication in building a resilient Canton Sarajevo government during the COVID-19 pandemic and to supply the government with the necessary knowledge, measures, and responses to overcome current environmental obstacles and ensure long-term recovery and growth. This thesis's specific objective is to answer the following three research questions:

- RQ1: Why is government resilience essential in times of crisis, and how can Canton Sarajevo ensure it during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- RQ2: What is the role of marketing and communication in building the resilience of local governments?
- RQ3: Which marketing channels Canton Sarajevo currently uses to communicate with citizens and promote the actions taken?

These questions will be addressed by the thesis's objectives, which are as follows:

- to evaluate and assess the research perspective on the role of marketing and transparent communication in the public sector during crisis globally and locally,
- to define trends and opportunities and identify best marketing practices to shape a more resilient government during the crisis,
- to investigate marketing strategies and techniques used by the government Canton Sarajevo in fighting against COVID-19 impacts, and
- to provide recommendations regarding decision-makers marketing strategies during and post-COVID-19 pandemic to ensure government resilience.

From a literature viewpoint, the primary contribution of this master thesis is the establishment of a context that supports an analysis of the role of marketing in the Canton Sarajevo government during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the importance of building a resilient government during the crisis. As seen during the literature review, extensive research has already been conducted regarding the role of marketing in governments during the crisis. However, considering that the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing, only some research is done regarding this matter globally. Therefore, this thesis aims to provide a direction and insight into the situation in Canton Sarajevo and fill in a part of a global gap regarding the marketing in governments during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the context of this thesis is built from a literature review combined with qualitative research, linked to the research questions provided and associated dimensions.

When looking at the aspect of government resilience during the crisis, as seen from the literature review, many studies highlight the importance of adaptability, enabling governments to recover and arise from a problem stronger. In addition, these studies state

that governments must constantly strengthen their resilience, be able to respond to urgent matters as well as develop governance structures and policies that promote resilience in governments and societies (Jacobzone et al., 2020; Van der Waldt, 2020; Linkov and Trump, 2019; Young, 2017; Antulov-Fantulin et al., 2021). These statements were also reinforced by qualitative research, which is explored in detail further below.

The qualitative research found that all nine interviewees believe that government resilience is essential in times of crisis, stating its importance in providing citizens with a sense of trust and security. Additionally, within research questions, it is further examined how the pandemic affected the government and how Canton Sarajevo can ensure government resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Keeping in mind that the current Canton Sarajevo government has been appointed in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic (January 2021), this government has been within the pandemic crisis since its appointment. This was first noticed during the interview with Department A in which they stated: *“We can say that for the first six months, and especially the first four months, we were exclusively dealing with COVID-19 because we were appointed directly to the third wave of the pandemic. Therefore, we have subordinated all our resources and human capacities to the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, especially focusing on the health response and the economic response.”* Regarding the COVID-19 effects on the Canton Sarajevo government, it was noticeable that all interviewees believe that the government and its plans and budgets were immediately affected. Interviewees stated:

- *“The COVID-19 pandemic and the spread of disease affected all areas of life in our country. The work program of the Sarajevo Canton government has been reduced to the rehabilitation of the health crisis, and only some implementation of significant infrastructure projects, such as the construction of roads, rehabilitation of public transport, construction of an underground garage, etc.”* – Department B,
- *“The COVID-19 pandemic has done enormous damage to the economic sector of the Canton Sarajevo, especially services (catering, tourism) which are the backbone of the economy of our Canton. As the repair and stabilization of this and other sectors take time, resources and energy were aimed at developing and improving the business environment in the Canton under normal circumstances.”* – Department C,
- *“There is no doubt that COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected the management of the Sarajevo Canton budget, conditioned the redirection of funds to the health sector, stopped infrastructure and development projects in Sarajevo Canton. In addition, pandemic also put pressure on the health system and the government in the process of finding adequate health care provision and health care financing.”* – Department E.

