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Party roles in young democratic regimes – Challenging dynamics in a modern political environment

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Abstract

The democratic situation for young regimes in Eastern Europe is one hallmarked with challenges. This master thesis focuses on three young democracies, Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia, in order to shed on these challenges. The framework is based on the functionalistic approach of Key (1964), dividing the realm into a micro, a meso and a macro level, and the dynamic approach of Easton (1990). Empirical observations from the old democracies are put into the framework setting, providing a reference mode. Data are of both a quantitative and a qualitative nature and are collected from second-hand sources. The presentation of the countries identifies a pattern of weak micro level roles, creating weaknesses on this and the meso level. The macro levels are stronger, but the discussion shows a great distance between electorate and government, which questions the soundness of the system. During my comparison between the younger regimes and old democracies, a universal pattern is established on the micro level. However, the consequences on the meso and the macro level are different. Old regimes have a robust institutionalized democracy with long traditions. This system is inertia for rapid changes in the democratic environment. The young regimes, however, do not have this advantage as their institutional structures are built in the modern political reality. Key's framework treats the political parties as an exclusive channel for political participation. The roles maintain, however, modern political development redistributes the roles to other actors and institutions.

Preface

This master thesis is the end product of a long and interesting process. Several sources of information have been read and utilized to achieve the final result. It has been a challenging task and I have learnt a lot.

I take the opportunity to express my gratitude to my supervisor, professor Per Selle at the Department for Comparative Politics, for his very valuable comments and rapid feedback, as well as encouragement along the way. Secondly, I would like to thank the professors in system dynamics at the University of Bergen for introducing me to the realm of dynamic thinking.

Finally, I would like to thank my dear friend and colleague, Meara He, for fruitful discussions and interesting arguments, providing the motivation for this master thesis.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND FOUNDATION

1.1 Background

Political parties and their function in a democratic regime are key features for our understanding of a modern democracy. Parties are described as the only vessel for transporting power from civil society to government. Schattschneider (1942: 1) concluded that "modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of political parties". Bryce (1921: 119) deemed parties inevitable as no other alternative to representative democracy has become apparent. Today, we observe the results of an ongoing process worldwide that has changed the political realm during the last 20 years significantly. The fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s and the revival of the European project, leading to an expanded European Union with broader policy areas, are good examples of this change. Modernization of technology, specifically regarding information, has changed the role of politicians and political parties. The largest area of change lies in the relationship between voters and party. Earlier there were traditional, close ties between voters and party based on ideology or societal differences. Dalton and Wattenberg (2002: 3) describes the situation today as "Today, mounting evidence points to a declining role for political parties in shaping the politics of advanced industrial democracies. Many established political parties have seen their membership rolls wane, and contemporary public seem increasingly sceptical about partisan politics". "Parties are also changing in organizational terms. The proliferation of citizen interest groups and other political intermediaries have provided alterations to the traditional representational role of political parties."

Changes in partisanship and parties have traditionally been primarily regarded in an electoral form. Voter behavior and volatility trends have been the main product from these studies and they have yielded good insight on how the parties are maneuvering in the election scope. However, the day-to-day political changes are a subject that has been left mainly outside the scope of such studies. How the changes in politics have reshaped the inner dynamics in a party and how these new dynamics shape policy and procedures, are largely left unanswered. New political regimes are also emerging around the globe today, and they are adapted directly into this real-political environment. With the development mentioned above in regards to western democratic regimes, how do these new democratic regime construct and carry out policy? How are parties organized and do their organization bring broader understanding to how the dynamics in old traditional democracies have changed? The question of how parties organize in this new political environment is an important one as democracy itself is not a

fully consolidated concept. Democracy evolves dynamically as any other political system and we could gain new insights and understanding into how democracy operates in this new environment. This is the motivation behind my master thesis, to further investigate the changes in select cases of new democratic regimes, to identify patterns of change or differences of development. By doing so, light will be shed on the current changes of party organization and day-to-day procedures. By comparing cross-nationally between both old and new democracies, similarities and differences that will have impact on the arguments presented around this issue will be discussed. The issue itself has been left unaccounted for in many aspects, and my ambition is to make some of these aspects clearer.

In recent years, old democracies have experienced e.g. a reduction in voter turnout and a reduction in membership in parties and in the voluntary sector. Although party organization and stability remain high, the observed development may create challenges in maintaining this situation. This master thesis looks at young regimes in Eastern Europe in order to investigate modern party roles in these new democracies. They have experienced sudden changes in their political realm and in their society as a whole. Also, the expansion of the European Union eastwards links the young regimes to traditional European democratic thinking. Therefore, cases from this part of the world provide a possibility to examine the emergence of a democracy directly linked with modernity. From the pool of alternative countries, Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia have been selected. Details on the selection process will be found in chapter 3.

This master thesis is organized as follows: In the rest of this chapter, political party functions are identified in a set framework, namely the functionalistic approach of Key (1964). In chapter 2, the focus is on empirical observations associated with party roles in old democracies and these will be discussed within Key's framework. In chapter 3, the selected cases will be presented in detail. Roads to democracy, main political parties and their electoral systems are major issues here. In chapter 4, methodological aspects of my study are discussed. In chapter 5, observations from the three selected countries will be discussed with reference to the party roles framework of Key. In chapter 6, my major findings are presented and discussed. Comparisons will be made among the young regimes themselves as well as between these new democracies and the old ones. Also, the appropriateness of Key's framework to identify new party roles will be discussed. Finally, in chapter 7, some concluding remarks are offered.

1.2 Political party functions in a tripartite framework

In order to compare political party functions, it is important to establish a means of reference that identifies political party functions that could be viewed as common. The challenge in doing so lies in the fact that little research has been done cross-nationally on this subject and therefore the construction of such a comprehensive framework is yet to be presented in full. The approach of Key (1964) on political party theory, however, presents us with a framework where political party functions are identified. The framework divides party functions into three dimensions creating a spatial dimension where the micro level concerns relationship between voter and party while the macro level identifies roles and functions between party and government. Although this framework has its limitation, due to both age and simplification of party functions, its functions and dimensions still give an appropriate foundation for identifying change, because the overall functions of a party are relatively similar. Combined with cases and further analysis, the framework may also be expanded to better capture the change in these functions as well.

Key's framework is constructed as a three-tier system where each stratum contains party-functions on a different level. Thus, it creates a three-level dimension with a micro, a meso, and a macro level. On the micro level, the functions of a party/voter nature are presented. On the meso level, one finds party functions that regard party organization and members, while on the macro level we find functions regarding parties and government. It is organized as follows:

> **Micro level: Parties in the electorate**
>> Simplifying choices for voters
>> Educating citizens
>> Generating symbols for identification and loyalty
>> Mobilizing people to participate

> **Meso level: Parties as organizations**
>> Recruiting political leadership and seeking governmental office
>> Training political elites
>> Articulating political interests
>> Aggregating political interest

Macro level: Parties in government

Creating majorities in government

Organizing the government

Implement policy objectives

Organizing dissent and opposition

Ensuring responsibility for government actions

Controlling government administrations

Fostering stability government

Next, details on each level will be provided to assess the relevance of this approach for my study.

1.2.1 The micro level: Parties in the electorate

One vital function for a party on the micro level is to simplify choice for voters. Politics are a broad and complex topic and it can be hard for individual participants to separate all the issues and choices they are presented for. Political parties have thus the role of making political positions and standpoints clear for the citizens. They provide useful information that result in support from the actors in the electorate that are compelled to share the views of the party. Parties are also connected to a certain political ideology or a view that separates them and makes it possible for the electorate to choose. Parties make information more available through their apparatus and thus allow voters to choose the party which fit their interests or which has a certain position in one significant case. Dalton and Wattenberg (2002: 6) point out that parties also shape and structure the political choice, creating the environment in which public opinion and behaviour is expressed. This lowers the cost of information for each voter and enables individuals to make a choice on the election day.

A second function of a political party on this level is to educate its citizens because it enables them to retrieve political information. This can be information around a certain policy or political subject, or information regarding the dynamic of the political body. Parties bring issues on the agenda and transmit its policy-position to the public. In some systems, parties educate their followers in policy matters and provide an insight to why one should adopt their position on the issue. In some European systems, parties are by law instructed to act as an information institution for the public in which policy-issues are brought to their attention. Germany is a good example of such a system. In this country, parties are mandated by law to inform the public of policy issues.

Furthermore, a political party should act as a generator for symbols of identification and loyalty. In a stable democratic regime with a predictable system, political parties play a vital role to anchor politics to symbols. They form a bond of loyalty with its supporters in the electorate. This in turn will make it harder for demagogues and extremists to sway the public into supporting them in an election. Parties thus represent a symbol of loyalty that will carry on between each election no matter who the people inside the party would be. This will dampen voter volatility and as such create a more stable system

The final function for a party on the micro level is to mobilize people to participate. This function involves two different dimensions. On one hand, political parties mobilize people to participate in elections. With their symbols and policy-standpoints, they transmit to the public the information they need to enable them to choose. Through campaigning and canvassing, active members of the party encourage voters to cast their ballot. This is often referred to as indirect mobilizing of the electorate. The second dimension is the direct mobilization of the electorate. By including volunteers into the campaign machinery, citizens are directly politically active and provided knowledge of political campaigns and functions. The volunteers may also choose to become continuous active members, working for the party on a general basis also outside the campaign-aspect. Thus they play the role as a link between the local community and the party.

1.2.2 The meso level: Parties as organizations

The second level of party functions lies in the sphere of the party organization, i.e. how they perform as an organization or the processes that are linked to the organizations themselves. One important issue is to recruit political leadership and seek government office. The most fundamental function in any classic definition of a political party is its strive to seek control of the governing apparatus and put forth candidates for political offices. Parties then need to come up with candidates that are ample and qualified to be in charge of the government offices. This is a large process that requires the party to seek out, screen and designate candidates who will compete under their label in the election. Many parties have internal subgroups specially designed for nurturing and moulding future leadership candidates. Examples are the party's youth-organizations where young aspiring individuals are house-trained into political processes. Dalton and Wattenberg (2002: 7) note that in virtual every case of their analysis, the office holder was nominated by the party. Therefore, they conclude that the designation of candidates is one of the most basic functions of any political party.

To train political elites is another important function. Selecting candidates is only a small part of the party's role in developing leaders. In most modern democratic regimes, the participation of members in the party organization is vital for education, because prospective leaders and candidates are subjected to the democratic process. Democratic norms, party principles and democratic processes are taught to the candidates through participation. This is vital in two aspects. First, the party itself trains future leadership to become a part of the democratic regime. The candidates are aware of the functions and processes and can therefore become office holders. Second, citizens as members are allowed either to directly observe the mechanisms and processes of democracy or indirectly to do so through the selected candidates. This enables the members to anticipate policy mechanisms and which norms and regulations govern it. Initiatives become possible and the potential level of participation by the citizenry is enhanced.

