

NET PROMOTER SCORE AS A SIMPLE METRICS FOR MONITORING CONSUMER FEEDBACK

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Abstract: Monitoring consumer satisfaction and loyalty represents one of the key decisions that serve to increase the company's competitiveness. One of the basic prerequisites for loyalty is consumer satisfaction, and the task of creating loyalty sometimes seems unattainable for a company. In this regard, to begin with, it is very important to develop metrics that would allow the company to receive feedback from the market. One such metric is the Net Promoter Score (NPS). With the help of NPS, feedback is sought on the basis of only one question related to the probability with which a consumer would be ready to recommend a certain brand to a friend or colleague. The aim of this paper is to point out the characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages of NPS through an overview of the selected scientific papers.

Key words: satisfaction, loyalty, consumer, NPS

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1. INTRODUCTION

Growth represents one of the foundations of business success and long-term sustainability of the company. To be successful in ensuring progress, businesses not only have the task of attracting new consumers but also of retaining current consumers. The goal is to encourage the largest possible consumer base to spend more, but also to motivate them to recommend products and services to their friends and colleagues. In order to effectively manage relations with consumers, it is required to understand their feelings and needs in as much detail as possible. Analysis of consumer feelings and needs as such should be an integral part of the company's business strategy. This approach enables companies not only to improve

consumer satisfaction, but also to create a platform for achieving the best possible financial results. Monitoring the aforementioned information is a key basis for making decisions that encourage the growth of the company, but also its competitiveness on the market (Mandal, 2014).

Efficient management of relations with consumers cannot be imagined without analyzing consumer satisfaction and loyalty. Consumer satisfaction is traditionally one of the key areas of interest in marketing, both in business and in the academic world (Tikkanen and Alajoutsijärvi, 2002). Consumer loyalty, in addition to satisfaction, is one of the key topics in marketing, which is particularly stimulated by increasing competition and a focus on the development of relations between consumers and companies. These relationships between consumers and companies, which are at the core of relationship marketing, play a crucial role in strengthening long-term consumer loyalty (Bodet, 2008). This connection between customer satisfaction and loyalty has been confirmed by numerous studies in which the authors emphasize the significant advantages that customer loyalty brings to companies (Pont and McQuilken, 2005).

Consumer satisfaction can be viewed from two aspects, namely, as a result that occurs after use or experience, and as a process (Parker and Mathews, 2001). In the case of observing satisfaction as a result of use or experience, the focus is on the nature of satisfaction, which can be manifested in emotion, fulfillment and state. Observed as a process, satisfaction represents a positive difference between what the consumer gets and what he expects from the product and/or service.

Giese and Cote (2000) based on a review of the literature, and data collected on the basis of interviews, conclude that satisfaction is a cumulative affective response of varying intensity, of limited duration with a determination point, aimed at the purchase and/or consumption of products.

Ganiyu, Uche and Elizabeth (2012) point out that it is sometimes very difficult and even magical to achieve consumer loyalty, but also that there are many positive aspects that contribute to better operations and the achievement of the company's strategic goals, because loyal consumers are more likely to recommend the company's products and services to others, continue to buy products and services from the company at least at the same level, potentially also buy new products and services that the company markets, believe that the company's products and services are superior to the products and services of competitors, do not seek products and services from other companies and enable the company to correct potential deficiencies without jeopardizing their relationship with the company.

According to Bowen and Chen (2001) loyalty is difficult to define, but for the purposes of measuring loyalty, there are generally three approaches. Behavioral measurements take repetitive shopping behavior as the basis for loyalty indicators. The measurement of attitudes includes the use of data on emotional and psychological attachment for the purposes of assessing loyalty. Composite measurement of loyalty implies the combined use of the first two approaches, and consumer preferences for certain products, consumer propensity to change brands, frequency of purchases and the total amount of purchases are used as frequent indicators.

