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# Taking Stock of Civil-Society Development in Post-communist Europe: Evidence from the Czech Republic

ADAM FAGAN

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This article contributes to a growing literature critiquing non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as civil society in post-communist Europe. From the perspective of the Czech environmental movement, although over a decade of foreign assistance and know-how transfer has resulted in a tier of professional NGOs that have obtained political influence at the elite level, these organizations have made little progress in rooting themselves in society at large. This gives rise to the claim that what exists today are NGOs without civil society. It is argued that, in light of the withdrawal of large American donors since May 2004 and EU accession, NGOs need to make links with the enmeshed community-based organizations that have emerged in recent years and focus much more on fund-raising and developing sustainable strategies for their future development. Fifteen years after communism collapsed, it is time to take stock of what has evolved under the banner of civil society, particularly in a state where the concept has been fiercely debated. At a theoretical level, it is argued that, in order to assess the capacity of NGOs to fulfil the democratic functions of civil society, we need first to acknowledge the ideological rationale that has dictated their development. It is only by returning to a more normative understanding of the concept of civil society that we gain a critical insight into the apparent disconnection between NGOs and society and their limited capacity to mobilize popular support.

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Key words: civil society; non-governmental organizations; Czech Republic; environment; democratization

## Introduction

Though most studies of democratization in Central and Eastern Europe have referred to the development of civil society as being a critical measure of democratic consolidation,<sup>1</sup> the conceptual understanding of the term has altered and varied quite considerably since the onset of democratization. Drawing on debates within normative democratic theory and critiques of existing liberal democracy, analysts talked about the ‘re-birth’ of civil society engulfing authoritarian communism.<sup>2</sup> There was also an explicit assumption in much of the early democratization in Eastern Europe literature that a vibrant and efficacious civil society would be a key feature of post-communist politics.<sup>3</sup>

However, this ‘people power’, or ‘citizen versus state’ notion of civil society was soon eclipsed in the early 1990s. Transitologists employed the concept of civil society

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to refer to the development of professional interest groups and NGOs that would act as a constraint and check on state power, assume some of the functions of the overstretched state, and generally help consolidate democratic practice.<sup>4</sup> Though the implicit assumption was that creating such a tier would enable greater participation and representation, in practice the focus quickly shifted to increasing professionalism amongst activists and turning them into partners in the policy process. The vision of a tier of professional associations and NGOs located on the periphery of the political elite, committed to the public-policy process, and able to assume the regulatory and implementation functions of the state was made a reality by foreign donors, who have, since the early 1990s, provided funding for civil-society development in all the post-communist states.<sup>5</sup> By the mid 1990s there had occurred a clear divergence between how civil society was viewed during the collapse of communism and the early transition period, and how it was being interpreted in the context of democratic consolidation and by western donors.

Today in the Czech Republic, as elsewhere in the former communist bloc, there is an abundance of seemingly western-style professional organizations spanning a range of interests and issues, from environmentalism to Roma rights.<sup>6</sup> Whilst they have certainly gained a degree of political influence – for example, NGOs working in a particular policy area are asked to comment on draft legislation – they remain dependent on a rapidly diminishing pool of foreign funding, work on campaigns and issues that have, hitherto, attracted donor money, and are detached politically and financially from communities. Although some of the ascribed functions of ‘civil society’ are undoubtedly being performed by these NGOs, their disconnection from grass-roots issues, campaigns and political agendas, as well as their continued dependency on retreating international donors raises concerns about their future sustainability and capacity for elite-mass linkage.

Case-study research on environmental movement organizations in the Czech Republic makes a useful contribution to this discussion, not least because it frames the interaction of NGOs within the context of a relatively developed sector of civil-society activity that has been the recipient of substantial amounts of aid and assistance, in a country arguably well-placed to realize western levels of elite-mass linkage. The empirical findings suggest, however, that, with a few exceptions, the core professional environmental NGOs that dominate policy arenas, comment on policy drafts and articulate the dominant environmental discourse in the media and within the political sphere have failed to root themselves within society at large. Their campaigns continue to reflect the interests of their donors rather than indigenous communities, and are not effectively channelling grass-roots societal interests to the political arena, nor mobilizing popular opinion around their campaign agendas. In this sense they are not adequately performing the democratic role that was envisaged for post-communist civil society in the early 1990s.

More specifically, the empirical focus details the extent to which the mainstream environmental NGOs have yet to address the issue of local fund-raising, have failed to align themselves with the community-based activism that has begun to emerge in recent years, and remain focused on obtaining dwindling sources of donor funding. Whereas in the past they could rightly claim that as levels of disposable income

remained low, local fund-raising would deliver little financial dividend, recent evidence suggests that this is no longer the case. It is concluded that rather than depend on what donor funding remains, or wait for revenue via the European Social Fund, Czech environmental NGOs need to follow the West European example and acquire a larger membership base that will provide them with sustainable income.<sup>7</sup> This will arguably deliver them a securer future both politically and economically.

Though not a comparative study, the analysis is informed by the conclusions reached by researchers working on civil-society development in parts of the South and at the periphery of post-communism: the fundamental question posed here is the extent to which western aid has successfully 'purchase(d) civic engagement and participation' in post-communist Europe.<sup>8</sup> Rooted in conceptions of democratic elitism dating back to Joseph Schumpeter, the dominant transitions to democracy/democratic consolidation approach seems to offer little critical insight into the implications of civil society remaining dependent on foreign donor aid and disconnected from society at large. For transitologists, civil-society development, depicted in terms of elite-level professional organizations, is assessed in terms of the role of NGOs within the policy process, and their capacity to supplement political parties in the representation of conventional societal interests.<sup>9</sup> Other than the vague notion that democratic practice will become a habit amongst all political actors and institutions, the literature provides no theoretical guidance for ensuring that NGOs become locally rooted.

Now that a tier of professional NGOs appears to have gained access to policy forums and obtained a degree of elite-level influence, our assessment of civil-society development in post-communist Europe needs to be framed much more within the context of civil society's capacity to channel and connect with societal interests, mobilize local resources and ensure its future sustainability in light of donor withdrawal.

