

GOVERNMENT–NONPROFIT SECTOR RELATIONSHIP IN CROATIA: A THORNY ROAD

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The goal of this paper is to analyse the relationship between the nonprofit sector and the government in Croatia 1990–2020, by employing Young's typology of the government–nonprofit relationships. Based on a secondary data analysis, the paper provides historical overview, description and analysis of the development of the nonprofit sector and its relationship with the government. The paper proposes three periods of government–nonprofit relationship: first, 1990–1999, started with the economic and political transformation, coupled with the Homeland war; second, years 2000–2012, marked by intense building of institutions and policy frameworks for supporting nonprofit sector development, and third 2013–2020, marked by Europeanisation and new financial opportunities for NPOs. The paper argues that the Croatian case is characterized by a complex coexistence of all three of Young's models, and by a nonlinear and path-dependent relationship development.

Key words: nonprofit sector; civil society; government–nonprofit relationship; policy impact; Europeanisation

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1. INTRODUCTION ****

The growth of the nonprofit sector (NPS) in the last decades and its role in the delivery of public goods and services has led to the development of new processes and institutions for managing the relations between nonprofits (NPOs) and governments. Governments and nonprofits are inextricably linked in a complex series of interactions that shape their separate and shared interests.¹

Development trajectories and roles of nonprofit sectors in the postsocialist context of the CEE (Central and Eastern Europe) countries have been widely analysed.² However, there is a lack of analysis of how government–nonprofit relationships have developed since democratic transitions to the current period. Although there are a significant number of studies that look into individual countries (for example see specific country analysis in some reports)³ government–nonprofit relationships are rarely put in focus, or those are analysed in specific fields.⁴ Topics of government nonprofits relationship are not sufficiently investigated in the CEE region, especially in the former Yugoslavia countries.

On the other hand, although the history of the nonprofit sector in Croatia dates from the late 19th century, the “rediscovered” world of nonprofit initiatives in Croatia coincided with the turbulent political and economic transformation of society, and the deep crisis caused by the Homeland War in the early 1990s. Since then, government–nonprofit relationships in Croatia have been situated in the process of country transition and the later process of Europeanisation. Therefore, their development can present a valuable case in reflection on a wider postsocialist context.

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¹ Casey, J., *A Bridge Between US and International Perspectives: Deliberate Relations Between Governments and Nonprofits*, in: Brothers, J. (ed.), *Rebalancing Public Partnership*, Gower Publishing Ltd., Farnham, Surrey, 2015, pp. 93 – 108.

² Meyer, M.; Moder, C.; Neumayr, M.; Vandor, P., *Civil Society and Its Institutional Context in CEE*, *Voluntas*, vol. 31, 2020, pp. 811 – 827.

³ Vandor, P.; Traxler, N.; Milner, R.; Meyer, M., *Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe: Challenges and Opportunities*, ERSTE Foundation, Vienna, 2017; USAID, *Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index. Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia*, United States Agency for International Development, Washington, 2021.

⁴ Cox, T., *Between East and West: Government–Nonprofit Relations in Welfare Provision in Post-Socialist Central Europe*, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 49, no. 6, 2020, pp. 1276 – 1292.

The main goal of this paper is to analyse the government–nonprofit relationship in Croatia in the three decades (1990–2020). The main research questions are: a) what were the characteristics of the government–nonprofit relationship in different periods during those three decades, and b) what types of the government–nonprofit relationship evolved in a particular period?

After the introduction, the second part of the paper will give an overview of different attempts to develop models of government–nonprofit relationships and discuss in more detail one selected as the theoretical framework for this paper.

The central part of the paper will focus on the historical overview, description, and analysis of the development of the nonprofit sector⁵ and key points of its relationship with the government in the three key phases: the turbulent 1990s, the transformation period, and EU membership. In the chapter that follows, the paper will provide the analysis and assessment of government nonprofit relationships in thirty-year period through the theoretical lens of Young's⁶ model and Young and Casey's⁷ model of government–nonprofit relationships; presenting the specific findings in relation to the theoretical framework. The paper will partly rely on the historical institutionalism approach which suggests that political and societal outcomes are conditioned and emphasises the role that institutions play in structuring behaviour.⁸ Outcomes are conditioned both by path dependency and by critical junctures in time. The historical institutionalist approach has several key features: substantive agendas, temporal arguments, and attention

⁵ The nonprofit sector is sometimes used interchangeably with civil society. While the paper will not specifically address theoretical differences between concept of civil society and nonprofits, the term “nonprofit” and “nonprofit organisations (NPOs)” is mostly used as a signifier of main organisational forms associations and foundations (and their activity). They satisfy internationally recognised non-profit institutions defining features (United Nations, 2003). In Croatian research tradition, the term CSOs (civil society organisations) is also frequently used and signifies the same type of (nonprofit) organisations.

⁶ Young, D. R., *Alternative Models of Government–Nonprofit Sector Relations: Theoretical and International Perspective*, Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, vol. 29, no. 1, 2000.

⁷ Young, D. R.; Casey, J., *Supplementary, Complementary, or Adversarial? Nonprofit-Government Relations*, in: Boris, E.; Steuerle, C. (eds.), *Nonprofits & Government: Collaboration & Conflict*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, 2016, pp. 37 – 80.

⁸ Steinmo, S., *Historical institutionalism*, in: Della Porta, D.; Keating, M. (eds.), *Approaches and methodologies in the social sciences: A pluralist perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008, pp. 118 – 138.

to contexts and configurations.⁹ Historical institutionalists can focus on the qualitative analysis of case studies of nations to gain insights into changes in socioeconomic institutions over time¹⁰, an approach that this paper applies to the case of Croatia.¹¹ The paper is, therefore, based on desk research, which includes the collection and analysis of secondary data on the topics covered in the from various sources, scholarly publications, laws and strategies related to the nonprofit sector in the selected period, and other relevant documents.¹²

In the discussion and conclusion, the paper highlights the wider social and political context of government–nonprofit relationships in Croatia and possible implications for the future development of these relationships. The paper also reflects on how the Croatian case contributes to the knowledge of the nonprofit sector in CEE countries and identifies areas for further research.

⁹ Pierson, P.; Skocpol, T., *Historical institutionalism in contemporary political science*, in: Katznelson, I.; Milner, H. V. (eds.), *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 2002, pp. 639 – 721.

¹⁰ Kerlin, J. A., *Defining social enterprise across different contexts: A conceptual framework based on institutional factors*, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 42, no. 1, 2013, pp. 84 – 108.

¹¹ Although it is acknowledged that historical-institutionalists strategies of analysis vary in many ways (Pierson, Skocpol, *op. cit.* (fn. 9)).

¹² A literature sample for the desk research was compiled by identifying of all the relevant papers on the topics of government–nonprofit relationships in Croatia in several databases. The databases were a) Hrčak – a portal of Croatian scientific and professional journals (as this is a rather specific topic and most papers on the nonprofit sector in Croatia are written in Croatian); b) Google Scholar database (as it provides a wider scope of the search), c) online databases available at the authors' faculty (EBSCO). Additionally, the authors also identified papers via other methods: a) the authors consulted several experts in the field. After identification, the authors screened all the relevant papers and included the relevant ones in the analysis. The criteria for selecting laws and strategies were a) country based – Croatia, b) time period, 1990–2020, and c) included nonprofits/civil society as a part of the topics covered by the law or strategy. After the initial screening, ones that were relevant for shaping the development of the nonprofit sector were analysed.

2. THEORETICAL LENSES: GOVERNMENT–NONPROFIT RELATIONSHIPS

Government activities and nonprofit activities are interdependent in different ways. For example, by systematically reviewing thirty studies, Lu and Xu's¹³ study found a mostly positive association between the level of government activities and the level of nonprofit activities, but this relationship is generally weak and sometimes statistically insignificant.

One of the first models of government–nonprofit relations¹⁴ proposed four models of government–nonprofit relations based on the distinction between the finance and service delivery or provision function. Seibel organises the scholarship on government–nonprofit relationships as emerging from three major perspectives: analyses of resource flows, inter-organisational interaction styles, and of comparative advantage.¹⁵

Najam¹⁶ proposes a typology which states that types of government–nonprofit relationships can be (1) cooperation, in situations where both government and nonprofit organisations share similar goals and strategies; (2) co-opting, where government and nonprofit organisations have different goals but prefer similar strategies; (3) complementarity, a relationship that entails similar goals but different strategies for achieving them, and finally, (4) confrontation, which occurs when the goals and strategies of nonprofit organisations and government differ.¹⁷

¹³ Lu, J.; Xu, C., *Complementary or Supplementary? The Relationship Between Government Size and Nonprofit Sector Size*, *International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, vol. 29, no. 3, 2018, pp. 454 – 469.

¹⁴ Gidron, B.; Kramer, R. M.; Salamon, L. M., *Government and the third sector in comparative perspective: Allies or adversaries*, in: Gidron, B.; Kramer, R. M.; Salamon, L. M. (eds.), *Government and the third sector: Emerging relationships in welfare states*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1992, pp. 1 – 30.

¹⁵ Seibel, W., *Government–Nonprofit Relationships in a Comparative Perspective: The Cases of France and Germany*, in: McCarthy, K. D.; Hodgkinson, V. A.; Sumariwalla, R. D. and Associates (eds.), *The Nonprofit Sector in the Global Community: Voices from Many Nations*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1992, pp. 205 – 229.

¹⁶ Najam, A., *The Four-C's of Third Sector – Government Relations. Cooperation, Confrontation, Complementarity and Co-optation*, *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2000, pp. 375 – 396.

