

THE CHANGES IN THE WORK STYLE OF THE MANAGER IN THE STRUCTURES OF BORDER POLICE WITHIN THE NATIONAL CONTEXT AFFECTED BY CRISIS

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Abstract: *Surveillance of the EU's external border has now become a sine qua non element for the proper functioning of the public, national, European security system and its key mechanisms. The three classical styles (authoritarian / autocratic, democratic / participatory and permissive / free) that have been based so far in many specialized works, are far from exhausting the existing palette in practice. In the current context, we argue that the manager's work style influences the external crises and the effects of the crises on the entity's performance. Starting from this idea, in this article we asked ourselves the following questions: What changes are taking place in the work style of the M.A.I. manager in the national context affected by the crisis? Is there a link between the work style and external crises? What would be the main tools and techniques for adapting to the external crises? In order to find out the answer, we undertook a qualitative research based on an interview on a section chosen from the structure of the Romanian Border Police.*

Keywords: *motivation, human resources, management, performance.*

JEL Classification: *M12.*

1. Introduction

In the context of the responsibilities assumed by Romania, as it results from the common position of the European Union, it is necessary to reposition the current system of public order and security, so that the priority effort of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to be focused on streamlining the services of all public institutions that are supposed to ensure public safety of the citizen and of the borders of the state. The public order structures within the Ministry of Internal Affairs must be flexible, mobile structures capable of integrating into the global and security architecture of the European Union. Romania is thus contributing to the conceptual completion and implementation of the NATO system in response to international crises, in order to ensure a climate of national order and security, in close connection with the provisions of the agreement with the European Union on participation in crisis management operations.

The area addressed in this article is current in the context of the imminent emergence of external crises, as well as in the context of the creation of an adequate management system to minimize their negative effects. Practically, at the moment, the surveillance of the EU's external border has become a sine qua non for the proper functioning of the public, national, European security system and its essential mechanisms. In the context presented above, we asked ourselves the following questions:

- What changes occur on the work style of the manager from M.A.I. in the national context affected by the crisis?
- Is there a link between the work style and the external crises?
- What would be the main tools and techniques for adapting to external crises?

We start from the premise that an increased performance is possibly caused by a managerial work style adapted to the internal and external environment (in which crises can arise at any time). In order to find out the answer, we undertook a qualitative research based on an interview on a sample chosen from the structure of the Romanian Border Police. Thus, through the interview, we test the influence of the work style practiced by the

Border Police managers on external crises and identify effective tools and techniques applicable to the field studied to prevent, reduce or counteract the effects of external crises.

2. The methodology of qualitative research

The interview we will conduct is a documentary interview. The qualitative research (namely the unstructured interview and the in-depth interview) was chosen in order to gain in-depth knowledge of the opinions of specialists on the relationship between the work style of managers in the Romanian Border Police structures and the external crises. The sampling method was random, the target group of the interview was represented by the heads of the territorial structures directly subordinated to the General Inspectorate of Border Police from Satu Mare, Maramureş and Suceava counties, which would have possibilities to observe and analyse the managerial work styles within these territorial structures and directions. The interview is structured in five open-ended questions. Seven people with leadership positions within the Territorial Inspectorate of Sighetul Marmătiei Border Police were interviewed. This territorial structure¹ has the mission to ensure:

- surveillance of the border and the control of its crossing with the Republic of Hungary on a length of 97.8 kilometres;
- surveillance of the border and the control of its crossing with the Republic of Ukraine on a length of 366.5 kilometres;
- compliance with the provisions of treaties, agreements, conventions and border protocols concluded with the Republic of Hungary and Ukraine and of the international ones to which Romania is a party, regarding the state border

Starting from the field of research, the interview conducted pursued three objectives:

O1. identifying the main effective tools and techniques for preventing, adapting and managing external crises;

O2. identifying the perception of specialists regarding the degree of influence of the managerial work style on external crises;

O3. description of the way in which the work style practiced by the Border Police managers helps to prevent, diminish, counteract the effects of external crises.

Starting from the first proposed hypothesis, namely that the work style of managers in the Romanian Border Police structures greatly influences external crises, by preventing, mitigating and counteracting crises, through the interview we will test three hypotheses and focus on identification within police structures Effective tools and techniques for preventing, mitigating and counteracting the effects of external crises.

