

Challenges for Civil Society: Participation in the Baltic States Region Building

Saulė Mačiukaitė-Žvinienė

*Mykolas Romeris University
Ateities str. 20, LT-08303 Vilnius*

This article addresses the question of how the emergence and development of NGOs differ in respect to their environmental form in different Baltic states. Attempting to do this, the research looks at three important aspects related to third sector building and performance in the Baltic States. Firstly, the article describes the main political features and roles of the civil society in the development of democracy by using collective action theory. Secondly, it analyzes the conditions for the emergence of NGOs in contemporary Baltic countries, while involving the theory of region building and theory of P. Joenniemi about the emergence of NGOs. The article considers a few periods: before 1991 and after till 2006, while dividing it into four periods before 1991, and 1991-1997, 1998-2003, 2004-2006. The following helps to identify the peculiarities more objectively and assess broader results of participation while adapting collective action theory. As a result, the article assumes that the development of civil society is progressive, but not sufficient in the context of international issues and public motivation.

Keywords: *third sector, civil society, NGOs, Baltic states, collective action theory, state development, region development.*

Pagrindinės sąvokos: *trečias sektorius, NVO, Baltijos šalys, kolektyvinė veiksmų teorija, valstybės kūrimas, regiono kūrimas.*

Introduction

In the long perspective of establishment and development of a democratic culture in the Baltic States, the signs of increased individualism and participation are very positive. Therefore, this article addresses a question of how the emergence and development of NGOs differ in respect of their environmental form in different Baltic states.

Furthermore, democratic states do not develop only on the basis of free elections; however, most scholars emphasise free elections in their research. This article shows that the development of democracy also depends on a participatory society and communication proficiency between a state and civil society. For this purpose the article describes the main political features and roles of civil society in the development of democracy by using collective action theory. Such exchange of communication could be preserved in the form of NGOs, which offer a space for public discussions, conflicts or dialogues of individuals and groups, which contribute to public welfare. Accordingly the article analyzes the conditions for the emergence of NGOs in contem-

porary Baltic countries, while involving the theory of region building and theory of P. Joenniemi about emergence of NGOs.

The term *civil society* in the Baltic States is associated with the revolution period from 1989. According M. Kaldor and I. Vejjada: “during the 1980s it came to have a very specific meaning, referring to the existence of self organized groups or institutions capable of preserving an autonomous public sphere which could guarantee individual liberty and check abuse of the state.” [10 p. 17]. In the Baltic States the term “*civic*” itself was, and probably remains, theoretically and practically associated with multiculturalism, associationalism, democracy and freedom. After 1989 many of those groups active in the pre-war period became active in the period of “independence revolution”, when those civic groups became a new political elite, and in some ways it provoked the loss of a firm basis for civil society, but it is also noticed that recent self-organized activities in the Baltic States are rather weak in comparison with the period of revolution. The struggle in the competitive market and disap-

pointment in “democracy” are only few explanations for decline of civil society.

Nevertheless, new NGOs form rapidly in all three Baltic States. Most of them are engaged in education, culture, leisure, community activities, although there are groups concerned with human rights, “racism” or environmental issues. In this article one asks how far civil activities have developed and whether they have been independent and responsive, in accordance with the traditional understanding of civil groups.

Civil Society and the Building of the Baltic States

In both Western and Eastern literature debates on civil society provoke a new reassessment of the term *civil society* in the context of the Baltic States’ revolution. It is assumed that the concept of *civil society* was simply brought back to European terminology and environment. It included active participation of citizens against state activities, and civil society practically appeared as the public space, what is a common element for civil society [18;16].

The concept of *civil society* is a central notion in the Baltic States’ development. Social movements and associations, local communities and civil interests have stimulated the development of the region and shaped its institutional framework. However, each country, despite the historic analogies, has developed individually.

