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Contemporary changes and civil society in Portugal and the Russian Federation¹

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Abstract

Portugal and the Russian Federation share some aspects of traditional culture and similar experiences in modern history, but they also exhibit significant differences that determine specific modes of civil society's development.

Results of a comparative and diachronic analysis show that the major differences between the two countries reside in civil society's openness and composition. Organized civil society is not very distinct in relative size when comparing Portugal and the Russian Federation, but it's globally more expressive, trusted and institutionalized in Portugal than in the Russian Federation and the main factors that contribute to this condition are an earlier and revolutionary transition to democracy, a larger middle class, a greater prevalence of the value of interdependence, and a regime that endorses bigger public social expenditure in Portugal, all this within the framework of the European Union that has a longer history of social demand and institutional incentives for civil society. Despite those unequal conditions, civil society face similar current challenges in both countries, mainly with the outsourcing of the public provision of social services.

Keywords: contemporary change, civil society, NGOs, Portugal, Russia

Civil society and its contexts

Our objective is to contribute to the knowledge about contemporary civil society and its patterns in different national contexts. We compare civil society in Portugal and the Russian Federation, two countries with recent democratic achievements but with significant societal differences, that were equated by Vladimir Putin in his first speech to the Russians in 1999 when he set the level of economic performance in Portugal as a reference for his political project.²

Civil society, the “voluntary”, “non-profit” or “third” sector may be understood as a development of citizenship, interpreted as social action focused on rights and obligations, manifest in modern history through a differing associative process to the market and the state (Gramsci, 1977), or also to religious, family and community spheres (Alexander, 2006). Civil society is questioned in its autonomy and effectiveness by G. W. F. Hegel, K. Marx and M. Weber, and is emphatically considered the proper place of the aspirations to universalism, solidarity and justice by J. Locke, A. de Tocqueville, É. Durkheim, R. Putnam and J. Alexander.

Civil society movements and organizations are growing in number and in terms of social and political relevance. Some analysts compare this expansion in the last decades to the rise of the nation-state in the 19th century (Salamon *et al.* 1996) and others like M. Castells highlight the blossoming of a global civil society.

The expansion of civil society is nevertheless quite heterogeneous and it is rooted in historical contexts.

The analysis of civil society’s context proposed in the Civil Society Index by the CIVICUS team has a wide spectrum including the political context, basic freedoms and rights, the socioeconomic and socio-cultural contexts, legal

environment, and the relations between the state, the market and civil society (Nash *et al.* 2006, p. 6).

Within this general theoretical approach, some theses have been advanced to explain the development and patterns of civil society.

For McGann and Johnstone the main factors are increased democratization (normally associated with the spread of civil rights, freedoms and responsibilities), an increased demand for independent information and analysis, the growth of non-state and inter-state actors, improved communications technologies, the globalization of Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) funding, and what can be called "a crisis in confidence" (McGann and Johnstone, 2006).

Salamon underlines the disengagement from state socialism and rising doubt about the State's capability to provide welfare, growing scepticism about neo-liberal policy, the political and social frustration of the expanding educated middle class, and the information and communication opportunities supplied by technological innovation (Salamon *et al.* 1999, p. 4).

Contrary to previous conceptions it's also evident that the higher the country's State social welfare spending, the bigger the size of organized civil society (Salamon *et al.* 2003). Social-Democratic and Corporatist countries (Esping-Anderson and Salamon, in Janoski 1998) have higher public welfare spending and a broader civil society than Statist and Liberal regimes.

A study comparing Portugal with Spain's democratization process sustains that, more than reformist progressions, revolutionary transitions to democracy have a positive impact on general civic and political participation because they involve common people beside the elites, engendering a more egalitarian society and political culture (Fernandes, 2014).

After extensive work, Howard (2003) concludes that civil society in post-communist countries is very similar and weaker than in other regions of the world, including those that had other authoritarian regimes, defending that previous communist experience is a specific significant variable in explaining civil society's development.

Research on the relationship between religion and civil society indicates that participation in civic activities is higher among Protestant individuals. But a secondary correlation is revealed showing that involvement in voluntary organizations is in general more common in countries where Catholic Church prevails and weaker in Orthodox countries (Voicu and Tufis, 2013, p. 214).

Considering these theoretical assumptions it would be expected that civil society may develop more significantly in countries that did not experience a communist State, and had revolutionary transitions to democracy and increased democratization, those with social-democratic or corporatist regimes and larger educated middle classes, and those with a Catholic cultural tradition when compared to Orthodox ones.

To assess these assumptions we advance an historical and comparative analysis, integrating documental and statistical information, and the results of a survey in Portugal and the Russian Federation.

Modern history and civil society

The expansion of civil society in Portugal followed the Liberal Revolutions and the foundation of the Portuguese Republic in 1910. But during the authoritarian regime of the New State in Portugal (1926-1974), the State demonstrated clear hostility towards civil society organizations, depoliticizing them, exercising control

over association activity, persecuting activists and integrating some of these organizations into new corporate institutions. The Constitution of 1933 guaranteed freedom of worship, expression and association but these were never really allowed during the New State (Hamann and Manuel, 1999, p. 75). Civil action was dispersed and informal, and dissident movements only expanded after 1960 under clandestine forms (Borzaga and Defourny apud Franco, 2015, p. 172).

