Óbuda University

Ph.D. Thesis

Disentangling the Impact of Social Capital on Safety and Security:
Responsibility and Consequences

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Statement

I, Adela Danaj, hereby declare that I have written this PhD thesis myself and have only used sources that have been explicitly cited herein. Every part that has been borrowed from external sources (either verbatim or reworded but with essentially the same content) is unambiguously denoted as such, with a reference to the original source.

Abstract

The development of social capital is a precondition for the democratization process of Albania. The composition of the roles and the responsibilities exchanged between the members of the social capital gives a boost to the establishment and the development of the civil society organization as a tool that guarantees the public's interest increasing the feeling of safety. The social capital actors establish their relations based on the common norms and values; by sharing (i) trust and reciprocity among each other; (ii) mutual support; and (iii) participating in the same networks to raise their interests. However, this relationship is complex, especially if it is established in an institutionally weak country where the level of citizens' trust towards government institutions is low.

Considering the literature, strong social capital and effective CSOs can boost the degree of democratization. Although the CSOs in Albania were financially supported by the International Organizations during the transition, their performance and effectiveness are poor. However, an examination of the consequences of the poor efficiency of the CSOs in Albania has largely been ignored by scholars. The overall argument of this thesis is that CSOs in Albania do not engage adequately. They cannot fulfill the planned goals, preventing the consequences of their actions, and taking responsibility for their consequences. This situation produces human insecurity and uncertainty. Such a poor performance of CSOs in Albania, it is explained by the absence of consolidated social capital. Theoretically, social capital was expected to be explained by Putnam's Theory, but his theory was insufficient for emerging democracies, like Albania. On this basis, this thesis utilizes a direct application of Putnam's theory by producing empirical findings.

This thesis measures the social capital in Albania, establishing the Social Capital Index, and it also addresses the limitations of Putnam's theory. After showing a very low index of the social capital in Albania, unable to create a favorable ground for the development of the CSOs, the thesis investigates the legacy of the past to shed light on the roots of such a phenomenon. Finally, this study establishes a link between the social capital theory, and the civil society organizations in the emerging democracies by allowing it to account for the democratization process in Albania.

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INTRODUCTION

'In the political domain, civil society development is now deemed crucial to stimulating the public pressure and participation necessary to force poorly functioning state institutions to become more responsive and accountable'

Thomas Carothers, 2004.

This thesis takes an analytical and critical explanatory approach to disentangle and assess the impact of social capital on the safety, and the security spectrum in a post-communist country. To do so, the current thesis explores the two aspects: the responsibility and consequences of civil society and the legacy of the past. This thesis paradigms an absence or presence of safety feelings among citizens in the post-communist countries around the presence or absence of social capital, and its capability to reach planned objectives to prevent undesirable consequences. In doing this, the thesis reveals the power of civil society in shaping safety and security and the limits that come out from the legacy of the past.

Great research is conducted in exposing the main determinants that contribute to the feelings of unsafety. Most of them are focused on the impact of crime [108]. Late research seems to find a poor understanding of the role of social capital and the feelings of unsafety, especially in post-communist societies. Nevertheless, several studies have recognized the value of the extent of social capital to decrease feelings of unsafety [91]. On the other hand, there is a lack of understanding of the role of active participation in civic activities and its link with the feelings of safety [41].

Why it is important to study the impact of social capital, and its role in post-communist societies? After the fall of the communist regime, the Eastern European countries adopted western examples that parachuted in the eastern part of Europe. Albania as a demand to build a democratic state followed the same path. Naturally, all the post-communist countries would go under a political-economic and social transition trying to build a democratic state. The history testified that the transition period did not follow the same steps in these countries and several explanations were related to the political culture theories. At this point, seems to be very important in emphasizing

that the post-communist countries experienced different levels of communist legacies, and therefore their approach to democratic norms was different. The safety and security concept in such countries developed differently, carrying out non-predicted consequences for society.

In countries where the communist regime was not very repressive, the democratic norms leaked into segmented parts of the society trying to amortize communist rule, while in countries where the communist regime was strongly established by repressing the people, democratic ideas and principles were alien and hostile to the given society. The lack of democratic experience for some countries made it difficult to perform in a democratic environment and much difficult to establish trustful democratic government institutions [78]. Literature suggests that a low level of trust towards government institutions increased the absence of the safety feelings in between citizens [45].

On the other hand, the adaptation of western experiences carried out a major debate on whether civil society can be 'purchased' through outside assistance [1] [73]. Civil society is perceived as the perfect ground for the social interaction independent from the state that articulates public demands aiming to protect citizens' interests and increase their sense of security. Thus, after the fall of the communist regime, the rise of civic engagement and the establishment of civil society to increase the feelings of safety among citizens (and not only), was an emergency for the democratization of the countries. Therefore, to cultivate civil society, external assistance has been requested. Western donors have been one of the main contributors that stimulated the development of civil society in post-communist countries [49].

Nowadays, the USAID contributes over $1 billion annually to programs aimed at strengthening democratic institutions, law and justice, elections and civil society development[1]. Within the Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance sector budget, the civil society aid comprises 41 percent and includes support for mass media, civic education, and labor rights. In 2011 and 2012,

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[1] See USAID's website for information on aid and programs
at: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/technical_areas/dg_office/evaluation.htm

the USAID allocated nearly $343 million to civil society programs globally [2].

However, many international reports, position Albania close to a semi-consolidated authoritarian regime, as far as civil society is concerned. According to the 2017 USAID CSO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, civil society in Albania remained underdeveloped in all aspects from 2010-2017 [172]. Empirical data demonstrates that Albanian civil society organizations (CSOs) do not cooperate with the government. In 2013, only 18 percent of environmental CSOs (ECSOs) cooperated with parliamentary commissions while 55 percent occasionally collaborated with ministries or law enforcement agencies [171]. According to the European Commission Report for Albania 2018, "substantial efforts are needed to ensure meaningful consultations with civil society actors as a part of inclusive policy dialogue." [50].

Although the vital activism of civil society is one of the most vigorous instruments for a government to successfully fulfill objectives set in favor of public interest making them feel safe in their home country, the underdeveloped sector of civil society undermines a *weak social capital body* in Albania. One of the most important compliance mechanisms of social capital seems to be the development of the civil society sector, whose role will enable cooperation between people and groups of interest to act collectively to achieve their interests. The Civil Society promotes tools to keep the balance between the power of the state and individuals from the state's power.

While many efforts are made at the national and international level to develop the social capital through the civic engagement of citizens in the public matters, the system seems to be prone to an environment where the civil society is absent, and the only form of representation is through voting [44]. Parties and their candidates endeavor to use a vocabulary that articulates likeness with the potential voters and through these supports the creation of the trust. The promises made during the electoral campaign also serve the same purpose, creating trust through inducing future expectancies in the potential supporters [43]. Thus, for many countries, and particularly emerging democracies like Albania, the development of civil society lies behind regarding effectiveness.

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[2] See USAID's website for information on budgetary allocations at: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/money/

This thesis aims to explore why successful practices of civil society have failed in Albania. Thus, for many countries, and particularly emerging democracies like Albania, the development of civil society lies behind in terms of effectiveness. This thesis aims to explore why successful practices of civil society have failed in Albania.

Deriving from these anomalies of democratization process, one of the most important challenges remains the assessment and evaluation of the long-term impact and effectiveness of social capital praxis. So far, the measurement of the wider impact remains elusive and is inadequate for capturing and tracing long-term consequences. The impact and long- term consequences of the lack of social capital under the safety and security spectrum has been ignored. This raises several puzzling questions. Why it is important to explore social capital consequence sunder the safety and security lenses? Do the government institutions have a clear understanding of the potential long-term unintentional and unexpected consequences of their decisions and actions? It remains puzzling why the lack of social capital consequences of the safety and security spectrum is rarely studied.

These are some key questions that this thesis seeks answers to better enhance and analyze the empirical understanding of the long-term influence and consequences of a lack of social capital in post-communist societies.

Problem Statement

The Albanian transition was much more difficult than those of other countries because the social, political, and economic structures that establish the democracy were never experienced during communism in any form [24]. However, the democratization process and the function of state institutions cannot be understood without the analysis of its main indicators, such as: (i) the electoral process; (ii) the civil society; (iii) the independent media; (iv) the local democratic governance; (v) the judicial framework and independence; (vi) the corruption (Freedom House). In this framework, contemporary Albania is an interesting case. As it is showed by the last report of the Freedom House Albania is one of the countries that did not progress towards democracy in different categories [54]. What attracts the most is the fact that only in one category it did not change in almost a decade: *civil society-stagnation*. Thus, Albania lacks some degree regarding

the effectiveness of civil society. As far as in the report, one category has been distinguished as it has developed quite differently from other categories. It looks interesting to check for its insights to better understand the development of civil society in Albania.

A general principle in the Political Science states that 'In the political domain, civil society development is now deemed crucial to stimulating the public pressure and participation necessary to force poorly functioning state institutions to become more responsive and accountable' [27]. However, to have a consolidated civil society, one of the pre-conditions is the presence of 'abundant stock of social capital'. The political function of social capital was first introduced by Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America*, who used the phrase the 'art of association' to describe Americans' propensity for civil association [57].

On the other hand, the work of the civil society sector should be subject to accountability as a check and a balance system. Based on the last report of the Freedom House, in the Albanian context, (i) civil society is a very poorly developed sector, but on the other hand, the USAID reports that (ii) there are over 10,000 CSOs—including associations, foundations, and centers—registered at the Tirana Court of First Instance.

Thus, the overall argument is that the existent civil organizations in Albania, do not fit with their purpose. They do not engage sufficiently with the consequences in the safety and security spectrum. They are not capable of reaching intended goals, anticipating and preventing the consequences of their actions, and take responsibility for their consequences. Therefore, Albanian's CSOs are not capable of building stable security for the citizens in a democratic environment. Considering this situation and the continued unsuccessful attempts to consolidate the civil society, this study explores the misuse of civil society for (un) known gain disfavoring the democratization process in Albania.

Main working concepts

Social capital is a determinant feature of both, modern economies and stable liberal democracies. The development of social capital is not an easy task. Social capital cannot be developed through economic reforms, economic institutions, or public policy. To cultivate social capital, it has to be explored its economic and political functions, as well as its origins [57].

The literature gives numerous definitions of social capital. But, at the core of every definition, social capital promotes cooperation between two or more individuals. According to Fukuyama, the relation between individuals is based on *informal norms* [57] that can be reached by a norm of reciprocity between two friends- *informal social capitals* [18] [34] and by *norms of reciprocity* between *formal relations/formal social capital- civic organizations* [137]. Based on the definition of Fukuyama, social capital implies concepts such as: *trust, networks, and civil society.* While trust and network are two of the main elements of social capital, *civil society expresses the political function of social capital.* The existence of *Civil Society* is a pre-condition for modern liberal democracies. The absence of civil society is a sign that shows a lack of democracy in the country, therefore, citizens tend to sense a lack of safety [58]. The civil society's role is to represent citizens' needs and to keep the balance between the power of the state and individuals from the state's power [57]. Modern democracy seeks to promote extreme individualism that cannot engage in *public affairs*. To overcome this obstacle, modern democracies have carried out *forms of associations-creating groups (formal social capital)-* which lead them in participating in political life. Such groups can be political parties or *interest groups* that cooperate by influencing public life.

Likewise, it was explained by political theorists such as Aristotle, David Hume, Alex de Tocqueville, Putnam [182], the participation of citizens in civic affairs has social consequences, specifically in *collective action* and economic development [136]. The role of civil society and its importance for the development of a country has been further elaborated in 1998 by the SCI (Social Capital Initiative) Group of the World Bank, highlighting the role of *civic participation* in the *sustainable development* of a country. Thus, when discussing the theories and relevance of social capital it seems to be inseparable from the concept of civil society [121].

However, social capital and civil society as notions present a great number of different understandings. The understanding of civil society can start with the work of Locke, Smith, Gramsci, and Hegel [32] [93]. In their point of view, civil society is an *entity autonomous* from the state and from the market lobbying for the interests of the interest groups they represent. Thus, the current thesis uses this definition to frame the concept of civil society in modern democracies. According to the authors, civil society is a group of people who establish an alliance between each other, the state, and the market to constantly negotiate collective and individual outcomes. The members of civil society share *coordinated actions* of individuals equally engaged in processes of negotiation, conflict, or alliance with each other and with institutions. Based on the definition of civil society it is important to understand the role of *the network* and *the trust* that members of the group give to each other to *act collectively* for their interests. To do so, it is important to analyze the (i) structural elements, especially networks (the structural social capital approach), and (ii) the dispositions of individuals, such as interpersonal or social trust (the cognitive social capital approach) [93].

The argument of the thesis

The social capital theories cannot be taken into consideration for civil society organizations in emerging democracies because they are based on advanced Western democracies and take civil society for granted. This thesis acknowledges the limitations of this theory in terms of explaining different contexts of modern and emerging democracies. So, to account for social capital, scholars have to confront the question of why certain institutions, such as civil society do not institutionalize in emerging democracies.

This thesis argues that before the institutionalization process of several civic organizations, a complex process of social construction occurs, during which actors create an understanding of the problem and the best way to address it. Thus, to understand how civil society consolidates, the scholars have to explain how problems are perceived, how history is understood, how preferences are created, and then analyze their effect on the institutionalization of civil society. Therefore, I propose the historical institutionalism theory to account for the institutionalization of civil society in emerging democracies.

It is important to note that the thesis considers institutionalization as a matter of degree. Under any regime, most institutions are partially institutionalized as they follow rules, are somewhat differentiated from the external environment, have a reasonably defined targeted behavior, and varying degrees of effectiveness. However, new institutions that lack experience, resources, and political support are under-institutionalized [63]. The study helps to understand whether the civil society in Albania, lacks all the above-mentioned features and whether it is an under-institutionalized body. If so, why and what are the consequences? Does it matter? Furthermore, can an uncultivated social capital produce an institutionalized civil society in the emerging democracies? More importantly for this research, how does social capital consolidate and how the civil society institutionalizes?

I put out trust among the community members, the peoples' participation in the civil organizations, and the attitudes of civic cooperation as the explanatory variables of social capital in the emerging democracies like Albania, through which actors understand events, reformulate interests, and affect social capital outcomes. Specifically, by analyzing the institutionalization of civil society in Albania, I aim to understand how the civil society perceives the political and social environment, how they shape their interests in the highly unstable transition period, and how such interests in turn affect the development of social capital. Besides accounting for this puzzle, I aim to: (i) engage the social capital with the emerging democracies, (ii) initiate a new research debate within institutionalist theories, and (iii) provide a framework for conducting empirical research. So, the

Albanian case has a special appeal for the social science researchers as its study holds the potential to uncover the mechanisms to deeply study the social capital in the emerging democracies. Also, it can engage mainstream institutionalist theories with the unstructured institutions, such as the civil society.

Methodology

This thesis investigates why Albania did not succeed in establishing healthy civil society organizations after the fall of the communist regime to contribute to the democratization process of the country, increasing the feeling of safety among citizens. I ground my study on two main objectives:

(i)   To find out why the civil society organizations in Albania failed towards the democratization process after the fall of the communist regime?

(ii)   Why the civil society organizations in Albania do not find a favorable ground that stimulates their development?

To this end, the research questions explore why civil society organizations did not develop in Albania. The analysis of the study is composed of two stages. In the first stage, the study hypothesizes about a proposed relationship between variables*, such as: trust, network, and reciprocity (Social Capital).* Thus*,* the first stage of the analysis is riling on the assumptions that:

Hypothesis 1: The Civil Society Organizations in Albania cannot be developed as far as Albania faces the absence of Social Capital.

Hypothesis 2: The absence of Social Capital comes as a consequence of a low level of trust among citizens.

The second stage of analysis is strongly linked with the results of the first stage. The study shows significant results regarding the absence of the social capital in Albania; thus, I explore the reasons behind this absence. The second stage of the study is grounded on the institutionalist approach, claiming that:

Hypothesis 3: The civil society organizations in Albania failed because of *the legacy of the past*.

Thus, first, I measure social capital in Albania, generating the Social Capital Index. Second, I explain the most influential feature of social capital in Albania (trust), and third, I explain the absence of social capital in Albania through the *legacy of the past*.

This study is important because it sheds light on an underdeveloped country like Albania, but also on an understudied field like the Civil Society organizations and their influence on the democratization process and safety feelings among citizens. This project brings together the social capital theory and the historical institutionalism theory by satisfying their explanatory mechanism in a context which they can delineate.

Research Thesis Structure

Chapter I explores the main theoretical approaches and available conceptual prisms. It argues that social capital theories cannot properly explain civil society in Albania. Thus, the institutionalist theories are introduced to account for the development of the civil society in the emerging democracies when counting for trust and network. Moreover, this chapter explains the main concepts such as: social network, social influence, social support, trust, and their interrelation with the development of social capital. Also, in the same chapter is explains the political function of social capital known as civil society. Chapter II presents an uncovered aspect of civil society as the link between civil society and safety and security. It also sheds light on such a link for the Albanian case. Chapter III provides insides into the research design and the methodological approach that I used in the thesis and the limitations of the research as well. In this chapter, I present the reasons for choosing Social Capital and the civil society as a field of research. Moreover, the selection of Albania as a case study is argued and justified. Lastly, methods chosen for this research are presented by justifying this decision and arguing mixed methods, to achieve a better result and to cross-test the validity of findings produced by each method. Mechanisms of data collection are described in detail. It is argued that there is necessary and enough primary data in place to proceed with the empirical analysis. Chapter IV presents the analysis and the empirical results of the first stage analysis. Meanwhile, chapter V, as an integrated part of Chapter IV, presents the state of civil society in Albania during the transition period. This is the second stage of the analysis that includes the qualitative approach of the thesis through the documentary research method. The last chapter, VI, presents the empirical considerations, the new scientific results, and several recommendations.

1 THEORETICAL APPROACH

Social Capital is a notion broadly used over time, but still, it remains unwell defined. There is an explanation of why such an important notion is facing limits in framing it, thus this chapter aims to give a valuable explanation to the limits that the social capital faced as a notion and as a theory as well. In this chapter I will make an overview on (i) The initial theories that tried to explain social capital dynamics; (ii) The social capital theory and its contribution in the formation of the civil society; (iii) Social Capital- Putnam's' Theory; (iv) Social Capital effect on the governance; (v) Political function of Social Capital; (vi) The ineffectiveness of Social Capital Theory in explaining civil society in Emerging Democracies; (vi) Civil Society and its role in democratization; (vii) The Historical institutionalism approach in explaining civil society; (viii) The need for a new theory in explaining civil society in emerging democracies.

1.1. The ineffectiveness of Social Exchange Theory and Psychological Contract Theory in explaining Social Capital

Social Capital is allied to both, historical authors and theories. According to Watson and Papamarcos authors such as Durkheim, Simmel, Marx, and Weber started to think and write about the social capital [178]. Based on what these historical authors carried out, the concept of social capital is not the same with the concept the scholars are tried to define nowadays. On the other hand, Watson and Papamarcos have found a link between social capital and social exchange theory and psychological contract theory [178]. Social exchange theory studies humans' interaction focusing on the cost-benefit analysis to determine risks and benefits. The Social exchange theory originates with John W. Thibaut and Harold H. Kelley (1959), George C. Homans (1961), Peter M. Blau (1964), Claude Lévi-Strauss (1969) and Richard Marc Emerson (1976) [142]. On the other side, Psychological contract theory studies the non-contract-based relationship between the employer and employee. The core of the psychological contract theory is to outline the work that has to be done [143]. Both theories show that the foundation of social capital dates back very early.

Reading the insights of both theories that tried to explain social capital, it has been noticed a significant division of the concept that none of these theories were able to further elaborate or

explain. Likewise, it is mentioned above, the social exchange theory studies the social behavior when humans are interacting between them analyzing the cost-benefit ratio to determine risks and benefits. In the meantime, the psychological contract theory studies the relationship between the employer and employee based on trust. However, these theories are powerless in explaining the *organized networks* of social capital, *the strength of the relationship* between individuals that cooperate among each other; *the types and the levels of relationships* that the individuals can establish while they are cooperating. None of these theories can explain whether such relationships can arise when *individuals do not share the same social world*.

For all these reasons, the old concept of social capital has been developed further and has become more relevant especially in times of crisis. As the existing theories on social capital were not able to explain the dynamic during critical moments, researches seemed to be very willing in developing the social capital approach. Far from what was known and from what the existing theories provided, the concept of social capital has been developed in all its dimensions such as: economic, sociological and political dimensions. However, being a complex concept, the definition of social capital remains a challenge for scholars. Lin tried to give both operative and inclusive definitions of social capital standing out that "social capital" is a social structure that has its rooted *resources* [111]. This *social structure* uses its recourses in determining actions. Following this line, it is important to clarify that social capital is not a social network. Social capital involves the resources that social networks can give access to. It means that social capital resources are useless in case there is no cooperation between social networks that can give access to such resources.

Investigating the literature, I realized that social capital was mostly concerned with developing countries. Most of the early studies working on social capital took as case studies developing countries [25]. Recently, scholars are focusing their studies on social capital in developed countries, especially to rural or peripheral regions [26]. The next chapter, on the social capital as the Theory, will help also to understand the insights of social capital in different societies and the way how it is perceived with all its differences.

1.2.   Social Capital Theory – The 'capitalization' of human capital

The contribution to the modern development of social capital is attributed to three well-known scholars, such as: Bourdieu [18], Coleman [34], and Putnam [136]. Summarizing the theories established by the three authors, it has been asserted that the social capital states the relationship between humans that can deliver productive results. Anyhow, social capital has been strongly promoted by Putnam's influential works [136]. At the same time, social capital has been widely presented by the World Bank's Social Capital Initiative in 1996. After 1996, the concept of social capital attracted the attention of other scholars as well. It has to be studied what happened during 1996 that made scholars think and work intensively on social capital. However, it is not the goal of this thesis to provide facts or evidence that show the broad picture of the main features of 1996, but the current section can contribute in opening new doors for further studies on the social capital to understand the dynamics of the society that influence on the (un)development of social capital.