¹⁷ A few years before that, Coston developed a framework for assessing the state of government–nonprofit relations at the national level. Relationships include repression, rivalry, and competition (where government resists institutional pluralism); and cooperation, complementarity, and collaboration (where government accepts institutional pluralism). Her focus is the possibility of using this framework on a

Young's three ideal-type models of the nonprofit sector and government relationships¹⁸ recognise that nonprofits can relate to the government in three ways.¹⁹ In the first model, they can operate independently as supplements to government. This relies on the thesis that nonprofit organisations provide collective goods on a voluntary basis advanced by Weisbrod in his work on government failure in which governments follow the preferences of the median voter of a dominant political coalition and not all heterogeneous preferences can be satisfied.²⁰ In the second model, nonprofits work as complements to a government in a partnership relationship. This aspect was also advocated by Salamon²¹ who holds the view that nonprofits and the government are engaged primarily in a partnership or contractual relationship in which government finances public services and nonprofits deliver them.²² This model also relies on the economic theory of organisations, which considers that is more efficient or less costly for the government to delegate the delivery of services to other organisations (including nonprofits).²³ In the third model, the government and nonprofits are engaged in an adversarial relationship of mutual accountability with the government. Once again, this model heavily relies on the work of Weisbrod and the theory of government failure in different aspects, such as not representing minority views in public policy or views on how new public services come into being through advocacy.²⁴

case-by-case basis for specific nonprofit organisations and government agencies, or policy areas. See Coston J. M., *A model and typology of government–NGO relationships*, Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, vol. 27, no. 3, 1998, pp. 358–382.

¹⁸ In this work, he recognises that “formulation of public policy toward the private, nonprofit sector inevitably depends on how the framers of such policy view the nature of the relationship between nonprofit organisations and government”. See Young, *op. cit.* (fn. 6).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Weisbrod, B. A., *The voluntary nonprofit sector*, D.C. Heath and Company, Lexington, 1977.

²¹ Salamon, L. M., *Partners in Public service*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1995.

²² Also, in his social origins theory, countries of Eastern Europe represent the borderline area between the statist and social-democratic regime types: a relatively high level of government social spending coupled with a relatively small nonprofit sector.

²³ Coase, R. H., *The Firm, the Market and the Law*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1998; Steinberg, R., *Competition in contracted markets*, in: Kendall, J. (ed.), *The contract culture in public services*, Ashgate, London, 1997, pp. 161 – 179.

²⁴ Weisbrod, *op. cit.* (fn. 20), p. 4.

To briefly summarize the key features of Young's models, in the supplementary model, nonprofit organisations meet the demand that is not met by public services or the state.²⁵ Nonprofits are independent of the government. The complementary model describes the role of nonprofit organisations as partners in providing public services, which are mostly financed by the state. Nonprofits here are interdependent with the government. In an adversarial model, nonprofit organisations act toward the state with a desire to change public policy or hold the government accountable to citizens. Nonprofits are in an antagonistic relationship with the government.

In addition, some new attempts to analyse government–nonprofit relationships have emerged. Sidel maps intersectoral dynamics along a continuum, from “governance by proxy,” in which a transactional, principal-agent dynamic dominates, to “relational governance” in which partnerships are the mode of interaction.²⁶ Grønbjerg and Smith look into government–nonprofit relations framework in different specific policy fields highlighting different aspects such as rules, norms, isomorphic pressures, power relations, and networks that influence those relationships.²⁷ Marwell and Brown's analysis focuses attention on the use of different tools that allow government actors to steer the relationship.²⁸ Toepler *et al.*²⁹ provide an extended typology of government–nonprofit relationship patterns, which integrates the foundational conceptions of Salamon³⁰, Young³¹, and Najam³² to develop their framework, and has been illustrated with the cases of Russia and China.

²⁵ Young, *op. cit.* (fn. 6), p. 3; Young, Casey, *op. cit.* (fn. 7), p. 3.

²⁶ Sidel, M., *The Federalization Problem and Nonprofit Self-Regulation: Some Initial Thoughts*, Kentucky Law Journal, vol. 99, no. 4, 2011, pp. 783 – 798.

²⁷ Grønbjerg, K.; Smith, S., *The Changing Dynamic of Government–Nonprofit Relationships*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2021.

²⁸ Marwell, N.; Brown, M., *Towards a Governance Framework for Government–Nonprofit Relations*, in: Powell, W.; Bromley, P. (eds.), *The Nonprofit Sector*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2020, pp. 231 – 250.

²⁹ Toepler, S.; Zimmer, A.; Levy, K.; Fröhlich, C., *Beyond the Partnership Paradigm: Toward an Extended Typology of Government/Nonprofit Relationship Patterns*, Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, vol. 52, no. 6, 2023, pp. 1448 – 1474.

³⁰ Salamon, L., *Of market failure, voluntary failure, and third-party government*, Journal of Voluntary Action Research, vol. 16, no. 1–2, 1987, pp. 29 – 49.

³¹ Young, *op. cit.* (fn. 6).

³² Najam, *op. cit.* (fn. 16).

From the different presented theoretical models, the paper will use theoretical lenses of government–nonprofit relationships developed by Young.³³ Although some other models were developed (and some have similar models like Najam³⁴, or new more extended ones, for example, Toepler *et al.*³⁵) this model was more widely empirically applied. The second, more important reason, is that Young's model is "simple but elegant".³⁶ It is flexible enough to provide a broader lens to describe the longer-term historical developments (thirty years since independence) in government–nonprofit relationships in Croatia. Young's model sees the relationship between the government and nonprofits as a multi-layered phenomenon in which different models are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, models can coexist, layer, and reverse, which is well suited for analysing the path-dependent, nonlinear development documented in CEE literature.³⁷

Based on presented theoretical frameworks, different government–nonprofit relationships models have not been widely tested, especially in CEE post-socialist countries. Therefore, the paper strives to partly fill this gap, and apply one of the theoretically developed models in the previously not applied case.

3. GOVERNMENT–NONPROFIT RELATIONSHIP IN CROATIA: DEVELOPMENT PERIODS

3.1. Short historical note

Although the history of the nonprofit sector organised services in Croatia dates from the late 19th century, the role of NPOs and civic initiatives has been addressed from the 1990s onwards. In the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, civil society initiatives were related to brotherhoods and other mutual organisations, as well as foundations, often linked to the Catholic Church and

³³ Young, *op. cit.* (fn. 6).

³⁴ Najam, *op. cit.* (fn. 16).

³⁵ Toepler *et al.*, *op. cit.* (fn. 29).

³⁶ Najam, *op. cit.* (fn. 16).

³⁷ Ekiert, G.; Foa, R., *Civil Society Weakness in Postcommunist Europe: A Preliminary Assessment*, Carlo Alberto Notebooks, no. 198, 2020, pp. 1 – 45; European Civic Forum, *Activizenship, Civic Space Watch Report*, 2020. See also Foa, R. S.; Ekiert, G., *The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society Reassessed*, European Journal of Political Research, vol. 56, no. 2, 2017; Meyer *et al.*, *op. cit.* (fn. 2).

nobility, which pursued important cultural, social, and educational goals.³⁸ The enlightened middle classes, and among them especially socially responsible entrepreneurs, contributed to the development of education, culture and art.³⁹ Those examples of bottom-up nonprofit initiatives played an important role in the processes of modernisation and development of the institutional framework for public social and healthcare programmes.⁴⁰

The development of the nonprofit sector during the socialist period in Croatian history was characterized by the relative marginalisation of the sector and the paternalistic role of the state in social policy and service provision, where the activities of civil society were largely suspended.

With the concept of self-management and with a certain level of decentralisation, controlled by Communist Party, this system differed from the Soviet model. In general, the socialist regime had a profound and long-lasting impact on the development of civic initiatives, whose effects tend to remain over time. This can be observed in the lack of civic virtues, where even citizens today are not keen on self-organising or taking on social responsibility outside the realm of family and kinship, and have high expectations from the state to solve their problems or meet their needs.⁴¹

In the mid-1980s, and especially towards the end of the decade⁴², independent initiatives of intellectuals as well as ecological, human rights, and women's groups arose in Croatia, pursuing the right of association and thus becoming the forefront of civil society development.⁴³ The "rediscovered" world of civil society

³⁸ Bežovan, G., *Civilno društvo i kombinirana socijalna politika*, in: Puljiz, V.; Bežovan, G.; Matković, T.; Šućur, Z.; Zrinščak, S. (eds.), *Socijalna politika Hrvatske*, Pravni fakultet, Zagreb, 2019.

³⁹ Maruševski, O., *Društvo umjetnosti 1868.–1879.–1941.*, DPUH, Zagreb, 2004.

⁴⁰ Bežovan, G.; Zrinščak, S., *Postaje li civilno društvo u Hrvatskoj čimbenikom društvenih promjena?*, Croatian Journal of Social Policy, vol. 14, no. 1, 2007, pp. 1 – 27. See also Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn. 38).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² More on development of civil society in the countries on the territory of the former Yugoslavia since the 1980s in Fink-Hafner, D. (ed.), *The Development of Civil Society in the Countries on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since the 1980s*, Založba FDV, Ljubljana, 2015.

