Abstract:

Most literature on the interaction between European institutions and NGOs focuses on interest representation and lobbying. This article tackles a neglected aspect of this interaction: the effects of European funding opportunities on NGO's organizational structures and on their values and identity. EU influence on national political systems is usually analyzed as a process of Europeanization. Some analytical tools as the “misfit” model can indeed throw some light at the dynamics at work. European funds alter the redistribution of resources among national NGOs, enabling in some cases a dynamics of growth and altering NGOs national landscapes. Specific requirements to obtain European funds can also modify norms about what is to be considered as “appropriate behavior” launching a process of socialization. This structural adaption has important effects on NGOs values and objectives, affecting their capacity to become agents of global and national democratization. Empirical evidence is drawn from Humanitarian NGOs and social voluntary organizations. In order to grasp Europe's differential impact in different national contexts, we have analyzed NGOs in France and Spain.
Introduction

The tocquevillian tradition considering voluntary organizations as schools of democracy gained widespread currency during the 1990s. The link between voluntary organizations and democracy has been adopted by many policy makers, including multilateral cooperation organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Public policy implementation by voluntary organizations is a widespread phenomenon at the transnational level and many funds are employed to foster the involvement of voluntary organizations in developing countries. European institutions have also recently turned their attention to civil society organizations. They are considered as good intermediaries to bring European citizens closer to the European Union (EU). European institutions, particularly the European Commission developed new procedures to grant the participation of civil society organizations in the decision making process. Notwithstanding, voluntary organizations are not only valued by European leaders for their «democratic» potential, they are also seen as partners in the implementation of public services as well as an opportunity to create new jobs (Laville, 2001).

However, most of the literature on the interaction between International Organizations (IO) and civil society organizations is one-dimensional as it focus on their participation in the decision making process (Martens 2005). This paper explores their role as service providers, and the prospects for national and global democratization. Assuming that International organizations contribute to the shaping of voluntary organizations, this article will tackle the structuring effects of European funding opportunities. We argue that the use of European funds by voluntary organizations has significant consequences for their organizational capacity, their priorities and specific practices. In this way, European funding opportunities affect the democratic practices of voluntary organizations.

In the first part of this paper theoretical and conceptual questions will be addressed, and in particular the presumed link between democratization and voluntary organizations. Transformation through funding opportunities will then be considered as part of a broader «Europeanization process». Analytical tools frequently employed by Europeanization scholars will be presented. Intervening variables, such as specific sectors or national context will be taken into account in order to account for differential impact. In the empirical part of this article, our attention will be first drawn to the amount of European funds allocated to voluntary organizations in the countries and sectors under analysis. The attention will finally be drawn to the contribution of funding opportunities to the shaping of voluntary organizations in Europe.

1. Transformation through funding opportunities and prospects for democracy.

In this first section, our attention will be turned to existing literature dealing with the link between democracy and voluntary organizations. Secondly, we will focus on the contribution of European funding opportunities to the shaping of voluntary organizations in Europe and prospects for global and national democratization.

1.1. Voluntary organizations contribution to democracy: a universal rule?

Since the half 1990s, many scholars inspired by the tocquevillian tradition have carried out studies exploring the contribution of civic organizations to democracy. Research on this topic is necessarily diverse because there exist many different conceptions of democracy and many functions attributed
The most popular conception is presented by Putman's study on Italian politics (Putman, 1993). Democracy is conceived as «institutional performance» and voluntary organizations are only considered from the perspective of their membership. Voluntary organizations are expected to contribute to the socialization of individuals into cooperative behavior and to produce what is labelled as 'social capital'. Many other studies focus on the policy making process at several levels. Democracy is understood as a deliberative or participatory process (Habermas, 2001). Through their participation in the public sphere, voluntary organizations are expected to influence policy-making and held policy makers accountable. Finally, democracy has also been considered from the point of view of service delivery. According to this view, service provision by voluntary organizations is democratic because of their intrinsic features, such as horizontal and democratic decision-making structures, flexibility, voluntary work and sharp knowledge about the beneficiaries.