To have a better understanding of the insights of the social capital theory as the fundamental ground for the theoretical avenues on civil society, I discuss social capital theory in three different dimensions. I established these three dimensions in light of the critical reading of the social capital literature.

1.2.1.   First Dimension: Formality and Informality of Social Capital

Social capital is presented in two forms: (i) formal and (ii) informal. The type of formal social capital consists of *formal participation in civic organizations* [136] [150]. Differently, the roots of the informal organization of social capital seem to be earliest. Initially, it has been hypothesized by Bourdieu and Coleman [18] [34]. Both authors acknowledged the informal organization of social capital with informal relations. Putnam contributions seem to be essential in defining the informal form of social capital as well, explaining that the informal social capital is based on the social relationship that individual established with family members, friends, colleagues, etc. [137].

Several studies show pieces of evidence of the existence of formal and informal social capital across different countries. In Nordic countries, we find both, formal and informal social capital. Meantime, a difference is found between Southern and Eastern European countries. While the

Southern European countries show high levels of informal social capital, the Eastern European countries show the contrary, by presenting a high level of formal social capital (Cetin et.al). Scholars explain such a variation between countries on the aspects of social capital, with educational accomplishment, family relations, and friends' contacts. Countries that have highly educated human capital are positively correlated with a high level of formal social capital [11] [60]. Other studies suggest that countries where is found a high level of relationships between friends have a positive correlation with formal social capital [89]. Thus, the theory is suggesting that when counting for the formal social capital - *participation in civic organizations*- we have to count for *the level of education* and the *strength of the relationship* between *family* and *friends* that individuals share with each other.

1.2.2. Second Dimension: Social Capital- Bonding VS. Bridging

As it has been explained in the previous section, one of the main dissimilarities between types of social capital opposes formal and informal social capital interactions. Another distinction exists between what Putnam labeled, bonding, and bridging social capital [137]. Bonding social capital is established on the bases of local cohesion and involves strong relationships among similar people, while the foundation of bridging social capital roots on the social link, involving weak relationships between people that link different social worlds. Following this perspective of social capital, civil society can be understood as bridges and bonders in the development of social capital.

As Alexis de Tocqueville would say, participating in civic engagement can be a very good mechanism to develop skills such as: trust and reciprocity. On the other hand, being part of civic engagement brings society together by constructing bridges between varied groups (de Tocqueville, as summarized by Newton [122]. However, the establishment of these bridges is difficult as they demand society to go out of their social world. Another challenge in bridging the relations between individuals that do not belong to the same social circle is linked with the type of organization that operates in the civil society sector. According to Newton, highly formalized organizations have less impact on the promotion of social capital, as the members are not interacting among them in the daily activities [122]. The members of these kinds of organizations uphold a figurative attachment to the organization because its support of a particular social cause.

However, bridging does not have to be understood as the only mechanism that promotes social capital. Bonding also plays a significant role as it represents dense lateral networks among friends, neighbors, colleagues in the workplace, etc. [125].

1.2.3. Third Dimension: The levels of Social Capital

The social capital notion can be divided into several categories and it may have several explanations for that. Nevertheless, its categorizations imply the *"belonging"* of people who construct the social capital *per se*. For example, (i) the same person can be at the same time in an informal and formal type of social capital, (ii) the same person can play an essential role in both cases, in the local cohesion (bonding) and the social link (bridging) as well [98]. Thus, the conceptualization of social capital as a concept remains vague. For this reason, this section analyzes the three levels of social capital.

Claridge analyzed the three levels of social capital which are showed in the above table [31]. The table encapsulates different views stated in the literature. However, other approaches tried to study social capital that are not included in this table.

Table 1. Levels of Social Capital

Level	Public Good		Both
Micro	Individual		Property of individuals - Private good
Meso	Group organisation	or	Property of individuals and the collective - Private and Public good
Macro	Community society	or	Property of the collective - Public good

Source: Claridge, T (2018) Literature Explanation of the different levels of social capital: individual or collective?

(i)Micro Level focuses on the relationships between individuals. At this level, social capital inclines to be theorized as a private good that belongs to the individual [184].

(ii)Meso Level social capital focuses on the relationship between people of social organization. At this level, I found a suggestion as the interaction can be between people of the same organization-internal social capital [3] or in between external actors- external social capital [186]. It means that bonding and bridging social capital are applied at the meso level. However, both of interactions may occur at the same time. The meso level theorized the social capital as both, private and public good, depending on the interactions (internal or external) of the social group members. Following this line, civil society finds application in the meso level of social capital and it is considered as both, a private and a public good at the same time for the society.

(iii) Macro Level focuses on the interaction of a community or society and this interaction has been considered as a public good. At this level, the social capital is considered as an added value for the community and not for the individual. This is the reason why social capital at the micro - level changes slowly [31]. To conclude, the social capital seems to be recognizable from the individual level to the level of the state. It also occurs where there is belonging.

1.2.4. Concluding Remarks

This section was devoted to the notion of social capital. Several approaches have been discussed and various conclusions wait to be deliberated. The literature seems generous in defining social capital, nonetheless, looking to the metamorphosis happened to the social capital notion over time, the definitions were not enough in explaining the core meaning of it. Thus, I tried to give a valuable explanation to the social capital as a notion using the very basic theories, such as: The Social exchange and the Psychological contract theory explaining the insufficiencies of these theories in approaching the dynamics of social capital.

Social capital started to be a very important tool in the development of societies and states, thus scholars started to further extend the meaning and the role of the notion. It has been realized that the theories did not illuminate the fundamental role of the social capital in society, thus several scholars started to use other lenses to re-define and re-discover the role of it. The division of social capital in two different types such as: formal and informal, started to provide other insights regarding the relevance of social capital. Through the lens of these two categorizations, social capital as a notion, was able to explain the type of relationships that people can establish in between

them. However, the literature suggests relyig on for *the level of education* and the *strength of relationships* between *family* and *friends* when studying the formal social capital - *participation in civic organizations*.

Based on the previous statement I tried to evaluate the strength of the relationship that people establish between them in both cases, in the formal and informal interactions. Bonding and Bridging Social Capital seem to be two extraordinary contributors in explaining the role of civil society in the development of social capital. These two fundamental indicators of social capital provide the interaction strength between individuals. Based on the conclusions of Putnam, the current dissertation stands with the idea, that both, bonding and bridging social capital, introduced two very important new concepts such as: (i) the strength of the relationship between similar people and (ii) people who come from different social context. Local cohesion (bonding) seems to be a strong trait in establishing strong interaction between people within the same social group, meanwhile, bridging (social link) seems to have much more relevance since, for the first time, scholars started to discuss the social capital notion that does not necessary belongs to the same social group. According to bridging social capital, individuals can establish interactions with individuals that do not belong to the same social group or do not share the same norms or values, linking two or more different social worlds. Being part of civic engagement is one of the forms that brings society together by constructing bridges between varied groups.

The last dimension of the social capital notion that has been discussed is related to the value that social capital shows in society. The last dimension tried to give answers to questions such as: (i) **Why** it is important to build social capital? (ii) **Who** is benefiting from it? (iii) **To whom** belong the social capital?

To reply to such questions, the three levels of social capital have been explored. Hence, the *micro-meso-macro* level of social capital tried to explain those whom belong to the social capital and those whom are distributed its benefits. It has to be underlined that at this stage of the research, the social capital as a notion has been developed by establishing new meanings and new dimensions. It means, that at this stage, the study does not focus on the definitions of social capital, but on its

relevance. It has been discovered that the social capital is one of the most important features that contribute: (i) to the development of a country, (ii) in finding solutions for social- economic problems, (iii) in healing the inefficient government, etc. To do so, the social capital 'activate' its meso level by presenting organizations (civil society) as an effective tool that contributes to the development of the country, evaluates the government performance, etc.

Figure 1. Social Capital- Why? Who? To whom?

Coming back to the three levels of social capital, they have been considered as a private and public good at the same time. At the individual level, social capital seems to be a private good that belongs to individuals. At this point, I have to add that this statement can be applied only in cases when individuals are not sharing. This scenario seems to be impossible as far as the existence of the individuals does not make sense being out of the community, thus I found a logical problem. Social Capital *per se* does not involve *the individual*, the social capital is a social structure, a long process in itself, and it does not make sense that an individual has its social capital.

I found very appealing the meso level of social capital. The meso level introduced a new approach, underlining that social capital can be established both, internally and externally. The meso level of social capital seems to be very close to the idea of bonding and bridging social capital. The only difference is that the meso level does not deal with the strength of the interaction but shows that this interaction can be possible even when the individuals do not belong to the same social group.

According to the meso level, social capital is a private good in the internal interaction (the same social group) and public good in the external interaction. When analyzing the three levels of social capital, scholars do not mention the type of relation, formal or informal. It means that the individual can be in an internal interaction, but not necessarily he or she has to have formal or informal interaction. Being part of a formal or informal interaction does not exclude the individual to be part of the internal interaction. The same explanation can be done for external interaction as well. It seems that in the macro-level of social capital the community benefits from all the public goods that social capital can carry out. At this stage, this study introduces another implication. How are distributed into the society the public goods of the social capital? Of course, it is not the goal of this section to analyze the distribution of the public good at the macro level of the social capital, but this dissertation may help to generate new debates in the field.

To conclude, the social capital seems to belong to the group members whether they share both, (i) internal or external interaction, (ii) formal or informal interaction. Mapping together all the types of interactions analyzed in the current section looks like all the different forms of interactions does not affect the role or the structure of the social capital. It means that society can build up different forms of relations or interactions in between people, but the social capital as a process and as a structure does not change.

1.3. Social Capital- Putnam Approach

Putnam frames the social capital based on three main features, such as: trust, reciprocity, and civic engagement networks-social networks. The thesis will analyze how Putnam's approach can explain the rise of civil society and how the civil society *per se* contributes to further promoting the social capital. Hence, the three main concepts will be analyzed separately.

1.3.1. Trust

Exploring the literature, I found out that Dawes and Thaler reported a very interesting story regarding trust [46]. In Ithaca, New York State, the farmers put fresh vegetables on unattended road stalls. The payment boxes were attached to the stalls but had a slit to prevent cash from being

readily removed and nobody was there to control the situation. At first sight it looks like a naive behavior, but it has a proper explanation. According to Möllering, such a behavior seems to be a 'natural attitude' supported by the spatial context (a rural region) and the norms and the values disseminated in the culture of the current geographic area [120]. On the other hand, Fukuyama explained such a phenomenon with the high-trust environment, where institutions support trust-based behavior [56]. This section will focus on what trust is and what trust means in different contexts and different perspectives. To do so, desk research has been carried out in order to identify and explore the nature of trust.

Several scholars consider trust as a feature that has the same importance as the social capital [55] others consider trust as a 'special' part of the social capital [61] [35] [85]. Another approach stands with the idea that trust is one of the elements that construct the social capital [123] [136] [137]. In this thesis, trust is conceptualized as one of the elements of social capital. To better understand trust under the light of the social capital, the current section analyses it in two dimensions: (i) the type of trust, such as: social trust and political trust, and (ii) the level of trust, such as: personal-collective-institutional trust.

Social Trust

Social trust is explained as trust in members of society and organizations such as neighborhoods, communities, and nations. In this perspective, trust is perceived as the axis in which the members of society can be supported without the fear of being harmed [123] [55]. Social trust relates to participation in the volunteer organization [55] [161]. These authors believe that the involvement in the volunteer organizations enables members to develop trust and cooperative behaviors with others.

According to Fukuyama, Japanese society is a very interesting case as it exhibits a very high degree of trust between different groups of people who are not related to each other. He believes that active participation in voluntary associations is what makes Japanese society have a high degree of trust among its citizens [55].

The volunteer experiences of people help them to build trust [161]. However, the author does not exactly explain how much time a person needs to develop trust. Anyhow, social trust brings benefits in several sectors, such as: promotes cooperation and moral support among communities [123] establish new communities [85] promotes economic development [138]. encourages public participation in public affairs [136].

Political Trust

Political trust is perceived as the trust that citizens have towards the effectiveness of public institutions trusting that the public administrations' policies will serve to the society [118]. In this view, it has to be the distinction between the trust towards the political institutions, such as the parliament, and the trust towards the political individuals, such as the president.

The institutionalist theory explains the trust towards political institutions as a consequence of a reasonable work of these institutions [123]. If the government performance meets the citizens' expectations, then they will have confidence, and aspects such as the good design of institutions, effective performance, the correctness of policy decisions, contribute to increasing trust in policy representatives. From this perspective, it is concluded that governments have at their disposal the ability to establish a trust or not.

Another approach that explains the establishment of the trust is cultural theory. The cultural theory claims that political trust does not come from the political sphere but is created during the process of socialization [42]. However, the cultural theory does not oppose the principle that the effectiveness of political institutions shapes people's trust in government. Scholars of the culturalism approach argue that political trust cannot occur in a short time, furthermore, the process of the trust establishment *per se* is essentially politicized. However, they agree that the main source in establishing political trust is the political culture, which includes features such as: political values, norms, behaviors, and beliefs [136].

Highlighting the significant role of the political trust towards the consolidation of democracy,

scholars argue that it is crucial establishing political trust between citizens and the political elite because under the trust presence the citizens can cooperate with the political elite [68] [43]. This cooperation brings a positive effect for the society as it encourages political participation, activism for the protection of civil rights and emphasizes the legitimacy and effectiveness of government performance.

In the absence of political trust, governments would work under great pressure, and democracy and stability itself would be in doubt. How can it be explained the work of the governments that do not have the trust of their citizens? Hardin would argue that the lack of trust has its function too, for example, it incentives the government to work with greater transparency and encourages people to question the government work [71].

Political trust does not bring a positive effect only in the political specter, but it plays a great role in the social specter as well. Political trust helps to create trustworthy societies and can generate general trust [161]. Individuals who are satisfied with the services provided by the public servants may also manifest their confidence in others and are more likely to interact with people they do not know [20].

Levels of trust

In a study conducted by Welter trust has been shaped as a multidimensional concept about the levels upon which it occurs, its object and sources [180]. Please refer to the table below:

Table 2. Levels of Trust

Forms	Level	Object	Source
Personal Trust	Micro	Relationship, person	Emotions, intentions, goodwill, benevolence, characteristics of persons, experiences, knowledge, competencies
Collective Trust	Meso	Community (e.g. kinship, ethnic group, profession) Organisation (e.g. network, firm, association) Industry	Characteristics of groups, information, reputation, recommendationcertification, professional standards
Institutional Trust	Macro	Cultural rules (e.g. norms, codes of conduct, values) Formal regulations (e.g. laws, certification, licences) Business infrastructure (e.g. business courts, administration, financing organisations) Government	

*Source: Welter, F (2012) All You Need Is Trust? A Critical Review of the Trust and Entrepreneurship Literature

A quick explanation of the table: When I interpret the table, I notice that personal trust can serve as a booster for the collective trust as they both overlap in terms of trust objects and trust sources. Organizations work successfully based on the people's relationships; thus personal trust contributes in collective trust. On the other hand, collective and institutional trust share the same sources. Agreements at the meso and macro-level are informal. Institutional trust is both an object and a source for the collective as well as personal trust [180].

Micro- Level: Personal Trust

In this section, 'trust' has not been evaluated as a value or a moral feature. It has been explored as a phenomenon of a relationship established in a specific society. I will try to define trust as an attitude or as a relationship based on practices linked with it. To settle the first form of trust-at micro level, this section will mostly concentrate on the relationship *per se*, trying to establish a new debate on the outcomes that such a relationship can produce. Labels such as kinsman, fellow believer, and co-member of a craft provide the first indication of a trust relationship [168].

According to my point of view, trust relationships are more likely to be evaluated whether we focus on the behavior of the protagonists. What does it mean? Imagine yourself not saying '*I trust you*', but only acting. For example, You decide to trust the education of your children to someone else; You give your savings to someone else to make some investments trusting that the same person will do the same with you, etc. [168]. This example shows that trust consists of placing valuable outcomes at risk to others' mistakes or failures. Trust relationships include those in which people regularly take such risks [167]. Based on the social trust perspective, I can say that personal trust can be developed when people share social trust among them.

Another approach has been presented by Putnam. According to him, trust is not a reflection of reciprocity. In other words, we (people) do not interpret trust based on our personal experiences [136]. The statement of Putnam generated a very wide debate, contributing to the trust thesis, which seems to be a very ambiguous term nowadays too. In his article 'Rethinking Trust', Roderick M. Kramer presented the thesis that human beings are naturally predisposed to trust [101]. According to him, this comes from our genes, and from our very childhood, a time when we, humans, used the trust as a survival mechanism. As individuals, we have to learn to trust to survive. From this point of view, the author is recommending that trust is a learning process, trust is something that we can develop for our personal needs.

Meso- Level: Collective Trust

The meso-level explanation has been based on the Sako's competence trust [146]. Sako's article explains whether a trading firm can carry out agreements. Based on this example, this study assumes that the meso-level trust is based on: (i) person to person meetings and (ii) features such as: race, religion, speech, ethnicity, etc. [29]. A high contribution to understanding the meso-level of trust seems to have Lewicki and Bunker [110]. in conceptualizing the trust as a process that has to be realized through interactions [107]. Usually, when we talk about trust in the meso-level we used to refer to a mid-large network to better see the interactions in between people. In this view, new concepts seem to be very important and have to be introduced, such as *trust networks/in-group loyalty*.

Trust networks consist of interpersonal connections and strong ties. Belonging to the same network, people seem to share the same set of values and are willing to cooperate in case of failure. As in the micro-level, the trust phenomenon in the meso-level is developed in terms of risk too. When people face serious risks to long-term enterprises they value highly, and they turn preferentially to trust networks. At this point, it must be underlined a very specific issue while talking about the trusted network. Usually, people who belong to the same group are loyal to each other and they are not likely to punish members of the same group in case they face violations of norms. This statement can be explained by the theory of strategic action fields (SAFs) by (Fligstein and McAdam, which stand that being part of the same group of interest leads to the increase of people's willingness to ignore bad behavior rather than punish them [52]. *What does it mean and why it sounds dangerous?* There are cases when powerful individuals within consolidated trust networks sometimes tyrannize their members, putting them in non-pleasant situations [167].

Recent advances in the field of behavioral ethics suggest that even though people generally value honesty, disapprove of unethical behavior, and report a strong willingness to punish unethical behavior of others, subtle situational and social factors can alter their punishment considerably (for an overview see [10]. These factors give rise to what is coined ethical dissonance, a gap between people's actual behavior and their desire to maintain a positive moral self-image [7]. Social factors based on group loyalties have proven to have the most persistent influence on the punishment of unethical behavior.

The notion of in-group loyalty has its roots in social identity theory [164]. The basic idea is that people tend to perceive themselves and others through categories such as ethnicity, language, religion, gender, ideology, or other forms of group division, and exhibit strong psychological motivations to endorse existing group membership. Turner and colleagues have described this motivation as a need among group members "to differentiate their groups positively from others to achieve a positive social identity" [169]. Individuals derive psychological benefits from affiliating themselves with a social group, such as status, honor, prestige, or increased self- image [2]. This gives rise to in-group loyalty, that is to say, the preferential treatment of in-group members compared to out- group members [164]. In-group loyalty develops based on naturally

occurring in- groups, due to language, ethnicity, gender, or ideology, but also arises from trivial categorizations based on a coin toss or preferences for the abstract paintings [164].

Recent research suggests that in-group loyalty leads to a willingness to ignore unethical behavior of in-group members as the punishment of an in-group member might have negative repercussions for both the violator and punisher due to the disruption of group cohesion [13]. Bernhard and her colleagues [13], utilizing lab-in-the-field experiments with two small and cohesive tribes in Papua New Guinea, demonstrate that social norm violators that belong to the punisher's group are punished less than those who do not belong to the punisher's group. These behavioral differences in punishment of anti-social behavior are also reflected in the beliefs that the potential norm violators have about possible punishment [13]. Since then, additional studies show that in-group loyalty increases people's willingness to forgive social norm violations [62]. Moreover, an experimental study by Hildreth, Gino and Bazerman shows that in-group favoritism effects are more pronounced in competitive environments as people wish to their in-group to win [75].

Macro-level: Institutional Trust

The macro-level trust refers to formal institutional preparatory. It focuses on the formalisms of the institutions and the ability of these institutions to govern based on the constructed and formalized norms [77]. Institutional trust seems to be very crucial related to a diversity of matters. It is central to the good function of democracy in every country. Having as a hardcore such feature as the trust to institutions, the government, or every type of relationship at the macro level can promise an effective procedure of the (i) courts to cooperate with the police, (ii) to decide whether to support a business, etc. By this definition, I can argue that political trust is applied at the macro level. However, the macro-level of trust seems to be strongly linked with trust between individuals [17]. This is a huge difference between the meso and macro-level of trust. Anyhow, the main aim of this section is to define the institutional trust and its relevance in establishing a proper vocabulary for this dissertation.

Defining trust does not look an easy task as it becomes more puzzling when introducing linguistic distinctions, cultural differences, and informal definitions. Next to the interdisciplinary variations

in defining trust, different languages, different cultures, and different origins contribute to the limitation of the trust definition [33]. Moreover, trust is also a phenomenon expressing the cultural patterns based on society's past experiences [55]. In different countries, trust is perceived differently. For example, in the European Countries, the level of trust seems to be highly correlated to the country's level of income and level of inequality [115]. All these variations may contribute to creating a broad frame regarding trust at the institutional level.

Institutional trust has practical relevance. It can be defined as an indicator of the legitimacy of institutions. Institutional trust has a very important role in the safety and the well-being level of the citizens. A formalized institutional trust can contribute to the stabilization of different social interactions, curtail uncertainty, and amplify predictability. The absence of Institutional trust can implicate the decline of the economy which is highly related ti the well-being of the citizens.