⁴³ Deacon, B.; Stubbs, P.; Soroya, B., *Globalizacija, postkomunizam i socijalna politika: teme u Hrvatskoj*, Revija za socijalnu politiku, vol. 1, no. 4, 1994, pp. 333 – 338; Stubbs, P., *Nationalisms, Globalisation, and Civil Society in Croatia and Slovenia*, Research in Social Movements, Conflict and Change, vol. 19, 1996, pp. 1 – 26; Davidkov, T.; Hegyesie, G.; Ledic, J.; Randma, T.; Behr, G.; Kessler, D.; Sulek, M.; Payton, R., *The Future of Third-Sector Teaching and Research in Central and Eastern Europe*, Voluntas, vol. 11, no.

in Croatia coincided with the turbulent political and economic transformation of society, and the deep crisis caused by the Homeland War in the early 1990s.

3.1.1. *Short note on a current scope, structure, and finance of the Croatian nonprofit sector*

The size of the nonprofit sector has increased considerably in the last 35 years. The number of associations increased from 12,000 in 1990 to some 52,000 at the end of 2015.⁴⁴ In the same year, there were 24,440 associations in the Register (46.8% of the total number of registered associations) that are considered inactive.

In 2016, donations made up the largest proportion of income sources for nonprofit organisations (28%), of which 60% are donations from the budget, followed by revenue generated under special regulations (27%). Membership fees account for 14% of income, while through social entrepreneurship 19% of revenue is generated.⁴⁵ The latest available data on the structure of funding of associations from the public sources for 2019 shows that 22.56% of public funding came from local governments' budgets, 17.18% from the lottery, 15.73% from EU funds, 14.29% from the state budget, and 11.29% from the City of Zagreb.⁴⁶

Recent research on foundations in Croatia shows that 53% of fundraising foundations raised funds from domestic individuals, 50% from domestic companies, 33% from local self-government, 8% from foreign individuals and 5% from foreign companies.⁴⁷

2, 2000, pp. 181 – 190; Petak, Z.; Vidačak, I., *The Political and Institutional Determinants of Civil society Development in Croatia since the 1980s*, in: Fink-Hafner, *op. cit.* (fn. 42); Lay, V.; Puđak, J., *Civilno društvo i udruge na području zaštite okoliša u Hrvatskoj 1989–2014*, *Ekonomika i ekohistorija*, vol. 10, no. 10, 2014, pp. 26 – 40.

⁴⁴ Bežovan, G., *Shrinking Space for Civil Society Development in Croatia*, in: Hummel, S.; Graf Strachwitz, R. (eds.), *Contested Civic Spaces. A European Perspective*, Walter de Gruyter GmbH, Berlin, Boston, 2023.

⁴⁵ Vašiček, D.; Sikirić, A. M.; Kostić, M. D., *Financial Position and Sustainability of Associations in Croatia*, *Central European Public Administration Review*, vol. 17, no. 1, 2019, pp. 93 – 110.

⁴⁶ Ured za udruge, *Izvršće o financiranju projekata i programa organizacija civilnoga društva iz javnih izvora u 2019. godini*, Ured za udruge, Zagreb, 2021.

⁴⁷ Bežovan, G.; Matančević, J., *Contemporary challenges of Foundations in Croatia: How Recent Crises Affect Their Operation? Paper presented at the 11th International ERNOP Conference, "Philanthropy and Crises: Roles and Functioning of Philanthropy in Times of Societal Upheavals"*, Zagreb, 29–30 June 2023.

A study on benchmarking the socio-economic performance of the EU social economy⁴⁸ gives recent data on some of the basic characteristics of the sector in Croatia.

Institutional entity	Number of entities	Number of employees	Turnover (in mil. EUR)	Number of volunteers
Associations	49,294 (25,941) ⁴⁹	20,381	1,133	45,201 ⁵⁰
Foundations	311 (207)	280	61	161

Source: European Commission, *Benchmarking the socio-economic performance of the EU social economy – Improving the socio-economic knowledge of the proximity and social economy ecosystem*, Publications Office of the European Union, Brussels, 2024.

At the end of 2020, the majority of associations are from the field of sport (33%) and culture (22%).⁵¹ Currently, there are 45,113 associations in the Register of Associations.⁵²

3.2. Government–nonprofit relationship in Croatia: characteristics in different development periods

In the analysis, the three periods are delineated by the key political turning points, and relate to changes in political orientations, policy development, the financial and institutional framework for the nonprofit sector, as well as changes in governance and discourse on the nonprofit sector. The first period began with the major political (but also social and economic) transformation at the beginning of the 1990s. The transition from socialism to democracy introduced pluralism and opened up space for civil society. This period lasted until 1999 and was marked by the political rule of the HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union) and the presidency of F. Tuđman. The second delineated period started in 2000, which coincided with the first change in government after 1990 when the coa-

⁴⁸ Carini, C.; Galera, G.; Tallarini, G.; Chaves Avila, R.; Sak, B.; Schoenmaeckers, J., *Benchmarking the Socio-Economic Performance of the EU Social Economy: Improving the Socio-Economic Knowledge of the Proximity and Social Economy Ecosystem*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024.

⁴⁹ Registered associations and those considered to be active.

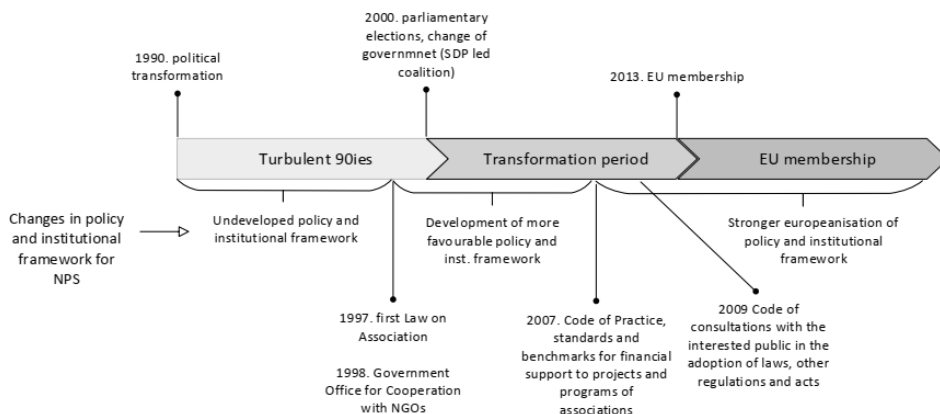
⁵⁰ That number is tracked in the annual reports on volunteer organizers submitted to the relevant Ministry.

⁵¹ Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn 44).

⁵² <https://registri-npo-mpu.gov.hr/#!udruge> (20 May 2022.).

lition headed by SDP (Social Democratic Party) came to power. Although the second period covers subsequent changes in governments⁵³, political changes in 2000 were a significant turning point in government–nonprofit relations by creating a more favourable environment for NPO's operations and legitimacy, as well as by introducing good governance principles. Even though the pre-accession period already positively influenced the nonprofit sector and strengthened its role in governance, the accession to the EU in 2013 can be defined as a starting point of the third period in this analysis, since it further strengthened the legitimacy and position of NPOs vis-à-vis the government, primarily through the availability of more generous financial support.

Graph 1: Illustration of key political and policy changes related to government–nonprofit relationship' (in the period 1990–2020)



Source: author's own analysis

3.2.1. Turbulent years (1990–1999)

The years 1990–1999 were the period in which initial government–nonprofit relationships were formed. Speaking of changes in Croatia after socialism, Puljiz points out two important factors – the transition and Homeland War.⁵⁴ Coupled with the humanitarian crisis and growing social needs, they influenced the pace of development of the nonprofit sector.

⁵³ And we can note the resurgence of corruption and clientelism with the change of government the end 2003/beginning 2004 under the Prime Minister Ivo Sanader (later convinced of corruption).

⁵⁴ Puljiz, V., *Trendovi u socijalnoj politici Hrvatske*, Revija za socijalnu politiku, vol. 3, no. 3–4, 1996, pp. 273 – 284.

The war strengthened solidarity and promoted ideological homogenisation of society and identification with nation-state. This significantly reduced the space for the emergence and recognition of pluralism and the potential for various forms of civil disobedience.⁵⁵ Unlike other transition countries, Croatia has significantly lagged behind in the development of the nonprofit sector⁵⁶ in terms of the availability of necessary resources.

In the early 1990s, anti-war and human rights⁵⁷ civic initiatives as well as those promoting feminist, environmental, and cultural goals were established. However, the abovementioned war circumstances led to the emergence of humanitarian organisations working with refugees, with significant support from abroad (e.g., USAID, UNHCR, and the EU), whereas other nonprofit organisations were rather marginal and partly suppressed.⁵⁸ In the 1990s national identification and state-building in the context of an ongoing crisis also led to a complex kind of “welfare parallelism”⁵⁹ between the government assistance programmes and agencies, and the large numbers of international organisations (supranational and nongovernmental), whose role became contested in the context of an assertion of national sovereignty and national identity.

Funding was often short-term and project-oriented and reflected donor values. NPOs were primarily funded by foreign donations.⁶⁰ There was a danger that civil

⁵⁵ Petak, Vidačak, *op. cit.* (fn. 43).

⁵⁶ Bežovan, G., *Croatia, Družboslovne rasprave*, vol. 11, no. 19–20, 1995, pp. 29 – 40; Bežovan, G., *Privatni neprofitni sektor i razvoj socijalnog režima u Hrvatskoj*, Revija za socijalnu politiku, vol. 3, no. 3-4, 1996, pp. 299 – 311.