In 1974 a military revolution created the path for democracy in Portugal. With the construction of a democratic political system and socialist ideals, there were bursts of civic participation for a couple of years. From the end of the 1970's to the mid 1980's the international economic crisis, the stabilization of democracy, and the introduction of liberal policies in the country sapped the thriving of civil society and several organizations disappeared. With the integration of Portugal in the European Economic Community in 1986, and until 2010, the associated economic and political stability, and direct exposure of Portuguese civil society to European standards, there was a steady increase in the number of civil society organizations and the creation of a new legislation framework (Quintão, 2011, p. 12/14).

Contemporary political institutions in the European Union (EU), largely governed by liberal and conservative political forces, have been promoting the idea that the European Welfare State must be restructured and that civil society must endorse some of the early Welfare intervention (CEC, 2008, p. 70). Presently, the economic crisis has been considered a further reason to cut State expenditure. Portugal is a dramatic case within this ongoing process. With the financial breakdown in 2008 and the State financial aid for threatened banks, the country had to ask for financial assistance from the International Monetary Fund, the European Central Bank and the European Commission that implied an economic adjustment programme

between 2011 and 2014. This had drastic negative economic and social consequences in Portugal as illustrated in further analysis of recent national data. While the financial, economic and social situation starting alleviating after 2014/5, the political context for civil society did not change.

In Russia the revolution of 1917 opened the way to a communist regime and a society solidly organized and dominated by the State. Centralized political power, the lack of social capital and the Leninist anti-liberal legacy severely contained the development of civil society (Greene, 2011, p. 94-95). At the beginning of the communist regime, civil activity in the cultural field and peasant and proletarian organizations flourished, but after 1930 statist politically repressive action developed and thousands of civil society organizations were shut down while new associations with explicit communist ideology were set up as part of the government machine. After the 1960's, dissident movements expanded recreating civil society (Buxton and Konovalova, 2012, p. 4-5).

The communist regime ruled the Soviet Union until 1990, when reforms were introduced, followed by competitive presidential elections, the Soviet Union's dissolution and the constitution of the Russian Federation in 1993, and parliamentary elections in 1995. With the regression of communist political power, the institutionalization of democratic procedures and the rise of market processes in the country, civil society expanded but with an irregular trajectory. Following the reforms after 1990 the Russian State gave some space of action to civil society but assuring insignificant budgetary support, and Russian NGOs developed important connections with organizations from other countries benefiting from foreign donors and enabling the transfer of a Western model of civil society to Russia (ibid, p. 5).

But after this, civil society did not show significant progress and even declined in the country (Greene, 2011, p. 81). Since his presidency in 2000 “Putin accelerated government financing of the sector (mainly via contracting out social services to NGOs), and set up a national structure of Public Councils to dialogue with and co-opt the sector. On the other hand, in 2006 he introduced regulations limiting the influence of foreign donors” (Buxton and Konovalova, 2012, p. 5). This shows a trend for a selective intervention of the State in Russian civil society.

Currently the Russian Federation is also facing a financial crisis, in the wake of the fall in oil price from 2014 onwards and the international economic sanctions following the incorporation of Crimea and alleged interference in the last elections in the United States, and as a result of the collapse of the rouble and growing inflation due to an increasing lack of confidence in the Russian economy. Russians support for the assimilation of Crimea and this economic environment has united the population around the State’s leadership and entailed the outsourcing of social services from the State to civil society associated with its growing dependence of the State for funding (Bindman, 2018, p. 5).

Contemporary figures and trends

Having portrayed the socio-political context, we now compare Portugal and the Russian Federation through official data, beginning in 1980, but predominantly from 2000 to 2017, and organized into four topics at a national level: a) social profile (economic, social and cultural), b) social problems, c) features of civic life, political action, and public policy, d) and performance in global institutional indexes, including a civil society index.

Despite their distinct integration in a market and capitalist economy, Portugal and the Russian Federation are both high-income economies for the World Bank. However, they are quite different countries in some regards. The area of the Russian Federation's territory (17.125.191 km²), the largest in the world, is around 170 times larger than the Portuguese (92.212 km²)³. The two countries are distant geographically, even though both belong to the northern hemisphere. Their population size is also very distinct; the Russian Federation's population is 14 times larger than the Portuguese (Table 1).

Table 1.

The percentage of urban population is slightly higher in the Russian Federation but the differences in the distribution of employment in the two countries is not significant, both showing the strongest weight of services, followed by industry and agriculture, with the Russian scoring a little higher in industry and the Portuguese in services.

Table 2.

Research estimates that the size of the Russian middle class is 20/30% (Hayashi, 2007, p. 42). This percentage may be higher if self-employed people were included (ibid: 39). The portion of the middle class with higher education should be around 21% and 22% of the middle class in 1997 and 2000, respectively (and 6.6% of the population in 2007). The author refers to emigration of specialists with higher education from the Russian Federation to foreign countries in 2007, which could contribute to reduce the percentage of this sector of the middle class. Recent evaluations draw a similar picture for the current situation.⁴

In Portugal, if we consider middle class as the sum of professionals, low and medium level managers, and routine employees, its size is 51% of the population, or 58,7% if we include the self-employed (Mauritti *et al.* 2016, p.85). The weight of the

sector of middle class with higher education was 13,9% in 2009 (Costa *et al.* 2009, p. 14). So, both the middle class and its fraction with a tertiary degree seem to be bigger in Portugal.

The percentage of adults (25 to 64 years) with a tertiary degree is very different in the two countries: 23,8% in Portugal (2016) and 55,6% in the Russian Federation (2015) (OECD Statistics). If Russians have a larger population with higher education but a smaller higher educated middle class, we may infer that a significant part of those who have a tertiary degree were not classified as middle class.

We can also compare the two countries with national data on values.

