

Article

Development of Civil Society Organizations—Caught Up in the Framework of Different Welfare Systems

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Abstract: This article examines the processes of governmentalization and marketization in enabling the development of civil society organizations within different welfare systems. It also attempts to explain how these processes impact volunteerism, distinguishing the service from the expressive roles of the civil society sector. Theoretical findings are tested and illustrated using data from the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project. Further, data for Slovenia are included as an example of a distinct post-socialist welfare system. The data were collected from a representative sample of Slovenian civil society organizations based on the methodology of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project. As revealed, in line with institutionalist theories, different welfare systems show path dependency by determining the basis and level of the professionalization of the civil society sector, influencing the approaches of governmentalization and marketization, and indirectly changing the role of volunteerism.

Keywords: civil society organizations; welfare systems; development; professionalization; volunteerism



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1. Introduction

This article explores the complex relationships between the three main processes involved in the growth and development of civil society organizations (CSOs) (governmentalization, marketization, and professionalization) and formal volunteerism. We use the term civil society organizations in line with the structural operational definition of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Salamon et al. 2017; Enjolras et al. 2018) and the term formal volunteerism, which refers to the organized utilization of volunteers within CSOs, as opposed to informal volunteerism that relates to mutual aid among relatives, neighbors and friends.

The processes of governmentalization and marketization that enable the professionalization of CSOs in the context of different welfare systems and arise from the theoretical approach of nonprofit regimes and social origins are highlighted (Salamon and Anheier 1998a; Salamon et al. 2017). We seek to explain the way these processes impact formal volunteerism in nonprofit activities, distinguishing the service from the expressive roles of the civil society sector. The service role includes the provision of services like education, healthcare, social welfare, housing, and economic development initiatives. The expressive role encompasses activities that enable the expression of cultural, spiritual, professional or policy-related values, interests and beliefs (e.g., cultural institutions, recreational groups, professional associations, advocacy groups, community organizations, environmental organizations, human rights groups, and social movements) (Salamon and Sokolowski 2004; Salamon et al. 2017).

The theoretical findings are verified and illustrated using data from the international research of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Salamon and Sokolowski 2004;

[Salamon et al. 2017](#)). In addition, as an example of a distinct post-socialist welfare system, comparative data from Slovenia are included. These data refer to a representative sample of Slovenian CSOs based on the methodology of the mentioned Johns Hopkins project ([Kolarič et al. 2002, 2006](#); [Deželan and Rakar 2022](#)). The growth of CSOs refers to the increasing number of these organizations. Their development refers to the level of their professionalization, as well as the structure and share of their financial sources. By “path dependency” we refer to the work of Esping-Andersen, which shows that the development of welfare regimes is strongly influenced by historical trajectories and institutional legacies ([Esping-Andersen 1990](#)).

The development of CSOs may be viewed as the close intertwining of three interrelated processes ([Kolarič et al. 2002](#), pp. 151–77):

- The first is the process of governmentalization, where CSOs become service providers for the welfare state. It refers to situations where governments contract out and pay for the provision of health, education, social and other services to CSOs. The process is associated with the New Public Governance (NPG) concept, i.e., the “nonprofitization” of the welfare state ([Salamon 2015](#)), since it increasingly involves CSOs in the delivery of publicly funded services by pointing out the considerable strengths CSOs can bring ([Salamon and Toepler 2015](#); [Almog-Bar and Young 2016](#); [Rojc Štremfelj et al. 2020](#)).
- The second is the process of marketization whereby essentially market-driven relationships penetrate the nonprofit sector ([Salamon 1993](#), p. 16; [Goodwin and Phillips 2015](#)). It describes the competition among CSOs themselves and between them and for-profit organizations for ‘clients’ able to pay more for the services and goods they offer. This process is associated with the New Public Management (NPM) concept where public sector institutions are to be made more ‘business-like’ by improving their efficiency along the lines of the for-profit sector and introducing competition into the market ([Henrekson et al. 2020](#); [Anheier and Krlev 2014](#); [Osborne and Gaebler 1993](#)).
- The two processes mentioned above enable a third process: professionalization. As a dimension of institutionalization, this process is inherent to all growing organizational units. The literature presents different concepts of professionalization, including organizational, occupational and managerial factors ([Evetts 2011](#); [Dobrai and Farkas 2016](#)). With the term professionalization, in this article, we refer to the tendency for organizational work to be performed by employed, paid professionals ([Salamon 1995](#); [Sanzo-Perez et al. 2017](#); [Rojc Štremfelj et al. 2020](#)).

The substantial changes seen in the civil society sector over the last 30 years in terms of its growth and professionalization in many countries have thus largely occurred in the context of NPM and NPG trends, which both promoted alternatives to government services ([Phillips and Smith 2010](#); [Almog-Bar and Young 2016](#)). However, the focus was placed on either greater efficiency or better service delivery, which influenced the development of CSOs. While NPM is based on Fordist models of public service delivery, NPG concentrates on the relationships between organizations and the management of processes, highlighting service outcomes ([Osborne 2006](#); [Albertson et al. 2020](#)). We assume that these trends, i.e., the processes of governmentalization and marketization and their impact on the complex relationships between sustainable professionalization and formal volunteerism, are determined by the logic of different welfare systems.