### **Civil Society, Democratization and Central and Eastern Europe**

In 1990 all commentators accepted the imperative of creating civil society in the former communist states. Fascism and Soviet-style communism had destroyed a legacy of civic engagement and political representation that, in the case of the Czech lands, dated back to the early nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup> The creation of a political and social space in which citizens could articulate their interests and challenge the exercise of power was seen as imperative for the new regimes, and a critical benchmark of a successful transition.<sup>11</sup>

In the ensuing period, the main emphasis of civil-society development was on NGOs; the role of international donors, foundations and philanthropic organizations has been paramount in helping to establish the tier of professional western-style organizations that exist across the region today. At the core of the assistance offered by American and European foundations and donor organizations was a particular interpretation of civil society, derived from a minimalist interpretation of democracy and democratization, whereby the process is viewed as marking the end

of a cycle of contestation.<sup>12</sup> From such a perspective, the imperative of fostering a culture of advocacy amongst NGOs has to be offset against the fear of a rapacious civil society that might challenge the rationale on which the new state is being built, and threaten the neo-liberal transformation of the economy. The indices of NGO development thus became the number of associations in existence, the diversity and range of interests represented, the extent to which organizations were enmeshed within the public policy process, and levels of professionalism and visibility.<sup>13</sup>

### A Partnership Interpretation of Civil Society

The function of post-communist civil society was envisaged by international donors in terms of the consolidation of a distinct arena of associations assisting in the development of public policy and the enactment of regulation.<sup>14</sup> At a normative level, through partnership and cooperation, the organizations of civil society would repair the destruction to natural bonds and moral codes wrought by late capitalism. According to Pearce and Howell, this ‘partnership’ interpretation of civil society ‘draws on a particular history of the concept that makes it relevant to a problem solving agenda’.<sup>15</sup> It is based on the premise that solutions are to be found within the context of the market through partnership with big business. Professional, policy-focused associations thus perform a key role in the neo-liberal scheme of transforming state power and freeing capital. As well as providing foreign donors with cost-effective mechanisms for the transmission of aid and tutelage, NGOs act as watchdogs for arbitrary regulation and, in the words of Larry Diamond, ‘prohibit actions that offend interests within bourgeois society’.<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, the interpretation of civil society used by donors finds endorsement within the transitions literature. Linz and Stepan’s distinction between *political*, *economic* and *civil* society relegates the latter to an ephemeral arena of civic organizations which, if they do have political aspirations, are intent not on challenging or transforming the state, but in assisting or influencing its neo-liberal policy agenda. *Political* society is defined as elite-level political institutions (such as political parties); *economic* society relates to firms and corporate interests.<sup>17</sup> Civil society is not seen as a vehicle for serious political critique, for challenging economic and political hegemony, or for transforming state–society relations. In essence civil society thus defined is highly compartmentalized – its remit is restricted to strengthening the status quo, assisting the neo-liberal reconfiguration of power, and enabling the state to transfer some responsibility for regulation and social protection to the voluntary sector. Such a notion of civil society does not permit the questioning of the type of state institutions, or their effectiveness in regulating capital. All civil society can realistically do is to assume some of the discarded responsibilities of the state, shoulder the costs of the state’s partial withdrawal from social protection, and facilitate the symbolic aspects of liberal democracy: freedom of speech and association.

The envisaged role and function of NGOs in post-communist Europe is thus ideologically specific. Organizations are there to assist rather than fundamentally challenge. For them to occupy this ‘space’ depends on the ‘rolling-back’ of the state in areas such as policy development, regulation and implementation. As far as public

participation and the representation of grass-roots interests are concerned, this reality of civil society includes the public 'only sporadically . . . and only to contribute its acclamation'.<sup>18</sup>

Yet it is hard to deny that in the early post-communist period civil society required change and a certain degree of re-formulation. The new civil-society organizations needed to learn how to operate within political democracy and to confront difficult ideological issues. Commentators rightly argued that the idea of civil society having taken over politics was a misrepresentation of the revolutions and an inaccurate understanding of civil society's purpose.<sup>19</sup> But others over-stated the extent of the required transformation. Smolar's claim that 'civil society . . . had been a historical costume; its usefulness disappeared with times that dictated its wearing'<sup>20</sup> conflated the need for civil society to operate somewhat differently under political democracy, and the notion of it giving up its mobilizing function entirely. Whilst an ability to complete grant applications and manage projects were undeniably valuable skills these fledgling new organizations needed to acquire, they were not the only learning that needed to take place. NGOs needed to learn also how to mobilize support and to connect with citizens in an entirely new political and social context. They needed to recognize that in order to escape dependency on international donor aid, their long-term sustainability depended on following their western counterparts: combining professionalism and elite proximity with the establishment of social roots.<sup>21</sup>

### **NGOs as Civil Society in Post-communist Europe: A Critique**

The critical literature on post-communist civil-society development has grown considerably. Some have questioned the extent to which the new civil-society organizations were operating like their western counterparts, and whether in fact they could realistically be expected to do so.<sup>22</sup> Others have contemplated the 'uncivil' aspects of post-communist civil society,<sup>23</sup> or issued warnings about its internal dynamics and questioned whether all aspects of post-communist associational activity were necessarily positive.<sup>24</sup> Several country-specific and comparative studies have observed low and declining levels of mobilization, the absence of representation within the policy process, and popular suspicion of NGOs.<sup>25</sup> In general, there is a distinct concern emerging within the literature that the sense of post-communist civil society as a critical space, relatively un-colonized by political and economic power, has been lost.<sup>26</sup>

More recent contributions have sought to explain why such low levels of mobilization persist and have questioned the implications of donor funding and NGO dependency.<sup>27</sup> Studies of NGO development at the periphery of post-communism – the Balkans, Central Asia and the Former Soviet Union (FSU) – have gone as far as to question the extent to which post-communist civil society needed to be professionalized, de-radicalized, institutionalized. They have variously concluded that the legacy of international assistance has been disabling and even counter-productive.<sup>28</sup>

Perhaps the most contentious aspect of NGO development in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) is the extent to which the transfer of know-how has been presented by

western donors as non-ideological; a practical means of realizing desirable ends, a technical solution for overturning the legacies of communism.<sup>29</sup> In a sense this assuaging of ideological content has blurred the capacity to identify the limitations of NGO activity. The notion of civil-society development espoused by donors is, of course, ideologically specific, drawing as it does on a particular interpretation of United States political history, and a somewhat subjective interpretation of how civil society emerged and operates in established capitalist democracies.<sup>30</sup> In the context of post-communist Europe, the notion of civil society having gained concessions from the state and democratized the political realm in western Europe is then interpreted through the neo-liberal paradigm of dismantling and restraining the state. Civil society's function is cast as preventing the atomization of commercial society, healing its wounds in order to nurture growth and stability and encouraging philanthropy. In terms of economic reconstruction in post-communist states, the latter becomes a critical function: as the state retreats, civil society's role in coaxing the private sector to 'give back' is vital in order to plug gaps in social welfare and to ensure cohesion. There is little sense here of civil society having emerged and grown in western Europe in conjunction with the expansion of the state, or indeed of the inherent social democratic legacy of what exists as civil society today, for example, in Britain.<sup>31</sup>

### **An Alternative Perspective**

Conceptualizing civil society as a realm in which power and dominant values can be contested, rather than just a forum for solving disputes through compromise, shifts attention away from elite-level 'problem-solving' organizations that operate on the periphery of the elite, towards grass-roots movements and organizations that view civil society as a vehicle for articulating alternative perspectives and opinions and for contesting power, whether it be through the frame of the environment, human rights or other community and identity issues.<sup>32</sup> The ability to represent such interests with the formal political arena, or at least connect with grass-roots agendas, becomes a criterion for judging the effectiveness of NGOs as institutions of civil society.