Furthermore, a political party should articulate political interest, since the parties are the voice of its members. This is expressed through policy stands and debate within government processes. In this sense, political parties act as any interest group with political ambition. The key difference, however, is the central position of a political party, being a part of government with direct influence of policy, as compared to an interest group who must seek influence through alternative channels.

The final function for a political party on the meso level distinguishes it as an organization from any other political actor. Political parties do not only articulate political interest, they aggregate it as well. Party manifestos or common program are drawn up, where the different political interests of all its members come together in a common political course. Parties create governing platforms and bring together various group and interests to form a comprehensive basis of government. This is a function that separates it from other political actors as it guides parties to incorporate several competing issues and interests together into one sound basis of governing. This in turn links interests and representation together and lead to responsible governing platforms. According to Dalton and Wattenberg (2002: 8), e.g. the renowned Giovanni Satori has argued that the responsible party government is the basis of democratic representation.

1.2.3 The macro level: Parties in government

The last level of political functions in Key's framework considers the functions regarding parties in government. Political parties hold a number of functions as concerning the affairs of government in position and in opposition. The first vital function is to create majorities in government. After the election, the next step in the democratic process is to form a government based on the outcome. The political parties are responsible for either alone or in coalitions to bring together enough elected officials to form a government. Then, they will act out their policy ambitions on the governing platform articulated or constructed during the campaign period. Thus, it will pursue the public's interest expressed in the election process.

It is also important to organize the government. The party is a key mechanism for providing organized mechanisms for interests in the legislative process. Parties function as a conduit for interests and individual legislators to cooperate in line with the party platform. Parties ensure party discipline and merge individual legislators into voting blocs. In most parliamentary systems, parties vote as a bloc with few abstentions or deviations. Parties usually control the appointment of legislative leadership positions such as committee chair positions and leader for legislative offices. Parties also control the distribution of resources to these committees and offices. Therefore, it is evident that political parties in contemporary democracies fulfill a vast legislative and administerial task in organizing policy-mechanisms into institutional forms.

Furthermore, a political party in government determines and implements policy objectives. In strict party discipline, manifesto and campaign promises articulated for the citizenry are put into law. Parties are the main agents of negotiating public policy decisions in the legislature. Parties provide an institutional structure where policy can be initialized, debated, put into action and enforced.

A party in the governmental sphere focuses on organizing dissent and opposition. It is a key feature in a democratic regime that even though majority rules, the right for other alternatives to express themselves is given as a democratic norm. Political parties losing the election have the responsibility to form the opposition or dissent to the governing majority. These parties express different standpoints on political issues as a whole or on certain policy objectives. The minority is not automatically overrun by majority decisions. Parties in opposition also form an alternative for the citizenry to the ruling parties and make it possible for them to choose diffe-

rently in the next election or to amend their position during the course of the governing period. Opposition puts limits on the present government and acts as a viable alternative. Next function is to ensure responsibility for government actions. A party in government is responsible for the actions taken and policies pursued. The party is a mechanism that ensures responsibility from each individual legislator. It makes it clear to the citizenry it represents how it pursues its policies as a whole. Since each individual legislator in a parliamentary system depends on the overall success of the government, it creates a strong incentive for party members to work together to deliver the best possible result. If the government is not acting out in accordance with the public, will it be punished in the next election. If it acts in accordance to public will, it may keep its position come next election or even strengthen it. Party control also ensures that processes for controlling legislative output are enacted on the individual legislators, thus making them responsible to the party body and its members.

An important function is to control government administration. Although the main activities of a political party are of an executive or legislative nature, it ensures political presence in the state bureaucracy as well. By appointing ministers and senior members to executive agencies, the party sees to it that the idea of public control over the administrative side of the state is fulfilled indirectly. Assigned heads of the departments will seek to carry out the policies articulated by the party and thus engage the bureaucracy to make the policy legally viable. The framework and practical side of the implementation is handled by the bureaucracy, while ministers and senior appointees make sure they follow the platform articulated by the policy objective.

The final function for a political party on the macro level is to foster stability in government. Parties provide the key element of continuity in democratic governance. The specific issues or policies may change from one period to another, so may the representatives in government. The political party label, however, remains through all the cycles of government. Stable parties in stable unities foster stable and foreseeable democratic conditions. The parties build institutionalized channels which dictate the rules and norms of the democratic process. This creates an environment with less room for populist short term maneuverability and ideally curtails political artistry at the expense of the public will.

We understand that Key's framework identifies functions for political parties that are both procedural and representative. On the whole, a party function acts as the translator between

civil society and government. On the micro level, citizens are allowed to participate through voluntary work, while the party educates them into the political apparatus. On the meso level, the party has the function of recruiting future leadership from the pool of its members. It actively trains political participants and seeks governmental position for them. Parties aggregate political interest in its member base and also articulate the policy wishes from them. On the macro level, the parties have the function of creating stable governmental platforms that ensure all citizens democratic rights. Responsibilities of government and the organization of dissent and opposition are key features in a democratic regime.

Given this platform, chapter 2 will present a number of important observations made in recent years in old democracies. These observations will work as a reference mode when the young democratic regimes are investigated, both in terms of theoretical framework and the associated indicators.

CHAPTER 2: OLD DEMOCRACIES – OBSERVATIONS AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This chapter focuses on the development in old democratic regimes by presenting the findings in central studies conducted on the field. The theoretical framework and a number of central indicators are employed in these studies.

2.1 Changes in participation and party function patterns

Voter turnout is a central indicator for measuring democratic participation and civil society activity. A high turnout shows an active civil society with close ties to political life, while a low turnout demonstrates the opposite. This measure also indicates whether political parties fulfill their roles on the micro level by mobilizing people to vote and providing them with the information necessary to make a choice. Excluded from this logic are of course regimes with mandatory voting. Voter turnout data are concise and superior to interview data or opinion polls since they reveal a direct measure of action, while the alternatives show opinions that may change. The behavioral pattern over time is thus easily studied.

Today, changes appear in the pattern of participation in democratic regimes. A notable feature is the fact that voter turnout for general elections across the world is diminishing, and significantly so during the last few decades. Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, IDEA (2007), has published the figure below, which clearly demonstrates this development.

Figure 9: Worldwide turnout, 1945-2001
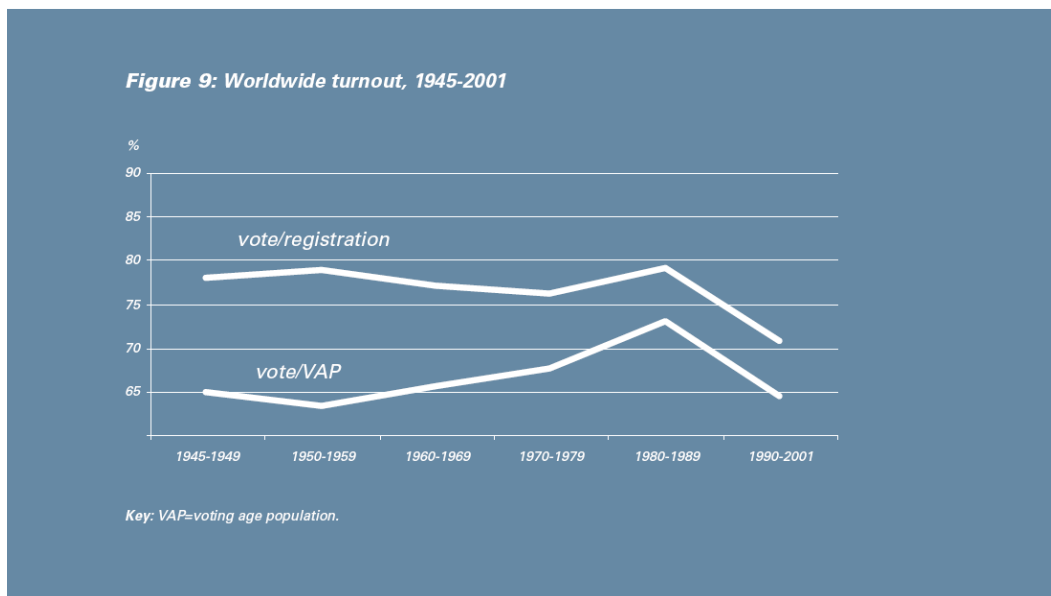
Source: Pintor, Gratschew and Sullivan (2007): *Voter turnout rates from comparative perspective*

Figure 2.1 Development in worldwide voter turnout

Several other studies report the same phenomenon. One example is Wattenberg's work on the OECD countries (Wattenberg, 2002). Comparing the average turnout in the first two elections in the 1950s with the average from the recent two elections in the 1990s, he found that in 17 out of 19 cases the recent turnout figures are lower. The exceptions are Denmark and Sweden. He concludes that there is a universal trend of turnout decline in the OECD countries and that the decline is higher the weaker the party traditions. In addition, while the connection between party and members has eroded slowly over time, the drop in turnout takes place at an accelerating speed. This development does not depend on the political system, as the U.S. (a pure presidential system), France (a semi-presidential system) and Great Britain (a parliamentary system) all belong to countries with large declines in voter turnout. Wattenberg's findings have been confirmed by Caul and Gray (2002), who study eighteen OECD countries over the same period of time. During the 1990s, a political development in all these countries apparently created a shift in the participation. The result is an arched trajectory of decline. Results from elections in the U.S., Great Britain, Germany and Japan demonstrate that the turnout has continued to drop.

Turnout informs us about the number of people participating in a general election. Voter volatility in combination with voter turnout provides us with more detailed information on election results. Voter volatility is a variable showing to what extent voters have switched their vote between the parties from one election to the next. A more precise definition will be given in chapter 4. Combining these two aspects provides more information to the decline in turnout and relation patterns between electorate and party. As an example, high volatility combined with low turnout indicates that the party is not a symbol of loyalty and that it fails to mobilize people to participate.

Dalton, McAllister and Wattenberg (2002) study trends in voter volatility in the OECD countries. As they note, finding cross-national data on voter volatility is a hard task and comparison studies are almost non-existent. The longitudinal data from the survey on voter behavior show that there is a tendency towards increasing voter volatility. They argue that with looser ties between voter and party, the voter is more inclined to switch party from election to election, thus creating a more unstable voter mass. A reasonable conclusion from their findings is that voters that still choose to participate in the elections, are not bound to one party.

