

# **THESIS**

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**The Levels of Social Responsibility**

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# 1. Introduction and objectives

As many claim that humans are inherently social beings, most of us are socialized from an early age to be a useful part of our society. Being resourceful in our interpersonal relationships is not only key to maintaining them, but also fulfills our need to lead with purpose in our lives. From a personal standpoint, I believe it is crucial for all of us to observe the current reality we are living in, to understand how we can best contribute to it as individuals, and hold corporations and governments accountable. We all hold some level of influence over the world, hereby we cannot pretend to not be responsible for our actions (sometimes inactions) and how its impact is manifested in our own and other people's lives.

The objective of this thesis is to examine the recently became relevant discussion: relationships individuals, corporations, non-governmental institutes and governments have with satisfying their social responsibility roles ( Szekeres et al, 2022). Through different perspectives and pressing issues, my goal is to gain a better insight on how today's humans add or neglect to their different social duties, and the consequences of those actions/inactions. Subsequently, I would like to identify the root causes of our neglects, while illustrating the intersectional factors within the problems mentioned below. After measuring people's relationships with determining factors regarding my research, (such as money), and examining how their ethics and morals bleed into their financial decisions; this thesis intends to summarize how socially responsible we are, and could be. To fulfill this goal, I will utilize some older and more recent historical examples, anthropological findings, as well as my own research. My goal includes sharing a broader scale of lived experiences that could challenge someone's mind about their outlook on the world, and their relationships with social responsibility.

Lastly, in the study section of this paper, I unravel the answer to three hypotheses:

1. H<sub>1</sub>: People find it important to participate in the decision of electing which government is in power.
2. H<sub>1</sub>: Capitalism negatively impacts one's ability to carry out social responsibilities.
3. H<sub>1</sub>: People consider boycotting an effective method to force more responsible business activities.

These hypotheses were formed with the goal of answering questions in relation to social responsibility under capitalism and exploring how finances can be a tool or in other cases an obstacle to improved social responsibility.

While my thesis will cast criticism on individuals, governments as well as multiple corporations, I would like it to note that in order to do better, we have to face reality, hold ourselves and others accountable, and remember that the greatest things that humans can achieve is when they unite.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Defining the levels with examples

As mentioned above, this thesis will talk about three levels of social responsibility: individual social responsibility, corporate or organizational social responsibility, and governmental along with non-governmental institutes social responsibility.

In general, being a socially responsible individual or legal body means considering the effects of your everyday- life practices and adjusting them to better society at large.

Individual social responsibility is voluntary, therefore cannot be forced upon anyone ,contrary to corporate social responsibility, whereas restrictions can be implemented by governmental or non-governmental bodies policies. In the absence of these governmental regulations, individuals and legal entities are solely reliant on their own moral compass, and ethics to fulfill their social responsibilities (Bhavani, S. a.).

#### 2.1.1. Individual Social Responsibility

The first mentioned category of social responsibility is the individual social responsibility, in short form known as ISR (Bhavani, S. a.). How an individual can practice social responsibility can manifest in various different forms. Here, I would like to highlight two categories: communal ISR, and environmental ISR.

Communal ISR for instance, could be donation of resources, such as money, time or blood; as well as, on the more extreme end, someone could dedicate their entire existence to combating arising social issues. Roles such as taking care of each other, raising children, building and sustaining social circles, fighting injustices and inequalities can also be associated with ISR. Communal ISR activities benefit other people, whereas environmental ISR benefits the environment (simultaneously the people) (Drew, 2022). Distinctive forms of taking care of the environment could be battling deforestation by planting new trees, minimizing trash output and recycling, as well as donating and/ or recycling old clothing (Drew, 2022).

As suggested, the opportunities to partake in ISR are far and wide, such as the motivational forces behind these actions. Since ISR is voluntary, most of the time the motivation to participate in these practices do not come from policies forced upon the individual. According to Bénabou and Tirole (2009), these motivating forces vary from selfless nobility, to seeking external validation. In their research paper, they mention that a person's donations rarely go

without them wanting social credit and recognition in exchange. They argue that most, if not all good deeds are carried out by individuals to either appear as a better person in the eyes of others, or their own (Bénabou-Tirole, 2009).

The importance of community and the fulfillment of communal roles have been essential parts of human life. Relationships between humans (as well as several other lineages of the animal species) has served multiple purposes. For the fundamental basics, these social circles could be utilized for raising kin, better surveillance of the acquired territory (therefore protection), increased chances of attaining and holding said territory, and hunting prey.

All in all, we can state that the satisfaction of our basic needs and our survival depended on the social circles we formed and were part of (Grinde, 2024). Wilkins (2020) states that among the basic needs to survive, these relations between individuals started to help foragers develop a wider range of skills over time. As early as the Middle Stone Age, when humans acquired useful social skills while partaking in their communal roles ( such as the assembly of stone appliances). She explains , the geographical distances these tools were found from each other further suggests the existence of a thriving social life. Proof from Southern Africa conveys that between 500 000 years to 50 000 years ago humans learned fundamental behaviours while engaging in their communal duties. Middle stone age humans could express their belonging to their tribes by performing manners of conducting oneself such as mimicking one another as well as self regulation. This certifies the evolution of interpersonal and emotional intelligence skills, attained by social interactions (Wilkins 2020). Social and self awareness prove to be essential while dismantling harmful ideas and conditionings in one's head. Such occurrences would be sexism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia and so on. Dismantling and unlearning these harmful ideologies can be considered ISR( Hughes 2023). An example of the aforementioned to be highlighted in this paper is racism, which is a belief in a superior race; therefore gives the justification of systemic, economic, social and political oppression against the believed inferior race/ races (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, S.a.). A research paper carried out by Crayton (2020) suggests that bridging the gap between individuals on the two ends of racism would mean open discussions of the past and present, and the implementation of strategies that invite oppressive people and systems to collaborate on the disruption of the racist ideologies that their hatred derives from. He states that the only way to a world with the absence of racism is by putting in effort for generations, by all parties involved. Examples of such efforts he lists include the implementation of courses around the discussion on racism in elementary schools. This would increase the number of socially aware

and responsible students. Other scholars had similar opinions about the establishment and introduction of social responsibility early on in children's lives, in school environments. Drew (2022) references scholar John Dewey, who believed, when we give students the opportunity to learn the value in serving others, we can expect them to grow up to treat their environment with care and consideration, therefore leading to a better society.

Therefore a particular ISR to be highlighted next in this thesis is raising children, hence it isn't only part of the ISR's, but also a key part of bettering society. By raising them to be caring humans, we inevitably shape our future. A relevant study carried out by Buğdayci (2019), inspected a group of secondary school students in the US, to determine: what are the different factors that make one more socially responsible? In their research, they examined 602 students, of which more than half were male, and over 70% of the students' physical education teacher was male. The results found the students most responsible were female students, 5th-6th grade students (compared to higher grade students), students who did sports, with the importance of students who had female sports teachers.

Another category of ISR that this paper digests is environmental social responsibility. For digging deeper into this subtopic, this paper will portray the way in which foragers related to nature, by referencing archeological findings. The most evident and fundamental way in which early humans and other animal species related to nature was through the food supply and other essential materials it provided for survival. The gain of food supply not only meant an additional communal responsibility foragers needed to fulfill (such as the inquiry and distribution), but also a factor that would modify their thought processes. Different groups of foragers from all around the world associate different, almost spiritual roles to nature, such the role of a parent that provides, other groups thought of nature as something that had humanlike attributes therefore a purpose. In the circle of some foragers, society and nature are not two separate concepts, but one, referred to as an environment ( Mithen, 1996). Paper conducted by Christie (2016) aims to examine the deeper, spiritual meaning behind Aldo Leopold's philosophical writing: "A Sand County Almanac", and its relevancy to society's level of environmental consciousness. Christie reckons there is a connection between the political and ethical neglects we have, and our estranged relationship with the environment. He suggests that spirituality making a rise in popularity could contribute to the solution of environmental crises. He theorized that with the help of spirituality, humans can understand

their role as a contributor, opposed to a bystander to the state of their environment, and therefore achieve better outcomes in regards to nature's health.

This last notion invites further conversation about Animism; a religious idea as well as perception and relation to one's environment where the components of said environment are all alive. Such components include other people, as well as wildlife, plants and forces of nature, spiritual entities, with the notion that in the case of some Animistic groups components given by nature, minerals and materials are also included in the aforementioned list of examples (Swancutt, 2019). Another research paper discourses the connection between Animistic societies and nature conservation. They theorize: if all beings have their worth of existence as equivalent (including plants and minerals), then one would cause less deliberate harm to the environment and its components they coexist with. Moreover, they would make decisions with the intent of causing the least amount of trauma to nature. These ethics, which came to existence from the religion, are thought to have a positive impact in lessening one's likelihood to exploit the environment, and the mis/overuse of its resources (Snodgrass-Tiedje, 2008). While environmental social responsibility carried out by individuals has positive effects on nature, it also has several beneficial connections to the health of agents living within said environment. Study shows how one's health improves due to a greener ecosystem. Green environments provide places for outdoor spaces, such as parks and playgrounds; where one could engage in physical activities, thus benefiting one's health. This can decrease obesity and stress, as well as increase the life expectancy of individuals (Heinze, 2011). This notion has been proven by other studies as well, where other items are added onto the list of health benefits. Health benefits such as: reduced symptoms of depression, allergy prevention in the case of infants, increased anti-inflammatory mediators in one's body, and immune system regulation among others. Additionally, it is stated that the best health results are seen in the group of individuals who have lower socioeconomic status, and are the most underprivileged in the access of said green spaces (Rook, 2015).

### 2.1.2. Corporate or Organizational Social Responsibility

Corporate or organizational social responsibility, also referred to as CSR, embodies the concept that in order to generate revenue, companies do not need to cause harm to the environment or the people, therefore: exploitation is not needed to successfully run a business (ENSURE IAS, 2024). CSR means that a company's way of conducting business has to align with the regulations and laws made by governments, and non governmental organizations.

Therefore, logically, governments and non-governmental institutions bear the responsibility of making sure CSR's are carried out in an appropriate manner. CSR expects companies to treat their employees and stakeholders ethically and according to predetermined standards. Their business practices must showcase that the company bears monetary responsibility, as well as operates in a sustainable-environmentally conscious way (Hopkins, 2006).

Through the work of fulfilling these responsibilities, CSR hopes to reach higher and higher standards in all social, economical and natural segments which business practices influence. In his article: What is CSR all about?, Michael Hopkins draws attention to Carroll's pyramid, where we can see, the foundation of the pyramid is profitability. With the absence of profit, a business would go bankrupt (if companies don't exist, CSR ceases to exist as well). By one of the definitions of CSR, the problem with businesses isn't their desire to draw profit, it is the way in which the aforementioned is made (Hopkins, 2006).

**Figure 1:** Carroll's Pyramid

(source: *AQA Questions matter published data (S.a.)*)



In relation to business ethics, a paper conducted by Lapiņa et al (2014) provide significant information about the transformation of CSR throughout history. As above, they too highlight that CSR strives to make continuous development in different business areas, so it's inevitable that the definition shifts as time goes on. In the mid 19's, Davis and Blomstrom described it as commitment as well as duty to take into account the ways firms coexist with and impact others and the environment (Lapiņa et al, 2014). Later, this definition was broadened by different sections of CSR: economics, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities, followed by environmental responsibility just a decade later. Economic CSR could be making donations and other philanthropic activities, that are all about giving back the earned profit to the community. Ethical and legal CSR often go hand in hand, examples could be fair treatment of employees, complying with national and international laws regarding minimum wages, and other rules set by governmental and non-governmental institutes. Local sourcing, therefore the support of local businesses and suppliers also belong to ethical CSR. Environmental responsibility involves mindful transportation of goods, reducing carbon footprints, recycling, and using renewable and sustainable energy sources (Herrity, 2025). In discussion regarding sustainability we cannot forget to mention John Elkington Triple Bottom Line concept, also referred to as 3BL. This concept refers to the 3P's : people, profit, planet. Previous to his concept, Bridgitte Bardot came up with the two-bottom line phenomenon, the left out piece in comparison to Elkington's concept being social justice

(people). According to Elkington, the first line (profit) is the financial dimension, the second is the environmental (planet), and the third is social justice (people)(Zaharia-Zaharia, 2020). He asserted that with the absence of the third line, the masses' wishes would never be pleased, therefore making the argument that sustainability could never be fulfilled. On the other hand, his statement stirred some debate over its implementation in practice. Concerns were made about the three lines relation to each other and as time went on and more corporations tried to implement his strategy, the aforementioned questions proved to become harder and harder to answer(Zaharia-Zaharia, 2020). Changing from the classical system (which mainly focuses on profitability), to the 3BL system would mean decrease in profit, that may or may not be made up in better reputation and sales of the company. The impossibility to calculate social profit/loss, due to human emotions being unquantifiable, proves as a significant disadvantage for the 3BL concept. Consequently, it would be hard to measure whether or not a company is truly dedicated to be socially responsible(Zaharia-Zaharia, 2020).