⁵⁷ Like the Croatian anti-war campaign (ARK), founded by activists of pre-war green and cultural initiatives. Osijek Peace Centre was one of the founding members of ARK and ARK led to many spin-offs. Also, organisations such as the Civic Committee for Human Rights, the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights (HHO), the Dalmatian Human Rights Committee, Arkzin, see: Škrabalo, M., *Izgradnja mira i razvoj zajednice – povezanost pristupa*, in: Škrabalo, M.; Miošić Lisjak, N.; Papa, J. (eds.), *Mobilizacija i razvoj zajednice – akcijsko istraživanje u Hrvatskoj*, MAP, Zagreb, 2006; Dvornik, S., *Akteri bez društva – Uloga civilnih aktera u postkomunističkim promjenama*, Fondacija Heinrich Böll, Zagreb, 2009.

⁵⁸ Bežovan, G., *Izazovi razvoja kombinirane socijalne politike u Hrvatskoj* (istraživački izvještaj), CERANEO, Zagreb, 2007; Puljiz, *op. cit.* (fn. 54).

⁵⁹ Stubbs, P.; Zrinščak, S., *Europeizacija i socijalna politika: između retorike i stvarnosti*, in: Puljiz, V.; Ravlić, S.; Visković, V. (eds.), *Hrvatska u Europskoj uniji: kako dalje?* Centar za demokraciju i pravo Miko Tripalo, Zagreb, 2012.

⁶⁰ Bežovan, G.; Zrinščak, S., *Postaje li civilno društvo u Hrvatskoj čimbenikom društvenih promjena?* Croatian Journal of Social Policy, vol. 14, no. 1, 2007, pp. 1 – 27.

society was led by maintaining funding⁶¹, rather than recognising and addressing the real needs of society. Such programs led to foreign donor dependency, and the subsequent withdrawal of foreign funds led to increased financial instability among NPOs. However, it has also been shown that foreign technical and financial programs contributed to the development of some important social services.⁶²

After the war ended in 1995, the division between domestic and international NPOs became less prominent.⁶³ On the other hand, the number of associations that emerged from the Homeland War developed which, despite many internal differences and conflicts, were largely regarded as a separate part of civil society in Croatia, whose perception of political and social reality is still inseparable from the experience of the war.⁶⁴

In the first half of the 1990s, the policy and sociocultural environment for the development of the nonprofit sector was rather unfavourable, in which NPOs faced various restrictions, and a certain degree of state control.⁶⁵

The government was particularly suspicious of the organisations dealing with the human rights, democratisation and the development of civil society in general and towards foreign funding of these organisations.⁶⁶ The government during that period used the media to defame the sector. The government's accusations that such organisations were foreign hirelings and spies had a strong impact on the public's attitude toward NPOs.^{67, 68} Cooperation and dialogue between NPOs and the state were limited and conflictual.

In 1997, the first Law on Associations was adopted, which was later repealed by the Constitutional Court, because it was not in line with the constitutional provisions of freedom of association. The tax framework hindered the development of the sector.⁶⁹

⁶¹ Deacon, B.; Stubbs, P.; Soroya, B., *Globalizacija, postkomunizam i socijalna politika: teme u Hrvatskoj*, Revija za socijalnu politiku, vol. 1, no. 4, 1994, pp. 333 – 338.

⁶² Bežovan, Zrinščak, *op. cit.* (fn. 60).

⁶³ Stubbs, P.; Zrinščak, S. *Croatian social policy: the legacies of war, state-building and late Europeanization*, Social Policy & Administration, vol. 43, no. 2, 2009, pp. 121 – 135.

⁶⁴ Škrabalo, *op. cit.* (fn. 57).

⁶⁵ Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn. 56).

⁶⁶ Bežovan, G., *Zakonski, politički i kulturni okvir za razvoj civilnog društva u Hrvatskoj*, Revija za socijalnu politiku, vol. 10, no. 1, 2003, pp. 23 – 44.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Mainly, The Open Society Institute Croatia and other donor organisations were threatened by the government and frequently exposed to attacks in the media controlled by the government.

⁶⁹ Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn. 56), pp. 29 – 40.

Under pressure from abroad, the government established the Governmental Office for Cooperation with NGOs in 1998, which contributed considerably to increasing the transparency of funds allocated from the state budget, and it organised several education programmes that were attended by representatives of NPOs, the state and, most importantly, local authorities.⁷⁰

USAID CSO Sustainability Index results states that the legal environment and advocacy aspects of nonprofit “ecosystem” were underdeveloped and under serious constraints until 2000. After that, they improved somewhat and are stable with minor oscillations from year to year.⁷¹

3.2.2. Transformation period

The second period (2000–2012) is characterized by some notable legislative changes and development of infrastructure as well as a political reorientation in government–nonprofit relations. By the end of the 1990s, nonprofit organisations and wider civil society efforts played a role in the mobilisation of the Croatian public to elect a new coalition government at the beginning of 2000⁷², which was positively inclined towards civil society.⁷³ Better cooperation was established between the state and NPOs, and the latter were frequently invited to cooperate in the implementation of various projects. In 2000, the Government delivered the first Programme of Cooperation between the Government and the nongovernmental, nonprofit Sector in the Republic of Croatia. However, a number of experts considered this cooperation merely declarative, and not a true contribution to establishing successful partnerships between the state and civil society.⁷⁴

International donors continued to withdraw, and nonprofits started to rely on steady government financing. Foreign influence contributed to the “NGO-isation” of nonprofit sector organisations and to a new type of activism which gained

⁷⁰ Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn. 38).

⁷¹ USAID, *2017 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index: Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia*, United States Agency for International Development, Washington, 2018; USAID, *2016 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index: Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia*, United States Agency for International Development, Washington, 2017.

⁷² Some also highlight the role of the Croatian trade unions in overthrowing the Croatian Democratic Union regime, Grdešić, M., *Tranzicija, sindikati i političke elite u Sloveniji i Hrvatskoj*, *Politička misao*, vol. 43, no. 4, 2006, pp. 121 – 141.

⁷³ Kovačić, M., *An Assessment of the Role of Civil Society in the Democratic Consolidation: A Comparative Analysis of Croatia and Serbia* (Master’s thesis), Central European University, Department of Political Science, Budapest, 2011.

⁷⁴ Bežovan, G., *Civilno društvo (drugo izdanje)*, Nakladni zavod Globus, Zagreb, 2005.

political relevance at the expense of grassroots and other dissident movements. This development, as in other transitional countries⁷⁵, increased the gap between citizens and civil society organisations, and contributed to the massive rise of new channels of popular discontent that began to be driven by conservative political actors. Against this background, it is not surprising that civil society has been perceived as weak with regard to its ability to engage citizens.⁷⁶

As regards the institutional and policy environment, a number of institutions supporting the development of the nonprofit sector were established: Council for Civil Society Development in 2002, the National Foundation for Civil Society Development in 2003, and the National Committee for the Development of Volunteering in 2009. Further, a more favourable tax framework for NPOs was created, comparable to those of transitional and developed countries.⁷⁷ The first national Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development (2006–2011) advocated the involvement of civil society organisations in the provision of public services in the fields of social welfare, health and education. It also introduced the term social entrepreneurship and emphasised it as a strategy for achieving the financial sustainability of civil society organisations.

The second half of this period was characterised by intensified pre-accession processes and Europeanisation of different policy fields, including those relating to nonprofits. Some policy standards from the EU level were implemented in Croatia: the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, and consultations have become an integral part of various documents and public discourse on civil society.⁷⁸ Commitment to these principles was expressed in the policy documents that followed: the Code of Practice, Standards and Benchmarks for financial support to projects and programmes of associations, adopted in 2007, and the Code of Consultation with the interested public in the adoption of laws, other regulations and acts, adopted in 2009. As regards the latter, the constant increase in the number of consultations conducted suggests partial strengthen-

⁷⁵ Navrátil, J.; Lin, K.; Cox, L., *Movements in Post-Socialisms*, Interface: a journal for and about social movements, vol. 7, no. 2, 2015, pp. 1 – 8.

⁷⁶ Bežovan, G.; Matančević, J.; Baturina, D., *External and Internal Barriers to Third Sector Development – Croatia*, Working paper part of work package 5 “External and Internal Barriers to Third Sector Development” of the research project entitled “Third Sector Impact”, 2016.

⁷⁷ Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn. 60).

⁷⁸ Baturina, D.; Bežovan, G.; Matančević, J., *Challenges of third sector development in Croatia*, in: Auferbauer, M.; Berc, G.; Heimgartner, A.; Rihter, Lj.; Sundbay, R., (eds.), *Social Development Today: Ways of Understanding & Practices*, LIT Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, Wien, Zurich, 2019, pp. 69 – 87.

ing of openness in the work of state bodies; although the consultation system has numerous shortcomings, there was little interest in participation, especially in the beginning, and on the other hand, public bodies were not receptive to suggestions from civil society and the public.⁷⁹

Notwithstanding the (declaratory) improvements in governance mechanisms and policy-making processes, NPOs were facing obstacles for greater involvement in policymaking and cooperation with the government.⁸⁰ Cooperation between the state and NPOs in service delivery, notably in the area of social services, was marked by certain levels of mistrust of professionals coming from the public organisations in the professional capacities and competencies of the NPOs in service provision.⁸¹ Nevertheless, earlier insights noted that in this period NPOs earned the status of co-governors in certain policy fields, such as protection of vulnerable groups, environmental protection or several others.⁸²

3.2.3. EU membership period

Contrary to the notion of a rapid democratic consolidation in the CEE countries since their accession, the Europeanisation process is treated here as an inherently ambivalent process for the nonprofit sector, which can even reinforce barriers to development of the sector.⁸³ On the one hand, accession conditionality and EU funding enhanced the legitimacy, resources, and policy role of NPOs⁸⁴; on the other, EU engagement fostered project-based dependen-

⁷⁹ Vidačak, I.; Đurman, P., *Savjetovanje s javnošću u donošenju propisa: kvaliteta javnog odlučivanja i sudjelovanje građana*, in: Koprić, I.; Musa, A.; Giljević, T. (eds.), *Građani, javna uprava i lokalna samouprava: povjerenje, suradnja, potpora*, Institut za javnu upravu, Zagreb, 2017, pp. 73 – 104; Jakopčević, M., *Mogućnosti i praksa sudjelovanja civilnog društva u oblikovanju javnih politika u Republici Hrvatskoj* (diplomski rad), Sveučilište u Zagrebu Pravni fakultet, Zagreb, 2018.

