

## THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTOR AND DEMOCRACY EMPIRICAL REFLECTIONS AND FINDINGS IN THE BALTIC STATES: RESULTS OF META-ANALYSIS (PART I)

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*The development of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe has become a popular subject of research since the collapse of the USSR. Many scholars have produced comparative studies gathering diverse data and providing interpretations. However, not much has been published on the relation between civil society and democracy, and the way in which non-governmental organizations, as a part of civil society, impact democracy. This is the first in a series of articles analysing, on the qualitative and quantitative bases, the influence of civil society on the development of democracy in the Baltic States, by applying meta-analyses. In tackling the objective of this study, the article uses correlation on thirty four impact factors defining the primary impact of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on democracy and thirty six NGOs' secondary impact factors. The primary factors are more important for the interpretation of impact contexts. The importance of secondary factors could be valuable as well, though it should be noted that their role could be questionable. The secondary factors impact the development and professionalism of the NGO sector, which in turn influences democracy. Therefore, secondary factors can be seen as consequential, though not directly.*

**Keywords:** non-governmental sector, democracy, correlation, the Baltic States, impact factors.

**Raktažodžiai:** nevyriausybių organizacijų sektorius, demokratija, koreliacija, Baltijos šalys, įtakos faktoriai.

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## Introduction

The theoretical ideas of researchers like P. Burnell, T. Vanhanen, P. G. Coy, W. Haerpfer, A. Uhlin, N. Gotz, M. Lagerpetz, E. Rikmann, R. Ruutsoo, M. Adoménas, R. Žiliukaitė and few others about the non-governmental sector and issues of democracy have been mostly based on the contributions of NGOs to democracy. Furthermore, various analytical approaches and methods for measuring democracy and the third sector are presented in the works of L. Diamond and R. Morralino, R. Dahl, T. Vanhanen, H. Klingemann, W. Inglehard, however, for this analysis the most reliable are selected.

This study is not just an application of quantitative analysis. It is a mixture of quantitative and qualitative analyses, therefore requiring meta-analysis. The latter helps answer the question of whether this study differs from those of other scholars. The meta-analysis in the article provides insight into the relevant impact of independent variables (impact/influence factors) on the dependent ones, and the strength of the relationship between variables. Furthermore, the application of meta-analysis in this article helps to code and interpret the collected studies using statistical methods similar to those used in primary data analysis. The result is an integrated review of findings that is more objective and precise than a narrative overview.

With the goal of applying meta-analysis correctly, a series of articles have to be presented, and this is the first one to be published. The article in this volume will be based on correlation analysis, which aims to offer insight into the overall effect of interventions. The second article, to be published later, will apply regression analysis and impact evaluation in order to provide insight into the relative impact of independent variables by using the individually created model of a “traffic light”. The comparative method described by F. Bechhofer and L. Paterson is also used, which can be characterized as a cross-regional and cross-period analysis, i.e., comparison across time and space, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. From the perspective of comparison across space, the Baltic region provides an almost ideal setting of three countries: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Regarding the comparison across time, three time periods are chosen for analysis: the 1<sup>st</sup> period comprises years from 1997 to 2000, the 2<sup>nd</sup> period—from 2001 to 2003, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> period consists of years from 2004 to 2006. The information collected produces mostly quantitative results that probably do not reflect the final outcome and prospects for three countries analysed in the article.

It is important to define two groups of variables, the dependent and the independent. *Dependent* (endogenous) variables are the degree of democracy, level of democratization, NGO index, and NGO per capita. The group of *independent* (exogenous) variables includes GDP growth, GDP per capita, salary, interpersonal trust among citizens, public trust in different institutions (including NGOs), public satisfaction with life and democracy, public national pride, public opinion on the importance of politics, freedom of speech and media, participation of citizens in unconventional acts, membership of citizens in different NGOs, public opinion on

future needs, state of elections and voter turnout, civil society, human development, corruption, capacities, capabilities, environment and visibility of NGOs, education of the population, participation of citizens in decision making, their competition and other variables.

