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**Nemzetközi tudományos konferencia
a Magyar Tudomány Ünnepe alkalmából**
International Scientific Conference
on the Occasion of the Hungarian Science Festival

Sopron, 2023. november 23.
23 November 2023, Sopron

**FENNTARTHATÓSÁGI ÁTMENET:
KIHÍVÁSOK ÉS INNOVATÍV MEGOLDÁSOK**
SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITIONS: CHALLENGES AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

Szerkesztők / Editors:

OBÁDOVICS Csilla, RESPERGER Richárd, SZÉLES Zsuzsanna, TÓTH Balázs István

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The Effect of Sustainability Development Using the Example of Green Washing

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Abstract:

The aspect of sustainability in order to preserve the planet for future generations is becoming increasingly important. Products are manufactured in different parts of the world with differing laws and regulations and are also transported across the globe. Corporations are trying to create a sustainable and ecological image. This can attract consumers who attach importance to ecological or CO₂-neutral production, for example. As a result, there are a large number of logos that consumers often cannot really see behind. There are no clear legal boundaries for many terms such as ecological or organic and for many regional terms and logos. In order to follow the current trend, to attract stakeholders and to have an advantage over the competition, companies are following the trend of green marketing. The paper compares official regulations with current greenwashing drivers. The main objective of the paper is to examine the effect of greenwashing on consumers and their decisions.

Keywords: greenwashing, regulations, influencing factors

JEL Codes: D91, M31, Q50

1. Introduction

There is a fine line between increasing profits and sustainable behavior, which is why more and more companies are trying to create a green image (Yang et al., 2020).

The term greenwashing goes back to an activist named Jay Westerveld in 1986. The term was used in connection with practices in the hotel industry. Jay Westerveld criticized hotels saving on towels was not for environmental reasons, but to make a profit for the hotels (Motavalli, 2016). According to the Cambridge dictionary the term “greenwash” means to make people believe that your company is doing more to protect the environment than it really is (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).

Since the Friday's for Future movement and Greta Thunberg, climate targets and saving the environment have become a major focus of society. Even over 40 percent of companies see environmental sustainability as part of their corporate philosophy, when it comes to implementation only 25 percent are doing more for the environment than is already above the legal norm. Customers are also making their purchasing decisions increasingly dependent on the environmental awareness of companies. As the demand for "green" products continues to rise, it is also becoming increasingly important for companies to invest in environmental sustainability. However, it is not only the interest in sustainable products that has increased in recent years, but also the willingness of consumers to pay a significantly higher price for them. According to a study

conducted in 2019, a third of respondents were prepared to pay a higher price for environmentally conscious products. An even more recent study from 2023 shows that in times of greenwashing and growing environmental awareness, consumers are also increasingly skeptical about sustainability promises. A study conducted in a total of 18 countries found that 68% of respondents from France were the most skeptical about sustainability promises. Among respondents from Germany, 63% stated that they were skeptical about sustainability promises (YouGov, 2024).

Another winner of increasing environmental awareness is the tech industry. Energy efficiency and sustainable mobility are forecast to see double-digit growth (Statista, 2020). Green marketing is an instrument for companies to build a green brand image and to attract consumers. However, green marketing also has its critics, especially NGOs trying to point out incorrect marketing practices and protect consumers from false promises (Aggarwal & Kadyan, 2014). Greenwashing can be found in all areas and sectors. Banks can also be targeted. In 2023, a subsidiary of Deutsche Bank had to pay a fine of 25 million dollars because sustainable investments were not as green as they had promised. This clearly demonstrated that greenwashing is not a minor, harmless offense (Bayona, 2024).

2. Literature review

2.1. Greenwashing Drivers

Companies that have a poor environmental performance but try to improve it through positive communication are engaging in greenwashing. As soon as this misrepresentation comes to light, it can damage the trust of consumers and other stakeholders. However, it is not only consumer confidence that is affected by greenwashing. The following figure should provide an overview of the factors that influence greenwashing. It is important to first understand the influencing factors in order to subsequently implement actions and steps to decrease greenwashing (Delmas & Burbano, 2011).