Research conducted by Hofstede shows that power distance and individualism are greater in Russia and uncertainty avoidance is bigger in Portugal (Rinne *et al.* 2012, p. 105).

Table 3.

Another investigation analyses collectivist or individualist orientation. Individualism is measured through ‘self-reliance’ and collectivism through ‘interdependence’, adding an indicator of ‘competitiveness’ as sub-dimension of both collectivism and individualism (Green *et al.* 2005, p. 326).⁵

Table 4.

Data shows that in Portugal interdependence/collectivistic orientation is valued more highly while Russia scores higher in self-reliance/individualism and competitiveness.

Another study indicates that Portugal exhibits more self-expression values (*versus* survival orientation) but also more traditional values (*versus* secular-rational values) than Russia (Inglehart and Baker, 2000, p. 35; World Values Survey, 1981-98). And the strength of emancipative values (that emphasize human choice against traditional conformity which subordinate human autonomy to community discipline)

is a little higher in Portugal (Wenzel *et al.* 2003, p. 369).

Schwartz shows that while Portugal values intellectual and affective autonomy, egalitarianism and harmony, Russia is more oriented to mastery (ambition, daring), hierarchy and embeddedness (Schwartz, s/d, p. 67).

Portugal achieves higher in self-transcendence (the importance of social equality, concern for the welfare of others, and also for the environment), self-direction, risk-novelty, hedonism, and conformity-tradition, while Russia scores higher in security and self-enhancement (the importance of power, wealth, and personal success) (Magun and Rudnev, 2012, pp. 35/37).

Other results show that where moral inclusiveness is high, people understand universalism values as applying to all members of society, and that this is higher in Portugal (Schwartz, 2007, pp. 717-719).⁶

When we turn to social problems, a crucial one is unemployment and Table 5 shows that it grew dramatically in Portugal after 2005: in 2013 its percentage was double the figure of 2005. Subsequently it decreases steadily.

Compared to the Russian Federation, unemployment is higher in Portugal, mainly after 2010. Russian unemployment seems to undergo a downward trajectory between 2005 and 2012, and then stabilizes.

Table 5.

Poverty is another, extreme, social problem. The percentage of the population living below poverty line was 13,3 in the Russian Federation and 19 in Portugal in 2015 (CIA The World Fact Book). This means that Russians may be a little better off in terms of relative poverty. Since the poverty line is different in each country, depending on Gross National Income (GNI) *per capita*, and GNI *per capita* is a little higher in Portugal, absolute poverty may be lower here.

After this comparison of social profiles and problems, it is important to look at features of civic life, political action, and public policy.

Trust is considered a fruitful indicator of social capital and civil society (R. Putnam, K. Newton). In 2006 (European Social Survey - ESS3), interpersonal trust and trust in the country's parliament was higher in Portugal (4,11 and 3,83, respectively) compared to Russian Federation (3,95 and 3,37).⁷ But in 2014 (ESS7) the Portuguese figures decreased to 3,67 and 3,16, and they grew in 2016 to 4,46 and 4,27 (ESS8) for the Russians.

Participation in associations and voluntary organizations is a little stronger in the Russian Federation: 19.5% of Russians and 17.9% of Portuguese said they belong at least to one voluntary organization in 2008 (European Values Survey, 2008).

Still in 2008, 72.5% of Portuguese and 75.4% of Russians say that they would vote at a general election tomorrow (European Values Survey, 2008), and in 2012 64.5% of the Portuguese and 65% of the Russian say that they voted in the last national elections (ESS6). Recently this percentage in Portugal was 65,7% (ESS7, 2014) and 52,4% in the Russian Federation (ESS8, 2016), seeming to be growing in Portugal and decreasing in Russia (in 2018 it grew to 67,5% in Russia).

When we look at policies through expenditure we see that total public social protection expenditure as percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is clearly higher in Portugal in 1995-2015, almost double the Russian figure. This expenditure expands in both countries until 2010 and after it stabilizes. This trend can be explained as a result of cuts in public social spending following the financial crisis in 2008 and reduced public investment due to the outsourcing of social public services.

Table 6.

Central government debt is much smaller in the Russian Federation than in

Portugal. In the latter this debt grew significantly on average between 2005 and 2014. In the Russian Federation it diminished until 2008 and then expands.

Table 7.

Comparing government debt and public social expenditure in 2005-11 we see that Portugal increased its debt by 21,8% and social expenditure only by 1,98%, while the Russian Federation decreased its debt by 7,4% and expanded social expenditure by 3,3%. Portuguese and Russian public debts decreased until 2007-8, after which both start rising. This clearly suggests the effect the financial crisis of 2008 and subsequent State support to banks and financial institutions had on public debts, not only in the EU but in the Russian Federation too. In the latter, the sanctions after the incorporation of Crimea, that included being cut off from borrowing abroad, may have contributed to a faster increase of the debt.⁸

To close this contextualization, we analyze performances in global institutional indexes.

According to the Human Development Index (HDI) life expectancy at birth is always higher in Portugal and it has been continuously increasing in this country from 1980 onwards.⁹ In the Russian Federation it decreased between 1985 and 2000 and then grows.

Table 8.

The mean years of schooling is higher in the Russian Federation, following the results on tertiary education stressed above. Although its evolution is positive for both countries, this figure stabilizes in the Russian Federation after 2010 and in Portugal after 2012, a sign of the socially regressive effects of the present crisis. The mean is still very high in the former, but in the latter it denotes a damaging effect, blocking an accelerated instruction process in progress since 1974 that was placing Portugal closer to most developed countries.