After fifty years of forced integration with the Soviet Union, Estonia reasserted its independence in August 1991. The independence phenomenon was not new to Estonia. Estonia was independent during the inter-war period. However, the challenges of civil society today are greater than those of the inter-war period. A non-communist government appeared after the first parliamentary elections. During that period the *Popular Front of Estonia* drove the major force of the independence movement; it was a kind of an *umbrella group* giving a non-visible push to various pro-independence groups. These movements opened the way for people to participate in policymaking and become closer to state institutions.

During 1988-1991 the struggles for liberty and the restoration of independence, called the Singing Revolution, saw the people and the political leaders sharing a common orientation to foreign policy,

and were united in legal and political arenas. As stated in the book “*Challenges to Democracy*”, it remains true that Eastern Europe’s revolutions, including those of the Baltic States, were a result of an alliance between intellectuals and the working class, which means alliances within civil society *per se* [1 p.148].

Estonian researchers M.Lagerspetz, E. Rikmann, R. Ruutsoo [11] claim that Estonian post independence social and political change has been characterized by a lack of credible alternatives to the present government policies. Discussions about the changes in Estonia have developed or “shifted” from transition to democracy consolidation, and here civil society is one of the central elements. The label “civil society” has been attached to all initiatives and interest organizations.

Latvia regained their national independence also in 1991, still the transition period in this country has four components, which correspond both to Estonia and Lithuania: 1) political transformation; 2) transition to a market economy; 3) creation of an independent state; 4) preservation of independence [10 p. 38]. Since 1940 Latvia had struggled for a democratic and independent state, and during the inter-war period the Latvian civil society was rather active: eighty percent of the population used to vote in the parliament elections [10 p. 38]. Later on the totalitarian rule started to vanish step by step in Latvia from the 1980s. Parliament, government and the *Popular Front of Latvia* became the centers of influence in Latvia. In the shadow of the Communist Party appeared a patriotic and reformist political group called the Latvian Democratic Party (LDP). It was the major force behind the independence revolution in the 1990s. During the first elections seventy percent of the Latvian Supreme Soviet was won by members who belonged to the *Popular Front of Latvia* [10 p. 40]. However, after the Supreme Soviet voted for independence of Latvia the mission of the LDP was accomplished, and they were not elected in the 1993 elections; such a result was probably provoked by the difficult political and socio-economic conditions during the first years of independence, which also weakened the motivation of participation of civil society.

The experience of Lithuania as a democratic country is rather limited, moreover civil society was totally destroyed during the communist period [4 p. 41]. The country was a democratic parliamentary republic from 1918 until 1926 and later on in 1940, and then was occupied by the Soviets. It is true that ethnical movements started in 1980s, because ethnic and culture were always most important for the Lithuanian society, and this reason is one of the

indirect bases for the 1988 social movement, called *Sajūdis*, which awoke civil society in the country.

It is necessary to explain what happened with the force of the civil movement for independence during this short but very important historical period in the Baltic States. According to John K. Glenn, the democratization could be “from below” and “from above” [5]. In the case of a revolution period, the democratization “from below” appears, i.e. it comes from civil society, which introduces their own demands; and later on, after the revolution, there is democratization “from above” when the elite initiates political reforms. The situation in the Baltic countries verifies the theory of John K. Glenn. In both cases civil society plays an important role: in the first case it is more obvious and in the second case there are members of the civil society who “moved” to the elite, and it weakened the remaining actors of civil society, and the state strengthens for account of civil society [15].

The revolution period of the Baltic States shows the rapid emergence and quick development of civil society. Still, it is thought that for deeper understanding of the civil society in the Baltic States, despite the historical presentation, the emergence and development of Baltic civil society should be explained empirically: for this it has been decided to choose *the collective actions theory*. The *collective actions theory* has been widely used in social sciences for more than thirty years to explain movements against various targets. Antony Oberschal explains that there are two levels in explaining mass movements/protests against the regime or other targets: macro-level and micro-level. At the macro level there are four dimensions necessary for civil society to “participate” in reforms [14 p.28]:

- Discontent and dissatisfaction about basic life conditions-hardship, corruption, lack of freedom;
- Beliefs, values and ideologies filter and frame the dissatisfactions, transform them into grievances against the regime, and promise to solve these problems;
- The capacity to act collectively exists such as freedom to organize, civil society, access to means of mass communication;
- Political opportunity, which increases the probability that the goals and demands of the protest will be achieved because of weakness in the target.