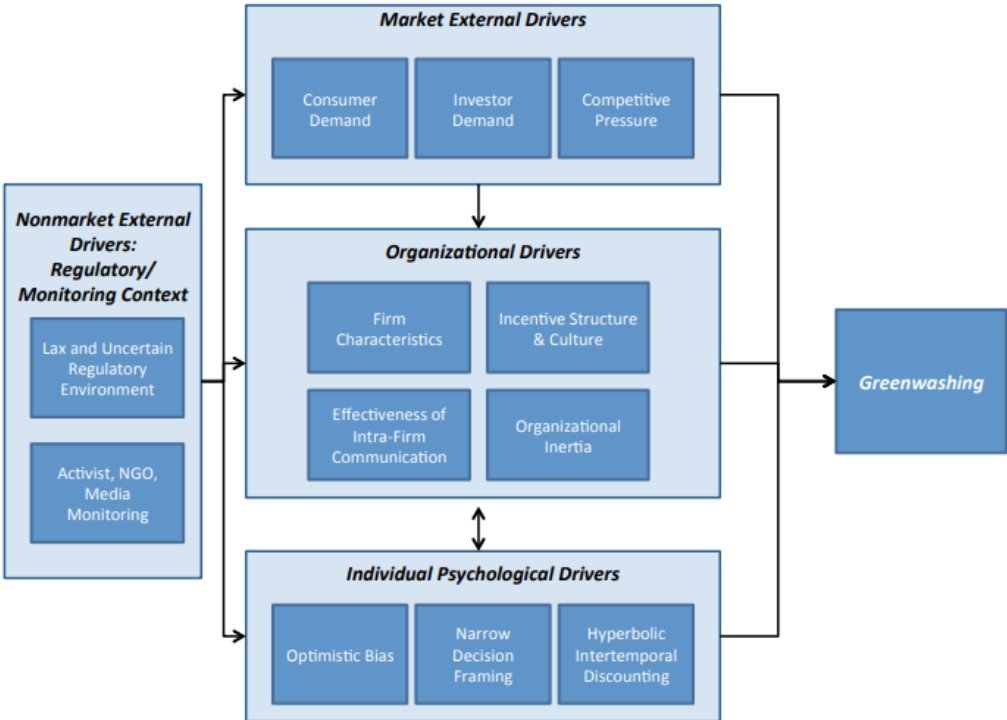


Figure 1: Drivers of Greenwashing
Source: Delmas & Burbano (2011)

Nonmarket External Drivers

The area of green marketing is currently not very strongly determined by regulations. For this reason, it is often not so easy for the consumer to recognize greenwashing and the consumer must consciously search for it himself in order to determine greenwashing (Change plastic for good, n.d.).

NGOs have the power to identify and communicate which companies are bad environmental performers. This role of NGOs as educators is particularly important in areas or countries where there are few legal requirements to protect against greenwashing. An article by Lyon & Montgomery (2013) has seen the role of information technologies, especially social media, as having great potential in the fight against greenwashing, especially among young consumers. However, the article also describes a necessity between old and new media, as in crises social media users often resort to ordinary newspapers rather than relying solely on social media. NGOs such as Greenpeace have also launched some important media campaigns using both social media and traditional communication channels (Lyon & Montgomery, 2013).

Another study also looked at government regulations and public demand as a means of combating greenwashing. It was found that political concepts that call for transparency on the part of companies are not sufficient to motivate companies to make deeper commitments with regard to environmental requirements. Measures such as monitoring and regulations in environmental policy (Kolcava, 2023).

Market External Drivers

The market factors include the needs of customers, investors and, of course, pressure from competitors. As the pressure on companies often comes from several sides because customers want environmentally friendly products, but investors focus on the company's figures, companies tend towards greenwashing. Competition is also responsible for why companies with a less environmentally friendly image like to present themselves greener than they actually are. Because there are often few regulations, customers cannot rely on products being as environmentally friendly as they appear. But investors also have problems with socially responsible investing if there is little guidance and information available (Delmas & Burbano, 2011).

Organizational Drivers

The organizational drivers include the size of the company and the sector in which it operates. In the case of consumer products, for example, the pressure to be environmentally friendly is greater than is the case with non-consumer products or service firms. In terms of company size, large companies and well-known brands attract more interest and are more in the focus of activists and NGOs. However, industries that generally do not have a good image with regard to the environment, such as the oil industry, are often accused of greenwashing (Delmas & Burbano, 2011).