It should be noted that the main idea of this series of articles is that while non-governmental organizations are part of civil society, they also strengthen it through their activities, which in turn bolsters the democratic process [22]. However, more civil participation does not necessarily mean more effective democracy, and if so, a series of questions should be answered, such as: What kinds of activities are undertaken? How do NGOs make democracy more progressive?

The objective of this series of articles consists of a few essential questions, which we will seek to answer fully or at least partially: (1) What is the potential of the support of non-governmental organizations to democracy?; (2) What factors contribute the most to the development of democracy in the Baltic States taking into consideration the role of non-governmental organizations, and what are the differences among the countries?; (3) What is the qualitative impact on relations between non-governmental organizations and democracy in the Baltic States, and what are the differences among the countries?

### **Correlation of factors and analysis**

One of the functions of meta-analysis is to offer insight into the overall effect of interventions, and in this case the application of correlation should help determine which set of democracy factors (DEMO) better explains not only inter-cultural differences, but also which of them affect not only the DEMO group, but also the NGOs group.

The guiding principle of this analysis is not to look at factors separately, but also to reduce them to a combination of several factors that have the greatest collective effect on democracy and the third sector, and explain reasons for positive or negative interrelation.

Correlation is defined as a measure of the relationship between variables. Correlation coefficients, as a rule, range from -1.00 to +1.00. The value of -1.00 represents a perfect negative correlation, whereas the value of +1.00 represents a positive correlation. To interpret a correlation, one should be aware of its significance. In this analysis, the most significant correlations, which have an index of correlation greater than  $\pm 0.5$  have been chosen.

In this study, 724,964 cases of correlation were analysed (6,241 for each country), but only part of them are significant. Furthermore, relationships of independent and dependent variables in 1,280 (324 for the Baltic States, 324 for Estonia, 328 for Latvia, 304) cases were analysed, and not all were found to be significant. It should be noted that the above cases of correlation contain a mixture of dependent and independent variables; in these analyses the major interest relates to the correlation of four dependent variables with independent variables.

A further aim of this article is to define exactly which of these independent variables influence the dependent variables the most. One possible way of doing this is to correlate all factors, defining the most impact and the regress of the total set of factors with most impact and identify factors that best convey the relationship between NGOs and democracy. There are more than 85 variables, which could be grouped into 3 components. *Component 1* consists of the entire set of Robert Dahl's criteria: rule of law, participation, equal rights, and civil society as the basic requirements plus additional factors such as self-governance, freedom of media. *Component 2* gives priority to economic issues and overlooks the importance of other factors, such as human development. *Component 3* is rather mixed, because the criteria of quality include elements of both, first and second components, which are still relatively important.

Correlation and regression were developed for interval variables only. However, the group of variables used in this study includes ranking variables, and processing of data is possible only if the ordinal variables have at least five categories. The categorization of ranking variables used in this study (27 ranking variables) will be calculated by applying Sturges formula [26].

$$n=1+3.322\lg^{10}N$$

In this formula,  $N$  is the number of ranking variables—27 and  $n$  is the number of categories. The calculation is as follows  $1+3.322\lg^{10}27=5.75$ . The result dictates that the ranking variables be grouped into 6 categories, allowing us to apply correlation and regression analysis to all variables used in this study.

The correlation itself helps determine the most significant relationships among dependent and independent variables out of a 1,280 cases of correlation between dependent and independent variables in the Baltic States, and in each country: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. However, only a fraction of these correlations are significant, ones with a coefficient above the +0.5 limit or below the -0.5 limit. The non-significant relationships will be excluded from further analysis.

Table 1 shows the effect of intervention between dependent and independent variables in the Baltic States. The following correlations not only help identify significant and non-significant relationships between variables, but they also reveal common independent variables, which have important intervening in both DEMO and NGOs groups. As a result, the correlation helps reduce the number of possible impact factors, which confirms the primary assumption that there are fewer impact factors that may have a tangible benefit to the development of democracy in the Baltic States.

