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РОЛЬ ЛОКАЛЬНЫХ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЙ В РАЗВИТИИ СКАНДИНАВСКИХ СТРАН

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LOCAL ORGANISATIONS' ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT - NORDIC COUNTRIES

Many social scientists divide the understanding that people's voluntary organisations have had and continue to have an important role in the development of successful market economies. In this paper we take a look at Nordic Countries, especially Finland, discussing about local, further than national development, with the aim to understand the contemporary changes in voluntary organisations and what consequences such changes might have.

Lester Salamon and Helmut Anheier (1994, 2) reported about a new phase in civic activity in the early 1990's. They pay attention among others on the new role of the non-profit sector organisations, the role to “substitute for government social welfare spending in United States and in United Kingdom, to help overcome the exclusion of the poor in France, to promote pluralism in Sweden, and to help foster a “civil society” in Russia and Central Europe”. Such were naturally signals of a remarkable change world-wide. The authors also considered the conceptual confusion, when speaking about this sector. They chose to accept in the category such organisations, which are private, do not distribute profit, which are to some extent formalised as well as self-governing. Also, they should not be religious or political organisations (ibid. 14-16). One has to add that this recorded change, as important as it is, only covers a part of civic activity. Why? Because many organisations do not have any connection to social welfare spending, as we will soon see. And still, they may have a connection to local development in one way or another.

The importance of the civic sector in a country like Finland can be seen from following numbers: in 2015 in Finland there were about 100 000 functioning, registered associations for 5.5 million people and 40 000 of them (40 per cent) were established after mid-1990s (Siisiäinen 2015).

Let us take some examples from long history of civil society in Finland. a) Fire brigades were established in Finland in the 19th century by local associations, which wanted to fight together against fires, when local administration was not yet able or willing to arrange such a work. Safety against fires was clearly useful, it was a common good for all inhabitants in a locality. b) Before and soon after the beginning of 20th century small and middle farmers established co-operatives mainly for marketing their products, milk, butter, cheese and others. Agriculture was effectively modernized in the following decades, and marketing co-operatives grew up. c) Another type of associations were the local sport clubs, with a function of social

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integration of local youth in the community. d) And taking a newer example, since 1970s village associations were established in almost every rural municipality in order to give some response to the huge migration from villages to urban centres and foreign countries. All these four types of organisations had different aims and types of action, but all they contributed local development: safety, economy, integration and adapting social changes.

Development, what is it?

To understand the role of local organisations in local development, we need some common understanding of development. For the writer development is “a stream of processes, which are mutually reinforcing ones and which cause as a whole positive changes” (see Granberg and Sätre 2017, 155). To develop a locality you need many things but definitely at least active individuals, who gets things done, such as entrepreneurs or other initiative persons. Civic activity may directly help poor or other vulnerable persons, who need supporters because of age, illness, accidents or immigration. Typically civic activities contribute to produce public goods, such things which benefit many local inhabitants and are not commercial, for instance by establishing and cleaning parks, building and keeping cultural houses or organising training courses. Civic activity can also have long term effects, by integrating people to locality, or by increasing social capital of participants, which in some later phase may be changed to other forms of capital.

Local and voluntary organisations, a part of civil society

Civil society was a new phenomenon when it was ‘found’ by Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-59), a Frenchman, who made a trip to America in order to study American democracy. He found a lot of organised activity, which was not aiming to target markets, neither was it class-based nor led by self-interest. Town meetings and independent associations worked as invisible hand in organising, directing and shaping public life in United States. Civil society was not a part of state, market, or family relations.

Local organisations are a part of civil society and they are ‘idle’ in the sense that they are driven by local people, answering some needs which emerge in the grass-root level of society. They can be formal or informal, registered or not, living on the support by their own members, or getting subsidies from state, church, or sponsors. Only condition for being ‘civic’ is that they have to be in their decision making independent from their funders.

The role of local organisations in local development can be charity, agency or facilitative activity. A fourth alternative is to stay more or less in the margin of development issues, like in sports, or chore singing, or in chess club. However, even they have integrative function and even they may potentially tighten social relationships, mutual understanding of people in a community and feeling of empathy between them. That means that also such activities, which are not planned to have some impact on local development, may give social and psychological skills or positive fame – as a top level tennis player or village chore - which benefit local development.

Charity helps people in need to cope through their everyday troubles, by getting money, clothes, medicines or other help. Charity is not strongly connected to development, however, it may include the aspect to give better circumstances for

earning for those in need, for instance by being trained, or by getting some tools to work with. In that case charity is changing to agency, even if in a minor extent. **Agency** can be facilitated by establishing business clubs, advisory services, or educational centres, making easier access to local resources and so on. There is a third alternative, too, which we have called **facilitative action** (Granberg and Sätre 2017). It is not done in order to bring forth immediate big changes in the locality, but to create places and opportunities for communication and learning. One can create clubs, arrange festivals, construct infrastructure to use internet, and keep training courses on information technology, and so on. German sociologist Jürgen Habermas (1989) has given the name Public sphere for this area of social life, in which communication is more important than material activities. Facilitative activity contributes the functioning of public sphere where one tries to identify reasons for problems in local life and to find solutions for them. Facilitative action, when successful, will start socio-psychological processes of ‘empowerment’, feeling oneself more capable to find solutions and to make efforts to realize them. Facilitative activity increases social capital among population, which is an important resource for initiating changes, alone or together with others.