Table 1: Theoretical conceptions of the link between democracy and voluntary organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conception of democracy</th>
<th>Social Capital</th>
<th>Public sphère</th>
<th>Service provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional performance</td>
<td>Institutional performance</td>
<td>Deliberative democracy</td>
<td>Participatory democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy process focus</td>
<td>Policy outputs</td>
<td>Policy making</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conception of voluntary organisation</td>
<td>membership</td>
<td>values /arguments</td>
<td>service provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Putman</td>
<td>Habermas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This article will focus on the third dimension considering voluntary organizations as service providers. Voluntary organizations are considered as an expression of voluntary action, understood as voluntary adhesion, voluntary work or 'public interest' objectives. Democracy is not only to be approached from a decision making perspective. Voluntary organizations can be indeed considered as a democratic means to implement many public policies, in particular at the global and transnational level where there is no nation state to assume this function. A significant room for maneuver left for the implementation of public policies could be a good means to foster democracy at this stage of the policy process. The way in which democracy can be promoted at the implementation stage is also diverse. Through the involvement of citizens in the implementation process, voluntary organizations can promote 'participatory' democracy or 'the government by the people'. The involvement of the population could also lead to better policy outputs and in any case, to a better match between citizen's specific aspirations and policy outcomes. Traditionally democracy has only been conceived exclusively as a decision making process, but democracy could also be imagined as a system empowering people to implement public policies by themselves.

Notwithstanding, some authors have argued against the tocquevillian conception of voluntary organizations as «schools of democracy» (Armony, 2004). According to this view, the

1Operational definitions of voluntary organizations have been proposed by Knapp and Kendall (1996) and Salamon and Anheier (1997).
2This argument obviously implies a broader conception of civil society/voluntary organizations than the restrictive one
contribution of civil society (conceived as voluntary organizations and associational life) to democracy is context-dependent. As the historical, social and political context shapes voluntary organizations, they can be both an opportunity and a hindrance for global and national democratization. « Social capital » can be used for different purposes, including the spreading of antidemocratic values.

The expected role of voluntary organizations as service providers may depend on specific contexts and it can be interpreted as an obstacle for the development of democracy. According to an alternative conception, voluntary organizations as service providers could be related to a minimalist conception of the state (usually labeled as neo-liberal) where service provision is reduced to its minimum expression. According to this conception, emphasis is not put on democracy but rather on cost-efficiency. Besides, if there is no room for maneuver left to voluntary organizations by public authorities, the implementation of public policies is not to be considered as « democratic ». The function of voluntary organizations would be reduced to the automatic implementation of governmental and intergovernmental priorities.

This articles will take fully into account the potential contribution of the European Union to the shaping of voluntary organizations in Europe and in particular the effects of funding opportunities.

1.2. Transformation through funding opportunities and differential impact.

The use of European funds has many consequences. The analysis of the effects of European funds can be related to studies on Europeanization. As this article will show, the influence of the European Union is not only exerted through rules and directives of direct application, but also through positive measures such as European funding. The basic scheme developed by Europeanization scholars (Börzel, 2002; Featherstone and Radaelli, 2003; Dyson and Goetz, 2004; Radaelli, 2004) can be adapted to the study of the transformation of non public actors. European funding opportunities can be analyzed as European pressures and their impact depends also on intervening variables. However, in this specific case, Europeanization is to be considered as an interactive process (EPPIE, 2007). To grasp the effects of funding opportunities is not only necessary to analyze them as European pressures, but also to consider their use by specific actors, such as voluntary organizations. National and local contexts as well as specific funding procedures are the main intervening variables to be taken into account.

European funds may contribute to the shaping of voluntary organizations in several forms. First, their impact can be understood as redistribution of resources. The more European funds are allocated to a specific issue, the more voluntary organizations (working on this topic) will be expected to use these funds and be transformed by this use. The EU may then contribute to the development of their activities. However, European funds do not only put money into an issue, they may also launch a socialization process, leading to a transformation of voluntary organizations. Funding conditions are then to be considered as rules structures diffusing understanding of what is to be considered as « appropriate behavior » (Börzel 2002).

But what does this transformation entail? Existing literature, which focus mainly on the national level, concludes that the establishment of partnerships between voluntary organizations and public authorities leads to a professionalization process (Harris and Rochester, 2001; Smith and Lipsky, 1993; Queinnec and Ingalens, 2004). However, these studies do not give many details about the content and implications of the professionalization process. For the purpose of this article, we will consider that European funds may contribute to the growth dynamics of specific NGOs or voluntary which considers only groups promoting democracy.
organizations, and that specific EU requirements may have a direct impact on their priorities and their management practices.