⁸⁰ Matančević, J.; Bežovan, G., *Domesti i ključni čimbenici razvoja civilnog društva u Hrvatskoj temeljem tri vala istraživanja*, Revija za socijalnu politiku, vol. 20, no. 1, 2013, pp. 21 – 41; ODRAZ, *Sudjelovanje udruga u postupcima izrade i donošenja zakona i drugih akata u Republici Hrvatskoj u 2009. godini*, ODRAZ, Zagreb, 2009.

⁸¹ Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn. 58).

⁸² Bežovan, G.; Matančević, J.; Baturina, D., *Country Report: Croatia*, in: Vandor *et al.*, *op. cit.* (fn. 3).

⁸³ Kutter, A.; Trappmann, V., *Civil society in Central and Eastern Europe: the ambivalent legacy of accession*, Acta Politica, vol. 45, no. 1–2, 2010, pp. 41 – 69.

⁸⁴ Gąsior-Niemiec and Gliński demonstrate on the example of Poland that the EU's accession triggered the involvement of civil society organisations in newly created

cy, administrative disciplining, and professionalisation. This dual dynamic, empowerment and projectification, is central to understanding the Croatian experience described below.

Whereas the Europeanisation process facilitated the transfer of formal democratic institutions and compliance with governance norms (participation, consultation, transparency), the creation of corresponding informal institutions, especially vibrant civil society, has remained undeveloped and absent, or they developed in the form of negative, clientelist and corrupt informal institutions.⁸⁵ Therefore, some authors go as far as to describe the processes of de-democratisation and de-Europeanisation, in terms of the decline of democracy and good governance.⁸⁶ Therefore, the EU membership can facilitate democratic backsliding and paradoxically even support the survival of authoritarian governments once the accession conditionality is removed⁸⁷, where the ruling parties exploit EU structural funds to consolidate clientele networks while formally maintaining compliance with EU norms.

Although the processes of Europeanisation⁸⁸ and endeavours to establish a modern governance structure had already started in the previous period, as a part of pre-accession, Croatia's accession to the European Union in 2013 gave further impetus to Europeanisation of certain policies and to legitimizing NPOs as actors in policy-making and service provision.

For example, the Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development for the following period (2012–2016), emphasised the further progress in the role of civil society in the preparation, adoption and implementation of public policies. Also, the concepts of social innovation and social entrepreneurship were introduced, as possible pathways for nonprofits' contribution to social and economic development. The first Strategy for the development of social entrepreneurship for the period 2015–2020 was adopted, which is seen as a step forward in the development of the policy framework

governance structures related to the structural funds. See: Gašior-Niemiec, A.; Gliński, P., *Europeanization of civil society in Poland*, *Revija za socijalnu politiku*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2007, pp. 29 – 47.

⁸⁵ Ágh, A., *The Decline of Democracy in East-Central Europe: Hungary as the Worst-Case Scenario*, *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 63, no. 5–6, 2016, pp. 277 – 287.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Kelemen, R. D., *The European Union's authoritarian equilibrium*, *Journal of European Public Policy*, vol. 27, no. 3, 2020, pp. 481 – 499.

⁸⁸ Similar to some other countries entering the EU, for example, see concept of cognitive Europeanisation in Guillén, A. M.; Álvarez, S., *The EU's Impact on the Spanish Welfare State: The Role of Cognitive Europeanization*, *Journal of European Social Policy*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2004, pp. 285 – 299.

for this field. However, the new Law on Associations adopted in 2014 and the new Law on Financial Transactions and Accounting of Nonprofit Organisations enforced in 2015 were less favourable and were restricting of freedom of association by overregulating the non-profit sector. In sum, developments in the policy framework in this period were not unambiguous and straightforward. Failure of the government to deliver the Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2017–2021 after it was drafted, as well as hindering the operation of the Council for Civil Society Development at the beginning of 2020⁸⁹, meant deterioration of the policy and institutional framework for NPOs and strengthening of adversarial relations with the government.

Contrary to the above-described substantial policy improvements and traits of Europeanisation of the policy framework for civil society, research shows less optimistic findings when it comes to government–NPO cooperation in policy-making and service delivery.

The impact of citizens and NPOs on public policy remains relatively limited. The government and local authorities do not regularly invite NPOs to participate in public policy-making. There is still a perception that the state interferes excessively in the activities of NPOs and maintains a paternalistic attitude.⁹⁰ Still, local authorities appear to be more supportive of NPOs than the national government.⁹¹

Generally, the relationship between the (local) government and the nonprofit sector is predominantly one-way, and mainly boils down to the funding of the NPOs from public sources, and less often takes the form of cooperation on projects or the exchange of experience and information.

New areas of the nonprofit sector's activity are often not recognised by the state.⁹² On the other hand, the limited capacity and non-responsiveness of the state to deal with new social problems and risks connected to the global crisis in 2008 opened up space for new bottom-up civil society initiatives. Some specific new social problems such as evictions or people with housing loans denominated in Swiss francs and citizens whose bank accounts were blocked (on the verge of personal bankruptcy) were addressed by civil society initiatives that tended to

⁸⁹ See: <https://gong.hr/2021/02/09/imenujte-predstavnik-tijela-javne-vlasti-u-savjet/> (10 May 2022).

⁹⁰ Matančević, Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn. 80).

⁹¹ Bežovan *et al.*, *op. cit.* (fn. 78).

⁹² Baturina, D., *Utjecaj trećeg sektora na socio-ekonomski razvoj Hrvatske*, Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb, 2016.

become institutionalised as political parties⁹³ in the attempt to assert changes by gaining institutional power.

In the pre-accession period, NPOs were at the forefront of promoting the EU policy agenda, putting some policy issues that were not articulated in the national context and new vulnerable groups on the national agenda. They were also engaged in important work in building know-how for applying for EU funds.

4. ANALYSIS OF TYPES OF GOVERNMENT–NONPROFIT RELATIONSHIPS IN CROATIA

From the perspective of the stated theoretical framework, we can find in the Croatian case the features of each of the three Young's models⁹⁴ of the relationship between the nonprofit sector and the government, as a multi-layered phenomenon. As in Young's models⁹⁵, it should be noted that three different models are by no means mutually exclusive, are multilayered and have blurred boundaries. The analysis highlights the dynamics of government–nonprofit relationships and how that relationship has changed over time. Against the background of the Young's typology, the Croatian case is analysed mainly by applying the broader indicators of service supply (type of provider, state vs. nonprofit), source of funding (presence or absence of state funding programmes for nonprofit organisations), and general discourses on civil society and/or nonprofit sector in a given period.

The supplementary model is characterised by NPOs providing collective goods in areas of state absence or under-provision. In the Croatian case, supplementary provision was most visible during the 1990s war crisis, when foreign humanitarian and social NPOs addressed acute social needs that the newly established state could not meet, and persisted thereafter in social services and social innovation niches where public provision remained structurally underdeveloped.

The complementary model is evidenced by formal funding arrangements, NPOs' participation in state-defined policy processes and state recognition of NPOs as service-delivery partners. In the Croatian case, the complementary model gained ground during the EU pre-accession and accession periods, evidenced by the gradual construction of a funding and policy framework, NPO

⁹³ Cepić, D.; Kovačić, M., *Civil Society Going Political: The Crisis of Democracy and the Rise of Participatory Political Parties in Croatia*, Contemporary Southeastern Europe, vol. 2, no. 1, 2015, pp. 24 – 44.

⁹⁴ Young, *op. cit.* (fn. 6).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

participation in (some of) governance processes, and the deepening of partnership roles through EU structural funds.

The adversarial model is characterised by exclusionary governmental discourse, absence of cooperation mechanisms, and NPO advocacy contesting state actions (or inactions). In the Croatian case, adversarial features were most pronounced in the 1990s, marked by mutual mistrust and negative state discourse against NPOs, and exclusion from political processes. These features persisted over time and resurfaced more evidently in the EU membership period through the deterioration of the strategic policy framework and the marginalisation of NPOs in different processes.