As aforementioned, a big part of CSR is complying with policies and regulations made by governmental and non-governmental institutes. Therefore, part of governmental social responsibilities is the making of appropriate regulatory frameworks for organizations to follow. These policies are made with the aim of overseeing and supervising what businesses do. This is supposed to protect people, nature, and guarantee an ethical and secure way of conducting business for all parties involved (Team Sanction Scanner, 2021). Governmental regulation casted upon businesses can be put into five distinctive categories. Commercial policies, which can include pricing products, or putting extra taxes over specific goods (such as tobacco). Managing waste, green movements (restoring wildlife, planting trees), resource conservation are all part of laws and initiatives that the government is responsible for, to ensure it protects the environment against exploitative business practices. To protect people's safety, the government has to create laws to ensure ethical work spaces (with minimum wages, diversity hiring, etc.). Health and safety laws are often in relation to the protection of the people, such as the requirements of safe workplaces (Team Sanction Scanner, 2021). The final category is, regulations in relation to financing where governments require transparency with financial reports, to prevent tax frauds, and other illegal financial activities. This, while could prove to be hard to align with for organizations, it also serves to their advantage, since it keeps the competition between businesses fair (Team Sanction Scanner, 2021).

CSR contributes to a company's long term success rate, competitive advantage, as well as gaining and retaining customers. Moreover, the implementation of CSR has positive

connections to employee loyalty along with employee satisfaction. A study focusing on the case of Hungarian workers, CSR proved to have strong ties to the employees mental and physical health. Nevertheless, whether or not a company adapts to CSR standards isn't the only, nor the primary factor workers look for to predict their future satisfaction (Karácsony-Reichel, 2024).

In the case of employed people in smaller villages of Hungary, opposed to people living in bigger cities, villagers tend to care less about CSR. This could be connected to the fact that villagers are more likely to be employed by smaller companies, who do not have as big of an impact, or competitive power in the market (Karácsony- Reichel, 2024).

### 2.1.3. Governmental and Non-Governmental Institutes Social Responsibility

For simplicity, I will be referring to governmental social responsibility as GSR, and for non-governmental social responsibility as NGSR.

As mentioned before, governments and non-governmental institutions have a high influence over the ways in which business practices are carried out. The fulfillment of a government's basic responsibilities impacts every business. For instance, GSR includes the contentment of the people, therefore governments should impose a minimum wage, which consequently affects businesses. Other examples of political interventions in business practices can be trademarks that prevent a company's identity to be stolen, law changes in relation to taxes, education, healthcare as well as transportation. Politics play a big role when a local company desires to operate internationally, and vice versa, when a foreign company enters the local market (Boyles, 2022). GSR includes value creation, which means that as an end result, the goods and services created will be higher in value than the means, resources required for the creation. The value creational responsibility of governments is not limited to material value, for instance the creation of a stable and innovative educational system will provide businesses with intellectual, reliable, and proficient people to hire (Boyles, 2022). In the case of CSR, governmental influence does not only manifest as strict laws or regulation. Examples of such could be the encouragement of CSR activities by giving official recognition for organizational effort towards sustainability. Encouragement within CSR can also look like more accessible ways of complying with laws, financing further research into CSR, or simply stirring up public debate among consumers, causing pressure on firms, with the aim of making companies change their management decisions (Steurer, 2007). A nation's GSR does not only contribute to the contentment of the people living within it, it is also an indicator for other

countries. If somebody is thinking about visiting another country, (be it short or long term), the state of the economy, rights of the marginalized, safety in general as well as environmental safety are examples of indicators that are important to consider before making a decision. Therefore in a way, countries are in competition with each other regarding GSR, as much as companies are regarding CSR. Not only that, governments are starting to condemn other countries' governments for neglecting their responsibilities, all because of the same reason why companies feel so inclined to perform CSR: the pressure of the public (Anholt, 2010). Ultimately CSR is beneficial for governments because it takes weight off of their own social responsibility. They do not need to create rules and regulations for companies to be environmentally friendly, if it's already profitable in the means of assets other than money. Governments can impact CSR through 5 distinctive agents: legal, economic, informational, partnering and lastly hybrid. All these agents can be influenced on 3 spectrums: awareness, transparency and responsible investments (Steurer, 2010). Study argues that in regards to any social responsibility, the people who ought to be the most responsible, (therefore held the most accountable) are the ones who hold the most power, influence and other means of control that directly or indirectly impact social and environmental issues. Additionally, one can only demand social or environmental change of behavior from another, if that person isn't dependent on the otherwise harmful impacts of their lifestyle and choices. At the end of a study, it is suggested that a person in high positions of power should bear higher responsibility for making up for the neglect and harm caused by others. Even if they themselves do not have any negative effect on the environment for example, their monetary or other privilege binds them to act as a corrective measure (Droz, 2020). Therefore, governments and large corporations should be the most responsible, be held the most accountable, with the expectation of reparation being provided for their actions/inactions.

Moving onto non-governmental organizations, which means an institute, funded and operated by groups of people devoted to a cause the NGO wishes to represent. Motivation behind NGOs can be related to several different areas, such as environmental sustainability, human rights of marginalized groups, research, as well as religion. With the rise of globalization and the advancements of technology, it comes as no surprise that issues around the world are becoming more and more widespread. NGOs can capitalize on the opportunity of online spaces, to share their message, and recruit others to join their cause (Nelson, 2007). NGOs can use their voices to inform the public about ongoing issues, encourage demonstrations for change (for instance organize protests, make petitions), or directly act as a negotiator in the

solution (for example delivering aid, humanitarian services)(Nelson, 2007). A significant advantage of NGOs compared to governments, is their ability to focus on one specific issue long-term, opposed to how governments bear responsibility for the management of an entire country. Further advantage is the independence from governments and businesses, therefore the freedom of any political or economical influence. The role of NGOs manifests in different areas, such as education, and healthcare, which both fall under GSR as well. However when governments cut funding into these essential social sectors (such as in the case of Kenya and Ghana), NGOs have the responsibility to satisfy the public's basic needs (Michael, 2002). In relation to healthcare, NGOs bear the responsibility of managing, funding as well as financing health institutions. Among other responsibilities, NGOs should promote the basic human right to receive healthcare, launch health crises prevention programmes, and provide proficient healthcare options for the marginalized (Das-Kumar, 2016). During environmental crises, NGOs can contribute in various ways to help people in need by providing shelter, aid and food among other responsibilities. In some cases, they can help rescue teams on ground. The advantage of NGOs in this sector compared to governments, is the way in which they are able to respond to crises. NGOs have lesser obligations, therefore can respond faster and more efficiently, leading to better outcomes (Mondal et al, 2015). In the department of environmental ethics and safety, NGOs play a massive role in helping prevent the effects of climate change. An example of such an NGO that operates internationally would be Greenpeace (Velykodna- Skrobacki, 2016). Renovation, and development is another category which NGOs can help improve, by filling in the missing pieces between the government and the people. Study shows, NGOs in Iran contribute to better urban planning, and helping operational strategies improve (Akhgar-Ardekani, 2014).

## 2.2. Neglects of Social Responsibilities on each level

In this part of the paper, we examine the neglects of social responsibilities on the different levels, furthermore try to find the root cause, and any intersectionality of said neglects. What could be the relation between them? Are there any dependencies? Can we draw conclusions and learn: how could we be more socially responsible?

### 2.2.1. Individual level

As the individual social responsibilities (ISR) were highlighted above, this section mentions arising issues, concerns and neglects in relation to the fulfilment of these responsibilities. Where does the neglect of these roles lead us, and what could be the underlying issue that gets us to the point of neglect?

As aforementioned, one of the ISR's includes childbearing. Arguably one of the most important, as well as one that stirred up plenty of debate, especially over the past years. The following study states that people with uteruses have been giving birth to less and less children. Data suggests that in 2023, in the United States, the number of pregnancies were lower than they were a hundred, ten, as well as a year ago ( USAFacts team, 2024). So what could be the reason for this decrease, why do people decide not to have children? It is crucial to examine a broader scale of reasons when we talk about fertility "neglects", other than just the self interests of a person hence many studies assert, that only with the consideration of socio-political, financial and environmental arguments against having children will we get the full picture of the reasons behind the fall of birth rates. Research carried out by Minkin et al (2024) studied two groups of people, and their reasons why they never had/ never want to have kids. Firstly, examining the age group of 50 and above, the majority gave reasons for not having kids such as not finding the right partner (33% ), simply not wanting to (31% ) or having other priorities in life (21% ). Delving into the other research group, adults under the age of 50 (precisely between 18 and 49), gave reasons why they do not want to have children such as simply not wanting to (57% ), wanting to devote time to other aspects of life (44% ), being concerned about the state of the world (38% ), as well as financial struggles (36% ), which in the previous group was only 12% (Minkin et al, 2024). While these different reasons may overlap (e.g.: someone is not financially stable, while also rejecting raising a child due to the climate crisis), we can see a significant rise in concerns about the world and financial struggles. We can observe, as birth rates are going down, awareness and concerns about the financial, political and environmental state of the world are increasing. If financial struggles lead one to oppose having children, we can state that capitalism could contribute to decreasing birthrates, therefore unfulfilled ISRs.

With the aforementioned data, added up with the information about childbearing as part of ISR, in the first part of this thesis, it is only natural that people around the world are in debate over the following question: What is more responsible, to have kids or to not have kids? The main point to which this debate boils down to oftentimes is the fact that without children, the human race will cease to exist. Therefore childbearing isn't only part of ISR, but also an essential element of our survival. Another interesting paper regarding parenthood digests the data from 2019, that suggests that adults who have children are more prone to depression than adults who are childfree. It examines the different factors of why parents become depressed,

most of which is not related to the child themselves, but stress from the acquisition of the material possessions and financial leverage required to raise said child (Simon-Caputo, 2019). The increased cost of living, financial and housing crises all add to the stress that makes parents depressed. Another factor is the lack of time outside of work and familial duties, mostly reported by mothers. Furthermore, this paper mentions correlation between a parent's mental state and their relationship with their child (Simon-Caputo, 2019). Concluding the above mentioned study, to raise a child well, the relationship between the child and the parent is an essential factor. Therefore the parent's stress and depression could hinder their parental duties to be performed to the best of their abilities, leaving the ISR of raising a child well unsatisfied. Moreover, it is often found that as unemployment and GDP fluctuates, so do birth rates (Sobotka et al, 2011). Therefore, the economic state of a country is closely related to how well people are able to and willing to perform children related ISRs. Based on the precedent studies, we can state that on multiple accounts, money and capitalism can oftentimes lead to issues, proving to be a deterring factor when it comes to fulfilling the ISR role of childbearing.

Another recent issue that is an example of the neglect of ISR, is the loneliness epidemic. The loneliness epidemic, (which now affects  $\frac{1}{3}$  of people) is when a person is not satisfied with the amount and/or the nature of their social relationships. This will lead to psychological disorders such as depression and anxiety, further fueling the difficulty in which they interact with their peers. When we feel lonely, a so-called biological alarm goes off in our bodies. This urges us to change something around or within us, to gain access to better fulfilling social relationships (Bottaro et al, 2023). As mentioned in the first section of this thesis, the desire to feel connected to one another is wired into us, not just for survival, but for our fundamental needs. A paper which examined a study group consisting of adults in Italy, suggested 3 hypotheses, all of which it was able to prove. Number one being the relationship between loneliness and depression, anxiety as well as the overuse of the internet is positive. Between depression and loneliness, the relation is paradoxical, the more depressed one becomes because of loneliness, the harder it becomes to reach out for help, causing one to feel even more isolated (Bottaro et al, 2023). The second hypothesis states that the relation between one's self esteem and loneliness is negative; meaning, the less satisfied someone is with themselves, the more likely it will be for them to become lonely. The third and last hypothesis proven to be correct, is the positive relation between social anxiety and loneliness, with great statistical significance. This epidemic proved to be the most evident in hyper

individualistic countries in Europe, more specifically in Eastern Europe, more specifically in the circle of men (Bottaro et al, 2023). In the absence of social life, one misses out on the primary emotions caused by interacting with others : pleasure and pain. Moreover, to highlight the importance of a social life, without social relationships, languages, science and technology would not exist today (Grinde, 2024). Why such a phenomenon can come to be could be explained by the occurrence of hyper individualism. It is thought that while hyper individualism elevates the accomplishments of individuals, the price to pay is our relationships with others. Rather than contributors to a community, hyper individualism separates us from one another, causing us to care about others less (Soltanpour, S.a.). Therefore, loneliness as a product of hyper individualism, leads to mental conditions that make it harder for us to perform ISR.

Another pressing issue over the past decades is overconsumption. To be present on Earth, is to consume, whether it's food, water, or the natural resources required to survive. Similarly to businesses, the problem isn't the desire to profit/consume, it is the way and the amount in which we do so. Overconsumption, alas taking more than one needs, has been digested and as a result looked down upon by several religions (for example Islam), and philosophers ( Yaacob, 2000). Wanting to make one's needs met is driven by the feeling of either physical or mental dissatisfaction. This feeling equips us with the means to do something about these states of dissatisfaction, fostering our proficiency to survive (Noerr, 2001). Overconsumption can present as obesity, money management problems, or the exploitational tendency of the planet's natural resources. Unfortunately, as capitalism thrives, so does overconsumption (Pan, 2019). In his paper, Pan divides overconsumption into two distinctive categories: excessive purchase, and excessive consumption post purchase. Excessive purchases can look like ordering too many clothes online, while excessive consumption after purchase is mostly related to eating habits. He argues, overspending could be tied to the existence of credit cards, which hinder people's ability to navigate their finances, due to it holding money in an intangible way. The aftermath of overconsumption can be the feeling of affliction and shame. However, companies are well aware of the public's tendency of excessive consumption, and as a result, they strategically market/package goods to get customers to overuse (Pan, 2019). In conclusion, overconsumption driven by capitalism contributes to health, and financial issues in our lives.