Secondly, most studies on Europeanization put emphasis on differential impact (Borzel 2002). In order to grasp the effects of the European Union it is necessary to take into account the form specific European pressures take as well as national contexts. This intervening variables explain the different results of the Europeanization process. The effects of European funds may depend on many factors, as the kind of activity developed by specific voluntary organizations, national and local context and different European pressures.

Humanitarian NGOs work in the field of Humanitarian Aid, whose principles (as defined by the Red Cross) are urgency, non discrimination and neutrality. During the 1980s the « French doctors » (a new wave of French Humanitarian NGOs) put also emphasis on the transgression of borders and the « right of intervention » (Klingberg, 1998). Social voluntary organizations provide a broad variety of social services. However the adjective « social » is so broad that it can include most of voluntary work. The hard core of social work is fight against poverty and support to discriminated groups. The specific task carried out by social voluntary organization depends much on national traditions.

The analysis of different sectors is so important because EU funding procedures depend much on the level of competencies of the EU on a specific issue. Humanitarian and social aid are channeled through two very different funding procedures, leading to very different European pressures. Since 1993, European Humanitarian Aid has been channeled through the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO). ECHO and humanitarian NGOs based on member states have direct relationships ruled by a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA). Contrary to Humanitarian NGOs, most Social voluntary organizations have no direct contacts with the European Commission. They get funds and grants funded by the European social Fund (ESF) or from Community Initiatives such as EQUAL. In this case, European funds are channeled by the managing authorities defined by member states. Contrary to Humanitarian aid, European pressures do not come directly from the European level but they are mediated by member states. Consequently, we should expect less convergence in the case of social voluntary organizations than in the case of Humanitarian aid.

Hypothesis:

H1: European funding opportunities have an impact on civil society organisations.
H2: The more funds are allocated to a specific issue, the more transformation is to be expected.
H3: Impact depend on intervening variables (European pressures, sector, member state)
H4: Such transformations have implications for global and national democratization.

In order to consider different national contexts and the significance of member states, we will analyse the use of funding opportunities in France and in Spain. Both countries receive a significant amount of European funds but they have established very different kind of relationships with voluntary organizations and NGOs. Our empirical information comes from the analysis of voluntary organizations activities reports (depending on availability) and from interviews carried out in both countries at the national and local level.
2. How much? The significance of EU funds for national NGOs

As it may be expected, the significance of European funds depends much on the sector under analysis. EU structuring effects on voluntary organizations are expected to be more significant in member states channeling more EU funds through NGOs. This section will present important disequilibria about the distribution of European funds by sectors in the member States under analysis.

Table 2: How much EU money do NGOs get?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Development and humanitarian Aid (2005)</th>
<th>Social Sector (ESF) in 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>France</strong></td>
<td>115 million €</td>
<td>41% of total funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spain</strong></td>
<td>40 million €</td>
<td>7% of total funds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

European funds for Humanitarian Aid are particularly significant in France, while for other member states they only represent a tiny amount of funds available. As the report of the French Commission on International Development (*Commission Coopération Développement*, 2008) clearly shows, most of the funds used by French NGOs come from international sources (around 74%). Most of these international funds come directly from the European Union (EU). The EU channeled 115 million € through French NGOs in 2005 (41% of the total amount of public funds used by French humanitarian and development NGOs). The total amount of public funds channeled through NGOs is 278 million €. European funds are significantly more important than national funds, as national resources represent only 21% of the total public funds for the same year. However, as the same report points out, most of international funds are channeled through the biggest NGOs. European funds channeled by French NGOs come from ECHO and to a lesser extent from Euronaid. Funds for development NGOs distributed by Euronaid were used in 2004 by 56 organizations, which is also quite significant.

Humanitarian Spanish NGOs did not benefit so much from European funding in this domain. In 2005, they only received around 40 million € from the EU, which represents only around 7% of the total amount of funds channeled through Spanish humanitarian and development NGOs. Most of the funds used by Spanish NGOs do not come from international sources, as it is the case for French NGOs. They come from local and regional governments (121 million € in 2005). The total amount of public funds channeled through Spanish NGOs in 2005 (around 230 million €) is comparable to the amount channeled by their French counterparts.