Accordingly, the article addresses the gaps in the literature by employing the welfare system concept to understand CSOs’ development with a view of deciphering the complex relationships between the various processes of development of the civil society sector, governmentalization, marketization, professionalization, and formal volunteerism, in a range of welfare systems. Another valuable contribution is that the analysis includes Slovenia, a country underrepresented in both comparative research on the civil society sector and the

comparative literature on welfare regimes, thereby adding to the understanding of how the civil society sector is developing in Central and Eastern European countries.

Our research questions are as follows: What are the relationships between the processes of governmentalization, marketization, and professionalization for CSOs' development in different welfare systems? What impact do these processes have on formal volunteerism in CSOs?

We attempt to answer these research questions in three parts. First, we present the welfare system concept in relation to the role of CSOs. Then, we discuss the logic of the conservative–corporate welfare system, which we argue determines the process of the governmentalization of CSOs as the basis for their professionalization and alters the role of volunteers within them. Analysis of the logic of the liberal welfare system follows, showing that it pushes CSOs towards the market, facilitates their professionalization, and narrows the space for volunteers. In the last part, using Slovenia as an example, we aim to show that the development of CSOs in former socialist countries is still caught up in the logic of the former state socialist welfare system. We conclude by reflecting on the future challenges for the sustainable development of CSOs within the changing post-socialist welfare systems.

2. Theoretical Background and Conceptualization

2.1. *The Welfare System as a Key Determinant for the Development of CSOs*

The role of CSOs as former socialist countries transformed to become capitalist societies in the 1980s and 1990s continues to be an important topic of interest for various social science disciplines and political science in particular (Fink-Hafner 2015; Fink-Hafner and Thomas 2018a, 2018b, 2019; Novak and Fink-Hafner 2019; Vandor et al. 2017; More-Hollerweger et al. 2019). Still, most research concerns the role of CSOs in the process of transiting from one-party to democratic multi-party systems (see Fink-Hafner and Thomas 2018a, 2018b, 2019; Novak and Fink-Hafner 2019). Yet, this approach overlooks the role of CSOs whose role is important not simply in the political but also in the welfare systems of democratic societies. CSOs provide many social services, represent the voices and interests of various minorities or disadvantaged social groups, and help with community building. We generally refer to them as private non-profit organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and CSOs. Together with social movements and interest groups, they are all located in the “sphere of civil society”, namely that part of the social space/social reality between the community/household and the state, distinct from the area of the social space governed by rules of the market and offers opportunities for self-organized and coordinated activities. The classification of CSOs in this intermediate sphere of social reality assumes the simultaneous separation and proximity of these organizations from/to the institutions active in the sphere of the community, the sphere of the state, and the sphere of the market. With this definition of CSOs, we move beyond the narrower normative definition of CSOs, which presupposes the complete separation of CSOs from the state, and approach a broader understanding that encompasses their interconnectedness (Rakar and Kolarič 2020).

Hence, in their service, advocacy and expressive roles CSOs constitute a valuable structural element of the welfare systems in all contemporary societies. Before commencing the analysis, it is necessary to define how we understand the welfare system concept. We believe that path dependency and the associated mechanisms inherent to different welfare systems are an important determinant of the professionalization of CSOs in a given country. Consistent with Salamon and Anheier's social origins theory (Salamon and Anheier 1998a; Salamon et al. 2017; see also Anheier and Krlev 2014; Enjolras et al. 2018), as inspired by earlier theories of welfare regimes, notably Esping-Andersen's (1990) “three worlds of welfare capitalism”, we assume that we can distinguish different ‘civil society regimes’ that emerge from various types of welfare systems. The welfare system concept differs from

both those of the welfare state and welfare regimes, which have been developed by many social scientists following Esping-Andersen (1990) (e.g., Leibfried 1992; Korpi and Palme 1998; see Abrahamson 1999).

The concept of a welfare system was introduced in Eastern–Western European discussions of social policy in the late 1980s (Evers and Wintersberger 1988) as an open concept covering not only the institutions, programs, and policies developed, financed, and controlled by the state but also those established according to the logic of the market and those developed and maintained in the realm of civil society and the community. It includes both producers and users of services, their norms and values, and the relationships between them that result from the management, financing, production, and distribution of goods and services that individuals use to ensure their social protection and well-being (Kolarič et al. 2002; Rakar and Kolaric 2020). Different welfare systems are based on varying hierarchies of spheres (market, state, and civil society/community) that have arisen through certain patterns in the historical development of individual societies. In line with social origins theory (Salamon and Anheier 1998a; Salamon et al. 2017), history such as the balance of power between social classes and, in particular, church–state relations are crucial for the developing of constellations of spheres within welfare systems (Kolarič et al. 2002; Salamon et al. 2017; Henrekson et al. 2020). The position of each sphere in the hierarchy reflects its importance or responsibility for the social protection and well-being of citizens in a given society. At least five different hierarchies of spheres and their main actors (market—private for-profit organizations, state—public institutions, and civil society—CSOs and the community) have been established, chiefly depending on which social classes were in power and the relationship between the state and church in a society. These five hierarchies represent five different types of welfare systems. These include the hierarchy of market, civil society/community, and state, which stands for the liberal type of welfare system; the hierarchy of quasi-market, state, and community/civil society, which stands for the conservative–corporate type of welfare system; the hierarchy of state, market, and civil society/community, which stands for the social democratic type of welfare system; the hierarchy of community/civil society, market, and state, which stands for the Catholic type of welfare system; and lastly, the hierarchy of state, community/civil society, and black market, which stood for the state–socialist type of welfare system (Kolarič et al. 2002; Filipovič Hrast and Rakar 2018).