**Table No. 1 Correlations among dependent and independent variables  
in the Baltic states**

	<b>Abbreviation of dependent variables</b>	<b>DegreeDEMO</b>	<b>NGOcapit</b>	<b>DEMOzation</b>	<b>NGOindex</b>
	<b>Abbreviations of independent variables</b>				
1	GDPgrow	0.494475	0.253014	0.241732	0.153969
2	GDPcap	0.29317	0.532406	-0.36648	0.585327
3	Salary	0.192002	0.743219	-0.39218	0.744396
4	Interpersonal Trust (in percentage of population)	-0.13111	-0.1405	0.147924	-0.32631
5	Trustparty	-0.40746	0.503115	-0.33191	0.488842
6	Trustgov	-0.53921	0.748752	-0.3698	0.652489
7	Trustparliam	-0.40885	0.761103	-0.36374	0.685585
8	TrustNGO	0.209337	0.611232	-0.09059	0.524481
9	SatisLIFE	0.449985	0.540055	-0.14536	0.518317
10	SatisDEMO	-0.02563	0.473763	-0.22621	0.49194
11	National	-0.13597	-0.44408	0.527536	-0.55653
12	ACTfree	-0.26159	-0.11722	0.046488	-0.24772
13	PolitLIFE	-0.13163	-0.52461	0.204051	-0.58185
14	AimORDER	-0.27689	0.38989	-0.31408	0.498852
15	AimSAY	0.289117	-0.38635	0.45947	-0.51877
16	AimPRICE	0.310304	-0.17538	0.109445	-0.24536
17	AimMEDIA	-0.04558	-0.57186	0.140755	-0.40587
18	Petition	0.193493	-0.64162	0.407543	-0.71196
19	Boycotts	0.592207	-0.60314	0.60594	-0.71724
20	Demonstration	-0.31438	-0.49358	0.519173	-0.60276
21	discusPOLI	-0.20914	-0.45332	0.212233	-0.49651
22	Index Combining Unconventional Forms of pol. Participation (Petition, Demonst, Boycotts, and discusPoli)	-0.07179	-0.60845	0.445125	-0.69504
23	Percentage of Population belonging to a religious NGO	0.05404	0.180049	-0.15717	0.235401
24	BelongSPO	-0.85572	0.42983	-0.41293	0.45577
25	BelongART	-0.63191	0.330896	-0.26314	0.296124
26	BelongLAB	-0.41588	-0.31685	0.014569	-0.30272
27	BelongENVR	-0.2981	-0.13218	-0.1024	-0.08596
28	BelongPROF	-0.14597	-0.00287	0.001705	0.010835
29	BelongOTH	-0.02564	0.224511	-0.05372	0.275407
30	FTRmater	0.337982	0.393026	0.226658	0.17982
31	FTRjob	0.330261	0.212524	0.284706	0.017739
32	FTRtech	-0.34513	-0.34137	0.307038	-0.44351
33	FTRindiv	0.103682	-0.082	0.14391	-0.15504
34	FTRauthor	0.23643	0.161574	0.507089	-0.12273
35	FTRfamily	-0.20054	0.03951	0.197062	-0.14966