Psychological Drivers

There are various approaches in psychology. Optimistic bias, for example, describes the overestimation of positive events and the underestimation of negative events. Decision-makers can overestimate the positive chances of success of greenwashing, such as an increase in sustainability or the incentive of investors interested in sustainability. The reverse side of underestimating the negative effects of greenwashing in the form of a legal action or a negative image can lead to a damage for the company. Another factor can be dynamic inconsistency, which can lead to greenwashing if there is a discrepancy between the company's long-term environmental goals in the past and environmental sustainability in the present (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). If greenwashing is experienced by customers during shopping, the perception of risk leads 54.7%

of consumers not to make a repeat purchase and the perception of confusion leads 63.4% of consumers not to make a repeat purchase (Kolcava, 2023).

2.2. Impact of greenwashing on the economy

However, greenwashing does not always only have an impact on consumers or benefit companies, the economy itself can also suffer from the practice of greenwashing. If greenwashing leads to a loss of consumer confidence, it can also affect the economy in general. Greenwashing can distort competition and unfair competition can harm environmentally conscious companies. Investors can also be misled or confused by greenwashing practices, which can also hinder the path to a more sustainable economy. A more sustainable economy that is also committed to the climate and resources will not be achieved.

On the one hand, it creates unfair competition and, on the other, it also hinders sustainable technologies and new changes of direction for the economy, as companies market themselves as green companies even without any real sustainable content or innovations. This can hinder sustainable technologies and practices. Greenwashing can hinder sustainable innovation by allowing companies to perceive environmental benefits without making significant changes. Thus, there are far more losers than just the consumer, resulting in massive disadvantages for the environment and humanity (Yoganandham, 2024).

Another important aspect that very few studies have investigated to date is the impact of greenwashing within the company and on its employees. Employees are the first to notice a discrepancy between the green part of the company that is communicated and the strategies that are actually implemented. The employee factor can also be dangerous for the company, as employees communicate their perceptions to the outside world and can be perceived as credible sources by other interest groups due to their direct connection to the company. It was also found that employees with a higher level of education in the area of the environment are more willing to leave the company in the event of greenwashing (Robertson et al., 2023).

2.3. Regulations to Prevent Greenwashing

Companies such as Ryanair advertise with slogans such as "Europe's cleanest and greenest airline". The airline's climate targets and efficiency are particularly emphasized, as are voluntary climate programs. Greenpeace takes a completely different view, describing in a document from 2023 that air traffic has been the fastest growing source of greenhouse gases in the EU in recent decades. Even though greenhouse gases in Europe have decreased by 30% since the 1990s, greenhouse gases from aviation have doubled in the same period. In the period before the corona pandemic, i.e. in 2018, air traffic was also the largest source of CO₂ according to Greenpeace (Greenpeace, 2022).

Greenpeace has commissioned research to examine the European aviation industry's sense of responsibility in the areas of environmental, social and corporate governance. The focus was particularly on climate friendliness and if airlines already advertise their environmental friendliness, the study found that there is a lot to do for European airlines to become more environmentally friendly. Only 39.2% of the average rating was achieved in the area of climate, while the focus on dividends was twice as high. The following graphic shows an excerpt from the study commissioned by Greenpeace and is intended to show the values achieved by the airlines as already described (Greenpeace, 2022).

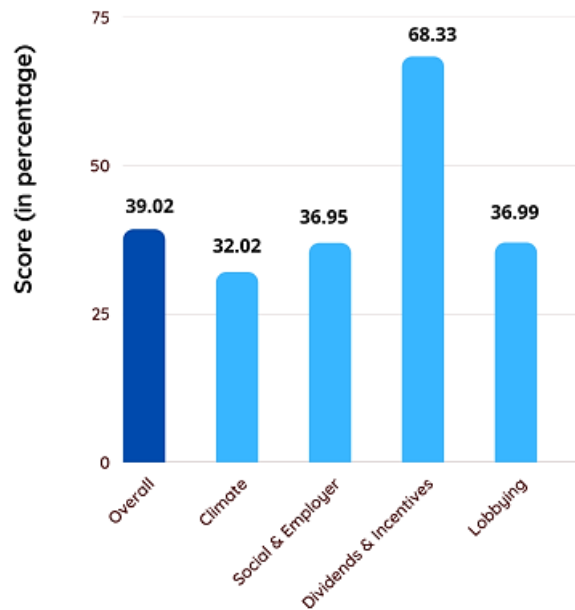


Figure 2: Evaluation of European airlines (commissioned by Greenpeace)