Companies measure consumer satisfaction based on research that includes overall consumer satisfaction, intentions related to consumer behavior, consumer perceptions of product and/or service attributes, contextual information, and variables related to consumer description (Mittal and Frennea, 2010, p. 5). Overall consumer satisfaction is measured using scales where consumers rate overall satisfaction with products and/or services, express their degree of agreement with statements, or rate their experience with the product or service. Intentions related to consumer behavior include the collection of data that is necessary to create indicators such as the likelihood of repeat purchase, the likelihood of making a recommendation, or the likelihood that a consumer will complain about a product or service. Consumer perceptions of various product attributes are measured on the basis of scales that measure product performance by comparing them with

consumer experience and expectations. When we talk about contextual information, the focus is on comparing the overall satisfaction with one of the reference points, which are most often the previous experience of the consumer or a product or service of a competitor. Variables that are related to the description of consumers are usually data on gender, age and income.

There are various methods for measuring customer satisfaction, and some of the most commonly used are the European Performance Satisfaction Index (EPSI), Service Quality (SERVQUAL), Multicriteria Satisfaction Analysis (MUSA), statistical regression models based on latent variables, National Customer Satisfaction Index (NCSI), American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) and probit/logit model (Cazzaro and Chiodini, 2023).

One of the composite measures, in which we can examine consumer satisfaction and loyalty in a simple way, is the Net Promoter Score - NPS (Adams, Walpola, Schembri and Harrison, 2022), which will be elaborated in more detail later in the paper.

2. NET PROMOTER SCORE

The global economic crisis highlights the limitations of indicators based on the growth of share values. Satisfied customers can serve as a shield for businesses, protecting them from competition and ensuring their growth, while making measuring satisfaction a key aspect of business. One of the appropriate tools in this context is the Net Promoter Score (Faltejsková, Dvořáková and Hotovcová, 2016).

The concept of the Net Promoter Score indicator was first presented in his paper by Reichheld (2003), according to whom only one summary result based on one answer to one question from the survey is enough to effectively measure consumer satisfaction and loyalty. In this sense, consumers on a scale from 0 to 10 (0 - not at all likely, 5 - neutral and 10 - extremely likely), answer the question about how likely they are to recommend a certain brand to a friend or colleague. According to the ratings they give, consumers are classified into three categories. Those consumers who give grades between 0 and 6 are categorized as "detractors", those who give grades 7 and 8 are categorized as "passively satisfied", while those consumers who give grades 9 and 10 are categorized as "promoters". After the categorization of consumers, the Net Promoter Score (NPS) is calculated as the percentage difference between the consumer categories "promoters" and the consumer category "detractors", excluding the category of consumers "passively satisfied".

By presenting this simple and direct method, Reichheld (2003) emphasized that complex research is not always necessary, and that NPS can provide a more efficient way to assess customer loyalty, while at the same time contributing to the goal of creating and maintaining positive financial results of the company.

Although a negative attitude towards the Net Promoter Score (NPS) is often expressed in academic circles, many companies still use it. This fact indicates the possibility that these companies were successful in identifying specific circumstances in which NPS has the potential to bring additional value to their operations (Baehre, O'Dwyer, O'Malley and Lee, 2022).

Blasberg, Vishwanath and Allen (2008) state that the application of NPS in a company gives insight into both the rational and the emotional side of consumer behavior, which can be a platform for predicting their future behavior. According to Barath (2022), the application of NPS in companies can have an impact on the spread of positive recommendations, but also on the attraction of new consumers. The spread of positive recommendations and awareness of the brand in the social community contributes to the reduction of costs that companies create in connection with marketing.

In addition to the benefits for profit-making companies, there are also certain benefits from the application of NPS for non-profit companies. According to Burnham and Wong (2018), non-profit enterprises that adopt NPS as part of programs that seek to obtain feedback can achieve certain advantages, the realization of which depends on the size of the enterprise, management support, visibility of metrics, consumer response to surveys and availability of resources. These advantages are:

1. strengthening the company through the development of the feedback system,
2. metrics that support external and internal performance,
3. better understanding the drivers of consumer loyalty,
4. potential improvements resulting from the feedback system, and the possibility of monitoring the effects of the proposed improvements and
5. notification of potential problems that may occur during the provision of the service along with a proposal for activities to improve them.

Some authors also highlight the shortcomings of NPS. Fisher and Kordupleski (2019) highlight five

problems that arise in connection with NPS, namely:

1. NPS does not provide information about what needs to be improved,
2. NPS focuses exclusively on retaining existing customers, not taking into account the attraction of new customers,
3. in practice, there is no such thing as a "passive" consumer,
4. NPS does not provide competency data and
5. NPS is internally and not externally oriented.