	<b>Abbreviation of dependent variables</b>	<b>DegreeDEMO</b>	<b>NGOcapit</b>	<b>DEMOzation</b>	<b>NGOindex</b>
	<b>Abbreviations of Independent Variables</b>				
36	Percentage of People thinking Society must be changed radically	0.045723	-0.62228	0.255559	-0.65964
37	ELECTindx	0.334077	0.650405	-0.17486	0.599543
38	CIVILindx	0.685656	-0.22372	0.012527	-0.09943
39	MEDIAindx	0.543735	-0.03412	0.608464	-0.23942
40	CORUPTindx	0.423973	-0.87824	0.335067	-0.79289
41	FREEeconSCORE	-0.15584	0.811127	-0.68109	0.915654
42	inflationRATE	-0.34115	-0.31676	0.259844	-0.43821
43	DegreeDEMO	1	-0.35173	0.40835	-0.40306
44	RegistrNGO	0.591608	-0.02727	0.321567	-0.172
45	LAWexpert	0.400892	-0.31973	-0.05678	-0.12362
46	ECOlegal	0.400892	0.329017	-0.04904	0.321404
47	LEGALimprove	-0.04226	-0.24627	0.549275	-0.38309
48	NGO Legal Environment Index: 4 SupportiveLegalEnvironment for NGOs	0.481108	0.087468	0.211975	0.030598
49	NGOGOVS	0.042258	0.510572	-0.17466	0.453457
50	NGOstrateg	0.400892	0.329017	-0.04904	0.321404
51	NGOmanage	0.54935	0.166974	-0.13793	0.242365
52	NGOtech	0.400892	0.329017	-0.04904	0.321404
53	NGOecap	0.400892	0.329017	-0.04904	0.321404
54	NGO is professionally organized	0.458349	0.299194	-0.07525	0.313762
55	NGO gets funding from Local Authorities	-0.40089	0.494852	-0.09033	0.346128
56	NGO gets funding from Government	0.252538	0.451796	0.115109	0.355094
57	NGO gets funding from Private Sector	0.267261	-0.10414	-0.22583	0.012362
58	NGO gets funding from providing Services	-0.08452	0.631397	-0.182	0.594185
59	NGO gets funding from Foreign Soruces	-0.54935	-0.09901	-0.1412	-0.10164
60	Number of Sources NGOs get funding from	-0.23623	0.489691	-0.16972	0.41957
61	NGOcont	0.400892	0.257376	0.245188	0.173064
62	NATadvoc	0.400892	0.329017	-0.04904	0.321404
63	INTadvoc	0.422577	0.117889	0.412977	-0.10946
64	NGOs professionalism at representation level	0.338062	0.537212	0.027749	0.390911
65	TYPEserv	0.54935	0.166974	-0.13793	0.242365
66	NGO has an active Network	0.267261	0.37147	-0.14453	0.420298
67	NUMsectr	0.298292	0.576085	-0.37685	0.551878

	Abbreviation of dependent variables	DegreeDEMO	NGOcapit	DEMOzation	NGOindex
	Abbreviations of Independent Variables				
68	Target	-0.13363	0.67926	-0.32778	0.618085
69	NUMtarget	-0.24166	0.473506	-0.37338	0.455224
70	NUMcenter	0.418527	0.261323	-0.14441	0.312871
71	NGOs are highly visible in public	0.227921	0.45171	0.190388	0.279366
72	NGONET	-0.26726	0.104144	0.225831	-0.01236
73	NGOmedia	-0.08452	0.552106	-0.13059	0.523821
74	PUBvisible	-0.25254	-0.4518	-0.11511	-0.35509
75	EDUCpop	-0.12942	0.723103	-0.69296	0.867346
76	Catholic	0.499013	-0.58698	0.386672	-0.64804
77	NGOcapit	-0.35173	1	-0.4528	0.898262
78	DEMOzation	0.40835	-0.4528	1	-0.76443
79	COMPETpartic	-0.09841	0.377469	-0.73751	0.706553
80	PARTIC	0.441347	-0.58361	0.917176	-0.82787
81	Vote	-0.25595	-0.59503	0.394928	-0.67959
82	NGOcap	-0.35173	1	-0.4528	0.898262
83	RepresentationLevel2	0.351382	0.539292	-0.03085	0.446207
84	HDIndex	0.252619	0.512968	-0.22668	0.521427
85	NGOindex	-0.40306	0.898262	-0.76443	1

\* Correlation is significant at +/- 0.5

\*\* Correlation is calculated with SPSS 14.00

\*\*\* The abbreviations of variables are explained on pages 124, 125

\*\*\*\* The data for correlation analysis are taken from the following sources:  
[2,3,4,5,8,15,16,19, 23, 24, 25, 30].

\*\*\*\*\* Variables, which have constant value are excluded

We may draw a few conclusions on the basis of this mathematical analysis. There are independent variables, which affect the NGO and DEMO groups, but this influence is very difficult to interpret, because independent variables represent outcomes for three different countries. For instance, participation in unconventional acts affects the NGO group negatively, or the decrease in voter turnout affects democracy positively. The first two components almost completely explain the variance of NGO and DEMO groups. At this juncture, it is appropriate to treat the NGO group as an intervening variable and determine its correlation with the DEMO group. Line 85 in Table 1 shows that increasing NGO index has a negative influence on the DEMO group, and NGO per capita (line 77 in Table 1) does not influence the DEMO group at all. We may conclude that NGO development does not affect the development of democracy, though with certain reservation, since there is content underlying the above mentioned correlation. This will be examined in an analysis of individual countries.