Source: Greenpeace (2022)

The airline Ryanair was already sued by the British Advertising Standards Authority in 2020 and another advertising campaign in which Ryanair advertised itself as "Europe's airline with the lowest fares" was banned. According to the British authority, the airline's advertising was misleading (Greenpeace, 2022).

Based on these studies, such as those by Greenpeace, the question naturally arises as to who is responsible for regulations against greenwashing?

A study from 2019 looked at the issue of whether government regulations prevent greenwashing. The study came to the conclusion that regulations to control greenwashing are effective and also promote the development of sustainable innovations. An important aspect here is also the level of government penalties, as these should be higher than the benefit that a company can generate from greenwashing. The study came to the conclusion that state penalties are an essential means of combating greenwashing (Sun & Zhang, 2019).

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A study conducted in Europe found that 42% of all claims made as environmentally friendly turned out to be false or misleading, clearly pointing in the direction of greenwashing. Punishment through legal regulations is one thing, but companies also see themselves punished by the customer. Companies that are associated with greenwashing damage their reputation and their products and services are consequently perceived differently by customers. Companies are better advised to implement their plans in order to be seen as credible (Ioannou et al., 2022). The European Union has spoken out against greenwashing in favour of a new legislative proposal to ban misleading marketing tricks. Sustainability features should only be permitted if they have been correctly certified. Products may also no longer be presented as repairable if this is not possible and sustainability labels will also be subject to greater scrutiny. As 60% of

European consumers know little about legal guarantees, this new law can ensure greater understanding and also show which products have an extended guarantee and are therefore more durable. The final vote should take place in January 2024 (European Parliament, 2023).

In addition to laws, consumers also have the option of having a greenwashing check carried out by the VKI (Association for Consumer Protection) in Austria. Companies/products/services can be reported and the association will check the respective facts. This means that any doubts can be dispelled or confirmed and companies also have the opportunity to make a statement (VKI Konsument, 2021).

3. Methodology

The article is based on a scientific literature review as well as empirical research to provide a deeper insight in the topic of greenwashing.

The literature review had the intention to investigate in the drivers of greenwashing and to allow a view on the regulation of greenwashing. The survey was conducted by means of a questionnaire and consisted of 19 questions and was divided into three parts. The first part of the survey related to the demographic characteristics of the respondents, where the respondents' gender, age, level of education, work status, and monthly net income were examined. The second part of the survey contained questions related to the respondents' environmental awareness and their contribution to environmental protection. One of the questions was asked in the form of a Likert scale in order to determine the level of environmental awareness among respondents based on the frequency of application of environmentally responsible procedures. The Likert scale was based on values from 1 to 5, with a value of "1" indicating "never" and a value of "5" indicating "always." The third part of the survey refers to the examination of familiarity and attitudes towards greenwashing. In addition to the subjective questions, this part also provides the definition of greenwashing according to the Lexicon of Sustainable Development. In this part, a question in the form of a Likert scale was also asked in order to determine a negative, neutral, or positive attitude towards greenwashing through the mentioned claims about greenwashing. The Likert scale was also based on values from 1 to 5, with a value of "1" indicating "strongly disagree" and a value of "5" indicating "strongly agree".