All four macro-level conditions are necessary conditions for civil movements, and the absence of at least one condition makes the challenge difficult

to reach. At the micro level, people have to decide whether to participate or not, when and how to do it. Their decision depends not only on macro-level conditions, but also on their perceptions and expectations of the number of other people joining and their chances for success. The collective actions at micro-level are under uncertainty: people measure expected benefits and costs, and make a decision on the highest benefit. A. Oberschal points five variables that characterize choice under uncertainty for achieving collective good, thus making citizens or their organizations more active [14 p.29]:

- V is the value placed on the goal of the challenge, on the collective good;
- P is a challenger’s estimation of the probability of obtaining those goals, probability of success;
- N is the challenger’s expectation of the number of other participants in the challenge;
- S are the selective incentives or personal benefits from participation, such as solidarity with peers, future leadership, an activist identity, which cannot be obtained by free “riding”;
- C are the expected costs of participation, such as arrest, injury, opportunity costs, for instance money lost, which can be later publicized.

P and C are the functions which appear in many variables, but most important is N , because the challengers usually believe that the more the number of people participate, the more power they have. $P(N)$ and $C(N)$ depends on the type of collective goal, still if N increases directly P increases and C decreases. A. Oberschal suggests the formula, which describes when the members of civil society decide to participate and when they decide not to participate in collective actions:

$$\text{If } P(N)V + S - C(N) > 0, \text{ then participate} \\ < \text{ or } = 0, \text{ then do not participate}$$

The micro theory is tested by various surveys, it has already proved its correctness, in the research it will be used to seek to explain the civil participation in the Baltic States and the motivation of people to participate in collective actions, which in the end makes them one unit, which is called *civil society*.

The emergence of collection actions in the Baltic States could be explained by showing the connection between macro and micro elements. If the dissatisfaction grows V increases. Anti-regime

ideas are correlated with \underline{V} , because people in such cases have the same goal, as it was in the case of the Baltic States. The capacity to mobilize appeared in all three Baltic States in the context of movements: *Eesti Rahvarin* in Estonia, *Latvian People Front* in Latvia, *Sajūdis* in Lithuania, decreases \underline{C} and increases \underline{S} . The increase of \underline{S} proves the freedom to organize, the existence of groups and associations in the Baltic States, which refer directly to civil society. Political opportunities influence the participation of civil society in reforms making. It increases \underline{P} and simultaneously decreases \underline{C} : more negotiations between leaders and members/representatives of the civil society are expected and less repression. As in the case of the Baltic States, the political opportunities appeared after Gorbachev declared his famous reform called *perestroika*, which liberalized social control (\underline{V} increases). Furthermore, the first major political opportunities for civil society in the Baltic States appeared in 1987, that year in Latvia people protested against the construction of new a hydro-electric power station, and their protests made the political leaders of that period stop the project. In Estonia, the environmentalists protested against the exploitation of a phosphorus mine and influenced the final results, which guaranteed Estonia autonomy from Soviet economy. In 1987 protests against the Ribontrov-Molotov Pact occurred in all three Baltic States, in each country more than 100 000 people participated (\underline{V} increases). Since no serious sanctions were made (decrease of \underline{C}), later on in 1989 a new protest of all Baltic States together appeared, which was called *Baltic Road*, around two million people participated (\underline{N} increases, which directly increases \underline{P} and decreases \underline{C}). While looking at this period, we can see that the value of $\underline{P(N)V+S-C(N)}$ is really more than \underline{Q} , so it shows the emergence and rather quick development of civil society in the Baltic, seeking their collective good – *independence*.