### 2.2.2. Organizational level

As many standards and regulations there are, many companies exploit the vagueness of what it means to be socially responsible. The reason for this could be, as discussed above, claiming social responsibility is profitable, and with the absence of governmental intervention and surveillance, can be easily manipulated. Hence the high level of competitiveness that is true for many market segments, and due to capitalism; to prevail, a company must acquire all the advantages it can get its hands on. One way to earn and detain customers' trust is through abiding by CSR (benevity, S.a.).

The majority of today's environmental issues are tied to companies' exploitative nature. Not only does this mean failing to comply with CSR among other regulations, but also a performative game, with the aim to keep the brand's image clean, regardless of the truth. Over 70% of global emissions are tied to just a hundred companies operating worldwide (Riley, 2017). If the performance of abiding by CSR results in popularity, and exploitation of nature means profit, why not do both? Could that be possible? This phenomenon has been a frequent occurrence, defined as greenwashing. Greenwashing is the performative, deceptive act of branding/marketing from a private sector organization, with the aim to seem environmentally friendly, or sustainable. A study, where 79 academic definitions of greenwashing were considered, named 6 requirements, which if fulfilled, a company is guilty of greenwashing. The 6 categories are as follows: 1) an act related to the environment, 2) made by a company in the private sector, 3) marketing their products or services as environmentally friendly, 4) even though that is not the case, 5) therefore made with a deceptive motive 6) in order to gain competitive advantage (Spaniol et al, 2024). Unfortunately, many large brands are guilty of greenwashing, making it harder and more confusing to follow for consumers. A few examples of greenwashing would be McDonalds recyclable paper straws, Ryanair's claim to be the lowest emission airline, or Apple's carbon neutral products (akepa, 2025).

As alarming news come out about the state of the Earth, it is natural for people to look for companies that offer sustainable aid for their worries. A recent example would be electric cars. In the case of electric cars, study shows that even though qualitatively electric cars are better for the environment; in some aspects, they are more harmful than other types of vehicles. In terms of water consumption required for the assembly of the batteries, land needed for the disposal of said batteries, water pollution, water extraction that could lead to droughts; other types of cars prove to be more sufficient than electric ones. The main indicator that leads to environmental damage is the lithium used within the electric cars

batteries, and as the study suggests, with other types of batteries, electric cars could be a sustainable answer in the future (Deutsche Umwelthilfe, 2023). Moreover, the advancements of new tech means the assembly of new gadgets, which lead to several questions. What type of materials are being used for the assembly? How rare are they? What does the acquisition process look like of said materials? Technology is a double edged sword, to the West it gives opportunity and advancements, while among others, African countries pay the price. The mineral, oil rich countries within the region often get exploited, and as demand for electronics increases, so do the different ways of exploitation (Zondo et al, 2021).

One way to more easily dominate a nation's natural resources is by disrupting its sovereignty, and causing internal conflicts. In the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the two main conflicting parties are: the M23 rebel group, backed by nations like Rwanda, and Uganda; and the government, backed by countries like China. As a result of this conflict, an estimated 6 million people have died (Center for Preventive Action, 2025). Congo's resources include cobalt, gold, copper, zinc, uranium, among other minerals. In 2000, the United Nations (UN) got involved, reporting crimes against the Congolese people such as modern day slavery, mass rape and sexual violence, mass murder and some argue genocide. Even though the UN's involvement, and the crimes reported are against international law, the conflict continues to this day (Ezekiel, 2007).

Research examines the way in which companies are excelling or otherwise in the different parameters of CSR. Although there are actions taken towards a greener future, such as reducing waste, the level of sustainability that companies are aiming for is not satisfactory. Additionally, it was found that the aforementioned 3BL concept is more often than not used for business advantages, rather than actual sustainability. Advantages as such include gaining and retaining consumers' trust, and building the company's brand image (Szennay, 2020). Another study indicates, the vast majority of large Hungarian companies (much like American ones) practice unlawful, unethical ways of conducting business (Pataki-Szántó, 2011).

### 2.2.3. Governmental and Non-Governmental Institute level

While both individuals and organizations have roles within the shortcomings of social responsibilities, governments have the most power, therefore they have the most responsibility (Droz, 2019).

The aforementioned example of human rights violations spreading across the Congo, can make one question, why isn't anything getting done about the situation? How come a legal body such as the UN is involved for over 20 years, and there is little to no improvement? The UN, founded in 1945, classifies as an International Governmental Institute, with the ambition of bringing countries together to find solutions for their problems. With different programs across the globe, tackling problems such as poverty, environmental issues, and famine, the UN has been fighting for peace and equality for decades (United Nations, S.a.). Contrary to their initiatives and the promises they have made such as terminating poverty by the year 2030, reality suggests otherwise. Despite their efforts, statistics released by the UN shows that less than 20% of their current goals have been fulfilled. Half of their missions show little-to-no progress; and alarmingly, over 30% of their objectives have been going backwards. Their reasoning for this include the leftover effects of COVID-19, escalation in warfare, as well as environmental issues (United Nations, 2024). The effects of the aforementioned global struggles undoubtedly leave their marks on society, making the UN's job harder. Recent elevated food prices, legislations made by governments limiting women's rights to bodily autonomy, illiteracy spreading across the globe have all played their role in the insufficiency of the UN (United Nations, 2024).

The legal instrument of the UN is non other than the ICJ ( International Court of Justice) (International Court of Justice, S.a.). Founded in 1945, the ICJ aims to oversee conflicts between countries, and determine the conclusion by discussing the issue with a wide range of legal professionals from different nations (Wikipedia, S.a.). In cases such as the ongoing Israel-Gaza conflict, the ICJ have been having panels since January of 2023. The last public update about the case was made in July of 2024 (International Court of Justice, S.a.). The court has finalized several obligations towards the state of Israel. These obligations include the cease of settlement activity, repeal of all laws enabling such activities, and the complete drawback from Occupied Palestinian land as soon as possible. Israel is also legally bound to pay reparations for the damage caused; be it institutional or the personal properties of the Palestinian people (International Court of Justice, 2024). However, these legal obligations had no real consequence to this day, as the genocide continues. Moreover, with the support of powerful nations such as the United States, the conclusion of the ICJ does not seem to be taken seriously (Walker, 2024). The UN is said to be working on sustainable ways to keep making initiatives towards peace, even though the geopolitical issues. Unfortunately, Palestine isn't the only case where the urgency for intervention has been prolonged. Warfare

in Sudan, Ukraine are both causing horrors for innocent citizens (International Crisis Group, 2024). Criticism that specifically the ICJ has received, was mainly focused on the way the jury is designed to operate. All decisions and obligations made by the ICJ have to be agreed upon by all parties involved. In the case of Israel and Palestine, Israel chose not to consent to the obligations it received by the court. And even if all parties comply, there is a chance for a member of the Security Council to veto the decision, leaving the obligations concluded in the discussion panels meaningless (Wikipedia, S.a.).

Other explanations about why governments push back on achieving these common goals, rather than supporting them could be tied to corruption. Corruption negatively impacts individuals, as well as businesses operating within a country. The three main types of corruption that can occur within governmental levels are as follows: extortion, theft, and capture. The first category, extortion, is when the administration aims to gain wealth through the abuse of their authority. Abuse such as threats, and violence (Boyles, 2022). Secondly, theft is when government officials steal financial or other properties of the government for private use. Finally, the third category, capture, is a transactional relationship between (an) organization(s) and the government, where both parties get benefits from one another. The government usually receives financial support from the firm(s), with the condition of making decisions that will give an upper hand to companies (Boyles, 2022). The self interest of governments is one of the biggest issues within the responsibility of governments, nationally or internationally.

Part of GSR is providing safety for the people and the environment within its country. In the absence of regulation, exploitation and as a result environmental degradation can occur. Besides the DRC, in Nigeria, companies exploit the natural resources of the country, through mining and drilling, without a satisfactory amount of compensation towards the locals. There is a clear need of governmental intervention, to urge the operating companies within the region to be more environmentally conscious (Nwokike, 2021).

According to Hanchett (2008) as part of NGOs as well as governments social responsibility, education, specifically the access of education for girls have been underfinanced in the past. The empowerment of women begins with their education, and unfortunately, data suggests, women still continue to be underprivileged in the access of education. From enrollment to

finishing school programs, and even in literacy, women have worse results than their male counterparts. Among other reasons, this can happen due to underfunding and not enough prioritization by NGOs and governments. However, ultimately governments should be held most accountable for this matter, hence their responsibility to provide young women their basic human right to education (Hanchett, 2008).

## 2.3. Neglects combated by individuals: The power of the people

This section of the paper will cover literature that supports the idea that despite all the shortcomings and violations of social responsibility: there is hope for the future. Ultimately, this section aims to highlight the power of people, and the results of what public pressure is able to create.

### 2.3.1. The Black Panthers

People could believe that as time progresses, we will learn how to do better, feel more satisfied with the state of our Earth and what happens on it. What if the answer we patiently wait for was already found in the past?

In the 60s, black people of North America had enough of the systematic racism they receive. Therefore, The Black Panthers were founded in 1966, by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, who met in university. Both of them had encounters with violent forms of racism, which pushed them further into wanting a better future for their people (Kotsampouikidou et al, 2016). Cases of police brutality, rejected employees and housing seekers, all because of racism were on a rise, and as a result Panthers figured they should build a self-determined, self-reliant, society among themselves. The Black Panthers revolutionized health care, education, and law enforcement. They opened the People's Medical Care Center, launched education programs with focus on critical thinking, authentic history, while also including field trips to intertwine education and the black community (Clark, 2015). Another reason to feel inspired about their education system, was the free school meals provided (which other institutions did not do at the time), and classes for adults, considering that expanding one's knowledge does not end at a certain age. Police brutality was met by Panthers patrolling in neighborhoods, educating their community of their fundamental rights, legally carrying weapons and lawbooks. The Black Panthers strongly believed power had to be built from the ground up, with the importance of community participation (Clark, 2015). Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin, a member, states, when one can see the product of their action, they become more

empowered, and can get other communities inspired. They recognized, for a thriving community, one must face oppressive systems such as capitalism and racism (Clark, 2015). In conclusion, The Black Panthers are an outstanding example of communal ISR, their experience suggests that engagement in some ISR activities can fuel further engagement with other ISR activities. Their highlight of the importance of community is a significant notion to remember.

### 2.3.2. Voting with money: Boycotting

In relation to the topic of capitalism, recently there have been several companies proven guilty of carrying out unethical business practices. People began uniting over their shared cause of protecting the people and the natural world; and with the utilization of social media, began mass-boycotting the companies concerned. The term boycott arose in 1880, in West Ireland, in response to unfair housing opportunities. Housing prices were increased, causing families with less financial leverage to not be able to afford rent. By definition, boycotting means the denial of political, cultural, commercial, diplomatic and academic relations with an agent (could be a company or a country), in order to pressurize them into changing their ways. Boycotting results in the economic and social isolation of the agent, leading them into a weakened state of authority (Ferron, 2015). After Hamas's attack on Israel on October 7 in 2023, Israel started escalating their military operations in the Gaza-strip, which is now considered a genocide due to the nature and magnitude of Israeli attacks on the region. Although this has been going on for 2 years at the time of this paper being written, little to no effort has been made for peace, and as an example discussed above, the process made by the ICJ does not contribute to tangible change. People took power into their own hands, and began mass boycotting Israel (Dogan, 2025). This wouldn't be the first time boycotting against Israel has happened. Boycotts were initiated in 1945 by the Arab League, and even in 2005 in response to another report made by the ICJ, regarding Israel's illegal activities in the West Bank. Today's boycott following October 7th, includes previous boycotting efforts, along with the boycott of goods and services provided by Israel. Additionally, the masses begin to boycott companies operating in the illegal settlements of Israel, companies affiliated with Israel, as well as any company supporting Israel (Dogan, 2025). Study made in Turkey shows, boycotts against Israel are supported by over 70% of the country. Moreover 50% of people believe boycotts will lead to the desired end goal of economic and social isolation. The economic effects of the aforementioned boycott was measured by using 3 different methodologies. Results find that boycotted companies affiliated with Israel have all been negatively impacted, however the degree is different for each company(Dogan, 2025). Results

of the mass boycotts against Israel include the relational downgrade or complete suspension by countries such as Turkey, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Chad, Honduras, Jordan and others. Economically, 80% of Israeli small businesses experienced decline, 75% of the investors ceased their investments, and large companies such as Samsung and Puma severed their connections with the state (Palestinian Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions National Committee, 2024). One of the biggest and most well known companies to boycott as a result of the genocide is McDonalds, the company which suffered tremendous decline in revenue as a result. Study, which examined 15000 agents from 15 different countries, shows that 1 in 3 people boycott a company with affiliations to Israel (Palestinian Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions National Committee, 2024). The general motivating indicators behind boycotting among others are healthy lifestyle, need for societal change, environmental protection, community values, solidarity and justice, self obligation and lack of trust in corporations (Gulyás - Wessely, 2011).