The following research questions have been defined:

- *H1: The experience that consumers have already had with greenwashing influences their attitude towards greenwashing.*
- *H2: As soon as customers know that a product or service is affected by greenwashing, they refrain from buying it.*

4. Results

In the review of the literature, the current scientific and professional knowledge is presented, while this chapter is focused on the implementation of empirical research and the interpretation of the obtained results. The main goal of the research was to determine the environmental awareness and attitudes of consumers towards greenwashing in the Republic of Croatia. Furthermore, the aim of the research is to determine to what extent consumers in the Republic of Croatia know the legal regulations regarding "green washing." In the rest of the chapter, the research methodology used is explained, the results obtained from the research are presented and interpreted, and its limitations and recommendations for further research are given. For the purposes of the research, primary data were collected using a survey as a measuring instrument, where the target population consisted of adult citizens of the Republic of Croatia. Sampling was carried out using the snowball method, which is based on "targeted selection of a narrow circle of people who then spread the sample, directing the researcher to other people

he could question" (Milas, 2005:413). The snowball method provides a non-probabilistic sample in which participants are not randomly selected but are selected based on their connections with existing participants. Some of the advantages of this method are simplicity, economy, speed of data collection, and easier access to hard-to-reach populations (Milas, 2005). On the other hand, the disadvantages are manifested in participant selection bias, lack of representativeness, limitation of diversity within the sample, and difficult estimation of error (Etikan et al., 2016). This method was chosen primarily because of the simplicity it offers when selecting participants, because it is economical, and because it enables a quick way of collecting participant responses.

We published the questionnaire under the title "Ecomanipulation, nature protection, or the last marketing trick" in order not to influence the opinion of respondents who are familiar with the term greenwashing and the negative meaning of the term. The questionnaire explained the terms used in the survey to the respondents. The meaning of "conditions of new purchase" is explained as the practice of giving a discount in return for the return of packaging instead of paying money, which is prescribed by the Ordinance on Packaging and Packaging Waste. In addition to the definition of conditions for a new purchase, the questionnaire explained what includes socially responsible business in the trade segment and how much knowledge of legal regulations is necessary for the implementation of real socially responsible business and environmental protection. Socially responsible business in the commercial sector is expressed through activities such as ecologically favorable, i.e., green products in the assortment, donations to the local community, donations to the needy, humanitarian actions, business with local OPGs, etc. Due to transparency and the desire to inform respondents about the topic of the survey questionnaire, at the end of the questionnaire, the concepts of what greenwashing is and why conditioning a new purchase is an example of greenwashing are explained. After reading the explanation, the respondents were not allowed to correct the already-completed questionnaire. The research was conducted on 253 respondents.

Table 1: Socio-demographic structure of respondents

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Sex		
Male	91	36%
Female	162	64%
Total	253	100%
Age of the respondents		
to 25 year	32	12,6%
26 – 35	57	22,5%
36 – 45	92	36,4%
46 – 55	38	15,0%
56 – 65	26	10,3%
more than 66 years	8	3,2%
Total	253	100%

Source: Own research (2023)

Table 1 shows the basic characteristics of the respondents. Regarding gender, there are 162 (64%) women and 91 (36%) men. The majority of respondents are aged 36-45, 92 of them (36.4%), 32 (12.6%) under 25, 57 (22.5%) between 26-35, 38 (15%) respondents are aged 46-55, 26 (10.3%) respondents are 56-65 years old, while 8 (3.2%) respondents are over 66 years old.

Table 2: Level of education of respondents

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Education level		
Completed elementary school	10	3,9%
High school education	80	31,6%
Higher professional education / Bachelor's degree	68	26,9%
Higher vocational education/ Master of profession	87	34,4%
Doctoral studies	8	3,2%
Total	253	100%

Source: Own research (2023)

Table 2 shows the level of education, 87 (34.4%) of the respondents have a higher professional degree/master's degree, 80 (31.6%) have a secondary professional degree, while 68 (26.9%) have a higher professional degree/bachelor's degree. The least number of respondents, 8 (3.2 %) have a doctoral degree, and only 10 (3.9 %) have completed elementary school.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to type of employment

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Employment		
Disciple	11	4,3%
Student	16	6,3%
Employed person	174	68,8%
An unemployed person	18	7,1%
A pensioner	22	8,7%
Own OPG	1	0,4%
Artisan	9	3,6%
Else	2	0,8%
Total	253	100%

Source: own research (2023)

From Table 3, it can be seen that the majority, 174 (68.8%), are employed persons, 22 (8.7%) are retired, 16 (6.3%) are students, and 11 (4.3%) are students. while there are a smaller number of respondents with their own OPG, craftsmen, or respondents with some other employment.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to the number of household members

Variable	Number of respondents	Percentage
Household members		
from 1 to 3 people	124	49,0%
4 – 7 persons	125	49,4%
8 and more people	4	1,6%
Total	253	100%

Source: Own research (2023)

Table 4 indicates the number of household members, 125 (49.4%) respondents live in a household with 4–7 people, 124 (49%) with 1-3 people, and only 4 (1.6%) respondents state that they live in a joint household with 8 or more people.