It could be argued that factors related to the DEMO group cannot also be used as evaluation indices for the NGO group. In spite of this, the attempt to determine if and how NGOs affect democracy should not be just a question of correlation between four variables. An analysis of just two index groups could lead to misleading conclusions, therefore a deeper analysis is necessary. Empirical analysis should conclude clearly, which factors influence the democracy group and which factors influence the NGO group, whether the same factor can influence both groups and how many common factors exist. On the basis of these comparisons, we can clearly determine the quantitative and qualitative function of the influence of NGOs on democracy. The resulting answer to the stated hypothesis should also reveal which impact “model” is more appropriate to the Baltic States as a whole and each country individually for the further effective development of democracy.

Table No. 2 **Common impact variables in the Baltic states**

	Abbreviation of dependent variables	DegreeDEMO	NGOcapit	DEMOzation	NGOindex
	Abbreviations of independent variables				
1	Trustgov	-0.53921	0.748752	-0.3698	0.652489
2	National	-0.13597	-0.44408	0.527536	-0.55653
3	Boycotts	0.592207	-0.60314	0.60594	-0.71724
4	Demonstration	-0.31438	-0.49358	0.519173	-0.60276
5	FREEeconSCORE	-0.15584	0.811127	-0.68109	0.915654
6	EDUCpop	-0.12942	0.723103	-0.69296	0.867346
7	COMPETpartic	-0.09841	0.377469	-0.73751	0.706553
8	PARTIC	0.441347	-0.58361	0.917176	-0.82787

\* Correlation is significant at +/- 0.5

\*\* Correlation is calculated with SPSS 14.00

\*\*\* The abbreviations of variables are explained on pages 124, 125

\*\*\*\* The data for correlation analysis are taken from following sources:  
[2,3,4,5,8,15,16,19, 23, 24, 25, 30].

\*\*\*\*\* Variables, which have constant value are excluded

In addition to the correlation examined above, variables of common impact on NGO and DEMO groups are determined. Based on the significance of correlations, the number of independent variables is reduced to eight (see Table No. 2). The collapsed version of influence factors appears to be representative for both groups. For instance, unconventional acts and participation have a positive influence on DEMO groups, but a negative one on the NGO group. Meanwhile, developing free economy has a positive influence on the NGO group and a negative one on the DEMO group. Revealing as these examples might be, the final goal of this study is to determine common variables, which could help construct a final model of influence. However, among the eight common variables, there seems to be rather few with great



impact. A potential solution could be an analysis of the common factors of NGO and DEMO groups in the Baltic countries separately.

Due to the large amount of data and cases for Estonia (324), Latvia (328) and Lithuania (304), correlation tables listing the influence of independent variables on NGO and DEMO groups are omitted, and only the major results for the final outcomes will be explained. Correlation analysis of each of the three Baltic countries reveals a number of important issues regarding the process of democracy and the development of non-governmental organizations in the countries. First, the data for all three periods show that this was an uneven process of development, characterized by irregular progress of the transformative factors. This evidence is supported not only by independent variables, but also by the results of dependent variable scores by country. Second, the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables varies in each country. Third, the impact of NGOs on democracy is not necessarily significant enough or positive in every case (see Table No.3).

Table No. 3. **Correlation of NGO and DEMO groups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Baltic states**