The picture is very different if we consider funds channeled by social voluntary organizations. Contrary to European funds for humanitarian and development NGOs, structural funds are managed by member states. For the period 2007-2013, 4.5 billion € (650 million € per year) were allocated to France within the framework of the European Social Fund (ESF). The same amount is granted by the member State. In Spain, European funds reach the amount of 8 billion € and only 3 billion € are guaranteed by the member state. In addition, during the period 2000-2006, Spain was not only eligible for objective 3 (on employment) but also for objective 1 (cohesion). Consequently, at that

time the amount of structural funds destined to Spain was even more important. The percentage of funds channelled through NGOs depends much on member states. Some member states have always been prone to channel structural funds through voluntary organizations while others, according to the European Commission, « are reluctant to allow voluntary organizations and foundations to have access to specific European funds for which they have decision power (European Commission, 1997: 13) ».

Member states have recently published some information about the beneficiaries of structural funds so for the first time, there are some figures about ESF beneficiaries in 2007. Spain only declares 47 intermediary bodies. Most funds are directly given to national employment services (763 million €) and regional governments (for example 194 million Euros to Junta de Andalucia). No private company is acting as an intermediary for the Spanish government to manage the European Social fund. In 2007 around 48 million € were directly managed by the biggest Spanish social voluntary organizations, such as the Fundacion ONCE, the Red Cross, the Fundacion Lluis Vives or Fundacion Secretariado Gitano. However, in reality much more than 48 million € will be finally managed by social voluntary organizations. European funds distributed by public bodies acting as intermediary bodies (in particular by regional governments) are very often finally channeled through voluntary organizations.

In 2007, the French government declared to have signed 2462 different contracts for the ESF implementation. The beneficiaries are very diverse and include private companies, social voluntary organizations, and national and local authorities. Given the number of intermediary bodies, the amounts of money given to each specific actor is much less important than in Spain. As an example, while the Spanish Red Cross received 9 million Euros from the ESF in 2007, the French Red Cross receives only 909.000 Euros. The FNARS, which is one of the biggest French voluntary organizations received only 66.000 Euros in 2007. As it was the case in Spain, the biggest share of ESF (from 5 to 10 million Euros depending on the region) is given to the national employment services (ANPE).

The different distribution of European funds in France and Spain may lead to different effects for voluntary organizations and NGOs. For Development and Humanitarian Aid, more transformations should be expected in France because much more European funds are channelled through French NGOs. However, for social voluntary organizations, funds in Spain are more concentrated than in France, so the European funds structuring effects on specific voluntary organizations are to be expected to be more significant in this country.

3. Structural effects and democratic practices.

European funds structuring effects have many dimensions. Our attention will be first drawn to the distribution of resources. European funds may promote some specific kind of voluntary activity and lead to a dynamics of growth among several voluntary organizations working on these issues. Secondly, Europeanization will be considered as a socialization process. Voluntary organizations using European funds are expected to adapt to European requirements and conditions, which leads to what is often referred to as a professionalization process. We will argue that this

---

4 The original is in French, selon la Commission les Etats membres « répugnent à permettre aux associations et fondations d'avoir accès aux programmes de financement européen spécifiques dans lesquels ils ont un pouvoir de décision (Commission des communautés européennes, 1997: 13) ».

5 Fundacion ONCE and Red Cross are not strictly « voluntary organizations » because they have « officially » a public status. However, they are autonomous and are perceived by the public as voluntary organisations.
professionalization process may not be compatible with the role of voluntary organizations as agents of global and national democratization. Finally, if funds available are aimed at implementing very specific governmental (or intergovernmental) priorities, they can lead to goal displacement, which is also at odds with a participatory conception of democracy.

3.1. Distribution of resources, growth and democracy

Distribution of resources is not neutral. The amount of resources distributed and the way they are allocated have a significant impact on voluntary organizations. As it is evident in table 2, European funds for humanitarian aid made possible a growth process of Humanitarian NGOs during the 1990s and 1980s. Humanitarian NGOs with a limited budget before EU pressures, experienced a significant growth dynamics, which entailed a transformation of their organizational capacities. During the growth dynamics, European funds represented more than 60% out of the total public funds, which is a clear indicator of their significance for this growth process.