GNI *per capita* is, on average, a little more favorable to Portugal, and it increases in the two countries between 1980 and 2014 but with some fluctuation. In Portugal it decreased up to 1990 and then resumed growth until 2011, to fall again until 2013 when it restarts increasing. This trend plainly represents a beneficial effect of the integration of the country in the European Economic Community in the first 25 years (from 1986 to 2011), and negative consequences of the adjustment programme (2011-13) established with the IMF, the ECB and the EC.

These human development indicators show that on average Portugal has more favorable traits in life expectancy at birth, GNI per capita and overall HDI index, essentially since 1995. The Russian Federation displays better performance only in years of schooling. And we can observe that in Portugal, and also in the Russian Federation after 2000, the HDI has been growing steadily but stabilized in 2011-2. This break is a sign of the impact of the financial crisis on human development, including emerging economies like the Russian.

Recently the HDI has been improved by weighing inequality. In 2015 inequality was slightly more striking in Portugal, concerning both education and income inequalities. The Russian Federation is more unequal only in terms of life expectancy. The Inequality-Adjusted HDI is, however, higher for Portugal.¹⁰

Table 9.

Despite the current crisis, the Social Progress Index (SPI) has been growing over these last years both in Portugal and the Russian Federation, but its indicators reveal a different situation in these countries in 2017.

Table 10.

Table 11.

Social progress is stronger in Portugal, above all in terms of personal rights, but also concerning tolerance and inclusion, personal freedom and choice, and access

to information and communication. Among the former, political rights, and freedom of expression and assembly are not only higher in Portugal but almost attain the maximum values on the designed scale. Personal freedom and choice, freedom of religion and over life choices are greater in Portugal, and corruption is much larger in the Russian Federation. Tolerance regarding immigrants, homosexuals, and different religions is also greater in Portugal, where there is also less discrimination and violence against minorities, and a slightly higher community safety net. The press freedom index is higher in Portugal but the percentage of Internet users is higher in the Russian Federation.

Finally, according to the Civil Society Index (CIVICUS State of Civil Society Report, 2018), Portugal is considered to have an open civil society, with laws and an overall environment that protect the rights to freedom of association, assembly and expression, and a strong culture of protest, while civil society in the Russian Federation is globally repressed and has witnessed its situation worsening since 2012, involving repression and arrest of peaceful protesters and activists, and laws limiting online expression and freedom of association and assembly. Since this date, many NGOs have closed or had funding cut off.

NGOs and the State – results of a survey

Although quite diverse, most of the modes of social action in civil society have some common features: they have a minimum level of organization, and they are institutionally private, not-profit distributing, self-governing and voluntary (Salamon *et al.* 1999, p. 3-4). The results of a questionnaire survey applied in 2014 in Portugal and the Russian Federation allow us to deepen our knowledge on civil society, and particularly on NGOs, focusing on legislation on civil society, number of NGOs in the

country, NGO activity areas, trust in NGOs, transparency laws for NGOs, NGO funding, and NGO monitoring and evaluation.

If we consider that civil society depends on the free and sometimes informal activity of individuals pursuing their own objectives, a certain tension would be expected between civil society and legal systems. But the legalization of civil society increases its security, cooperation capacity and integrity (Fries, 2005, p. 221-2), and its regulation is supported on several grounds, whether at national or international levels (Pedraza-Fariña, 2013). Jonathan Garton argues that civil society regulation by the State “can (...) be justified by reference to (a) preventing anti-competitive practices, (b) controlling campaigning, (c) ensuring accountability, and (d) coordinating the sector. However, two further justifications for regulation emerge from contemporary civil society theory: (e) the need to rectify other philanthropic failures; and (f) the need to prevent the erosion of the key civil society organizations structural characteristics” (Garton, 2009).

A basic question for civil society regulation is the legal definition of civil society organizations. Portugal and Russia have legislation with a definition of civil society organizations. Current legal definitions of civil society organizations in these two countries are different but share several characteristics. According to the law, NGOs work for the public benefit and have juridical personality in both countries, non-profit activity is stressed in Russia, and self-governing is emphasized in Portugal.

Some legislation also refers to the principal areas where NGOs develop their activity: in Portugal, human rights, environment, migrations, humanitarian action, development and social intervention are underlined; in Russia, the emphasis is on social and managerial activity. In the latter, committed to restructuring a centralized economy, the institutionalization is directed to market expansion and to a

corresponding attention on the social problems that market economy implicates.

With the available data, we can say that the present gross number of NGOs is around 45.543 in Portugal (Franco, 2015, p. 186).¹¹ In Russia there were 227.445 NGOs in 2015, according to the Ministry of Justice, and this number may have been increasing recently.

On the basis of this data, and on the total population of each country in 2014, when we calculate the number of NGOs per 1000 habitants, we find that Portugal appears to be denser in terms of civil society with 4,2 NGOs per 1000 habitants, and Russia less dense with 1,6.

Actions developed within civil society are identified using different criteria. This is due to the variety of national official classifications of NGOs, and it is also known that technical typologies of civil society intervention areas proliferate. In order to enable systematization and comparison, we used a recent typology developed in a recent United Nations (UN) survey on NGOs (UN, 2012). In this survey that involves 154 countries, education and health are the main areas of activity of NGOs (UN, 2012).