### 2.3.3.Environmental efforts: Waste investigation

In terms of legal matters, and environmental safety, the contribution of NGOs and individuals have helped holding firms accountable. Jim Puckett, waste investigator, ex Greenpeace director, is an activist, with the goal of environmental policy development. He founded BAN (Basel Action Network), in the 90s, in order to strategically monitor companies waste management, and improve ecosystems and communities health who are most affected by toxins produced by firms. As a result, his work had an impact on regulations within the UN. His primary focus is on electronic, plastic waste as well as green transportation of goods (Basel Action Network, S.a.). Cases of BAN addressing illegally discarded waste into Hong Kong or the Philippines have had legal consequences for complicit companies, such as fines or jail time. The title: waste investigator came to be as a result of the company's strategy of monitoring waste. In order to investigate whether or not companies truly recycle their waste, BAN places GPS trackers on scrap materials, to find out where it ends up (Basel Action Network, S.a.).

### **3. Methods used (material and method)**

Throughout the literature review, the definitions of social responsibility, as well the neglects and the possible solutions for these neglects were digested at each level. The individual study conducted in this paper, aims to gain better insights into what has been discussed above, through the examination of a study group consisting of 111 people. The questionnaire explores the level of social responsibility individuals claim to have, while also investigating which ISR activity is the most popular within the group. Furthermore, we aimed to discover more about the relationships that people have with potential factors that could be hindering our capabilities of executing duties related to social responsibility (finances, community, capitalism). We explore how one's financial state can contribute to social responsibility, moreover, we investigate how morals can bleed into one's financial choices, and how people feel about boycotts as a tool for change. In this section of the paper, I aim to prove three hypotheses:

1. H<sub>1</sub>: People find it important to participate in the decision of electing which government is in power.
2. H<sub>1</sub>: Capitalism negatively impacts one's ability to carry out social responsibilities.
3. H<sub>1</sub>: People consider boycotting an effective method to force more responsible business activities.

With the first hypothesis, we hope to gain better insight into how important people think it is to go vote, and participate in elections. The second hypothesis aims to examine how capitalism impacts individual social responsibility. The goal of the third hypothesis is to measure how individuals feel about boycotting being an appropriate tool for forcing corporations (as well as in some cases governments) to be more socially responsible. The data collected for the purpose of proving the hypotheses was collected through google surveys (attached in the annexes section) which was open for anyone to fill out. The collected data is quantitative, with some exceptions where participants were given the option to elaborate on their answer. These elaborations (when relevant) are briefly summarized in the next section of this paper. All data is primary data, collected by the author. The variables in the survey were not manipulated nor controlled, making them strictly descriptive, and the results are concluded through observations. The population of the research area is the group of individuals living in capitalism, however it is important to note that the representative sample group is dominated by certain subgroups regarding socio economic backgrounds, as well as

ethnicity. This will be explained in more detail in the “ Results and evaluation” section of this paper, where data about the participant’s background will be shared. The survey was filled out by an exact 111 participants, from all over the world, with different ethnic and financial backgrounds, as well as age and educational level. Every member of the population had a chance of getting selected, as the questionnaire was open for anyone to fill out across the globe. The questionnaire was released in several online spaces to encourage engagement of participants with diverse characteristics and backgrounds. The sample group was made with simple random sampling.

The first hypothesis ( $H_1$ : People find it important to participate in the decision of electing which government is in power.) measures, how many people think it is important to vote from our sample group. Voting is not only part of ISR, but also a way of evaluating which candidate is most capable of leading a socially responsible government. To prove the alternate hypothesis, we created a null hypothesis( $H_0$ : People do not find it important to participate in the decision of electing which government is in power), which we aim to discredit by using the One-Sample Z-Test for Proportions statistical test.

Moving onto the second hypothesis ( $H_1$ : Capitalism negatively impacts one’s ability to carry out social responsibilities) is only a 1 variable hypothesis, given that we consider capitalism to be a fixed background context. This is a justified assumption, only because we do not compare the effects of capitalism to other societal systems, in the context of how these systems impact one's ability to engage in social responsibility activities. We only examine how people's ability manifests in a capitalistic context, and measure how well one can perform their social duties under the umbrella of capitalism. To prove the alternate hypothesis, a null hypothesis was defined, and disproven, serving the purpose of supporting the alternate hypothesis. Hence the data collected regarding the hypothesis is categorical data, the decision was made to use the goodness-of-fit Chi-Square test to disprove the null hypothesis (50% -50% distribution):  $H_0$ : Capitalism has no negative impact on an individual's ability to carry out social responsibility.

Lastly, the third hypothesis ( $H_1$ : People consider boycotting an effective method to force more responsible business activities), we measure people's belief about whether or not boycotting works. To be able to support the alternate hypothesis, we create a null hypothesis, that we desire to discredit:  $H_0$ : People do not consider boycotting an effective method to force more

responsible business activities. The data used to contribute to our calculations are categorical data in this case as well, and we are only working with 1 sample group. Therefore the statistical test carried out will be the One-Sample Z-Test for Proportions.

## 4. Results and their evaluation

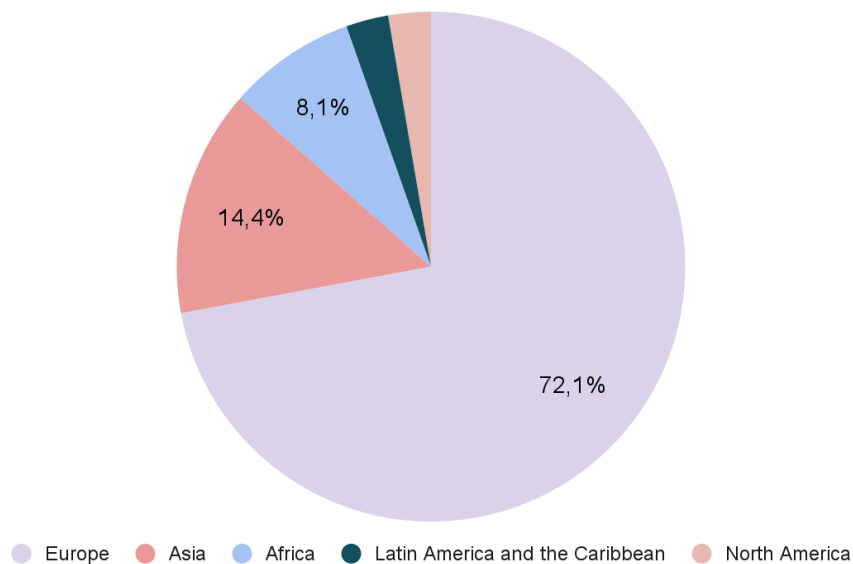
### 4.1. General info about participants

#### 4.1.1. Ethnicity

Overall, the study examined 111 people. Most of the participants were from Europe (72.1%) with the importance of 47% of them being Hungarian. Then followed by Asia (14.4%), Africa (8.1%), as well as Latin America and the Caribbean (3.2%), and lastly North America (3.2%).

**Figure 2:** Ethnicity of the sample group

*(source: own work)*

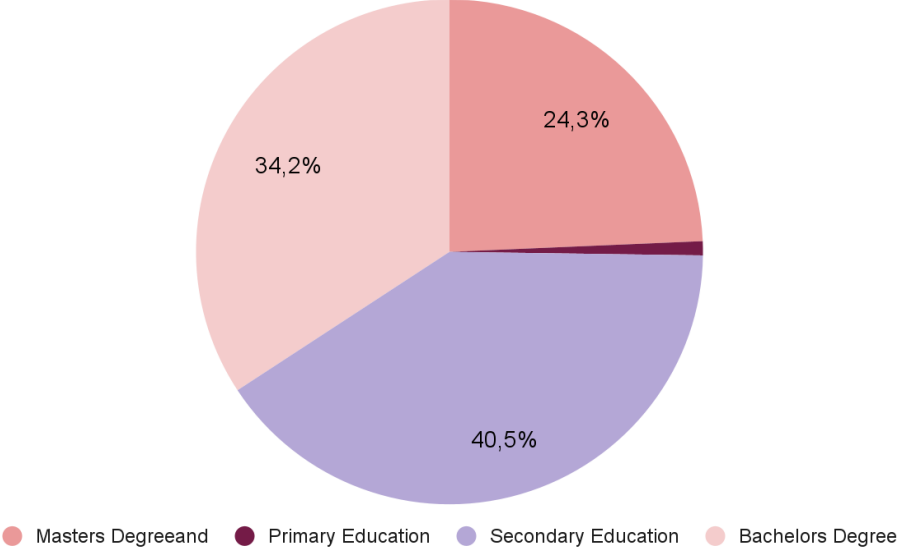


#### 4.1.2. Level of Education

While examining the participants' level of education, we found that the vast majority of the study group had at least a high school diploma, with the importance that most participants continued their studies and have acquired a bachelor's degree (58.5%). 34.2% had a bachelor's degree, 24.3% had masters, 40.5% graduated high school and 1% had only a primary school education.

**Figure 3:** Level of education of the sample group

(source: own work)

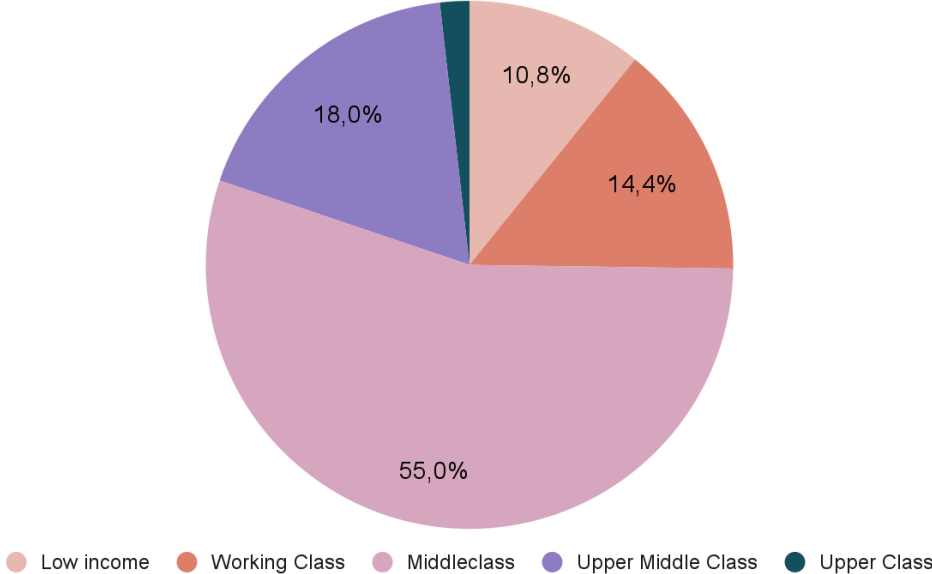


**4.1.3. Financial Background**

Examining one's financial background we found that the majority of participants had a middle class upbringing (55%), followed by upper middle class (18%), working class (14.4%), low income (18%), and upper class (1.8%) families.

**Figure 4:** Financial background of the sample group

(source: own work)

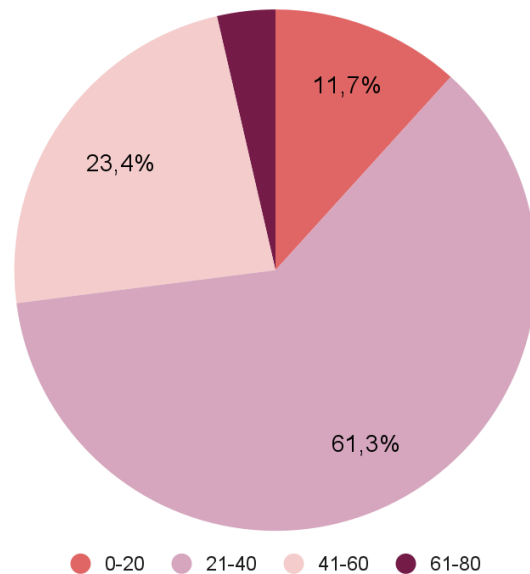


#### 4.1.4. Age category

In the category of age, most participants belong in the 21-40 age segment (61.3%). People in the age category of 41-60 were 23.4% of the study group, participants under 21 made up to 11.7%, and lastly, people between 61 and 80 were 3.6% in total.