Such a perspective is perhaps less radical than one might assume. In seeking to return to the notion of civil society as separate from the state infrastructure, as a platform for challenging power, it veers close to Jürgen Habermas or Hannah Arendt's public sphere, of deliberation and discursive forums as the basis of democratic renewal. It is also akin to the implicit and fundamental premises of earlier liberal interpretations of civil society; the reclaiming of autonomous critical space and the eighteenth-century notion of trying to reconcile individual self-interest unleashed by commercial activity with the common good.<sup>33</sup>

It is such an interpretation of civil society that implicitly, if not explicitly, lies at the core of the now-substantial literature critiquing the role of donor-dependent NGOs masquerading as civil society in a variety of regions and countries. The basic tenor of this somewhat eclectic critique is that whilst newly established and western-funded NGOs may well be fulfilling useful functions – providing expertise, reforming the policy process and helping to deliver new legislation – their dependency on donor



aid and the focus on short-term projects has encouraged a disconnection with local community agendas and a lack of sustainable development.<sup>34</sup> NGOs compete with each other for scarce donor funding, they switch from project to project in response to the whims of donors, and remain unaccountable to the societies whose interests they supposedly represent.

It is with both a sense of the ideological foundations of donor-driven NGO-development initiatives, and the critical perspective described above, that this account considers the current state of the Czech environmental NGOs as a measure of civil-society development. Beyond providing a brief summary of how Czech environmental NGOs have developed since the early 1990s, the analysis illustrates how NGOs are responding to the effective withdrawal of US donors in light of accession to the European Union. It highlights what this change in funding has revealed about the capacity of NGOs, their societal linkage and their long-term sustainability.

### **Civil-Society Development in the Czech Republic: The Environmental Lens**

As one of the most developed, visible and multifarious sectors of civil society, and a recipient of substantial donor aid since the early 1990s, the Czech environmental movement offers a lens on issues of NGO-community linkage, donor dependency and sustainability.<sup>35</sup>

Environmentalists were the most visible expression of an immanent civil society in the latter days of communism, and activists played an important role in bringing down the communist elite in November 1989.<sup>36</sup> The movement seemed to encapsulate the heady ideals and aspirations of the new civil society: a submerged network of politically engaged activists, highly eclectic and radical in terms of ideas and strategies. By bringing together scientists, students and citizens as well as hardened activists, the embryonic environmental movement seemed to reflect a new type of post-communist politics in which movements and civic activism would exercise agency within a vibrant and deliberative public sphere. For both the academic research community and foreign commentators, the environmental movement acted as metaphor for the new politics in the early 1990s.<sup>37</sup>

The ensuing transformation in the role of civil society that occurred after 1992 and the election of Vaclav Klaus as prime minister, the altered attitude of elites towards collective action and the interpretation of civil society in terms of service provision rather than advocacy were poignantly reflected within the realm of environmental politics. During what now appears to have been a nadir in their evolution, all environmental NGOs were politically marginalized and castigated as emblems of a bygone age of civil-society activism.<sup>38</sup> What had emerged by the second half of the 1990s was a tier of western-trained and supported professional environmental organizations that had abandoned their radical campaign agendas and commitments to direct action. Invited to participate within policy networks, encouraged to comment on draft legislation by the new Social Democrat administration, the influence of these NGOs had, by the end of the 1990s, increased considerably. The new government was under extreme pressure from the EU Commission to enact new environmental legislation, and the professional, policy-focused NGOs were welcomed into the process.

The withdrawal from the country of the larger US donors that had funded environmental NGO since the early 1990s – in response largely, though not entirely, to EU membership – has placed the established tier of environmental NGOs at a crossroads in their development. As revenue has dwindled, and the threat of further withdrawals looms large, organizations seemingly face stark choices. The perspective of environmental NGOs thus retains its capacity to reflect the dilemmas of civil-society development beyond EU accession.

### **What does the Perspective Reveal about Post-communist Civil Society?**

Looking back, the environmental-movement perspective reveals a number of trends. The most obvious development, and one that has been discussed at length in the existing literature,<sup>39</sup> is the transformation of environmentalists, from an un-organized tier of radical opponents of the communist state in 1989, to professional organizations that are able to influence the development of policy and have gained significant respect amongst the public and within government.<sup>40</sup> The proximity to government of the large professional NGOs such as FoE-CR is reflected in the fact that both the press secretary and the policy adviser of the current environmental minister, Libor Ambrozek, were prominent members of that organization.<sup>41</sup> Greenpeace and FoE-CR personnel have a high media profile; their opinions are recorded in the press and they are invited to contribute to environmental debates and forums as recognized experts. Statements released by these organizations on policy and ecological issues are taken seriously.<sup>42</sup> This is a stark contrast to the situation ten years ago, when all environmental organizations were treated with contempt and suspicion.<sup>43</sup>

But the perspective has the potential to reveal a great deal more about the dynamics and tensions of post-communist civil society than just the maturity of NGOs and the linkage with government. More in-depth research reveals that whilst Czech environmental NGOs may appear to resemble their western counterparts in terms of their relationship with elites, their linkage with communities and their financial situation is in fact very different. The analysis below focuses on two specific and inter-related aspects of environmental NGOs – their relationship with community organizations, and the issue of funding – in order to develop analysis of societal linkage and the sustainability of what has been created under the rubric of ‘civil society’.

### **NGO–Community Linkage**

The first key point to consider is the relationship between the larger NGOs and community-based local campaigns. Linkage between NGOs such as FoE-CR and community-based organizations, whether it be through local chapters or existing network organizations, would suggest that NGOs are combining influence at elite level with a deepening of their roots within society at large.

A phenomenon within Czech environmental politics over the past three years has been the growth in community-based organizations, mostly, though not exclusively within the Prague district, campaigning on local issues with a distinctly environmental theme.<sup>44</sup> Such activism initially began in response to the construction of a

controversial ring road development around the city of Prague in the late 1990s, which posed a threat to green spaces, and had various implications for the environments of local communities. The momentum to establish small organizations to defend local amenities and to oppose environmentally damaging construction has increased considerably. What constituted, in May 1998, about 20 organizations is now estimated to include in the region of 250 organizations in the Prague vicinity alone.<sup>45</sup> Though there is substantial variation between the organizations in terms of their campaign strategies, issues, support base and size, they tend to be volunteer-based and typically involve a core of between 10 and 20 part-time local activists plus an outer core of up to 50 supporters and volunteers.<sup>46</sup> Though most organizations obtain small amounts of revenue from donations and membership fees and appear adept at mobilizing volunteers from within the community as well as other resources, they have not professionalized their operations and appear to have gained little access to the skills and know-how acquired by the larger NGOs. Of the 10 local organizations interviewed in late 2003, none had received international funding, and two (Optim Eko and Flora) had attended training and or received assistance from either donor foundations or other NGOs. The campaign strategies of these community organizations tend to combine conventional lobbying with mild non-violent direct action towards the local municipality. Typically these organizations oppose road-building schemes in their vicinity, the destruction of green space, or other locally specific environmental concerns.