The available information from our survey indicates that actions developed by NGOs in Portugal involve the areas of education, sustainability, humanitarian assistance, and culture and development. Other areas of activity not directly incorporated in the UN typology are cooperation, security, justice, social action, professional training, and housing. This country follows the results from the UN survey in the area of education. This reveals the deficit Portugal still displays in this area, while NGOs working in the area of health are not relevant due to the more effective public health system in the country. Portuguese NGOs also show institutional differentiations: there is a distinction between Non-Governmental

Development Organizations and Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations. There are also Private Institutions of Social Solidarity, “institutions that intend to solve social needs for which state intervention is insufficient or deficient”. Some NGOs are of “canonical initiative and constitution (Catholic Church)”. The types of NGOs used by the UN survey are not the same as the ones in the legal definition, but we can see some equivalence between what really predominates and legal prescription in Portugal with emphasis on ecological-humanitarian purposes.

In Russia the most important NGOs areas are political, religious, social care, and social assistance. Social care, and social assistance could be integrated in the UN areas of “poverty reduction” or “inequality and iniquity”, indicating a clearer importance of NGOs actions under these subjects. The main areas in the UN global survey are not prevalent in Russia. Schooling is quite high on average in Russia, as we have seen, inducing no concern for civil action, and the system also seems to incite no civil worry in society. It is also reported that NGOs carrying out political activities and receiving foreign funding, or, even intending to do so, are now required to register at a special archive maintained by the Ministry of Justice, and have specific normative treatment.

As noted above, NGOs have been growing in number and relevance with McGann and Johnstone having identified "a crisis in confidence" as a main factor of this growth (McGann and Johnstone, 2006). This crisis is visible in the critiques progressively made by NGOs to several States and to the UN on lack of transparency, democracy and accountability in their action. But with their growing relevance “NGOs are falling under this same criticism — NGOs processes are far from transparent, democratic and accountable” (Lehr-Lehnardt, 2005, pp. 1-2).

If current NGOs want to maintain a predominant role in promoting organizational accountability and a status defined by some advocates as the “conscience of the world”, they must face multiple challenges, and a crucial one is bridging this credibility and legitimacy gap.

One way to evaluate the evolution of this role of NGOs is to analyse and compare degrees of people’s trust in NGOs and governments.

According to the results from the Edelman Trust Barometer, trust in the government in Portugal was 12% in 2013. For Russia, the value is 29% in 2013, decreasing to 27% in 2014, and increasing to 54% in 2015.

When it comes to NGOs, trust levels in Portugal rise to 69% in 2012 and 63% in 2013. In Russia the results vary from 28% in 2012, to 40% in 2013, 41% in 2014, and 38% in 2015.

If we consider all the trust values, including the evaluation of governments and NGOs, we can see that the maximum value of trust belongs to NGOs in Portugal, and the minimum seems to implicate the government of Portugal.

And while the difference between the highest and lowest percentage of trust in the two governments is 32, for NGOs in both countries this difference is 41. This means that when considering Portugal and Russia together, trust in NGOs is slightly more differentiated, hitting more extreme values, than trust in the government.

The two countries are, then, more similar when we look at trust in the government than when trust in NGOs is concerned.

In Portugal trust is very polarized, in favour of NGOs, and trust in NGOs is generally greater than in Russia. In Russia trust in NGOs and in the government is alike, on average, trust in the government is greater than in Portugal, and increased significantly in 2015.

Since trust in the government and in the NGOs is identical in Russia, it is not possible to say that a bigger score on corruption in Russia (according to the Social Progress Index) could be mainly related to one of these two sectors.

Data from the survey also shows that Portugal has a transparency law for NGOs that refers to accountability, participation and efficiency. We have no equivalent information about Russia.

In 1998 Coston analysed the variety of relations between governments and NGOs, and defined resource exchange and government funding as important topics in government-NGOs relations (Coston, 1998, p. 361). More recently, in 2006, Agg asserts that developments in NGOs funding, mainly the uncertainty of its context, “will require NGOs to seek funding from market-based sources rather than governments” (Agg, 2006, p. 8).

The available information on NGO current access to public funding does not allow for any overall appraisal here. NGOs in the field of social work fill a niche that the Russian State cannot afford for one reason or another (economic, staff, resources) and there are also some joint projects of NGOs with government organizations. In some cases, the State is funding NGOs for some services. Recently NGOs get Presidential grants for their development on competitive bases.

In Portugal, data from 2013 show that the main source is public funding (41%), followed by membership fees (31%), and private donations (10%), the remaining 18% coming from other sources (Franco, 2015, p. 194). Results considering a sample of Portuguese NGOs show that between 2011 and 2013 public funding and original revenue grew, while private financing declined (Franco, 2015, p. 200). The answers to this questionnaire report a global recent increase of funding for Portuguese NGOs. Further comments shows that in Portugal substantial funding is

currently coming from the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area (EEA Grants).

It seems that since the work on NGOs performance and accountability by Michael Edwards in 1996 there has been no systematic global analysis on the question of NGO monitoring. Here, he concludes that increases in NGOs income were not satisfactorily invested in evaluation, transparency and accountability, and yet this investment “is central to their continued existence as independent organizations with a mission to pursue” (Edwards and Hulme, 1996, p. 224).

However, NGO’s evaluation practices started developing very fast after that. In 2001, Davies underlined “a growing concern about identifying the achievements of NGOs. This has been evident in the burgeoning literature on the monitoring and evaluation of NGO activities” (Davies, 2001). And evaluation methodologies, toolkits and standards now multiply.

Russia does not have a developed system of NGOs evaluation but this exists in Portugal.