The observations on voter turnout and volatility are closely related to the micro level functions of a party in Key's framework, more specifically to generating symbols of identification and loyalty and to mobilizing people to participate. These functions seem to have weakened. Parties do not mobilize people to participate like before and with higher volatility the generation of symbols for loyalty and identification has been reduced as well. Since the parties are losing members, their power to educate citizens is also being reduced. Mass media educate citizens at a higher degree and high volatility indicates that they fail to simplify the choice for voters. If voters often move across to different parties, this is an indication that the parties have failed to present themselves as stable alternatives and thus have in fact complicated the choice for the voter.

Moreover, we have also witnessed a contemporaneous decline in parties' membership rolls. As Scarrow (2002: 97) points out, falling enrolments are reinforced by public opinion surveys about party membership. This has led to certain changes in function patterns in contemporary political regimes. The studies of Dalton, McAllister and Wattenberg (2002), Scarrow, Webb and Farrell (2002) and Strøm (2002), utilizing Key's tripartite framework, found trends and tendencies of change on all levels. On the micro level, citizens themselves are increasingly educated outside the party apparatus and thus do not need the party as a mean of educating body. Furthermore, mass media have made the information flow much broader as citizens through the internet may directly interact in forums previously monopolized by the parties. Through new third-party organizations that are politically fuelled, citizens seek to influence policy-making by this mode of participation rather than by the traditional political party link. These are micro level changes that alter the pattern of functions on that level. Parties are no longer the flagship for mobilizing the public into participation. They are not the symbols of loyalty and political ideologies any longer, as the tendency the last decade has been a depolarization of parties. Mair (2002: 4) notes: "The first factor that may be cited here involves the blurring of the ideological or programmatic identity of at least those parties that inhabit the mainstream of the party system. Parties increasingly with one another, and, with the decline in the strength of affective loyalties, they are now even more eager to direct their appeals into what had once been the traditional heartlands of their opponents. The result, as noted above, is that the notion of politics as social conflict, in which the parties where seen to represent the political interest of opposing social forces, is now less relevant".

Mair argues that one can observe some clear changes to party functions as a result of the decline in party membership and identification. With the erosion of ideology after the cold war, parties in government and opposition have less capacity for policy maneuvers. This is experienced by all western governments in the internationalized and globalized economy. Another area where this is profoundly clear, is the realm of the European Union. The governments in member states have increasingly turned over policy areas from the national level to the intergovernmental or supragovernmental stage of the European Union. Policy and policy objectives are no longer only articulated on the national or regional level. Some are articulated through intergovernmental conferences such as the IMF, or through supragovernmental policies formed through the European Union and enforced through the European Court of Justice. Thus, governments proceed by regulation rather than by partisan policy-making. Parties do not present themselves as being very different from one another, according to Mair, because the organizational distinctiveness has become equally blurred. When parties fish in the same pool of voters, they tend to develop similar organizational and campaigning techniques. Hence, the mode of communicating with potential voters has also become more professionalized and standardized across parties. The political parties earlier relied on separate party presses to broadcast their policy objectives. These have been discarded as the party organization uses the mass media as channel for the same activity. Policy-campaigning has been transferred to advertising agencies outside the party organization, or adapted inside the organization as a special branch. This development shows how party functions on the micro level have deteriorated. Parties have grown increasingly similar and thus do not pose as clear choices for the voters on policy questions. With fewer party members and a broad mass media, their function as educational body is equally weakened. Without ideology and manifesto-based policy objectives, they weaken their position as symbols of identification and loyalty. With the latest figures on voter turnout, it is evident that they are less able to mobilize people to participate. All of these functions are linked to the micro level functions of a party, which is the direct link to the public. These functions are all representative functions. What Mair suggests in his article, is that the procedural nature of policies today strengthens procedural functions and at the same time weaken representative functions. The hired staff and professionalized personnel inside the party organization are more important than the voluntary sector the mass parties once relied upon (Mair 2002: 4-6).

On the meso level, the identified changes are shifts in strength between procedural and representative activities. The major change on this level is less focus on formulating public policy

and more focus on recruiting political leaders and nomination of persons to public offices. Policy and the slight maneuverability lie no longer in the public support, but rather in professional staff, positions in government and supragovernmental bodies. The public, Mair argues, is therefore depoliticized and the parties transform their organization from voluntary-based broad-spectrum partisanship to an educated and expert-oriented membership base where the procedural strength is more important than voluntary participation. According to Farrel and Webb (2002), conducting an analysis of parties as campaign structures, these changes are evident in western democratic parties today. They write: "Political parties have invested heavily in election campaigning, making full use of new technologies, adapting their organization and employing specialist agencies and consultants. As a result the party of today and the way it operates in the context of electioneering is scientifically different creature from what was twenty years ago." (Farrell and Webb, 2002: 123). Three major developments are pointed out: Parties have tended to become more centralized and professionalized, parties have become more cognizant of citizen opinion and demand, and party and leader image have come to assume a prominent thematic role in campaigning.

However, the opinion that parties have become more cognizant of citizen opinion and demand is contested by Mair (2002). He points out that citizenry is now less politicized due to the heavy influence of international politics and to lack of participation. This difference suggests that even if politics are largely focused on the policy level, the public opinion does matter. The power balance still rests with the citizenry participating in elections because parties are the only body that directly governs on behalf of its voters. Third party organization may be influential. However, it is inside the party dynamic that policy strength is pursued, even if its role has changed.

2.2 The consequences of change in party functions

There is no clear-cut conclusion on how the changes in party functions directly influence the current affairs for political parties. Mair (2002) suggests for example that the political parties today are moving to a new form denoted cartel parties, while Scarrow; Webb and Farrell (2002) argue that civil society is still represented in political parties and that the changes alone are not necessarily all that dramatic. Some more details about the various arguments on this issue will now be presented.

Mair sees the development as an adaptation of parties and not as a party decline. Even though party enrolment is waning and participation is low, parties still enjoy the position as intermediary between public and government. Parties are in fact changing in two important respects. They have become increasingly stratarchial in character with the party on the ground, the party in office, and possibly the party in ventral office, each stressing their own freedom to maneuver (Mair, 2002: 8). However, as later studies indicate, this freedom to maneuver has been reduced due to external influence on national politics. Mair identifies a fourth form of party that will emerge from the catch-all party system, which he has dubbed a cartel party system. The consequence of this development today, he argues, with increasingly professionalized staff and procedures in politics, will lead to a system where parties are completely centralized and have inter-party collusion. The cartel party relies on the state in order to survive. The parties are consumed by state organization and their financial base is provided by government funds. The cartel party becomes a broker between government and civil society like any other interest organization. The organization is professionally trained and the members are all experts in their field. The cartel party is an extreme result of the changes taking place in contemporary politics today. The citizenry is dislodged from the parties and forced to seek influence through several other channels of participation in order to influence policy objectives. However, the threshold is steeper and the power behind the ballot is decreasing.

Scarrow, Webb and Farrell (2002) investigate the intra-party power. However, their conclusion suggests that parties are not moving in the direction of cartelization. They find that party grassroots members, and sometimes even supporters, commonly play a significant role in selecting party leadership and legitimizing programs, even though party elites generally retain veto rights and autonomy in shaping party policy. In a growing number of cases, the party members are gaining significant rights to elect their party leaders. They suggest that intra-party decision-making thus have become more inclusive, however not in a way that obstruct leadership. "In any case, if we are to take the notion of cognitive mobilization seriously, we must give more credit to the potential and actual role played by the ranks of armchair members of modern parties. Many of them may be inactive when it comes to mundane virtues of attending party meetings and running campaigns, yet are better placed than most of their predecessors in terms of educational experience and access to independent political information" (Scarrow, Webb and Farrell, 2002: 150).

Panebianco (1988) is devoted to adaptation in party organizations through the scope of organization and members. He uses Duverge's image of concentric circles to identify the party recipients of organizational incentives. Panebianco utilizes the term "believer" and "careerist" to identify two groups of party members with separated goals. The outmost circle is the electorate rewarded by central persons that obtain positions in a party subculture often involved in a network of associative ties revolving around the party. In the second circle, we find the party members who are largely inactive, attending political meetings at an uneven interval and having no clear political choice. They are often party members by tradition, family ties or community ties. Within this member group, we also find a minority of party activists. These are active members separated into the two above-mentioned groups. "Believers" seek collective rewards through their participation in the terms of identity. "Careerists" seek selective material or status-oriented gains by the organizational hierarchy. The first fraction constitutes the traditional majority of activists, while the latter constitutes the activists that seek personal position in the party through the bureaucratic side of the political party. Future party leaders are selected from the latter group of activists. Another approach for the party to compensate activists is to give them status incentives outside the party organization. Intellectuals or experts are positioned in organization interlinked with the party through traditional ties (Panebianco, 1988: 25-30). The assumption in Panebianco's argument is that believers and party members constitute the large majority of the party body, while careerists constitute a small minority.

Combining this with Mair's argument and Dalton and Wattenberg's findings, we have seen that there are two central changes in party politics today, namely that the mass-base of party supporters are waning and that the ideologies and symbolic values of parties are diminishing. This would then suggest that the careerist fraction of the party no longer is a clear minority, and that the bureaucratic branches of political parties are strengthened and that the dynamics and threshold of single member activity have been altered. The consequence for this could lie in the nature of daily political procedure. There are examples of democratic regimes with an extraordinary high threshold for participation within the bureaucratic system. With professionalization of political bodies, where each member is an expert in his or her field, democracy becomes quite narrow in the sense of participation. Japan is a good example of such a system. Only individuals educated at the selected five top universities are granted the possibility for active participation. The European model has always relied on the possibility for any activist to walk the ranks of a party and become leader. However, as politics become more

policy-oriented and technical, the threshold becomes higher. What is problematic with the bureaucratic side of parties is the secrecy around them. Parties are very reluctant to provide information on officially hired experts or members of the bureaucratic staff, and thus their position and function are hard to account for.

Panebianco's distinction also provides a link between party and third-party organizations that has largely been overlooked. Scarrow, Webb and Farrel's argument for third party participation implies that members today are more educated and better suited to take action in organizations outside the party body that support their policy-incentives. Panebianco, on his side, shows how parties have rewarded their experts and intellectuals with position in such organizations.