2.2. Relationships Between Professionalism and Volunteerism

The professionalization of CSOs is a process that refers to the tendency for organizational work to be performed by engaging employed, paid professionals (Salamon 1995; Sanzo-Perez et al. 2017; Rojc Štremfelj et al. 2020). For our analysis, the term “professionals” therefore refers to all qualified staff carrying out organizational tasks and not just highly qualified experts. The professionalization process can be operationalized as the employment of appropriately qualified staff in CSOs. One indicator of the degree of professionalization of an organization is the number of employed workers relative to all workers in the civil society sector; the proportion of employed workers in all CSOs relative to the economically active population (EAP) in a given country is an indicator of the level of the civil society sector’s professionalization as a whole (Salamon 1995; Salamon and Anheier 1998b; Salamon and Sokolowski 2004; Salamon et al. 2017).

Findings of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Salamon and Sokolowski 2004; Salamon et al. 2017) suggest that we can define the relationship between professionalization and volunteerism as both a zero-sum game (more professionals mean fewer volunteers) and a positive-sum game (more professionals mean more volunteers). Nevertheless, in itself, the professionalization process neither limits nor increases the possibilities of involving volunteers in CSOs’ activities. It is thus not the degree of profes-

sionalization per se but other elements that also determine the use of volunteers in CSOs. A primary element is the ideology held by management, especially the commitment of managers to the notion of volunteering (Brudney et al. 2019; Brudney and Meijs 2014). This allows us to conclude that the more technocratic the management of a CSO, the less likely it is to promote volunteering, and the more it aspires to a democratic partnership model, the more likely it is to involve volunteers in organizational activities. Although we agree with this argument, we should add that the ideology held by management in CSOs is not an independent variable. The professionalism–volunteerism relationship is more complex than it seems at first glance. We assume that it is determined either by the process of governmentalization or the process of marketization, as shown in Figure 1, which depends on the logic of the different welfare systems, as explained in the next part.