After presenting the potential problems that NPS brings with its application, Fisher and Kordupleski (2019) offer solutions to overcome the mentioned problems. As a solution to the first problem that NPS does not provide data on what needs to be improved, it is proposed to develop an indicator called the Net Promote System, which provides additional information about consumers. A recommendation to avoid over-reliance on NPS is the implementation of activities that stimulate the attraction of new consumers, which requires monitoring the competition, which would potentially overcome the problem of focusing exclusively on current consumers. Given the statement that there are no "passive" consumers, it is necessary to work on the development of products and services that will satisfy consumers in a better way than the competition. In this regard, the recommendation to overcome the fourth problem related to the fact that the NPS does not provide information on competence, is to work on increasing the percentage of consumers who, according to the NPS categorization, belong to the "promoters" category, thus making the base of consumers who belong to the "detractors" and "passives" categories smaller and smaller. Finally, to overcome the problem of the internal focus of NPS, the development of the Customer Value Management (CVM) system is proposed, which primarily measures what the company does for its consumers.

A simple approach where one number is all that is needed may sound attractive and therefore be accepted, but after theoretical and empirical considerations, it can still be concluded that the development of multidimensional indicators of consumer loyalty would be more effective (Grisaffe, 2007). Considering the limitations that may affect the application of NPS in practice, Bendle, Bagga and Nastasoiu (2019) point out the limited access to data to verify claims related to NPS, the challenges of testing claims that are unfalsifiable, the lack of a precise specification of the theory, the first impression, the use of different terminology by academics and managers that can

lead to misunderstandings between them, the potential legitimization of claims by imputation by academics, the irregularity of evidence used in research and the unlimited choice of dependent variables.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

When selecting the scientific papers analyzed in this paper, care was taken to ensure that, in order to achieve relevance and validity, the focus of the papers' topics was on NPS, as well as customer satisfaction and loyalty. Databases such as Web of Science, Google Scholar and Scopus were used to search for papers, and in order to ensure the topicality of the research, papers published in the last ten years were taken into consideration. A certain number of papers were also obtained by analyzing the literature, that is, the sources used in the most cited papers. During the search, care was taken to primarily consider papers that have the aforementioned business implications. The literature review sought to emphasize the topicality of the papers while maintaining a breadth that allows the topic of NPS to be covered as qualitatively as possible.

An overview of selected papers in which the authors write on the topic of NPS application is given in Table 1. The review contains an overview of the focus of the paper and the main conclusions of the research that was conducted.

Table 1. Overview of selected papers

Authors	Focus of paper
Baehre, O'Dwyer, O'Malley and Lee (2022)	Usage of NPS for sales growth forecasting purposes
Baquero (2022)	The connection between NPS and customer satisfaction
Korneta (2018)	The connection between NPS, growth and profitability
Jaramillo, Deitz, Hansen and Babakus (2024)	Assessment of the construct and predictive validity of the NPS
Rajasekaran and Dinesh (2018)	The impact of NPS on organizational growth
Diliasari and Sulistiadi (2024)	NPS in the function of building a marketing strategy
Raassens and Haans (2017)	The connection between NPS and eWOM
Yusmansyah, Martinis, Sulyani, Nurhasanah and Rivianto (2023)	Measuring customer satisfaction using NPS

Müller, Seiler and Völkle (2024)	Ability to combine NPS with other metrics to measure consumer satisfaction
Hardianto and Wijaya (2023)	Analysis of the impact of NPS on financial performance
Nguyen and Ho (2023)	Analysis of online consumer experience using dynamic topic modeling and NPS
Burnham and Wong (2018)	Factors influencing the acceptance of the NPS concept in non-profit organizations
Tungare, Gundawar and Jain (2023)	The role of NPS in increasing consumer loyalty
Mecredy, Wright and Feetham (2018)	The role of NPS in predicting future consumer spending
Luoma-aho, Canel and Hakola (2021)	Relationship between public sector reputation and NPS
Melnic (2016)	Comparison of NPS and ACSI as two indices measuring consumer satisfaction
Kara, Spillan and Bell (2024)	The effectiveness of NPS as a tool for predicting student behavior
Slamet, Sari and Azmala (2021)	Consumer loyalty on digital platforms through the prism of NPS
Pechter and Kuusik (2024)	Viewing NPS from the consumer's point of view
Dawes (2024)	The relationship between NPS and revenue growth