2.3 Civic participation in other organizations

In the essence of democracy, the participation of the civilian sphere is a key indicator for the vibrancy and activity of the public in general. Parties provide an arena for some activity in election and voluntary party work, while other organizations outside the political mainstream offer other channels for political participation. It is therefore of interest to include these organizations into the overall discussion about democratic participation. They provide a second link to politics outside the straight party/state relationship. These kinds of organizations are typically linked to certain specific political cases and thus focus their attention on one policy area. They are membership-based and therefore represent their members' interests in specific political issues. Environmental organizations or trade unions are examples of such organizations that directly seek to influence political decisions regarding the political policies or regulations (environmental regulations for environmentalists and trade and fiscal regulation for trade unions). According to Skocpol (2003: 132), Almond and Verba have argued that decline in public participation in elections and parties needs not be of such a dramatic character if the public is still engaged in other channels. The idea is that public participation and civilian inclusion now rest in a new pattern of organizational membership, where the awareness and education of the civil sphere take place in these organization, rather than political parties. Thus, the civil society holds the same control over policy and policy-outcomes, perhaps even more effectively as the independent organizations focus their attention on one or a few specific policy areas. In order to give a full picture of the civil participation, the development of these organizations and their membership need to be taken into account when discussing civil control of the political sphere.

The first observation, when looking at the membership rolls for organizations in western democracies, is a heavy fall. Since the early 1990s, the level of members in all kinds of voluntary and independent social organizations has declined. This is another important aspect of the development of democracy, the overall activity in alternative organizations working alongside political parties are in decline as well. Skocpol (2003) describes the development in the U.S. as a diminishing democracy, where civil society is transforming from voluntary participation to public management. Americans, she argues, are more inclined to pay membership fees and let experts apply pressure to the government than invest of their own time to participate. In general, politics are such a complicated business that only experts and highly educated personnel can fully understand the policy objectives and how to achieve them.

One could argue that the apparent problem for organizations of these types is the same as for the political parties. Information is vast and the public is more aware of the implications from politics. At the same time, the arguments and difficulties of policy-making have become so complex that only a few bystanders feel they are competent to contribute to the discussion. This is an interesting aspect, as the argument for a long time has been that civil society is not caring or interested in politics. Could it be that politics itself shifted from a value-based open discussion to a highly professionalized undertaking that requires intimate knowledge and vast resources, thereby excluding the common civilian actor from participation? Looking at the central apparatus of the most active organizations of the western democracies today, we find that their main active members are educated personnel more informed and having a higher capacity than the ordinary voluntary members. As Skocpol (2003: 174) notes, the citizenry is more than happy to pay professionalized organizations to the political lobbyism provided by hired personnel. One may ask if politics and policy have become a profession where the investment for participation is so high that it excludes the common citizen from being able to participate directly. The individuals are forced to delegate their voices to paid professional lobbyists and organizations.

2.4 Resources, funding and structural changes in state and party structure

On the meso level in Key's framework, the relationship between parties and their internal organization and functions are outlined. Now, change in party organization and discuss how the development on the micro level influences the meso level.

During the end of the 1980s and through the 1990s, the common development for the OECD countries was an expansion of resources and consequently an expansion of the state. The state apparatus grew both in terms of economy and human capital. Departments in the state apparatus were subjected to an increase in responsibility areas that required them to hire more staff. Katz and Mair (1994) note that with more parties gaining positions, the need for a change in the party composition follow the development of state. Thus, parties increased their staff to be able to link themselves to the new state responsibilities. Their data show how universally parties in the OECD expanded both budgets and staff during this time period.

	Growth in number of staff employed by parties[a] (%)	Growth in income of party central offices[b] (%)
Austria	+ 61	+ 286
Denmark	+ 112	+ 50
Finland	+ 55	+ 6
Germany	+ 268	+ 350
Ireland	+ 330	+ 123
Italy	+ 140	− 25
N'lands	+ 17	+ 41
Norway	+ 50	+ 14
Sweden	+ 55	− 4
UK	+ 24	+ 46
USA	na	+ 145

[a] The change refers to the difference between the position in the late 1960s or early 1970s and that in the late 1980s; only those parties are included where it proved possible to make a direct comparison over time.
[b] The change refers to the difference between the income (in constant prices) in c. 1975 and that in 1989/90; only those parties are included where it proved possible to make a direct comparison over time.

Source: Katz and Mair, 1994: 7

Table 2.1 Development of party resources in a number of European countries and the U.S.

These data reveal a significant increase in staff and budgets in an extraordinary short period of time. The increase of staff and budgets is measured from the late 1960s to the late 1980s. Germany increased its total number of employed staff by 268% and its income by 350% between late 1960s and late 1980s, while the figures for Ireland are 330% and 123%, respectively. For most countries a big growth can be seen in both variables. This development is a clear indicator of party organizational change and adaptation. Parties have expanded their staff branch considerably. This increase in staff-size can only be attributed to an increase in specialized policy-areas within the parties themselves. The need to have a strong bureaucratic system within the party to link it with policy-outcomes and technical solutions to these, have created an environment where the parties focus on these aspects of political organization. The funding data clearly indicate a shift in organization and funding. Parties in democratic systems relied heavily upon their own apparatus and link to the citizenry to allocate both funds and resources for their political endeavor.

Table 2.2 displays the growth in party members in percentage of the electorate. Table 2.1 clearly displayed a massive increase in both staff and budgets over a short period of time. Thus, we would expect to see an increase in member mass. Table 2.2 demonstrates that this is not the case.

	Beginning of 1960s		End of 1980s	
	N ('000)	% of electorate	N ('000)	% of electorate
Austria	1380.7	26.2	1311.8	21.8
Belgium	468.8	7.8	654.4	9.2
Denmark	599.1	21.1	260.5	6.5
Finland	513.1	18.9	520.1	12.9
Germany	1001.9[a]	2.7	1907.5	4.2
Ireland	na	na	129.3	5.3
Italy	4332.8	12.7	4405.2	9.7
N'lands[b]	648.4	9.4	326.4	2.9
Norway	363.7	15.5	432.0	13.5
Sweden	1092.1	22.0	1343.3	21.2
UK	3258.8	9.4	1426.3	3.3

[a] Includes estimate of 50,000 for FDP membership.
[b] Includes estimate of 10,000 for CPN in 1963, and includes Green Left in 1989.

Source: Katz and Mair, 1994: 7

Table 2.2 Development of party membership in a number of European countries and the U.S.

On the contrary, in most cases there is a decline, and substantially so in the U.K., Denmark, Finland and The Netherlands. Paradoxically, as the membership decreases, staff and budgets increase. This development severely weakens the assumption that funding and resources mainly are pooled from the party's registered members.

Katz and Mair (1994) deploy the terms "party in office" and "party on the ground" to explain the shift in organization. The idea is that in the older mass party model budgets, funding and human resources came from the party on the ground. Parties were linked to the citizenry, and thus legitimacy and survivability hinged on the party members alone. This can be seen in Key's framework as well, indicated by the roles given the party on the meso level. Human resources and budgets are now relocated from membership base to state subsidies, and through external hiring processes. They argue that the processes of politics have changed and that the strong link between party on the ground and party in office has eroded. Parties are linked to government and this link is now more important than the old membership base. The state becomes the guarantee for the survivability of the party and thus entrance to state and its resources become the main focus.

The development of mass media and internet has also fuelled the transformation of the political machinery. With information available across the internet and mass media, parties have deemed it necessary to incorporate such technological advances into their own party organization. Campaigning, for example, is today quite different from the earlier processes when members on the ground where canvassing to meet the citizenry. Today, this is done by advertisement on TV, on the web and by mail. This is a fairly complex and resource-demanding enterprise which requires parties to allocate funds and staff to continuously monitor and develop campaign programs over the years between elections. Increase in public knowledge and free flow of information have also intensified the scrutiny of policy and policy objectives. With the inclusion of more experts in every field, policy becomes more complex to meet the demands set by expert opinions rather than ideological factors.

Austria is a good example of this development, a country where the staff of parties has increased dramatically. According to Müller (1994: 73), "This growth of staffing in the main parties has been caused by the greater demands involved in such functions as propaganda and public relations, and also by increased specialization. What used to be one of several jobs carried out by a single employee three decades ago is now the exclusive occupation of one or more staff members. It has also been necessary to assign duties to party employees which used to be exercised by party activists or functionaries."

In Austria, several functions provided by activists and functionaries are now allocated to staff. The staff itself is more professional with experts on every field. Some activities have also been outsourced by the party to agencies who draft proposals or strategies. One example of this is found in the campaigning department, where strategies and advertisements are outsourced to promotion-bureaus. Great Britain, one of Europe's oldest and most robust democracies, shows signs of the same development. As noted by Webb (1994), British parties have centralized their power much more extensively over the decades since the 1960s. The parties have not increased the state apparatus extensively; however, every single party has cut their local and regional staff to a minimum. Politicians are trained and skilled professionals master the media and the increasing demand of scrutiny in policy questions. In the terms of funding, parties have relied on donations from single actors such as wealthy supporters or special interest groups. Webb argues that the limits of relevance for the members are underlined by the role played by them within the party apparatus' internal procedures. Centrally, the upper

echelons of the political parties have shown that they are ready to set aside demands from their members if it clashes with the strategy drafted by the staff or external advice.

Compared to Key's four main roles of a party on the meso level, this development indicates a clear erosion of three of the roles played by parties, namely training political elites, articulating political interests and aggregating political interests. The final one, recruiting political leadership, has been strengthened. Parties are now more active in this field. However, the face of the leadership selection has changed as the number of members has been reduced and the process centralized.

When it comes to the training of political elites, the function of the party has eroded. The party used to be an institution for education, where members were trained into the different functions they would fulfill. Today, the staff and members are handpicked professionals in the field they engage. Thus, the staff has already been schooled and trained outside the party apparatus. The staff is required to possess a certain degree of insight and training in the field exclusively allocated to them, economists in the financial branch, lawyers in the judicial branch, and so on. As the citizenry has received increased amount of education through the school system, the party may hire them directly and employ them where they are needed. When parties work with subjects outside their expert-field, this subject may be outsourced to expert firms.

The consequence of this development influences the two remaining political roles. The party articulates political interests, although with much more narrow interests than before. Earlier, the parties articulated the will of the entire member mass, but as the mass has eroded and policy-objectives are more strongly linked to expert opinions, the articulated interest is in general the one dictated centrally in the party, or through the consensus of the ruling body. Given the development of professionalization, there are in my opinion two main consequences. When experts have been deployed into staff to articulate and decide upon the party position, legitimacy of the system shifted from the civil society to the legitimacy of the expertise. Katz and Mair (1994) note that experts draw legitimacy from the civil society by their expertise. Their opinions are regarded as academically more sound due to the strict nature they are said to make their decisions on. This is radically different than the legitimacy drawn earlier from the membership of parties, where legitimacy for political decisions rested on the broad support from members of civil society. The consequence of this is an increase in the threshold

for any actor in the civil society who wishes to penetrate the political system. Katz and Mair argued that few parties have decreased their members' de jure control over the party, rather the opposite has happened. However, my claim is that even though the parties have indeed strengthened the relative power for party members, the nature of politics creates a threshold so high that it excludes parts of civil society. Policy is formulated by experts, with huge resources to back up their opinion. The cost for a citizen to follow the process or to intervene has increased considerably due to the experts' very strong legitimacy. To actively intervene, a citizen must have equal insight or data material available to him. In many studies, the argument is like "citizens are no longer active because they choose to abstain from politics". However, as the U.S. study of Katz and Kolodny (1994) showed, citizens feel that politics are so complex that they are unable to follow the process and find counter-arguments against carefully presented expert opinions. Hence, the parties fail to aggregate political interest, rather they discourage it.