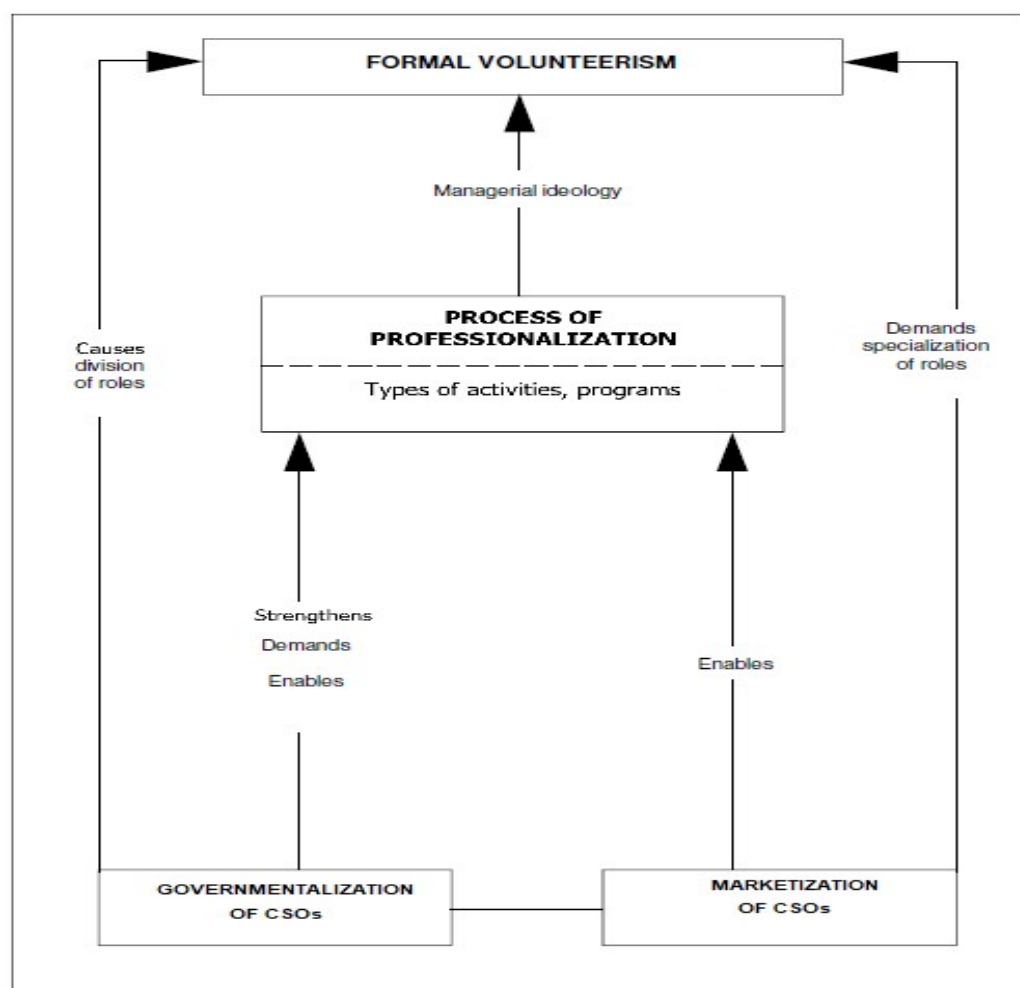


Figure 1. The complex relationships between professionalism and volunteerism. Source: (Kolarič et al. 2002).

3. Materials and Methods

In this article, data from the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project available in the latest publication (Salamon et al. 2017) are combined with data from Slovenia collected via two CSO surveys in Slovenia in 2006 (Kolarič et al. 2006) and most recently in 2022 (Deželan and Rakar 2022; Rakar and Deželan 2023). These surveys were based on the methodological framework applied in the Johns Hopkins Comparative Non-profit Sector Study (Salamon and Anheier 1998b; Salamon and Sokolowski 2004; Salamon et al. 2017), particularly regarding the same definition and classification of CSOs across different fields of activities—the International Classification of Non-profit Organizations (ICNPO)—as well as the main indicators for the calculation of CSOs’ professionalization, and take into account the data on

employment and volunteers' involvement in CSOs as a share of the economically active population (EAP). The 2006 data were collected from a representative sample of CSOs in Slovenia, based on a stratified random sample of 1118 CSOs. The 2022 survey was based on a sample of 405 CSOs in Slovenia. The latter data are exploratory in nature and are not representative. Therefore, the data on CSOs from 2006 is used for comparison with other countries included in the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project, as the sample is representative, and the period of data collection is more comparable. In addition, the data from the 2022 survey are used to analyze the current development trends of CSOs in Slovenia. Despite the limitations of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project approach (see [Searing et al. 2023](#); [Enjolras et al. 2018](#); [Salamon and Sokolowski 2018](#)), this methodological approach was the most appropriate and comprised the most comprehensive data for our comparative analysis of the processes for the development of CSOs in various welfare systems.

4. Results

4.1. *The Governmentalization of CSOs as the Basis of Their Professionalization and Formal Volunteerism—A Framework of the Conservative–Corporate Welfare System*

The governmentalization of CSOs is a process in which CSOs become service providers for the (welfare) state ([Kolarič 2003](#); [Rakar and Kolarič 2020](#)). More specifically, it is a process whereby states/governments order certain quantities and types of public services from CSOs, namely those services assured to all citizens on an equal basis. The state/government gives funding to CSOs for the provision of these services. In this way, the process of governmentalization could be operationalized as the state/public funding of these organizations. The dominant share of public/government funding in the structure of an organization's annual revenue is an indicator of the degree of its governmentalization.

Data from the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project ([Salamon and Sokolowski 2004](#); [Salamon et al. 2017](#)) show that CSOs are most governmentalized in countries featuring a conservative–corporate welfare system. It is the logic of this type of welfare system that primarily justifies the use of CSOs by governments. This logic cannot simply be called the “subsidiarity principle”, namely it is only when the lower instances (informal social networks and CSOs) have proven unable to solve a problem that the state steps in. In a conservative–corporate welfare system, while the state does not act as the direct provider of social security and welfare, its role is not residual like in a liberal welfare system. On the contrary, a state in the conservative–corporate type of the welfare system acts in two directions. First, it ‘forces’ all those participating in the labor market (employees and employers) to join compulsory insurance schemes. The insurance contributions they make support the benefits for those no longer able to work due to old age, illness, disability, or simply after becoming unemployed (a pay-as-you-go system). Both contributions and benefits are income-dependent. Moreover, the state thereby “supports” the ability of those who work or have worked to secure (buy) their social security and the welfare of their family members in the market or quasi-market ([Grohs 2014](#); [Filipovič Hrast and Rakar 2018](#)).

Second, the state—via local governments—is also responsible for those who cannot enter the labor market. This care is not only implemented through social assistance in the form of cash but also by contracting out the provision of, mainly, social care services for children, youth, the elderly, and marginalized groups to CSOs ([Kolarič 2003](#); [Seelkopf and Starke 2019](#)). Here, CSOs are in fact service providers for the welfare state, with their role being limited to producing and delivering services while the state and local governments, together with the compulsory (public) insurance schemes, retain responsibility for purchases and funding, because of the established partnership between the church and the state ([Gabriel and Kracht 2004](#); [Salamon 1995](#); [Rakar 2007](#)). This relationship consists of the church's role in establishing CSOs and the role of (local) governments in financing the provision of services, notably in

social services. It is important for the church to play this role to add its legitimacy, just as it is important for the legitimacy of the welfare state to actively demonstrate its commitment to solidarity and social justice in society.