For instance, one sign of low trust in Albania is that foreign direct investments declined by 10% from 2009-2018. According to the World Bank report, 1.344 billion dollars have been invested during 2009 in Albania. Almost after ten years, these investments were deducted in 1,207 billion dollars [183]. The foreign companies in Albania are showing lower performance implicating the deterioration of the economic situation in Albania. Foreign companies are not investing their profits anymore. In this line, whether Albania can guarantee Institutional trust, the foreign companies can change decisions. Based on the definition and the examples of the institutional trust at the macro level I stand with high confidence that political trust plays a crucial role in the establishment of institutional trust.

Discussions

This section provided an overview of trust as an attitude and as a relation. It was not the goal of this section to give to the definition of trust moral values, thus it has been focused on what trust means in different levels. Said that it has been explored that trust can be analyzed in the social and political level. Social trust can be developed through participation in volunteer organizations, meanwhile, the political trust can rise when the citizens show a high level of satisfaction towards the public institutions' performance. These two main core explanations of trust analyzed through

institutionalist and cultural theories lenses are the foundation of the three levels of trust, such as: micro-meso-macro levels.

Trust in the micro-level has been mostly focused on personal trust. As it has been shown in the current study, we (people) construct trust by our own, being aware that trust is a relationship which cannot be established by our experiences, but it is present constantly in our life as a form to survive and as a form which we intentionally construct. We (people) learn to trust. At this point, seems to be valuable to discuss whether we decide to learn to trust, or it comes naturally. If we start to think about early childhood, we can realize that children give trust to their parents not being aware of the fact that they are developing trust skills. Thus, I stand with the idea that we developed trust to survive when we feel weak or vulnerable, but we decide to learn and use trust when we are aware of the benefits that trust can give. Here, I found a paradigm that seems to be important to further discuss. What does it mean?

We construct trust to use it as in instrument for our own needs, but on the other hand, as it was explained in the previous sections, we construct trust on the bases of taking risks. Such a relationship among people seems to be pathological. Why establishing relationships based on trust as far as we are aware that it means to face a failure outcome? It seems to be another human dilemma that need to be further studied. There is another situation when we study and analyze the meso-level of trust, such as collective trust. At this level, we start to enter into interaction with others. At the meso-level, we do not need only to give trust others, but we expect that others give trust to us too. The collective trust, differently from personal trust, seems to be safer in case of failures. People decide to cooperate. Cooperating with each other, people start to establish the capital social of a certain society. Here we can make a huge difference between personal and collective trust.

In personal trust, people see trust as a need and somehow are forced to give trust, but in the collective case, trust comes as a common a mature decision. People decide to be part of a group and they decide to take risks together. The section above helped us to understand what is called

collective trust. Being introduced with such a term I realized that there might be some implications, which seems to be interesting to further discuss.

The concept of in-group loyalty, which is part of a networking trust, seems to bring several non-adequate outcomes to society. For example, being part of the same political apparatus means being loyal to the party and the members of the same party too. This sounds fine, as far as the society is leaving in a healthy democratic system. It would not be the same in the case that countries are facing one political party system, where everything is commanded by one hand. It is not the goal of this section to discuss which the implications of such a situation are, thus I will not go further to discuss the negative aspects of having one political system governing in a country. However, under such conditions seems to be impossible to have a wind of change in case the society shows the need to change the political system.

The third and final level, the Institutional Trust is an important indicator in understanding the function of formalized institutions. At the first sight, it looks like personal trust is the most relevant one in between all three forms of trust. The personal trust is the foundation of the three forms of trust, and it is highly correlated with the institutional trust, but at the governance level (including here: cultural rules, formal regulations, business infrastructure, government), institutional trust appears to have very practical relevance. The lack of institutional trust can be an advantage for the collective trust. The lack of institutional trust produces weak institutions. Consequently, the lack of institutional trust can be an advantage in cases when different networks wants to create their illegal activities based on their networking trust. For a country facing illegal activities, means an unsafe Society. On the other hand, missing institutional trust may imply the economic growth. In the case of private companies, when the companies have limited institutional trust, the employees are likely to show low performance during the working hours.

To conclude, knowing trust and what kind of behaviors it implies among people in a society, has a precious value in understanding to what extent and how the Institutional domains function, such as: a-Problem Solving: (i)Trust and Confidence; (ii) Conflict Resolution, b-Microeconomic efficiency, c-Social Policies

1.3.2. Civic Engagement Network – Social Network

Social Support as a prognosticator for Civic Engagement Network

The network of civic engagement is considered as 'the heart of democracy' [176]. By engaging in civic networks, the citizens gain a political attitude as they address issues of public concern. Thus, the main aim of civic engagement is to address public concerns, consequently, it has been perceived as an important instrument towards democracy [30]. However, based on the nature of the relation, the civic engagement network can be classified into two main categories, at the horizontal and vertical-levels. This categorization mostly depends on the characteristics of the organizations [5]. In the network with vertical relations, the relation between groups and institutions is hierarchic, unequal and is based on dependency [136]. In networks with horizontal relations, every member is treated equally.

Civic engagement networks can be also characterized as formal and informal [53]. In the formal network, the relationship between its member is based on laws or rules that define the duties and responsibilities for each member. On the other side, informal networks are characterized by flexibility and weak relations. They do not have a stable structure and are not well organized. This kind of networks link people that have social relations, such as family, relatives, friends, etc [61].

The members of the informal networks often share the same social status. The more horizontal the network is, the greater is its density and stronger will be the impact on social integration. Among the greatest benefits of these horizontal networks, it can be listed the strengthening of political trust, the development of social skills, cooperative skills, positive attitude towards others, the strengthening of tolerance and respect for others as well as the increasing of the political input [5]. However, these very important networks cannot have a great effect on the public concern they are addressing whether they (i) do not have the social support of the community; (ii) they do not give enough social support to the community. From this point of view, it is needed the analysis of the meaning of social support. First, I will try to analyze the concept as it is outlined in the theoretical literature and second, I will try to examine its effect in the performance of formal and informal civic networks.

It has been counting more than 30 years of work in theorizing social support and the concept *per se* has been defined in manifold ways, thus there is no articulated definition of the term, yet. On the other hand, it has been found a persistent insistence in empirical research, testing several definitions and measurement tools that have been found in the scientific literature. As a result, the concept is not completely understood yet, bringing a lack of reliability among research on social support. Thus, it seems that contextualizing the meaning of social support might help to further extend the debate on social support and civic engagement networks. The current section will focus on: (i) the definition of social support in the literature, (ii) the contextualization of social support, (iii) opening new discussions on social support, and civic engagement networks.

A critical overview of the academic literature on social support

The written history on social support seems to have started with Darwin (1871/1952) when he introduced the idea that people have benefits as social animals they are. According to him, belonging to a cohesive group helps people from predators [181]. However, Darwin's work has never been written the term of social support. From Darwin point of view, it remains still unclear the meaning and the definition of social support. Hupcey stands with the argument that social support has been widely studied, not reaching an operational definition yet [83]. The concept *per se* does not explain or imply the argument that social interaction is necessary linked with the social support. The researches seem to have measured the variables of social support without considering *the complexity* of the term *per se.* Thus, I will try to contextualize the social support to better define its meaning and its importance in the social scientific context and the development of a civic engagement network.

Social support cannot be studied separated from the *social influence* [6] or *social network* [114]. It means that the more support you have from the social network more influential you can be. Also, the social influence seems to be much related to the social support degree too. Thus, having a high degree of social support can increase the influence of the majority. It means that if a specific civic organization has a high level of social support, it should be able to have a high degree of influence at the political level for the public concern it is 'fighting' for.

Likewise, it has been explained at the Social Capital Theory that people involve themselves in

informal and formal networks (please refer to the social capital theory). It means that people cannot establish relationships when they are not part of a specific network. At this stage, the current thesis is exactly trying to understand *how these relations* can be established? The process of *giving and receiving* support can function only in the case where the social support network is established. The below section focuses on the relationship between the social network and social support as main mechanisms in rising civic engagement network.

The contextualization of social support as a prognosticator for Civic Engagement Network

Social Support

As has been previously discussed, the term social support has been defined and measured in numerous ways. For the current thesis, it has been evaluated that the definition that better fits is the House definition [79]. According to the author, social support can be seen as a function of four types of supportive behavior:

      1. Emotional support - empathy, love, trust, and caring;

      2. Instrumental support - services that assist a person in need;

      3. Informational support - information that a person can use to address problems;

      4. Appraisal support - information that is useful for self-evaluation purposes.

By this definition of social support, based on these four types of supportive behavior I can stand that the civic engagement network shares almost the same behavior features. As far as civic engagement network address issues of the public concern, it has to reflect reliability towards the citizens that are giving trust to it. Saying that it seems that the civic networks have to reflect emotional support. On the other hand, the civic network looks to be strongly linked with Instrumental support too, as it is the main role of such organizations to assists the citizens' needs. Regarding the other trait of supportive behavior, such as informational support, the civic networks can play the role of the informant, to inform the citizens for a public issue that has to be discussed or solved at the political level. Also, the civic network has to follow up to realize whether their effectivess was of a high degree. Thus, they establish polls to have feedback for their activities. Through the results of the polls, the civic networks can make self-evaluation and improve their

performance. To carry out the polls, they need the citizens' support in order to participate in the poll. Saying that it means that the civic networks apply the last feature of social support such as, appraisal support. After this analysis, I can say that the civic engagement network can be seen as a function of four types of supportive behavior of social support.

However, social support has to be eminent from other functions of social relationships too [21]. Social support aims are helpful, thus, it differentiates for other intentional interactions, such as negative intentional actions. Grounded on the four types of supportive behavior, another important division must be made on social support concepts, such as: (i) perceived; and (ii) administrated social support [160].

Perceived social support has been a constant topic studied under the social psychology research discipline. According to the social psychology theory, perceived social support is related to the individuals' trusts perception- he or she can obtain help when is needed. It means that the perceived social support is highly related with (i) the degree of affection that the individuals share among each other's, (ii) the degree of satisfaction with the quantity of available support. It has to be explained that social support does not represent the actual support. Also, perceived support is correlated with health status [37]. According to the authors both, perceived support and satisfaction with the obtained support seem to have a strong correlation with the personality characteristics. While, when the current thesis is writing on the perceived social support, it is essential to identify features that may influence whether behaviors are perceived as supportive [67]. According to the literature, the features that might influence the perceived social support are related to the previous experiences with the helper and the social context of the relationship. Also, there are other factors, such as: the role expectations and the individual preferences for types and amounts of social support.

Administered social support has been discussed earlier in the literature in comparison compared with perceived social support. Administrated social support refers to the actual delivery of support. The community of psychology showed a high interest in studying administrated social support [87] [40] as it has been evaluated as a resource in preventing mental illness. The literature of social

support gives a broad picture of the importance that social support has in establishing human relations. Social support seems to be one of the core determinants in a social support network and social influence. Thus, the social network will be analyzed as a derivate of social support and its role in social influence too.

Social Support Network

According to the early scientific literature, in the sociology field [118] [70] the social support network is made up of family members and friends. Further studies stand the argument that social support can be provided based on the types of relationships that people create among them. As it was explained through the theories of social capital, individuals organize their interaction within informal and formal networks. Thus, naturally, the current thesis comes to the argument that social network should be divided in the same way: (i) informal social networks (family, friends, colleagues, etc) (ii) formal social network (health care professionals, human service workers, civil society organizations, etc) [114]. Based on this very logical division, it can be said that the different social networks are likely to deliver different *amounts and types* of support. Anyhow, the current section will not analyze the amount and the types of social support networks as its main focus is to explore the social support network as a derivate of social support and as one of the mechanisms that increase the civic engagement influence. However, based on the above discussions, social support and social network are notions that describe the structure, the processes, and the functions of the social relationships and they cannot define or describe a theory [72].

Social Influence

In human societies, it looks like social influence has a universal meaning. Studies on social psychology and more precisely on social influence started to be conducted since 1898 by Triplett [124]. According to Zental, and Baer social influence *occurs* when behavior is influenced by the presence of other members of the same species [188]. From this point of view, the current thesis stands with the argument that since individuals are part of the same social network (civic organizations), they will have social influence in cases they are socially supported.

Discussions

Understanding social influence as an outcome of social support and social network - The Logical Error

High Social Support Increase VS. Decrease Social Influence

The graph below shows the result (social influence) that comes out from the interaction between Social Support and Social Network. In this section, this relationship has tried to be explained theoretically. According to the graph, the thesis assumes that: More social support individuals deliver to the network they belong (for example, civic network), the stronger the network will be, increasing the social influence in the society. The graph below shows the visualization of such a statement. Logically, this statement can explain the effectiveness of the civic network.

Figure 2. Social Support

However, this thesis carried out other findings that occurred from the classic literature is used. Based on the literature, the current thesis carried out a ***Logical Error.*** According to what has been discussed until now, the social support interacting with the social network brings as an outcome a strong social influence. What the literature did not take into count is: having social support, people gain independence. What does it mean? Finding support means establishing an ally (social support network- civic engagement) in supporting your point of view or your concern; and having an ally helps in building confidence. A high level of confidence allows people to remain independent. Individuals who find support seems to avoid social influence. Furthermore, this category of

individuals is more likely to disobey orders. Re**commendation:** This approach seems to be very important in explaining the inefficiency of civic engagement networks in several states nowadays. The graph shows a visual approach of the statement:

Figure 3. Social Support- The logical error

1.3.3. Reciprocity

The basis of social capital is that it attracts individuals to exchange resources among them. The basic concepts in understanding how such exchanges work are trust and reciprocity. Reciprocity norms (balancing, receiver, and transmitter) exist all over the world and are one of the key prerequisites for social capital. They can be divided into two forms: positive and negative relationships between donors and recipients [162]. It should be emphasized that reciprocity norms play an important role in forming mutual respect and cooperation between donor and recipient. Gouldner explains the norms of reciprocity by showing how "people should help those who helped them before and should not harm them" [65]. Reciprocity help people in establishing relations among each other through an exchange of shared privileges. Reciprocity is considered an asset for developing correlations between people and government by generally increasing the level of solidarity [162].

General ideas of reciprocity were first elaborated in the field of anthropology by Sahlins, proposing that with increasing kinship distance, more reciprocity and solidarity from a relationship are expected [145]. He built a continuity of reciprocity, based on the time and equality of goods exchanged. When the time elapsing between a given resource (a gift) and a returned resource is short, and the content nearly equal, there is a balanced exchange. If this time is longer, indefinite, and the contents of the gifts exchanged are heterogeneous, there is generalized reciprocity. There are also cases of non-reciprocal actions. If the gift is not returned, it is called a pure gift. If it is an involuntary gift, it is called theft, or negative reciprocity.

However, the direct and balanced exchange of goods is possible up to a certain point. The exchange can present some difficulties as the joint evaluation of goods and services is complicated, and often lacks coincidence of desires [34]. To solve this problem, there are two procedures for dividing a transaction into two halves. First, with the development of money, it became possible to create a general means of exchange [35]. Money itself is worthless, but it gives the assurance that a lack of trust is overcome, and the transaction is completed. Another solution is the generalized exchange between the two parties. Where resources are obtained from Party A, following the reciprocity norms, Party B acquires the right to claim some of A's resources in the future. This is the basis for social capital transactions. Allowing specific relationships and such debts, people 'force' each other to fulfill obligations in the future. Generally, people do not like debt, and the importance of reciprocity in social relations limit the number of requests made by the network members.

The need for reciprocity changes with the passage of relationships, weaker bonds are less trust-based than stronger bonds, they require rapid reciprocity. Exchanges also vary depending on the network connections, the exchanges with weaker links are often motivated by empathy, while exchanges with close relatives can often have the character of the task [162]. In long-term relationships all the exchanges are balanced, so the importance of reciprocity is reduced.

Discussions

The reciprocity section showed one of the core features of social capital, such as the exchange of privilege or other goods among people. In this view, reciprocity is seen as an asset in establishing

relations between citizens and the government. It means that when people are satisfied with the work of the government, they are prone to support the government by voting. Through this example, reciprocity plays a significant role. On the other side, when citizens are not satisfied with the performance of the government, they start to give trust to several organizations who can lobby for citizens' interests in the parliament. Even in the case, the role of reciprocity is clear. Thus, people support such organizations as far as these organizations reflect and elaborate citizens' need in the policymaking level. At the core of all these actions is the dichotomy of giving and receiving. Through 'giving and receiving' people involve themselves in relations with others, establishing social capital.

1.4.   Putnam's Theory on the Impact of Social Capital on Governance

After discussing Putnam's theory on the development of social capital, focusing on the three main features of social capital, such as: trust, network, and reciprocity, in this section I will try to explain Putnam's theory of social capital on the governance. Robert Putnam claims that cultural factors have received great attention in determining institutional performance [136]. Based on an elaborate theoretical argument as well as on extensive evidence drawn from decades of regional governments' studies in Italy, Putnam claims that communities characterized by large reserves of social capital are more likely to have better governments than those with low reserves.

1.4.1.   Putnam's main Hypothesis

Since the publication of "Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy" in 1993, Putnam's work has caused great discussions and debates than any other work of recent years in the political sciences. Because of the innovative methodology, Putnam's work has changed the way of how academics and policymakers view the relationship between politics and society. The sociologists list social capital as a profound variable when trying to explain political and economic phenomena. Putnam, like the rational choice theorists on whom he relies, argues that intensive social interaction in civic associations facilitates cooperation because it reduces the transaction costs of collaborative efforts.

The main thesis of Putnam's study was *the role of civic engagement in the creation of social capital*, which resulted in more successful regional governments. His comparative analysis of the Italian regional governments revealed that the regions characterized by more vibrant civic networks had the most successful regional governance institutions. Success was also shown in the efficiency in which regional governments worked, as well as in the way they were perceived by the public. The hypothesis on the relationship between social capital and good governance is based on the 'Tocqueville' notion of civic activism, emphasizing the dual effects of citizen associations: internal effects on individual members and external effects on the political system.

Putnam argues that organizations' members acquire 'habits of cooperation, solidarity, and public vivacity' [136] and acquire the skills that are important for the functioning of participatory democracy. For this reason, civil organizations can serve as schools for citizens in a democracy. External effects appear in the institutional links that civic organizations create between their members and the political system. Through this institutional link, citizens can articulate their public concerns to the political level. These dual effects of participation are supposed to produce more responsible public officials as well as engaged citizens who can influence the decision-making process and political outcomes. Moreover, the notion of the relationship between social capital and Putnam's good governance must be understood as a reinforcing and cumulative development, not as a one-way mechanism.

Putnam's argument can be summarized as follow:

(i)   Social capital promotes cooperation and cooperation facilitates problem-solving within the community;

(ii)   The components of social capital reinforce each other, they are mutually linked, and their use facilitates the creation of larger reserves, while their non-use reduces reserves;

(iii)   Unless they undergo any dramatic change, communities are marked by both levels of social capital, either high or low;

(iv)   The stock of social capital in the mass culture of a community is reflected in the stock within the culture of the community's political elite;

(v)   In democratic communities with high levels of social capital, government performance will be good; in communities where levels of social capital are low, government

performance will be poor.

As it was discussed in Putnam's theory on social capital, there are three interdependent aspects of social capital. First, trust, which has been considered an 'essential component of social capital' because it facilitates the cooperation needed for the coordination within society [136]. Second, norms of general reciprocity, which facilitate the 'resolution of collective action dilemmas' and have been described as a 'highly productive component of social capital' [136]. Third, civic engagement networks, which also constitute 'an essential component of social capital' [136]. Being represented by the secondary organizations, such as the sports clubs or the choral societies, they provide room for 'intense horizontal interaction' that fosters 'social trust and cooperation' [136].

After all, the value of social capital can be seen in facilitating cooperation among the citizens within a community. At the same time, 'social trust, norms of civic engagement, and successful collaboration are mutually reinforcing' [136]. For example, recognizing that trust will not be exploited facilitates and promotes the norm of generalized reciprocity [136]. On the other hand, the generalized reciprocity encourages collaborative participation in social networks, which in turn cultivates and reinforces this norm [136]. Moreover, unlike physical capital, the use of social capital increases the stock of this commodity, and the lack of use of social capital reduces it [136]. These attributes of mutual reinforcement, self-reinforcement, and augmentation bring out two social balances [136]. First, it is the result of a 'virtuous circle', where high social capital stocks support themselves and generate more social capital; the second it is the product of a 'vicious circle', where the relative lack of these traits reinforces desertion and lack of cooperation, thereby it declines any existing social capital.

As social capital promotes civic virtue among citizens, it must also create more civic communities [136]. Putnam suggests two channels through which this effect is created. First, as virtuous citizens are so committed to their communities, they are more effective if they seek and act for good governance. Through their dense network of organizations, they can pressure the government to perform well. The second channel: by providing a robust social infrastructure for the community

and inculcating democratic values within the elites and the masses, social capital facilitates the kind of co-operation that is needed to identify, adopt and implement effective policies for the community [136].

The consequences of social capital for the democratic theory can be seen from both, as a pessimistic and as an optimistic perspective. On one hand, the pessimistic perspective suggests that no kind of institutional engineering will allow it to successfully perform a democratic government unless social capital is part of the culture in which it operates. The other perspective implies that while performance degrades under conditions of social capital shortage, the institutions can still work to an independent effect; however, such institutional design (civil organizations) would work better if the environment in which it exists would be more favorable.

1.4.2. Criticism on the Putnam's approach

Goldberg suggests that there are several major problems with Putnam's arguments and evidence. According to him, there is a significant problem in the empirical aspect of Puntam's work [64]. To support the social capital argument, the strong covariance between the social capital and the performance across Italy (Northern and Southern) must match similar levels of covariance within the two parts of Italy; while Putnam cites several examples where such a relationship does not exist. Another problem is the argument on the path of dependence by which historical conditions have a great bearing on the production and reproduction of the civic culture and its absence it is not consistent with the historical evidence.

Levi elaborates three problems with Putnam's work, such as: (i) the problem of the dependence path in terms of social capital; (ii) the mechanisms that are supposed to generate social capital; and (iii) how government, especially democratic government, is produced by social capital [109]. According to Levi the argument of Putnam on the path of dependence, as well as the historical evidence he provides to support this argument is insufficient [109]. Thus, the supposed link between social capital and good democratic performance may not be convincing.