Surprisingly, there appears to be virtually no linkage between these community organizations and the established NGOs. Of the community-based organizations interviewed in late 2003, all reported that they saw their operations as distinct from the larger environmental NGOs (Greenpeace CR, FoE-CR) and received no direct support or assistance from these organizations. Instead they reported linkage with other small community-based organizations, mostly facilitated by the network organization SOS Praha, of which all were members.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, several activists and volunteers claimed that they felt the need to establish a specific organization because there existed no other organization that would defend or represent their interests.<sup>48</sup> Although the largest, most prominent national environmental NGO, FoE-CR (Hnutí Duha) is also a member of the SOS Praha coalition, the organization has had no involvement in specific local campaigns, nor does it actively cooperate with any of the community-based organizations involved.<sup>49</sup>

Whereas western-movement organizations have successfully combined strategies and action repertoires that focus at both policy-elite and community levels,<sup>50</sup> the transformation of Czech environmental organizations into professional organizations has seemingly not coincided with the deepening of social roots and community linkage. Indeed, if we take a longer-term view dating back to the early 1990s, it could be argued that there has effectively been an inverse relationship between increased professionalism and societal linkage: the more professional and apparently 'western' the larger organizations have become, the less connected they are with local issue agendas and campaigns compared to the early period.

Such dislocation between the national NGOs and local agendas is reinforced by the internal structures of the leading organizations. For instance, whilst young local

volunteers typically populate the local chapters of FoE-CR, the internal structure of the national organization is hierarchical, with power resting squarely with a core of employees in the Prague and Brno offices. Those at the top exercise considerable control over what campaigns and activities local activists become involved in. There is thus little opportunity for local activists to influence campaign agendas.<sup>51</sup>

Research conducted during 2001–02 on the development of domestic waste-management legislation discovered that there was virtually no linkage between the large NGOs that were consulted on policy drafts and the small number of local organizations that campaigned directly or indirectly against incineration and dumping.<sup>52</sup> A similar picture emerges from the perspective of transport. Though the issue has become extremely pertinent amongst sections of urban communities affected by increasing traffic volume and the decline of public transportation, the large environmental NGOs appear to do little to connect with local campaigns on such a contentious issue, apart from tacitly supporting actions through their local chapters.<sup>53</sup> The local, politically active citizen-based organization *Chceme Metro, Nechceme Rychlodrahu* ('We want trains, not the expressway') reported no linkage with FoE-CR or indeed any other national environmental organization.<sup>54</sup> Whilst it is understandable that the large national NGOs are reluctant to get involved in local NIMBY ('not in my backyard') campaigns, the issues of waste and transportation were actually contentious national political issues in the country during the run-up to EU accession and it is therefore quite surprising that so little linkage was made with local organizations, particularly as FoE-CR were actively involved in waste-related projects. What became particularly apparent was that there was virtually no transfer of know-how taking place between the large NGOs and local initiatives. Despite all the advances made by FoE-CR in lobbying techniques and public relations, little of this knowledge is passed down by the large NGOs to the new local initiatives.

There are exceptions to the general pattern. The organization Arnika,<sup>55</sup> which emerged as a breakaway organization from *Deti Zeme* in 1999, set out to enmesh itself with local campaign and community organizations, to campaign on a much more local agenda, whilst developing a national presence. Arnika performs an important networking role amongst local activists and clearly provides know-how and expertise to these groups through its citizen information centres within the Prague municipality. However, the dilemmas of financial sustainability have encouraged the organization to work increasingly on a variety of health and ecology campaigns that have delivered revenue from foreign donors. Despite retaining a local presence, Arnika operates increasingly more as a high-profile lobbying and campaign organization than a locally enmeshed organization. Revenue from local fund-raising accounts for less than 10 per cent of annual revenue, the bulk of which comes from a variety of small and medium-sized European and US donors.<sup>56</sup> Arnika's financial links with the local community via membership subscriptions and donations have remained largely undeveloped.

## Funding

The key to understanding this apparent dislocation rests on the continued dependency of NGOs on foreign donor funding. Whereas many of the large western

environmental organizations have maintained links with local communities and campaigners because they rely on donations from members as an important source of income and resources.<sup>57</sup> Czech NGOs have, since the early 1990s, been almost entirely dependent on foreign donors.<sup>58</sup> Whilst donor money has been available for a host of different projects, there has been little incentive on the part of NGOs to develop local financial links or to increase the number of fee-paying members. Indeed, some NGOs have been positively reluctant to do so, arguing that becoming involved in local politically controversial campaigns may ‘put off’ foreign donors.<sup>59</sup> The larger NGOs, such as FoE-CR and Greenpeace, employed staff for their skills in completing grant application forms rather than for their campaigning skills, or indeed their fund-raising know-how.<sup>60</sup> At particular times in the year, the entire organization would be turned over to the process of completing a successful application for another year’s funding.

The local foundations – national entities that began as foreign donor organizations but now distribute western funds to NGOs – envisaged the solution to the threatened withdrawal of foreign donors in terms of NGOs developing closer links with Czech citizens. They anticipated re-orientating themselves more towards local campaign issues, and receiving an increased proportion of their income from membership fees. Such a combined strategy – elite presence and societal rootedness – would strengthen the democratic function of NGOs as well as offering a more sustainable future than reliance on foreign donor money.<sup>61</sup>

However, this shift has largely not occurred, in part due to the fact that new sources of foreign revenue – mostly from the EU – have offered a stay of execution for NGOs, but also because the sector lacks the capacity to make the shift. The skills acquired by NGOs and the training they have undertaken since the mid 1990s have not been about developing fund-raising within the community. Instead they have learnt how to complete grant application forms using the logic matrix demanded by foreign donors, how to hold a successful press conference, and how to lobby parliament – valuable skills, but not necessarily the most appropriate for mobilizing support amongst citizens and for embedding NGOs within communities. Despite recent efforts to promote fund-raising by international donors and the EU, there remains a lack of local capacity in this regard. It is difficult for NGOs to access fund-raising know-how locally; the most effective option is to attend courses or training abroad, but this is extremely expensive and prohibitive even for the most financially stable NGOs.<sup>62</sup> As one activist pointed out, ‘to use our resources in this way (fund-raising) is a long term strategy . . . it means not working on projects that will get us money (from donors) to pay salaries . . . it may not help us for many years to come’.<sup>63</sup>

The nature of donor funding has changed quite considerably. After the mid-1990s, levels of revenue supplied by US and bilateral European donors declined sharply. The emphasis in the earlier period on donors providing short-term grants (typically one to two years in duration) to work on specific designated projects was replaced from 2000 onwards with an emphasis on establishing trusts and endowments. The funds from these were to be distributed by local agencies for the purposes of building sustainability within civil society. This typically involved funding short training programmes

and directing grants to projects that involved NGOs co-operating with business, municipalities or other NGOs. This was undeniably a positive change of emphasis, although it had arguably occurred very late. Donors such as C.S. Mott, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and the German Marshall Fund of the United States, all of whom had been active in the country since the early 1990s, expressed concerns about the impact and outcomes of their small grant projects, and were keen to establish a more sustainable legacy to their funding.<sup>64</sup> In essence they wanted to leave the Czech Republic and realized that if NGOs were to survive, they had to alter the way they raised revenue.