Source: Author

In their research, Baehre et al. (2022) focus on the usage of NPS for the purpose of predicting sales growth. Based on the collected data and the processing of the research results, the authors conclude that changes in NPS can have an impact on forecasting sales growth. Also, according to the author's conclusion, NPS should be used for the purpose of assessing brand health, and not as a metric that seeks to establish consumer loyalty.

The connection between NPS and customer satisfaction in the hotel industry is the subject of research conducted by Baquero (2022). According to the results of the research, observing in relation to the time of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the author concludes that the main factors that influence the high score of the NPS are gastronomy at the time of one year after the outbreak of the pandemic, and the cleanliness and

comfort of the room during the period of the outbreak of the pandemic.

Korneta (2018) investigates the connection between NPS, growth and profitability of transport companies. Upon completion of the analysis of the research results, the authors conclude that there is no statistically significant relationship between NPS and growth, but that there is a statistically significant relationship between NPS and company profitability.

Jaramillo, Deitz, Hansen and Babakus (2024) focus their research on assessing the construct and predictive validity of the NPS. After conducting research and analyzing the results, the authors come to the conclusion that NPS scores correspond to reported word-of-mouth ratings, but not for all product categories that were observed. Also, by demographic group, the NPS score is unchanged. Finally, the authors conclude that customer satisfaction and NPS, when viewed separately, are significant predictors of differences in financial performance.

The main question to which Rajasekaran and Dinesh (2018) want to discover the answer is related to how NPS affects organizational growth. In this regard, the authors conclude that the better the NPS, the better the growth. However, if the NPS is used independently, it is not an adequate administrative instrument, but it can be a valuable indicator if it is used with additional motivational address in the correct structure.

Diliasari and Sulistiadi (2024) emphasize the importance of using NPS in the function of building a marketing strategy, which will help increase the satisfaction and loyalty of clients who use hospital services. Despite numerous benefits, the authors emphasize that the NPS has certain limitations when it comes to efforts to improve hospital services based on it. The role of NPS as a tool for measuring consumer satisfaction and predicting consumer loyalty is uncertain.

Raassens and Haans (2017) investigate the relationship between NPS and consumers' willingness to use eWOM (online word-of-mouth). According to the conducted research, the authors conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between NPS and consumers' willingness to give online recommendations. The authors emphasize that a special focus should be on passive consumers, who, although they do not participate in the calculation of NPS, express heterogeneity when giving recommendations.

Yusmansyah, Martinis, Sulyani, Nurhasanah and Rivianto (2023) write about the use of NPS as a tool for measuring customer satisfaction. Using the example of consumer satisfaction research with a

digital product, the paper concludes that, looking at categories of digital products, wholesale has the highest, while financial digital products have the lowest NPS score.

Müller, Seiler and Völkle (2024) try, based on an empirical study on the mobile phone market, to answer the question whether NPS as a measure of consumer satisfaction should be supported by some other metrics in order to be complete. Based on the conducted research, it can be concluded that one of the conclusions is that the NPS score can be better used in combination with the research of emotional responses of consumers.

Hardianto and Wijaya (2023) analyze the impact of NPS on the financial performance of companies respecting consumer loyalty. The research results imply that NPS has a statistically significant effect on consumer loyalty, and that consumer loyalty further has a statistically significant effect on the financial performance of the company.

Nguyen and Ho (2023) conduct research with the aim of analyzing the experience of online users in the hotel industry using dynamic topic modeling and NPS. After analyzing the results, the authors state that the topic model shows hidden topics that have the highest probability of keywords and are about customers and trends over a certain period of time.

Burnham and Wong (2018) investigate which factors influence the acceptance of the NPS concept in non-profit organizations. Based on the analysis of the case study, it can be concluded that the data and feedback together with the NPS score stimulate the management of the selected observed non-profit organization, positively influencing organizational practices.