Another important argument to consider is that social capital may not function universally. Ikeda, Yamada, and Kohno confirm that "Putnam's account of democracy may have some limitations in terms of applicability to different cultural settings" [85]. In this way, Putnam's theory may not be applied effectively in any kind of context.

1.4.3. Concluding Remarks

Based on the Putnam Approach on the impact of the social capital towards governance and the criticism of Putnam's approach, I claim that there is another moment that Putnam did not consider. Putnam established his study in a consolidated democratic state like Italy is, but what about the emerging democracies? Can Putnam's theory of social capital be applied in the Albanian case? On the other side, Putnam's theory is also established on the bases of a consolidated social capital. What about unconsolidated social capital? Does it matter? When? Furthermore, can an uncultivated social capital produce an institutionalized civil society in the emerging democracies? More importantly for this research, how does social capital consolidate and how civil society institutionalizes?

1.5. Political Function of Social Capital

During the last three decades, the concept of collective action has emerged as one of the central lines through which political scientists study the political world. According to the theory, people are not likely to cooperate, thus, to account for such behavior, theorists have developed the concept of social capital [14]. The political function of social capital in modern democracies is well explained by Alexis de Tocqueville in 'Democracy in America', where the author uses the expression 'the art of association' to describe Americans' propensity for civil society. According to Tocqueville, modern democracy tends to suppress forms of social classes or inherited status that binds people together in aristocratic societies. People are equally free, but weak in their equality after being born without conventional attachments. The essence of modern democracy is to promote excessive individualism and the unwillingness to engage in public affairs.

Americans fought this tendency toward excessive individualism with their tendency for voluntary associations, which led them to form groups both irrelevant and relevant to all aspects of their lives. This was in stark contrast to his native France, which was influenced by a far more radical individualism than in the US. Tocqueville explains that during the old regime and the French Revolution, on the eve of the Revolution 'there were no ten Frenchmen who could come together for a common cause' [12] [148]. Only by joining in civil associations, the weak individuals become strong; the associations they formed could participate directly in the political life (as in the case of the political parties or the interest groups), or they could serve as 'citizenship schools', where the individuals learned the habits of cooperation that would ultimately remain in the public life. The abundant amount of social capital is what it takes to produce a dense civil society, which is considered a necessary condition for modern liberal democracy.

If democracy is liberal, it defends the sphere of individual freedom, where the state intervention is limited. If such a political system degenerates into anarchy, the society living in this protected sphere must be capable of organizing itself. The civil society serves to balance state power and protect individuals from state power. In the absence of civil society, the state often needs to intervene and organize individuals who are unable to organize themselves. The result of excessive individualism, then, is not freedom, but the tyranny of what Tocqueville saw as a great and benevolent state acting as a 'father' to society and all its needs. Low levels of social capital can cause several political dysfunctions, which have been widely documented [12] [148].

1.5.1. Civil Society Organizations and their role in democratization during the transition period –The legacy of the past

After analyzing the Social Capital Theory, its role in the formation of the civil society, and its role on the governance, the thesis presents an overview of Putnam's approach on the social capital, highlighting the role of the civil society as the tool for the political function of the social capital. The thesis also tries to criticize Putnam's standing with the idea that his theory of social capital was based on the consolidated democratic state. Putnam did not account for the emerging democracies like Albania is. Thus, this section will try to analyze the role of the civil society in

the emerging democracies and will deal with the question of the 'institutionalization' of the civil society in such countries.

Civil Society is considered as the tool for the political function of Social Capital. However, the role of civil society goes beyond that. Civil Society is considered as a promoter of economic growth [69] the social services and recreational and cultural enrichments [147] and the maintenance of social capital [137]. Exploring the literature, I found several scholars who investigated several theoretical avenues in their search for an understanding of the role of civil society, focusing on nonprofit organizations in society. The role of civil society is to increase the clarity of citizens' demands on government and to improve the responsiveness of elites to those demands [14]. Civil Society may be a promotor for civic asset among the citizenry in modern democracy.

For the post-communist scholars, civil society is a crucial instrument that can contribute in the establishment of the democratic state institutions, especially during the transition period. According to them, the civil society should support the state apparatus to create a favorable political and economic environment for the development of the country and the economy as well. The Civil society as a non-state organization can collaborate with the post-communist state that lacks democratic experience, and support in constructing the institutional capacity of that state [19].

However, to count for the degree in which the civil society is present during the transition period and contributes in the democratization process of the post-Communist states, I consider two fundamental perspectives: (i) the degree of independence of the civil society during the communist regime- high degree of independence during communism → high degree of participation during the transition; (ii) high degree of participation of the civil society during transition →high degree on the contribution towards the democratization of the post-communist state. The effort of the civil society toward democratization requires the collaboration between the state and the civil society *per se*, thus, the state has to maintain the boundaries with the civil society to allow the process of

dialogue with the civil society [134]. The existence of civil society *per se* depends on the interdependent relationship that it has with the state [19]. In a democratic country, civil society loses its notion of whether it cannot be involved in the policy-making process and to do so it must collaborate with the state apparatus [1]. On the other hand, it is the state that needs the presence of civil society too, as far as it cannot 'guard' all the institutions that constitute the public domain [94].

In a communist country, the role of civil society was not understood as in a democratic country. During communism, civil society has not been treated as a 'partner' of the state, but as a body that was challenging politically the state. The civil society of such states had to face new challenges during transition, a period where the role of the civil society had to progress forward and hence to be the state partner for the democratization of the country [66] [177]. It has been during the communist regime when the border between civil society and the state became unclear. The Communists regimes oppressed civil society and pushed people to build trust only on the state social organizations [48] [175]. The relationship between the state and the civil society has been substituted by the state-controlled CSOs [132].

However, Hirst claims that the scholars should count for the civil society even in the most oppressing forms of the communist regime towards the civil society [76]. According to him, it is difficult to admit that even in these oppressing regimes there was no civil society. Its presence and its role were weak. However, this did not happen for the Albanian case during the communist regime. Albania is considered a unique case in the political science field. Different from other former communist countries that experienced at a level of degree the role and the presence of civil society, Albania faced a non-existent civil society body [102]. Thus, political history during communism and cultural conditions played a significant role in the development of the civil society in all the post-communist countries [112] [106]. Therefore, it might be a crucial distinction between the Central-Eastern European Countries that experienced a moderate communist regime and the South-Eastern European Countries where the presence of communist regime was much stronger [81] [24]. Based on the records of the World Values Survey of 1995-1997, after the fall of the iron curtain, Albania was the only state that did not have any CSOs, meanwhile,

Czechoslovakia counted more than two hundred CSOs; whereas Bulgaria and Romania had few. The numbers of CSOs represented only the CSOs established during the communist regime inside the country. The World Values Survey did not count the CSOs established abroad.

Thus, the degree of oppression played an important role in the behavior of civil society in the CEEC countries. In the communist countries that had a level of development of social society let their CSOs oppose the communist regime [80] [95]. In the Central-Eastern European countries, the very first signal of an active civil society was during 1960, after the introduction of the revisionist policies by Nikita Khrushchev. The civil society in countries, such as, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland started to question the legitimacy of the Communist regimes [105]. The examples of the Prague Spring and the Budapest School are empirical evidence where the regime tried to shut them down, but with the public support, these two socio movements forced the Communist states to acknowledge more space towards the civil society [105]. In light of these movements, the international civil society networks offered support to the CSOs of the communist countries. Thus, the organizational capacity was increased and the influence in mobilizing citizens against the regime was greater too [158].

Following the same line, the presence of the civil society in the post-communist countries is likely to have a positive impact on the establishment of a democratic state [81]. During the transition period by being involved in policy processes, the CSOs were likely to play a crucial role in the democratization process [99]. The involvement of civil society in such an important moment, as the democratization of the country, did not happen during the Albanian transition period (It will be discussed in Chapter five).

An institutionalized civil society facilitates the transition period through constant dialogue with the public [105]. Civil society can increase the citizens' willingness in participating in the public sphere by generating public approval for several reforms [105]. The Civil society can play also the role of a high significance in the implementing reforms. I can bring the example of Poland, where the civil society raised the public concerns on privatization, asking for more transparency from the government [105].

To conclude, an independent civil society can play the watchdog role, by increasing the citizens' awareness and by collaborating with the state. Thus, the current section tried to present the important role of civil society in the democratization process in the former columnist countries. Civil society is elaborated as a crucial feature in supporting citizens and states during the process of transition.

1.5.2. Civil society – The historical institutionalism Theory

Likewise, it has been discussed above, when studying the civil society in the post-communist countries, the scholars should take into account the way how the problems are perceived, how the history is understood, how the preferences are created, and then analyze their effect on the institutionalization of the civil society. Until now, the research on civil societies has been shaped by the Social Capital theory [136] [137]. without taking into account that this theory cannot explain the dynamics of civil society in the emerging democracies. On the other hand, when counting for the political context, the civil society has been studied through the lenses of the theory of the social origin (SOT) [147]. Nevertheless, the theory of the social origins is applicable only for Western societies too and it cannot be applied in other countries, such as emerging democracies [90]. Therefore, this thesis will try to study civil society in the emerging democracies on the light of one of the institutionalist theories, such as the historical institutionalism theory. I reflect on the democratization process of the emerging democracies as a critical juncture for the former communist countries. To do so, an overview of the historical institutionalism theory will be conducted in the next section.

The historical institutionalism Theory- HI

For many years, the researchers have been studying the institutions and their impact on the development of societies [95]. The institutionalism approach has been able to explain complex phenomena [15] [165] including the variations in the civil society role. Institutions have to be understood as societal structures based on both, formal and informal rules [135]. Thus, examining institutions, first, we have to understand how they construct an agency and which forces shape them [144] [152]. Regarding the societies' institutional context, the institutional

forces seem to be applied by the collective actors, which include the formally organized actors, such as: governments, churches, etc. [149].

Historical institutionalism theory aims to understand the mediating role that the institutions have on politics. It focuses on the history of institutions and the historical consequences in the present, suggesting that political and societal results are habituated both by the path dependency and by the critical junctures in time [175]. Thus, HI scholars argue that through the path dependence and the feedback mechanisms, even modest policy and institutional changes reinforce the initial direction [63]. Empirical studies show that historical institutionalists focus mainly on the qualitative analysis of the case studies order to advance insights regarding the development of the societal institutions and their consequences [97]. Institutional change is not produced only by the transition periods, but also by the re-arrangement of the different institutions [156], thus the HI delivers a powerful theoretical perspective in explaining the emergence of institutions that simplify collective action [166].

From this point of view, HI raises the argument that once the institutions are established, it will be difficult for them to change and become almost self-sustaining entities that affect interests and behavior. HI has provided illuminating accounts of policy and institutional developments by being mindful of the power of historical legacies. As it has been presented HI has been used to explain varied puzzles, thus, it is helpful to define it for the current thesis. I rely the current study on Sven Steinmo's definition 'HI is distinguished by its historical orientation and its attention to thow institutions structure and shape political behavior and outcomes" [159]. Here again, when the scholars underline the influence of the institutions to constructive behavior, they claim that institutions are consolidated. But the question is: How institutions get there. How do institutions become institutionalized? In the case of this thesis, *how civil society become institutionalized*?

Some authors would suggest that HI provides several explanations on the institutionalization of the civil society in the light of transition and the post-communist patterns of democratization [117]. From this point of view, the low degree of effectiveness of the CSOs in post-communist countries can be explained by factors such as: compulsory membership in communist

organizations and the highly politicized public sphere. These factors contributed to the 'weaknesses of civil society in former communist countries after the fall of the communist regime [81].

But is this always the case? When studying the civil society in the light of HI, civil society is treated as an institutionalized body after the fall of the communist regime. But, what happens in cases when civil society is not institutionalized yet? Is HI still valid in explaining the case? Thus, in the light of HI, I argue that when counting for the institutionalization of the civil society in the emerging democracies, we do have to count the degree of institutionalization that such a body manifests. However, being aware of such a situation, scholars of HI try to explain through the light of HI the democratization process in post-communist Eastern Europe Countries. Through this view, they try to explain the processes of transformation in these countries that have experienced the absence of stable institutions and regime changes [4]. However, I have to admit that their focus is not on the process of institutionalization. They aim to explain the influence of the previous despotic arrangements on post-dictatorial developments. Thus, the HI approach is founded on the assumption that even during transitions to democracy, the institutions (old or new) continue to be substantially institutionalized. From this point of view, it looks difficult to explain the degree of institutionalization of the civil society in Albania. In the case of this thesis, to understand the degree of institutionalization of civil society, I will consider civil society as an under-institutionalized body. When I say, under-institutionalized I refer to the lack of experience, resources, and political support of such organizations.

1.5.3. The need for a new theory

This section mostly focused on the political function of social capital, such as participation in the public sphere and the cooperation with the state apparatus. To complete its role as a representative agent of a public concern, social capital is represented in society through several forms and organizations of civil society. Thus, civil society is considered as the main instrument of the social capital for its political function. It has been highlighted the great role of civil society in the economic, political, and social context of a country. However, the degree in which civil society is present during the transition period and contributes in the democratization process of the post

Communist states have been the central point of this section. This perspective has been explained through two perspectives: (i) the degree of independence of civil society during the communist regime- high degree of independence during communism → high degree of participation during the transition; (ii) high degree of participation of civil society during transition →high degree on the contribution towards the democratization of the post-communist state.

To see such a variation, the degree of oppression by the communist regime during the communism has been considered. I claim that the cooperation between the state and the civil society has to be evaluated under the lenses of the historical legacy. Thus, I proposed to apply the Historical institutionalism theory to understand and explain the civil society dynamics during democratization. Using such a fundamental theory in political science, it can be explained the low degree of effectiveness of CSOs in post-communist countries.

However, I proposed that HI cannot explain all the cases of the former communist countries. When studying civil society in the light of HI, the CS is treated as an institutionalized body after the fall of the communist regime. Thus, HI does not predict situations when civil society is an under-institutionalized body. Said that I argue that when counting for the institutionalization of the civil society in the emerging democracies, we do have to rely on the degree of institutionalization that such a body manifest. HI, approach is founded on the assumption that even during transitions to democracy institutions (old or new) continue to be substantially institutionalized. From this point of view, it looks difficult to explain the degree of institutionalization of the civil society in Albania. Therefore, I propose to count on a new theory.

2 CIVIL SOCIETY OVERSIGHT OF THE SAFETY AND SECURITY SECTOR

Likewise, it is explained in the previous chapters there is a poor understanding of the influence that the Civil society can contribute to the security sector. What is known is that poorly regulated security forces can lead to increased uncertainty and dislocation resources and could undermine the efforts to govern better. Besides, a security sector in an undemocratic government can be easily used for party purposes, or it may give rise to a state monopoly. Supervising policies, structures, programs, actions, and processes of security sector reforms are a way to ensure that human rights and the rule of law are protected by the security sector. This tool is designed to be a resource for the organizations of the civil society (CSOs) that are engaged in oversight the security sector, as well as those CSOs seeking to play a more active role in this regard. The tool is also relevant to the policymakers and the officials in the national governments, the international organizations, as well as the donor countries around the world that are engaged in designing and implementing the security reforms.

Supervising the safety and security sector by civil society, involves the active participation of the organizations in setting security policies and overseeing the security sector structures and practices. The objective is to ensure that interests are included at the community level and to support local ownership. Except for this, civil society supervision ideally upholds internationally and democratically recognized norms of transparency and accountability. Supervision of civil society can occur at the local, national, regional, and international level, and may include the participation of the NGOs in formal and informal oversight mechanisms [8]. However, before discussing the different ways and levels in which the civil society is involved in the safety and security sector and the challenges it faces, I will first discuss the differences between safety and security in science, to better understand the relevant role of the civil society in this sector.

2.1. Safety and Security – Differences and Similarities: A comparative approach

It has been found that safety and security notions are usually used reciprocally and sometimes they seem to have the same meaning. Thus, the current section of the thesis will shed light on the main differences and similarities of these two very important concepts strongly related to the quality of life level. It has been noticed that the security is often used ineffectively and not as a preventative approach towards safety. According to Eames and Moffett, there is an interaction between both, the safety and the security, but it has to be underlined that both of them are developed independently [47].

Anyhow, the scholars have documented the differences and the similarities between the security and the safety notions [39]. On the other hand, it is found another approach that stands with the idea that safety and security are a dichotomy and they can help each other adopting the respective knowledge or theories of each other [103]. Security seems to have some characteristics that have to be explored apart from safety. Thus, firstly, I investigate the meaning of safety, secondly the meaning of security and thirdly I will initiate a dissection emphasizing their differences and similarities. As such, the current section will provide a conceptual approach to contribute to the development of safety and security literature.

Safety is linked with: (i) the danger towards people or practical failure; (ii) the threat towards people seems to be caused in purpose or randomly; (iii) Also, natural catastrophes can threaten the safety of people [74]. The main core of the theories in safety science predicts that accidents can be prohibited in case risk analysis would be carried out. Safety culture and organizational flexibility are likely to prevent the harm that can be caused by different reasons [88]. Based on the mentioned statement, it has to be underlined that safety is not necessary linked with random or intentional accidents. As far as analysis or forms that prevent the risk can be carried out, it means that the above claims on safety fall.

During the past years, the researchers who worked on organization safety have pointed out that accidents happened because of limited studies on safety planning. According to Weick and Sutcliffe, people are the source of the accidents and the organizations should necessary project vigorous measures to overcome the "human error" [179]. Thus, it can be claimed that safety is strongly linked with human activities and the place where these activities take place. As such, the relation that individuals establish among each other plays a significant role in their quality of life. Following the line, it means that good relations between individuals of the same group will increase the collaboration between them also will increase the reciprocity between them.

Security research seems to face a major change. Previously, security research has been perceived and explained by a set of ideas relying on tradition, principles, values, and norms [22]. Currently, in modern times, the classical view has been challenged by several hazards as well as new methods of addressing it. Also, the interaction between society and the new type of danger has been approached differently. By tradition, the security has been perceived to be both a principal need and a universal right. It has been pointed out on Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person" [22].

The security as science established a wide debate about (i) what security is, (ii) what makes us insecure, and (iii) how can we develop security through the research, the communication policy, the legal instruments, and the best practices [23] [16] According to Burgess [22] the meaning of being secure is still a challenge in the literature. On one hand some explanations define security as an answer to the national border protection, the infrastructure protection, the public transport protection, etc. On the other hand, security is perceived as a protector of all the types of institutions, democracy, economic well-being, etc. The definition of the security is wide, but all together they have a common purpose: making all these things to fit together in the first place in the society.

Apart from differences and similarities between safety and security as notions, as it has been discussed so far, this section focuses on the levels. It has been found that the safety and the security by meaning can overlap and be apart at the same time, but in very few cases there has been a comparison between them based on the different meanings of the safety. Thus, the table below will

help this study to better organize the differences between safety and security. The table was found in the Jore, S. article [88]. Anyhow, I found similarities between the Jore's approach towards the levels of safety and security and the annual UN Human Development Report of 1994 where the concept of security was categorized in six levels (Please check the section below when referring to the UN Human Development Report, 1994)[3] [82].

Table 3. Safety and Security – Differences and Similarities

Level	Associated security concept	Key features of security
Individual	Human security	The individual, human rights
Objects, buildings and public spaces	Object security, onsite security	Asset protection, protection of public places
Organization	Organizational security, private security	Security risk management, security culture
Critical infrastructure	Critical infrastructure security	System vulnerability, cascading effects
Society	Societal security, public security, homeland security	Ability to prepare for and deal with crisis, feeling of safety and trust
State	National Security	Protection of borders, survival of the state
International	International Security	International organizations` efforts to achieve stability and peace

*Source: Jore, S.H. (2017) The Conceptual and Scientific Demarcation of Security in Contrast to Safety [88] - (based on Collins [36] Smith and Brooks [157] and Zedner [187])

As it is shown in the table, the security is a multi-dimensional concept and it changes its features in practice depending on the situation.

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[3] UN Human Development Report (1994)
http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf, the last access, 27 September 2020.

2.2. The ways that civil society participates in the security sector

The role of the civil society in the security sector has been under-evaluated. As it was showed below, the CSOs can play a significant role in the safety and security sector. First, in case the citizens know several organizations protect them, it increases the feeling of safety. Secondly, in case the CSOs collaborate with the public or the private institutions it increases the level of the security sector. However, the CSOs need to overcome several challenges to be accepted by the other institutions or the organizations in establishing new bridges of collaborations. To do so, the CSOs need to be fully independent by the founders. Anyhow, the link between the CSOs and the security sector is under-developed and this thesis can be a good premise in opening a new debate in this perspective.

Based on the study of Karen Barnes and Peter Albrecht [8], civil society can participate in several ways in the security sector, such as:

1. The Civil Society can be a source of political advice and technical expertise that can inform policymakers and provide insights into the needs and interests of communities regarding security issues.
2. With the expansion of local ownership and participation through the involvement of various groups in discussions on security-related issues.
3. The Civil Society can influence the authorities for their actions through lobbying, public awareness campaigns, or direct pressure from the public.
4. It can facilitate the dialogue between the policymakers, the security sector officials, and the population.
5. The Civil Society can intervene through protection campaigns that raise awareness on key concerns and security issues, human rights, misuse of funds, or other such violations.
6. By providing services and alternative sources of security and justice in cases where the state is unable and / or unwilling to assume these roles, or where the civil society can provide such services.

2.2.1. The Index of Civil Society in Albania: Does it reach the goal in the security sector?

The Civil Society Index (CSI) is an assessment and action tool implemented globally by civil society organizations (CSOs) with the support and guidance of CIVICUS, which provides a comprehensive assessment of the Albanian civil society analyzing five basic dimensions: Civic Engagement, Level of Organization, Impact, Values and Socio-Political and Economic Environment [84]. The Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) in Albania, in the period of June 2009 - June 2010, led a project involving over 200 national CSOs, around 150 public and private sector actors (state institutions, donors, media, business, academic society, etc.) as well as 1,150 citizens, to measure CSI. Unfortunately, no other studies have been conducted to measure the nowadays Civil Society Index. Thus, the thesis will show the results carried out by IDM in 2010. Anyhow, because during the last ten years the civil society score in Albania did not change (please refer [54]) the IDM analytical report seems to be valid.