Table 3: Humanitarian NGOs, Growth process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before EU pressures</th>
<th>During 1980-1990</th>
<th>After 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MPDL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In 1998, 64% of total funds come from the EU.</td>
<td></td>
<td>In 2006, 94.5% of public funds come from the EU but only 12.17% of total funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Médecins sans frontières- France (1971)</strong></td>
<td>Budget: 1.1 ME (1979)</td>
<td>First contract with the EU in 1979</td>
<td>Budget: 34.3 ME (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In 1990, 68.76% of public funds come from the EU (28% of total funds).</td>
<td></td>
<td>In 2006, 43.88% of public funds come from the EU but only 0.47% of total funds (3.5% in 2005).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In 1997, 69% of public funds come from the EU.</td>
<td></td>
<td>In 2006, 29% of public funds come from the EU (9% of total budget).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Médicos sin Fronteras- Spain (1986)</strong></td>
<td>Budget: 0.16 ME (1988)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Budget: 8.6 ME (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In 1993, 68.5% of public grants come from the EU.</td>
<td></td>
<td>In 2005, 22.47% of public funds come from the EU (3% of total budget).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is clear from table 2, Spanish and French voluntary organizations did launch a process of growth thanks to European funds during the 1990s (the period of creation of ECHO). However, the influence of the EU on national voluntary organizations landscape is not necessarily everlasting. These figures also point out to the fact that during the 2000 the growth process came to an end. Besides, many Humanitarian NGOs are currently experiencing a process of disentanglement from the EU. The percentage of European funds is becoming smaller as other public donors put more money on Humanitarian Aid.

Social Voluntary organizations also receive significant amounts from the EU, but contrary to
Humanitarian funding, these amounts are much more important in Spain than in France. In this country, some organizations receiving a significant amount of European funds could experience a growth process thanks to European funds during the 1990s and the 2000s. *Fundacion secretariado Gitano*, as it is clear in table 4 is a clear example. The influence of European funds on the other voluntary organizations receiving directly ESF funds from the government is expected to be less significant because they are originally bigger and receive a smaller share of ESF. It is more complex to assess the impact of ESF grants on smaller voluntary organizations acceding to ESF through intermediary bodies.

**Table 4: Growth process for Fundacion Secretariado Gitano**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before EU pressures</th>
<th>During 1990</th>
<th>After 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gitano (1982)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>In 2000, 20% of the funds come from the EU</td>
<td>In 2006, 55% of the funds come from ESF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In France, European funds are spread through many organizations and consequently, their influence on the growth dynamics of each specific social voluntary organization is not expected to be so significant. As an example, in 2007 no French social voluntary organizations did receive more than 1 million Euros from the ESF. However, it is difficult to get this kind of financial information because French social voluntary organization publish their activities reports in their websites even less often than their Spanish counterparts and seem quite reticent to give this kind of information⁶.

### 3.2. Professionalization and democracy

Concerning the professionalization process, there are also significant differences between Humanitarian aid and social funds. Humanitarian NGOs are directly in contact with ECHO and there is a direct transfer of norms and practices from the European level to the NGOs. The ESF is managed by member states. The European rules and procedures to implement the ESF are then mediated through national public administrations. Many requirements are not defined by the European Commission but only by the member states. They are not European but national. In this sense, the professionalization process supported by ESF is both European and national and can vary widely from one member State to the other. It is very difficult in this specific case to disentangle European and national pressures.

**Different aspects of professionalization**

Humanitarian NGOs receiving an important amount of funding from ECHO have developed specific skills on New Public Management (NPM) such as the project cycle approach and strategic planning. Many European humanitarian NGOs have created working groups or specific departments in order to promote these organisational principles. Only Humanitarian NGOs directly in contact with the EU (or with other donors sharing the same requirements), such as MPDL, MDM or some sections of Caritas Internationalis have experienced this professionalization process (more details

---

⁶We have contacted several French social voluntary organizations by phone or e-mail and they were not willing to give us basic information about the total amount of their budget and their sources of income.
Social voluntary organizations in France and Spain are also prone to become more professional if they enter in contact with the ESF. However, this professionalization process takes different forms depending on the member state under analysis. Because of the significant role of national administrations it is not possible to speak about convergence in Europe. 'Professionalization' does not mean the same in every country. European specific requirements stated in the European Council regulation 1083/2006 are very broad and leave a lot of room to manoeuvre to member States.