The second consequence of this development is a paradox. Experts draw their conclusions from the ideal of independence. Their conclusions should always follow the academic norm of being the best from the logic applied. Policy then becomes a-political. In many cases, governments become production units where the widget made is policy. This can be found in situations where the parties on the opposite sides of the left/right spectrum create and implement policies together. The political ideology is set aside and the end product, the policy, is the important goal the party must implement.

2.5 Parties in government

The macro level in Key's framework is the governmental sphere. The parties fulfill several key roles when in government, such as organizing ruling majorities and opposition. The parties in government control the state apparatus bureaucracy and ensure the articulation of dissent and minority issues. We have observed a movement towards dismantling party roles concerning party and civil society. Old traditional linkages have weakened and the parties have focused their activities towards the state. This development has naturally influenced the roles of parties in government. However, the tendency is intuitively opposite than the one observed on the lower levels. Parties have over the last two decades strengthened party roles rather than dismantled them. According to Katz and Mair (1994), since more parties have focused on a state-side approach, more parties have also been able to establish themselves in governments. This strengthens both the parties' role as organizer of governing majorities and the organizer

of opposition. Parties have adopted an increased staff, which in turn has enabled them to more effectively interact with the state apparatus. With a more professional streamlining of parties, the likelihood of participation in government increases, as the parties in larger degree show through their day-to-day conduct that they are capable of such undertaking.

The development of more stately linked parties also strengthens the roles of the party as overseer and auditor of government actions. In several governments, access to committees and the work provided by these is a vital source of legislative power. Parties may appoint members from their staff to such committees or appoint independent single actors to chair them. Since parties have expanded their ability to scrutinize reports and policy drafts through their increased staff, the role of ensuring responsible government actions has been strengthened.

With the inclusion of more parties to the government, the range of influencing actors within the state apparatus has increased. However, the result of this increase may lead to a strengthening of stability in government, or even the opposite. On one hand, more stable parties create a more stable governmental structure, where the foreseeable coalitions or actors are apparent. On the other hand, having more parties in government may create more deadlocks if the power distribution is too equal. This manifests itself in minority-governments and larger coalitions to act as a ruling government in the parliamentary states. In Europe, the recent development inside the western democratic states is a more consensus-driven platform of politics. The deadlock of a system only leads to a restrain on the policy implementation and this in turn makes the government ineffective. Party blocs seem to agree that dead-locking the system is not beneficial for any party in opposition, nor in government. Since parties rely more on the government-side in its day-to-day functions, stability is often preferred and sought by parties across the spectrum.

The roles of the party in government are to some degree harder to identify as strengthened or weakened as they are dependent on the development on the lower levels. To illustrate this, one may use the role of organizing dissent and opposition. The tendency of the western democracies in the plural parliamentary systems is the inclusion of more parties to the governing body. Then, broader alliances of governing coalitions are formed, while more parties are included in the opposition. This provides a broader field of actors into parliament and the organizing of dissent and opposition is strengthened. However, as we saw from the development

of party roles on the meso level, the costs are higher, the demands for staff are higher and the apparatus is required to handle a vast bureaucratic reality. This will in turn shrink the number of effective parties in parliament, as the smaller parties will lack the resources and have to either back out or merge with other parties. Next, this weakens the role, as some voices of minority will have to find other ways to express their concerns. The system locks in the parties already established and even though they do form a viable alternative to the sitting government, issues or parts of civil society may be locked out from the main arena due to the demand for professionalization and staff. In many ways, the roles of parties in government are locked into forces that both reinforce their roles at first, but over time becomes a balancing force locking the system in. This leads to strengthening of some sides of party roles, while other sides of the same role are diminished.

2.6 Development and change

In this chapter, I have presented important observations from the developed western democratic systems, and how their roles according to Key's framework have changed. On the micro and the meso level, the roles linking parties to the civil society are diminishing. The forms of campaigning have changed dramatically. Now, a party needs to allocate vast amount of resources on mass media channels rather than employing the traditional line of campaigning. However, this does not suggest that the canvassing and voluntary work during campaigns have completely disappeared. During the latest American presidential election, massive groups of voluntary workers backed the Obama and the McCain campaigns, doing the footwork associated with the traditional form of politics. The difference between then and now is the organization and deployment of such volunteers. The volunteer workers often hail to an ad-hoc body created during the course of the election. The main office coordinating the movement may be hired from the campaign-office or from the party. The difference in utilizing these tactics is that the volunteers are not directly linked to the party themselves, rather they are incorporated in the process due to political belief or support. When the election is over, the groups dissipate as their function has ended. These changes in party relationship to its electorate lead to the argument that the functions have been weakened on the lower levels. With the increased resources in civil society forming other channels for voicing opinions, along with the state-oriented approach of political parties, one may argue that the interdependent relationship between them has diminished.

In the debate on political parties, the returning argument or question is whether political parties are weakened or in decline. The development illustrated in this chapter shows that parties are perhaps more important for government than before, while the link to civil society has weakened. Parties do not diminish or become less important, rather the roles they perform are changed. When it comes to roles directly linking parties to civil society, we see a decline in importance. However, in the realm of organization and government, their roles are clearly strengthened.

In the discussion around party organization and the diminishing of party roles over time, some argue that this is a natural process. As long as parties fulfill their governmental roles, this is clearly the important question. Thies (2002: 256) argues that the Key classification scheme should be treated as an indicator, where the different levels are of unequal importance. The macro level and the roles of government are, according to Thies, the important level and logically the primary for political parties. Parties are organized of, by and for legislators. The other two categories should be treated as indicators of activity for the core legislative party. In my opinion, there is a weakness in this argument, as it treats the three realms as separate entities. If we consider parties in government, organization and on the civil society level as a whole, the reality of the development looks quite different. On the lower levels, we find a decline of roles, while there in government seems to be party strengthening. The organization changes and the party structure includes more staff and fewer members. Therefore, the somewhat confusing debate on party decline seems to stem from focusing on the different levels separately and not seeing them as a dynamically interlinked entity.

One other problem is the notion that parties and government are comprised of legislators alone. Legislators are actors who at some point have been introduced into the process. Mair (2000) notes that governments consist of parties that in turn are given their legitimacy to govern from the people. Every piece of legislation is made by representatives of civil society. Future legislators and actors in the governmental stage have to come from the same civil society it represents. They are thus interlinked dynamically, where changes in one department over time will have implications for the roles conducted higher up in the system. For example, Thies (2002) predicts that in the future we shall see new parties that will have a different strategy to win support from the electorate. This argument then overlooks the fact that a party does not only fill the election role and that resources and demand for staff will be a large obstacle for such enterprises.

Democracy is in itself not the end of political development. Any political system evolves and develops over time, and so does democracy. The challenge when studying democracy lies in its somewhat obscure definition, which contains a host of different political systems said to hold democratic traits. Some theories focus on the role of the people, others on the role of the state. Democracy is a multi-layered concept, however, they all hold the citizens' control over the state as a key component. This chapter has shed light on how this relationship has changed over time, and therefore it would be of vital interest to further pursue this development as Europe has entered a new democratic wave. In order to do so, we need to go deeper into the underlying changes in democratic regimes and compare these to the development in younger democratic regimes that are currently consolidating their system. In order to find similarities or differences, creating a broad-spectrum reference-mode and comparing the development to single cases, seems in my view to be an appropriate mode of operation. By using empirical examples, one may reveal common indicators which in turn will be transferred to new cases. This will reveal existing patterns or irregularities between cases.

My master thesis wishes to address the questions linked to democratic development, however through different democratic regimes. The western systems have been consolidated for a long period of time and thus their development has been gradual. Therefore the changes in relationship between civil society and political parties will not show its effects during a short time period. The inertia of the system will delay changes, and therefore make them harder to identify. Therefore, focus is set on newly consolidated democratic systems in Eastern Europe. The development of party roles in this region will be compared with the development seen in Western Europe. No democratic regime is born in a vacuum, they build on the knowledge and in cooperation with neighboring regimes. Will the development mimic in these regimes, and how do they solve problems like legitimacy and linkages to civil society? Furthermore, the development here may also give a clearer indication on future problems or even solutions for Western regimes, where the structural inertia so far keeps the larger problems at bay.

Chapter 3 will start on this endeavor by identifying my three cases, starting out by giving arguments for these countries have been selected. Their road to democracy, main political parties and electoral systems will be presented in detail.

CHAPTER 3: CASE-PRESENTATION – HUNGARY, LATVIA AND SLOVENIA

In chapter 2, some of the development in the advanced democratic systems of Western Europe has been outlined. They were linked to central contributions on the subject. Now, it is time to make the presentation of my cases.

3.1 The new and old democratic system

The old consolidated regimes provide a reference mode, where the deterioration of party roles on the lower levels in the Key framework and the strengthening of executive power impose clear challenges to our notion of democracy. They provide in themselves a strong case for further research on the field. One may argue that an analysis of the well-established democratic regimes would be fruitful. Such cases would highlight future challenges for consolidated democratic regimes. However, they would provide little or no knowledge on the ingenuity or restructuring of younger regimes. Three reasons for using young democratic are given. The first one is time and position in development. The old regimes of Europe are products of a long, slow-moving process towards democracy. Consolidated through centuries of crisis, wars and compromises, robust and dependable institutions have been developed. These regimes are regarded as corner-stones of modern democratic thinking, and changes and challenges within them are always locked into a democratic setting. New regimes have a completely opposite position in their democratic transition, in a modern world where economic and social innovations have changed the speed and dynamics of society. The current political atmosphere faces new challenges much different from the ones faced by their older counterparts. The challenges to democracies that are observed in the old stable systems are in themselves intriguing and puzzling, finding the same challenges in younger, less stable systems opens for a completely new set of possible outcomes and consequences. Young democratic regimes are not as robust, have less experience and capital, and have not established democracy as the only game in town. To understand regime breakdown and how modern problems may interfere with the democratic process, cases that are currently in this position should be studied.