**Figure 5:** Age of the sample group

(source: own work)



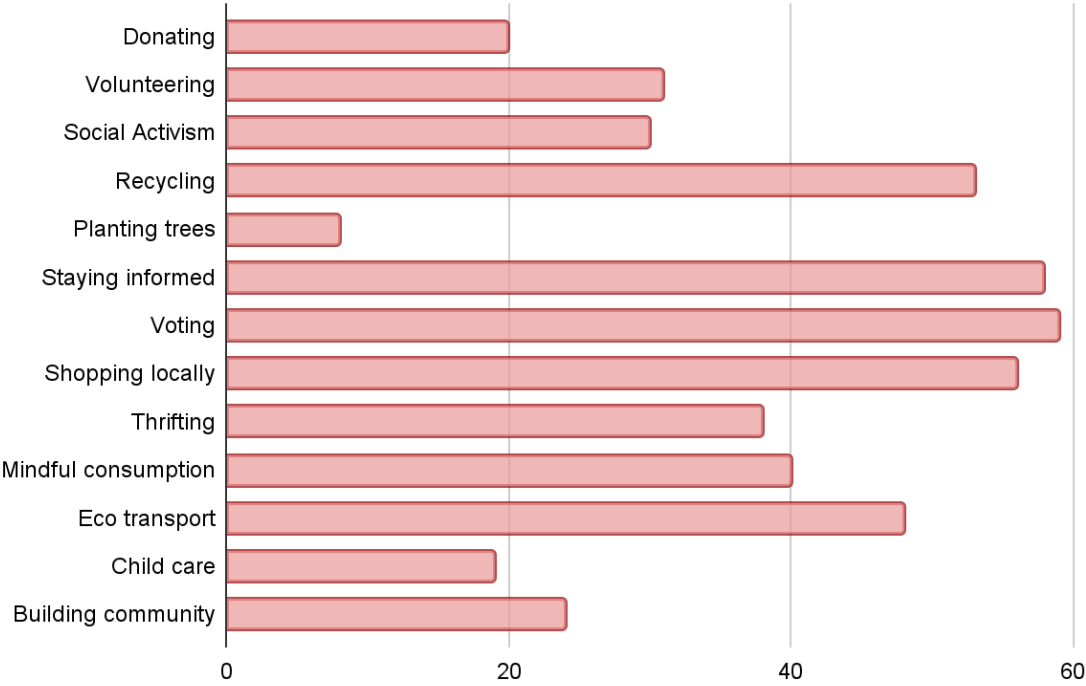
## 4.2. Level of social responsibility in the examined study group

### 4.2.1. Level of Activeness

When measuring the level of social responsibility, participants were asked to select which social responsibility role(s) they fulfill on a regular basis. Social responsibility activities were divided into 13 distinctive categories. The graph below displays the number of selections each social responsibility activity received by participants. Additionally, the participants were free to select as many social responsibility duties from the list as they wished, therefore one could have selected 1 or all the options offered. Therefore, the following percentages will be expressed as the percentage of people who selected the given category from the entirety of the sample group. The options which got the highest selections were voting (53%), staying informed about social issues (52%), and the support of local businesses (50%). Followed by recycling (48%), environmentally friendly ways of transporting (43%), mindful consumption and purchase of goods (36%), buying clothes second hand also referred to as thrifting (34%), volunteering (28%), participating in social activism (27%), building community (22%),

donation of material resources (18% ), taking care of or raising children (17% ), and lastly planting trees (7% ).

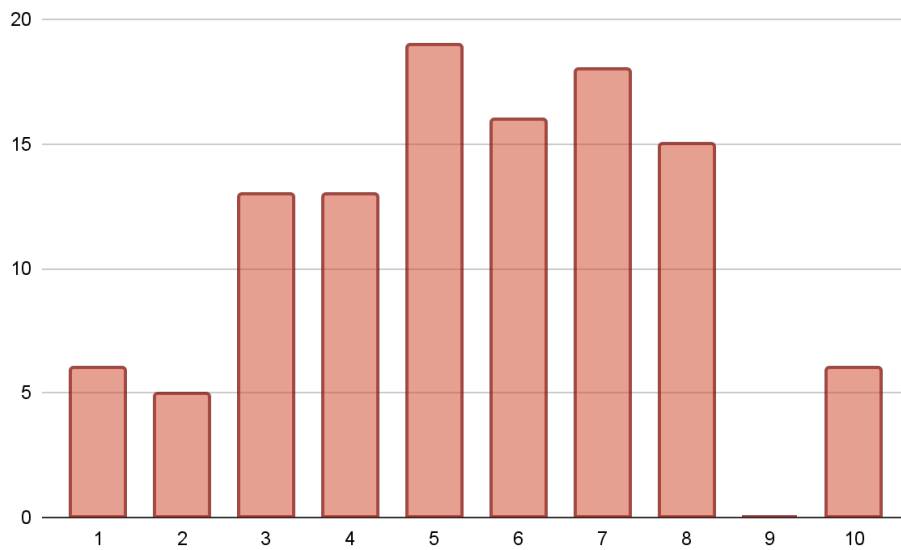
**Figure 6:** Level of activeness in ISR of the sample group  
(source: own work)



4.2.2. Level of involvement in issues affecting communities the responder is not part of

We measured responders' level of involvement in social issues that affect communities they are not part of (e.g.: different race, gender, sexuality, etc.). The motivation behind this was to determine the level of unity and solidarity among people, as this factor often comes up when we talk about social responsibility. Participants could give their level of involvement on a scale of 1-10 (horizontal diagonal). The number of participants choosing each scale is shown on the vertical diagonal on the left side. The top three selections between 1-10 were 5 (17% ), 7 (16% ), 6 (14% ). Overall, there have been a total of 56 selections among the 1-5 levels of involvement, which amounts up to 50.45% of the sample group. There were 55 selections among levels 6-10, making it 49.54% of the entire group. Hereby we can state that more people reported being less involved in other communities issues than who are involved, although there is no significant difference.

**Figure 7:** Level of activeness in other communities issues of the sample group  
(source: own work)



Though it was not an obligation, out of the 111 participants, 72 explained further about their little to no involvement in the aforementioned topic. The most common reasons people gave for little involvement in other communities' problems were not having enough time (34.72%), little/ or insufficient access to education about said issues (25%), or feeling indifferent (19.4%). Other reasons included having a hard time empathizing with other communities' causes, disagreeing with their cause, being confused about their issues, or having other priorities opposed to supporting other communities' issues.

### 4.3. First hypothesis

The first hypothesis wants to prove that people consider voting an important ISR to fulfil:

$H_1$ : People find it important to participate in the decision of electing which government is in power. This means, at least half of the participants who make up the sample group will agree that voting is important and report that they regularly vote.

We will use the One-Sample Proportion Z-Test, and discredit the null hypothesis of the original alternate hypothesis:  $H_0$ : People do not find it important to participate in the decision of electing which government is in power. In the case of the null hypothesis being true (therefore the alternate being false), the proportion has to be 0.5. If the alternate hypothesis is true, the proportion will be higher than 0.5. In total, 59 responders reported voting regularly as a form of participating in ISR, from the sample group of 111.

#### 4.3.1. Rule of Thumb

In order to be able to carry out the One-Sample Proportion Z-Test, we have to check if the Rule of Thumb is true, and our sample ( $n$ ) is big enough for normal approximation, and to move forward with this specific statistical test.

$$n \times p = 111 \times 0.5 = 55.5 ; n \times (1 - p) = 111 \times 0.5 = 55.5$$

In both cases, the result is greater than 10, which is the given threshold we compare our results to. Therefore we can move forward with the next step.

#### 4.3.2. Sample proportion

For checking the sample proportion, we divide the sample size( $n$ ) by the amount of people who said they regularly vote( $x$ ).

$$p^{\wedge} = 59 \div 111 \approx 0.5315$$

Hereby, we conclude the sample proportion as  $0.5315$ .

#### 4.3.3. Calculation of the Z-score

In order to calculate the Z-score, we use the sample proportion value ( $p^{\wedge} = 0.5315$ ), as well as the value of proportion under the null hypothesis ( $p_0 = 0.5$ ), and lastly the size of our sample group ( $n = 111$ ). The formula to calculate the z value is the following:

$$z = \frac{p^{\wedge} - p_0}{\sqrt{\frac{p_0(1-p_0)}{n}}} \quad (1)$$

If our values are substituted, we will get:

$$z = \frac{0.5315 - 0.5}{\sqrt{\frac{0.5(1-0.5)}{111}}} = \frac{0.0315}{\sqrt{0.002252}} = \frac{0.0315}{0.0475} \approx 0.663 \quad (2)$$

#### 4.3.4. Significance Level and critical value

In order to see if we can reject the null hypothesis, we need to compare the critical value of Z, and compare that to a given significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). We use Excel to execute this step, by using the following function:

$$= \text{NORM.S.INV}(0.95)$$

This gives  $1.645$ , which if compared to the calculated Z value, we can see the critical value of Z is higher, therefore we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

#### 4.3.5. Conclusion of hypothesis

With the data collected in this thesis, there is not enough evidence to prove that the amount of people in the sample group who vote regularly is significantly greater than 50%. The null hypothesis cannot be discredited based on our result, therefore we fail to support the alternate hypothesis.

#### 4.4. Manifestation of hindering factors such as capitalism and money

##### 4.4.1. Financial/ Economical

When asked questions related to one's income level, 86% of participants said they would donate more if their income level was higher. Moreover, 79% of responders agree or strongly agree with the notion that economic challenges make it harder for them to perform ISR duties.

##### 4.4.2. Mental Health

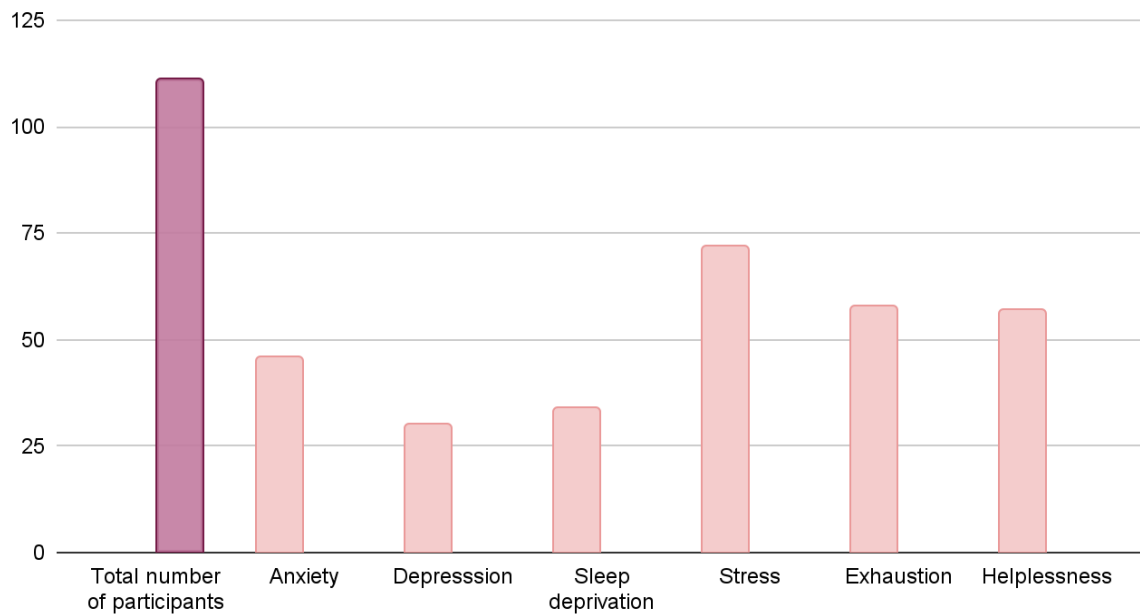
The relationship between mental health and one's finances proved to be important to examine in the above digested literature when it came to the neglect of social responsibilities.

Therefore we examined the relation between capitalism and one's mental health as a preventive factor in social responsibility. When asked the question, if the responder agrees or not with the notion that they have mental struggles (at least partially) as a result of capitalism, approximately 70% of responders agreed. People who strongly disagreed were only 7% .

Mental health problems reported are displayed on the graph below, where the first column represents the total number of participants, followed by the columns to the right, representing the amount of selections each mental health problem received. Participants were welcome to select multiple options for this particular question. Overall 65% of participants reported stress, 52% exhaustion, followed by 51% reporting the feeling of helplessness. Other mental issues reported include anxiety (41% ), sleep deprivation (30% ), and depression (27% ).

**Figure 8:** Mental health as a hindering factor in ISR of the sample group

*(source: own work)*

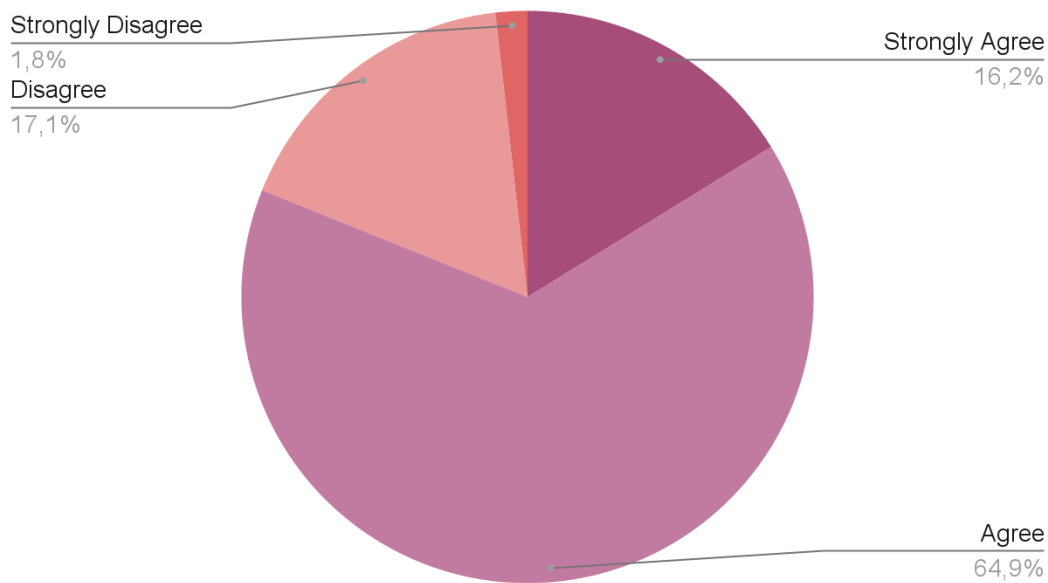


When it came to the optional question about social/political involvement, participants were asked to give reasons why they could be disengaged. Out of 111 participants, 70 people provided an answer to the question. Their reported reasons were the feeling of overwhelm and helplessness (51.4%), too many personal struggles to attend to (30%), being disinterested (17%), and a non-specified “other” (2%).