<b>Estonia</b>				
	<b>Degree DEMO</b>	<b>NGO capit</b>	<b>DEMOzation</b>	<b>NGO Index</b>
<b>Degree DEMO</b>	1	<b>0.628619</b>	0.485918	<b>0.61859</b>
<b>NGOcapit</b>	<b>0.62861856</b>	1	<b>0.985182</b>	<b>0.999918</b>
<b>DEMOzation</b>	0.48591765	<b>0.985182</b>	1	<b>0.987301</b>
<b>NGOindex</b>	<b>0.61858957</b>	<b>0.999918</b>	<b>0.987301</b>	1
<b>Latvia</b>				
<b>DegreeDEMO</b>	1	<b>0.088475</b>	0.208053	-0.5
<b>NGOcapit</b>	0.08847479	1	<b>0.992689</b>	<b>0.818392</b>
<b>DEMOzation</b>	0.2080534	<b>0.992689</b>	1	<b>0.743048</b>
<b>NGOindex</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>0.818392</b>	<b>0.743048</b>	1
<b>Lithuania</b>				
<b>DegreeDEMO</b>	1	<b>0.790838</b>	<b>- 0.99703</b>	<b>0.987829</b>
<b>NGOcapit</b>	<b>0.790838</b>	1	<b>-0.83561</b>	<b>0.876409</b>
<b>DEMOzation</b>	<b>-0.99703</b>	<b>-0.83561</b>	1	<b>0.9687</b>
<b>NGOindex</b>	<b>0.987829</b>	<b>0.876409</b>	<b>-0.99687</b>	1
<b>Baltic States</b>				
<b>DegreeDEMO</b>	1	-0.35173	0.40835	-0.40306
<b>NGOcap</b>	-0.35173	1	-0.4528	<b>0.898262</b>
<b>DEMOzation</b>	0.40835	-0.4528	1	<b>-0.76443</b>
<b>NGOindex</b>	-0.40306	<b>0.898262</b>	<b>-0.76443</b>	1

\* Correlation is significant at +/- 0.5

\*\* Correlation is calculated with SPSS 14.00

\*\*\* The abbreviations of variables are explained on pages 124, 125

\*\*\*\* The data for correlation analysis are taken from following sources:  
[2,3,4,5,8,15,16,19, 23, 24, 25, 30].

\*\*\*\*\* Variables, which have constant value are excluded

Although certain states (Estonia) have fared much better in encouraging democracy, the general outlook of the region as a whole is a positive one in the sense that more and more non-governmental organizations are engaged in the processes of democracy. It seems that in some states the development of democracy could be considerably slowed down or interrupted by economic instability (Latvia), a decrease in voter turnout (all Baltic countries), the slow development of the non-governmental sector (Lithuania) or stronger development in the area of social services (Lithuania, Latvia). Furthermore, it appears that the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania), after implementing democratic reforms, have given up on improving the quality of democracy. It could be stipulated that in the case of Lithuania, the growing influence of NGOs and their growing professionalism should have a negative correlation with democratization. This has not happened because of the non-effective development of NGO index, but mostly because of “contextual” problems in the system, as well as decreasing percentage of democratization on the one hand and the rather slow growth of the third sector compared to Estonia and Latvia on the other hand. It should be noted that the latter reasons influence results for the Baltic region as a whole, because as much as 15% of NGOs have been established in Lithuania during the three periods analysed. Despite this fact, the overall picture of NGO support for democratic processes is positive. Hence, it might be presumed that NGOs affect democracy to a greater extent and support the development of democratic systems.

In view of these results, one cannot help but make one particular observation: Lithuania differs the most from Latvia and Estonia. In 85 cases of correlation between the DEMO and NGO groups, Lithuania differs from Estonia and Latvia in 54 cases of correlation. Latvia, compared to Lithuania and Estonia, differs in 2 cases: 1) a growing percentage of people who think that there should be more order positively affects both groups, while in case of Lithuania and Estonia, it does not affect them at all, or does not affect them significantly; 2) increasing trust in political parties has a positive effect on NGOs and only partially on democracy, though in Estonia and Lithuania a negative impact on democracy is observed. Estonia differs from Latvia and Lithuania only in 2 cases of correlation: 1) decreasing interpersonal trust has a positive effect on democracy; 2) increasing number of funding sources for NGOs has a positive effect on both dependent groups, while in Latvia it affects democracy negatively and in Lithuania it has almost no effect. In 27 cases of correlation all countries have different impact scores. Although such an empirically-derived conclusion is analytically misleading, such an explanation might also be influenced by various contextual factors.