Free elections in 1990 were held in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and the civil movements' leaders, who organized themselves as political parties won the parliamentary elections: in Estonia by 77,8%, Latvia 73,6 % and Lithuania 90 % [9]. In 1991 Latvia and Estonia reestablished their independence; Lithuania did it in 1990, and all these victories were the victories of civil society and their decision to participate in policy making [8]. However, already after three years all Baltic States had experienced economic crises, political reforms and a regression of civil society. For example, in 1994 the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture made a survey,

which showed that 6.7 % of people found themselves to be active participants of civil society [10, p. 62]. If one just looks at the period from 1988 to 1990, it appears that the protests used to gather from 100 000 to around 500 000 active citizens, so the average percentage of active citizens was around 12%. The following conclusion could be done that the activeness or willingness of citizens to participate in politics halved. The researchers, who analyzed the reasons behind the decreased activities of citizens, usually define them as: political apathy, distrust in government, economical problems, social inequality and the absence of stability [16, 19, 17]. Similar moods continued during the first period of exploration. As a result, the negative perceptions of civil society decreased the value of $\underline{P(N)V+S-C(N)}$ to \underline{Q} or even less in the first period.

Civil society is the condition of order in a society and is an aim of existence in itself, and democratic states do not survive only on the basis of free elections. The development of democracy depends on a participatory society and on their voluntarism, which could be found in various non-governmental organizations. It has been already signified that the mobilization and activation of individuals is the most important function of the Baltic civil society in the process of legitimizing democracy in their states. Despite this it should be acknowledged that the transition processes brought freedom to their markets and new ways of interaction among the Baltic States. [19]

The analysis of cooperation in the Baltic States shows that the relation between civil society and region building is rather complex. On the one hand it seems to be rather simple, as the principles of political and societal organization are derived from national processes; on the other hand all three countries have different national traditions and experience in political solutions. So, the regional formation was influenced by various decentralized efforts, collaborating institutions and political or civic networks. Within a very short period 1990-1993 a number of such collaborative contacts were established. The process was endorsed from the bottom up, from national level to upper level: to a more formal decision making then on the national level, and sometimes international, the complexity of the realms of which leaves no doubt.

While exploring the region building, the historical approach should be also applied, so therefore, in 1990 the Declaration on Unity and Cooperation was signed by the Republic of Estonia, Republic

of Latvia and Republic of Lithuania, and it was the re-establishment of all forms of cooperation - the *Baltic Council* emerged. In 1993, the Parliaments of the three Baltic States created their cooperation organization called the *Baltic Assembly*, 1994 saw the re-establishment of the *Baltic Council of Ministers*, also called Cooperation Council, an inter-governmental co-operation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Soon after, the need for a trilateral cooperation, the *Prime Ministers' Council* appeared, it provided guidance for intergovernmental co-operation. The regional activities of the three Baltic States are transferred towards co-operation in the region of the Baltic Sea, especially with Nordic countries: the *Council of the Baltic Sea States*. However, civil society itself through the form of non-governmental organizations of the Baltic States does not have their own network, so the institutional units are directly involved in the NGO network together with the other Baltic Sea countries: *Baltic Sea NGO Forum*. In 1992 non-governmental organizations were invited to participate as observers in the *Council of the Baltic Sea States* and chair a few programs. This cooperation between states and civil society led to other initiatives such as, the *Baltic Sea Region Agenda 21* and *Visions and Strategies around the Baltic 2010*. The analysis notes that the latter organization and initiatives go beyond the geographical borders of the Baltic States, however, in the process of region building of the Baltic States, the ambition to be in the arena of the nearest neighboring countries, was and still is the basis for the political region building. C.Stalvant, while analyzing the theory of region building, defines three types of actors: intergovernmental, mixed, and non-governmental [6, p.189]. The same composition is defined at the Baltic States' arenas (see Table No.1)

Table No. 1. **The Baltic States Arenas**

Intergovernmental	Mixed	Non-governmental
Baltic Council, Baltic Assembly, Baltic Council of Ministers, Prime Ministers' Council, Council of the Baltic Sea States.	Baltic Sea Region Agenda 21 Visions and Strategies around the Baltic 2010	Baltic Sea NGO Forum