Tungare, Gundawar and Jain (2023) focus their research on the role of NPS in increasing consumer loyalty in retail. Stating the results of the research, the authors, among other things, assert that NPS can be a useful tool for measuring consumer loyalty in a supermarket, that continuous monitoring of the NPS score can improve supermarket performance.

Through their research, Mecredy, Wright and Feetham (2018) try to answer the question of whether consumers who belong to promoters are valuable and whether NPS can be a good predictor of consumption by consumers. Analyzing the results, the authors come to the conclusion that there is a positive relationship between NPS and company revenue, and that consumers in the role of promoters really spend more in the current year when the research was conducted.

Luoma-aho, Canel and Hakola (2021) analyze the relationship between public sector reputation and

NPS score. Based on the obtained results, it can be concluded that the use of NPS to monitor the satisfaction of users of public sector services can play a significant role in the context of the word-of-mouth strategy.

Melnic (2016) conducts research with the aim of comparing NPS and ACSI (American Customer Satisfaction Index) as a measure of satisfaction of users of banking services. After conducting research, the authors state that there is a statistically significant relationship between customer satisfaction and financial performance of banks, regardless of whether customer satisfaction is measured with the help of NPS and ACSI, but that it is either potential clients.

Kara, Spillan and Bell (2024) focus on looking at the effectiveness of the NPS as a tool for predicting the behavior of students in terms of making recommendations about a higher education institution. After collecting the data and processing it, looking at the results of the research, it can be concluded that teaching together with financial aid are important factors that will determine students to give recommendations to others about the higher education institution where they studied.

Slamet, Sari and Azmala (2021) analyze the role of NPS in researching online consumers who belong to the millennial generation. Based on the conducted research, that is, the results of the NPS, the authors conclude that the largest number of consumers on digital platforms belong to the group of detractors and passive users, while a very small number of consumers represent promoters.

Pechter and Kuusik (2024) look at NPS from the consumer's perspective. Among other things, the authors state that it is not a rule that consumers always give a high score exclusively for good experiences, and a low score for bad experiences. What was also concluded is that consumers prefer to give recommendations for recent services they have experienced, in relation to services they have experienced in periods that belong to distant moments in time.

Dawes (2024) investigates the relationship between NPS and company revenue growth. After conducting cross-sectional and longitudinal research, the authors conclude that there is no statistically significant relationship between NPS and company revenue growth.

4. DISCUSSION

By reviewing the selected literature, it can be seen that the authors write and deal with the role of NPS in predicting company growth, researching consumer satisfaction, both at the level of the entire brand and at the level of individual brand attributes, the impact on the company's financial

performance, the impact on consumer loyalty, and the impact on the likelihood of the company's word-of-mouth strategy being achieved. Also, it can be seen that in addition to the above, the authors also deal with the challenges related to the NPS methodology in different sectors of the profit and non-profit sectors.

Although very popular, NPS still encounters many criticisms, which primarily relate to the validity and reliability of this tool, as well as its lack of potential for predicting revenue growth and company profitability. Authors come to different conclusions by studying these relationships. Thus, Korneta (2018) states that the use of NPS has no impact on company growth, but that it still has an impact on company profitability. On the other hand, authors Mecredy et al. (2018) conclude that there is a significant statistical relationship between NPS and revenue, where it should be emphasized that "promoters" contribute most to company revenue. Contrary to the above findings, Dawes (2024) based on research concludes that NPS score does not affect company revenue growth.

The authors' findings also differ when considering NPS as an indicator of customer loyalty. According to Hardianto and Wijaya (2023) NPS influences customer loyalty and acts as a mediator in achieving the goal of better financial performance. It can further be concluded that similar findings are also reached by Tungare et al. (2023), who state that, observed in retail, continuous monitoring of NPS can significantly improve retail performance. Observing the healthcare sector, Diliyasi and Sulistiadi (2024) warn that NOS has no potential for improving healthcare services due to the lack of in-depth analysis.

Furthermore, when looking at the relationship between NPS and consumers' propensity to make recommendations, it can generally be concluded that NPS has a positive impact on making recommendations. However, NPS should not be the only metric for monitoring recommendations, but rather part of a much more complex and comprehensive system. Raassens and Haans (2017) in their research conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between NPS and consumers' willingness to make recommendations (in an online environment), but that caution should be exercised when drawing conclusions because "passive" consumers show greater behavioral heterogeneity. In addition, Jaramillo et al. (2024) find that NPS generally improves the effect of making recommendations, but not in all product categories. NPS finds its application in different industries, while respecting the fact that it must be adapted to each of them.