Table 5: Measures of environment and dispersion, and internal reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) of the scale on knowledge of legal regulations on the production and labelling of eco products

	N	Arithmetic middle	SD	Minimum – maximum	Cronbach Alpha
Assessment of knowledge of certain legal regulations and labels of eco products					
<i>Knowledge of the concept of eco manipulation</i>	253	3,88	1,3	1 – 5	0,861
<i>Recognition of vegan/bio/eco/"cruelty free" labels</i>	253	3,21	1,4	1 – 5	
<i>Recognition of legal regulations in the use of eco-labels</i>	253	3,05	1,4	1 – 5	
<i>Advertising that is deliberately misleading</i>	253	3,21	1,4	1 – 5	
<i>Sin of the hidden trade-off – refers to claims that a "green" product based on a set of attributes that in reality do not pay attention to the important ones environmental issues</i>	253	3,72	1,3	1 – 5	

Note: Ratings are given on a Likert scale from 1 - 5 (1: I am not familiar at all, 5: I am completely familiar)

Source: Own research (2023)

The respondents evaluated the ability to recognize eco-labels positively, which can be connected with their assessment of environmental information according to which they think they are informed, however, this should definitely be examined in more detail in further research. The ability to recognize eco-labels is very important for consumers because the use of eco-labels is presented as a potential solution for recognizing the application of greenwashing. There is a visible lack of deviation in the number of answers to the questions offered, so it is possible to conclude that among the respondents there is a relatively even representation of those who are familiar with the term, those who are not sure and those who are not familiar with the term.

Furthermore, the question "Have you ever given up buying a product or service because you found out that it was greenwashing?" was asked, to which more than half of the respondents answered that it was not safe - 56% of them. These data further emphasize the previously mentioned possible misunderstanding of the concept of greenwashing. Only 16% of respondents state with certainty that they gave up buying such products or services, while 28% of respondents state that they did not give up after finding out that it was greenwashing.

Table 6: T test on respondents' attitudes about Greenwashing

Knowledge of the term Greenwashing	Have you encountered Greenwashing?	Number of the respondents	Arithmetic middle (standard deviation)	Difference	95% range reliability		t (df)	P*
					From	To		
<i>I am skeptical of environmental claims and do not believe they are always true.</i>								
	No	80	3,33 (1,4)	-0,808	-1,2	-0,5	-4,5 (121)	<0,001
	Yes	173	4,13 (1,1)					
<i>Greenwashing is a serious problem that undermines genuine efforts to protect the environment.</i>								
	No	80	2,19 (1,3)	-0,986	-1,4	-0,6	-5,3 (251)	<0,001
	Yes	173	3,17 (1,4)					
<i>If a certain company is found to be practicing greenwashing, I will boycott it.</i>								
	No	80	2,21 (1,3)	-0,840	-1,2	-0,5	-4,5 (251)	<0,001
	Yes	173	3,05 (1,4)					
<i>Greenwashing is designed to manipulate consumers.</i>								
	No	80	2,41 (1,3)	-1,171	-1,5	-0,8	-6,9 (251)	<0,001
	Yes	173	3,58 (1,2)					
<i>Companies that practice greenwashing are not honest with consumers and should be held accountable.</i>								
	No	80	3,46 (1,3)	-0,376	-0,7	0,05	-2,2 (251)	0,026
	Yea	173	3,84 (1,2)					

*Studentov t-test

Source: Own research (2023)