There is a growing concern with the quality of services in the Third Sector in Portugal. As the provision of Social Responses with high quality standards, is a major national objective, the Social Security Institute has developed models for Quality Assessment in order to enable the Evaluation of the Quality of services provided by the social services. Based on ISO9001 and European Foundation for Quality Management excellence models, these evaluation models remain voluntary in terms of implementation and are certifiable.

There seems to be no institutionalized evaluation system for NGOs in Russia. In this matter the main resource is clients’ opinion, then time and resource consumption, and expert evaluation.

Unequal condition, different paths, a similar challenge

The Russian Federation and Portugal share traditional Christian values, endured modern long authoritarian regimes and are nowadays considered high-income economies, experiencing a similar stage in terms of urbanization and weight of the different sectors of the economy, and showing a currently stabilized public social protection expenditure.

But these countries also have very diverse features. Russia is mainly Orthodox while Portugal is essentially Catholic. Authoritarian experiences were divergent in ideological nature – nationalism and traditionalism in Portugal, sharing some aspects with the Italian fascism, and communism in the Russian Federation. The democratic regime and Constitution were founded 15 years earlier in Portugal, and the political transition to democracy was differently set by a revolution in Portugal and by a reformist program in the Russian Federation. Portugal is an open economy, integrated in the European Union that has been characterized by a liberal democracy, free market and a Social Model project that binds economic and social progress, and the Russian Federation has been advancing democratic procedures within a framework not always compliant to contemporary international standards (Human Rights Watch, 2017; OSCE, 2018), now re-centralizing in the State the power over democratic, market and social processes. On average, schooling is much higher in Russia but the middle class and its segment with a tertiary school degree are relatively larger in Portugal. This country scores higher in values like self-transcendence, tradition, interdependence and autonomy while in Russia self-enhancement, secularization-rationality, self-reliance and mastery are emphasized. Portuguese total public expenditure and public debt are larger. The two countries are not very different in

terms of civic and political engagement, but follow divergent trends with the present-day Russia showing a slightly higher performance in social capital. Portugal exhibits higher results in the HDI, IDHI and SPI, but Russia shows superior results in means of schooling, equality in education and percentage of Internet users, and less unemployment.

Civil society was harshly undermined in both countries during the authoritarian periods, subsequently expanded with the democratic transition and is currently classified by the Civil Society Index as open in Portugal and repressed in the Russian Federation.

When we compare existing features of NGOs in these two countries we realize that both have legislation defining civil society organizations, and these definitions highlight that NGOs must work for the public benefit and have juridical personality.

But for the rest they are quite diverse.

In Russia there is a discrepancy between the State definition underlining non-profit activity and legislation emphasizing managerial activity. In Portugal there is a more structured normative framework basically envisioning civic-ecological objectives.

The proportion of NGOs appears to be superior in Portugal. This difference seems to contradict the bigger participation of the population in associations in Russia, unless the average dimension of NGOs in terms of number of associates is bigger in the Russian case.

Areas of activity developed by NGOs seem to be very distinct: the profile in Portugal is similar to the world average, centred on education and, to a much lesser extent, health, while in Russia political and religious NGOs are particularly relevant. The weight of education and health public systems in Russia can explain the minor

importance of the activity related to education and health in civil society, and the still very recent withdrawal from an authoritarian regime may also explain the dynamism of political NGOs.¹² The significant proportion of Russian NGOs with political and religious activity illustrates civil agitation with the current political and cultural situation. In this country there is also less equivalence between legal prescription and the major NGOs areas actually operating; this is a sign of a stronger disconnection between State and civil society dynamics.

Trust also differentiates the two cases: in Russia the government exceeds in terms of trust while in Portugal it is the NGOs that are more trusted. Trust in the government and in the State is not the same thing, so trust in the government in Russia is not contradictory to tensions between State and society that may be partial.

Funding is a crucial issue for civil society, but insufficient information prevents a comparison of the two countries.

In Portugal, civil society seems to be further institutionalized, revealing the existence of a transparency law and an evaluation system for NGOs.

Therefore, these specific data about NGOs supports the idea that organized civil society may be bigger in the proportion of NGOs (but not in the percentage of the population involved), and more trusted and institutionalized in Portugal. Further differences between the two countries reside in civil society's composition.

If we consider the literature review in the introduction of this paper and the preceding analysis, we can state that the possible negative effect for the expansion of civil society of lower schooling in Portugal, when compared to the Russian Federation, may be surmounted by the impacts of a Catholic culture, an earlier and revolutionary transition to democracy, a larger middle class and a regime that endorses higher public social expenditure, all this within the framework of the

European Union that has a longer history of social demand and political incentives for civil society. These results validate the thesis of Voicu and Tufis (2013), Fernandes (2014), McGann and Johnstone (2006) and, in general, the “regime theory” drawn up by Esping-Andersen and Salamon (Janoski, 1998), but indicate that education and the expansion of middle classes, when considered independently, can have specific effects on the development of civil society.

The thesis established by Howard is also confirmed: civil society is weaker in the Russian Federation that experienced a communist State. The factors underlying this effect, according to the author, are mistrust and avoidance of organizations as a negative reaction to previous state authoritarianism, permanence of private and informal networks developed under communism, and detachment from public activities due to disappointment with the results of political and economic transition to democracy (Howard, 2003). Our results seem to fit with these assumptions since, comparatively to Portugal, in Russia NGOs are less trusted, interpersonal trust is higher but electoral participation is lower in general.