Thus, through the qualitative research, we want to verify the validity of three hypotheses of this research:

- the work style of the managers from the public institutions subordinated to the Ministry of Internal Affairs directly influences the external crises in a proportional way;
- the work style practiced by the Border Police managers helps to prevent, diminish or counteract the effects of external crises;
- the identification of effective tools and techniques for preventing, mitigating and counteracting the effects of external crises is verified only by qualitative research.

¹ <https://www.politiadefrontiera.ro/ro/structura-teritoriala-sighetu-marmatiei/>, accesat 10 ianuarie 2022, ora 17:30

3. Case study

Through this qualitative research we want to check the perception of the interviewees on the relationship between the work style of managers (leadership style) and the external crisis, and at the same time to know the main tools and techniques applied by managers on prevention, mitigation, di-mitigation, in a word, external crisis management.

The profile of the interviewed

The interviewees are seven people with management positions (deputies of the territorial services: Satu Mare, Maramureş, Suceava, but also from different departments such as human resources, communications and informatics, operational management) within the Territorial Inspectorate of Sighetul Marmăţiei Border Police, highlighted in figure 1.

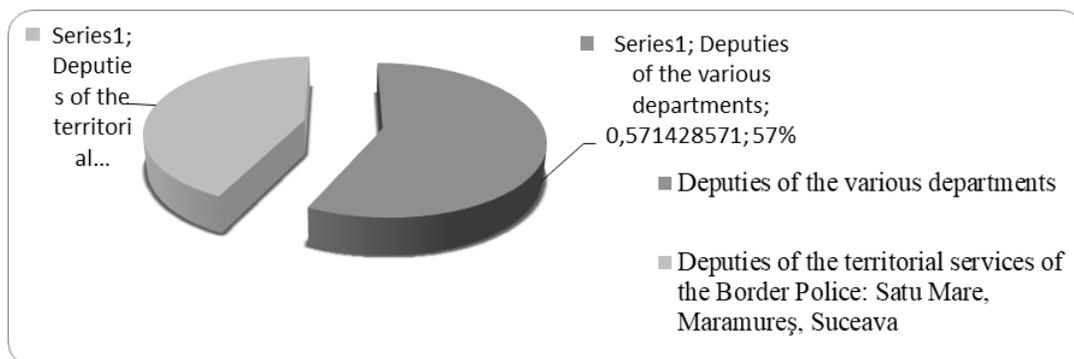


Fig. 1. The field of activity of the interviewed persons

Source: Developed by the author

Qualitative research results:

✓ In the first question of the interview: What does “work style” mean to you? we wanted to know the level of understanding of the phrase “work style” and we found the almost total association of the term with the way of being, of acting, of behaving of the manager towards subordinates. One of the interviewees from the human resources department states that the work style is that “*practical way of influencing employees based on the status, principles and norms of the activity*”. Concluding the work style implies a combination of “*knowledge and skills, reflecting objective needs and particularities of the psychic structure of the manager*” (deputy within the operational management service).

✓ The second question of the qualitative research: In your opinion, is there a link between work style and external crises? is one to check the evidence of the relationship between work style and external crises. Otherwise, all interviewees argued that this relationship existed. Only one respondent mentioned that there is a relationship of “conditioning imposed by the managerial style on external crises” (deputy of the communications and IT service).

✓ How do the manager's work style influence the external crises that arise? Most of the interviewees (approximately 86% of the interviewees) confirmed the high degree of influence of the manager's work style on the external crises in the economy (figure 2. is representative for the measure of the influence exerted by the managerial style).

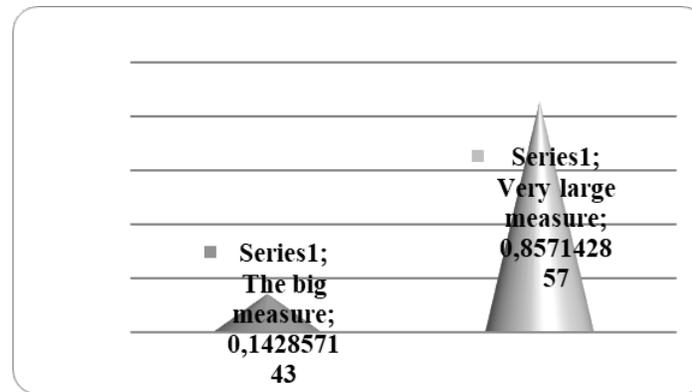


Fig. 2. The influence exerted by the managerial style within ITPF Sighetul Marmatiiei