Using the Student's t test, we tested the existence of a difference in the assessment of knowledge of the term Greenwashing in relation to whether they encountered some form of Greenwashing in real life when purchasing a product. We set the significance level at $\alpha = 0.05$. All probabilities (p) are lower than the level of significance, and we can say that there is a significant difference in the assessment of all forms of Greenwashing according to whether the respondents actually experienced Greenwashing. As we can see from Table 4, there are respondents who recognize the form of Greenwashing, and have encountered it in some way. Those who have encountered some form of Greenwashing believe that "I am skeptical of ecological claims and do not believe that they are always true" ($t = -4.5$, $df=121$; $p < 0.001$), Greenwashing is a serious problem that it diminishes genuine efforts to protect the environment. ($t = -5.3$, $df=251$; $p < 0.001$), If a certain company is found to be practicing greenwashing, I will boycott it. ($t = -4.5$, $df=251$; $p < 0.001$), Greenwashing is designed to manipulate consumers. ($t = -6.9$, $df=251$; $p < 0.001$). The highest score with the arithmetic mean score "I am skeptical of environmental claims and do not believe that they are always true." 4.13 (standard deviation 1.1), and the lowest is "If a certain company is found to be practicing greenwashing, I will boycott it.", with an arithmetic mean score of 3.05 (standard deviation 1.04).

While hypothesis 1 could be proven in the study, hypothesis 2 could not be proven as only 16% of respondents in the study had not purchased a product or service with the knowledge of greenwashing.

Most people will condemn lying and deception. But when it comes to deception, they carry out organizations, there is indifference and acceptance of such practice. As we condemn

lies of other persons, we should also condemn greenwashing by which organizations deceive the public and stakeholders.

The conducted research provided information on the level of environmental awareness and importance certain ecologically responsible procedures in the respondents. An insight into the attitudes towards greenwashing and the connection between the level of education and the level of environmental awareness was established attitudes towards greenwashing. Certain modifications of the research would provide new insights and more representative data.

The recommendation for further research is to collect a larger number of responses so that the data is more accurate more representative. In doing so, it is important that all population groups are represented in equal proportion and that the method of conducting the test does not exclude them due to the impossibility of accessing it. From for this reason, it is necessary to use different channels and ways of distributing the survey, and if possibilities allow it, it is desirable to conduct field research.

It would be desirable to conduct research with a deeper insight into the data, so its implementation is recommended qualitative research. Through such research, more about the factors could be determined consumer behaviour, and therefore more specifically what affects the level of environmental awareness and attitude towards greenwashing. Research with included regional division would give an insight into the representativeness of the data collected data, and possible deviations by region would provide information on some other factors which influence the importance attached to environmental protection. Furthermore, conducting research is recommended which would determine the prevalence of greenwashing in the Republic of Croatia and the possibility his recognition among the Croatian population.

5. Conclusion

The topic of greenwashing has many facets, and there are also different influencing factors or drivers as described in this article. Although the central question of the article focuses on the impact of greenwashing on customers and their decisions, the article also tries to shed light on the topic from several angles in order to better understand this issue. In addition to drivers like investors, the corporate structure, the industry also psychological factors play an important role. There is therefore a broad spectrum of factors that have an influence on companies and their and their tendency towards greenwashing. But it is not only the lack of regulations, competition or investors that play a role in greenwashing, it also has a strong influence on other areas. The first thing that comes to mind is the consumer and the environment, which suffer from greenwashing, but the economy in general can also be negatively affected by greenwashing. Greenwashing has a negative impact on competition in the economy and is responsible for preventing the development of positive and more environmentally friendly technologies because it distorts competition. A suitable means of combating greenwashing would be stronger state intervention against greenwashing, and the European Union has already drafted a legislative proposal that speaks out against misleading marketing strategies.

In addition to a better understanding of the issue and government regulations, a great deal of power also lies with consumers, who ultimately make their purchasing decisions. For this reason, this paper focuses on consumers and how their attitudes and purchasing behaviour change when they are confronted with greenwashing.

The paper provides empirical evidence that consumers are not always sure about greenwashing. More than half of the study could not answer with certainty whether they had already refrained from buying products and services because they had been greenwashed. However, there is a significant difference in the assessment of greenwashing depending on whether the

respondents had already experienced greenwashing. Consumers who have experienced greenwashing are sceptical of environmental claims and do not always believe them to be true. Greenwashing is seen as a serious problem that opposes environmental protection efforts.

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