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Social participation and local development – role of civil/nonprofit organisations

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Introduction

Settlement or region development is a kind of conscious action, which influences the operation of the region in a way to ensure the required living standard for the population and to be able to ensure a desired future of the given region.

State and local government actors play an important role in the development by ensuring the legal framework to the realization of the goals. However key actors of the development are those citizens who can promote the development through their activity.

That goals can be only efficiently and successfully realized, when people are attached to the given settlement or region, and when they attend such kind of relations, which can contribute to the realization of the goals. These local relations can be shaped by the civil/nonprofit organisations. So these organisations can have a direct and indirect effect on the development of the settlements and regions. In this way the local development concept connect to the framework of social participation.

In the focus of my study are the civil/nonprofit organisations and they role in local development from the approach of social participation. At first I show the conceptual framework of development, civil/nonprofit organisations and social participation. After it I display the role of the civil/nonprofit organisations in the development processes, then I feature the advantages of the participation and the preconditions of a well-functioning participatory system. I close my study with some recommendations for the future.

1. Conceptual framework

1.1. Meaning of development

When we talk about development, differences between growth and development have to be clear. Behind the word growth there is a quantitative approach (Stöhr 1990), the element of territorial unit have to be much more extended and bigger. The approach of development is qualitative, something must be not bigger but better. Usually economic issues are behind growth, but the interpretation of development is more complex. Moreover it must be distinguished a spontaneously and a conscious development (Ugrin – Varga 2007). A

territorial unit can develop spontaneously, but often it has to be intervened in its processes, this means conscious development. In this case citizens are not just spectators of the development process but they are also active actors who are involved in the strategic planning of their settlement. So citizens are able to contribute to make their surroundings more beautiful and attractive also for the local actors and also for the others who would like to live, work or run a business at the settlement. Stiglitz (1998) defines development as a process which is able to widen the horizon of people and ensures possibilities to fight against isolation.

Development can be defined in different territorial level. The regional development can be explained as the complexity of such activities which influence conscious the territorial unit (Pap – Tóth 2005; Süli-Zakar 2003; László – Pap 2007). The settlement development is a kind of conscious and complex action, wherefore the given settlement is changing, the quality of the citizens is improving, and the settlement is getting more attractive (Pap – Tóth 2005; Kőszegfalvy – Loydl 2001; Farkas 2005; Süli-Zakar 2003; Rechnitzer 2007). When we talk about local development we mean the settlement and its surroundings. Nowadays this concept is used more and more often, because it is more complex than the settlement development: the settlement is not a separate unit, but a unit which lives in symbiosis with the settlements around it.

It is important to talk about the subjects of development. There are two types of approaches of it (Rechnitzer 2007; Farkas 2005; Szigeti 2006): a narrower and a wider approaches. The narrower one means that development characterized by such activities which result in physical levels (e.g. roads, buildings). The wider approach is more complex than the narrower one. Any territorial unit can be considered as an economical, territorial and physical unit, that's why also the economic and social processes are needed to be considered during the regional and settlement development (Kőszegfalvy – Loydl 2001). Some literatures call this complex process holistic development (Pike – Rodríguez-Pose – Tomaney 2006, El-Mously 2007). In this way we can speak about economic development, rural development, community development, infrastructure development and so on. All these types of development can be characterized by complex processes, that means, all of the actors (e.g. state actors, local government actors, civil society, citizens, companies, institutions) who are concerned with the development are involved in the development process. To be able to live in a society like this, it is not enough to build roads and buildings, it is needed to be able to build communities who

are responsible for their life and don't wait for the state and local government actors to make their life better.

1.2. Civil and nonprofit organisations

The term “civil society” was first used in the 18th century, but Aristotle and Cicero had already written about civil society as a social phenomenon. The term was used in the 18th century to “indicate the sphere of social reciprocity” (Seligman 1997, 19), then in the 19th century the term was used to describe that sphere of the society which was different from the public sector. According to Seligman the scientific interpretation of this term is still missing as in the earlier centuries the term was defined in different ways. The definitions had one thing in common that is they proceeded from the problem of “public and private, individual and social, public morality and private interest, personal passions and common/public good” (Seligman 1997, 20–21). Seligman imagines civil society as an arena where individuals can enforce their interests.