More trust in the country’s parliament and government in Russia illustrates the thesis by Sundstrom and Henry of the persistence of a long-standing tradition of statism, initiated before the communist period, revitalized by Putin and visible in the belief shared by most Russians in 2000 that order is more important even if it implies the need to limit democratic principles and individual rights (Sundstrom and Henry, 2006, p. 316-8). This statism is associated with a nationalist resurgence against previous Soviet supra-nationalism, meaning that recent citizenship advances are above all national in character (Narozhna, 2004, p. 300).

The attempt to build international proletarianism in a “top-down” process in the Soviet Union may have fragmented national identities and communities,

producing an unanticipated individualist culture (Sztompka apud Narozhna, 2004, p. 306) that contemporary neoliberal reforms have reinforced, ultimately contributing to further erosion of solidarity. The relative higher weight of individualist values like self-enhancement and self-reliance in contemporary Russian society is perceptible in the comparison with Portugal.

If Portugal shows a more collectivist culture although less prone to trust in the State, Russian culture is represented as more individualist and attached to the State, and this may undermine civil society.

The comprehension of differences in civil society between Portugal and Russian Federation may still require extended reflection on the premises of the concept of 'civil society'. Narozhna finds decisive distinctions between Eastern and Western European conceptualizations of civil society, with the former emphasizing and supporting a communitarian basis to society and the latter relying on and endorsing individualism. This would explain Western dissatisfaction about the progress of civil society in Eastern Europe, mainly its stronger control by the State, and the difficulties and perverse effects of importing the western model of civil society into Eastern Europe (Narozhna, 2004, p. 308).

There's no data to compare communitarian dispositions in Portugal and Russia, but Russian contemporary culture is more individualistic, raising doubts about this generalization by Narozhna.

Anyhow, based on the outline produced by A. de Tocqueville the core of civil society is defined as the pursuit of autonomous action in-between the individual and the State, and this means that even if Narozhna was right about the differences between Eastern European and Western cultures and concepts of 'civil society', civil society in both regions will keep facing the same challenge of autonomy.

Revealing unequal conditions in autonomy and following different paths in relations with the State and the market, in present times the challenge of autonomy in the Russian Federation and in Portugal involves similar tests like the tendency of the Russian State and the EU to outsource the public provision of social services. This trend is assumed in the EU and Russian Federation's policy, and visible in the stabilization of public social protection expenditure after 2010 in Portugal and Russia.

In the EU there is a longstanding and close relation between social policy and the process of market-building (Liebfried, 2010, p. 279), including the expansion of social enterprises (Nyssens, 2006). There is no systemic evaluation of public outsourcing of social services, the performance of for-profit and civil society organizations in this process, and its social consequences, however, a recent study about eldercare in Nordic and Anglo-Saxon countries shows that non-profit service provision has given way to for-profit provision, and that expectations on outsourcing involving private actors and market competition have not been met (Meagher and Szebehely, 2013, p. 277-280).

This indicates that public outsourcing may not be bringing in lower cost and better quality, and civil society may be losing its scope for the market in Western countries, at least in some areas.

And an extremely recent survey reports a current shrinking space in the EU for NGOs that fight for the respect of human rights (EESC, 2018).

Tables

Table 1. Total Population (thousands)

	Portugal	Russian Federation
2005	10.511,0	143.933,0
2010	10.589,8	143.617,9
2012	10.603,8	143.169,7
2013	10.608,2	142.833,7
2014	10.813,8	142.590,5
2015	10.581,9	146.519,8*
2016	10.324,6	146.544,7*
2017	-	146.804,4*

Source: UNDP-HDR 2014, 2015; *ROSSTAT 2017 (these data include Crimea)

Table 2. Urban population and sectors of the economy

	Portugal	Russian Federation
Urban population (% of total) (2016)	64	74
Employment in agriculture (% of total) (2017)	8.0	6.8
Employment in industry (% of total) (2017)	23.8	27.1
Employment in services (% of total) (2017)	68.2	66.1

Source: World Bank – IBRD-IDA 2016, 2017

Table 3. Power distance, individualism and uncertainty avoidance

	Portugal	Russia
Power distance	63	93
Individualism (vs. collectivism)	27	39
Uncertainty avoidance	104	45

Source: Rinne *et al.* 2012

Table 4. Collectivism and individualism (mean values)

	Portugal	Russia
Competitiveness	2.21	2.83
Self-reliance/individualism	2.02	2.46
Interdependence/colectivism	3.14	2.99

Source: Green *et al.* 2005

Table 5. Unemployment (% of total labor force)

	Portugal	Russian Federation
2005	7.6	7.1
2010	10.8	7.3
2012	15.6	5.5
2013	16.5	5.6
2014	14.1	5.6*
2015	12.4	5.6
2016	11.1	5.8*
2017	9.9	5.6*

Source: World Bank - World Development Indicators; *ROSSTAT

Table 6. Total public social protection expenditure (% of GDP)

	Portugal	Russian Federation
1995	16,0	11,1
2000	18,5	9,4
2005	22,3	11,8
2010	24,5	16,6
2011	24,4	14,9
2012	24,5	14,8
2013	25,5	15,4
2014/5	24,1	15,6

Source: ILO - World Social Protection Report 2017-19

Table 7. Central government debt (% of GDP)

	Portugal	Russian Federation
2005	68.4	16.7
2006	67.1	9.9
2007	65.1	7.2
2008	75.9	6.5
2009	87.9	8.7
2010	91.4	9.1
2011	90.2	9.3
2012	123.7	9.4
2013	129.0	9.0
2014	130.6	11.2
2015	128.8	13.5
2016	130.1	14.2

Source: World Bank IBRD-IDA

Table 8. Human development (1980-2015)