### **Plugging the Gap: The Role of the European Union**

Membership of the EU and the process of accession have exerted an impact on NGO development in a number of ways. Full membership in May 2004 provided a focal point for those US and international donors who wished to withdraw or at least curtail their involvement in the NGO sector.<sup>65</sup> However, in the run-up to full membership, the EU directly and indirectly provided significant amounts of funding to NGOs. Through the PHARE Programme and pre-accession funds, the EU placed great emphasis on building fund-raising capacity amongst NGOs, particularly in the six-month period just prior to May 2004. Under pressure from the Commission, the Civil Society Development Foundation,<sup>66</sup> a local foundation established in the early 1990s and responsible for distributing PHARE funding to NGOs and civil-society organizations, targeted the apparent reluctance and incapacity of NGOs to develop their local funding strategies. By offering training programmes on fund-raising, and providing resources for specific projects designed to strengthen the sustainable development of NGOs, CSDF and other local aid foundations were attempting rapidly to fill the knowledge gap and re-orientate NGOs away from short-term donor funding towards long-term organizational planning and development.<sup>67</sup> Whereas prior to 2002 the EU had directed its support particularly towards the Roma, supporting organizations, education initiatives and cultural associations, there was, in the run-up to May 2004 a seismic shift in emphasis. As one prominent civil-society activist and local foundation executive member noted, 'there was simply too much money made available (for fund-raising) . . . it had to be spent almost overnight and NGOs were being overwhelmed; it all felt like too little, too late'.<sup>68</sup>

However, at the heart of the EU's strategy to develop the sustainability of NGOs there is an apparent contradiction. On one hand the EU was, and still is, pushing local fund-raising and independence from donors, whilst on the other it offers direct funding for projects, mostly concerning conservation and eco-education that require NGOs to produce reports, liaise with business and government, and increasingly become involved with implementation and monitoring of environmental-policy initiatives – in other words, the type of funding context that NGOs were used to and arguably needed to move beyond. The whole process of acquiring EU-derived funding has become more complicated, intensive and competitive for NGOs. That they now have to employ all their remaining resources to access short-term, project-related funds, sourced directly or indirectly by the EU, suggests the continuance of dependency and a lack of strategic change. For those NGOs that were heavily

reliant on the large US or international donors, the situation is that, whilst existing commitments are being honoured, no new projects are being established, and the only donors that remain are foundations that work on very specific issues and offer low levels of aid.<sup>69</sup> Though the larger NGOs have reduced the number of staff they employ and other small organizations that were entirely reliant on donor money have simply collapsed,<sup>70</sup> there has been a reorientation not towards local sources of income, financial diversification or an increase in the number of fee-paying members, but towards accessing EU-derived funds. Indeed, when pressed about prospects for future funding prior to the Czech Republic joining the EU, several respondents from within the environmental NGO community identified revenue coming from the EU Social and Consistency Funds.<sup>71</sup> One activist summed up the situation thus: 'the threat (of foreign donors withdrawing completely) has been around for ages now . . . new funding appears and we have to change in order to get it'.<sup>72</sup>

Despite the recent emphasis placed on the development of fund-raising, evidence from both the grant foundations as well as from the larger NGOs suggests that organizations have done little as yet to increase the number of fee-paying members or to increase their fund-raising capacity.<sup>73</sup> But to expect NGOs to quickly establish significant numbers of fee-paying members and to diversify their financial resources in such a short space of time is unrealistic. It is true that NGOs should have anticipated the need to reduce their dependency on donors. Nevertheless, the emphasis placed during the period up until 2002 on short-term grants, with donors not funding infrastructure projects such as staff costs and organizational development, did not encourage such a shift to take place. Organizations were not encouraged to think long term; their frame of reference was the current grant round and at best two- to three-year development, with everything always dependant on the renewal of donor money. Moreover, whilst EU-derived revenue is the reality and a prospect for the future, the pressure on NGOs to make significant and costly changes to their financial strategies is reduced. Whilst they may have obtained the know-how on EU-funded training courses, few of the established NGOs are making significant changes.<sup>74</sup>

Membership of the large environmental NGOs remains at best a few hundred individuals paying a small annual subscription.<sup>75</sup> Indeed, for organizations such as FoE-CR and Deti Zeme, based on the published details of income and membership, there appears to have been no significant change in either the number of members, or the amount of revenue raised from membership as a proportion of annual income, since the mid-1990s.<sup>76</sup> Membership data are still not shared between organizations, nor have direct mailing or other marketing techniques been widely used, despite evidence to suggest that there is benefit to be gained from such an approach.<sup>77</sup> The opinion expressed by most NGOs in the mid-1990s, that Czech citizens were unwilling to donate to NGOs or lacked the resources to do so, still remains the standard response to the issue of a significant push for fund-raising.<sup>78</sup>

It is also important to recognize that data relating to the source of NGO income can mis-represent the extent of their dependency on donor revenue. For instance, it is estimated that of the 58,000 civil-society organizations registered in the Czech Republic in 2003, 85 per cent were funded 'from domestic sources'.<sup>79</sup> This includes

revenue obtained from municipal sources by professional and cultural organizations as well as sports clubs for the provision of services in the community. It also includes as 'domestic sources of income' revenue from Czech foundations such as Nadace VIA and CDSF, that distribute foreign trust funds and revenue.

However, such information creates a false picture of civil society's sustainability. Most advocacy NGOs remain dependent on what donor money is still available.<sup>80</sup> For environmental NGOs income is derived directly or indirectly from the EU, or other small European and US donors, received as grants to work on specific projects, for consultancy and advisory services and for work with government agencies and business. In a sense the problem is that the donors have not entirely withdrawn, or rather the EU has filled the funding gaps. There is thus a sense that the sword of Damocles that has hovered over the environmental movement since the mid-1990s, the threat of no more international money, will never fall.

### **Conclusion: Assessment and Future Prospects**

This article has sought to move analysis of environmental NGOs in the Czech Republic away from considerations regarding elite access and representation within the policy process that typified earlier research, towards a consideration of societal linkage. The core argument is that the development of professionalism and elite proximity amongst the larger organizations has occurred at the expense of closer linkage with communities, largely as a result of the dependency of NGOs on foreign donor revenue. The lack of an immediate financial incentive to cultivate closer linkage has translated into a political dislocation. The changing dynamics of donor funding in response to the country's membership of the EU potentially offered an opportunity for a re-orientation of NGOs towards society, but the larger NGOs have responded by targeting EU-derived revenue and the donor money that remains rather than seeking closer societal linkage.