#### 4.4.3. Capitalism and social responsibility

The next section of the questionnaire aimed to discover how the study group feels about the notion that the effects of capitalism (overworking, overconsuming, oversteering) has a negative impact on their ability to perform their social duties. 80% of participants agreed, with the importance of 16% strongly agreeing. Only about 2% of the examined group strongly disagreed.

**Figure 9:** Capitalism as a hindering factor in ISR of the sample group  
 (source: own work)



#### 4.5. Second hypothesis

As aforementioned, the first hypothesis of this study is an alternate hypothesis that I aim to support by disproving its null hypothesis. The alternate hypothesis states:  $H_1$ : Capitalism negatively impacts one's ability to carry out social responsibilities. This would mean that a high number of respondents would argue that capitalism affects them negatively, and as a result making it harder for them to fulfill their social responsibilities. We use a null hypothesis, assume its true and try to discredit it in order to support the alternate hypothesis. The null hypothesis states:  $H_0$ : Capitalism has no negative impact on an individual's ability to carry out social responsibility. Therefore, it suggests that capitalism does not have any or any relevant impact on one's ability to perform their individual social responsibility duties. If this is factual, the data concluded from people's responses will spread equally when it comes to agreeing or disagreeing with this statement. We use the goodness-of-fit Chi-Square formula to move forward with the second hypothesis.

##### 4.5.1. Observing the concluded data

Here, a so-called contingency table is presented. The total number of responders were 111, all of them were given the option to Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree or Strongly disagree with the notion that the effects of capitalism hinders their ability to perform their social responsibility roles. The responses are concluded in the table below, showing that altogether, 90 people agreed with the statement out of the 111, while a total of 21 disagreed. In the table,

and as we continue our calculations, we collapse the four categories into two, for simplicity, and because we are measuring direction of opinion opposed to strength of opinion.

**Table 1:** Responses to the notion of capitalism hindering one's ability to carry out social responsibility

(Source: own work)

Response	Percentage (%)		Count (number of responders)	
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	16.2%	81.1%	18	90
<b>Agree</b>	64.9%		72	
<b>Disagree</b>	17.1%	18.9%	19	21
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	1.8%		2	

#### 4.5.2. If the null hypothesis is correct

If the null hypothesis is correct, the data will be distributed evenly, meaning altogether half of the group would agree, and the other half would disagree.

Expected Agree:  $111 \times 0.5 = 55.5$

Expected Disagree:  $111 \times 0.5 = 55.5$

#### 4.5.3. Chi-Square Test formula

We use the goodness-of-fit Chi-Square formula to see if the aforementioned null hypothesis is correct or otherwise. To be able to tell if the null hypothesis is incorrect, we have to measure how much the observed responses deviate from our expected responses. The “ $O_i$ ” in the following formula represents the observed count, the “ $E_i$ ” represents the expected count. The expected counts have been calculated above.

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i} \quad (1)$$

If we substitute our values into the given formula, we will get:

$$x^2 = \frac{(90-55.5)^2}{55.5} + \frac{(21-55.5)^2}{55.5} \quad (2)$$

Solving the formula, our end result will be:

$$x^2 = 21.45 + 21.45 = 42.9 \quad (3)$$

The result is 42.9, showing a higher observed outcome than the expected null hypothesis. Because of such a high difference, the Chi-Square test suggests these results are unlikely to be due to coincidence. Therefore we can say that the results derived from the sample groups' responses discredits the null hypothesis.

#### 4.5.4. Degrees of freedom

In the next step of this paper, we calculate the degrees of freedom with the aim of further implementation of the Chi-Square test results. Degrees of freedom will be used to shed light on how many of our values are free to vary, and to make sure the result of the Chi-Square test is not misleading. The formula to calculate the degrees of freedom is as follows:

$$df = k - 1$$

Here, “*df*

” stands for degrees of freedom, and “*k*

” refers to the number of categories. In the current study's case, we originally had 4 categories that were collapsed into 2 (agree or disagree), hence we measure the direction of the sample group's opinion, not the strength of it. By substituting our values into the given formula, and then solving it, we can conclude the following equation:

$$df = 2 - 1 = 1$$

Therefore the degree of freedom is 1, meaning only one value if free to independently vary, hence there have been 2 categories given. This result serves as further confirmation that we can reject the null hypothesis.

#### 4.5.5. The p-value

We use probability to further solidify our statement where we reject the null hypothesis. Hereby we measure how likely it would be for 81% of respondents agreeing with the notion that capitalism hinders their ability to perform social responsibilities, if capitalism had no actual effect. To calculate this, we use Excel, giving the following formula to determine the value of *p* :

$$CHISQ.DIST.RT(42.9,1)$$

Here, we use the results from the Chi-Square test formula, as well as the results of the degree of freedom formula. The results will be:

$$p \approx 5.6 \times 10^{-11}$$

Approximately, this amounts up to 0.000000000056, which further encourages the rejection of the null hypothesis.

$$p < 0.05$$

#### 4.5.6. Conclusion of the first hypothesis

Statistical evidence strongly suggests the rejection of the null hypothesis, and as a result supports the alternate hypothesis.

### 4.6. Financial decisions contributing to social responsibility

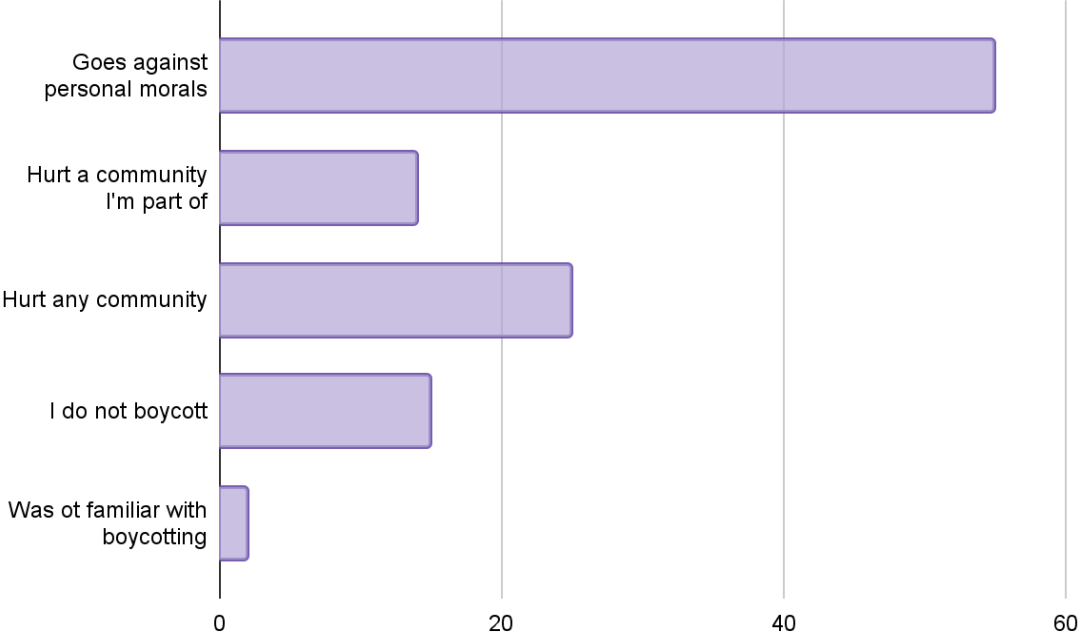
#### 4.6.1. Financial decisions making a difference

The study group's majority (85.6% ) agrees with the notion that where they put their money makes a difference in the world. Though optional, some people shared their personal experiences, where they explained what leads them to support the aforementioned statement. In the case of financial decisions impacting companies, responders often brought up boycotting, and the ability to use their money as a “vote”, as they believe companies only care about profitability, therefore ethical business practices can be achieved by public pressure. Specific cases of boycotts were mentioned, such as pro-Palestine boycotts, as well as boycotts against the fast fashion industry by purchasing from small businesses, or thrifting. Several responders talked about how they felt the impact of their financial investment while making a donation, specifically to NGOs at the times of environmental crises such as earthquakes. On a personal level, people explained how their impulse buys, or bigger purchases affected them, and how they feel about the weight of their spendings.

Regarding boycotts, the question was asked: when does the responder consider boycotting a brand or in some cases a country? The diagram below showcases the number of selections each category received from responders. Mostly, people would boycott an entity if their practices go against their personal morals (49.5% ), or if they hurt a community the responder is not necessarily part of (22.5% ). 13.5% of responders would consider boycotting when a firm or government hurts a community they are explicitly part of. 13.5% of people do not boycott, and 1.8% of participants were not previously familiar with the term boycotting.

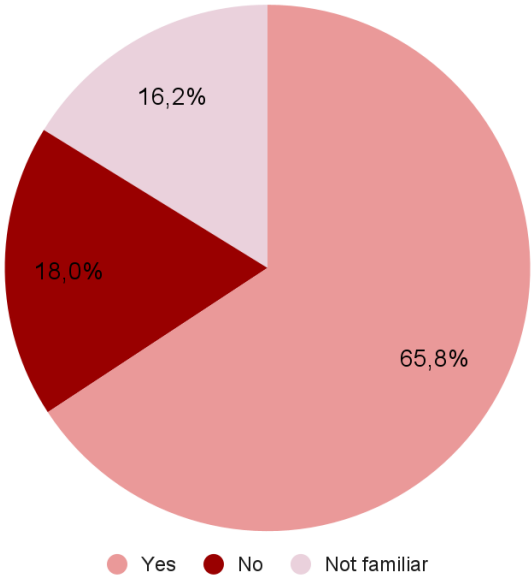
**Figure 10:** Boycotting habits of the sample group

(source: own work)



Moreover, we measured if participants believed that boycotts make a difference, to which over 60% of people said yes, 16.2% said they were not familiar, and lastly 18% said no.

**Figure 11:** Belief in boycotting making a difference measured in the sample group  
(source: own work)



Additionally, it was optional for participants to elaborate on their personal views regarding the effectiveness of boycotting. Out of the 111 responders, 24 people reported their personal experiences. People supporting the statement that boycotts make a difference, stated that boycotts oftentimes result in businesses being shut down, or companies losing money. Examples people have mentioned of such brands were Tesla, McDonalds as well as Starbucks, and makeup brands that test on animals. Certain individuals highlighted that boycotts on an individual level are ineffective, and can only make a difference if we boycott collectively. Some believed that even personal boycotts make a difference, as they can slowly accumulate to collective boycotts. Others suggested that the impact of boycotts depend on how large a brand is. One person explained that they believe instead of boycotting we should focus on supporting ethical businesses, and as a result the market will slowly shift into an ethical direction. Some reported that boycotts are inevitable, if people feel cheated by a company that does not comply with corporate social responsibility, in most cases it is easy to find a substitute, and replace their products/services. When it comes to scepticism of the effects of boycotting, some said that no matter how successful a boycott is, a company will still have a customer base left.

#### 4.7. Third hypothesis

The topic of the second hypothesis was whether or not people believe boycotting contributes to social responsibility. As mentioned in the literature review, one of the tools individuals can use against corporate and governmental neglect is boycotting, which could lead to financial loss for the affected parties. Therefore, the second hypothesis states:  $H_1$ : People consider boycotting an effective method to force more responsible business activities.

To be able to support this statement, we create a null hypothesis, assume it is true, and try to discredit it:  $H_0$ : People do not consider boycotting an effective method to force more responsible business activities. If the null hypothesis is correct, it would mean that 50% or less of the respondents believe that boycotts make a difference in the context of social responsibility. That would conclude that more people think that social responsibility is not useful, than people who do. The data collected from the questionnaire shows that from the total of 111 people, 73 responders said yes, 20 no, 18 not familiar when asked about the effectiveness of boycotts.

#### 4.7.1. Proportion test

We carry out the One-Sample Z-Test for Proportions, in order to see whether or not the observed sample population is higher than 0.5, the proportion of the null hypothesis.

Firstly, in order to prove that the proportion of the sample group who believe boycotts make an impact are higher than 50%, we define our alternate and null hypothesis in the following manner:

$$H_0: p = 0.5$$

$$H_1: p > 0.5$$

Here, we choose a one-tailed test, since we only want to prove that the observed sample of proportion is greater than 0.5, the to support the alternate hypothesis. We calculate the observed sample of proportion, based on the survey, where the sample size ( $n$ ) is 111, and the number of "Yes" responses ( $x$ ) is 73.

$$p^{\wedge} = \frac{x}{n} \quad (1)$$

Our values substituted:

$$p^{\wedge} = \frac{73}{111} = 0.658 \quad (2)$$

The result of the equation is  $0.658$ , which is greater than the proportion under the null hypothesis (0.5).