As shown in Table 1, government funding (public sources) is the dominant share in the structure of CSO annual income in all societies belonging to the conservative-corporate welfare system type. In Belgium, government support accounts for 68.8% of all nonprofit revenues, in Germany 64.8%, in the Netherlands 62.6%, and in France 62.8% (Salamon et al. 2017).

Table 1. Framework of the conservative–corporate welfare system.

Country	Level of Professionalization (Paid Workforce as a % of EAP)	Volunteers (as a % of EAP)	Structure of Revenues (in %)			Service Activity	Expressive Activity
			Market Sources	Public Sources	Philanthropy		
The Netherlands	10.1%	5.8%	32.4%	62.6%	5.1%	64.4%	30.1%
Belgium	9.7%	3.4%	27.9%	68.8%	3.3%	85.2%	14.2%
France	5.9%	3.1%	27.7%	62.8%	9.5%	62.0%	37.1%
Germany	3.7%	3.0%	31.8%	64.8%	3.4%	54.8%	37.1%

Source: Based on data from (Salamon et al. 2017).

Regardless of its actual form (grants, contracts, project funding, etc.), the government/public funding of CSOs is not merely a ‘technical operation’ but also contributes to the existing professionalization trends of CSOs by way of three interrelated processes (Smith and Lipsky 1993, pp. 106–7; see also Anheier and Toepler 2023):

- Governments facilitate professionalization by supplying funding; this enables CSOs to stabilize and expand their activities and make long-term commitments to attract new and better paid staff;
- Government funding requires professionalization by setting standards for professional staffing. Even if an organization itself considers professional staffing to be desirable, government requirements often promote the organization’s orientation to professionalization;
- Government funding strengthens the professionalization process by measuring the quality of services provided against the level of an organization’s professional qualifications; this prompts CSOs to recruit more qualified staff and boost the level of professionalization.

The data in Table 1 show that government funding enables the professionalization of CSOs. In all countries with a conservative–corporate welfare system and an established partnership between the church as the founder of CSOs and the state as the financier (public sources account for the majority of CSOs’ income), CSOs are relatively highly professionalized. In the Netherlands, the share of employees in the civil society sector in the EAP is 10.1%, whereas in Belgium, the respective figure is 9.7%. In France (5.9%) and Germany (3.7%), the degree of professionalization of civil society organizations is somewhat lower, which can be explained by the welfare state’s tendency to largely fund CSOs active in the field of social welfare rather than those involved in the provision of healthcare, as occurs in the Netherlands, for example, and/or in education, in Belgium.

However, the government/public funding of CSOs not only enables, demands, and strengthens the process of their professionalization but also indirectly changes the role and position held by volunteers in these organizations (Kövéř 2021). Government funding of CSOs leads to a separation between direct (state-mandated) service activities and support activities. Direct service delivery is “reserved” for professionals (those employed by an organization), with volunteers being “pushed” into supportive roles (Smith and Lipsky 1993; Sozanská et al. 2004). Given that, as a funder, the government requires that all supportive activities in an organization be monitored, supportive roles are also defined, while volunteer roles are formalized (see Brudney 2016).

Involving volunteers in the implementation of activities—even if only supportive ones—in conditions where everything must be defined and formalized in advance is thus a very demanding task for an organization’s managers (see [Brudney 2016](#)). This viewpoint finds support in data from the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project ([Salamon and Sokolowski 2004](#); [Salamon et al. 2017](#)) that show that in Western European countries (with a conservative–corporate welfare system), where CSOs are highly professionalized in the areas of health (Netherlands), education (Belgium), and social services (France, Germany), the majority of volunteering occurs in the areas of culture and recreation and in civic and advocacy organizations ([Salamon et al. 2017](#)). These organizations do not provide services in which the state is especially interested. They accordingly receive less state funding and are not so strongly professionalized (also given the nature of their activities and programs) but have greater flexibility when it comes to involving volunteers. One conclusion from this part of the analysis is that the governmentalization of CSOs is a process that enables, demands, and accelerates their professionalization and indirectly alters the position and role of volunteers within them.

4.2. The Marketization of CSOs as the Basis for Their Professionalization and Formal Volunteerism—The Framework of the Liberal Welfare System

The professionalization of CSOs can also be based on their marketization. Alongside the expansion of commercial activities (activities entailing the sale of products in quasi-markets by nonprofit enterprises), the marketization of CSOs is a process related to competition among CSOs themselves and between them and for-profit organizations for clients who can pay more. The arena of this competition is on the borderline between the traditional (pure) market and the quasi-market where subsidized, tax-exempt CSOs are often seen as “unfair competition” against private for-profit companies ([Rose-Ackerman 1990](#); [Zimmer and Pahl 2018](#)).

The marketization process can be operationalized as the sale of products from CSO activities (goods and services) as a way of generating revenue. The indicator of the level of CSOs’ marketization is the dominant share of market revenue generated by the sale of products in the structure of an organization’s annual income. The most traditional form of sale is a user fee, i.e., fees charged to people who use a CSO’s services. For example, universities charge tuition fees, hospitals charge patient fees, museums charge admission fees, etc. Yet, user fees are not the only evidence of CSO commercialism. They can also make “genuine sales” when they look for new users (market niches), develop new services/products, and try to exploit every possibility and opportunity to sell the outputs of their activity in the most profitable way. Universities, for instance, are turning to new markets—looking for unconventional students like senior citizens and people seeking ‘weekend’ education. Hospitals, too, are doing more than just raising their daily hospital fees. They are also tapping into new markets—not simply by expanding activities like fitness centers but also by opening potentially highly profitable departments like heart transplant units. Museums are also opening shops to sell reproductions of their exhibits, among other things ([Weisbrod 1998](#), p. 10; [Anheier and Toepler 2023](#)).