This has occurred for a variety of reasons that reflect fundamental contradictions of the NGO-civil society-foreign aid logic. First, the EU has, in the interests of accession, taken over the funding role that US and other foreign donors played in the 1990s. It has used short-term projects as the basis for its funding of NGOs and in this sense has not challenged the whole approach of NGOs to income generation. Though the EU has also pushed sustainability and financial diversification, it has actually maintained rather than challenged the status quo. Thus the NGOs are not solely responsible for having failed to shift their funding strategies and not thinking long term, so long as the availability of short-term EU-derived donor money remains the most accessible source of income and survival.

The NGOs lack fund-raising skills and there is a lack of such know-how available locally. Whilst donors, the EU and local foundations have now begun to address this issue, such initiatives as fund-raising seminars and the importance placed on sustainable development of NGOs have occurred rather late. It is only since 2002 that such skills training and know-how has been available; up until then NGOs were trained in very different skills. Although data on membership numbers, plus the impression gained from qualitative interviews, would suggest that environmental NGOs are



not responding quickly to such initiatives and provision, donors are equally, if not more, culpable for having been slow to build sustainability strategies into their assistance programmes.

The recent emergence of community-based activism, whether around environmental issues or in conjunction with other social issue agendas, is a positive development that suggests a political vibrancy within Czech society that was unimaginable in the mid-1990s. However, this research suggests that through their dislocation from grass-roots civil society, the established tier of environmental NGOs are currently failing to take advantage of this new consciousness and willingness to become politically engaged. There needs to occur a transfer of know-how from the established organizations to the grass-roots campaigns. Tentative research on local campaigns within the Prague municipality suggests that, compared to a decade ago, there is in fact the possibility today to mobilize revenue locally in the Czech Republic, and a willingness to participate in campaigns and provide funds for social action. The established environmental NGOs need to respond to such a dynamic, not least because it has implications for their own future status as representative institutions of civil society.

The concluding section would not be complete without some mention of the *de facto* take-over of Strana Zelených, the Czech Green Party, by a core of activists from within the NGO community. Until 2002 there was no linkage whatsoever between the environmental movement and the party, which had been discredited by alleged financial malpractice and, more importantly, links with both the Communist Party and the old security services.<sup>81</sup> However, this changed in the run up to the 2002 parliamentary election. Leading figures within the NGO community have radically altered the party's political image and direction. Its new president, Jan Beranek, is a respected activist and former director of FoE-CR. Other members of the board have either close links with NGOs, or with progressive 'green' voices within the Social Democrats and the political elite.<sup>82</sup> That the chairman of the Prague branch of the party, Petr Stepanek, is a long-term activist, who initiated the SOS Praha network of local community environmental organizations in 1998, suggests that closer ties between NGOs and the party will not just help connect NGOs with political elites, but also fuse new links with society. In the 2004 European elections the Green Party gained 3.16 per cent of the vote, its highest result in any election since the early 1990s.<sup>83</sup>

Though it should not be assumed that the Green Party will necessarily remain close to community politics, the fact is that whilst many prominent members of the 'new' party have links with elite-level NGOs, others come from a background of community-level green campaigns.<sup>84</sup> If the party does maintain and develop its connections with community campaigns and local initiatives, thereby providing elite–mass linkage, the elite-level environmental NGOs may well find themselves displaced as representatives of civil society.<sup>85</sup> The environmental NGOs undoubtedly benefited from the demise of the Green Party in the 1990s. In the absence of an effective and respected green party, it was with NGOs that the Social Democratic governments have worked since 1998. The extent to which the leaders of FoE-CR and Greenpeace have become the spokespersons for environmentalism today is due in part to the

absence of a green political party. Whilst this is unlikely to alter in the short term, the re-birth of the Green Party may well alter the status of NGOs in time, weakening both their position at elite and at community levels.

What does the lens of environmental NGOs then suggest more generally about civil-society development in the Czech Republic, and indeed in post-communist Europe? Relating the empirical findings to theoretical discussions regarding civil-society development, the research endorses the critique of the transitions literature for its inability to adequately theorize the development of civil society beyond quantitative analysis of the existence of elite-level NGOs. As so many recent contributions to the literature have acknowledged, analysis of civil society must look beyond the number of elite-level NGOs and their capacity to gain influence with policy elites, and focus much more at the extent to which these NGOs have become embedded, can channel interests, and link citizens with government.<sup>86</sup>

Whilst it is unlikely that NGOs could have developed at all in post-communist society without donor aid and assistance, that they need now, 15 years after the collapse of communism, to rapidly acquire fund-raising skills, learn how to mobilize resources within the community, and generally re-orientate themselves towards society, reflects the limits of western tutelage and the specific rationale of donor involvement. The perspective of the Czech environmental movement has highlighted the constraints on NGOs performing such democratic functions. But it has also revealed, through its focus on small, enmeshed community organizations, that the potential exists for such linkage; resources are clearly available in communities and citizens are evidently more inclined to organize and protest than they were a generation ago.

If the elite-level policy-oriented NGOs established by western donor aid are to root themselves within society, act as institutions of civil society and remain politically relevant, they must connect with such community activism. The case study in this article suggests that what is currently constraining Czech NGOs from doing so is their continued dependence on donor funding, which has bred a skills deficit and a general lethargy regarding accessing local resources. As recent research on western European environmental movements suggests, the embedded nature of movement organizations, their efficacy and ability to contest power is as much derived from citizens providing time and revenue as it is from elite linkage.<sup>87</sup>

#### NOTES

1. Mary Kaldor and Ivan Vejvoda, *Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Pinter, 1999); Andrew T. Green and Carol Skalnik Leff, 'The Quality of Democracy; Mass-Elite Linkages in the Czech Republic', *Democratization*, Vol.4, No.4 (1997), pp.63–87.
2. V. Tismaneanu (ed.), *In Search of Civil Society* (New York: Routledge, 1990).
3. Ralf Dahrendorf, *Reflections on the Revolutions in Europe* (New York: Times Books, 1990).
4. The most concise depiction of the liberal view of civil society is offered by Larry Diamond, 'Rethinking Civil Society: Towards Democratic Consolidation', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.7, No.3 (1996), pp.3–17.
5. For an overview of the aid provided for civil-society development by the big donors, see Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999).