The second reason for utilizing new democracies lies in the possibility for innovation and development of the democratic ideal. Consolidated regimes follow the rules of democracy that were laid down centuries ago, and there has not been an innovation within democratic thinking since the end of the 19th century. Regimes recently consolidating their position have a higher degree of possible development and innovation as their democracies have been forced

to tackle modern problems from the outset rather than slowly integrating them into a large apparatus. Since the democratic states of Western Europe have positioned themselves as democratic ideals, new democratic regimes would follow this "blueprint". However, as these democracies are born in an age of globalization and far from being in a vacuum, new solutions may be found that also are applicable for old consolidated democracies. If there are universal challenges as suggested by theories like the Cartel Party Model of Katz and Mair (1994), their impact on the consolidation process is imminent, thus opening for new democratic models and ideas. If these solutions can be found they will add to our collective understanding of how young democratic regimes mix the designs of old with solutions to problems of new.

The third and final reason for utilizing younger democratic regimes is one of theory. The extensive research on western democracies on all levels; civil society, voluntary organizations, political parties and practices of government, are primarily linked to specific consolidated cases. New democratic regimes are naturally not covered by such vigor. Nevertheless, "universal trends" are often based on results from Western democracies, see e.g. Wattenberg (2002), who claimed that it was rare to see a tendency being so universal. By using existing models and assumptions on new cases, one can test these assumptions and see whether or not they truly are universal. Research suggests that there is a diffusion-process between political parties and the demos they are representing. Is this diffusion-process truly universal? New cases may strengthen or weaken the given conclusions on universality. In addition, models like the Cartel Party Model are highly contested and controversial. By subjecting these to new cases, a broader knowledge to the problems and solutions will appear. Before my cases are presented, a few challenges and considerations need to be discussed.

3.2 Young democratic regimes

The term "young democratic regime" in this master thesis is a rather vague expression that needs to be clarified and defined. Huntington (1993) identifies three waves of democratization that have moved across the globe at different time intervals. I will use his wave framework to clarify the term.

Huntington's first wave of democratization originates in Europe and in the colonies of America trough the American and French revolutions. The movement was fuelled by new ideology and philosophy, removing the traditional powerbase of sovereign kings and nobles. This long

wave contains the countries regarded as the foundation of modern democracy, e.g. Britain, France and the U.S. Hence they are the "traditional" or "old democratic states". The second wave is a short wave of democratization and takes place in the aftermath of the Second World War. The outbreak of this war disrupted the power balance across the globe as the colonial powers where locked in combat. Japan's expansion in the pacific theater crippled Britain's position in the region at the same time as Germany occupied France and The Netherlands. In the vacuum after the Second World War, democratic institutions where inaugurated in allied occupied territories like Japan, Korea, West Germany, Italy and Austria. Former colonies formed democratic regimes, such as India, the Philippines and Israel. Nigeria starts its process towards democracy in this second wave of democratization.

The third and final wave of democratization starts with an incident in Europe. In 1974, the military in Portugal seizes power, ending the authoritarian rule of Caetano. The new military leaders are pro democratic, and this coup sparks a movement of democratization in Latin-America, Asia and Europe. It was regarded as an unlikely turn of events as a military coup d'état normally enforces an authoritarian rule, not democratic regimes. The third wave of democratization continues from 1974 and into the 1990s and early 2000s. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the ideological paradigm dividing the world vanished, leaving new sovereign states in the position of regime consolidation. Thirty new democratic regimes entered the consolidation process and were still in development when Huntington published his work. Young democratic regimes in this master thesis are from the second part of the third wave, regimes that formed their democracies around the events of 1989 and continued the consolidation process in the 1990s. According to Huntington, these democracies are in the process of stabilizing their democratic regime or in transition towards a modern system different from the previous regime. They are ideal cases for conducting inquiries into party functions as they are born into the world at a time when the East-West paradigm is shattered with the fall of the Soviet Union, and the big changes in party ideology and political participation in established democracies start to manifest themselves. These countries have recently consolidated their democracies within the last decade and are therefore well-suited cases for highlighting the roles of modern political parties and the challenges they face. By using cases from this time period, the focus will be on regimes that were born into the same time period as the decline in membership and voter turnout intensified (cf. Figure 2.1). In chapter 2, we observed how membership and voter turnout took sharp turn towards decline. Since democratization in the 1990s in a much larger scale is a product of international contact and influence than it was in

the post-war period, it gives us the opportunity to investigate whether or not the same development is present in these new cases and if so, how they were dealt with in the democratic process.

3.3 Geographic position

Democratic regimes have been born in the chosen time-interval in all continents of the world. Therefore, the geographic location is important when choosing cases. Political culture and tradition vary across continents. In my analysis, a few cases including one geographic region are selected and they will be compared cross-nationally. Particularly interesting is the wave of democracy in Eastern Europe, for at least three reasons. First, historically these new regimes have been involved in the development of Europe as a cluster of modern states since the peace of Westphalia in 1648. They have been subjected to the same drive towards expansion of human rights and political ideas such as its Western sisters, and thus the idea of democracy is not one that is alien. In the Soviet Union period, ideas and philosophy often traveled between the states, so their democratization-period is often influenced by the lessons learned in other neighboring regimes. This provides a better platform for comparison both among the regimes themselves and between East and West.

A second reason is the European Union and its expansion to the east, including new democratic regimes. This is a political force that would have a direct influence on any young regime aspiring either to become a member country or to participate in the European community. The political realm in which my cases operate will be quite similar, simplifying a cross-regime comparison. The EU influence on each case will be quite constant as the ideals are laid down in the Copenhagen Criteria, and the young regimes have these as a backdrop for future cooperation or continued membership. The democratic ideals are also consistent with the democratic culture born in Europe, creating a more common understanding of the concept of democracy in the cases observed.

A third reason for focusing on the Eastern European cases is data and availability. As these countries have been subjected to a systematic, albeit totalitarian, regime, a tradition of data-storage and archives is found. With the expansion of the EU, conducting several social studies through its research division, more data from this region have become available to the public in languages like English, making them accessible without the long process of translation. This is an obstacle with cases from other continents. The data quality from very young re-

gimes with low institutionalization in Africa is often poor and inadequate. Asian cases tend to provide the data in only one language which is the mother tongue. This requires knowledge of language that is beyond the author's reach. Only India of the Asian cases provides a broad database in English. In Latin-America, the host of data is in Spanish and somewhat restricted for access. Another positive element from utilizing data gathered by the EU, is their similarity. These studies are conducted on all regimes with the same content. Each case is subjected to the same questionnaire or analyzed with the same methodological tool.

3.4 The selected cases: Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia

Based on the discussion above, Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia will be my cases. They can all be described as totalitarian systems for a long period before 1989. Latvia was a part of the Soviet Union, Slovenia was a part of Yugoslavia, while Hungary was heavily influenced by the Soviet Union. With the fall of the Soviet Union, Hungary and Latvia got the option of choosing regime-type freely. Both countries created a parliamentarian republic, combining the role of president and prime minister as head of State and head of Government. Slovenia was the only country in the Yugoslavian breakdown that obtained sovereignty without being directly engulfed in the civil wars in the beginning of the 1990s. All countries are situated in the heart of the East-European sphere. Their political environment is influenced by the same forces internationally. They also have a history of seeking westwards culturally, and their political legacy is also in many ways similar. These common elements are a plus when creating a cross-national comparison. Furthermore, the three countries are members of the same international organizations; NATO, EU, OSSE, OECD and the UN. Being members of the EU, the criteria for membership have ensured that several democratic benchmarks have been passed. This provides us with a greater certainty that the countries have consolidated the democratic regime, and therefore are meaningful cases to utilize for my study of party functions. The rest of this chapter will give necessary details about each country's road to democracy, main political parties and the electoral system. These pieces of information are much based on Bakke (2002).

3.4.1 Road to democracy

Hungary has a population of approximately 10.0 million spread out on a geographic area of 93 square kilometers. The capital is Budapest, which houses 1.7 million people. Hungary's parliament and main bureaucratic institutions are situated in the capital, which functions as a

region of its own in the regional list system. Hungary is classified as a parliamentary republic where the prime minister is Head of Government and president Head of State. Hungary joined NATO in 1999 and later the EU in 2004.

The breakdown and subsequent transition towards democracy started in Hungary in 1989. The attempted breakaway from the influence of the Soviet Union in 1956 showed the ruling elites that a wish for supremacy and democracy was embedded in the civil society. There was an overwhelming support for a democratic process from all the political actors in 1989. The transition was brokered between the ruling communist party and the opposition towards the 1990 election. During these negotiations, the foundation of institutions where settled along with plans for a free-market economy. There was a broad agreement that only through the framework of democracy dictated by western institutions could the Hungarian regime operate. The IMF, NATO and the EU became key institutions that the new Hungarian regime sought to attach itself.

Like all democratization-processes in the region, the Hungarian process was dominated by negotiation. Inside the communist party, the soft-liners took the initiative for reform after the conservative communist leader Kadar was removed in 1988. They found partners in the opposition and wished to transform the party into a socialist democratic alternative rather than risk being ousted by the opposition through civil uprising. This way, the communist alternative could still keep some control on power through elections. The opposition consisted of liberals and conservative powers seeking influence through elections. These three forces were the main political groups, they met at broad roundtable discussions and laid down the framework for the election of 1990.

Latvia has a population of approximately 2.2 million people, occupying a territory of 64.5 square kilometers. The capital of Latvia is Riga, and the country is a parliamentary republic. President figures as Head of State, prime minister as Head of Government. Latvia joined NATO in March 2004 and the EU in May 2001.

The Latvian push for democracy started earlier than in the rest of the region and manifested itself in a long winding struggle for independence. The process started with elite and activist-led environmental demonstrations in 1986. The following year a host of mass demonstrations where organized that focused on the historical wrongdoing of Soviet Russia from 1939.

Latvia's claim for independence was rooted in the Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement where Hitler and Stalin divided the Baltic and central Europe between themselves. The Latvian movement for sovereignty faced serious issues that needed to be dealt with in a calm and collected manor. In 1989, the country's population demography consisted of 52% Latvians and 42% Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian ethnic groups. A peaceful move to democracy seemed extremely difficult as Latvia housed a huge part of the Soviet Red Army.

The central actors on the pro-democratic side in Latvia were the Latvian People's Front and the Latvian National Independence Movement (LNNK), The latter embedded itself as Latvia's first political party in the first free election of 1990. The strongest actors in the transition, however, were the Latvian People's Front and their leadership. The front was gathered by pro-democratic forces from the elite and reform-friendly communists in the ruling communist party. Both the Latvian People's Front and the LNNK believed that the best way for Latvia to leave the Soviet Union, would be to generate the 2/3rd majority in the upper Latvian Soviet. Both the Latvian People's Front and the LNNK started to demand further autonomy for the republic, economically and politically. In addition, the Latvian Congress Movement advocated a separation from the Soviet Union outside its institutions, but this movement was relatively weak. The majority of the communist ruling party and the communist movement Interfront were working against Latvian sovereignty. In the election of 1990, these parties secured 34.5% of the Latvian votes. However, their victory became hollow as certain events removed their powerbase in the population and the opposition moved in to block their further existence. These events were the failed coup d'etat by the conservative communists in August 1991 and the decision made by the Latvian parliament that excluded immigrated Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians to be regarded as Latvian citizens. The result of these events shapes Latvia's politics even today, as there is only center to right parties, the left-side of Latvian politics is non-existing. In September 1991, Latvia was restored as a sovereign nation.