The report identified some serious problems related to the relationship of civil society with (i) the socio-political environment in which it operates, (ii) the values of good governance and accountability, despite noting human resources and qualified expertise. Thus, according to the authors, "Albanian civil society manifests the characteristics of a moderately developed sector that remains committed to democratic values and principles but remains disconnected from local a context, citizens' priorities and has low impact." [84]

While in the early 1990s activism and civic involvement in the student movements, trade unions, etc. were motivated by a pronounced idealism, nowadays it seems that the predominant motive is personal gain or interest. The widespread apathy towards political parties, the lack of trust in state institutions, and the positive change that engagement in such forms of organizations can generate, are some of the reasons why the political activism remains an option for only about 30% of citizens. About 34% of citizens said they do not trust civil society, while 56% of external stakeholders believe that most civil society organizations are not transparent [84]. All these results clearly show that the civil society in Albania is unable to reach its main goals and is powerless to increase the safety feelings among Albanian citizens.

The report identifies other problems also in terms of transparency, accountability, tolerance levels among citizens and non-members of civil society towards certain groups such as homosexuals, Roma, HIV / AIDS carries civil society, which must promote these values, is not yet internally practicing. According to the outside organizations and actors, dialogue and exchanges between the two actors remain at low levels. Based on the results, the authors conclude that all the stakeholders agree that improvements to current legislation and even additional legal acts are needed to regulate the state-civil society relationship to contribution to civil initiatives more effective [84]. On the other hand, the study of the Civil Society Index confirms the repeated concern that civil society remains a donor-led sector, and its activity remains project-bound. Such an approach (by CSOs) can only fragment the sector in terms of topics and geographical coverage.

2.3. Challenges of the civil society in the security sector

Based on the study of Karen Barnes and Peter Albrecht [8], several key challenges may limit the ability of the civil society to engage in effective oversight:

1. Lack of expertise and capacity among the organizations to engage with issues related to the security sector;
2. Lack of trust and / or transparency in between the organizations and the security sector does not help the CSOs to access key decision-makers to impact the security;
3. Lack of independence of organizations as they are funded or coopted by the elements of the security sector, which compromise their independence.

3 METHODOLOGY- CONCEPTUALIZATION AND MEASUREMENT

3.1. The Research Question

This thesis investigates why Albania did not succeed in establishing healthy civil society organizations after the fall of the communist regime to contribute to the democratization process of the country. This is a pertinent question because, the onset of the CSOs in the emerging democracies is poorly understood. Therefore, this undertaking is significant not just for shedding light on an understudied case, but also because it illuminates the mechanism(s) that enable the CSOs during the transition period, under approaching *ceteris paribus* conditions, to produce insufficient outcomes towards democratization. I ground my study on two main objectives:

(iii)   To find out why the civil society organizations in Albania failed towards the democratization process after the fall of the communist regime?

(iv)   Why the civil society organizations in Albania do not find a favorable ground that stimulates their development?

To this end, the research questions explore the civil society organizations did not develop in Albania. The analysis of the study is composed of two stages. In the first stage, the study hypothesizes about a proposed relationship between variables*: trust; network; reciprocity.* The first stage of the analysis is relying on the assumptions that:

Hypothesis 1: The Civil Society Organizations in Albania cannot be developed as far as Albania faces the absence of Social Capital.

Hypothesis 2: The absence of Social Capital comes as a consequence of a low level of trust among citizens.

The second stage of analysis is strongly linked with the results of the first stage. The study shows significant results regarding the absence of the social capital in Albania; thus, I explore the reasons

behind this absence. The second stage of the study is grounded on the institutionalist approach, claiming that:

Hypothesis 3: The civil society organizations in Albania failed because of *the legacy of the past*.

Thus, first, I measure social capital in Albania, generating the Social Capital Index. Second, I explain the absence of social capital in Albania through the *legacy of the past*.

By establishing the civil society organizations in Albania after the fall of the communist regime in 1990, it can be said that they were designed according to the institutional EU models. However, thirty years after their establishment (1990-2020), the civil society organizations' outputs are not satisfactory, and their decision-making process is questionable.

This study is important because it sheds light on an underdeveloped country like Albania, but also on an understudied field like the Civil Society organizations and their influence on the democratization process and unsafety feelings. It makes a tangible analysis of causes that affect civil society organizations' performance and bring unsatisfactory outcomes of its decision making. This project brings together the social capital theory and the historical institutionalism theory by satisfying their explanatory mechanism in a context which they can delineate.

3.2. Conceptualization – The research design

Civil Society organizations are one of the most vital instruments to check whether the government successfully fulfills its objectives set for the public interest. The literature on the civil society organizations uses social capital as a proxy to estimate the establishment and performance of such organizations during the transition periods and their contribution towards democratization. For this reason, at the first stage of the analysis, I generated the Social Capital Index in Albania. On the other hand, the historical institutionalism approach is usually used in the literature to understand the performance of the civil society organizations during the transition periods using as a proxy the legacy of the past. In this view, the thesis investigates (i) the establishment of the civil society organizations in Albania after the fall of the communist regime; (ii) the performance of the civil society organizations in Albania during the transition period by assessing how variables of the

legacy of the past thrive within the civil society organizations.

Even though it has passed thirty years since the fall of the Iron Curtain, Albania, differently from other CEE countries is still considered as a partly free country, remaining in the status of 'emerging democracies' countries. Even in the cases where the CSOs seem to achieve some improvements in fulfilling their tasks in contributing to the democratization process, it did not last for a long time. Thus, reconstructing the chain of events that led to the failure of such organizations is challenging. That is why this thesis looks at how variables interact during the democratic transition to uncover the mechanisms that affect such a specific outcome. The findings, besides explaining the puzzle, aim to improve the theoretical understanding of (i) a weak social capital; (ii) the beginning of the civil society organizations; (iii) their dynamics nowadays and the variables that affect it the most.

This thesis relies on a single country case study research design, which is proportionate to its main objectives. According to Yin, where the RQ focuses on *'why'* questions, the case study strategy looks the most appropriate one to investigate the contemporary events [185]. Also, this design enables me to uncover the mechanism(s) responsible for the civil society organizations' dynamics in Albania. Second, through this design, I can test the theoretical proposition presented in the thesis. Besides engaging in theory testing, this research design enables me to lay the ground for theory development. If the theoretical proposition is validated, then it opens the possibilities for further research, covering similar cases. Overall, using a single country case study research design is reasonable, fits the thesis's goals, and is not a controversial choice.

3.3. The case selection – Why Albania?

Albania was the last country among the CEEC countries that started the democratization process. Unlike, other CEEC countries, Albania faced the strictest regime, thus with the fall of communism, Albania found itself with unconsolidated and unprepared institutions, not able to adapt and implement the good practices at both, political and economic level, of the Western countries. Even though three decades has passed from the fall of the communist regime, Albania is considered an underdeveloped country manifesting regress towards democratization. The Civil Society in Albania is not fulfilling its task in checking whether the government is successfully fulfilling the

objects set for the public interest. This is one of the reasons why Albania is still considered to be a semi-consolidated authoritarian regime.

Regarding the CSOs, Albania is a very attractive case. From one side, as it is reported by several international reports, the only indicator of democracy that did not change at any moment in thirteen years, is *civil society* [54]. Such a result shows that civil society in Albania has not improved or deteriorated over years, making impossible its function towards democracy. On the other side, in the National Court of Tirana are registered more than ten thousand CSOs. These two very contradictory findings have been motivated by the current thesis.

The role of the CSOs is to represent all the groups of interest in a democratic society and to raise public concerns. If the CSOs cannot fulfill this very crucial goal, thus the development of democracy is questionable. The CSOs help in increasing the citizens' involvement in decision-making processes. Participation in the decision-making processes means opportunities for citizens and other stakeholders to influence the development of policies and laws that affect them. Following this line and the last results of the Freedom House on the civil society in Albania, it has been identified that the current CSOs are not fulfilling their duties and their activities are suspicious too. According to the reports published by the USAID, the CSOs in Albania have been constantly financially supported by international donors, but they lack transparency about how they spent their budget. Despite the numerous audit actions of foreign donors on the use of donations, the CSOs in Albania remains a highly problematic sector where both the national and international actors have been unable to find long-term, sustainable mechanisms for increasing its effectiveness and accountability.

Another reason for choosing Albania is related to the research design of the thesis. Since one of the main goals of this thesis is to test the theoretical proposition, it seems that Albania is presenting an appropriate choice because it provides a controlled environment in which to test the plausibility of the theory. Following such an approach, I can identify the variables that affect the most of the failure of the CSOs in Albania during the last twenty-nine years.

Another reason for choosing Albania is that it provides a suitable environment for undertaking an empirical analysis of the effects the ideational variables have on the development of the CSOs. Several studies that have been using the social capital, the legacy of the past, or other similar explanatory mechanisms, are criticized for either not being convincing enough or being just another story. To avoid such criticism, I pay attention to undertaking empirical and replicable research. To study the establishment and the development of the CSOs in Albania, the study draws a line between social capital and historical institutionalism theories in emerging democracies.

3.4. The Depended Variable

The dependent variable is the civil society organizations in Albania from 1991-2019. It is important to conduct a deep analysis of the CSOs in Albania to understand their output towards (i) the democratization process after the fall of the communist regime; (ii) their role in engaging citizens for public concerns; (iii) the relationship they establish with the state to support or to be supported by it. The outcome of the CSOs has a general effect on all the institutional and non/institutional actors.

As it is mentioned in the introduction part of the current thesis, the main goal of the thesis is to identify the main variables that enabled the CSOs outcomes. Therefore, I use social capital as the indicator of the rise and the development of the CSOs in Albania. From the theoretical point of view, civil society occurs only where the country has a developed social capital. The absence of progress in the CSOs in Albania during the transition period and beyond has been highlighted in the thesis to identify the variables that affected it the most.

3.5. The Independent Variables- Stage 1 and stage 2 of the analysis

As it is already discussed, the analysis of this thesis is composed of two stages. In *the first stage,* the explanatory variable is the social capital and in the second stage, the second explanatory variable is the *legacy of the past*. By social capital it is understood the effect that might have the level of *trust, reciprocity, and the degree of network among citizens*; as these three indicators are

the main features of the Social Capital. By legacy of the past, it is understood how the communist legacy influenced the establishment of the new CSOs during the transition period.

3.5.1. Stage 1 - Independent Variable 1 - Social Capital

In *the first stage,* the explanatory variable is social capital. The main difficulty with this variable has been its operationalization. Social capital is being understood as the indispensable environment that creates the rise of civil society. In terms of measurement, I measured Social Capital, using Putnam's approach. Following this approach, I have been focusing on the three main features of the social capital, such as: *trust, reciprocity, and network.* In this line, social capital has been analyzed as a promoter of cooperation that facilitates problem-solving within the community. However, cooperation in-between people can be realized when there is trust. This essential component of social capital facilitates the cooperation needed for coordination within society [136]. On the other hand, the norms reciprocity facilitates the 'resolution of collective action dilemmas' [136]. Meanwhile, the civic engagement networks are another essential component of social capital as they create the environment for a successful cooperation.

The measurement of social capital:

Indicator 1.1. Measuring the development of the Social Capital with Trust

By measuring the development of the social capital in Albania through its main three indicators, the study used the trust in all three levels, such as: micro-meso-macro level as it was explained in sub-chapter 2.2.3.

Trust in the micro-level was focused on personal trust. The questionnaire provides questions to understand whether the citizens developed trust at the micro-level (individual trust) when they feel weak or vulnerable. Also, the questionnaire provides the questions regarding the meso-level of trust (collective trust). This approach seems to be very relevant in regards to the feelings of unsafety. According to the literature when people feel a positive attachment with individuals of

their neighborhoods they feel safer as they perceive the place warm, familiar, and safe places [9]. Thus, it is important to understand that the bonding with the neighborhood seems to be a significant prognosticator of feelings of unsafety [28] [41].

Based on these findings, the meso-level of trust composes the crucial part of the questionnaire. It is also, strongly related to the purpose of the first stage of the analysis (measuring the social capital). The third level of trust, the institutional trust, has been covered in the questionnaire too, aiming to understand whether the citizens that participated in the study have built trust toward the formalized institutions, in the case of this thesis: towards the civil society organizations.

The macro-level of trust, the institutional trust helps the study to investigate the insights of the CSOs dynamics in Albania. This level of trust helps the study to analyze and understand whether the citizens trust the civil society organizations, or they do trust more their close network because of the in-group loyalty traits. This is very important for the study. Based on the institutionalist approach- the lack of institutional trust produces weak institutions. Consequently, the lack of institutional trust can be a significant factor in producing weak social capital; therefore, weak civil society organizations, unable to satisfy the safety feelings among citizens. Such a statement is supported by Putnam [137], who considered the high level of trust at the macro level as a way that is positively related to feelings of safety.

Indicator 1.2. Measuring the development of Social Capital with Reciprocity

Likewise, it has been discussed in sub-chapter 2.3.3., the basis of the social capital is that it attracts individuals to exchange resources among them. Reciprocity norms are one of the key prerequisites for social capital. It should be emphasized that the reciprocity norms play an important role in forming mutual respect and cooperation between citizens who are 'giving' and 'receiving'. The principle of reciprocity is grounded on the idea that people should help those who helped them before. Reciprocity aims to establish relations among people through an exchange of shared privileges. Reciprocity is considered an asset for developing correlations between people and government by generally increasing the level of solidarity. Said this, reciprocity has been included

in the questionnaire too, to measure the degree of social capital in Albania.

Indicator 1.3. Measuring the development of Social Capital with Network and social support

Social capital and its connection with the network cannot be understood without taking into account social support, as was explained in the sub-chapter 2.3.2. Social support can be provided based on the types of relationships that people create among them. Such as it was explained through the theories of social capital, individuals organize their interaction within informal and formal networks. Thus, naturally, the current thesis comes to the argument that the social network should be divided in the same way: (i) informal social networks (family, friends, colleagues, etc) (ii) formal social network (health care professionals, human service workers, etc) [114]. Through this indicator (network) of social capital, the questionnaire tried to shed light on how the community functions and deals with problems.

3.5.2. Stage 2 - Independent variable 2 – Legacy of the past

In the second stage of the study, I investigate the legacy of the past as the main indicator that could not provide a favorable political and economic environment to stimulate the social capital and consequently the CSOs in Albania. More precisely the second independent variable is the political legacy that the communist system left in the re-establishment of the institutions and how it has been reflected during the transition period. To measure the political past, I used the historical institutionalism approach. The main difficulty with this kind of an explanatory variable is reliable operationalization and measurement. The most effective way to measure the CSOs development in Albania during the transition and the effect on the decision-making is to analyze different documents, such as the newspaper coverage, the national and international reports, the empirical evidence for the period 1990-2018.

To do so, first, I explained the degree of oppression that the communist regime exerted on the state and on the citizens. I compared it with other CEE former communist countries to have a better understanding of the reasons why CSOs in the other CEE former communist countries did not

follow the same path as in the Albanian case. This approach has been explained in the sub-chapter 2.5.1. Second, I analyzed the degree of the effectivess of the civil society organization in Albania during the state transition, using again the historical institutionalism approach and counting for the legacy of the past. This approach is explained in chapter five of this thesis. The analysis of the CSOs of Albania during the state transition has been focused on two main indicators, such as: (i) the Complications in establishing a participatory civil society and (ii) the Failure of the civil society to act as an intermediary actor.

The unit of analysis of the second stage

At this stage the units of analysis are two:

- the national and international reports to explore the influence of the legacy of the past towards the establishment of CSOs during the state transition period;

-the members of the CSOs in Albania to understand the opposing findings

3.6. Methods and Data Collection

3.6.1. Methods used

This study employs mixed methods- quantitative and qualitative approach when it comes to the methods used for data collection and analysis. The thesis uses the Process tracing approach. Considering the relevance of the study, I use the research methods that appropriately address the research questions and enhance the explanatory power of the independent variables. The purpose of choosing such a methodological approach was to fully explain and justify the data collection and provide a replicable analysis of such data, by fulfilling the quality control criteria.

Likewise, it has been previously explained, the first goal of the thesis was to identify the poor performance of the CSOs in Albania. To do so, the social capital approach is applied looking for the development of social capital. The study uses the questionnaire by Anirudh Krishna and Norman Uphoff looking into the effect of trust, network, and reciprocity on the development of social capital [104]. To do so, two different statistical analyses have been applied.

In the first analysis, there are used the responses of six separate questions which have been combined to measure the social capital and to construct an index of social capital in Albania. The questionnaire integrates the structural and cognitive dimensions of social capital. Each of these dimensions has been measured through the appropriate questions in the questionnaire (Explained in detail in Sub-chapter 3.6.2).

At the second stage of the analysis, I test the explanatory variables that can explain the results of the first stage of the analysis (SCIndex), thus, I use the Process Tracing method to test whether the legacy of the past is the main variable that causes the dynamics of CSOs in Albania. Likewise, it has been explained at the sub-chapter 2.5.1, to understand the legacy of the past as the main indicator for the poor performance of the CSOs, first, I explain the degree of oppression that the communist regime exerted on the state and the citizens and its effect on the CSOs;

Second, I analyze the degree of effectives of the civil society organization in Albania during the state transition and its role towards the democratization process, focusing on two main indicators, such as: (i) the Complications in establishing a participatory civil society and (ii) the failure of civil society to act as an intermediary actor. To achieve the goal of this analysis, I use the PT as the most appropriate method to give insights to the effect of the casual mechanism [59]. PT enables the researcher to make strong within-case inferences about how outcomes are generated updating the level of confidence we have in the validity of the theorized causal mechanism.

To apply the PT method in measuring the performance and the role of the CSOs during the state transition period, documentary research is conducted as it fits properly with the aim of the study. The Official documents such as the newspapers, the national and international report on the dynamics of the CSOs in Albania during the transition period, allow for a systematic collection of data and provide a good baseline for the researcher to study the phenomenon. Discourse analysis of such documents has been used to extract the main information [191].

The study merges several methods to explain all the variables that affect the poor performance of the CSOs in Albania, such as a *weak social capital and the legacy of the past*. All these variables

are operationalized in the relevant indicators. The Data collection has been carried out through the quality control criteria and the methods used to validate the findings of each other [191]. The methods I used in the framework of this thesis are analyzed as follows.

3.6.2. Stage 1- Quantitative Approach: The questionnaire

I use the questionnaire composed by Anirudh Krishna and Norman Uphoff [104]. I extracted from this questionnaire only the part that measures the social capital. The questionnaire is divided into two parts aiming to measure *the structural social capital* and *cognitive social capital*. Such a division goes perfectly in the same line with the literature and the social capital theory that I use in the framework of the thesis.

The questionnaire is filled by three hundred ninety-two (392) respondents covering all the geographical areas of Albania. I disseminated the questionnaire among students who are studying at the European University of Tirana (EUT). I am confident that the questionnaire has been distributed properly meeting the internal and external validity of the study because:

The European University of Tirana is a University with four thousand students' capacity, who come from all the Albanian geographical areas, thus I cover the entire regions of Albania. Also, the students are asked to give the questionnaire to their parents, thus they are the target point of the study. It means that I measure social capital through the citizens who work and have their own business activates. Only in such a way I can check whether the citizens can *trust, establish a network, and share reciprocity* among them (elements of social capital). To identify the students that have families involved in their business activities, I took advantage of my position as an assistant professor at (EUT). Thus, I notified my students that I was conducting a study, and I asked their help in filling the surveys. All the students that came to my office registered their email addresses and I sent via email the questionnaire. I made sure that the families of the students who would fill the questionnaire owned their own business in the capital, other cities, and villages in Albania. I did not choose another person to give insights and instructions of the study to the students, but I did the whole process on my own to decrease the *human error*.

On the other hand, the sample size of the study meets the criteria concerning the level of validity for generalizable conclusions. According to the last results of INSTAT 2019[4], in Albania are 162,835 active enterprises. I recall that the respondents belong to the group of citizens who have their business activities. Thus, calculating the representativeness of my 392 filled questionnaires, I can say with 95% confidence and with 5% of margin error, that my sample size exceeds the level of validity.

Analysis 1: The measurement of social capital

Analysis 2: The Social Capital Index in Albania- Factor analysis: Trust factor

Both analyses, 1 and 2 are conducted based on the following questions. The questions of the survey are divided into two categories:

-*The Structural Social capital* is measured by a point scale starting from 1 until 5. According to the point scale; 1 means low-level of social capital and 5 means high-level of social capital. Meanwhile, values such as 8 and 9 correspond to the answers: 'don't know' and 'no answer'. The answers that scored 8 and 9 were not taken into consideration during the analysis.

-*The Cognitive Social capital* is measured by a point scale starting from 1 until 4; 1 means low - level of social capital and 4 means high-level of social capital. Meanwhile, values such as 8 and 9 correspond to the answers: 'don't know' and 'no answer'. The answers that scored 8 and 9 were not taken into consideration during the analysis.

The questions below are used to measure Social Capital:

Structural Social Capital:

- (Informal networking and mutual support)

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[4] Active enterprises: http://www.instat.gov.al/, last access: 2nd October 2019

1. If your neighborhood would be polluted affecting the entire environment of your village/town/city, then who do you think would come forward to deal with this situation?

- (Collective actions)

2. Who in this village/town/city has historically looked after the common public spaces?

3. Suppose two people in this village/town/city argued with each other. Who do you think would resolve this dispute?

Cognitive Social Capital

-(Solidarity)

4. Suppose some children of the village/town/city are disrespectful to elders, they disobey their parents, etc. Who in this village/town/city feels right to correct other people's children?

5. Which among the following is the most important reason why people in this village/town/city take care of public space?