Table 1: Summary of the characteristics of the development of the government–nonprofit relationship in Croatia through the lens of Young’s models

Period / Young’s model	Supplementary model	Complementary model	Adversarial model
Turbulent Nineties	(Foreign) humanitarian and social NPOs dealing with the war crisis; Parallelism in social programmes; Act on Social Care in 1998 opened space for growth of non-state service providers		Antagonistic relationship and mutual mistrust; NPOs, especially those dealing with human rights and democratisation, are portrayed negatively by the government
Transformational period	NPOs in social services still partly operating as a supplement to government programmes	NPOs gaining legitimacy; Significant improvements in the policy and institutional framework for NPOs; Introduction of good governance in policy-making, with greater involvement of NPOs, especially with the start of the EU pre-accession period	
EU membership	NPOs in social services still partly operating as a supplement to government programmes	Participation in EU funds strengthened partnership of NPOs and public bodies	Deterioration of policy framework (failure to deliver strategic documents), partly negative discourse on nonprofit sector

At the beginning of the analysed period, government–nonprofit relations started to evolve on an adversarial basis. Civil society was not given space and role in political, economic and social transformation. The relationship was characterised by mistrust towards the sector. Notwithstanding positive developments in the following periods, and endeavours to build partnership relationships, adversarial contours remained over time and even intensified in the last years, largely due to political reservations towards the sector, and misunderstanding of its mission in society.

The state was often characterised as centralised, bureaucratised⁹⁶ and often ineffective with poorer capacities of strategic thinking and cooperation, whereas nonprofits are more flexible, a greater source of innovation, more adaptable, and closer to citizens.⁹⁷

One of the paradoxes of citizen participation in the nonprofit sector is that state mechanisms have taken over the identity and key roles in the development of the sector (through support institutions or more indirectly), which limits the strength of the social capital of the bottom-up initiatives and their impact on spheres such as public policy and advocacy.⁹⁸ At the local levels where interaction can be closer relationships also often depend on political support or political support towards the sector.

Excessive regulation of NPOs from the 1990s till today within the legislative framework⁹⁹ can be interpreted as distrust of the government to citizens' self-organisation and private non-profit activities. As far as accountability and performance requirements are concerned, there is a growing expectation towards the sector, which is partly reflected in increased bureaucracy and bidding pro-

⁹⁶ For example, Croatia ranks 35th (of 38 countries) in the International Civil Service Effectiveness Index, <https://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/about/partnerships/international-civil-service-effectiveness-index-2019> (10.5.2022.).

⁹⁷ Bežovan, G.; Matančević, J., *Civilno društvo i pozitivne promjene*, Školska knjiga, Zagreb, 2017.

⁹⁸ The freedom of expression and the advocacy of NPOs are constantly improving and NPOs are increasingly recognised as stakeholders, in some fields they are even playing the role of co-governor (Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn. 58); Matančević, Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn. 80)). Although, the respondents in one of the researches (Baturina, Bežovan, Matančević, *op. cit.* (fn. 78)) notice a diminished government support, but also trends like a shrinking democratic space and the pushing of civil society organisations more into the direction of service providers (for new social risks or in educational reform, for example) than that of advocacy or policy-making, in which they are perceived to participate in a decorative and token way.

⁹⁹ Bežovan, Matančević, Baturina, *op. cit.* (fn. 76); Baturina, Bežovan, Matančević, *op. cit.* (fn. 78).

cedures.¹⁰⁰ It exhausts the capacities of organisations, diverts them from their mission and reduces the influence of organisations.

The second analysed period brought positive changes in the environment of NPOs' operation, as well as cooperation with the government, which were the result of both exogenous and endogenous influences. In this period, the characteristics of Young's complementary model are more strongly developed. Already by the end of the first period, a more favourable policy and institutional framework for NPOs was created, as the beginning of the transformation to a more complementary relationship with the government. The state has recognised the need for non-state organisations (due to the complexities of the problems and the lack of resources). Today there are areas (mediated with EU funds) in which nonprofits complement the state in providing social services (for example in the field of homelessness or youth). Nonprofits are helping to deliver public goods largely financed by the government and the EU, which are still an important source of income. The strategy for the Development of Social Entrepreneurship partly suggests a broadening of the nonprofit perspective in complementary roles.¹⁰¹

While "on paper" the procedure for the allocation and use of public funds for nonprofits is transparent, in reality NPOs often complain about issues relating to the allocation of funds, delays in tenders or arbitrary government decisions about financing. Meanwhile, the use of public funds needs to be researched more and authorities should conduct more evaluations in that respect.¹⁰²

Throughout these periods the nonprofit sector as an independent supplement is least pronounced¹⁰³ and largely latent, however, continuously present in the areas in which the activity of the nonprofit sector occurs because of shortcomings in the provision of public services. This includes the areas of social services, socio-entrepreneurial initiatives and social innovations aspiring to make an impact. In the 1990s (foreign) humanitarian and social nonprofit organisations were dealing with the war crisis, meeting the needs that the state in the midst of war could not meet. The adoption of the first Social Care Act in 1997 opened up space for non-state actors in social service provision, and from then onwards,

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Government of the Republic of Croatia, *Strategy for the Development of social entrepreneurship in Croatia 2015–2020*, Zagreb, 2015.

¹⁰² Baturina, Bežovan, Matančević, *op. cit.* (fn. 78).

¹⁰³ Nonprofits as an independent supplement were more pronounced in the crisis period caused by the war which led, in the newly established state, to the development of humanitarian organisations that addressed important social needs.

the growth of nonprofit and other private providers was significant, which in some services soon outnumbered the public providers.¹⁰⁴

The nonprofit sector fulfils the demand for public goods left unmet by the government. The sector is also sometimes going beyond the state services and developing innovative services for marginalized groups or opening new areas for expanding services.¹⁰⁵ There are still expectations that the state organises and delivers social, healthcare, cultural and other services¹⁰⁶, which limits the space for innovation. Welfare institutions do not show capacity for cooperation and the development of new solutions. Nonprofits, on the other hand, have certain capacities but cannot build the expected partnerships with the state. The public sector in the perceptions of stakeholders is rather inflexible and places a greater administrative burden than necessary on the innovative organisation.¹⁰⁷

In this regard, it is important to distinguish the significant impact of nonprofits in fostering the project approach which was part of the necessary conditions for the creation of European projects and the absorption of EU funds. As many organisations depend on EU funding, they have adopted the logic of a project-based approach, which is still a major issue for many stakeholders, especially the state administration in preparing and reporting on projects. This can partly be understood as tactical mimicry defined as tactical identification with the normative demands of power geared towards gaining access to important resources¹⁰⁸, in this case, funding.¹⁰⁹

NPOs were pioneers in placing important EU topics on the agenda that were relatively unknown in the Croatian context. In this respect, the nonprofit sector had an impact on the Europeanisation of policy-making and on the way things

¹⁰⁴ Šućur, Z., *Socijalna pomoć i socijalna skrb*, in: Bežovan, G. et al. (eds.), *Socijalna politika Hrvatske*, Pravni fakultet u Zagrebu, Zagreb, 2019, pp. 287 – 335.

¹⁰⁵ Bežovan, G.; Matančević, J.; Baturina, D., *Socijalne inovacije kao doprinos jačanju socijalne kohezije i ublažavanju socijalne krize u europskim urbanim socijalnim programima*, Revija za socijalnu politiku, vol. 23, no. 1, 2016, pp. 61 – 80; Baturina, *op. cit.* (fn. 92).

¹⁰⁶ Bežovan, Matančević, Baturina, *op. cit.* (fn. 76).

¹⁰⁷ Bežovan et al., *op. cit.* (fn. 78); Baturina, *op. cit.* (fn. 92).

¹⁰⁸ Dey, P.; Teasdale, S., *The tactical mimicry of social enterprise strategies: Acting “as if” in the everyday life of third sector organizations*, Organization, vol. 23, no. 4, 2015, pp. 485 – 504.

¹⁰⁹ The notion of tactical mimicry was used by Dey and Teasdale (Dey, Teasdale, *op. cit.* (fn. 108)) to describe, in a case study in the UK context, identification with the normative premises of “social enterprise” as part of a parasitical engagement with governmental power geared toward appropriating public money.

are done.¹¹⁰ The process of EU accession had given NPOs the legitimacy needed for their institutional development.¹¹¹

However, the limited capacity of the public administration often led to “financial exhaustion” and “administrative violence” towards NPOs. Therefore, EU funds, previously seen as an opportunity, can now be seen as a threat to civil society, due to bureaucratisation, high uncertainty, delays in tenders, overregulation and high administrative demands in project implementation.¹¹²

At the local level, considerable space for dialogue has been created and new networks are being established; these could become the pillars of positive social change.¹¹³ On the other hand, the respondents to the Civil Society Survey¹¹⁴ reported diminished government support, but also trends like a shrinking democratic space and the growing tendency to push civil society organisations more towards the role of service providers (addressing new social risks or contributing to educational reform, for example) than that of advocacy or policy-making, where their participation is perceived as merely symbolic and tokenistic.¹¹⁵

5. DISCUSSION

Across many countries, governments have been reviewing and restructuring their relationships with nonprofits. That has resulted in a wide range of experiments, designed to reshape relationships.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ Bežovan *et al.*, *op. cit.* (fn. 78).

¹¹¹ According to Börzel and Risse (Börzel, T.; Risse, T., *When Europe hits home: Europeanization and domestic change*, European integration online papers, vol. 4, no. 15, 2000), Europeanisation is only likely to result in domestic change if there is a misfit between European and domestic norms, rules, and collective understandings.

¹¹² Jašić, S., *Državni udari na civilno društvo potpomognuti EU fondovima*, GONG, Zagreb, 2020.

¹¹³ Matančević, Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn. 90).

¹¹⁴ Bežovan, G.; Matančević, J.; Baturina, D., *Croatia*, in: More-Hollerweger, E.; Borgorin, F. E.; Litofcenko, J.; Meyer, M. (eds.), *Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe: Monitoring 2019*, ERSTE Foundation, Vienna, 2019, pp. 51 – 60.