Evolution of civic organisations in Nordic countries

Temperance movement against alcohol consumption, women’s associations for philanthropic aims and fire-brigades are three historical examples of early civic activities in Nordic countries. They were established already in the 19th century, earlier than modern political parties, trade unions and co-operatives for farmers and consumers. All these had close connection to rising industrialism and urbanisation in the beginning of 20th century. Industrial society caused hot political environment and even civic organisations experienced a strong class division. This was not any Finnish speciality by it went further in Finland than in its Scandinavian neighbours. In Finland not only political parties and Labour Union were divided, but even sports associations were divided to “Finland’s Workers’ National Sports Union” (TUL) and “Finland’s National Sports Union” (SVUL). Even if situation calmed down in 1950s and 1960s, formal separation continued until 1994, when national sport unions were united to a new covering organisation. (Harju 2018; Siisiäinen 2015)

Welfare state became a common target of political life in Nordic countries in the 1960s to 1990s, class-based division in countries lost slowly its relevance and also many civic organisations received a new character. Interest organisations represented the wishes and needs of their members, which however were no more strongly connected to their class position as workers or farmers or capital owners. Associations were also connected to members’ life-style and identity. And sometimes before and after mid 1990s more and more organisations were established with connection to hobbies, sports and exercise, culture and environmental interests. (Ibid.)

As we can see, there are different historical periods even in these quite similar countries and of course one may find much stronger variation in other countries, for instance with strong Catholicism as in the Mediterranean countries or an all covering domination of one political party as in socialist countries. An interesting question is, what happens to the old organisations in the long run, when societies change. Many of them just continue, even if with smaller role in society. Some others change. An example is farmers’ co-operative, which grew to a remarkable business group (Valio

in Finland, Arla in Sweden, Co-operative banks and so on), which cannot be any more calculated to be a civic organisation. Also sport associations have become more market oriented than earlier, training of athletics is often a profession and reaching national and international top requires money, making sport dependent on sponsors and state subsidies.

As mentioned about 40 per cent of Finnish civic organisations are established after mid-1990s, which means also that the latest period really differs from earlier ones, now 'postmodern' organisations are to a great extent dominating. One type of civic organisation, which was organised little before this latest period, is the village association. They were organised on grass-root level, at first because of the worry about the future of villages when rapid outmigration took place in the 1960s, and 1970s. Village associations took initiatives to improve infrastructure, organise common events and try to include villages in local and regional development plans and political measures. In 10-15 years "village movement" developed to nationwide activity which was recognized by authorities and could have positive influences to local life, not least by carrying out projects with external funding. How was this change possible? Starting village activity was not easy because of deep pessimism. Still some small steps could be taken, to keep meetings, to arrange some summer festival and collect funding, to restore some old, empty building for common use. And doing such things could launch psychological processes, empowerment of the participants, awakening feelings that one can do changes if one really tries to. Village activity facilitated also other things, to renovate a club house for meetings, training courses, and so on, helping to build networks inside and outside the village and increasing social capital in the village. Even if such activity may continue for only a rather short period of life, it can mean personal learning and growth, giving capability to do other things somewhere else, in later life. Changes in society were positive for this development, too. Academic researchers paid attention to dying villages, rural policy was found by OECD and later European Union and funding could be channelled to rural initiatives and rural enterprises, often as an alternative to more traditional subsidies to agriculture.

Three dimensions of civic organisations

Elena Chebankova(2014) has, following Edwards (2009), presented three dimensions, which are typical for civil society at large: associational life, ethical life and life world. **Associational life** is the most common and simple one, each unit in civil society is organised in clubs, associations, networks or some other kind of organisation. **Ethical life** underlines that civil society organisations have to pursue positive norms, values and beliefs, criminal organisations cannot be included in civil society. And furthermore, **life world** is a kind of social space for civil society organisations, a place where communication takes place and where things are public (see Habermas 1989). A well-functioning civic society demands well-functioning ethical life as well as public sphere. One can say that these preconditions have been relatively well filled in all Nordic countries at least during 70 last years. However, it is difficult to say to what extent the changing nature of civil society is accepted and supported by leading political and economic elite in these countries. It worries many today in Nordic countries that an interest in politics is decreasing. Civic organisations are for a great part acting in cultural and hobby sphere and their general merits to the

society are not that easy to see as the merits of the old time organisations with focus in economic interests, politics, and health care and so on.

What is the reason for the high number of local as well as regional and still larger civic organisations? Even if society is changing and nature of such organisations is taking new forms, the need to construct new and new organisations seems to prevail. The basic cause for this phenomenon might be in the complex nature of the contemporary society. It is impossible for small group(s) of political leaders to steer the society without getting help from the society itself. Civic organisations in their great quantity and variety are optimal for this function. They meet problems, identify them, inform political leaders about them and help to solve them - if the partnership between political leaders and civic organisations works well. Especially local organisations integrate people around the issues which have relevance for them; and they do practical things for common benefit of communities, be they local or wider networks in society.

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РАЗВИТИЕ ПРОИЗВОДСТВ LOCALFOOD

Аннотация: статья посвящена актуальной на сегодняшний день теме развития производств localfood. Дано определение понятию localfood. Кратко описаны этапы продовольственной системы localfood, ее преимущества. В статье рассматриваются основные мероприятия по развитию производств localfood в Великом Новгороде и области.

Ключевые слова: localfood, местная еда, местная потребительская сеть, местная продовольственная система, проект«Покупайте новгородское».