- (Trust and cooperation)

6. Suppose someone from the village/town/city had to go away for a while, along with the family. In whose responsibility charge could they leave "their house"?

Each of the variables that measure Social Capital is grounded in the literature. Responses to these six questions are shown in Annex 2.

Analysis 3: The correlation between the Social Capital Index and the determinants of social capital. To do so, I transformed the values of social capital in a rage from 0 to 100. (It is explained in detail in Chapter 4).

3.6.3. Stage 2 – Qualitative Approach- Documentary research method

A. Documentary research method

After measuring the degree of social capital in Albania, I use the process tracing to test the legacy of the past effects on the CSOs performance. For this method, I use documents of reliable information providing information on the topic that I want to study. For the process-tracing method, I use secondary data that allow me to provide scientific findings. To apply a rigorous PT approach, I was careful in the selection of the documents I used for the discourse analysis to generate generalizable findings [191]. The goal of using such a method is to measure whether the legacy of the past is the main reason for the poor performance of the CSOs in Albania. To do so, I used and analyzed the reports conducted by the national and international agencies.

Through analyzing such documents, I was able to test the Historical Institutionalism theory, too. I have to underline that this method is used as a complementary method of the questionnaire, as it tries to explain the mechanisms that operate in producing a weak social capital. The sample of the documents was not selected randomly. The types of documents I used for this thesis meet all the quality control criteria. The source of the documents is authentic, credible, and representative [151].

However, the study tries to cover a very long period, from 1990-2018, thus the documents chosen to be analyzed provide a representative sample, but the study does not cover all the documents that have been published. I focused on selecting the reports that have been published by rigorous agencies and well-known experts in the field. For the selection, I tried not to be biased as I was involved in the study reports by agencies that operate at least for twenty years, showing high-level of credibility (example: the USAID; the World Bank; the OSFA, etc). Before doing it, first I identified the agencies and the experts who worked on the CSOs field in Albania. Thus, the study provides credible and meaningful data for the thesis. However, this kind of method requires a high level of understanding of the field, therefore, I consulted several experts in the CSOs field in Albania to give a valuable understanding to the data I collected from the reports.

3.7.   Concluding remarks

In the current chapter, the thesis introduces the theoretical and empirical approach that is used to answer the research questions. The chapter also explains the reason why I decided to study the development of social capital in Albania. Based on the research desk, I found out that this is a very sensitive topic showing a high level of complexity. Furthermore, I did not find such research during my research desk process, thus the contribution of it significant. On the other side, the current section explained the case selection. Albania as a study case appears as a unique case compared with former communist CEE countries regarding the development of CSOs. Said this, the case selection I am using in the thesis, give me space for theory testing using complementary theories to explain my case. Regarding the theoretical selections, it has been argued that after applying the social capital, the research needs to analyze the historical institutionalism theory, whose explanatory power is applicable in unstructured settings like Albania. This theory aims to identify the role of the state towards the development of CSOs and the role of CSOs *per se* towards the democratization process during the transition period. On the other side, both theories are used to clarify the contexts for which they are developed and the validate findings and conclusions of each other.

The thesis has identified the dependent and independent variables. There is one dependent variable (i) the civil society organizations; and two independent variables (i) the social capital; (ii) the legacy of the past. Both explanatory variables are operationalized into measurable indicators.

To conclude, the thesis introduces and justifies the process tracing methodology, and methods used to collect and analyze the data. Likewise, the research uses complementary methods, it has been justified the use of them for each indicator. Mixed methods are used to accomplish reliable results. Also, it has been described both, the methods and the categories of data collected. It is argued that the size of the primary and the secondary data is sufficient to conduct a successful empirical analysis.

4 MEASURING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN ALBANIA: RESEARCH RESULTS OF STAGE 1 OF THE ANALYSIS

The main aim of this chapter is to develop the Social Capital Index (SCIndex) in Albania. Likewise, it has been discussed in the literature review that social capital is one of the main features that contribute in the sustainable development of a country, especially in emerging democracies like Albania. Thus, to better understand the last report of the Freedom House, why the CSOs performance index in Albania did not improve or it aggravated over the years, I am measuring the Social Capital Index. However, before measuring and calculating the overall SCIdenx in Albania, I carried out several interesting findings after collecting and analyzing the data.

First, I found out that there is a great difference between different Albanian regions regarding Social Capital development. The participants in the survey are from different cities, towns, and villages in Albania, thus I found it interesting to further explore whether their background affected any of the variables of the social capital, such as: mutual support, trust, solidarity, etc. The first step was to categorize the Albanian regions. The indicator I use to categorize the cities/towns/villages is the number of habitants who live in these areas. To check where it is more likely to find a consolidated social capital, I relied the analysis in the number of habitants. This gives me the possibility to explore how the relations are created in big, medium, and small cities. After calculating the Social Capital Index in Albania, I checked whether there is a significant relationship between the social capital Index and the indicators of social capital *per se*.

The database includes 392 respondents. 201 of respondents are male and 191 of them are female.

Figure 4. The gender of respondents
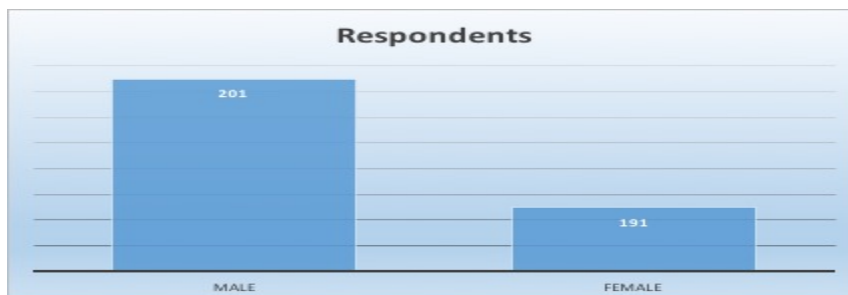
N= 392

I did not calculate whether there is a difference regarding the gender towards social capital, but I noticed that there is a slight difference regarding the trust issues. According to my data, women are less likely to trust strangers. Anyhow, it is not the focus of this thesis to look for the insights of the mentioned finding, but this can be a good promise for further studies in the gender studies specter.

Likewise, it has been explained above, the respondents that participated in the survey are from different areas of Albania. The purpose of the survey was to cover almost the entire region of Albania. This approach helped me to evaluate the differences regarding the social capital between the different areas in terms of large, medium, or small numbers of habitats. Using this approach, I can explore whether certain socio-cultural features influence the consolidation of social capital. The categorization of the cities/towns/villages in Albania is made based on the last report of the Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT)[5].

The categorization of the cities/towns/villages is as below:
Large cities = 500.000 – 1.000.000 habitants
Medium cities/towns = 100.000 – 500.000 habitants
Small towns/villages = 50.000 – 100.000 habitants

The cities/towns/villages where the participants in the survey come from are showed in Annex 1.

I found out that the index of social capital is negatively related to the size of the region. **I found that in big cities with many habitats there is less cooperation between individuals and a very low level of trust.**

To explore such differences, first I measure the development of the Social Capital for each category #small #medium #large number of habitats. Each category regarding the number of habitats has the following distribution:

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[5] INSTAT: http://www.instat.gov.al/al/temat/statistikat-e-p%C3%ABrgjithshme-dhe-rajonale/qytetet-dhe-shkalla-e-urbanizimit/
last access: 2nd October 2019

Figure 5. The distribution of respondents based on the size of the cities

Ration between the size of area and No. of Respondetns

- Large city — 29%
- Medium town — 38%
- Small village — 33%
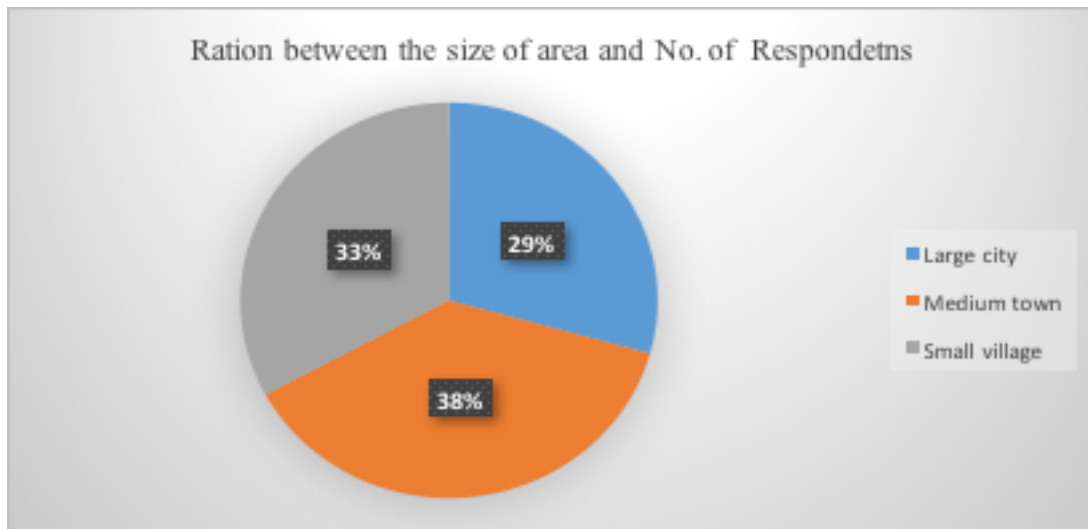
It was very important to check whether there is a fair distribution to avoid biased results. According to the graph, the distribution of the respondents regarding the region does not show high differences.

To measure Social Capital, I based the analysis in the literature. Likewise, it is showed and discussed in Chapter 2, the Social Capital is distinguished in two main categories, such as: the structural social capital and the cognitive social capital. The first category is objective, including noticeable features; the second is fundamentally subjective, exploring how people think and feel. Both of these categories affect the social relationships between individuals. However, the relationship that individuals establish between each other can be categorized as a *mutual beneficial collective action*. These collective actions produce positive outcomes. Individuals working together can gain several mutual benefits. Such a relationship can be established at the group level too, providing promises for cooperation at national or social levels. From this point of view, it is very important testing social capital empirically as the main factor for the development of a society.

The questions in the questionnaire are composed with the purpose to get the structural form of social capital (roles, social networks, rules, procedures, or precedents) or cognitive form (norms, values, attitudes, or beliefs). All these factors are tested by quantitative analysis. The model that has been established in measuring social capital in Albania was firstly used by Anirudh Krishna and Norman Uphoff [104]. I decided to use their methodological approach as the indicators they used in measuring social capital correspond to the purpose of my thesis. However, I decided to change the content of several questions, adapting them with the Albanian context. Example: Who in this village has historically looked after the common pasture lands? → Who in this village has historically looked after the common public spaces? (Please refer to Annex 2 for the questionnaire).

4.1. Empirical Results of Social Capital in Albania

Likewise, it is explained in the methodology chapter, social capital is measured through these six questions:

- (Informal networking and mutual support)

Q.1. If your neighborhood would be polluted affecting the entire environment of your village/town/city, then who do you think would come forward to deal with this situation?

- (Collective actions)

Q.2. Who in this village/town/city has historically looked after the common public spaces?

Q.3. Suppose two people in this village/town/city argued with each other. Who do you think would resolve this dispute?

-(Solidarity)

Q.4. Suppose some children of the village/town/city are disrespectful to elders, they disobey their parents, etc. Who in this village/town/city feels right to correct other people's children?

Q.5. Which among the following is the most important reason why people in this village/town/city take care of public space?

- (Trust and cooperation)

Q.6. Suppose someone from the village/town/city had to go away for a while, along with their family. In whose responsibility could they leave "their house"?

Each of the variables that measure Social Capital is grounded in the literature. Responses to these six questions are shown in Annex 2.

The questions that composed the questionnaire aim to test the first Hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: The Civil Society Organizations in Albania cannot be developed as far as Albania faces the absence of Social Capital.

The unit of analysis of the first stage

I measured the social capital in Albania using surveys that have been distributed towards the Albanian citizens in different geographical areas. Thus, the units of analysis are *the citizens*.

Likewise, I explained above, I will measure the Social Capital in Albania, following the measurement of the Social Capital level for each region I previously categorized. The number of respondents for each region is as in the table below:

Table 4. The number of respondents by cities' categories

Size of area	No. of Respondents
Large city	115
Medium town	148
Small village	129

Based on this categorization, I will carry out findings that will further explain the lack or the consolidation of the social capital in Albania.

4.1.1 Measuring Social Capital in Large cities

The social capital level for the large cities in Albania is shown in the table below:

Table 5. The social capital level in large Albanian cities

	Large Cities					
	Structural Social Capital			**Cognitive Social Capital**		
Question	**Q.1**	**Q.2**	**Q.3**	**Q.4**	**Q.5**	**Q.6**
	1.9	2.1	1.9	2.1	2.4	**1.1**
Scores			**1.9**			**1.86**
Score						**1.9**
No. of Respondents						115

According to the results, when the respondents were asked:

Q.1: *'If your neighborhood would be polluted affecting the entire environment of your village/town/city, then who do you think would come forward to deal with this situation?'* they scored with 1 #Every person would deal with the problem individually and #The entire city/town/village scored 5. *The average response score of 118 respondents was 1.9.*[6] This question showed that in the big cities, citizens do not offer mutual support and do not consider the *informal networks* as an important feature that can contribute to the development of the area.

Q.2: *Who in this village/town/city has historically looked after the common public spaces?* Responses ranged from "No one does anything," scored 1, to "We all discuss and jointly decide what needs to be done," scored 5. *The average response score overall 115 respondents was 2.1.* According to the index, the indicator shows that there is somehow a collective action regarding to the mutual space that citizens share with each other. Differently from the previous question, the current index shows that people feel responsible regarding the actions that can directly affect them. Through this question, the collective actions are measured, which seem to be important only in the cases where the citizens feel jeopardized in a specific context.

Q.3: *Suppose two people in this village/town/city had an argument with each other. Who do you think would resolve this dispute?*

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[6] The full range of responses to each of these six questions is presented in Annex 2.

The alternative responses: "No one," scored 1, through "Their neighbors," scored 3, to "The entire village/town/city collectively," scored 5. *The average response was 1.9.* The current score is another indicator that measures the collective actions and mutual support at the same time. According to the index, there is very low common support regarding the individual level.

- **Structural Social Capital Score = 1.9**

The below questions are used to measure the cognitive social capital:

Measuring cognitive social capital, I have been mostly focused on features such as: solidarity and trust. This decision is made based on Putnam's theory on the social capital (Please refer to Chapter 2).

Q.4: Suppose some children of the village/town/city are disrespectful to elders, they disobey their parents, etc. Who in this village/town/city feels it right to correct other people's children?

Responses were modeled: "No one," scored 1; "Only close relatives" scored 2; "Relatives and neighbors," scored 3; and "Anyone from the village/town/city," scored 4. *The average response was 2.1.* This question has been used to measure the level of solidarity among citizens in the big cities in Albania. According to the result, the Albanian citizens in big cities seem to consider important solidarity among them. The current score is above the average considering that the current question is measured by a point scale from 1 to 4.

Q.5: Which among the following is the most important reason why people in this village/town/city take care of public space?

Alternatives: "Because the common public space is valuable for the citizens" scored 1, "Because this activity keeps the citizens united' scored 2. *The average response was 2.4.*

Q.6: Suppose someone from the village/town/city had to go away for a while, along with their family. In whose charge could they leave "their house"?

Alternatives: "no one" scored 1. "neighbor" scored 2, "other family member" scored 4. *The average response was 1.1.* This question indicates the level of trust among the Albanian citizens in big cities. As it was discussed in the literature, *trust* is considered as one of the main features of the social capital. According to the current score, in Albanian society, trust seems to be a

problematic issue. Considering that this question is measured by a point scale from 1 to 4, it is obvious that the value is very low.

- **Cognitive Social Capital Score = 1.86**

Based in the literature, a consolidated social capital can be found in those societies where there is a high level of mutual support, collective actions, effective informal networks, a high level of trust and, a high level of solidarity. According to the results of this study, *big cities in Albania lack a consolidated social capital. Every* separated value showed that Albanian society in the big cities did not develop notions such as: solidarity, networking, or trust. Considering the results carried out from each indicator and the two main structures of the social capital, I conclude that the Social Capital Albania in big cities is not well defined.

4.1.2 Measuring Social Capital in Medium Cities and Towns

The social capital index for medium cities in Albania is shown in the table below:

Table 6. The social capital level in medium Albanian cities

Medium Cities/Towns						
	Structural Social Capital			**Cognitive Social Capital**		
Question	**Q.1**	**Q.2**	**Q.3**	**Q.4**	**Q.5**	**Q.6**
	1.7	1.9	2.6	1.9	2.2	**1.7**
Scores			**2**			**1.9**
Score						**1.95**
No. of Respondents						148

According to the results, when the respondents were asked:

Q.1: '*If your neighborhood would be polluted affecting the entire environment of your village/town/city, then who do you think would come forward to deal with this situation?*' they scored with 1 #Every person would deal with the problem individually and #The entire city/town/village scored 5. *The average response score overall 148 respondents was 1.7.* This

question showed that in the medium cities, the citizens are likely to give less mutual support than in the big cities and do not consider the *informal network* as an important feature that can contribute to the development of the area.

Q.2: Who in this village/town/city has historically looked after the common public spaces?
Responses ranged from "No one does anything," scored 1, to "We all discuss and jointly decide what is to be done," scored 5. *The average response score overall 148 respondents was 1.9.*

Q.3: Suppose two people in this village/town/city had an argument with each other. Who do you think would resolve this dispute?
The alternative responses: "No one," scored 1, through "Their neighbors," scored 3, to "The entire village/town/city collectively," scored 5. *The average response was 2.6.* The current value is another indicator that measures the collective actions and mutual support at the same time. According to the value, there is a slightly high level of common support. The result of question three shows a great difference between the big and medium cities in Albania in regards to the collective actions. *According to the results in the medium cities, individuals are more likely to collaborate among them.*

- **Structural Social Capital Score= 2**

Q.4: Suppose some children of the village/town/city are disrespectful to elders, they disobey their parents, etc. Who in this village/town/city feels it right to correct other people's children?
The following responses: "No one," scored 1; "Only close relatives" scored 2; "Relatives and neighbors," scored 3; and "Anyone from the village/town/city," scored 4. *The average response was 1.9.* This question has been used to measure the level of solidarity among citizens in the medium cities in Albania. According to the result, the Albanian citizens share less solidarity among them in the medium cities compared with the big cities.

Q.5: Which among the following is the most important reason why people in this village/town/city take care of public space?
Alternatives: "Because the common public space is valuable for the citizens" scored 1, "Because this activity keeps the citizens united' scored 2. *The average response was 2.2.*

Q.6: *Suppose someone from the village/town/city had to go away for a while, along with their family. In whose charge could they leave "their house"?*

Alternatives: "no one" scored 1. "neighbor" scored 2, "other family member" scored 4. *The average response was 1.7.* This question indicates the level of trust among Albanian citizens in medium cities. According to the current value, in Albanian society trust seems to be less problematic in medium towns compared with big cities.

▪ **Cognitive Social Capital Score = 1.9**

Based in the literature, a consolidated social capital can be found in those societies where there is a high level of mutual support, collective actions, effective informal networks, a high level of trust and, high level of solidarity. According to the results of this study, ***medium cities and towns in Albania lack a consolidated social capital. Every*** separated value showed that Albanian society in the big cities did not develop enough notions such as: solidarity, networking, or trust. Considering the results carried out from each indicator and the two main structures of social capital, I conclude that Social Capital Albania in medium cities is below the average.

4.1.3   Measuring Social Capital in Small Towns and Villages

According to the results, when the respondents were asked:

Q.1: '*If your neighborhood would be polluted affecting the entire environment of your village/town/city, then who do you think would come forward to deal with this situation?'* they scored with 1 #Every person would deal with the problem individually and #The entire city/town/village scored 5. *The average response score overall 129 respondents was 2.1.* This question showed that in the small towns and villages, citizens give **more** mutual support than in the big and medium cities and do consider the *informal network* as an important feature that can contribute in the development of the area.

Q.2: *Who in this village/town/city has historically looked after the common public spaces?*

Responses ranged from "No one does anything," scored 1, to "We all discuss and jointly decide what is to be done," scored 5. *The average response score overall 129 respondents was 2.4.*

Q.3: Suppose two people in this village/town/city had an argument with each other. Who do you think would resolve this dispute?

The alternative responses: "No one," scored 1, through "Their neighbors," scored 3, to "The entire village/town/city collectively," scored 5. *The average response was 2.5.* The current value is another indicator that measures the collective actions and mutual support at the same time. According to the result, there is a high level of common support in small towns and villages compared with big cities in Albania. *According to the results in the small towns and villages, individuals are more likely to collaborate among them.*

- **Structural Social Capital Score= 2.4**

Q.4: Suppose some children of the village/town/city are disrespectful to elders, they disobey their parents, etc. Who in this village/town/city feels it right to correct other people's children?

Responses were modeled: "No one," scored 1; "Only close relatives" scored 2; "Relatives and neighbors," scored 3; and "Anyone from the village/town/city," scored 4. *The average response was 2.2.* This question has been used to measure the level of solidarity among citizens in the medium cities in Albania. According to the result, the Albanian citizens in the small towns and the villages share more solidarity among them then in the big and medium cities.

Q.5: Which among the following is the most important reason why people in this village/town/city take care of public space?

Alternatives: "Because the common public space is valuable for the citizens" scored 1, "Because this activity keeps the citizens united' scored 2. *The average response was 2.4.*

Q.6: Suppose someone from the village/town/city had to go away for a while, along with their family. In whose charge could they leave "their house"?

Alternatives: "no one" scored 1. "neighbor" scored 2, "other family member" scored 4. *The average response was 2.6.* This question indicates the level of trust among the Albanian citizens in small towns and villages. According to the current value, trust seems to be less problematic in small towns and villages compared with the big cities.