The marketization process has not been equally intense everywhere. It has been most intense in societies where a liberal welfare system has developed. It is the logic of the liberal welfare system that principally determines the “gravitation” of CSOs to the market. In this model, all citizens are assumed to be able to obtain the resources they need from the market. Arising from the “failure” of the market to produce collective services and goods in sufficient quantities, and given the residual role/responsibility of the state for the welfare of the people in the model (rather than the “failure” of the state), there is considerable “scope” for CSOs. The latter’s role is to produce and sell services and goods in quasi-markets to users who cannot (or will not) buy them in the pure market (from for-profit organizations). Selling goods and

services in the quasi-market is the basic (albeit not the sole) way in which CSOs generate their income in this model (Kolarič et al. 2002, pp. 53–67; Young and Soh 2016).

Data from the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Salamon and Sokolowski 2004; Salamon et al. 2017) support the above theses. In the USA and Australia, two countries belonging to the liberal type of welfare system, market sources account for the dominant share of CSOs' total revenues (56.9% in Australia; 55.9% in the USA). Only in the UK, where the liberal type of welfare system has also developed with certain specific features, is the share of market-generated revenues slightly lower (43.5%) (see Table 2).

Table 2. Framework of the liberal welfare system.

Country	Level of Professionalization (Paid Workforce as a % of EAP)	Volunteers (as a % of EAP)	Structure of Revenues (in %)			Service Activity	Expressive Activity
			Market Sources	Public Sources	Philanthropy		
The United States	6.2%	3.0%	55.9%	30.0%	14.1%	66.2%	29.0%
The United Kingdom	5.1%	5.8%	43.5%	45.2%	11.3%	50.1%	46.0%
Australia	5.9%	2.9%	56.9%	33.5%	9.5%	57.3%	25.4%

Source: Based on data from (Salamon et al. 2017).

It is evident that the marketization of CSOs facilitates the professionalization process by providing resources. Data from the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project demonstrate this by revealing that CSOs in Australia, the USA, and the UK are relatively well professionalized and roughly to the same extent. Nevertheless, we must be clear that the marketization of CSOs means more than just selling services and goods. It also means, as mentioned earlier, the penetration of an essentially market-like relationship into the civil society sector (Salamon 1993, p. 16; Salamon et al. 2017). Moreover, the implementation of NPM has had a significant impact on service providers in the UK, the USA, and elsewhere because commercialization and professionalization under the pressure of competition in quasi-markets and the convolutions of contracting arrangements have challenged the identity and autonomy of CSOs' service activities (Toepler 2018; Anheier and Toepler 2019). This entails strong competition among CSOs themselves and between them and for-profit organizations for more solvent "clients". To succeed in this process, the organization must effectively address the specific needs of special groups of "clients". Under these conditions, CSOs are led to hire professionals possessing more refined skills and having undergone training at all levels of organizational activity. Marketization thus not only facilitates professionalization but also requires specialization within CSOs. When special skills are called for to satisfy clients' needs most effectively, volunteerism is not an adequate response (Sanzo-Perez et al. 2017; Watson and Abzug 2016). Put more clearly, the marketization of CSOs not only enables their professionalization but also requires their specialization and in turn narrows the space for volunteers to (continue to) participate in organizations.

The above statement can be illustrated using data for the civil society sector in the USA. Organizations in the health and education sectors are highly professionalized. CSOs in the health sector account for 50.8% of total nonprofit employment, another 15.5% is employed in CSOs working in education, with only 11.1% being employed in CSOs in the field of social services (Salamon et al. 2017). The explanation for this relatively low level of professionalization of CSOs operating in the area of social services is that these services cannot be traded as successfully as, for example, education and especially health services, because those in need of social services typically do not have money to pay for them. This means these organizations offer much greater room for volunteers to become involved, such as in the USA where the field of social services absorbs considerable volunteer input, with volunteer workforce representing 14.6% of FTE in social services, while in healthcare, for instance, it is much lower at 4.0% (Salamon et al. 2017).

4.3. Governmentalization, Marketization, Professionalization, and Formal Volunteerism in Slovenian CSOs—Framework of the (Post)State-Socialist Welfare System

Data from the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Salamon and Sokolowski 2004; Salamon et al. 2017; Enjolras et al. 2018) and other research (Kolarič et al. 2006; Vandor et al. 2017; Rakar and Deželan 2023) show that CSOs in former socialist countries share certain similar characteristics that distinguish them from CSOs in other societies. These inward similarities and outward differences can be explained in the context of the state socialist welfare system established in these societies in the 50 years of their socialist development. The logic of this system determined the role of CSOs—although they were not an important service provider (services being assured by the public sector/state), they were important because they supported the capacity of informal social networks (mainly the family) to take care of their members. CSOs generally existed in the form of associations that were not very professionalized and included a large share of volunteers; they were active in all fields and most numerous in the areas of culture and recreation (Kolarič et al. 2002; Rakar and Kolaric 2020; Salamon et al. 2017; Vandor et al. 2017; Rihter and Zidar 2017).