The underlying interest of this study is not only whether or not NGOs influence democracy, but also how NGOs themselves are impacted. As already noted, the growing number of non-governmental organizations and their general index of development have a direct positive effect on the degree of democracy. This is true for Estonia and Lithuania, but not for Latvia or the whole region. Figures for the latter two may not be fully representative of the real state of democratic development in the respective states. Latvia, in the first period has the highest score of degree of democracy and level of democratization. Degree of democracy slightly decreases in

period 2, and reaches a plateau in period 3, while the level of democratization increases in both of the latter periods. Non-governmental organizations appear to be growing in numbers in all three States. However, Lithuania has had the lowest NGO per capita, and this could be one of the quantitative factors negatively affecting the democratization process. There are also qualitative reasons, for instance, the majority of NGOs in Lithuania have been geared towards social and cultural purposes rather than political ones.

Finally, we may consider the caveat that cross-country comparison using Pearson's correlation is not reliable when countries have the same score over the entire period. Among independent variables, there are some that maintain highest and lowest scores over the entire period: Estonia scores 0 for Law experts in the non-governmental sector, 0 for NGO staff, 0 for NGO funding from the private sector, 1 for NGO funding from local authorities, 1 for NGO and networking, 0 for competition in participation, 1 for NGO goals; Latvia scores 1 for NGO goals, 0 for NGO staff, 0 for NGO funding from the private sector, 2 for the Number of NGO sectors, 0 for NGO target groups, 1 for NGO and networking; Lithuania scores 1 for NGO goals, 0 for NGO staff, 0 for NGO funding from the government, 0 for NGO financing capacity, 3 for NGO high visibility, 1 for NGO public visibility, 1 for NGO registration system.

Before further discussions on the Baltic States, an explanation is in order on the common independent variables, which influence DEMO and NGO groups. Returning to Table 1, where the common independent variables for the DEMO and NGO groups are listed, it should be noted that these independent variables do not determine the area of influence for the whole region, composed of the three individual states. In fact, "territorial" factors are important, especially considering that the study examines 3x3 country cases of correlation, where each case of correlation might have a direct effect on the whole region. It was therefore decided to not only take 8 common factors derived statistically for the whole region, but also to establish a range of common variables while exploring each country individually and comparing similar factors.

The information obtained from the correlations of independent variables and NGO/DEMO groups for different countries will be operated to determine common impact factors. It is assumed that for factors, which influence the NGO group and the DEMO group, at least one of the variables from each group could be identified in more than one Baltic country, which reveals the way in which NGOs influence democracy in the Baltic States. However, impact factors differ in the context of the qualitative approach. Some are directly related to NGOs, while others are not. Accordingly, they can be divided into primary and secondary impact factors. Primary factors are those that are directly related to the NGO environment, e.g., NGO staff, NGO sources of funding. Meanwhile, secondary factors have a direct effect on the NGO environment but are not related to it, e.g., GDP and interpersonal trust. Common impact factors of the region coincide with country-specific factors. Therefore, factors will be divided into primary and secondary factors. In view of the above, primary factors that influence democracy are the following: index of

population belonging to religious NGOs; index of population belonging to sports NGOs; index of population belonging to music, art, and education NGOs; index of population belonging to labour NGOs; index of population belonging to professional NGOs; index of population belonging to other NGOs; index of supportive registration for NGOs; index of law experts working in the third sector; index of supportive economic regulations for NGOs; index of legal improvement for the third sector; index of supportive legal environment for NGOs; index of framework for NGO and government cooperation; index of NGO strategic activities; index of NGO professionalism in management; index of technology integration into NGO activities; index of e-capacities of NGOs; index of professionally organized NGOs; index of NGO funding from the government; index of NGO funding from the provision of services; index of NGO funding from foreign sources; index of the number of sources for funding of NGOs; index of NGO professionalism in finance management; index of NGO representation on the national level; index of NGO representation at the international level; index of NGO professionalism at the representation level; index of the types of NGO services; index of active networks of NGOs; index of the number of sectors NGOs work in; index of major target groups of NGOs; index of the number of target groups of NGOs, index of NGO information centres; index of the high visibility of NGOs; index of NGO and media cooperation; index of public visibility of NGOs; index of professional representation of NGOs.