Life expectancy at birth	Portugal	Russian Federation
1980	71.3	67.4
1985	73.2	68.5
1990	74.3	68.1
1995	75.2	66.0
2000	76.6	65.1
2005	78.0	66.0
2010	79.3	67.6
2011	79.5	67.8
2012	79.7	67.9
2013	79.9	68.0
2014	80.9	70.1
2015	81.2	70.3
Mean years of schooling		
1980	4.8	7.1
1985	5.5	8.1
1990	6.2	9.2
1995	6.4	10.0
2000	6.6	11.3
2005	7.1	11.6
2010	7.8	11.7
2011	8.0	11.7
2012	8.2	11.7
2013	8.2	11.7
2014	8.2	12.0
2015	8.9	12.0
GNI per capita (2011 PPP\$)		
1980	14.184	-
1985	13.968	-
1990	19.167	19.397
1995	20.935	11.991
2000	24.547	12.917
2005	25.204	17.773
2010	25.214	21.052
2011	24.887	21.789
2012	24.484	22.319
2013	24.130	22.617
2014	25.757	22.352
2015	26.104	23.286
HDI value		
1980	0.643	-
1985	0.674	-
1990	0.708	0.729
1995	0.757	0.697
2000	0.780	0.717
2005	0.790	0.750
2010	0.816	0.773
2011	0.819	0.775
2012	0.822	0.777
2013	0.822	0.778
2014	0.830	0.798
2015	0.843	0.804

Source: UNDP-HDR

Table 9. Inequality in 2015

	Portugal	Russian Federation
IHDI	0.755	0.725
Coefficient of human inequality	10.1	9.6
Inequality in life expectancy (%)	3.9	8.8
Inequality in education (%)	5.9	2.2
Inequality in income (%)	20.4	17.7

Source: UNDP-HDR 2016

Table 10. Social Progress Index value, 2012-2017

Year	Portugal	Russian Federation
2012	-	46.89
2013	80.49	60.79
2014	80.49	60.79
2015	81.91	63.64
2016	83.88	64.19
2017	85.44	67.17

Source: Social Progress Index

Table 11. Social Progress Index indicators, 2017

Indicators	Portugal	Russian Federation
Personal Rights	88.93	25.42
Political rights (0=low; 40= high)	39	5
Freedom of expression (0=low; 16= high)	16	3
Freedom of assembly (0=low; 1= high)	0.88	0.42
Personal Freedom and Choice	78.73	56.77
Freedom of religion (1=low; 4=high)	4	1
Freedom over life choices (% satisfied)	83.04	63.44
Corruption (0=high; 100=low)	62	29
Tolerance and Inclusion	76.17	36.15
Community safety net (0=low; 100=high)	88.87	88.63
Tolerance for immigrants (0=low; 100=high)	74.39	38.88
Tolerance for homosexuals (0=low; 100=high)	52	8.88
Religious tolerance (1=low; 4=high)	4	2
Discriminations and violence against minorities (0=low; 10=high)	2.7	9
Access to Information and Communications	85.06	73.37
Press freedom index (0=most free; 100=least free)	17.27	49.03
Internet users (% of pop.)	68.63	70.10
Social Progress Index	85.44	67.17

Source: Social Progress Index 2017

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Data bases

Edelman Trust Barometer.

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Social Progress Index.

World Values Survey.

¹ This text includes results from the project Civil Engagement in Social Work: Developing Global Models project funded by FP7-PEOPLE-2013-IRSES, Marie Curie Actions - International Research Staff Exchange Scheme.

² See: <https://www.sott.net/article/310072-Vladimir-Putins-first-paper-as-president-Russia-at-the-Turn-of-the-Millennium-A-Strategy-for-Russias-Revival>

³ Since we have no data on the Crimea that would permit a retrospective analysis on the following variables, most of the analysis does not include the Crimea.

⁴ Tatyana Maleva, Director of the Institute of Social Policy.

⁵ On a scale from 1=totally disagree, to 4=totally agree.

⁶ Inclusiveness is defined as the concern over the welfare of non-in-group members; universalism is measured by the importance of treating every person equally, the importance of listening to people that are different, and the belief that people should care for nature.

⁷ On a scale from 0= no trust, to 10=complete trust.

⁸ The consequences of the financial crisis and the economic adjustment programme (2011-4) in Portugal are evident in these figures. Unemployment doubled between 2005 and 2013. Debt increased by 40,0% in 2011-4, while its growth between 2005 and 2008 was only 7,5%. The adjustment programme is associated to an unprecedented acceleration of debt, when its main objective was to control it. Total public social protection expenditure in Portugal grew by 1,38% in 2011/2013 (0.69% a year, on average) while it grew by 3,86% (0,48% a year) in 2000-2008. Social protection expenditure accelerated during the adjustment programme despite severe cuts that were made in public expenses, once again contrary to the objectives of the programme.

⁹ The Human Development Index (HDI) is a synthetic measure of development achievements in health, education and standard of living. The HDI was created to enable going beyond a classification of economic growth alone. It is used to inform national policy priorities and choices, and to compare development between countries (UNDP-HDR).

¹⁰ The IHDI combines a country's average achievements in health, education and income with the degree of inequality in the distribution of these achievements among the population.

¹¹ An extensive review of the history of civil society in Portugal is available in Franco (2015) and Quintão (2011).

¹² Although Portugal shows higher public expenditure in health and education, the coverage may be bigger in Russia considering a greater proportion of physicians and larger gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education in this country (UNDP-HDR, 2016).