6. T. Anderson and J. Stuart, *The 2003 NGO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia* (Washington, DC: USAID Office of Democracy, Governance and Social Transparency, 2004).
7. Brian Doherty, *Ideas and Actions in the Green Movement* (London: Routledge, 2002).
8. Sarah L. Henderson, 'Selling Civil Society: Western Aid and Nongovernmental Organization Sector in Russia', *Comparative political Studies*, Vol.35, No.2 (2002), p.48.
9. See P. Schmitter and G. O'Donnell, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions from Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).
10. M. Kundrata, 'Czechoslovakia', in D. Fisher, C. Davis, A. Juras and V. Pavlovic (eds), *Civil Society and the Environment in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Ecological Studies Institute, 1992), pp.31–50.
11. Dahrendorf (note 3).
12. For a concise overview of the notion of civil society held by donors, see T. Carothers and M. Ottaway, 'The Burgeoning World of Civil society Aid', in M. Ottaway and T. Carothers (eds), *Funding Virtue: Civil Society Aid and Democracy Promotion* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000). For an exposition of this conceptualization of democracy, see Schmitter and O'Donnell (note 9), J. Linz and A. Stepan, 'Towards Consolidated Democracies', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.7, No.2 (April 1996), pp.14–22, G. Di Palma, *To Craft Democracies: An Essay on Democratic Transitions* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990).
13. Several academic analyses seemed to endorse this focus in both their methodological approach and their conclusions. See, in particular, Green and Skalnack Leff (note 1); Brian Slocock, 'The Paradoxes of Environmental Policy in Eastern Europe: The Dynamics of Policy-Making in the Czech Republic', *Environmental Politics*, Vol.5, No.3 (1996), pp.501–21; Nick Manning, 'Patterns of Environmental Movements in Eastern Europe', *Environmental Politics*, Vol.7, No.2 (1998), pp.100–134.
14. For a succinct overview of the objectives and rationale behind donor finding of civil society, see T. Carothers, 'The End of the Transition Paradigm', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.13, No.1 (2002), pp.6–7.
15. J. Pearce and J. Howell, *Civil Society and Development* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2001), p.17.
16. Diamond (note 4), pp.3–4
17. Linz and Stepan (note 12).
18. J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), p.176.
19. Aleksander Smolar, 'Civil Society after Communism: From Opposition to Atomization', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.7, No.1 (1996), pp.24–38.
20. *Ibid.*, p.28
21. The extent to which western environmental movements have combined strategies and retained a presence at both elite and societal level is described by M. Diani and P. Donati, 'Organisational Change in Western European Environmental Groups: A Framework for Analysis', *Environmental Politics*, Vol.8, No.1 (1999), pp.13–34. For a broader overview of the evolution of western movements, see Doherty (note 7) and C. Rootes (ed.), *Environmental Protest in Western Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
22. See C. Hann, 'Introduction', in C. Hann and E. Dunn (eds), *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models* (London: Routledge, 1996); V. Bunce, 'Comparative Democratization: Big and Bounded Generalizations.' *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.33, Nos. 6/7 (2000), pp.703–734.
23. Petr Kopecky and Cas Mudde (eds), *Uncivil Society? Contentious Politics in Post-Communist Europe* (London: Routledge, 2003).
24. Gordon White, 'Civil Society, Democratization and Development (1): Clearing the Analytical Ground', *Democratization*, Vol.1, No.3 (1994), pp.379–95.
25. See Marc Morje Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Bill Lomax, 'The Strange Death of 'Civil Society' in Post-communist Hungary', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol.13, No.1 (1997), pp.41–63; Green and Skalnack Leff (note 1); Ferenc Mislivetz, 'Participation and Transition: Can the Civil Society Project Survive in Hungary?', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol.13, No.1 (1997), pp.27–40, C. Tempest, 'Myths from Eastern Europe and the Legend of the West', *Democratization*, Vol.4, No.1 (1997), pp.132–43.
26. Mislivetz (note 25), p. 27.
27. See in particular, J. Wedel, *Collision and Collusion: The Strange Case of Western Aid to Eastern Europe, 1989–1998* (New York: St Martin's Press); Henderson (note 8); B. A. Cellarius and C. Staddon, 'Environmental Nongovernmental Organisations, Civil Society and Democratization in Bulgaria', *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol.16, No.1 (2002), pp.182–222; S. Sampson 'The Social Life of Projects', in Hann and Dunn (note 22); K.F.F. Quigley, 'Lofty Goals, Modest Results: Assisting Civil Society in Eastern Europe', in Ottaway and Carothers (note 12), pp.191–216.

28. There is huge literature analysing the impact of NGOs and western assistance in Central Asia, the FSU and the Balkans. See, for example, R. Mandel, 'Seeding Civil Society', in C.M. Hann, *Postsocialism: Ideals, Ideologies and Practices in Eurasia* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp.279–96; Roberto Belloni, 'Building Civil Society in Bosnia- Herzegovina' (Human Rights Working Paper No. 2, January 2000); S. Sali-Terzic, 'Civil Society', in Z. Papic *et al.* (eds), *International Support Policies to South-East European Countries: Lessons not Learned in B-H* (Sarajevo: Muller, 2002); D. Petrescu, 'Civil Society in Romania: From Donor Supply to Citizen Demand', in Ottaway and Carothers (note 12), pp.217–42.
29. Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad* (note 5).
30. See Hann, 'Introduction' (note 22), p.2
31. Jonah D. Levy, *Tocqueville's Revenge: State, Society and Economy in Contemporary France* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Peter A. Hall, 'Social Capital in Britain', *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol.29, No.3 (1999), pp.417–61.
32. This notion of civil society draws heavily on New Social Movement theory. See A. Melucci, 'The Symbolic Challenge of Contemporary Movements', *Social Research*, Vol.52, No.4 (1985), pp.789–815.
33. See J. Keane (ed.), *Civil Society and the State* (London: Verso, 1988).
34. See note 28.
35. The conclusions about the Czech environmental movement are based on extensive qualitative interviews with activists in both large mainstream organizations and small local groups during the period 1994–2002. In total activists from over 40 organizations were interviewed on several occasions during the research period.
36. For a discussion on the role of environmentalists at the time of communism's collapse, see Adam Fagan, *Environment and Democracy in the Czech Republic: The Environmental Movement in the Transition Process* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar 2004), pp.62–73; Andrew Tickle and Josef Vavrousek, 'Environmental Politics in the Former Czechoslovakia', in Andrew Tickle and Ian Welsh (eds), *Environment and Society in Eastern Europe* (Harlow: Longman, 1998), pp.114–18; Michael Waller and Frances Millard, 'Environmental Politics in Eastern Europe', *Environmental Politics* Vol.1, No.2 (1992), pp.159–85.
37. Tickle and Vavrousek (note 36), p.120
38. Fagan (note 36), pp.85–8.
39. Adam Fagan and Petr Jehlicka, 'Contours of the Czech Environmental Movement: a Comparative Analysis of *Hnutí Duha* (Rainbow Movement) and *Jihoceske Matky* (South Bohemian Mothers)', *Environmental Politics*, Vol.12, No.2 (2003), pp.49–70; Fagan (note 36).
40. This claim is made on the basis of an editorial published 22 June 2003 in *Lidove Noviny*, in which the role of the 'community of environmental NGOs' was appraised in terms of public respect and political access. Opinion poll surveys carried out during 2002 by the Institute of Sociology also endorsed a positive view amongst citizens regarding environmental NGOs and their political role.
41. The press secretary is Karolina Silova and the policy adviser is Daniel Vondrous, a stalwart activist in FoE-CR from the 1990s.
42. The executive director of Greenpeace CR, Jiri Tutter is regularly quoted in the Czech press regarding the safety of the controversial Temelin nuclear plant, and has given evidence to the state prosecutor. Dan Vondrous, despite his capacity as adviser to the minister, continues to speak out on behalf of FoE-CR on a variety of high profile campaigns.
43. See Adam Fagin and Petr Jehlicka, 'Sustainable Development in the Czech Republic: a Doomed Process?', *Environmental Politics*, Vol.7, No.1 (1998), pp.113–28.
44. Organizations interviewed in November 2003 include, *Chceme Metro, Nechceme Rychlodrahu* ('We want trains, not the expressway'), Optim-EKO, Park Klarov, Pro Nebusice ('For Nebusice'), Flora, SDR - Obcanska Iniciativa Pankrace (Citizens of Pankrac Initiative), CSOP Troja, Oziveni Bohemian Greenways, Dvojka Sobe, Kyjsky Obcansky Klub, Zdravy Zivot, Obcanske Sdruzeni pratele Hendlova Dvora.
45. Information obtained from SOS Praha, the network organization established in May 1998 to coordinate the handful of protest organizations that were emerging in response to the ring-road construction.
46. For example, the organization Optim Eko is run by several retired volunteers.
47. SOS Praha is an initiative originally established in 1998 to co-ordinate local grass-roots activism within the Prague municipality.
48. Interview with Jaromir Strejcek, *Chceme Metro*, November 2003. This view was also expressed by Sona Dederova, *Optim Eko* and Marie Janouskova, SDR, and endorsed by Marie Petrova (SOS Praha), November 2003.
49. Interviews with Vojtech Kotecky, FoE-CR, May 2002, November 2003.
50. Diani and Donati (note 21).