In the last few decades more approaches came up to define civil society and I will present some of them. Perry Anderson, sociologist means civil society as those diverse social organisations that have a relative autonomy against the state. According to him “non-state and non-profit organisations like sociological entities, institutions and organisations” belong to civil society (Bartal 1999, 19).

According to András Arató “modern civil society consists of various forms of civil initiations and self-organisations, and it is enforced by a legal system that guarantees the fulfilment of principal human rights and that respects the diversity of the society.” (Arató 1992, 55) Civil organisations are the main and dominant part of the civil society.

The **European Commission** in its document of 1997 (which was the first most important document regarding the relations between the EU and the civil organisations “*Communication from the Commission on Promoting the Role of Voluntary Organisations and Foundations in Europe*” COM (97) 241 final) defines the 5 main criteria of being a member of civil sector, and these are the followings:

- volunteering: the sector consists of a group of people working together to reach a common goal,
- formality: civil organisations can operate in determined corporate forms,
- the ban of profit distribution: organisations are banned to distribute the generated profit, but they have to reinvest it to their operation,

- independency from governments: civil organisations can be founded by only those individuals and organisations that are independent from governments,
- the serve of public good: organisations have to serve the public good during their operations.

In 2000 the **European Economic and Social Committee** (EESC) mentioned similar criteria regarding civil society (*The European Commission and non-governmental organisations: building a stronger partnership 2000*). What's more in 1999 they provided a realistic definition of civil society, the main elements of which are the followings (*The role and contribution of organised civil society to European constructions 1999*):

- organisations independent from state and market,
- civil sector is a kind of communication sphere,
- it works based on the following principles: autonomy, pluralism, subsidiarity, solidarity, responsibility.

It is important that the civil and nonprofit organisations have different meaning in Hungary. Nonprofit organisations are only those ones in the civil society which have legal status. It means that the nonprofit sector is a narrower category, but it is also a wider one, because the nonprofit sector in Hungary also includes organisations which are established partly or completely by state actors (Kuti 1998). These organisations are out of civil sector because of their establishment.

In this paper I use the civil/nonprofit doublet to indicate the organisations as it is almost impossible to draw clear line between civil and/or nonprofit regarding the nature of organisations. Under the expression civil/nonprofit organisation I understand such organisational form which has been established by citizen and/or national, self-government will in favour of realization individual, community or public purposes voluntary.

2. Participatory democracy

2.1. What we mean on participatory democracy?

Participatory democracy is based on the principle that besides public actors social and economic actors can also take part in processes affecting their environment and they do so voluntarily and as a full party (Sartori 1999).

I agree with Ugrin – Varga (2007), Nizák – Péterfi (2005), Sartori (1999) and Kulcsár (1997) that future democracy will be somewhere between representative and participatory democracy. I mean that the representative system is essential, although its extension and a wider application of it based on the principle of participation is necessary in a way that the citizens could participate in the preparation of decisions, in the implementation, but the right of making a decision still remains the exclusive right of representatives (the possibilities are limited to implement this in practice). According to Péter Nizák and Ferenc Péterfi (2005) it means the extension of representative democracy with participating elements. The goal is that more participants could state their opinions in more questions, so they could take part in decision-making and in its implementation. Based on the above-mentioned the representative democracy's implementation with participating elements could be described in practice by the term *active democracy* (Reisinger 2010), which indicates that form of democracy in which citizens actively participate in development processes – basically by enforcing the reflection principle – in cooperation with the representatives chosen by them and with other actors.

In the following social and economic issues actors can take part:

- making laws,
- shaping local affairs,
- planning of settlement/local development,
- realising the goals of the settlement,
- planning of territorial development,
- realising the goals of the regions,
- planning economic development.

Who can be the social and economic actors who can take part in participatory democracy?

- national state actors,
- local governments,
- companies,
- educational institutes,
- civil/nonprofit organisations,
- citizens.



Social participation

If we talk about the participation of the citizens and the civil/nonprofit organisations it means social participation. As we can see these actors can take part in the participatory democracy, in my study the focus is on the development process mainly at local level.