However, even though the effects on the government and all life aspects were significant and negative, interviewees highlighted that in their opinions, the government had taken all the necessary and available measures to prevent the spread of infection and support the economic sector during the process. Interviewees stated that even though the public may not

see it, the government of Canton Sarajevo ensured functionality of primary resources, continuously procured the necessary medical supplies for hospitals and other health care institutions, and systematically monitored all health measures taken to prevent the spread of the infection with solutions to help and support businesses. Interviewees also stated that they believe in the necessity of taking Canton Sarajevo government measures for two main reasons. First, Canton Sarajevo is a much smaller organization unit than other global countries that the public could consider successful during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as Israel, Iceland, and Germany. And secondly, they stated that even though the public finds these states as successful, there are still no clearly defined criteria on which specific methods can be evaluated as correct in the fight against the pandemic, as it is still an ongoing battle.

When discussing the public understanding of the government measures and actions, as seen in the literature review, studies highlight that a crisis needs expert marketing to identify and adequately communicate acceptable solutions and assist victims by aiding those in need (Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2018). Keeping in mind the necessity for citizens' compliance with government measures during the times of COVID-19, the role of adequate communication is perceived as a necessity for government resilience by the interviewees. However, when it comes to marketing, it was surprising to find that three out of nine interviewees state that government does not practice any marketing. Interviewees noted the following:

- *“Governments do not do marketing. Governments promote their activities that are closest in some commercial sense to advertising, campaign management and advocacy. We do not produce new needs for people or satisfy our products. What is crucial is not only to provide people with a better service and to implement projects that are of public importance.”* - Department A,
- *“Marketing generally sells an idea or product and has no interest in connecting. But, on the other hand, communication is connecting, and that is why we prefer to use this term instead of the other.”* – Department C,
- *“Marketing is by definition a link that connects the buyer and the seller. We don't sell anything. Citizens are not customers of our services. We are representatives acting in citizens' interest by creating a framework and regulating the circumstances in society according to their wishes and needs, for the common good, for the progress of society. Therefore, we do not use marketing channels and services.”* – Department D.

These surprising answers can be explained as the representatives not familiarized with the term “public sector marketing,” as they have described its main components during the other research questions, as seen by the Department A answer. To further investigate marketing role during the crisis, the research investigates the importance of social media and transparency. Both factors have been highlighted by the interviewees as extremely important, as seen in the Methodology section. When it comes to the high importance of social media, one of the reasons for this was mentioned by Department B: *“A big problem in our country is the fact that the vast majority of our media is subordinated to a certain*

political option, which significantly impedes its socially useful activities. Due to this, a significant number of media are limited in the transmission of essential activities and steps taken by the Canton Sarajevo government, so we do focus on the social media as a more reliable resource.”

When it comes to reliability and transparency, this is a goal that a government always has in mind when communicating with the public, as this was not the case in the previous government, according to interviewees. In their opinion, with inadequate communication, the government allows its opponents to create and spin various messages and information, which might damage the government's reputation. Even though all departments state that they communicate transparently, they still mention the high possibility of fake news and political propaganda. In Canton Sarajevo, this is especially visible as the first change in government representation happened only recently, after more than two decades. Therefore, as the role of adequate communication has been perceived as necessary, it can be concluded that the government representatives may believe the same regarding the marketing channels, which they do mention later within interviews.

Within the final research question, the thesis focuses on the current marketing channels used by the Canton Sarajevo government for communication and promotion. According to the interviewees, the government most frequently uses traditional Press services – press releases, press conferences and direct contact with media representatives, followed by government website and social media platforms. Facebook was mentioned as the most used social media platform, followed by Instagram and Twitter. Within the research of marketing channels, the interviewees mentioned the issue of budget. They would also like to focus more on the TV to promote their activities but are unable to do so at the moment. Interviewees also mentioned the importance of two-way communication, highlighting social media for enabling interaction with citizens. The research found that even though the government currently primarily uses PR services, the interviewees believe that social media's most significant advantage is the speed of communication, as it allows citizens to get answers in real-time. To gain further insight, the research also focused on the type of content published within these channels. According to interviewees, these channels are used for the promotion of the following information:

- *“Canton Sarajevo government website publishes information related to the work of Prime Ministers and Ministers and is sent to all media and media agencies. The government is also active on social networks, where it reports to the public through its official Facebook, Twitter and Instagram profiles.” – Department B,*
- *“In terms of informing the public about all government activities, we use press releases and information, press conferences, constant contacts with journalists to clarify and provide answers to all questions related to combating the crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic. We distribute all information to all media houses regularly, very often and at all hours and all days, working or non-working, holidays, and publish them*

- on our official website, as well as on social networks Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, depending on the intention of these communication channels.” – Department B,*
- *“The government uses the social platforms Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Viber Community, as well as the government web site of the and email correspondence. On each of these channels, we actively promote government activities, but also some other important segments of society, such as the culture of remembrance related to the period of aggression against our country, and the celebration of important international dates.”*
 - Department C.

However, even though the government has a Press service in charge of all marketing and communication activities, according to the research, the government does not have a marketing strategy in place for the communication of key issues. Therefore, the Press department makes decisions on the type of content promoted according to the government representatives and current topics of public interest. Additionally, the government's data collected by media channels are not processed or analyzed by the Canton Sarajevo government. Department A explained this furtherly: “Unfortunately, we don't have media channel analysis at the moment, but I'd love to have it. We need more employees within the Press department to keep track of our accounts and answer public because we can't focus on everything ourselves. Therefore, I hope we will have that in the future.” This answer provides an essential insight that the current amount of employees within the Press department is not sufficient for coverage of government, all ministries and assembly within Canton Sarajevo. Keeping in mind that using data and analytics presents one of the key opportunities for making faster and better decisions in times of crisis, the recommendations section will focus on this topic to ensure a resilient government.

Keeping in mind that both literature review and qualitative analysis highlight marketing importance in building the resilience of government, this thesis concludes with recommendations for the Canton Sarajevo government. To become more resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Canton Sarajevo government should:

- eliminate scarcity in personnel to enable development and implementation of omnichannel marketing strategy,
- define functions and responsibilities related to the management of the government's PR and social media services,
- define functions and responsibilities associated with the analysis of government's PR and social media data,
- review previous marketing efforts to determine a clear and consistent marketing strategy,
- evaluate the social media impact and analyze available data to determine a marketing strategy,
- assess and determine the tone of marketing channels and messaging towards the public,
- build a strong presence on social media networks and keep the information up to date,
- expand sharing success stories via social media networks,

- engage in conversations with the public via social media networks, and
- focus on regulating the area of fake news and political propaganda.

Even though the research regarding government resilience is still limited, these practices can help shape and build a more resilient government during the pandemic. The recommendations also offer representatives new techniques to rethink government marketing activities, illustrating how the crisis can produce opportunities for the long run. In addition to these recommendations, it is important to note that the government should first focus on employing experienced marketing experts or partnering with a marketing agency specializing in government marketing. Working with appropriate partners will allow the Canton Sarajevo government to engage with citizens and develop its marketing strategy.

After eliminating the scarcity of educated personnel, it is important to note that the government should regularly update its omnichannel marketing strategy to keep up to date with new issues and topics after the initial development. In addition, it is essential to focus on citizens within these marketing strategies by connecting with them and engaging them in a two-way communication process. Communication with citizens can either be enabled via social media networks or by creating a responsive website and will serve as a tool for collective feedback and a host of issues.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Povzetek

Namen te magistrske naloge je preučiti vlogo trženja in komuniciranja pri izgradnji vzdržljive vlade Kantona Sarajevo med pandemijo COVID-19, da bi predstavnikom vlade zagotovili potrebno znanje, ukrepe in odzive za premagovanje sedanjih okoliških ovir in zagotovili dolgoročno okrevanje in rast. Poleg tega se ta naloga osredotoča na uspešne svetovne primere sinergije tržnih orodij in izobražuje lokalno upravo o tem, kako odražati, načrtovati in premisliti svoje trženjske strategije med in po COVID-19 svetu.