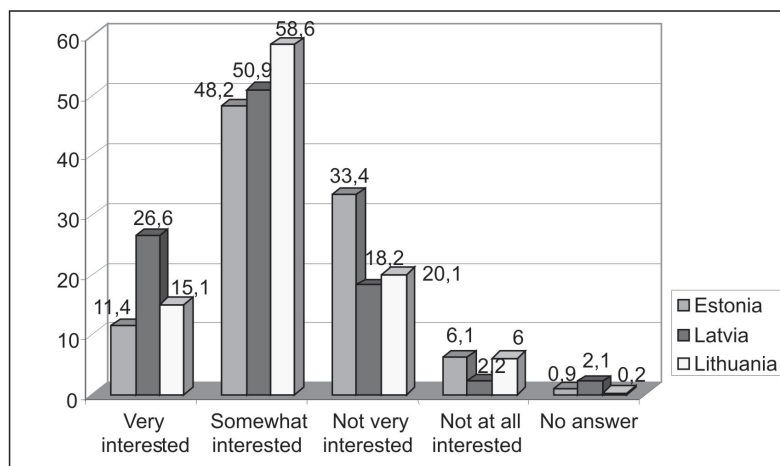
The weight of civil society is stressed in many public documents; still there is nothing in the documents of the Baltic Council, Baltic Assembly, Baltic Council of Ministers, and Prime Ministers' Council. The question could be raised why in the declarations of the Baltic States the civil society is not mentioned; especially taking into consideration that the civil societies of the Baltic States played an important role in the building of the region. While looking at the documents of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the declaration defines that a shared cultural heritage of "free and open interchange between individuals and governmental and non-governmental organizations" sets certain ground rules for realizing fruitful cooperation [6, p.189]. Furthermore, the CBSS even has a Commissioner position for Democratic Development, whose major activity is to strengthen civil society. It is true that if the Baltic States want to develop public policy, they should involve civil society and the national networks should link to international networks, within political, economic, competitive, legal and other types of cooperation, and the dominant position in the networks should be given to various civic organizations. Eventually, we can conclude that despite a strong civil society during the revolution period at national and international levels, and its regression during the first and partially second period, as the analysis in the next section presents, civil society re-emerged in all three Baltic States in the third period at least on national level. However, participation on the "Baltic" level is still rather weak, and it should be strongly suggested for organizations of the Baltic triplet to amend their root initiatives in the context of civil society.

The Development Challenges of the Third Sector in the Baltic States

In the 1980s, civic engagement and the third sector in the former Soviet Union attracted much attention of policy makers and political science researchers. It should be agreed that as civil society differs in each state and community thus the development of the third sector also differs due to national traditions. P. Joenniemi defines three modes of non-governmental organizations emergence [6, p.194]:

- *Society and the Oppressive State*. This mode drives from illegal opposition and systematic hostility.
- *Separation of Spheres of Action*. In this mode the major factor is self-evaluation of civil society, where non-governmental

Figure No. 1. The Percentage of Interest of Baltic Citizens in Political Reforms of 1990-19991



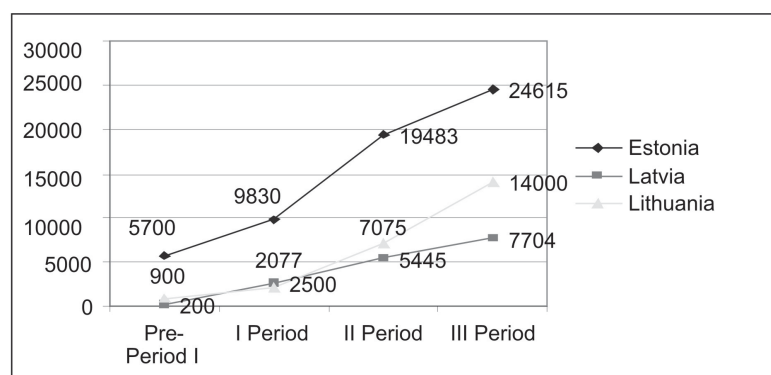
Source: Freedom House

organizations and the concept of goodwill state are central ingredients.