51. This claim is based on research conducted in May 1999 and September 2000, in which activists from the Olomouc, Tabor and Usti chapters of the organization. Respondents wished to remain anonymous.
52. The research was carried out during the period February 2001–November 2002 and coincided with the development of new waste legislation. The NGOs referred to were Hnutí Duha (FoE-CR), Greenpeace and Deti Zeme. The small local community-based organizations that worked at the time on waste related issues were Flora and Optim-Eko.
53. The Brno branch of FoE-CR publicly supported the campaign of the local NGO *Nesehnuti Duha* to resist a controversial road traffic plan proposed by the municipality. But FoE did not participate in the protests directly.
54. Interview with Jaromir Strejcek, *Chceme Metro*, 4 November 2003.
55. Information on Arnika was obtained from two interviews with Lenka Maskova (28 September 2001; 6 November 2002).
56. For example, DANCEE, Danish Environmental Protection Agency, HCWH, Healthcare without Harm, Jennifer Altman Foundation (US), Mitchell Kapor foundation (US).
57. Rootes (note 21); Doherty (note 7).
58. Donations from foreign organizations, charities and foundations typically constitute over 90 per cent of an ENGOs annual budget. This has remained constant since the early 1990s. Figures published in annual reports can often be deceptive in the sense that Czech law requires foreign organizations operating in the country to be registered as a local organization. Thus, many seemingly 'local' operatives are merely intermediaries for foreign donors. A good example of this is the VIA foundation which provides funding for a host of NGOs but merely distributes foreign donations.
59. This view was expressed by various activists during the mid/late 1990s, when there was a general fear amongst NGOs of engaging with any direct action campaigns.
60. Hnutí Duha advertise in the national press for their top posts. In an advert placed in March 2002 (*Lidove noviny*), a specific expertise in 'project application forms' was stated as an essential skill.
61. Interview with Hana Pernicova, *Nadace VIA*, November 2002.
62. This claim is based on discussions with Hana Pernicova (*Nadace Via*), who felt that lack of local fund-raising expertise was 'one of the greatest obstacles to NGO sustainability'.
63. Interview with Lenka Maskova (*Arnika*), 6 November 2002.
64. Interviews were conducted with representatives from all of these foundations during September 2001. All expressed similar concerns about the value of grant schemes and the need to establish something different prior to their withdrawal.
65. For example, Soros, C.S. Mott, Rockefeller Brothers
66. Known as NROS – '*nadace rozvoje občanske společnosti*'.
67. Interviews with Hana Pernicova, Director of Nadace (organization) VIA, September 2002, November 2003. Hana Silhanova (NROS), November 2003.
68. Interview with executive director of a key local foundation, Prague, September 2004.
69. For example, Care International.
70. For example, GAIA, a long-established eco-feminist organization has folded.
71. Interview with employees of both Hnutí Duha (Brno) and Arnika who wished to remain anonymous (November 2002).
72. Interview with Filip Fuchs, *Nesehnuti Duha*, 5 November, 2002.
73. Interview with Hana Pernicova, *Nadace VIA*, October, 2004.
74. The exception being the Usti nad Labem-based organization *Pratele prirody* (Friends of Nature), which now is almost entirely funded by local members and private sources. The change has involved a re-orientation away from national campaigns, towards community issues and local agendas.
75. Typically annual membership is 150 crowns (equivalent to about £3 or US\$6).
76. This is based on the information obtained from the annual reports of FoE-CR, Deti Zeme, Arnika and Nesehnuti, EKO Forum, and Tereza, together with information received in response to interview questions appertaining to funding and membership, conducted during the period 1994–2003.
77. The only ENGO that has used these techniques is Greenpeace CR which was able to rely on Austrian help to do so.
78. In late 2003, respondents from the large NGOs (Arnika, FoE-CR, Greenpeace, *Deti Zeme*) still claimed that levels of disposable income amongst Czech citizens negated the value of investing in fund-raising.
79. T. Anderson and J. Stuart (eds), *The 2003 NGO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia* (USAID, 2004), p.66.
80. For example, FoE-CR lists as its 'partners' and sources of revenue, NROS (EU Money), the EU, *Nadace VIA* (US trusts), *Nadace Partnerstvi* (EU derived), The Netherlands Embassy, The Nando Peretti Foundation and a host of other small foundations.

81. For a full discussion on the post-communist history of the Czech Green Party, see Fagan (note 36), pp.162–5, and Petr Jehlicka and Tomas Kostecky, ‘Czech Greens in the 2002 General Election: a New Lease of Life?’, *Environmental Politics*, Vol.12, No.2 (2003), pp.133–9.
82. Dalibor Strasky was an adviser to Libor Ambrosek, environmental minister from 2002.
83. The Green Party put up candidates in all 13 regional assemblies in November 2004. They failed to secure a single seat.
84. For example, Jana Drapalova, spokesperson in the party for regional development, is a respected community activist from Brno.
85. This was certainly the viewpoint expressed by Petr Stepanek, who saw the future of the party in terms of community politics. (Interview, November 2002).
86. See for example Mandel (note 28), Sampson (note 27).
87. Rootes (note 21).

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