¹¹⁵ Some respondents even expect the widening of nepotism towards the civic sector, in which those “politically correct” NPOs close to the ruling party will be favoured, resulting in the distortion of responses on the real needs in society.

¹¹⁶ Phillips, S. D.; Smith, S. R., *Between governance and regulation: Evolving government–third sector relationships*, in: Phillips, S. D.; Smith, S. R. (eds.), *Governance and Regulation in the Third Sector: International Perspectives*, Routledge, London, 2011, pp. 1 – 38.

In analysing those relationships in Croatia, path dependency has influenced the development of the nonprofit sector and its relationships with the government. In the socialist period, freedom of association was limited. In the 1990s, key processes were related to the transition to a market economy and parliamentary democracy as well as the context of the Homeland War. In that period of political stagnation and postponed consolidation under a relatively authoritarian regime arguments about a weak and the structurally deficient nonprofit sector could be presented.¹¹⁷ Government–nonprofit relationships were burdened by the lack of a quality public space which was recognised as an important factor in postcommunist societies for the nonprofit sector's strength and capacity to act.¹¹⁸

The second phase that influenced government–nonprofit relationships was related to democratic consolidation. The change in government at the end of the 1990s influenced developments towards Croatia becoming a more consolidated democracy.^{119, 120} During this period, government–nonprofit relationships were closer to a partnership approach, linking the government with nonprofit organisations across a wide range of fields.¹²¹

The third important process that influenced government–nonprofit relations was the Europeanisation process, starting in the early 2000s, prompted by greater democratisation of the country.¹²² In the time of accession to the EU and under pressure from the EU in adopting policy standards and practices,

¹¹⁷ Finn, V., *Democracy in Croatia: From stagnant 1990s to rapid change 2000–2011*, *International Political Science Review*, vol. 42, no. 2, 2021, pp. 197 – 212.

¹¹⁸ Ekiert, Foa, *op. cit.* (fn. 37); European Civic Forum, *op. cit.* (fn. 37).

¹¹⁹ Dolenec, D., *Europeanization as a Democratising Force in Postcommunist Europe: Croatia in comparative perspective*, *Politička misao*, vol. 5, 2008, pp. 23 – 46; Matić, D., *Political Culture, Socio-Cultural Values and Democratic Consolidation in Croatia*, in: Ramet, S. P.; Clewing, K.; Lukić, R. (eds.), *Croatia since Independence: War, Politics, Society, Foreign Relations*, R. Oldenbourg Verlag, München, 2008, pp. 171 – 188; Finn, *op. cit.* (fn. 104).

¹²⁰ The maturation of Croatian institutional, or electoral, democracy over two decades (1991–2011) is also reflected by various indexes that measure democracy on the state level (Kuntz, J., *(Re)Entering Europe: The Post-communist Transition of Croatian Political Culture*, *Politička misao*, vol. 48, no. 5, 2011, pp. 215 – 246).

¹²¹ Almog-Bar, M.; Young, D. R., *Special issue of Nonprofit Policy Forum on Policy towards Nonprofits in International Perspective: Current Trends and Their Implications for Theory and Practice*, *Nonprofit Policy Forum*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2016, pp. 85 – 93; Bode, I.; Bransen, T., *State-third sector partnerships: A short overview of key issues in the debate*, *Public Management Review*, vol. 16, no. 8, 2014, pp. 1055 – 1066.

¹²² Dolenec, *op. cit.* (fn. 119).

Croatian government partly adopted tactical mimicry¹²³ towards nonprofits. The European Union influenced democratic progress, particularly via conditionality policies.¹²⁴ Therefore, in that period nonprofits gained access to some policy processes and were seemingly seen as partners to the government, however, outcomes were more related towards formal inclusion of nonprofits without major positive changes in their overall relationships.

After the EU accession, the importance of Europeanisation was reflected in EU funds as an important source of funding for nonprofits through which NPOs were, in some areas, funded as partners in providing public services.¹²⁵ These developments are similar to those in other CEE countries in which civil society was influenced by foreign institutions¹²⁶, especially by the European Union.¹²⁷ Polish experience¹²⁸ shows that new modes of governance have been instituted in connection with the management and monitoring of EU structural funds which contributed to structural change by positioning civil society actors as social partners in many policy arenas.

But the government's relationship with the nonprofit sector (best illustrated by the failure to adopt the Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development) was also oriented towards what was recognised in the wider nonprofit context as shrinking space for nonprofit organisations, stagnation in government–nonprofit relationships or policy neglect.^{129, 130} In that

¹²³ Dey, Teasdale, *op. cit.* (fn. 108).

¹²⁴ Finn, *op. cit.* (fn. 117).

¹²⁵ Baturina *et al.* note the importance of the external financing and EU funds in the development of social entrepreneurship in the CEE region (Baturina, D.; Mihály, M.; Haska, E.; Ciepiewska-Kowalik, A.; Kiss, J.; Agolli, A.; Bashevska, M.; Sribjanko, J. K.; Rakin, D.; Radojičić, V., *The Role of External Financing in the Development of Social Entrepreneurship in CEE Countries*, in: Defourny, J.; Nyssens, M. (eds.), *Social Enterprise in Central and Eastern Europe*, Routledge, London, 2021, pp. 218 – 234).

¹²⁶ Ottaway, M.; Carothers, T., *Funding virtue: Civil Society Aid and Democracy Promotion*, Carnegie Endowment, Washington, DC, 2000.

¹²⁷ Vandor *et al.*, *op. cit.* (fn. 3); Meyer *et al.*, *op. cit.* (fn. 2); Baturina *et al.*, *op. cit.* (fn. 125), p. 218.

¹²⁸ Gąsior-Niemiec, Gliński, *op. cit.* (fn. 84).

¹²⁹ Anheier, H. K.; Lang, M.; Toepler, S., *Civil Society in Times of Change: Shrinking, Changing and Expanding Spaces and the Need for New Regulatory Approaches*, *Economics*, vol. 13, no. 8, 2019, pp. 1 – 27; Anheier, H. K.; Toepler, S., *Policy Neglect: The True Challenge to the Nonprofit Sector*, *Nonprofit Policy Forum*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2019, pp. 1 – 9; Toepler, S.; Zimmer, A.; Fröhlich, C.; Obush, K., *The Changing Space for NGOs: Civil Society in Authoritarian and Hybrid Regimes*, *Voluntas*, vol. 31, 2020, pp. 649 – 662.

¹³⁰ In wider European developments the report on civic space in the European Union for 2019 similarly shows that the space for nonprofit action is “narrowing”. European

period, the rise of some conservative nonprofit organisations and initiatives is noted.¹³¹

Stagnation in government–nonprofit relationships or policy neglect can be illustrated with some additional observations about path dependency. In the context of transition countries, there is a certain colonisation of the social sphere by the public and political sectors¹³² as seen in the case of Croatia. Certain democratic backsliding has been noted in recent years.¹³³ This also shapes modernisation capacities because often the criterion of political affiliation and nepotism is given greater weight than the criteria of competence. Besides, the public sector is too bureaucratised and has not shown itself as a place of entrepreneurship in terms of developing innovative solutions or making changes.¹³⁴

With previously recognised democratic deficits and insufficient institutional capacity (also noted by Maldini)¹³⁵ Croatia is also characterized by a low level of trust in institutions, especially representative institutions, suggesting alienation of citizens from these institutions and indicating a problem for the functioning of representative democracy in Croatia.^{136, 137} The rise of the use of direct democracy in Croatia in the last decade with the proliferation of citizens'

Civic Forum, *op. cit.* (fn. 37).

¹³¹ Petričušić, A.; Čehulić, M.; Čepo, D., *Gaining Political Power by Utilizing Opportunity Structures: An Analysis of the Conservative Religious-Political Movement in Croatia*, *Politička misao*, vol. 54, no. 4, 2017, pp. 61 – 84.

¹³² Baturina, *op. cit.* (fn. 92); Račić, D., *From the Only Party to the Central Party: The Continuity of State Capture in Croatia*, *Politička misao*, vol. 58, no. 3, 2021, pp. 39 – 76.

¹³³ Čepo, D., *Structural weaknesses and the role of the dominant political party: democratic backsliding in Croatia since EU accession*, *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2020, pp. 141 – 159.

¹³⁴ Baturina, Bežovan, Matančević, *op. cit.* (fn. 78); Koprić, I., *Public administration reform in Croatia: Slow modernization during Europeanization of resilient bureaucracy*, *Вопросы государственного и муниципального управления*, no. 5, 2019, pp. 7 – 26.

¹³⁵ Maldini, P., *Croatian accession to the European Union: EU democratization potential and issues of democratic consolidation*, in: Maldini, P.; Pauković, D. (eds.), *Croatia and the European Union: Changes and Development*, Routledge, Ashgate, Farnham, 2015, pp. 11 – 32.

¹³⁶ Bovan, K.; Baketa, N., *Stability and/or Change? Institutional Trust in Croatia in 1999–2020*, *Revija za sociologiju*, vol. 52, no. 1, 2022, pp. 1 – 30.

¹³⁷ Earlier research also stated that Croatia is a society with markedly low levels of social trust which could present an obstacle to further political and economic development, see: Šalaj, B., *Socijalno povjerenje: Hrvatska 1995–2003*, *Anali Hrvatskog politološkog društva*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2005, pp. 35 – 56.

initiatives and referendums was meant to activate politically passive citizens and to strengthen their role as controllers of the executive but the research showed that this is not the case and different actors in society used the tools of direct democracy to promote their particular anti-minority, anti-government or anti-establishment agendas.¹³⁸ On the other hand, political support is often perceived by stakeholders to be the key to further strengthening the sector's impact at the local and national levels.¹³⁹ The nonprofit sector does not seem strong enough to give a stronger incentive for self-development.