- *Strong Society cum State*. This mode derives from welfare state experiences, where state-society relations generally blend and gain a different quality, i.e. associations become dependent on an omnipotent state.

When analyzing the emergence and development of non-governmental organizations in the Baltic States, the first mode *Society and the Oppressive State* could be adjusted. First of all, because the communist system was not acceptable for all three states and the opinion of society came into the open and second of all, the state structures failed non-governmental organizations and local political institutions became sources of power. There is a slight possibility, as it will be noted in further exploration that, the mode of *Separation of Spheres of Action* could be adjusted as well, however, in the Baltic States the non-governmental organizations

Figure No. 2. The Growth of Non-Governmental Organizations



Source: Eurostat, National Institutions of Statistics of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, NGOs information centers

are still rather weak and it is far from self-evaluation.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the transformation of *non-perfect* civil society [16] in the context of democracy was developed. Hereafter, referring to the development of third sector J. Kubik distinguishes three types of NGOs in the transition period [2, p.181-207]:

- Reformed organizations, which remained from the communist period;
- Split-off organizations, those which broke away from their communist period organizations;
- Newly formed organizations.

The fall of the Soviet Union took considerably different courses in the Baltic States; nevertheless, the fundamental political changes happening after 1980 had one common feature: countries were influenced by belief and activity of people who voluntarily engaged themselves in civil initiatives (see Figure No.1).

The fundamental changes NGOs had desired were governmental democracy and freedom of association. There is no doubt that these goals enabled them to emerge and later on to develop. The most obvious evidence is the rapid growth of NGOs after 1989 in all three Baltic States (see Figure No. 2)

In Estonia between 1988 and 1991 many new independent NGOs were established, however, most of them were based on the idea of peoples' movement. Still, since 1997, around 2000 NGOs have been established annually, from 1997 over 18915 NGOs were officially registered in Estonia. Nevertheless, it is very difficult to say the exact number

of established NGOs, because many NGOs were not even registered, and most of them are probably still operating. According to UN Development Program during the pre-first period a little more than half of NGOs were active. The third sector received financial support from abroad, and this assistance reduced the States' role in social issues and the society sector, and it resulted in the emergence of charity groups. However, the reduction of the support shortly after independence left many NGOs in financial problems,

due to lack of managerial experience, many NGOs could not raise funds and were forced to close or cooperate with other NGOs, and this brought to emergence of non-governmental networks, information and media networks.

In Latvia before the independence there were around 1200 NGOs, however, this number decreased very quickly and in the pre-I period there were only 200 registered NGOs; but soon after the number started to increase. Nevertheless, the percentage of people who were involved in the non-governmental sector started to decrease: in 1988-1991 there were 54 %, pre-I period only 42 %, and in I period the percentage decreased till 20 %, and the most popular areas of focus of NGOs were care and assistance, defense of social interests and monitoring of government.

In Lithuania the NGOs were not actively registering themselves, so as a result very contradictive figures appear. According to the Ministry of Justice there were 900 registered NGOs during 1991-1996, however the NGO Information and Support Center says that the total number of NGOs was around 4000, and the most active were religious, charitable and human rights NGOs. However, the legislation, which guaranteed tax allowance, became difficult to achieve, and the growing corruption made it difficult for foreign support to reach the final objective, and it influenced negatively the capacity growth of non-governmental sector in comparison to Estonia, period III sees an increase to 14000.

During the first five years of independence the developments resulted in massive enthusiasm for the promotion of democracy. During the way to independence the development of NGOs brought two results: 1) one of them was a growing third sector, however, on the other hand 2) members of NGOs started a massive departure from the third sector into politics or private sector. As a result, the third sector degraded gradually. They lacked property, money, qualitative legislative framework, tradition, professional backgrounds, cooperation and information networks, infrastructure, educational and research centers, volunteers, etc.