According to this regulation, the rules on the eligibility of expenditure and the management and controls system (just for an example) are set up by member states. National norms are subject to some specific provisions and exceptions since the 2006 regulation, but still, European requirements are only minimum standards and consequently they can be interpreted differently by national and local actors. As an example, the regulation stipulates that control systems shall include « arrangements for auditing the functioning of the systems » or « systems and procedures to ensure an adequate audit trail », but it is up to each member state to define a specific form of auditing.

Besides, social voluntary organizations are not directly in contact with national public administrations and the professionalization process is promoted by intermediary bodies. Such intermediary bodies can be voluntary organizations as the Fundacion Vives in Spain or consortia of voluntary organizations in France (including FNARS, UNIOPSS, Avise and CPCA). In order to foster professionalization, these intermediary bodies publish manuals and kits of information about how to create a ESF project. They also organize training sessions all over the territory. Very often local public authorities and national public bodies also act as intermediary bodies and consequently, they also contribute to the professionalization of social voluntary organizations.

In France, according to our interviews and the manuals and kits available, professionalization is considered from an administrative and financial point of view. Organizations receiving ESF are expected to be (or become) more professional, but in France «professional» means to be able to hold analytical accounts and an audit process. The essential ESF requirement is the eligibility and follow-up of specific expenses. Most of the NPM techniques promoted by the European Commission such as the project cycle approach or strategic planning are not being considered essential in order to receive a ESF grant. French requirements on transparency and accountability are only conceived from a national administration perspective. Voluntary organizations have to be accountable to the public administration (as well as public administrations have to be accountable to the European Commission). There seems not to be any specific requirement for transparency or accountability towards stakeholders or towards the public.

What is more striking is that everyone in France considers that these administrative and financial requirements come from Europe while most norms have been defined by France. Many French voluntary organizations are not willing to submit a proposal for ESF because they consider it is much more complex than the usual grant. Consequently, they prefer to use national and local funds. Officially, the same norms should be applied to French and European grants but according to some of our interviews, this seems not to be always the case.

A quality management system (sistema de gestion de calidad) is also one of the most important dimensions of professionalization in Spain. However, training sessions proposed by intermediary bodies as well as manuals and toolkits consider also other dimensions of the professionalization process. As an example, the training proposed by Fundacion Vives was based on four axes: human resources qualification, networking, management and new technologies. Besides, quality

management is not only considered from a 'national administration perspective' (accountability to a higher authority). Other aspects are being integrated, including a business approach. As an example, some manuals are based on the European Foundation for Quality Management excellence model. Intermediary bodies such as Fundacion Vives did assume responsibility to train specific voluntary organizations to do the work.

To sum up, the ESF contributes to the professionalization of social voluntary organizations. However, the specific shape this professionalization may take depends on national administrations and the role played by intermediary bodies. While in France professionalization seems to be limited to expenses eligibility and control, in Spain emphasis is also put in NPM techniques.

The implications for national and transnational democratization

Policy instruments and particularly the use of specific management techniques is not neutral (Lascoumes and Le Galès, 2004). Different conceptions of professionalization have different consequences for democracy. According to the ideal defined in section 1, implementation by voluntary organizations should foster citizens participation and make policy outcomes closer to citizens aspirations.

However, the potential benefits for democracy expected from voluntary organizations may be lost because of professionalization requirements. The classical conception of quality management is very time consuming. According to many interviews, there is no convincing evidence that this kind of sound management leads to better outcomes. The time invested to fulfill quality management requirements is time taken from the practical implementation of the project. The lack of flexibility does not enable citizens involvement in the implementation of the project. As one interviewed put it «These management rules are so strict that its positive effect may be lost because of the efforts required for their implementation». Is a quality management system really adequate for voluntary organizations? Is it really so important to know if every single euro has been expended according to strict standards? Analytical accountability is based on the notion of cost, but even the definition of specific costs can be considered as a social construction determining the different alternatives for action.