- **Cognitive Social Capital Score= 2.5**

The social capital index for small towns/villages in Albania is shown in the table below:

Table 7. The social capital level in small Albanian cities

Small Towns/Villages						
	Structural Social Capital			Cognitive Social Capital		
Question	Q.1	Q.2	Q.3	Q.4	Q.5	Q.6
	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.7	2.4	2.6
Scores			2.4			2.5
Score						2.45
No. of Respondents						129

Based in the literature, a consolidated social capital can be found in those societies where there is a high level of mutual support, collective actions, effective informal networks, a high level of trust and, a high level of solidarity. According to the results of this study, the *small towns and villages in Albania have established a slight level of social capital.* Every separated index showed that the Albanian society in small towns and villages develops notions such as: solidarity, networking, or trust. Considering the results carried out from each indicator and the two main structures of the social capital, I conclude that the Social Capital in Albania in the small towns and villages is developed at a certain point. It is not in the main focus of the current thesis to investigate the reasons why such a result, however, such conclusion is discussed in the following chapter (4.2).

4.2. The integrated results of Social Capital in Albania

The current section of the thesis provides information regarding the level of development of the Social Capital in Albania. To do so, first I collapsed all the cities from where the respondents in three big categories are, such as: Large, medium, and small cities/towns/villages. I established the categorizations based on the number of habitats for each city. This categorization gives a paramount picture on the level the variables are developed, such as: trust, solidarity, collective actions, mutual support, etc. (as main determinants of social capital).

In the previous section, the data and the results for each category are shown in separate tables. In this section, I will present all the results in an integrated table. The integrated table helps to further discuss the differences between big, medium, and small cities in Albania, it also helps to measure the Social Capital in Albania from a point scale from 1 to 5.

Table 8. The social capital level in Albania

Social Capital in Albania						
	Structural Social Capital			**Cognitive Social Capital**		
Question	**Q.1- Scores**	**Q.2-Scores**	**Q.3-Scores**	**Q.4-Scores**	**Q.5-Scores**	**Q.6-Scores**
Big Cities	1.9	2.1	1.9	2.1	2.4	1.1
Medium Cities/Towns	1.7	1.9	2.6	1.9	2.2	1.7
Small Towns/Villages	2.1	2.4	2.5	2.2	2.4	2.6
			2.1			**2**
Sore						**2.05**
Tot. No. of Respondents						**392**

According to the results of the table, I did not find great differences between different areas of Albania regarding the development of social capital. In the current section I measured Social Capital, as it is suggested in the literature, through variables: such as: mutual support, collective actions, solidarity/reciprocity, and trust. Literature suggests that when a high level of each of these variables is found in a certain society, these societies are more likely to show a high level of consolidated social capital. In the Albanian case, the six questions used in the questionnaire measured the level of social capital in three different regions. Each of the questions represented one of the above-mentioned variables. Q.1 → the level of mutual support; Q.2 and 3 → the level of collective actions; Q.4 and 5 → the level of solidarity and Q.6 → the level of trust.

The results in the integrated table show that there is a significant difference between the big and the medium cities regarding the level of collective actions. In the medium towns, the citizens seem to be more collaborative regarding certain issues that belong to the community. Meanwhile, trust seems ***to be the most problematic issue in large and medium cities.*** According to the results, the Albanian citizens in big cities ***do not trust*** each other (Check the Q.6 in Table 5). An opposite finding is found in the small villages of Albania, where people are more likely to trust each other.

Based on the results, I find that such social capital variables are related negatively to the size of the city/town/village. It means that the bigger the city, the less trust is established between citizens. Under such conditions, it seems to be difficult to establish a consolidated social capital.

Based on such results I recall the sixth question, to operationalize in practical terms, *the factor of trust* that is commonly included in most treatments of social capital.

> ***"Q.6***: *Suppose someone from the village/town/city had to go away for a while, along with their family. In whose charge could they leave "their house"?*
>
> Alternatives: "no one" scored 1. "neighbor" scored 2, "other family member" scored 4.*"*

This way I test the second Hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: The absence of Social Capital comes as a consequence of a low level of trust among citizens.

Based on the results of Table 8, I calculated the average response *that* indicates the level of trust among the Albanian citizens in the big/medium cities and small towns and villages. *The average response **was 1.8***. According to the current value, trust seems to be problematic in Albania. It means that it does not contribute in the development of social capital.

Table 9. Trust level value in Albania

Question	Q.6-Scores
Big Cities	1.1
Medium Cities/Towns	1.7
Small Towns/Villages	2.6
Sore	**1.8**

Responses to these six questions, shown in Annex 2, are quite highly correlated among themselves, and they load commonly on a single factor.

Table 10. Social Capital: Factor Pattern

	FACTOR 1
Dealing with polluted environment	0.74163
Dealing with common public space	0.62604
Settling disputes	0.75494
Dealing with errant children	0.71018
Value placed on unity	0.76853
Trust placed in others	0.06639

*The single common factor accounts for 55 percent of the combined variance.

The six separate variables presented in the table above were merged into a Social Capital Index. "Each variable is given equal weight within the index, which is obtained by summing across the scores after first dividing each variable by its range so that each variable has a maximum range of one." [104]. Likewise, I mentioned before, I use the model established by Krishna and Uphoff to generate the Social Capital Index in Albania. Thus, following their line, I transformed the results in a second stage, into an index has a range from zero to hundred. This transformation is useful for the interpretation of the results generated by the regression analysis.
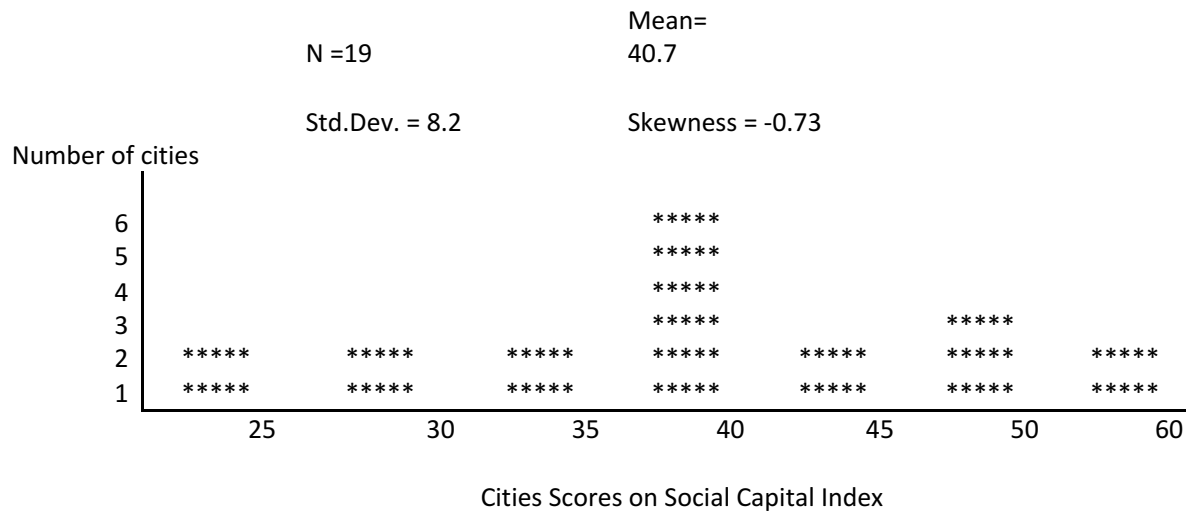
The Albanian scores on the Social Capital Index are portrayed in Figure 6. To calculate the social capital index in Albania, I used the number of cities from where the respondents come. After working with the data, I found out that 392 respondents that participated in the study come from 19 cities/towns and villages in Albania. (Please refer to Annex 1 where is also their categorization according to their size.).

Likewise, it is shown in the graph below, in a rage from 0 to 100, **14 cities scored below 50, while the other part scored above the 50 but below the 70**. The combined index is highly correlated with its constituent parts[7]

---

[7] Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha = 0.855. Individual correlations with the index are all 0.75 or higher.

Figure 6. Albanian scores on the social capital index

```
                                          Mean=
                     N =19                 40.7

                     Std.Dev. = 8.2        Skewness = -0.73
 Number of cities

        6  │                               *****
        5  │                               *****
        4  │                               *****
        3  │                               *****              *****
        2  │ *****    *****    *****    *****    *****    *****    *****
        1  │ *****    *****    *****    *****    *****    *****    *****
           └──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────
               25       30       35       40       45       50       60

                      Cities Scores on Social Capital Index
```

Highest Score: 60 (Delvina/South district; Kukesi/North district)
Lowest Score: 25 (Durres/Central district; Saranda/South district)

After transforming the results in the second stage (aiming to generate the Social Capital Index) the new results (figure 6), present almost the same results as showed in table 8 where the level of consolidation of social capital is lower in the big and medium cities compared with the small towns/villages. As it is shown in figure 6, small towns such as Delvina and Kukesi scored the highest score compared with Durres which is one of the biggest cities in Albania that scored the lowest score. Again, based on the results, I find out that social capital variables are related negatively with the size of the city/town/village. To better understand the reason why in small towns or villages of Albania, there is a stronger social capital, I suggest developing other studies which can give better insight that can explain the phenomena. Anyhow, I would recommend focusing on the social cohesion spectrum. After the fall of communism, a large number of the Albanians coming from the small towns/villages, drooped in the big cities where they did know nobody. It means that they could not collaborate with other citizens as they potentially did in their village or town. On the other hand, the Albanian citizens who lived in the big cities perceived the newcomers as foreigners. Under such conditions was difficult to establish bridges of trust between them. According to the literature, in a state where the institutions are weak, as they are in the Albanian case, there is found a very low level of trust among citizens of a country/city and the foreign citizens who come to live there [45]. This situation grows the feelings of unsafety, meaning

that in the big cities, citizens feel more unsafe as not all of them feel attached to the place. Thereby, "others" or "strangers" are perceived as intruders into a warm and safe community [45].

On the other hand, results suggest that in small towns/villages there is a higher level of trust among individuals. This might be explained by the place attachment. In small communities, it is found a higher feeling of safety. The findings on small towns/villages where 'all know all', suggest that the more people feel attached to their neighborhoods, the less they feel unsafe [41]. Furthermore, the studies on the social composition of the neighborhood, suggest that the perception of too many foreigners in the neighborhood is positively related to feelings of unsafety.

4.2.1. The correlation between SCIndex in Albania and informal networking, solidarity, and trust

Analyzing the data and the results, I found out that there is a significant correlation between SCIndex in Albania and the main features of the social capital, such as: ***mutual support and informal networking, solidarity, and trust***. Such a measurement is conducted based on Putnam's theory on Social Capital.

After analyzing the data, I found out that the cities that scored a high level of Social Capital Index also show a high level of variables of the social capital *per se*. Measuring the correlation between the Social Capital Index and the variables of the social capital is very relevant, as it can be empirically supported the theory of social capital. The section below will show all the significant correlations between the Social Capital Index and Social Capital variables.
***All the reported coefficients are significant at 0.01 level.*

- Indicator. 1. Informal networking and mutual support- '*If your neighborhood would be polluted affecting the entire environment of your village/town/city, then who do you think would come forward to deal with this situation?* (The entire village/town/city).
*(correlation = 0.68)

- Indicator. 2. Trust- *Suppose someone from the village/town/city had to go away for a while, along with their family. In whose responsibility could they leave "their house"?* (Can only close relatives be trusted, or a larger group of cities?)

*(correlation = 0.657)

- Indicator. 3. Solidarity- *Which among the following is the most important reason why people in this village/town/city take care of public space?* (The activity keeps the citizens united).

*(correlation = 0.54)

5. DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH METHOD- STAGE 2 OF THE ANALYSIS

The lack of Civil Society influences towards democratization in Albania during transition

A liberal and moderate public sphere was supposed to be established in Albania after the collapse of the communist regime in the early 1990s. Free exchange of different views and public opinions has been and is still linked to the needs of the new business class and intellectuals, who seek public forums to discuss business-related issues, political and social problems. There a need to have citizens' representatives' to protect them. The state was unorganized, facing a lack of experience in democratic state-building and the level of insecurity between individuals was high. More than 3,000 people took up residence at the German embassy, in difficult conditions after the interruption of water and food supplies [189].

On the other hand, the fall of the communist system had its impact on the military system, where the dictatorial regime had invested large sums to build the giant infrastructure of the Albanian army. One of the first stages of the destruction and degradation of the Albanian army, the consequences of which are still felt today, even though we are members of NATO, is the devaluation of the military status. Another moment that marked the devaluation of the military status was that of 1997 when the army suffered the greatest blow and the country was engulfed in collective madness and weapons fell into the hands of various people. The chaos of 1997 destroyed the entire military structure leaving only its skeletons behind [63].

Feeling afraid by these conditions, Albanian citizens did not develop trust feelings towards the state and between each other. They refused to collaborate, refused to hold elections, refused to go the polls [190] contributing to the underdevelopment of social capital, and increasing the feelings of insecurity at the same time. Thus, after the fall of communism in Albania, several forms of profit and non-profit organizations were rapidly established that aimed at representing different social group interests aiming to protect them and make them feel secure in a very fragile state.

However, such organizations faced serious challenges regarding their capacity, influence, reliability, and legitimacy in the public sphere [131]. On the other hand, the state per se seemed not to be able to take advantage of these organizations.

Likewise, the former Minister of Integration and Foreign Trade (1998-2002), Ermelinda Meksi, would say: "We had to start everything from scratch, attempting to create a database of the existing CSOs and classify them according to their field of expertise to take advantage of their experience and professional competence in various issues" [116]. The statement of Ermelinda Meksi has been deducted from one of her interviews where she was trying to summarize the situation of the civil society in Albania after the early phase of transition. Her declaration was in the framework of the establishment of the Stability Pact for South-East Europe in 1999. However, in 1998 the presence and the role in the policy process of the civil society in Albania started to increase. Based on the report of OSFA in 2005, CSOs improved their relationships with the public, state institutions and the government [131]. The Civil society and its organizations started to be involved with their activities in the economic and socio-economic sphere, in promoting human rights, and civic education, and in creating awareness and mobilizing citizens against the corruption.

During the transition, Albania experienced the development of the CSOs. In 1994, the number of CSOs that were registered in the Court of Tirana was 210 and in 2005 the Court of Tirana counted 823 registered CSOs [173]. Such an increase can be explained because of the political and economic situation that Albania faced after the crisis of 1997. It was this historical moment where it was understood the importance of the civil society as a crucial instrument in the contribution to the development of democracy in a country that was almost politically and economically collapsed. It was not the same situation before 1997. From 1990-1997, the civil society was deeply politicalized, and the Albanian citizens were completely indifferent towards this form of representation. At that time, it was explained that such behavior from both the civil society and the citizens was because of the Communist legacy and the political and economic aggravated context during the early transition period. Thus, under such conditions, the civil society in Albania failed in promoting democratization.

In this chapter, as the second stage of the analysis, the Albanian civil society dynamics will be analyzed during the transition period. To do so, I will use the post-Communist normative approach that assumes the civil society to act as an intermediary actor, to promote a dialogue between the state and the public; and to provide expertise for a non-professional and politicized bureaucracy inherited from the previous regime. Based on such assumptions, the second stage of the study is grounded on the institutionalist approach, claiming that:

Hypothesis 3: The civil society organizations in Albania failed because of *the legacy of the past*.

To achieve the main goal of this chapter, I will focus in two moments: (i) The development of the civil society in Albania during the early transition period; (ii) The failure of the civil society in Albania as an intermediary actor between the state and the public.

5.1. Challenges in developing the civil society in Albania during the early transition period

The deficiency of an independent civil society in Albania has been justified by the factors of the past, such as: the strong dominance of the Communist system that did not leave space for the development of such organizations and the compulsory association in state socio-political organizations. All these factors have been discussed in Chapter two of this thesis (for a deeper understanding please refer to Chapter two). As will be discussed in the current chapter, all these challenges harmed the professional preparation and the efficient internal organization of the CSOs. However, other factors played a significant role in the weak establishment of the CSOs in Albania during the early period of transitions, such as: (i) the citizens' indifferentism towards CSOs; (ii) the limits of the legal framework; (iii) the organization's internal challenges; (iv) the lack of professional preparation. All these factors will be analyzed in this current section when studying the development of the CSOs in Albania during the early period of transition.

5.1.1. Legacy of the Past: An indifferent public

After the fall of communism, in all the Central-Eastern European Countries (CEEC), the public

started to react against the compulsory membership in the party-state organizations [80]. But this was not the case for Albania because of the strong totalitarian regime that Albania experienced. As Kitschelt, Zdenka, Radoslaw, and Toka would argue, the stronger the compulsory membership in state-controlled organizations is, the less the public tended to participate in the CSOs during the transition [100]. Thus, the degree of communist oppression during the communism played a significant role in the participation of the citizens towards civil society. From this point of view, I state that: The Communist legacy played a crucial role in the weak performance of the civil society organizations in Albania during the transition.

During the communism, the Albanian party-state established seven socio-political and more than 35 cultural organizations, aiming at the dissemination of the party ideology and ensuring loyalty to the party. Citizens have been forced to be active members of such organizations. This form of activism was the guarantee for these individuals not to be considered as an 'enemy of the state. Not being a member of the party-state organizations, the citizens had to face several forms of repression, such as: imprisonment and deportation to the labor camps. It was not difficult for the party-state organizations to recognize the participation of the citizens as they were holding weekly meetings and monthly meetings [100]. These enormous public meetings were organized mostly for supporting the resistance in Vietnam, the annual memorials of the anniversaries of revolutions in the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba. According to Lubonja because of this process, citizens started to lose the sense of their civic engagement [113]. Furthermore, these kinds of participations were based on the concept of volunteerism. Thus, the communist regime based all its ideology on volunteering, by giving a broad usage and meaning to this concept. For example, it is a matter of fact that the Albanian railway was built with voluntary labor [113].

However, the concept of volunteering faced several challenges with the fall of communism. In 1990, one of the expressions widely used in Albania was: 'In a market economy even a bird no longer sings for free' [102]. Said that Albanian society was not supporting the voluntary actions and as a consequence it faced a lack of civic engagement, hence impeding the development of civil society during the transition [24]. After the collapse of the communist system, the citizens abandoned the voluntary action, showing unwillingness to engage in the newly established CSOs

[102]. Such conclusions have been empirically evidenced in a study conducted by the OSFA in 1994, in which, 75 percent of the respondents considered volunteering and participation in CSOs as behavior that belonged to the past and thus irrelevant for future development [127]. On the other hand, trade unions significantly declined regarding the membership [174]. As a result, in 1998, Albania only eleven percent of the population participated in civil society organizations. These results ranked Albania in the last position among the former communist countries [126].

The Albanian communist regime, differently from other former communist countries, abandoned the religion in 1967. Such an action has been considered as another reason why the civil society organizations did not succeed during the transition in Albania [24] Religion played a significant role in organizing different forms of independent CSOs in countries such as: The German Democratic Republic, Poland, Romania, and other CEEC. Religion supported different organized groups in limiting the diffusion of Communist propaganda, enabling the re-establishment of the civil society [96]. Thus, it offered legitimacy to the newly established CSOs, by firstly supporting forms of collaboration in humanitarian actions [92]. Through these actions, the CSOs introduced to the citizens the significance of the civil society during the transition period.

Albania did not experience the same story after the fall of communism as the banning of religion demolished the development of an independent civil society [51]. After the change of the regime, the religious organizations could not offer support or legitimacy to the CSOs as they had to recover their image, which was destroyed by the Communist regime. Religion was inexistent in Albania for 23 years [51]. The director of the Christian Relief Society in Albania, John Wood, claimed that the inexperienced religious organizations in Albania could not participate in humanitarian activities. They had a lack of experience and they could not influence civic engagement or stimulate voluntary action towards such actions. Furthermore, religion in Albania was not in the position to offer newly established CSOs experience and legitimacy. The absence of volunteers and the inexperience of religious institutions in the region of Albania were two fundamental features that contributed towards the under-development of the civil society organizations during the transition period.

5.1.2. A powerless legal framework

Based on the institutionalist approach, the state should create a favorable environment to give a boost to the development of civil society through an adequate legal framework and appropriate development strategies for the civil society activity. Civil society, on the other hand, should support the state with its expertise when requested. In the Albanian case, such an approach could not be applied in the early transition period. The state could not support the development of the civil society organizations because of the political and economic challenges that it was facing, but also because of an inadequate legal framework.

The legal framework was able to support the establishment of the CSOs in Albania based in Tirana. It did not include other cities. Also, based on the legal framework of 1993, on the Civil Society Organizations in Albania, the citizens who wanted to establish the CSOs had to fill several application forms in different offices including the central office at the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports in Tirana under the presence of at least five of its members [139]. This process costs three times more in financial terms and six times more, in terms of time, compared with the other former-CEEC [129]. These centralized procedures brought out another implication such as: the concentration of the CSOs in Tirana. In 1995, in the Tirana Court, 82% of all the CSOs in Albania has been registered. Thus, the rest of the country lacked the presence of the CSOs because of the complicated procedures of registration discouraging the establishment of the new CSOs in different geographical areas of Albania.

To evaluate the inefficiency of the legal framework, the [170] undertook a study and according to the results, during the early period of transition, Albania counted 250 CSOs, meanwhile, Montenegro had half of the population compared with Albania counted 2500 CSOs [170]. In the Albanian case, none of the main Political Parties, the Socialist Party (SP) and the Democratic Party (DP) gave support to the CSOs [131]. It means that the support towards CSOs was not related to the ideology that these parties shared, but it was related to the way how governments perceived civil society.

According to Simon, during the early period of transition, the CEEC governments evaluated the financial difficulties of CSOs as one of the principal problems of the post- Communist civil society. For this reason, they presented legal frameworks that supported the new CSOs, through fiscal incentives for donations, financial support for the activity of civil society [154]. In relation to CSOs, such an action consisted of the reduction of the annual taxation towards donators [130]. In Albania, the lack of legal support jeopardized the expansion and the development of CSOs. The Law of 1995 on 'Civil Society Organizations in the Republic of Albania' civil society did not include fiscal incentives [141].