Slovenia is one of the smaller countries of Europe with a total population of approximately 2.0 million people spread out on a territory that covers 20 square kilometers. Ljubljana is the capital, which houses the administrative and parliamentary institutions. Slovenia is classified as a republic, but it has a mixed system with president as Head of State and prime minister as Head of Government. Slovenia joined both NATO and the EU in 2004.

Slovenia was a part of the federal socialist republic of Yugoslavia and had developed in an entirely different environment than the countries of the Eastern Bloc dominated by the Soviet Russia. Inside Yugoslavia under Tito, a unique political system had developed where freedom of alliance, market socialism and decentralization where key characteristics. Slovenia, during the Tito period, maintained strong ties to Belgrade and thus where allowed to develop itself politically and economically without much interference. In 1974, laws of decentralization were implemented allowing the federal partners to execute local politics at a higher degree. This opportunity was seized by the Slovenians, who developed a strong political apparatus that reformed the country's fiscal and social policies.

Slovenia's path to democracy, as compared to the other states of Yugoslavia, was quite clean and painless. In the 1980s, a consensus was formed in Slovenia for independence as nationalistic tendencies in Serbia grew stronger. The crisis between the central government in Serbia and Slovenia intensified during the last years of the 1980s and in the early 1990s. In 1989, Slovenia condemned the Serbian oppression of Kosovo-Albanians and referred to the Yugoslavian military forces in Slovenia as an occupying force. The government of Slovenia passed radically new laws that gave the state increased powers. The Slovenia-Serbia conflict of 1989 became the element that broke the Yugoslavian Federation apart. The final decisions were made in January 1990, when Slovenia's representatives at the communist party convention announced its plans for a free election in Slovenia and that they demanded a Yugoslavia with free and sovereign states holding democratic elections. Milosevic was strongly against these plans and demanded a strong nation with one strong party. Slovenia's representatives answered by leaving the convention. Slovenia held a referendum on total separation from the Yugoslavian republic in 1991 and a majority of 88% vote for full independence. Slovenia declared independence in June 1991. This provoked an attack by the Yugoslavian army, however, Slovenia had prepared its defenses for such an event and through heavy resistance kept the Yugoslavian army at bay. Milosevic and Slovenia finally agreed on a treaty where the army would leave the Slovenian territory within three months and Slovenia would postpone its claim for independence in the same time sphere. Slovenia was recognized as a sovereign state in January 1992.

3.4.2 Main political parties

In the roundtable-discussions of 1989 in Hungary, three major movements made compromises for the 1990 elections. On the ruling side, the Communist party sought to reform itself into a

social democratic party in line with the European tradition. On the opposition side, there were two movements within the democratization movement, the liberals who wanted to transform the country quickly into a free-market economy, and the Christian conservatives opting for a slower process, where the traditions and values would be reflected in the new regime. These three forces of democratization form the backbone of the Hungarian parties. The communist rulers transformed into the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSzP) for the 1990 elections. Being the former ruling party, it could boast a member-mass of 40,000 people and a self-sufficient economy. The MSzP thus formed a broad-based party that fits with the traditional mass-member party. The Hungarian Socialist Party enjoyed the pre-established party apparatus of the communist period, and could therefore choose to maintain strategy based on a broad membership.

From the Christian conservative fraction four parties were born. The first was established as early as 1988 and was called the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF). The MDF was a central partner in the democratization process in 1989 and sought to broadly represent the country's urge for a democratic regime. The second party was the Christian People's Democratic Party (KDNP), originally founded in 1943 by Hungarian catholic statesmen, intellectuals and members of the Ecclesia and disbanded during the Soviet Era. The third and fourth party from the Christian conservative movement established in 1989, were the Individual Farmers Party (FKgP) with its roots from the 1920s and 1930s, and the Hungarian Party for Justice and Freedom (MIEP).

From the liberal/conservative bloc two main parties where formed; The Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz), the major liberal party, and Hungarian Civic Union (Fidesz). Both parties were established in 1988 from the loose networks of illegal democratic movements during the final communist regime. Fidesz changed its political orientation after the 1994 election and adopted a conservative stance in the political spectrum.

These parties participated in the first election in 1990 and have continued to represent the electorate in the parliament.

In Latvia, four stable parties have been in the national assembly since the first election in 1993. Two parties emerged from the People's Front, "Latvia's way" (LC) and the TB/LNNK. LC is a center-right liberal party founded in 1993. Four out of seven prime ministers in Latvia

have belonged to the LC. The party consists of members from the communist party being pro-reform and later switching political position to liberalism. The party draws its supporters from the Latvian ethnic community.

The TB/LNNK is the most prominent Latvian expression for nationalism. The party wishes to establish a coherent politic over the stateless and Russian speaking minority that entails exclusive rules in the naturalization process. The members enjoy support from the Latvian ethnic majority, who wish to protect Latvian cultural uniqueness from Slavic interference. The party name indicates that it is an alliance between the old LNNK and the radical For Fatherland and Freedom party (TB).

The final two stable parties are The People's Harmonic Party (TSP) and the Latvian Socialist Party (LSP). The TSP is the heir of the more Russian friendly actors of the People's Front who sympathized with the other ethnic minorities of Latvia. Their leader since 1993 is Janis Jurkans, who is ethnic polish. This party was in the beginning a center-left liberal party, but later lost its more liberal left-members. The rest of TSP is a left-wing party showing both social-democratic and social-liberal traits. Today, the party belongs to the Russian-friendly bloc called "For human rights in a united Latvia" (PCTVL). The TSP is a typical opposition party and has never been in government. The LSP is a party from the "equal rights" fraction of the 1990-93 parliaments. The party consists of members being against the break from the Soviet Union and those who wished a modernized Soviet Union with Latvia as member. The LSP is an important representative for the Russian-speaking community.

After the change to a multiparty system in Slovenia, two elections were held until the party system was fully consolidated. In the election of 1996, there was a clearer picture of which parties had established themselves, and the same pattern was strengthened in the 2000 election. In Slovenia, it is difficult to identify the parties on the traditional right/left axis. However, we find a clear tendency towards three parties with a center-left orientation, two parties with a conservative-right orientation and two populist parties.

The largest center-left party is the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (LDS). This party has roots in the old communist party's youth organization and inherited members with organizational experience. This was reflected in the 1992, 1996 and in the 2000 election, after which the LDS formed government. The reason for LDS' broad support from the beginning was their

earlier experience in the communist apparatus, which was regarded as a positive trait. The party was well organized and had more experience than its competitors.

The left party of Slovenia is the Social Democrats (SD). The SD was named United List of Social Democrats (ZLSD) until 2005. It was a coalition of four parties that merged for the 1992 election. The party's core is the old members of the reform-communist party that lost its power in 1990. The party was modernized after the election in 1996. After the election of 2004, the SD is the third largest Slovenian party in the parliament. The last left-center party is a small party named the Democratic party of Pensioners of Slovenia. This is a pure interest party for pensioner's but holds a left-wing orientation.

On the center-right front, we find the Slovenian People's Party (SLS) and the New Slovenia (NSi). The first one is a conservative right party. The SLS was able to form a coalition government with the LDS after the 1996 elections. It regarded the fight against EU and NATO membership as its main focus. The New Slovenia (NSi) is a conservative-right Christian party consisting of members from the old Slovenian Christian People's party (SKD) that was merged with the SLS. Among the members to reestablish a Christian people's party was SKD's old leader and former prime minister Lojtz Peterle.

The two populist parties of Slovenia are the Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS) and Slovenian National Party (SNS). The SDS is a right-wing oriented party earlier named Slovenian Social Democratic Party. However, the party was only social-democratic by name and not orientation and switched name in 2003. The party is build around former prime minister and defense-minister Janez Jansa, who fought the Yugoslavian Army in the confrontation in 1991. Janza became a symbol for Slovenia in its struggle against the central-communist regime in Belgrade. His party has experienced both progress and setbacks in elections. In the 2004 election, the SDS was the largest party occupying 29 seats in the parliament. The orientation of the second populist party, the SNS, is somewhat difficult to pinpoint. The party derived from the old communist party, but is deeply nationalistic and anti-communist. The party structure, however, has kept the authoritarian traits of the communist party. The party was compared to Haider in Austria and Zjirinovskij in Russia, and branded as extreme-right. The party lost its support in 1996 when it was revealed that its leader had worked for the Communist Intelligence during the Tito era. Today, it is a marginal party in the Slovenian political sphere.

3.4.3 The electoral system

The parliamentary electoral system in Hungary is a product of a political compromise reached at the roundtable deliberations of 1989, which created a complex electoral system combining single-member districts and county-based lists. This was enshrined in the electoral law of 1989 and has operated since with small adjustments. The system distributes 386 seats in the Hungarian parliament. The voters have two votes to cast, one for the single-member district and one for the regional list.

176 seats are distributed through single-member districts, based on the simple majority principle with two rounds of elections. The country is divided into 176 single member districts, where any candidate with 750 signatures from eligible voters living in the constituency may participate. The first round is declared valid if the turnout exceeds 50%. If this requirement is fulfilled and a candidate wins with more than 50% of the votes, that person is declared winner. If this requirement is not met, the second round takes place two weeks later. The first three candidates plus any other candidate with more than 15% of the votes may participate. The requirement for turnout in the second round is 20%.

The regional lists distribute 152 seats to the parliament based on proportional representation. The country is divided into twenty multi-member districts. These match the units of regional administration, the nineteen counties and the capital city. These districts return a differing number of deputies depending on size. A party can put forward a list in any region where it successfully have candidates nominated in a quarter of the region's single-member district. The final institutional mechanism for distributing seats is the national lists. No votes are cast for the national lists specifically. This is a system of distributing seats on the basis of a national pool of votes. The pool is filled from two sources. The first source is fractions of the full quota of votes from the regional list elections that remain after the distribution of seats are transferred to the national pool. The second source is all the votes from losing candidates in the second round of the single-member district elections. The seats are distributed using d'Hondt's version of the highest average system. The condition for putting forward a national list is that the party successfully put forward regional lists in at least seven of the regional districts (Körösényi, 1999: 119).