According to our view, transparency and control over expenses are certainly essential for sound financial accountability but if they are good for democracy, it is still another question. As a representative of the third sector in Catalonia put it «the best way to avoid transparence is to be as much transparent as you can manage». The paradox is that too much information on your accounts is the best means to avoid transparency because the level of complexity makes it impossible for the public to understand who is funding what and how the money is really expended. Crucial information is carefully buried by digressions on unliquidated obligations, refunds, and expenditure adjustments. Experts able to read this intricate language only evaluate the project according to analytical accountability standards and may not have the competences required to evaluate the pertinence of the budget taking into account the aims of the project. Given its complexity, the quality management approach (as applied currently) makes it impossible for the average citizen to get involved in the implementation process and undermines the potential contribution of voluntary

9Interview to a ESF global grant project manager in Ile de France, 2009. The original in French « Des règles de gestion très saines mais tellement lourdes que les effets positifs peuvent être perdus à cause du travail nécessaire ».
10 La paradoja es que la mejor manera de no ser transparente en una organización muy grande, es siendo transparente. Por la propia complejidad, con la cantidad de cosas que tiene. Por ejemplo "¿tienes tal o cual listado? -sí, aquí tienes el listado de 500 páginas". Available on : http://www.fundacionluisvives.org/upload/05/90/Cuaderno_TS_V_bj2a.pdf, p. 68.
Strategic planning and NPM techniques have different implications for ethics and democracy. These techniques put emphasis on the quality and efficiency of specific actions instead of on their ethical or democratic dimension. This shift has generated several critics, in particular in France (Vedelago et al., 1996; Marraine, 1996; Castellanet, 2003). When priority is given to the fulfillment of measurable goals, much less importance is given to the ethical mandate of a specific organization, to its democratic structure as well as to symbolic action. According to some humanitarian workers, logistics would rather follow their strategic plan than to save a life (Marraine 1996). This extreme example shows how the involvement of citizens and beneficiaries of public policies are not being taken into account. To give money to peasants present in a community planning session is considered to be a good means to foster participation (Castellnet 2003). Even if (as this last example shows) democracy is considered to be a strategic goal measurable with indicators, the means employed to reach this objective are in contradiction with the very objective.

3.3 Goal displacement and democracy.

European funds can also have a significant impact on the priorities of specific organizations. European funds can enable the launch of a growth process for some Humanitarian NGOs and social voluntary organizations. However, this growth process is not experienced by voluntary organizations working on other sectors such as human rights promotion or fight against poverty. This is a typical problem of goal succession following the availability of public funds and it is not specific to the European level:

« Are nonprofits that accommodate demands to change or tailor service directions “guilty” of goal succession? That is, should they be taken to task for shifting their emphases away from their original goals in favour of goals which will allow the organization to continue to prosper? Is the apparent abandonment of original purposes cause for alarm or censure? This is not simply an academic question. People who work in and for the voluntary sector regularly raise the issue when organizations appear to be drifting away from their founding purposes (Smith et Lipsky, 1993: 164)»

Spain: goal displacement through funding specific priorities

Movimiento por la Paz, el desarme y la Libertad (MPDL) is a Spanish NGO created during the 1980s in order to promote peace. Since the signature of their first partnership agreement with ECHO, this organization not only did experience an important process of growth (see table 2), its objectives have also been completely transformed. At present, most MPDL activities are about emergency and humanitarian aid as well as visibility campaigns, which are the activities funded by ECHO. In France, many organizations have been created on the wake of the availability of European funds. Most organizations analyzed in France did not transform radically their aims to meet the criteria of European funds. However, new organizations were created to meet these requirements, such as Equilibre or Aide Médicale d’Urgence (AMI).

In the social sector, the Fundacion Secretariado Gitano can also be considered as an example of goal succession. This Spanish NGO, created during the 1980s, had several priorities and objectives,
such as employment, education, health, training, etc. Before the growth process, there was some balance among the different priorities (the amount of resources allocated to each priority was proportionate). However, after the growth process, most of the funds of this association are allocated to fight against unemployment, and other priorities, such as education not only did not experience a growth in resources, but a decrease (for example the FSG gave 82 grants for the access to university in 2000 and only 77 in 2006). In France, as it was the case for humanitarian aid, the creation of new structures seems to be more frequent than goal succession, even if some organizations may have increased their activities on unemployment because of the availability of European funds.