Observing the hospitality sector, Baquero (2022) points out that the priorities of hotel service users during the COVID-19 pandemic were gastronomy and cleanliness, which indicates that hotel service users have a different behavior pattern during the crisis.

According to Luoma-aho et al. (2021), NPS can play an important role in monitoring the quality of services in the public sector, but that it must be combined with other monitoring tools. Kara et al. (2024) also emphasize the importance of applying NPS in the education sector, where the quality of teaching and financial aid are key factors influencing the likelihood of giving a recommendation.

Finally, a number of authors also cite criticisms of the use of NPS. Criticizing NPS, authors Pechter and Kuusik (2024) emphasize that consumers are often not consistent, that is, some overestimate and some underestimate experiences. Related to this is the conclusion of authors Müller et al. (2024), who suggest that in addition to NPS, a deeper analysis of consumers' emotional responses should be done. Melnic (2016) states that NPS does not have the capacity to register all dimensions of consumer satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

The basis for effective management of relations with consumers is the analysis of satisfaction and loyalty, which, as key topics of marketing, through the development of relations between consumers and companies, contribute to long-term loyalty and bring significant advantages to companies.

Consumer satisfaction can be seen as a result, if it is manifested through emotions or a state, and as a process, where a positive difference between what the consumer gets and what he expects is observed.

Although it is very often difficult to achieve, consumer loyalty brings numerous advantages to the company, while the measurement of loyalty is based on a behavioral approach, an approach that analyzes consumer attitudes and a composite approach that represents a combination of behavioral and attitude-based approaches.

Consumer satisfaction is measured through research related to overall satisfaction, intentions related to consumer behavior, consumer perception of product attributes, contextual information, and demographic variables that describe consumers. In this regard, the most commonly used methods for measuring consumer satisfaction are EPSI, SERVQUAL, MUSA, NCSI, ACSI and NPS.

NPS, as a composite measure of satisfaction and loyalty, proves the thesis that complex research is

not always necessary, and that consumer loyalty, which contributes to the achievement of good financial results of the company, can be easily and efficiently assessed. NPS faces many criticisms in academic circles, but its application does not diminish in practice, due to the specific circumstances in which it brings additional value to the company through, first of all, insight into consumer behavior, expansion of recommendations and brand awareness, and reduction of marketing costs. Some of the shortcomings of NPS that are cited are the focus on retaining existing customers, the lack of information about improvements and competences, and, generally speaking, an internal orientation. As solutions for the mentioned shortcomings, two systems are offered, representing the Net Promote System and Customer Value Management (CVM).

By analyzing the papers in which the authors write about the application of NPS in practice, it can be concluded that NPS finds a wide and purposeful application in practice.

It can be concluded that NPS represents a useful tool that finds its use in the tendency to understand consumer satisfaction. What makes it a useful indicator is its ability to be used to assess brand status and predict consumer behavior. The application of NPS extends through various sectors of the economy such as retail, hotel industry, transport, but also healthcare. In all these sectors of the economy, the NPS is adjusted to adapt to the circumstances specific to each of the sectors.

The synergistic influence of NPS in combination with word-of-mouth strategies in the function of building a brand image should be emphasized. In the review of the literature, it can be seen that the monitoring of feedback through the implementation of NPS has a positive effect on the improvement of relations with consumers.

However, the weak predictive power emphasizes the need to combine NPS with other metrics, all in order to obtain a more comprehensive assessment of company growth and consumer loyalty. Combining NPS with additional metrics such as consumer emotion analysis or product performance monitoring has the potential to contribute to greater brand competitiveness.

Based on the findings of this paper, suggestions for future research could be directed in several directions. One direction would be to combine NPS with other metrics for monitoring customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Further research should be conducted to examine the long-term effects of NPS implementation on business performance. In addition, research that attempts to compare the usefulness and importance

of NPS across different industries would be useful. Finally, one of the suggestions for future research is to conduct empirical research on the application of NPS across different industries in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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