As shown in Table 3, despite some differences, the characteristics described have predominantly continued following the end of socialism. In these societies, CSOs are still the least professionalized (see also Salamon and Sokolowski 2018), although the emerging differences are also evident. In Hungary and the Czech Republic, the civil society sector is more professionalized, also due to the bigger share of public funding that permits the development of services and the dominant activities of CSOs. In Slovakia and Slovenia, in contrast, expressive activities still predominate, with the leading areas of activity remaining culture and recreation. In Slovenia and Slovakia, CSOs have also remained similar in terms of their revenue structure. Based on the share of membership fees included in market sources, commercial sources appear to make up the lion's share of the structure of CSOs' revenues. Nonetheless, membership fees are a voluntary contribution made by members to their organization rather than an (upfront) payment for a particular service. Researchers from the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Salamon and Sokolowski 2004; Salamon et al. 2017) considered a membership fee as the payment by a user for a particular service (user fee). In certain cases, although these two terms may coincide, the membership fee is often simply the support of individuals to an organization without receiving or expecting anything in return. This is especially the case when associations are the most common form of CSOs. When taking this into account, the "marketization" or market orientation of CSOs in these societies becomes blurred. The relatively large share of income from private donations, which is the highest in former socialist countries than in other countries, can be explained by the fact that these are mainly corporate sponsorships; these funds obviously provide the platform for "professionalization" and the involvement of volunteers, especially in organizations in the culture and recreation fields, which are still the most numerous (Salamon et al. 2017; Kolaric et al. 2002, 2006; Rakar and Deželan 2023).

Table 3. Framework of the (post)state-socialist welfare system.

Country	Level of Professionalization (Paid Workforce as a % of EAP)	Volunteers (as a % of EAP)	Structure of Revenues (in %)			Service Activity	Expressive Activity
			Market Sources	Public Sources	Philanthropy		
Czech Republic	1.4%	0.3%	17.3%	64.7%	18.0%	68.5%	30.8%
Hungary	1.7%	0.4%	36.0%	52.2%	11.8%	60.2%	36.9%
Slovakia	0.7%	0.3%	54.2%	22.1%	23.7%	29.6%	63.8%
Slovenia	0.7%	0.9%	30.0%	36.3%	20.9%	28.2	60.2%

Source: Based on data from (Salamon et al. 2017); for Slovenia, data from (Kolarič et al. 2006).

A similar “pattern” was found in data from a representative sample of Slovenian CSOs (Kolarič et al. 2006). In both Slovenia and other former socialist countries, associations are the most common form of CSO. Other types of organizations (like private institutes—the dominant form of service provider in Slovenia—as well as foundations) are much less common, yet in recent years, the process of their establishment has become more intensive. The most numerous associations are observed in the field of sport and recreation, followed by culture and fire services. While one can also find many associations in the areas of social services and healthcare, there are significantly fewer of them in the field of education. In terms of the level of professionalization of Slovenian CSOs, they rank second to last among all countries included in the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project. Slovenian CSOs account for a negligible 0.7% of the EAP in Slovenia (Kolarič et al. 2006; Rakar and Kolarič 2020). The use of volunteers in Slovenian CSOs is relatively high since volunteers perform almost half as much work as those formally employed by the organizations (Kolarič et al. 2006; Deželan and Rakar 2022).

In terms of the absolute prevalence of associations as a form of CSOs that are membership organizations, membership fees are the primary basis or source of the (usually low) professionalization of Slovenian CSOs. Membership fees comprise the biggest income source as their share in the structure of annual income is almost 20% (Kolarič et al. 2006; Rakar and Kolarič 2020). To membership fees, we can add public sources (largely local government), which enable employment, mainly in CSOs in the field of social services (e.g., in organizations for individuals with disabilities), as well as corporate sponsorships, which ensure that CSOs in the field of sports have the greatest share in employment of all Slovenian CSOs. When summing up all income sources, in the structure of annual revenues of all Slovenian CSOs, public sources (state budget and municipal budgets) account for 36.3%, philanthropy (donations from private foundations, individuals, and companies) 20.9%, and market sources, which are largely membership fees, 30.0%. This revenue structure does not permit Slovenian CSOs to be described as “governmentalized”, or even less, “marketized”. Specifically, this revenue structure proves that the processes of governmentalization and marketization, upon which the professionalization of Slovenian CSOs is based, did not really start until recently (Rakar and Kolarič 2020). All three processes, which are closely linked, will only begin when the share of other organizational forms in the Slovenian civil society sector’s structure starts to grow alongside the form of association.