5.1.3. Lack of professional preparation

Providing professional assistance to a politicized and unprofessional post-Communist state is considered one of the most important functions of civil society. This kind of support has been considered as a step towards democracy [163]. As it has already been discussed, the civil society in Albania failed in accomplishing this function. Another factor that influenced such a failure, besides the public indifference and organizational inter challenges, was the reason that the post-communist CSOs in Albania experienced a lack of professional preparedness too.

Likewise, it has been already discussed, during the communist regime, Albania faced the inexistence of an independent civil society. Thus, the lack of experience that CSOs showed after the fall of the regime, did not help them to compose a body with developed professional capacities able to handle the socio-economic challenges of transition [113]. Hence, the start was difficult. Human capacity became central for the activities of the CSOs in Albania after the publication of a study conducted by ORT-USAID in 1993 [126]. The study has been published five years later, thus in 1998. The study showed that the CSOs in Albania lacked developed human capital as in 1993, only 14 percent of Albanian's CSOs had two or more of their staff members who participated only one time in training programs offered by the foreign donors, on the civil society, and the market economy. Meanwhile, nine percent of them had one or more of their staff members educated abroad [126]. Therefore, the role of civil society in transition was underdeveloped.

The lack of skilled staff was accompanied by the absence of a database system, often aggravated by a low level of computerization, impeded knowledge accumulation, and the development of institutional memory [132]. As a matter of fact, in 1996, more than 70 percent of CSOs in Albania did not have records on their previous projects [128]. Another practice that followed CSOs in Albania during the early transition was the staff change of around 40 percent per year [131]. Therefore:

Lack of experience + *Lack of knowledge accumulation* + *Staff rotation* = **Underdeveloped CSOs** →Jeopardizing the further specialization of CSOs in the long run.

But, this was not enough for the CSOs in Albania during the early transition as the development of human resources did not become a priority yet. Yet, the CSOs prioritized their activities based on short-term financial profits rather than a long-term strategy that would have helped them in improving their professional skills and human capacities. This fact was empirically evidenced by a study conducted in 1999, where 65 percent of CSOs that participated in the study, declared that had never allocated parts of their annual budgets for the human resource development, and 74 percent had never thought of the need for a human resource development strategy [126]. Thus, the development of human recourses in the CSOs in Albania in the early transition remained low. On the other hand, the CSOs that thought to participate in training to treat their staff said that they did not have sufficient money to cover such expenditures [126]. They said that the only way to participate in training was to participate in training offered at the national level, although these did not necessarily meet the training needs related to the activity area of the CSOs [126].

Hence, during the early transition in Albania, CSOs lacked (i) the financial resources; (ii) the vision and strategies in increasing the level of professional preparation. The absence of prepared and skilled staff, penalized CSOs in Albania to contribute towards democracy during the early transition period. This supposition is supported by the study of OSFA [131]. The study investigates such an issue focusing on the first five years of transition in Albania. According to the study, during 1996 only 17 percent of CSOs in Albania accepted to have adequate human resources ready to evaluate public policies [131].

5.2. The failure of civil society in Albania as an intermediate actor between the state and the public

According to the post-Communist civil society scholars, the main function of the civil society is being the intermediator actor between the state institutions and the public in strengthening the transition state. The main role of civil society is to represent the citizens' problems and force the state institutions to take more responsive approaches towards the citizens' needs. Said this, the current section investigates whether the Albanian civil society fulfills/ed the function of the intermediate actor. As it was already discussed, the government and the state institutions showed little interest in the civil society in Albania. Thus, the legal framework is poor in this context. Furthermore, the regulations concerning the activity of the civil society were drafted and approved without prior consultation with civil society. An empirical fact is the law of 1994 on 'The Trade Unions'. The law did not predict any form of involvement of the trade unions in the policy processes concerning the labor market regulation [140].

The need to quickly introduce the economic reforms did not allow the Albanian government to involve the trade unions, as this would have prolonged the decision-making process, slowed down the reforms and ultimately it would have caused greater hardship for citizens [155]. The action of the non-involvement of the trade unions was considered to settle the indifference of the government and the state institutions towards the civil society [153]. At that time, the citizens protested in the street against the law. Also, the intellectuals initiated a public debate regarding the exclusion of civil society in the process. According to them, the exclusion of civil society implemented reforms more difficult and contributed to an increase in social discontent. The absence of a legal framework promoting the transparency of the state institutions restricted access to information, limited relationships between the civil society and the state to confront and individual contacts, as well as a delayed the process of institutionalizing the dialogue between them.

From 1991 to 1998 no regulation ensured transparency and public accountability of the state institutions [133]. Moreover, the state institutions at central and local levels had no public offices or spokespersons to communicate with the media and the public [38]. Despite the existence of an

agreement that would have provided full access to unclassified documentation for the CSOs, the annual reports edited for the public were the only information available [131]. The Restricted access to the information on the progress and the impact of the liberal reforms were a major barrier to the civil society in engaging with the state institutions, which continued to operate, a common practice during the Communist rule, surrounded by a shield of secrecy. This was particularly relevant for the media, as we will see later in this chapter when attempting to fulfill its role as a watchdog over the government's activity.

Because of these difficulties in establishing an institutional dialogue with the state institutions and with their low level of professionalism, the CSOs never acted as a social cushion, neither through informing the public about the necessity of reforms nor through the delivery of services to ease the social pressures. From 1993 to 1996, only 25 CSOs published information concerning the difficulties encountered and likely future challenges during the transition process [131]. In a 1996 survey, 68 percent of the citizens answered that they did not expect such a long and difficult transition process [126]. A widely uninformed public interpreted the outcomes of the transition reforms as government mistakes [132]. This left the entire social burden of the social discontent on the shoulders of the already weak state [132].

Civil society is meant to be a messenger between the state and its citizens. From 1990 to 1995, the limited interaction between civil society and the public made them distant actors. According to a survey conducted by INSTAT in 1996, only 32 percent of the interviewed citizens claimed to be aware of what the civil society was and what it did in Albania [86]. The survey showed that the indifference of the state institutions to the civil society reduced the public support for the CSOs [86]. This view was confirmed by a 1996 survey, in which 90 percent of the CSOs argued that they would enjoy more support from the public if the state institutions were to involve them as partners in the reform process [126].

5.3. Concluding Remarks

The Civil society in Albania did not exist before the transition, thus, it had to start from scratch after the fall of the communist regime. With a low level of professional preparedness and difficulties in understanding its role during the transition process, neither the public nor the state helped the civil society to increase its capacity. Lack of interest and participation from the public, complemented by a politicization process, impeded the civil society in taking up its role as an intermediary actor that is to promote a dialogue between the state and the public.

A civil society that was excluded from the policy processes, concentrated on pursuing economic interests, and failed to demand the institutionalization of its relationship with the state, lost the support from the public. The absence of support by the public made the civil society unable to demonstrate to the policymakers its potential role. It is also marginalized its position to the point where the civil society remained a distant actor unprepared to find its role in a participatory democracy. Limited interest in making human resource development a strategic objective, insufficient financial resources, and the absence of appropriate fundraising strategies can be considered major impeding factors that left the civil society unable to strengthen the state, as well as to provide assistance and feedback to the state institutions of assistance and feedback to state institutions. However, it has been under-evaluated that a weak civil society, unable to strength the state involves the security sector. For this reason, this implication will be discussed in the next section.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND NEW SCIEFENTIC RESULTS

After the fall of communism, the former communist countries tried to adapt the political practices of the Western states to consolidate democracy. However, the transition period in the CEEC manifested several challenges in the political, social, and economic context. Albania, as one of these countries, it is considered as a political unique case because of the political and economic challenges over time. Albania is a country that lacks several degrees of democratization, especially in the development of civil society organizations. The last report of the Freedom House reported that Albania did not progress improve for at least the last decade in the category of the civil society organization.

After exploring all the economic, socio-political contexts that a country should have manifest to develop the civil society, I found out that the Albanian case had all the potential and conditions to develop a strong civil society. However, as it is reported, Albania lacks the development of civil society. Starting from this point of view, I investigated the literature to identify the domestic conditions of a country under which civil society organizations develop. Based on the literature, for the development of civil society, it is a pre-condition for the development of social capital.

Deriving from the anomalies of the democratization process in Albania, one of the most important challenges remains the assessment and evaluation of the long-term impact and effectiveness of social capital praxis. So far, the measurement of the wider impact remains elusive and is inadequate for capturing and tracing long-term consequences. The impact and long- term consequences of the lack of social capital under the safety and security spectrum have been ignored and outshined.

Thus, the thesis took an analytical and critical explanatory approach to disentangle the impact of social capital on the safety and the security spectrum in Albania. This thesis showed an absence of safety feelings among citizens in Albania around the absence of social capital. Such a finding revealed the power of both, the civil society and the trust in shaping safety and security and the limits that come out from the legacy of the past.

6.1. New Scientific Results

Based on the research presented in my Thesis, I arrived at 5 concluding thesis:

Thesis 1 – Institutionalization of social capital in post-communist countries is different from that of the western countries.

Published in: Çabiri, Danaj; 2017, Danaj, 2016

After the fall of communism, in all the (CEEC), the public started to react against the compulsory membership in the party-state organizations, but this was not the case for Albania. As scholars of post-communist systems would point out 'the stronger the compulsory membership in state-controlled organizations, the less the public tend to participate in the CSOs' Thus, (i) the degree of communist oppression during the communism played a significant role in the participation of the citizens towards civil society. (2) During the communism, citizens have been forced to be active members of the Albanian party-state organizations. Because of this process, citizens started to lose the sense of their civic engagement. As a result, in 1998, Albania only eleven percent of the population participated in civil society organizations. (3) The Albanian communist regime, differently from other former communist countries, abandoned the religion in 1967 and it took 23 years. Religion played a significant role in organizing different forms of independent CSOs in countries such as: The German Democratic Republic, Poland, Romania, and other CEEC. Such an action has been considered as another reason why civil society organizations did not succeed during the transition in Albania. (4) In the first years of transition, Albanian citizens did not develop trust feelings towards the state and between each other. They refused to collaborate, refused to hold elections, refused to participate in the polls, contributing to the underdevelopment of social capital, and increasing the feelings of insecurity at the same time.

Thesis 2 - The level of institutionalization and the efficacy of existing institutions can be explored with the help of the Process tracing approach using one study case.

Published in: Lami, Danaj, 2017; Çabiri, Danaj, 2017; Danaj, Lazányi, Lami, 2017.

One study case, because: (1) it illuminates the mechanism(s) that enable the CSOs during the transition period, under approaching *ceteris paribus* conditions, to produce insufficient outcomes towards democratization; (2) of the research design of the thesis- to test the theoretical proposition. Albania presents an appropriate choice because it provides a controlled environment in which to test the plausibility of the theory; (3) this research design enables me to lay the ground for theory development. If the theoretical proposition is validated, then it opens the possibilities for further research, covering similar cases. The study merges several methods (mixed methods) to explain all the variables that affect the poor performance of the CSOs in Albania and it is also divided into two different stages of analyses. In the first, stage I use the questionnaire by Anirudh Krishna and Norman Uphoff looking into the effect of trust, network, and reciprocity on the development of social capital. Through the results, I construct the (SCIndex) in Albania. In the second stage, I use documentary research to test whether is the legacy of the past the main feature that causes the dynamics of CSOs in Albania.

Thesis 3: The Civil Society Organizations in Albania cannot be developed as far as Albania faces the absence of Social Capital.

Published in: Çabiri, Danaj, 2017

With the fall of communism, Albania tried to adapt the good political practices of the Western states to consolidate democracy. The transition period manifested several challenges in the political, social, and economic context. To check the democratization degree of Albania, I checked the last report of Freedom House and I investigated the main indicators that Freedom House uses for the measurement of democracy. I realized that all the indicators changed over time, some improved and some of them did not, but it was only one indicator that scored the same in the last thirteen years, showing stagnation. This feature of democracy was civil society. Thus, to understand why the good practices of Western countries on the civil society in Albania did not succeed I started to investigate the literature to identify the conditions under which civil society rises. I found out that the pre-condition for the existence of civil society was Social Capital. Civil Society occurs where there is a developed social capital. Thus, my first question was? Why civil society in Albania failed? To investigate such a question, I measured the degree of social capital

that Albania has developed nowadays and the index I generated was too low, showing a lack of social capital. On the other side, I found some opposing findings. Freedom house reports the failure of civil society in Albania, meanwhile, in the court of Tirana are registered more than 10.000 CSOs. USAID reported that it has been donated billion dollars to increase the awareness of civil society, but still Albania is facing difficulties in that. Based on these two contradictory findings, my second question was: Why CSOs in Albania are not manifesting success? The second question is elaborated and explained through the legacy of the past as the main feature that did not allow the success of a developed social capital.

Thesis 4: The absence of Social Capital comes as a consequence of a low level of trust among citizens producing a sense of insecurity.

Published in: Danaj, Lazanyi, Bilan 2018; Danaj, Lazanyi, Bilan, Lami, 2017

The empirical findings of the thesis suggest that the development of social capital in Big/Medium Cities and Small Towns/Villages, varies from one other. The results show that in small towns can be found a higher developed social capital compared with the bigger cities in Albania. Thus, in the Albanian case, social capital variables are related negatively with the size of the city/town/village. Such results seem to be explained by the social cohesion spectrum. After the fall of communism, a large number of the Albanians coming from the small towns/villages, drooped in the big cities. On the other hand, the Albanian citizens who lived in the big cities perceived the newcomers as foreigners. Under such conditions was difficult to establish bridges of trust between them. Thereby, "others" or "strangers" were perceived as intruders into a warm and safe community. On the other hand, results suggest that in small towns/villages there is a higher level of trust among individuals. This was explained by the place attachment. In small communities, it is found higher feelings of safety. The findings on small towns/villages where 'all know all', suggest that the more people feel attached to their neighborhoods, the less they feel unsafe. All these empirical results are grounded in the theory also, where trust, as one of the main determinants of social capital, is understood as an Institutional domain function, covering spectrums such as: a-Problem Solving: (i)Trust and Confidence; (ii) Conflict Resolution, b-Microeconomic efficiency, c-Social Policies.

Thesis 5: The civil society organizations in Albania failed because of *the legacy of the past*.

Published in: Çabiri, Danaj, 2017

The Civil society in Albania did not exist before the transition, thus, it had to start from scratch after the fall of the communist regime. With (1) a low level of professional preparedness and difficulties in understanding its role during the transition process, neither the public, nor the state helped the civil society to increase its capacity. (2) Lack of interest and participation from the public, complemented by a politicization process, impeded the civil society in taking up its role as an intermediary actor that is to promote a dialogue between the state and the public. (3) A civil society that was excluded from the policy processes, concentrated on pursuing economic interests and failed to demand the institutionalization of its relationship with the state, lost the support of the public. The absence of support from the public made the civil society unable to demonstrate to the policymakers its potential role. It is also marginalized its position to the point where the civil society remained a distant actor unprepared to find its role in a participatory democracy. (4) Limited interest in making human resource development a strategic objective, insufficient financial resources and the absence of appropriate fundraising strategies can be considered major impeding factors that left the civil society unable to strengthen the state, as well as to provide assistance and feedback to the state institutions of assistance and feedback to state institutions. However, it has been under-evaluated that a weak civil society, unable to strength the state involves the security sector.

6.2. Summary

Considering the composition of the five hypotheses tested in the framework of the current research, it seems that the dissertation sheds light on a very complex phenomenon such as the social capital and its link with safety and security. The current thesis helped contribute to such new scientific results, as below:

First, analyzing the social capital, the thesis tried to shed light on questions such as: (i) ***Why*** it is important to build social capital? (ii) ***Who*** is benefiting from it? (iii) ***To whom*** belong the social capital? It has been discovered that the social capital is one of the most important features that contribute: (i) to the development of a country, (ii) in finding solutions for social- economic problems, (iii) in healing the inefficient government, etc. through (i) internal or external interaction and (ii) formal or informal interaction.

Second, through the current thesis, trust, as one of the main determinants of social capital, is understood as an Institutional domain function, covering spectrums such as: a-Problem Solving: (i)Trust and Confidence; (ii) Conflict Resolution, b-Microeconomic efficiency, c-Social Policies.

Third, this thesis established a theoretical discussion regarding the need for a new theory that can explain the social capital phenomena in the emerging democracies. As it is shown, Putnam's Theory was insufficient to explain the lack of social capital in emerging democracies as his theory was applied in consolidated democracies. Thus, theoretically, this thesis suggested an extension of Putnam's theory, merging it with the historical institutionalism Theory to explain the absence of social capital in emerging democracies.

Fourth, the current thesis contributes to exploring the role of civil society in the security sector. The study suggests that the CSOs in Albania need to overcome several challenges to be accepted by citizens and other institutions. It also carried out findings that suggest that CSOs in Albania are unable to fulfill their main goals and do not take responsibility for the consequences that produce their incompetence.

Fifth, the thesis explains the role of the legacy of the past as a great contributor to an unconsolidated social capital in Albania.

Sixth, the thesis, suggested interesting findings regarding the development of social capital in Big/Medium Cities and Small Towns/Villages, making a comparison between them and linking with the unsafety feelings of the individuals who are living in cities/towns included in the study.

Seventh, from the past perspective point of view, the thesis articulated that the civil society in Albania did not exist before the transition period, thus, it had to start from scratch after the fall of the communist regime. Thus, the thesis highlighted that the legacy of the past might be a very good explanation of why the civil society in Albania failed in fulfilling its main goals. The thesis focuses the argument on (i) the low level of professional preparedness and difficulties in understanding its role during the transition process; (ii) lack of interest and participation from the public' (iii) the fail of CSOs in Albania as an intermediary actor to promote the dialogue between the state and the public.

6.3. Recommendations

According to the results of the thesis and experts' consultations, the following recommendations are necessary to promote the role of civil society in Albania and make their presence useful.

- Safety and security issues should be involved in CSOs agenda in Albania. As far as trust issues result as a big problem between Albanian citizens and they fear to trust their relevant/friends/community, is the duty of CSOs to increase their role and power in protecting citizens by decreasing the feelings and unsafety. To fulfill such a duty, CSOs in Albania should take steps, such as:

- CSOs in Albania should organize several seminars and workshops to increase their credibility among citizens. First, they should conduct a survey which can show them the Albanian regions that do not trust at all the CSOs or do not have information regarding the CSOs. In such regions, the workshops seem to be a must.

- CSOs in Albania should organize campaigns that increase the awareness of their role in general and their role in the safety and security sphere in particular.

- As CSOs in Albania face a low level of trust among citizens, they must take concrete action during delicate periods in the country, such as: during elections, civic war, scandals, etc.

- CSOs in Albania should develop awareness policies on their role in protecting citizens, increasing the feeling of safety. To do so, the CSOs members need to be trained by experts in the safety and security field. Such actions were never undertaking in Albania.

- CSOs in Albania should develop practices that reduce the role of the legacy of the past in nowadays life. It can be made through a high pressing that CSOs can make towards the governance, through accountability and transparency requirements.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMSHC – The Civil Society Support Agency

CEEC – Central and Eastern Europe Countries

CSI – Civil Society Index

CSO – Civil Society Organization

DP – Democratic Party

ESCO – Environmental Civil Society Organization

EU – European Union

EUT – European University of Tirana

HI – Historical Institutionalism

IDM – The Institute for Democracy and Mediation

INSTAT – Institute of Statistics in Albania

NGO – Non-governmental Organization

OSFA – Open Society Foundation Albania

PT – Process Tracing

SC – Social Capital

SCI – Social Capital Initiative

SCIndex – Social Capital Index

SP – Socialist Party

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

APPENDIX 1. THE CITIES INCLUDED IN THE STUDY

City/Town/Village	
Tirana/C	Large
Durres/C	Large
Elbasan/C	Large
Vlore/C	Large
Sarande/C	Medium
Korce/C	Large
Berat/C	Medium
Lezha/C	Medium
Shkoder/C	Medium
Sukth/V	Small
Bathore/V	Small
Libohove/T	Medium
Tepelene/C	Small
Kruje/C	Small
Kolonje/T	Small
Delvine/T	Medium
Kukes/C	Medium
Shijak/T	Medium
Corovode/T	Small

APPENDIX 2. SOCIAL CAPITAL INDEX IN ALBANI: QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

1. If your neighborhood would be polluted affecting the entire environment of your village/town/city, then who do you think would come forward to deal with this situation?

Every person would deal with the problem individually [1]
Neighbors among themselves [2]
The dominant political faction [3]
All village/town/city leaders acting together [4]
The entire village/town/city [5]
Don't know/not sure [8]
Refused to reply; no answer [9]

2. Who in this village/town/city has historically looked after the common public spaces?

No one does anything for protecting the public space [1]
There are old customs that are followed here [2]
Our leaders take decisions that we all follow [3]
A village/town/city committee exists which takes these decisions jointly [4]
We all discuss and jointly decide what is to be done [5]
Don't know/not sure [8]
Refused to reply; no answer [9]

3. Suppose two people in this village/town/city had an argument with each other. Who do you think would resolve this dispute?

No one [I]
Some political leaders [2]
Their neighbors [3]
Their caste fellows [4]
The entire village/town/city collectively [5]
Don't know/not sure [8]
Refused to reply; no answer [9]

Cognitive Social Capital

4. Suppose some children of the village/town/city are disrespectful to elders, they disobey their parents, etc. Who in this village/town/city feels it right to correct other people's children?

No one [1]
Only close relatives [2]
Relatives and also neighbors [3]
Anyone from the neighbors/village/town [4]
Don't know/not sure [8]
Refused to reply; no answer [9]

5. *Which among the following is the most important reason why people in this village/town/city take care of public space?*

Because they like to have a clean environment [1]
Because this way there is less need to protect our common environment [2]
Because this is the right thing to do and earns us religious merit [3]
Because this activity keeps the citizens united [4]
Don't know/not sure [8]
Refused to reply; no answer [9]

6. *Suppose someone from the village/town/city had to go away for a while, along with their family. In whose charge could they leave "their house"?*

No one [1]
Neighbor [2]
Anyone from the neighbors [3]
Other family members [4]
Don't know/not sure [8]
Refused to reply; no answer [9]

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