2.2. Forms of social participation

The social participation has a different approach. There are two main form of social participation by the Council of Europe (Participation of Citizens in Local Public Life 2000). The first is the political role of the citizens (by voting, by working in a political party in a direct on indirect way and by taking actions in an indirect way), the second is the participation in community actions (this form of participation is often means the involving the citizens into the work of a civil or nonprofit organisation). The indirect way has different methods, these are the followings:

- Informative and advisory participation: The main part of the participation is the information and the way of getting to information. Citizens and civil/nonprofit organisations are able to participate in the development processes if they have relevant information about their environment, about the concepts of the local development and about the methods and facilities of participation. State and local government actors and experts need information from local citizens to realise effective development. Local citizens possess those local information which are necessary to make effective decisions. Without each other the development process can't be effective.
- Involvement into decision-making: This means that citizens and civil/nonprofit organisations participate not just in the pre decision-making but also in the decision-making. This kind of participation is considerably rare in the modern democracies, because neither the citizens nor the state actors are in a position to realise this process in the practice.
- Involvement into realisations of the development goals: It is important to allow the citizens and civil/nonprofit organisations to participate in the realizations of the goals.

Arnstein (1969) created the ladder of social participation in 1969, in which he distinguishes the depth of participation in eight steps from total passivity to active participation. The lower two steps of the ladder express the total passivity of social actors, then the next three steps reflect partial participation. It includes information provision and the cooperative solving of problems occurred. Arnstein means the role of information provision

as a legitimization of social participation, as participation is impossible without providing information therefore one of the main tasks of local and central state is to provide information among inhabitants and other local actors. Arnstein interprets the role of placation that although actors do not have the right to decide, they can tell their opinion about preliminary information during the preparation of decisions. The partnership means a higher level of cooperation, whereas the 8th step reflects best the “power” of citizens, where none of the actors has absolute control as every local actor has the same rights and duties.

Chanan (1997) introduces the two forms of participation from another point of view. According to one of the forms citizens are active actors of development processes and in this case participation is said to be full. According to Chanan the other form is partnership which means an intensive cooperation between the public sector and the other local actors. Similar to Chanan other authors (Burns – Hambleton – Hogget 1994, Gerston 2002, Coleman 2005) also mention partnership as one of the feasible and highly effective forms of social participation. I illustrate partnership as a form of cooperation in the next subsection.

2.3. The principle of partnership

Partnership is a principle of the EU’s cohesion policy since 1998 which means cooperation between the economic and social actors of the different levels starting from the aims of diverse programs to implementation (Pálné 2008). Cooperation has two segments. The vertical segment affects the aspect of development work under which decision-making bodies and territorial units implicate affected social (civil) and economic actors in processes to reach aims. Partnership is never just a top-down process as in this type of cooperation the implicated actors can participate in planning and implementation as initiators. The horizontal segment means the cooperation of implicated (local) actors to create a common vision and mutual programs. Two things is necessary so that the principle of partnership could work and these are on the one hand the sharing of tasks, benefits and responsibilities and on the other the higher and higher level of cooperation between the participants of partnership.

One important aspect of effective implication is that actors are not motivated by political or economic privileges or interests but that common interest that they should take part in processes to make their residence and environment more beautiful and liveable. If only or mainly political and personal interests dominate, developments meet the demands of a smaller group of actors and not local needs. People’s capability and willingness regarding the implementation of common aims is needed to real cooperation and to the practical application

of the principle of partnership. Among principles of partnership we can find the principle of continuity, feedback, the equal opportunities and coordination (Fodor – Kálmán – Lovász – Németh – Wächter, 2003). Every principle puts in front the importance of cooperation and refers to the necessity of participation in all stages of development not only during the planning process but during the whole implementation process.

The importance of partnership is provided (Gerston 2002) by the direct or indirect relation of almost every economic and social actor as every actor represents a part of a system based on its relations. The future of the systems depends on which forms and how deeply the actors can cooperate in their common cases.