V okviru te magistrske naloge empirični pregled naslednjih raziskovalnih vprašanj pomaga pri pridobivanju boljšega vpogleda v vlado Kantona Sarajevo v času pandemije COVID-19:

- RQ1: Zakaj je vzdržljivost vlade v času krize bistvena in kako jo lahko Kanton Sarajevo zagotovi med pandemijo COVID-19?
- RQ2: Kakšna je vloga trženja in komuniciranja pri krepitvi vzdržljivosti lokalnih oblasti?
- RQ3: Katere tržne poti Kanton Sarajevo trenutno uporablja za komunikacijo z državljani in spodbujanje sprejetih ukrepov?

Podrobni analizi literature so sledile kvalitativne raziskave in analiza podatkov za obravnavo raziskovalnih vprašanj. Končno je vrsta pol strukturiranih poglobljenih intervjujev s predstavniki Kantona Sarajevo omogočila zbiranje ključnih podatkov, potrebnih za ustrezen odgovor na raziskovalna vprašanja.

Tu so ključne ugotovitve študije:

- tako pregled literature kot kakovostne raziskave poudarjajo pomen vzdržljivosti vlade in ustrezne komunikacije, da državljanom zagotovi občutek zaupanja in varnosti,
- predstavniki vlade menijo, da je vlada Kantona Sarajevo sprejela vse potrebne in razpoložljive ukrepe za preprečitev širjenja okužbe in za podporo gospodarstvu v procesu,
- predstavniki vlade niso seznanjeni z izrazom "trženje v javnem sektorju", čeprav poudarjajo pomen družbenih medijev in preglednost kot "izjemno pomembni",
- trenutno število zaposlenih v oddelku za tisk ne zadošča za pokritje vlade, vseh ministrstev in skupščin v Kantonu Sarajevo, in
- vladnih podatkov, ki jih zbirajo medijski kanali, vlada Kantona Sarajevo trenutno ne obdeluje in ne analizira.

Appendix 2: Interview guide

PART 1 (related to RQ1: Why is government resilience essential in times of crisis, and how can Canton Sarajevo ensure it during the COVID-19 pandemic?)

1. How would you define government resilience, and why is government resilience important during the crisis?
2. What are the key responsibilities of government during the crisis?
3. In what ways did the COVID-19 affect the Canton Sarajevo government?
4. Which activities were taken by Canton Sarajevo to ensure government resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - a) What is the government doing now?
 - b) What tools, infrastructure and support is the government employing?
5. Can you identify some successful and unsuccessful global methods for handling the COVID-19 pandemic at the local community levels?
6. What tactics, processes, and policies should government include for its resilience model to become more "pandemic-resistant?"

PART 2 (related to RQ2: What is the role of marketing and communication in building the resilience of local governments?)

1. Would you please explain how important is the role of marketing for government resilience?
 - a) What is the role of communication in government resilience?
 - b) What is social media role in government resilience?
2. To what degree do governments prioritize marketing and communication before and after an issue becomes a source of public concern?
3. Can you highlight good and bad communication practices and trends by governments globally during crisis communication?
4. What are the benefits and issues caused by government communication during the crisis?
5. What is the role of transparent communication in building the resilience of local governments?
6. How high is the level of trust by citizens regarding the government information related to the Covid-19?

PART 3 (related to RQ3: Which marketing channels Canton Sarajevo currently uses to communicate with citizens and promote the actions taken?)

1. Which marketing channels Canton Sarajevo government uses to provide information to the citizens?
2. In what ways are these marketing channels utilized for government communication?
3. Which marketing activities Canton Sarajevo government prefers?

4. Does the Canton Sarajevo government have a marketing strategy in place for the communication of key issues?
 - a) If yes, who is in charge of it?
5. What type of content and how often is it placed via previously mentioned channels?
6. Do any of the marketing channels provide governments a two-way communication with the community?
 - a) If yes, in what way?
7. Can data collected by media channels be processed and analyzed by the Canton Sarajevo government?
 - a) If yes, who has access to that data?
8. What are the pros and cons of mentioned channels (for example, radio, television, print and social media communication)?
9. Would you please share your general views on government communication with citizens, including recommendations and challenges?