Source: Developed by the author

A response from a deputy from the Territorial Inspectorate of the Border Police support his conviction regarding the image of a good manager, ie that manager who “is obliged to adapt to situations, to notice the essential elements, to treat employees differently and the problems they face. raises them ”(deputy from the human resources service)

✓ Through the fourth question: What do you think would be the main tools and

techniques for adapting to external crises? Identify the level of awareness among staff in the structures of ITPF Sighetul Marmatiiei of the solutions applied in case of external crises. Thus, the interviewees acknowledge that the main tools used in the management of crisis periods are found in *"the staged content of the techniques of approach and adaptation to the crisis and its effects"*. Respondents believe that there is a need for *"a comprehensive crisis response strategy (crisis management), a well-trained group of specialists (crisis cell) and an appropriate communication policy (crisis communication)"* (deputy from the territorial service of the Border Police: Maramureş). If the preparation stage has led to the elaboration of some crisis plans, then the institution through its managers (implicitly through their work style) has a control over the crisis, otherwise, it can try to control only when and how the information referring to this event will be distributed. This is *"particularly important"* because, *"from this moment on, the public and the press become aware of the existence of the crisis and keep the institution under strict supervision"* (deputy from the territorial service of the Border Police: Satu Mare).

✓ In the last question of the interview: What changes are taking place on the work style of the manager from M.A.I. in the context of the national crisis?, most of the interviewees express the difficulty they went through during the crisis caused by the Sars-Cov-2 virus, and claim that their work style changed between March 2020 and March 2022. Thus, they claim that *"when the crisis strikes, every day, habitual activities change"*, there is *"an exit from the comfort zone"* (deputy from the human resources service). Different emotional states can occur within the institution and only an effective management style can have an influence on the crisis, so that *"all difficulties end up being managed"* (deputy from the territorial service of the Border Police: Satu Mare).

Certainly, the manager's work style and even the activity of the institution will undergo direct changes both in the approach and in the application of the appropriate measures to the crisis management. Usually, the beautiful, famous *"brand image"* (deputy from the territorial service of the Border Police: Satu Mare) is built in the normal periods, when the set of values and representations through which the public perceives the respective organization is outlined. A deputy from the ITPF Sighetul Marmatiiei

departments states very eloquently that “*crisis management cannot be improvised: on the contrary, it is based on the correct assessment of the circumstances and the mastery of adequate response strategies, strategies prepared and even experienced long before the onset of the crisis*”. In this context, crisis response programs, designed and implemented, must be based on different communication strategies, able to influence the public and change the way they interpret that crisis.

4. Conclusions of the study on the relationship between the work style practiced by the Border Police managers and external crises

The definitions collected following the quantitative research on the phrase “work style” have as common points the set of “*knowledge and skills ... particularities of the psychological structure of the manager*” (deputy within the operational management service), used in relation to subordinates or others team members.

Therefore, all the interviewees argued that there was a relationship between the work style and the external crises. Most of the interviewees (approximately 86% of the interviewees) supported the high degree of influence of the manager's work style on the increasingly frequent external crises in today's society.

Thus, the interviewees acknowledge that the main tools used in crisis management are found in the preparation or prevention of the external crisis, a global crisis response strategy (crisis management), a group of well-trained specialists (crisis cell) and an appropriate communication policy (crisis communication)” (deputy from the territorial service of the Border Police: Maramureş). If the preparation stage has led to the elaboration of some crisis plans, then the institution can have some control over when and how the crisis will break out, if it cannot have control over the crisis, it can try to control when and how the information about this event will be shared. This is a priority because “*from this moment on, the public and the press become aware of the existence of the crisis and keep the institution under strict supervision*” (deputy from the territorial service of the Border Police: Satu Mare). In other words, the manager has crisis management tools and techniques at his hand. Legislative instruments that can be used legally and specific enforcement techniques can be used. Unfortunately, the interviewees did not provide much information about the existence and variety of these tools and techniques to adapt to external crises.

The interviewees' perception of the influence of managerial work style on external crises is favourable to the validity of the central hypothesis of this research. Namely, it can be seen from the graph created that most of the interviewees state the existence of a major influence, the percentages exceeding 66%, in case of preventing and counteracting the external crisis, and reaching the threshold of 100% in case of crisis reduction.

Therefore, the perception gathered from the qualitative research is that the changes in activities, missions, way of working, work schedule have changed and so has the mood, both inside the institution and outside it (the case of civilians). A crisis deeply affects the image of an organization, and the managerial style is the only one able to influence the effects of external crises.

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