3. The role of civil/nonprofit organisations in development policy

In Hungary in period passed since transition the activities of civil/nonprofit organisations have become more differentiated; it has appeared those organisations too that have been not only for fulfilling needs of a small community but for participating in local public affairs and social processes (Nizák – Péterfi 2005). It has established continuously those organisations too which goals have been to develop a settlement, area or the participation in development procedures at least (organisations for economic development, settlement development, environment protection). However, this role of these organisations in the wide range practice is not yet clear defined in our country, on one hand because of the legislative conditions are also incomplete, and on the other hand the attitude of actors involved in development is not suitable in all cases. In my opinion the main problem is that there is not any measure which would define exactly what is meant under participation in development, its enforcement on local, regional and national level and who and what kind of obligations are rights may have got in this process. Therefore neither the tasks nor the actors are not identified exactly so the consistency in cooperation between actors, experts and planners may be involved is often lacking.

The appearance of civil/nonprofit organisations in development policy can be originate in that process which has put forward the participation of local actors in (local) developments, allowing them to be active participant in social and economic shaping of their environment by using their internal resources.

From development aspect my interpretation of the role of civil/nonprofit organisations are the following extended ideas of Nizák – Péterfi 2005) and Pálné 2008):

- 1) There are civil/nonprofit organisations which operational basic is strongly connected to policy, eg. in form of delegating member, active politics.
- 2) Although the second group of organisations are not direct participant in public force but the active participation is typical. Kákai (2004) defines the participatory of organisations in the following: participation in local legislation, in local public affairs and in strategic development. The elements of this trial division cannot be divided sharply in the practice even so I will focus on detailing their development role. I divide the organisations belong to this class into two main groups:
 - a) The purpose and main activity of establishment connects to local development, they provide development tasks directly. Here can be found those organisations like eg. civil/nonprofit organisations for settlement development, economic development, interest enforcement.
 - b) The main activities of organisations are not directly the development but under their operation they provide many tasks relating to development directly.
- 3) The third group of organisations is not the part of public force and cannot be characterized by active participation so their role connecting to development appear only indirectly through shaping community, delivering opinion and information (communication channel – bridge role).

According to trial division it can be stated that almost civil/nonprofit organisations have got any role in development procedures even if they not focus especially on this activity during their operation. In my opinion every civil/nonprofit organisations are able to act for development of a certain area and settlement, the organisations can create such possibilities in cooperation on local, regional level which contributes to be more developed and viable for a certain area.

The role in local development of organisations from the three groups can be connected mostly to the second group; I determined their role in development policy in the following:

- participation in municipality's work,
- participation in working out development documents,
- delivery opinion on development documents,
- realization of development purposes,
- management and realization of investments and projects,
- renovation, maintenance,

- building and shaping community,
- delivering opinion,
- operating as communication channel (bridge role).

The question arises that why the role of civil/nonprofit organisations is important in development. The appearance of civil/nonprofit organisations as settlement developer meant and means that there is need from citizens to do anything for nicer and more liveable environment on local level, the local knowledge of inhabitants is needed too in order that the development and improvement of a settlement would be supported not only from above but from under as well. The main task of organisations for settlement development is to contribute to improvement of a certain settlement and its narrow and wider environment through their operation. In addition they should make recommendations on settlement strategy during its working out and implementation process, with their application activity they contribute to expansion of resources for developing the settlement, they should inform the citizens about development ideas and last but not least they should “shaken up” local communities as their opinion is needed too in order that the development of settlements proceeds into the right direction. So their role in shaping and developing community is very important in the whole settlement or even in its wider and narrower environment.

In my opinion in Hungary despite of the fact that the number of organisations for settlement development increased from 1990s and is increasing continuously nowadays as well, their social and economic assessment was not adequate and it is not today yet. I think that the majority of these organisations are not able to present the power that their interest could be represented in activities for development a settlement or even a bigger territorial unit, in application process they are considered as partners only in a few cases. Based on my results it is caused for two factors (Reisinger 2006, 2007a, 2007b): on one hand the majority of organisations (like the other national civil/nonprofit organisations) do not dispose of enough financial and human resources, and on the other hand the national development practice is still not completely prepared for civil/nonprofit organisations in development processes. It does not mean that the hundreds of organisations did not play and play important role in the developments; the work of every operating organisation is needed, the imperfections project the guidelines of promotional possibilities in the future.