#### 4.7.2. Rule of Thumb

In order to move forward with the One Sample Z-test for Proportion, we have to check if the Rule of Thumb is true. This means that we need to see if the sample group is large enough to assume approximate normality. In order to test this, we have to use the following formulas:

$$n \times p_0 \geq 10 ; n \times (1 - p_0) \geq 10 \quad (1)$$

Our sample group ( $n$ ) consists of 111 people, the proportion under the null hypothesis ( $p_0$ ) is maximum of 0.5. If we substitute these values, we get:

$$111 \times 0.5 \geq 10 ; 111 \times (1 - 0.5) \geq 10 \quad (2)$$

If calculated, both cases will result in 55.5, which is greater than 10, therefore we can calculate the One Sample Z-test for Proportion.

#### 4.7.3. Calculation of the Z-score

In order to calculate the Z-score, we will need to use the sample proportion value, which we have observed ( $p^\wedge = 0.658$ ), the value of proportion under the null hypothesis ( $p_0 = 0.5$ ), as well as the size of our sample group ( $n = 111$ ). The formula to calculate the z value is the following:

$$z = \frac{p^\wedge - p_0}{\sqrt{\frac{p_0(1-p_0)}{n}}} \quad (1)$$

With substitution, we can calculate the z value as follows:

$$z = \frac{0.658 - 0.5}{\sqrt{\frac{0.5(1-0.5)}{111}}} = \frac{0.158}{\sqrt{0.0475}} \approx 3.33 \quad (2)$$

#### 4.7.4. P- value

The next step is calculating the p-value, to see what is the probability of the sample proportion ( $p^\wedge$ ) being 65.8% or even higher (meaning more than 50% of people believe boycotting makes a difference) by coincidence, if in reality, only 50% people believed that boycotting is effective. For this, we will need the above calculated z- score (3.33). In order to calculate the p-value, we use Excel, where we use the following formula:

$$1 - \text{NORM.S.DIST}(3.33) \text{TRUE}$$

The result will be approximately 0.00043. We compare this result to the commonly used significance level, which helps us determine whether or not we can reject the null hypothesis. (0.05).

$$0.00043 < 0.05$$

Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis.

#### 4.7.5. Conclusion of hypothesis

We carried out the One-Sample Z-Test for Proportions statistical test, in order to reject the null hypothesis. With the null hypothesis rejected, we can support the alternate hypothesis, which states that the sample group thinks that boycotting is an effective way of forcing more ethical business practices.

## 5. Conclusions and proposals

In the personal study of this paper we conducted data from a sample group of 111 individuals. These individuals came from a mixed ethnic, socio-economic background, with different levels of education and age categories. While the population of the study is the people who live under the umbrella of capitalism, we have to acknowledge that the sample group is not only a very small proportion of the population, but also dominated by certain ethnic, age, and other subgroups. Ethnically, most people filling out our survey were from Europe, with a high number of them being Hungarian. Regarding education, high school diploma holders were the majority, however many of that subgroup continued their studies, and have made it to a bachelor's, or master's degree. When it comes to responders' financial backgrounds a high number of people had a middle class upbringing, while some had lower or higher income families. The subgroup dominating within the age category of participants, were people within the 21-40 age range. With the information the sample group provided, we aimed to prove three alternate hypotheses:

1.  $H_1$ : People find it important to participate in the decision of electing which government is in power.
2.  $H_1$ : Capitalism negatively impacts one's ability to carry out social responsibilities.
3.  $H_1$ : People consider boycotting an effective method to force more responsible business activities.

With the exception of the first one, we were able to prove all the hypotheses.

For the first hypothesis we used the One-Sample Z-Test for Proportions statistical test, in order to discredit the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ : People do not find it important to participate in the decision of electing which government is in power) created for the alternate one. The results of the statistical test were not satisfactory enough, to be able to confidently reject the null hypothesis. The critical Z value proved to be higher than the calculated Z value, therefore people participating in elections as a form of ISR was not significantly higher than people who did not. Therefore the null hypothesis could not be discredited, and could not be used to support the alternate hypothesis formed within this study. The motive behind the first hypothesis was to gain insight about ISR's relationship with GSR, how important do people think it is to get involved in selecting which political party will be in power. In this particular

study, the ISR activity receiving the highest number of selections was voting, still we could not prove that people find it to be important.

- I propose that the reason why people do not go to vote is because they feel like their vote adds no value or has no influence. Many responders of our sample said that when it comes to political/social involvement, the feeling of helplessness is the leading cause that prevents them. Although many people feel it is important to vote, advocacy for people to use their power and right to vote is still crucial.

The second hypothesis was interesting to examine, because of the continuous mention of capitalism and finances being obstacles to ISR within the literature review. Whether it was the fall of birth rates, different mental health problems and epidemics, the materialistic societal system we live in seemed like one of the root causes. Therefore, one of the hypotheses was investigating people's response to whether or not they agree that capitalism is a hindering factor in their abilities to practice and carry out social responsibilities. Findings in the study showed correspondence with the key takeaways of the processed literature. The majority of the participants said yes, however to further examine the data, we carried out the goodness-of-fit Chi-Square test, in order to discredit the null hypothesis(  $H_0$ : Capitalism has no negative impact on an individual's ability to carry out social responsibility) created to be discredited and help prove the second alternate hypothesis. At the end of the statistical test, it could be concluded that there is strong evidence suggesting the rejection of the null hypothesis, the result supports the alternate hypothesis. However, it should be considered how well this study's sample group represents the population.

- I argue that further examinations, with a larger sample group are needed, to be able to prove that capitalism negatively impacts our ability to perform our social responsibilities.
- Furthermore, it would be interesting to examine how capitalism plays out in different nations, and how much capitalism impacts ISR within these different countries.
- I believe hyperindividualism has strong ties to ISR neglects, which was touched on in the literature review, however was not further investigated in the study. Therefore future examinations shall be conducted.

Lastly, the third hypothesis measured whether or not people believe that boycotting contributes to social responsibility. In order to prove the third alternate hypothesis, we carried out the One-Sample Z-Test for Proportions statistical test. This was conducted successfully, the created null hypothesis ( $H_0$ : People do not consider boycotting an effective method to force more responsible business activities) was discredited by the conclusions of the test. The belief in the effectiveness of boycotts were also discussed in the literature review, where a recent study conducted by Burak Dogan in Turkey drew the conclusion that about 50% of people believe boycotts lead to the desired outcome. Comparing this result with the results of this study, data from our sample group concluded that 65.8% of people believe boycotts make a difference. Therefore our study group shows a higher number of boycott believers, however it is important to note that the study mentioned in the literature review was focused on one case of boycotting, while the study in this paper was speaking of boycotts in general. Finances prove to be a double edged sword when it comes to social responsibility. While capitalism can hinder one's ability to perform their duties, it can also allow individuals to donate to NGO's, as well as use their financial leverage to pressure companies to be more ethical.

My recommendations if replications of this study are carried out in the future; or the topics regarding the hypotheses are investigated:

- A more ethnically diverse sample group
- Insights into the complexity of capitalism, hence one can neglect their social responsibilities due to a lack of money, or in other cases: time
- Further examination of relationships with factors such as hyper individualism, since hyper individualism thrives in capitalism, and could lead to issues in one's life that hinder their ability to perform social responsibility
- Investigation of interdependencies as well as intersectionality of issues that derive from the neglect of ISR by different departments of education, and experts of the given area
- Research about potential paradoxes between capitalism and one's ability to perform social responsibilities, in the case of individuals as well as corporations
- More research exemplifying connections between financial choices leading to tangible change, and forcing the market to be more ethical

→ A wide range of experts are needed, to fully understand the role of the financial world and social responsibility. Psychologists, anthropologists, economists, sociologists, environmentalists, law makers and many more groups of professionals insights are needed to fully and correctly evaluate this topic.

## 6. Summary

As humans are social beings, it is important for us to feel as though we are excelling in our social roles and responsibilities. To understand social responsibility better, this paper investigates the relationship individuals have with their own, as well as governmental and corporate social responsibility. The objective of this paper, is to gain better insights into what has been discussed in the literature, through the observation of a study group consisting of 111 people. The questionnaire explores the level of social responsibility individuals claim to have, as well as their relationships with potential factors that could be hindering their capabilities of executing duties related to social responsibility (finances, community, capitalism). A particular ISR to be investigated further in this paper is voting, as it has ties to governmental social responsibility. Furthermore, we unpack what the power of financial leverage can provide for individuals, and how it can be used to force a more ethical market. Moreover, we investigate how morals can bleed into one's financial choices, and how people feel about boycotts as a tool for change.

In the study, three hypotheses were defined:

1. H<sub>1</sub>: People find it important to participate in the decision of electing which government is in power.
2. H<sub>1</sub>: Capitalism negatively impacts one's ability to carry out social responsibilities.
3. H<sub>1</sub>: People consider boycotting an effective method to force more responsible business activities.

Each hypothesis had a null hypothesis, created with the desire to be discredited, and help prove the defined alternate hypotheses. Statistical tests were carried out, the data used was collected through google surveys, open for anyone to fill out. The collected data was quantitative, with exceptions where people were given the option to elaborate. Where relevant, the expressed personal experiences, elaborations were noted. All of the data is primary data, collected by the author. Conclusions made from the results were strictly through observations, variables in the survey were not manipulated nor controlled. The populations of the study are humans living under capitalistic societies. The sample group consists of 111 people. An important notion is that the representative sample group is dominated by certain subgroups regarding socio-economic backgrounds, as well as ethnicity. Ethnically, most people filling out our survey were from Europe (72.1% ), a high percentage of them being Hungarian ( 47% ). Followed by Asia (14.4% ), Africa (8.1% ), as well as Latin America and

the Caribbean (3.2% ), and lastly North America (3.2% ). The education level of participants were dominated by high school diploma holders (40.5% ), however many of that subgroup continued their studies, and have made it to a bachelor's (58.5% -assuming master degree students have a bachelor's degree as well), or master's degree (24.3% ). Responders' financial backgrounds were made up by a high number of people who had a middle class upbringing (55% ), while some came from lower or higher income families. The rest of participants reported their financial background as upper middle class (18% ), working class (14.4% ), low income (18% ), and upper class (1.8% ) families. The subgroup dominating within the age category of participants, were people within the 21-40 age range (61.3% ). Other age range groups consisted of the group 41-60 (23.4% ), participants under 21 (11.7% ), and lastly, people between 61 and 80 (3.6% ). Every member of the population had a chance of getting selected, as the questionnaire was open for anyone to fill out across the globe, to anyone who has internet access. The sample group was made with simple random sampling.

The first important part of the survey was the measurement of the level of social responsibility of the sample group. Participants were asked to select which social responsibility role(s) they fulfill on a regular basis. Social responsibility activities were divided into 13 distinctive categories: donation of resources, volunteering, social activism, recycling, planting trees, staying informed regarding the social and political climate, regular voting, shopping locally, thrifting (shopping clothes second hand), mindful consumption, eco friendly ways of transportation, raising or taking care of children, and lastly building community. The participants were free to select as many social responsibility duties from the list as they wished, therefore one could have selected 1 or all the options offered. Therefore, the results of each ISR category will be expressed as the percentage of people who selected the given category from the entirety of the sample group. The highest selected options were voting (53% ), staying informed about social issues (52% ), and the support of local businesses (50% ). Followed by recycling (48% ), environmentally friendly ways of transporting (43% ), mindful consumption and purchase of goods (36% ), buying clothes second hand also referred to as thrifting (34% ), volunteering (28% ), participating in social activism (27% ), building community (22% ), donation of material resources (18% ), taking care of or raising children (17% ), and lastly planting trees (7% ).

The first hypothesis was created in connection to the highest selected ISR measured within this study: voting regularly. The hypothesis states:  $H_1$ : People find it important to participate

in the decision of electing which government is in power. This would mean, at least half of the participants who make up the sample group will agree that voting is important and report that they regularly vote. To prove this hypothesis, we created a null hypothesis ( $H_0$ : People do not find it important to participate in the decision of electing which government is in power) with the goal of discrediting it, and help prove our statement. The statistical test carried out to help prove the alternate hypothesis and discredit the null hypothesis was the One-Sample Proportion Z-Test. In the case of the null hypothesis being true (therefore the alternate being false), the proportion has to be 0.5. If the alternate hypothesis is true, the proportion will be higher than 0.5. Not only that, the calculated Z-score has to be higher than the critical value of Z, to be able to discredit the null hypothesis. In total, 59 responders reported voting regularly as a form of participating in ISR, from the sample group of 111. The Rule of Thumb was checked in order to be able to carry out the chosen test, and the sample proved to be big enough for normal approximation. The proportion based on the observed sample group was calculated ( 0.5315), and proved to be higher than the assumed proportion under the null hypothesis (0.5). Even so, the critical value of Z ( 1.645) was higher than its calculated value (0.663), therefore the rejection of the null hypothesis would be incorrect. The null hypothesis cannot be discredited based on our result, therefore we fail to support the first alternate hypothesis. The conclusion drawn from the first hypothesis was that the evidence and the collected data was not sufficient enough to prove that the amount of people in the sample group who vote regularly is significantly greater than 50%. The proposal was made that the reason why people do not go to vote is because they feel like their vote adds no value or has no influence. Many responders of our sample said that when it comes to political/social involvement, the feeling of helplessness is the leading cause that prevents them. Although many people feel it is important to vote, advocacy for people to use their power and right to vote is still crucial.