Secondary impact factors that influence the NGO group and consequently impact democracy are the following: index of GDP growth; index of GDP per capita; index of income of citizens; index of interpersonal trust; index of public trust in political parties; index of public trust in the government; index of public trust in the parliament; index of public trust in NGOs; index of people satisfied with their life; index of public national pride; index of public belief in the freedom of action; indices of people's major aims, index of public participation in political activities; index of public interest in politics; index of public participation in unconventional actions; index of the most important future changes; index of attitudes concerning radical social change; index of the electoral process; index of independent media; index of corruption; index of free economy; index of inflation; index of educated people; index of competition in participation; index of participation; index of Catholicism; index of human development; index of voter turnout.

The division of factors most influential to the development of democracy in the Baltic States into primary and secondary impact factors lays the groundwork for the next step of meta-analysis, i.e., regression. Despite scientific assumptions for the division and selection of the most influential impact factors, the arguments for such selection are yet to be presented. Final conclusions on the relationship between civil society and democracy could be drawn after regression analysis and application of the “traffic light” model.

## Conclusions

Correlation helped to determine thirty four indices of the primary impact of NGOs on democracy and thirty six factors of secondary impact upon NGOs. While primary factors are more important to this analysis, and they directly correspond to the objective, the importance of secondary factors should also be considered, as their role is undeniably important. The secondary factors affect the development and professionalism of the NGO sector, which in turn influences democracy. Therefore, these factors should be recognized as significant, though not directly so.

The empirical data collected for this study demonstrates that in most areas the Baltic States have integrated democratic elements quite effectively. However, progress in the Baltic States should hardly be surprising, as it was a result of a lengthy process beginning at the end of the 1980s. Another interesting empirical observation is that factors that should influence the progress of democracy or development of civil society do not affect the dependent variables or even affect them in a negative direction. Although most of the data has been in use for a number of decades and is globally accepted as reliable, it is qualitatively based on subjective observations and interpretations, and could therefore provide controversial results in certain cases.

Before dealing with the final model of NGO influence on the democratic process in the Baltic States, it should be acknowledged that of the numerous factors defined, likely not all of them have the same impact. Therefore, dealing with empirical investigation of the Baltic States, the second step of meta-analysis—regression analysis will enable us to determine which independent variables of primary and secondary importance statistically impact democracy more, and which ones should be used in a relation analysis between NGOs and the development of democracy.

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## NEVYRIAUSYBINIŲ ORGANIZACIJŲ SEKTORIUS IR DEMOKRATIJA. EMPIRINĖS REFLEKSIJOS BALTIJOS ŠALYSE: METAANALIZĖS REZULTATAI (I DALIS)

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Santrauka

*Demokratijos plėtra Centrinėje ir Rytų Europoje žlugus Sovietų Sąjungai tapo vienu pagrindiniu socialinių mokslų tyrimo objektu. Mokslininkai atliko lyginamąsias analizes remdamiesi įvairiais kiekybiniais ir kokybiniais duomenimis, tačiau pilietinės visuomenės ir demokratijos santykis bei būdai, kaip nevyriausybinių organizacijos, būdamos pilietinės visuomenės dalis, veikia demokratijos plėtrą, nėra pakankamai tiriama. Šis straipsnis yra pirmoji metaanalizės rezultatu, kurie parodė, kaip pilietinė visuomenė veikia demokratiją Baltijos šalyse, dalis. Jame pateikiama koreliacinės analizės rezultatai, kurie leido nustatyti trisdešimt keturis NVO pirminės įtakos demokratijai ir trisdešimt šešis NVO antrinės įtakos demokratijai faktorius. Pažymėtina, kad pirminiai įtakos faktoriai yra svarbesni analizuojant įtakos diskursus, tačiau antrinės įtakos faktorių svarba taip pat nėra kvestionuojama, nes jie veikia nevyriausybinių organizacijų sektorių, o tai savo ruožtu daro įtaką demokratijos plėtrai, todėl antriniai faktoriai taip pat naudojami tolesniuose metaanalizės etapuose, nors jų įtaka ir yra netiesioginė.*