More authors raise important questions in connection with the role of civil/nonprofit organisations (e.g. Kende 1999, Böhm 1999), in the centre of the questions is that to what

extent the operation of organisations is related to political life and to what extent they differ. This question plays a really important role in case of organisations participating in development processes. According to Kende Péter civil society can't be seen out of politics as the activities of the actors of both civil society and political life interact. The author's opinion about the border-line between the two spheres is the following (Kende 1999, 16): „The difference between civil sphere and the strictly interpreted politics doesn't lie in that civil sphere lives in another nonpolitical life, but on the one hand it lies in that it is in a lower level of institutionalization than the state; and on the other hand it always defines a “common thing” based on some particular [...] approach, and not based on aspects agreed with others.”

In contrast with Kende, Bóhm Antal (1999) sees the political role of organisations in a different approach. He thinks that in developed democracies market, state and civil sector are separable, whereas in those countries where roles aren't clear and the organisations aren't strong enough to represent the interests of citizens the economic and political interest groups can dispossess the operation of civil/nonprofit organisations thus the political participation of organisations may come to the front. To my mind it could be eliminated if organisations focused on their real founding interests and aims during their operations and didn't let actors participate in the realization of their aims who could call the organisation off from its initial aims.

If we see the organisations' participation in development processes from the point of view of political participation, to my mind an approach partly different from the above-mentioned may be necessary. The development of a settlement or territory can't be sharply separated from the ruling party's work; however the participation doesn't focus here on political collaboration but on those democratic processes that give the settlement or territory a lead on effective and successful development in the long run. As a consequence of this organisations participating in development have to cooperate with the actual leadership but not because they agree with political ideologies but because in favour of development they recognize the positive effects of cooperation and they would like to support local development processes by stating their opinion. If participation is based on other aims (e.g. organisations support aims to return to the actual leadership's allegiance), the connection with political life may tighten. In case of organisations previously brought into the first class the cooperation with the political sphere is different, as in this case more tight connections may evolve which may have political strain. In case of organisations operating in the second and third group my point of view detailed in the introduction may proceed.

The following table sums up the role in development policy of civil/nonprofit organisations at local and territorial level.

Figure 1
The role of civil/nonprofit organisations in development policy at local and territorial level

Roles	Local	Territorial
to improve the quality of decisions	X	X
establish legitimacy	X	X
to create transparency	X	X
establishing contact between local actors	X	X
keeping contact between local actors *1	X	X
contribution to working out strategies with vision elements	X	X
increasing the security of strategic planning *2	X	X
organising local inhabitants into community	X	
offering possibilities for people to feel them important	X	
teaching the approaches of interest enforcement for citizens in organisational framework	X	X
building confidence	X	X
teaching for people how to think on common level	X	X
working out jointly development alternatives	X	X
gathering local ideas and opinions for development documents	X	X
participation as active actor in working out development documents	X	X
measuring the effects of scheduled changes on stakeholders	X	X
participation in implementation the development purposes	X	
evaluation of development procedures	X	
communication channel between citizens and state, local governmental actors	X	X

*Sources: *1 Own construction based on Fennell – Gavelin – Wilson (2008)*

**2 Own construction based on Rehnitz 1998*

Own construction.

*Comment: Source of the first 5 roles *1, Source of next 2 roles *2, The others are own construction.*

4. Advantages of social participation

In this section I introduce the positive effects of participation. The argument for participation is that participation in development processes facilitates the forming of local social communities, the improvement of interactions between people in terms of quality and thus a more balanced improvement of social and economic processes (Building new... 2006; Westholm – Montero – Deth 2007). People learn to think in communities, their problem-solving skills improve and last but not least they become more balanced. The other advantage of participation (Goldfrank 2002) is that it strengthens democratic processes and strengthens the sense of people that they can live in a society as full citizens. This latter can be an important aspect mainly in case of excluded social groups' participation.

Cahn and Camper (1968) mention the following arguments for participation:

- the satisfaction level of individuals improves as people feel they are important in the society,
- the individual capital of every person appears aggregated in community, which makes a more effective lobby possible,
- civil/nonprofit organisations can see the processes around them and they can have an opinion about these processes so they are not only passive actors of the processes.