Community was an essential part of ISR as concluded in the literature review, hereby a question to measure the unity between people coming from different backgrounds (eg.: different race, gender, sexuality, etc.) was: How involved is the responder in issues affecting communities the responder is not part of? The motivation behind this was to determine the level of unity and solidarity among people, as this factor often comes up when we talk about social responsibility. Participants could give their level of involvement on a scale of 1-10, the most popular levels of activity were 5 (17% ), 7 (16% ) and 6 (14% ). Regarding this question, we concluded, there have been a total of 56 selections among the 1-5 levels of involvement,

which amounts up to 50.45% of the sample group. There were 55 selections among levels 6-10, making it 49.54% of the entire group. Hereby we state that more people report not being involved in other communities problems than who are, however there is no significant difference.

The factors hindering one's ability to partake in ISR, were put in different categories. Regarding one's financial state, 86% of participants said they would donate more if their income level was higher. When asked about economic challenges coming between someone and their ability to perform social responsibility duties, 79% of responders agree or strongly agree with the notion that economic challenges make it harder for them to perform ISR duties. The relationship between mental health and one's finances proved to be important to examine in the above digested literature when it came to the neglect of social responsibilities. We asked responders if they agree that some of their mental health issues derive ( at least partially) from capitalism, and as a result around 70% of participants agreed. When asked the question, what mental health issues responders were specifically referring to, participants could select multiple options from a given list. Overall 65% of participants reported stress, 52% exhaustion, followed by 51% reporting the feeling of helplessness. Other mental issues reported include anxiety (41% ), sleep deprivation (30% ), and depression (27% ). Mental health also bled into one's inactivity in staying informed regarding social/political issues. Out of 111 participants, 70 people answered the question: what is the reason for the disengagement? Their reported reasons were the feeling of overwhelm and helplessness (51.4% ), too many personal struggles to attend to (30% ), being disinterested (17% ), and a non-specified "other" (2% ). When respondents were asked about the negative relation between the ability to be socially responsible and capitalism, around 80% of responders agreed that capitalism has a negative impact on them regarding social responsibility.

Therefore, the second hypothesis to be closer examined states:  $H_1$ :Capitalism negatively impacts one's ability to carry out social responsibilities. To be able to prove this hypothesis, a null hypothesis was created ( $H_0$ : Capitalism has no negative impact on an individual's ability to carry out social responsibility), to be discredited. The statistical test to be used for the second hypothesis is the goodness-of-fit Chi-Square formula. If the null hypothesis is correct, the data will be distributed evenly, meaning altogether half of the group would agree, and the other half would disagree. To tell if the null hypothesis is incorrect, we examine how much the observed responses deviate from our expected responses. Due to the result showing a

higher observed outcome than the expected null hypothesis, we can discredit the null hypothesis. To be sure, we proceeded by checking the degrees of freedom, which showed that only 1 value is free to independently vary. To further solidify the rejection of the null hypothesis, we measure the probability of coming to our conclusion, if the null hypothesis is assumed to be true, and capitalism had no actual effect on one's ability to perform social responsibility. The probability of that was measured extremely low, therefore statistical evidence strongly suggests the rejection of the null hypothesis, and as a result supports the alternate hypothesis. I argue that further examinations, with a larger sample group are needed, to be able to prove that capitalism negatively impacts our ability to perform our social responsibilities. Furthermore, I suggest examining how capitalism plays out in different nations, and how much capitalism impacts ISR within these different countries. I believe hyper individualism has strong ties to ISR neglects, which was touched on in the literature review, however was not further investigated in the study. Therefore future examinations shall be conducted.

The third, and final big section of the questionnaire was examining the positive effects of financial decisions regarding the economy. The study group's majority (85.6% ) agrees with the notion that where they put their money makes a difference in the world. Here, participants could elaborate on their experiences supporting their opinion, many of them brought up the example of boycotting. The next section of the survey asked participants: when would they consider boycotting a brand? Mostly, people would boycott an entity if their practices go against their personal morals (49.5% ), or if they hurt a community the responder is not necessarily part of (22.5% ). 13.5% of responders would consider boycotting when a firm or government hurts a community they are explicitly part of. 13.5% of people do not boycott, and 1.8% of participants were not previously familiar with the term boycotting. Furthermore, the belief in boycotts leading to change was measured, to which over 60% of people said they believe in the effects of boycotting, 16.2% said they were not familiar, and lastly 18% said they do not consider boycotts making an impact. People could elaborate on the reason for their opinion, though it was optional.

The third and last hypothesis examined in this paper has to do with people's belief in boycotting making a difference, and potentially leading to a more ethical market. It states:  $H_1$ : People consider boycotting an effective method to force more responsible business activities. To support this notion, we created a null hypothesis ( $H_0$ : People do not consider

boycotting an effective method to force more responsible business activities), and if disproven, we can support the alternate hypothesis. We carry out the One-Sample Z-Test for Proportions, in order to see whether or not the observed sample population is higher than 0.5, the proportion of the null hypothesis. We continue with a one tailed test, hence we only want to prove if the observed sample proportion is greater than the proportion assumed under the null hypothesis. The result of the proportion test is 0.658, for the observed sample proportion, which is greater than the proportion under the null hypothesis (0.5). The Rule of Thumb is checked, to see if we have a sample group large enough to assume approximate normality, to which the result is that our sample group is satisfactory, therefore we can proceed. With the calculation of the Z-score (3.33), and checking the probability(0.00043) of having the observed number of respondents believing in the effects of boycotting by coincidence if in reality only 50% people believed so, we can reject the null hypothesis. With the null hypothesis rejected, we can support the alternate hypothesis, which states that the sample group thinks that boycotting is an effective way of forcing more ethical business practices.

Other conclusion and suggestions drawn from the study include:

- A need for more ethnically diverse sample group in future studies
- Insights into the complexity of capitalism, hence one can neglect their social responsibilities due to a lack of money, or in other cases: time
- Further examination of relationships with factors such as hyperindividualism, since hyperindividualism thrives in capitalism, and could lead to issues in one's life that hinder their ability to perform social responsibility
- Investigation of interdependencies as well as intersectionality of issues that derive from the neglect of ISR by different departments of education, and experts of the given area
- Research about potential paradoxes between capitalism and one's ability to perform social responsibilities, in the case of individuals as well as corporations
- More research exemplifying connections between financial choices leading to tangible change, and forcing the market to be more ethical
- A wide range of experts are needed, to fully understand the role of the financial world and social responsibility. Psychologists, anthropologists, economists, sociologists,

environmentalists, law makers and many more groups of professionals insights are needed to fully and correctly evaluate this topic.

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## 9. Annexes

**Surveys in English and Hungarian language, line numbers: 770- 1492**

- **Hungarian version:** <https://forms.gle/nxRKhcqQpykWRYEC9>
- **English version:** <https://forms.gle/FNvmkMj7XJXrS8u56>

# 10. Student Declaration

## MATE Organizational and Operational Regulations

### III. Requirements for Students

#### III.1. Study and Examination Regulations

#### Appendix 6.13: The MATE Uniform Thesis /thesis / final thesis / portfolio guidelines Annex

#### 4.2: Declaration of public access and authenticity of the thesis/thesis/dissertation/portfolio

### DECLARATION

#### the public access and authenticity of the thesis

Student's name: Jordán Petra Zorka

Student's Neptun code: EJCVLX

Title of thesis: The Levels of Social Responsibility

Year of publication: 2025

Name of the consultant's institute: Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics

Name of consultant's department: Political philosophy, History of Ideology, Ethics, Economical Philosophy, Art Theory

I declare that the final thesis submitted by me is an individual, original work of my own intellectual creation. I have clearly indicated the parts of my thesis or dissertation which I have taken from other authors' work and have included them in the bibliography. Furthermore, I declare that the artificial intelligence tools (e.g. text generation, linguistic correction, translation, data analysis) used during the preparation of the thesis did not substitute my own research and creative work; their use was indicated either in the list of sources or in the methodology section, and I acted in accordance with professional and ethical expectations.

If the above statement is untrue, I understand that I will be disqualified from the final examination by the final examination board and that I will have to take the final examination after writing a new thesis.

I do not allow editing of the submitted thesis, but I allow the viewing and printing, which is a PDF document.

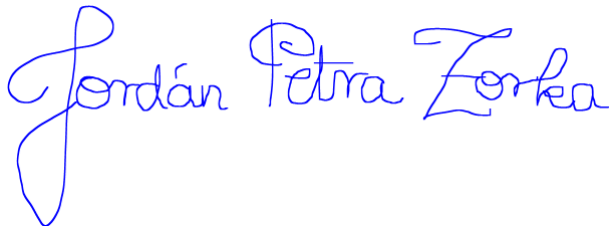
I acknowledge that the use and exploitation of my thesis as an intellectual work is governed by the intellectual property management regulations of the Hungarian University of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

I acknowledge that the electronic version of my thesis will be uploaded to the library repository of the Hungarian University of Agricultural and Life Sciences. I acknowledge that the defended and - not confidential thesis after the defence

- confidential thesis 5 years after the submission

will be available publicly and can be searched in the repository system of the University.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ year \_\_\_\_\_ 10 \_\_\_\_\_ month \_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_\_ day

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jordán Petra Zorika". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

Student's signature

# 11. Consultancy Statement

MATE Organizational and Operational Regulations

III. Requirements for Students

III.1. Study and Examination Regulations

Appendix 6.13: The MATE Uniform Thesis /  
thesis / final thesis / portfolio guidelines

Annex 4.1: Consultancy statement

## DECLARATION

\_\_\_\_\_ Dr. Farkas Attila \_\_\_\_\_ (name) (student Neptun code:  
\_EJCVLX\_\_\_\_\_) as a consultant, I declare that I have reviewed the thesis and that  
I have informed the student of the requirements, legal and ethical rules for the correct  
handling of literary sources.

**I recommend / do not recommend** the final thesis / dissertation / portfolio to be defended  
in the final examination.

The thesis contains a state or official secret: yes no

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 2025 \_\_\_\_\_ year \_\_\_\_\_ 10 \_\_\_\_\_ month \_\_\_\_\_ 22 \_\_\_\_\_ day



insider consultant

# 12. Declaration of Students and Doctoral Candidates on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)”

**1. general information:**

<b>Name of the student:</b>	<b>Jordán Petra Zorka</b>
<b>Neptun ID:</b>	<b>EJCVLX</b>
<b>Level of program (mark with X):</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BSc/BA <input type="checkbox"/> MSc/MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral School (PhD) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: .....
<b>Name and code of the subject*:</b>	<b>Business Administration and Management -B-GOD-N-EN-GAZME</b>
<b>Title of the work:</b>	<b>The Levels of Social Responsibility</b>

\* Not required to be completed in the case of a doctoral dissertation.

**2. Declaration on the Use of AI**

I, the undersigned, fully aware of my ethical responsibility, make the following declaration:

*(Please choose one of the options below!)*

- A) I have not used any artificial intelligence system or service.  
 (If you selected this option, completing the subsequent tables is not required.)
- B) I have used an artificial intelligence system or service.  
 (Please fill in the relevant tables!)

**3. Details of Artificial Intelligence Usage**

**TABLE I: Assistant or Minor Usage (e.g., translation, language proofreading, brainstorming, etc.)**

*(For these uses, attaching the specific prompts and responses is not required.)*

Purpose of Use	Name and Version of the AI Tool Used	Affected Section (if not applicable to the entire text)

Suggestions and guidance for statistical tests	ChatGPT, 3.0	Hypothesis sections
Checking for AI and Plagiarism Levels	Quillbot, version 34.3.1	The whole text was checked

**TABLE II: Significant Content Contribution (e.g., generating an entire figure or a longer text section)**

*(In these cases, documenting the key prompts used and the raw responses provided by the AI, and attaching them as an appendix to the work, is required.)*

Purpose of Use	Name, Version, and Access Information of the AI Tool Used	Exact Number of the Affected Chapter / Figure / Table	Entry Number of the Appendix Containing the Prompt Log
-	-	-	-

**3/A. Additional Rules Prescribed by the Lecturer (if any)**

If the instructor or supervisor of the course has established specific rules or expectations regarding the use of AI tools, please summarize them in the field below:

*For example: prohibition of AI use for certain types of tasks; only specific tools are permitted; different citation requirements; documentation format, etc.*

Rules Prescribed by the Lecturer or Supervisor

.....

.....

.....

.....

**4. Declaration Applicable to All Students:**

I declare that I have critically reviewed, edited, and incorporated any content potentially generated by AI in all cases. I take full responsibility for every element of the submitted work, including its originality and scientific validity. I acknowledge that the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences may check the submitted work with an artificial intelligence detector and may initiate proceedings if my declaration is found to be false or incomplete.

**Place and Date:** .....Gödöllő....., 2025. ....10.....  
month ....22..... day

Jordán Petra Zorika

.....

**Signature of the Student**



.....

**Signature of the Advisor/Supervisor**