Table No. 2. **The Progress Development Score of the Third Sector**

	1997	1998	1999	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Estonia	2,25	2,25	2,50	2,25	2,00	2,00	2,00	2,00
Latvia	2,25	2,25	2,25	2,00	2,00	2,00	2,00	1,75
Lithuania	2,25	2,00	2,00	1,75	1,50	1,50	1,50	1,50

Source: United States Agency of International Development

The progress scores in table No. 2 assess the growth of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), their organizational capacity and financial sustainability, and the legal and political environment in which they function. The ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the highest and 7 the lowest level of progress. The ratings follow a quarter-point scale. Changes in ratings are based on events during the study year in relation to the previous year. Minor to moderate developments typically warrant a positive or negative change of a quarter (0.25) to a half (0.50) point. Significant developments typically warrant a positive or negative change of three-quarters (0.75) to a full (1.00) point. It is rare that the rating in any category will fluctuate by more than a full point (1.00) in a single year. It is noted that the progress in Estonia was not very effective, comparing 1997 and 2006, despite the fact that Estonia was the first country where parliament accepted the Estonian Civil Society Development Concept in 2002. In Latvia, the EU membership has influenced the development of the third sector and the change is more meaningful between periods I and III in comparison to the Estonian case; in Lithuania the year 2002 saw the emergence of a new legal act, which exempted NGOs from profit tax, and the improvement by three quarter point was the consequence. These three different central issues were the most influential in the Baltic States; nevertheless, there had been minor development issues to be discussed.

In Estonia, NGOs continued to face numerous challenges in the last decade: the Estonian Civil Society Development Concept (2002) and the Memorandum of National Accord (2003, signed by NGOs and political parties), both contained the commitments to the development of a civil society. The Estonian Parliament has continued to influence the non-governmental sector and in 2004, the Estonian Civil Society Development Concept was adopted for the period 2004-2006. "It lays down a series of activities and authorities, a timeline for implementing legislation regulating NGOs, involvement of NGOs in the decision making process, financing of NGOs, collection of new data about NGOs, the teaching of civic education, and increasing public awareness of NGOs and their activities" [9 p. 247]. NGOs in Estonia have three forms: non-profit associations, foundations and non-profit partnerships (usually not registered). The number of non-governmental organizations in Estonia grew tremendously in periods II and III; however, most NGOs are located in large cities and involved in local activities.

The development of the Latvian third sector has been influenced by the Russian minority problems, which promoted the rapid growth of the number of NGOs in period II, during which the EU decided to give around one billion Euros to the activities of NGOs - development of civil society in Latvia. 2004 also saw the Program of Latvian Civil Society Development, however, NGOs are still strictly regulated by the Latvian Constitution and legislation on public organizations passed between 1992 and 2004. The following laws have decreased the development of the third sector, as it became very bureaucratic in the context of registration. In 2003, the government decided that all NGOs have to register themselves according to the new procedure: present annual reports, overview their income and expenditure. Nevertheless, this new legal regulation has not increased the effectiveness of non-governmental development. Despite the strict legal framework, during the decade, NGOs number grew more than thirty times. Recently, the Latvian third sector's actors are involved in the following areas: minority rights, sport and culture clubs, religious groups and unions, most of them in minority rights organizations.

The third sector developed gradually in Lithuania as well. Lithuanian NGOs developed their managerial and financial capacities very quickly after independence, later the financial support from abroad decreased. In Lithuania there have been no serious obstacles to registering NGOs or raise funds. However, most NGOs have seen lack of permanent income and staff. In 2002, the exemption of NGOs from the profit tax became a turning point in the third sector development (see Table No. 1). However, in 2004 amendments in registration procedure of NGOs appeared, and these changes might slow down the development of NGOs in the nearest future. The NGO numbers has grown fifteen times, and the most popular activities have become cultural, sport, religious, youth or ethnic activities.

The emergence of the third sector has not brought the effective start for further development of NGOs. Soon after independence, the financial support from abroad decreased, and support from the national government or the private sector had been rather low in the Baltic States, only in period II the national governments became involved in the qualitative development of the sector. Baltic NGOs had lacked organizational and financial capacities, managers of NGOs had not been qualified enough, the percentage of the working people in third sector had been around 10 %. However, it enhanced the

NGOs in the Baltic States to cooperate and establish national and international networks, what had reinforced the enlargement of third sector.