Putnam (2000) emphasises that the fact that citizens are members of civil organisations where they can learn how to participate in community meetings, speak in public, organise projects and debate positively affects participation. The citizens who are members of civil/nonprofit organisations are more active in social and political life. Thus they can live their citizenship more entirely. Namely they have the chance to put in their life and to develop their communication skills both in their private lives and in community level (Westholm – Montero – Deth 2007).

It is important to emphasise that social participation has not got only social and psychological advantages but it has economic impacts, too. But this approach isn't mentioned often in the literatures. If citizens are involved in development process, they can express their interests better, so they will be more balanced and can fulfil more effectively at their workplace, which could mean better economic indicators (Pateman 1970). Also positive effect is the favourable atmosphere at the workplaces. Better community communication can create also better realisations of the goals of the company through the capacity of the employees with better communication skills.

Social participation has a positive effect on the budget of the settlement. Projects – supported by the local actors – can be profitable not only short but also long term, and can serve not only the interests of politicians but also the interests of other actors. In this case the results of the development are accepted also by local actors, so protests against the development processes will not occur. This type of development can save a lot of money for the settlement and also for the country, because the development plans are harmonized, so projects with no future will not be realized.

If citizens are aware of that they have an important role in the development processes, and they really take part in it, they will realise that the use of the local and national funds are effective, the trust in the local and state actors can deepen, which can strengthen the

democracy in a country. In this case all of the tasks of the state actors can be satisfied more effectively, people can live in a better society.

5. Preconditions of participation

What are the preconditions of the social participation? From my perspective the most important is that the organisation should be capable of operating actively both in local and regional level and should be open to European dimension and other civil organisations. Openness and relationship-building is important because civil interest can appear more effectively if it is presented in an organised way to decision-makers and not alone. Only those organisations are able to do so that do not have to face with the difficulties of everyday life, but have the chance to elaborate projects and programs and are able to endorse their interests. What are the requisites of organisations' local and regional activity (Reisinger 2010)?

- The positive attitude of local actors: it is highly important that the participation of civil/nonprofit organisations can be successful if this wish comes from two sides, from top and from down (Putnam 2000). This means that central state actors realise on the one hand that development is impossible without the participation of local actors and on the other they realise that participation does not only mean the asking for and then the incorporation of opinions about documents completed but it also means the active participation of local actors starting from the first step of planning.

On the other hand organisations also have to realise that they have to think in a common level and not in an individual level for the more effective development of their life and environment, and they have to make use of every opportunity to be able to participate in public affairs and development tasks affecting them as opinion-makers and implementers. This two-way realisation cannot happen separately because if there is no state wish, then bottom-up initiatives are useless as either they do not reach their aims or only by having lot of difficulties; or if there is a state wish but there is not a local one, it is hard to make people motivated. Thus, parties approaching each other have to set out towards each other almost at the same time and to meet the road to each other and then to move on by strengthening each other.

For the active participation of civil/nonprofit organisation it is also necessary that citizens (who are founders of organisations) should be active and motivated, they should perceive that they have a word in processes happening around them. To be active and motivated and to take part in decisions affecting them either personally or

by a civil/nonprofit organisation, citizens need to have those types of social nets that make cooperation possible.

- The existence of a strong civil/nonprofit sector (Dezseri 2008), which is characterised by the followings:
 - ✓ Internal factors: appropriate revenue structure; effective leadership and management functions; appropriate lobbying capacity; appropriate employment structure; wide range of relationships, cooperation networks; clear vision; flexibility (response to internal and external environment); effective programs.
 - ✓ External factors: appropriate legal framework; appropriate political environment; civil-friendly local governments; social acceptance; economic acceptance; high levels of social capital.
- Civil-friendly local governments (Nizák 2001):
 - ✓ they help the foundation of organisations,
 - ✓ they support their operation,
 - ✓ they create the basic conditions of organisations' operation,
 - ✓ they acknowledge the autonomy of organisations,
 - ✓ they make the participation in local decision-making possible,
 - ✓ they support the service activity of organisations.
- Trust: The functioning of active democracy is based on state, market and social actors' trust shown to each other and to the processes taking place in the country. Trust means that if we trust someone or something, during our actions we are not forced to deal with what happens if the other party does not do as promised. Thus, we can absolutely concentrate on the given process while dealing with economic and social processes full of trust and therefore the process of implementation and the result as well will be more effective.