The latest available data indicate this trend has indeed commenced in the past decade. Results of the 2022 survey (Deželan and Rakar 2022; Rakar and Deželan 2023) reveal that while culture and recreation continue to be among the most common primary orientations of CSOs, the provision of services that were once the preserve of the state is becoming more common. Social services are becoming the most common primary orientation of service activity (14.6%), whereas education (9.5%) and youth (also considered informal education; 6.3%) are important parts of the civil society sector. Moreover, employment in the health sector now accounts for 5.6% of CSOs. What all these organizations have in common is that they are not associations but act as service providers for the common good. Most of these organizations carry out activities/programs that call for professionalization. However, this does not in itself mean that volunteers cannot be involved in performing their activities. The process of professionalizing these CSOs is chiefly based on concession agreements and other public funding forms. According to Slovenian legislation a concession agreement is a contract between the government (on the national or local level) and a private service provider that sets out the scope and type of the services to be provided by the private actor, as well as the costs for the state (Rakar and Kolarič 2020). To a certain extent, this turns these organizations into service providers for the state, which means that they are “governmentalizing”. This enables and

requires an ever-higher level of professionalization and, at the same time, the formalization of the tasks and roles of (any) volunteers.

By using concession agreements or contracting out services to CSOs, the Slovenian welfare state is limiting further expansion of the public sector (Filipovič Hrast and Rakar 2017, 2020). Still, this does not mean that public funds are or will become the dominant source in the structure of annual revenues of Slovenian CSOs. Similarly, we cannot currently assess whether the share of private donations, which is very high compared to other countries, will drop significantly. As already mentioned, private donations are for the most part corporate sponsorships, typically for sports organizations and clubs. Yet, there are signs that companies are also willing to support organizations from other sectors, not only cultural organizations, but also those from the health, social and education sectors—albeit with appropriate tax relief. Certainly, while the funds acquired in this way cannot be the basis for CSOs' sustainable professionalization, they can help facilitate the involvement of volunteers.

This kind of development would partly reduce the pressure on CSOs to turn to market/commercial sources. Indeed, analysis shows that CSOs “marketize” themselves noticeably when funds from private donations are insufficient and public sources are unavailable (Sanzo-Perez et al. 2017; Anheier and Toepler 2023; Gidron et al. 1992). This is not to say that a market orientation does not benefit CSOs. While it is true that it enables professionalization or even requires specialization and narrows the space for involving volunteers, it is also true that it increases competition between CSOs in social markets. This forces them to provide quality services and gives users the possibility of choice.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

We may conclude that despite common trends as most welfare systems in the developed Western world transform in the marketization direction under the auspices of neoliberal ideology (Taylor-Gooby et al. 2017; Alexander and Fernandez 2021), the responses of different welfare systems in line with institutionalist theories reveal path dependency in determining transformation by maneuvering between the NPM and NPG approaches. The basis for the professionalization of CSOs in a liberal welfare system rests on the primacy of the market and the marketization process inherent to the NPM approach but offset by the governmentalization process under NPG. Similarly, the basis for the professionalization of CSOs in a conservative–corporate welfare system remains the inherent process of governmentalization reflected in NPG, although it is balanced by the marketization embedded in the NPM approach. Both processes indirectly alter the role of volunteers within CSOs by formalizing and/or “narrowing” their space.

The combination of the two approaches—NPM and NPG—can also be found in post-socialist welfare systems. Which approach prevails nevertheless depends largely on the experience of the “welfare gap” that arose in these countries during the transition period following the political system's transformation in the 1990s and hence on which principle has dominated in closing this gap: marketization or governmentalization. In this respect, Slovenia is an exception since, unlike some other post-socialist countries, it did not face a growing “welfare gap” that was then filled by CSOs (Kolarič et al. 2009, 2011; Filipovič Hrast and Dobrotič 2022; Kuitto 2016), leading to the much broader development of its CSOs' service activities (Salamon et al. 2017). In Slovenia, a complementarity (rather than subsidiarity) relationship was created between the public/state sector and the civil society sector (Rakar and Kolaric 2020). If the future development of Slovenian CSOs is based on a relatively balanced mix of public, commercial, and private sources, CSOs could indeed establish themselves as intermediary structures capable of combining different functional logics, resources, and potential from their environment (the spheres of the market, state, and community) in an innovative way (Pestoff 2014; Evers 1995;

Rihter and Zidar 2017). In any case, the professionalization and sustainable development of CSOs can only happen if Slovenian society maintains “public responsibility for the social”. In essence, this means that the public/state funding of CSOs is not a substitute for services that should be provided by the public sector but is only a supplement for those services the public sector does not provide to a sufficient extent or quality.

Finally, it is important to note some data limitations, such as the limits of the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector approach, which does not capture all of the nuances of CSO activities and their impact, especially in rapidly changing environments. While the research covers a wide range of CSO activities, certain sectors or types of organizations may be underrepresented, leading to an incomplete picture of the CSO landscape. In addition, limitations arise due to data from different survey years, gaps, or inconsistencies in data collection methods between different countries, which affects the comparability of the results. Nonetheless, the data indicate different nuances in the development of the civil society sector and the professionalization basis that are determined by the welfare system’s characteristics. This holds great potential for extending the research by introducing more frequent data collection points to better comprehend the trends and changes in the civil society sector over time and, for comparison, between different countries using both qualitative and quantitative methods to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the changing landscape of CSOs and their future potential.

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