While explaining the radical changes in the last periods, the theory of collective action is applied as well. The growing number of collective actions grew during the last periods, especially the third one, and the emergence of collective good – *society welfare*, is determined. Eventually \underline{V} increases, the growing number of NGOs shows that \underline{N} increases and directly influence the increase of \underline{P} , because mostly NGOs are not sufficiently professional, then at least visual representation, thus supporting final achievements of operational activities. With the growth of \underline{N} , \underline{P} , \underline{V} and decrease of \underline{C} , the value of $\frac{P(N)V+S-C(N)}{Q}$ is more than \underline{Q} . Eventually, it lets us make an arguable, but “positive” prediction that the development of NGOs will progress.

Conclusions

In this article both qualitative and quantitative approaches were applied to analyze the data, however, it should be clearly stated that the analysis contains general weaknesses and possible measurement errors. For instance, the periods measured are too broad and no far-reaching pronouncement could be made, but for annual analysis there was a lack of data. Still the application of collective action theory, theory of region building and modes of P. Joenniemi, also assessment itself clarify several things with respect to region building:

- First, the search or dimensions of civil society helped to explain the macro and micro conditions by applying the theory of collective actions for measuring civil society in policy making. This model appears to bridge the gap between the revolution period regime and contemporary society, from civil actions to professional third sector, but it also implies a certain bias towards a strong civil society.
- Second, taking into consideration the practical and theoretical implications NGOs could be analyzed in the contexts of socio-cultural (economic), institutional, political parameters.
- Third, the theory of P. Joenniemi helped us to define the emergence model of NGOs in the Baltic States, what as a result in itself brings value for future analysis on development issues of civil society.
- Fourthly, the implication of progress evaluation defined that despite the regressive development of civil society activities, it

could be assumed that the development of civil society appears to become stable and progressive.

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Saulė Mačiukaitė-Žvinienė

Pilietinės visuomenės iššūkiai kuriant Baltijos regioną

Santrauka

Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjama nevyriausybių organizacijų kūrimo ir plėtros tendencijos skirtingose Baltijos šalyse: Estijoje, Latvijoje, Lietuvoje. Aptariami pagrindiniai pilietinės visuomenės politiniai bruožai ir jų vaidmuo Baltijos šalių demokratiniuose procesuose taikant kolektyvinių veiksmų teoriją. Taip pat straipsnyje tiriama nevyriausybių organizacijų aplinka Baltijos šalių regione, pateikiama pilietinės visuomenės plėtros galimybių istorinė apžvalga bei analizuojama pritaikant regionų kūrimo ir P. Joenniemi modelių teorijas.

Nagrinėjant pilietinės visuomenės plėtros tendencijas ir jų įtaką Baltijos šalių regionui pasirenkamas 1991–2006 m. laikotarpis, kuris skirstomas į smulkesnius periodus. Taip suskirsčius geriau atlikti objektyvų vertinimą ir susisteminti daugiau statistinių duomenų, leidžiančių išsamiau analizuoti pilietinės visuomenės dalyvavimo tendencijas ir atkreipti dėmesį į tuos faktorius, kurie lėmė pilietinės visuomenės keitimąsi per pastaruosius dešimtmečius: politinę aplinką; reformas; vertybių kaitą ir kt. Straipsnio pabaigoje pateikiamos išvados, leidžiančios daryti prielaidą, kad pilietinė visuomenė Baltijos šalyse yra progresyvi, tačiau jaučiama internacionalizavimo ir motyvacinės sistemos plėtros stoka.

Saulė Mačiukaitė-Žvinienė – Mykolo Romerio universiteto Strateginio valdymo ir politikos fakulteto Politikos mokslų katedros lektorė, daktarė.

Telefonas (8 5) 2714565;

Elektroninis paštas doktor@mruni.eu

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