European priorities are not neutral. European funds are channeling specific conceptions of society and sometimes new subtle ways to perpetuate discriminations and inequalities. Contrary to most international NGOs, humanitarian aid only focuses on the consequences of international conflicts and disasters and do not offer any structural solution for the main problems about globalization or global inequalities. Focusing on catastrophes and dramatic events, humanitarian intervention is the most adapted to get public opinion attention but it provides very few long term solutions. Much more than development, environmental or human rights NGOs.

Emphasis on unemployment as conceived by Fundacion Secretariado Gitano (FSG) can also be considered form a critical perspective. According to the last slogan from FSG (used in their visibility and awareness campaigns in order to avoid discriminations) « Employment makes us equal ». However, employment as promoted by FSG does not make gypsies equal, it only offers them the possibility to become auto technicians, cooks or carpenters. Emphasis on education would enable the Spanish gypsy population to have access to university degrees and eventually, to better jobs. Jobs currently at their disposal are those with the lowest level of responsibility, qualification and salary. Consequently, Employment is only the continuation of discrimination by more subtle means. The gypsy population is not expected to decide which jobs they would like to take (if any), they are only expected to agree with what the government and social voluntary organizations consider it is good for them. This way of implementing public policy is not to be considered as compatible with 'participatory' democracy (but may be conceived compatible with other conceptions of democracy).

These conclusions should not question the excellent work carried out by social voluntary organizations or humanitarian agencies, most frequently carried out in very difficult conditions. They only intend to put emphasis on a structural phenomenon.

France: goal displacement through the introduction of competition in the allocation system

The dependence of French social voluntary organizations to public funding is also being at the origin of goal displacement. In this case, European funds are not explaining directly such transformations. However, European norms are being used by national policy makers to transform the allocation funds system at the national level.

The French public administration is trying to introduce a method of call of proposals with the purpose to foster competition in the delivery of social work. The European Union is considered to be responsible of such transformations in the allocation system. Indeed, those changes have been associated to the transposition of the service directive (directive 2006/123/EC) to be completed by December 2009. However, from our point of view the service directive lefts a lot of room for interpretation in the domain of social services and the French national government may be just taking this opportunity to introduce competition in this sector according to the principle of cost-

These activities may also be considered to be problematic, but this is another topic.
efficiency. The introduction of the competition principle in the delivery of social services has important effects on social work, and in practice leads to goal displacement. As emphasis is put cost-efficiency, the least performing beneficiaries (poor people, long term unemployed and so on) are being neglected and replaced by more performing beneficiaries. Public funds are to be completed by private funds and consequently, specific actions take into account business priorities and neglect a public interest perspective. Voluntary organizations could be a good means to foster participation and involvement of excluded citizens in a democratic society. Such excluded populations do not participate in the decision making process but voluntary organizations could be a means to integrate their views and expectations at least at the implementation stage of the projects (and eventually by making public policy proposals).

As it is clear from these examples, implementation through voluntary organizations is not always understood as a way to introduce participation at the implementation stage of the policy process. Public authorities spread specific conceptions of society and only fund activities considered appropriate for policy goals as defined by policy makers. If more room to maneuver and flexibility was left to civil society organizations, they would be able to integrate citizens in the implementation process, contributing to the development of participatory democracy.

4. Conclusion. NGOs as agents of democratization?

Voluntary organizations are often considered as agents for global and national democratization. Scholars interested on this issue normally reach this conclusion after the analysis of the role of NGOs in the policy making process. Voluntary organizations and NGOs are considered as actors representing citizens aspirations and views, and consequently, they are viewed as an important contribution to the ideal of bottom-up and participatory democracy. The difficulties linked to the development of representative democracy at the international level make the role of voluntary organizations even more significant.

The purpose of this article was to turn the attention to the role of voluntary organizations and NGOs as service providers. Indeed, voluntary organizations do not only participate in decision making procedures, they also play an important role in the implementation of public policy at the national and transnational level. The analysis of the use of European funds by voluntary organizations reveals that donors exigencies and funding procedures have significant structuring effects on voluntary organizations. European funds can contribute to the launch of growth dynamics of NGOs in one specific sector, to goal displacement and to the diffusion of some specific management techniques. The important structuring effects of European funds questions the ideal of participatory democracy, according to which voluntary organizations are expected to foster citizens involvement and implement citizens concerns. This study shows that voluntary organizations could eventually fulfill this function but current developments do not enable them to do so.
References