6. How participation can be more successful in the future?

A communication of the European Commission in 2010 defines the strengthening of partnership as one of the most important tasks in accelerating cohesion process among regions. The document emphasises the strengthening of local development solutions, the representation of social actors and among them especially the representation of civil society at local and regional level.

Similar to the Commission the European Economic and Social Committee also encourages the strengthening of partnership and the wider participation of civil society (Opinion of the... 2010). It also stimulates the publication of a handbook containing good practice from which organisations could gain idea how to participate in practice in local development. Besides this they aim to compile a list that would contain the contact data of potential partners to make relationship-building more easy.

The Barca Report (Barca 2009) emphasises the importance and development of the cooperation with civil/nonprofit sector and so does the 5th Cohesion Report (Investing in Europe's Future... 2010), and the latter one emphasises that local development policy should be given more emphasis so it becomes more important how actively local organisations can form their opinion. One of the important tasks of the future is to give more emphasised roles to local, regional organisations, and to find those communication channels that can help to reach the previous aim. The essence of the local development conception can be interpreted as a wider manifestation in which a given number of social and economic actors complement each other in a given territorial level while doing tasks the result of which the best possible usage of local resources takes place and the area develops (Best Practices in... 1999). So the aim of the EU is to decide the catching up process of a given region locally.

How can civil/nonprofit organisation be more active in this relation? I confirm the opinion of Bóhm (1987), Boda (2008) and Battistoni (2000) with my research according to which local actors – both economic and social ones and local governments – should be enabled to realize that they are all needed for a successful development. One basis of effective local development is the intensive communication and the partnership between local and spatial actors. The successfulness of developing activities depends on the type of actors involved in the processes and the way how they are involved, and on how effectively they can cooperate with each other and with other actors of the economy and the society. The enabling could be the task of those experts who have the adequate theoretical and practical knowledge to be able to transfer the information necessary for participation to the involved actors via events, forums and education. People and representatives of organisations of course should take part in these meetings to reach this objective. A reason for the motivation can be the broad spread of publications that illustrate the successful examples of local development in a plain language.

I think that the restitution of trust between people could be a basis for the growth of participating activity. I think it has two ways: on the one hand because of historical features

people should experience – while studying democracy – how to trust in social and economic actors. On the other hand it may be necessary to organize meetings initiated by civil/nonprofit organisations where the parties can freely talk and during this they can know each other's opinion and what's more they can learn the communication. One condition of this is that people should understand the importance of communal communication.

7. Summary

In my study I showed the role of the civil/nonprofit organisations in the local development process. I reviewed the conceptual framework of development, civil/nonprofit organisations and social participation. The new approach in my study is that I presume that the local development and social participation are in the coherent categories. That means civil/nonprofit organisations have to learn, that they do not have only the role to serve a determined group of people, but they have to participate in shaping their environment by taking part in the local development. It's true that not all of the organisations are able to do this, only those which do not have financial and management problems, and which have enough knowledge to stand for the citizens.

The processes mentioned in this study could be functional if civil/nonprofit organisations and decision-makers are made able to realise that they are needed altogether to have effective development processes. One basis of effective local development is that the actors from local, regional and also national level maintain an intensive communication with each other and they are able to cooperate with each other in partnership. The successfulness of development actions depends on what kinds of actors are involved in the processes and in which way and how effectively they can cooperate with each other and with other economic and social actors. To make capable can be the role of those experts who have appropriate theoretical and practical knowledge and can share this knowledge with affected actors regarding active participation in events, forums and trainings.

All in all I think that for a country's democratic operation both in social and in economic sense it is needed that besides state and local government actors every actor who is affected by developments should participate in development processes. Thus on the one hand more effective decisions could be made and on the other the community integration of people can be fostered. The future of a nation is the responsibility of the whole society. Every member of the society is affected either directly or indirectly by supports given to settlements or regions and that's why it is our common case to prioritise civil society who can make the

development process more effective and support their actions. So it is our common responsibility that organisations that make our lives and environment better could reach their aims and the existence of their majority would not be determined by uncertainty, but by the joy of assistance.

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