The importance of path dependence and the character of the interaction between the state and the nonprofit sector has shaped and constrained the space of activity of the sector. This relatively disadvantageous context has significantly conditioned the sector's capacity for development and without greater recognition of the sector's potential impact, the sector is somewhat left to "swim upstream".

In the end, we can conclude that civil society exhibits capacity, especially at the local level, for fostering sustainable and positive social change in Croatia.¹⁴⁰ NPOs are also often the first to place new issues on the public agenda (e.g. sustainable sources of energy) and have contributed to building new structures of social governance in policy-making, and are today recognised as co-governors in certain policy fields.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The paper has described key features of three phases of nonprofit sector development (from 1990 to 2020) in Croatia and how the relationship of the nonprofit sector with the government evolved in that period. The paper highlighted path dependency shaped by processes related to the independence war and transition to a market economy, democratic consolidation, and at the end Europeanisation. The turbulent 1990s have been marked by the delayed development of the nonprofit sector, the patronage of the state, and distrust of citizens' associations (partly due to external sources of funding). The transformation period brought the development of institutions related to the support and financing of nonprofits. A new environment was more encouraging for

¹³⁸ Čepo, D.; Nikić Čakar, D., *Izravna demokracija i uspon političkih poduzetnika: analiza građanskih inicijativa u Hrvatskoj poslije 2010*, Anali Hrvatskog politološkog društva, vol. 16, no. 1, 2019, pp. 27 – 48.

¹³⁹ Baturina, Bežovan, Matančević, *op. cit.* (fn. 78).

¹⁴⁰ Bežovan, Matančević, Baturina, *op. cit.* (fn. 97).

freedom of association. The EU pre-accession period and EU membership, as the third and final period, brought some changes. The nonprofit sector was partially Europeanised and showed that it could follow some relevant EU-level topics related to social development ahead of the government. Moreover, the nonprofit sector's funding sources now heavily rely on EU funds. However, there are still barriers in the relationship between the sector and the state, emphasized in the results of the analysis.

Overall, the adversarial model¹⁴¹ is shown to be most dominant over the thirty-year period in Croatia, as stated in the analysis and discussion. Research shows that stakeholders continue to perceive numerous barriers to the state and the nonprofit sector relationship.¹⁴² Stagnation in government–nonprofit relationships is noted and some authors even mention that there is growing recent evidence of captured civil society.¹⁴³

This paper's contribution lies in the first systematic description and analysis of the government–nonprofit relationships in Croatia since the democratic transition. It showed how path dependency from socialism, democratic transition and EU membership has significantly influenced government–nonprofit relations. It therefore also contributes to the literature on the development of the nonprofit sector in postsocialist societies. The paper grounds its analysis in specific Croatian experiences and contributes to the avoidance of treating CEE as homogeneous, as research has shown is not the case¹⁴⁴, while acknowledging that the space for nonprofits is changing.¹⁴⁵

Beyond describing the Croatian trajectory, this paper contributes a broader theoretical observation about Young's typology in post-socialist, Europeanised contexts. The Croatian case suggests that the three models do not constitute evolutionary stages through which transitional democracies progressively move toward partnership. Rather, they coexist in a configuration in which formal adoption of complementary institutional features, strategic documents, co-funding mechanisms, participatory platforms, do not displace underlying adversarial structural conditions rooted in path-dependent mistrust, weak state capaci-

¹⁴¹ Young, *op. cit.* (fn. 6); Young, Casey, *op. cit.* (fn. 7).

¹⁴² Baturina, Bežovan, Matančević, *op. cit.* (fn. 78).

¹⁴³ Bežovan, *op. cit.* (fn. 44), p. 7.

¹⁴⁴ Meyer *et al.*, *op. cit.* (fn. 2); USAID, 2020 *Civil society organization sustainability index. Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia*, United States Agency for International Development, Washington, 2021.

¹⁴⁵ Toepler, S.; Zimmer, A.; Fröhlich, C.; Obush, K., *The Changing Space for NGOs: Civil Society in Authoritarian and Hybrid Regimes*, Voluntas, vol. 31, 2020, pp. 649 – 662.

ty, and political instrumentalisation. Europeanisation accelerates the formal adoption of complementary discourse while leaving the structural adversarial substrate largely intact, and may indeed strengthen it through projectification. The Croatian trajectory can, therefore, also be seen through the lens of layered institutional change¹⁴⁶, where new institutional rules were added to the government–NPO relationship without displacing the adversarial normative base.

The paper applied Young's theoretical model to Croatia and demonstrated that it is a useful tool for analysing the government–nonprofit relationship through time and in the new, previously unanalysed context. But there are also limitations to this approach. Although the models are useful for understanding government–nonprofit relationships, this analysis also showed some challenges in applying this theoretical framework in observing the nuances, sectoral and period differences in government–nonprofit relationships. The typology's strength lies in its flexibility and non-exclusivity; it enables the capture of the coexistence of supplementary, complementary, and adversarial patterns across time. However, it does not theorise the mechanisms of persistence by which adversarial legacies survive and reproduce themselves. So, this analysis could also confirm Toepler *et al.*'s notion that existing models of government–nonprofit relationships need an extension.¹⁴⁷ Therefore, the next step in advancing the analysis of government nonprofits relationships in Croatia is providing a more specific analysis (beyond the descriptive and historical analysis conducted in this paper) aligned with Toepler *et al.*¹⁴⁸, who expanded government–nonprofit relationship typology by considering the relationship roles and strategies available to both sectors and conducting a deeper analysis of those relationship across different fields of nonprofit organisations' activities.

In the end, methodological limitations need to be noted. This paper is based on secondary sources, published academic studies, policy documents, legislative texts, strategic frameworks, and civil society monitoring reports. This design enables long-range historical synthesis but constrains the depth of certain claims about actors' motivations, subjective experiences of partnership, and the internal dynamics of government–NPO interactions. Claims about the quality of cooperation, institutional commitments, and the political attitudes underlying policy decisions are thus to be understood as interpretations grounded in secondary evidence, not as empirically verified findings.

¹⁴⁶ Mahoney, J.; Thelen, K. (eds.), *Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency, and Power*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009.

¹⁴⁷ Toepler, S., *Modeling the Government/NGO Relationship in an Era of Shrinking/Changing Spaces for Civil Society*, 48th Annual Conference of ARNOVA, San Diego, 2019.

¹⁴⁸ Toepler *et al.*, *op. cit.* (fn. 29).

Future research combining primary qualitative data (for example, expert interviews) with the historical institutionalist framework developed here would advance understanding of relationship dynamics, including the degree to which the adversary model reflects durable social and cultural patterns versus contingent political configurations.

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Sažetak



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ODNOS VLADE I NEPROFITNOG SEKTORA U HRVATSKOJ: TRNOVIT PUT

Cilj je rada analizirati odnos neprofitnog sektora i vlasti u Hrvatskoj od 1990. do 2020. godine. Na temelju analize sekundarnih podataka i uzimajući u obzir ovisnost o prijašnjem putu, rad daje povijesni pregled, opis i analizu razvoja neprofitnog sektora. Rad predlaže tri razdoblja odnosa neprofitnog sektora i vlade. Prvo razdoblje, 1990. – 1999., započelo je ekonomskom i političkom transformacijom, vezanom uz Domovinski rat koji je uokvirio razvoj neprofitnog sektora. Drugo je razdoblje, 2000. – 2012., donijelo transformaciju odnosa i intenzivnu izgradnju institucija i političkih okvira za potporu razvoju neprofitnog sektora. Treće razdoblje, od 2013. godine, obilježila je europeizacija koja je utjecala na odnos vlade i neprofitnih organizacija te otvorila nove financijske mogućnosti za neprofitne organizacije. Primjenjujući Youngovu tipologiju odnosa vlade i neprofitnih organizacija, rad tvrdi da hrvatski slučaj karakteriziraju složena koegzistencija svih triju Youngovih modela te nelinearni razvoj odnosa. Analiza je pokazala kako je ovisnost o prijašnjem putu od socijalizma, demokratske tranzicije i postajanja članicom EU-a utjecala na odnose vlade i neprofitnog sektora. Općenito, pokazalo se da je suparnički model najdominantniji u analiziranom razdoblju od 30 godina u Hrvatskoj. Analize pokazuju da dionici i dalje percipiraju mnogobrojne prepreke u daljnjem razvoju odnosa neprofitnog sektora i vlasti, među kojima se na kraju promatranoga razdoblja primjećuje određena stagnacija u odnosima. Doprinos ovog rada leži u prvome sustavnom opisu i analizi odnosa

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vlasti i neprofitnih organizacija u Hrvatskoj od demokratske tranzicije. Rad analizira specifična hrvatska iskustva i pridonosi izbjegavanju tretiranja Srednje i Istočne Europe kao homogenog konteksta, što istraživanja pokazuju da nije slučaj, uz prepoznavanje da se prostori djelovanja za neprofitne organizacije u Europi mijenjaju. Iznesele lekcije iz hrvatskog konteksta mogle bi pridonijeti analizi i razvoju prilagođenijega okvira politike u Hrvatskoj i regiji Srednje i Istočne Europe.

Ključne riječi: neprofitni sektor; civilno društvo; odnos neprofitnih organizacija i vlade; utjecaj politika; europeizacija