This mix of both proportional representation and single-member majority system make the Hungarian system one of the most complex systems in Europe. The compromise made in

Hungary show how the democratic process is directly influencing the regime and mechanisms chosen in the institutional design. Hungary is in this aspect a good example of a tendency seen in most new democratic regimes.

Latvia's electoral system is a mix between its legacy from the 1920s and 1930s and western democratic models. For the first parliamentary elections, the old communist system with simple majority in single-member districts was utilized. This was reformed during the 1990s towards the system utilized today, where the members of parliament are elected in multi-member districts. The seats are distributed by proportional representation using the formula of St. Laguë. There is a limit of 5% of the votes for ascension to parliament.

Latvia's system is one with a strong single-chamber parliament and a weak presidency. The president is elected by the national assembly Saeima by a majority of 51% of the members for a four-year period. The president symbolically forms the government on the background of the vote by selecting a prime minister, who in turn has to be accepted by the Saeima. The president has an initiative for drafting law proposals and may dismantle the Saeima and make a call for a new election. If so, the proposal becomes a referendum. If the majority of the people is against the proposal, the president must resign his commission.

In the law process, the president may ask the Saeima to reconsider the draft and make a new one, but only once per accepted proposal. He may also delay the implementation of a new law by two months. If the Saeima wishes to express a vote of no confidence towards the president, a majority of 50% of the members is needed, and a majority of 2/3rds of the Saeima must vote for enactment of the vote to remove the president from office.

Unlike Hungary and Slovenia, the Latvian communist party played the role of anti-democracy. The result is a clearer separation between the blocs and political tradition. However, Latvia shares the same ties towards the west as both Hungary and Slovenia and is member of the same key organizations.

Slovenia has a mixed system where the president is the Head of State while the prime minister is Head of Government. The president is directly elected by the electorate for a 5 year period, and may be reelected for a second term only. The presidential role is limited to a formal position as Head of State, with little or no political power. Formally, the president is the comman-

der of the armed forces and assumes the legislative power in a state of marital law. The president may call for new elections and appoints ambassadors to serve abroad. The president handles ceremonial roles in the same capacity as a monarch in the European system.

The Slovenian parliament is a bicameral body where the upper house consists of directly elected representatives for a four-year term. The Hungarian and Italian minorities elect one representative each, the others are elected from the eight electoral regions. The Slovenian election system has complex laws and builds its distribution on multi-member districts with a proportional representation system. Slovenia changed its system from the original Hare method to Droop in 2000 and put up a barrier of 4% of the votes for ascension to parliament. In the national elections, the country is divided into 8 electoral regions with 11 election districts for each region. The parties create a list for each region with 11 party candidates, one for each district. The candidate with the highest score from his district becomes the first name on the regional list. Thus, the Slovenian system prohibits parties to rank their list. The results from each district dictate the order of the candidates on the party list for the region. Every candidate must gain a minimum of 10,000 votes. The surplus above this figure is transferred to a national pool. From the national pool, candidates are elected from two national lists. The first list contains the names of the strongest candidates from different districts that were not elected. The second list is created by the parties themselves and names are ranked in an order chosen by them. This makes it possible for a party to nominate key members to office, such as the chairman. The surplus votes are tallied and distributed after d'Hondt's method and approximately a quarter of all members of the upper house are elected from this pool.

The lower house of the Slovenian Parliament, called the national council, is not elected by the electorate but by interests in the civil society. This is a legacy from the communist period and kept by the Slovenian parliament as a tradition. 40 seats are filled by members selected from the finance and other interest sectors. Five representatives are selected from the Employers Union, four from the Labor Union, four from the Farmers Union and other financial groups. Additional six representatives are selected by the non-economic sector and the final 22 seats are distributed by local interest groups. The appointed members sit for a 5 year period. The lower house plays an advisory role to the parliament. The council may create draft proposals for new laws, call for a referendum on national matters and demand for independent parliamentary inquiries when an issue presses for it.

This presentation of my cases has provided the background information needed in my study along with the framework established in chapter 1 and 2. Before embarking on the main analysis of my master thesis, methodological aspects will be dealt with.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the focus is on methodological aspects in my master thesis. The theoretical foundation of my work is the Key framework presented in chapter 1. This will be combined with the dynamic approach of Easton (1990) to create the design of my study. One important issue is to select indicators for the various party roles in Key's framework into variables that can be utilized in my three cases and how the values of these variables may be categorized. Another vital issue is to explain the data set and why my cases in several instances are constrained to using information somewhat back in time. The ability of drawing inferences will also be brief-ly commented upon.

4.1 Design

In this study, the design represents a mix of Key's framework and Easton's approach. The idea is to form a simple chain of relationship between the micro and the macro level. Easton constructs this chain by using a simple stock-and-flow diagram from data modeling. However, my presentation extends Easton's approach by incorporating Key's three levels. The logic relationships between the levels will be outlined, however this is only meant to be a visual aid for the reader. It is by no means a full-scale model to be implemented for data simulations. The objective is to simplify the theoretically based relationships to observe patterns.

Easton defines democracy as a system of feedback (Easton, 1990: 15), where different institutional practices operate within an opaque sphere. The result of the activity inside this system is policy outcomes, which in turn come back to the public in a feedback loop. Thus, Easton identifies democracy as a dynamic system where information is fed from the public into the democratic system and transformed into policy. The policy outcome is then fed back to society, creating electoral behavior based on the information. The problem for Easton is that his democracy structure is not clear and open and critiques have labeled it a black box.
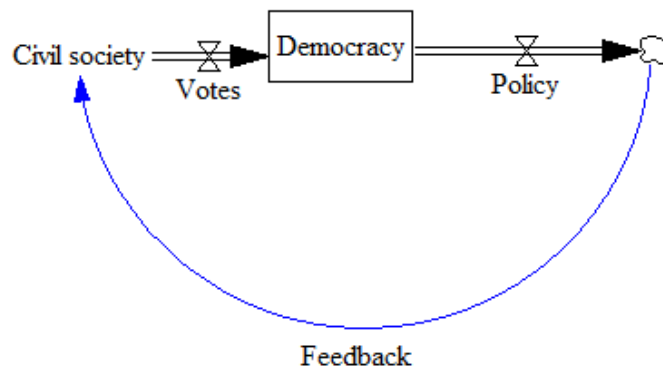
Figure 4.1 Description of the approach of Easton (1990)

Figure 4.1 shows how information is being fed from the electorate and into the democratic system. The information flow is facilitated to represent votes. Through the ballot, civil society elects representatives to govern the system. The elected officials then suggest and implement policy outcomes implemented on civil society through law and regulations. This is the feedback information to civil society indicated by the curved arrow. The reaction from civil society on these laws and regulations manifests itself in the next election, where either sitting representatives are reelected or removed based on their performance. Eaton's model is a very simplified version of a dynamic system and of course far too simple to catch all possible feedback loops between government and society. However, this contribution is in my opinion important in the assessment it creates. Democracy in the feedback system comprising dynamic processes underlines that no political actor operates in a vacuum and brings an understanding of how democracy work or fails to work.

To utilize Easton's model in combination with Key's framework of political party roles to give an increased understanding of how political roles and political parties work as a conduit between civil society and state, the black box needs to be opened. Since Key's framework identifies specific roles for a political party on three levels, these roles are linked together and can be used for that purpose. The result is a three-sphere environment with feedback systems.
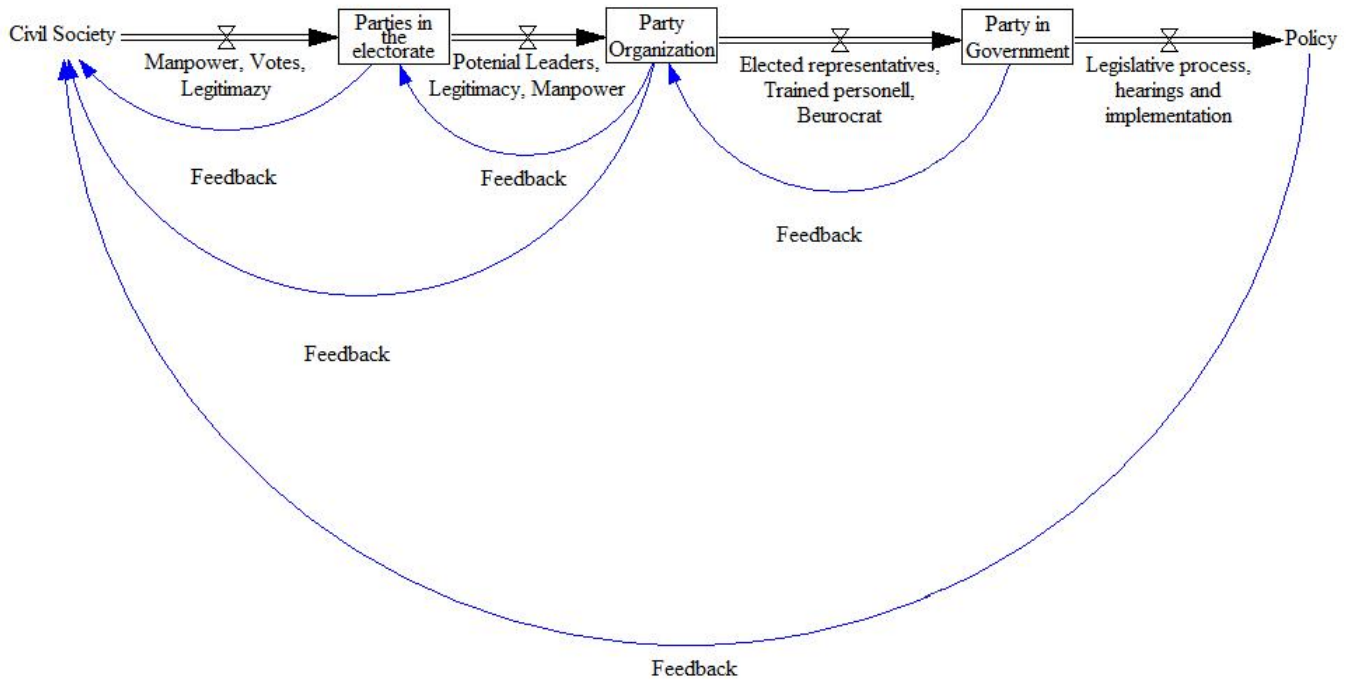
Figure 4.2 Extended feedback model based on Key's framework

Although my model is also a simplified presentation, it shows quite precisely how the different roles of a party are linked to each other. Civil society is ultimately the pool that any political party draws its resources from in terms of legitimacy and manpower. The party's conduct and internal construction are fed back to civil society through the loops, just like policy outcomes. My model, however, focuses on the fact that the information flow contains elements of legitimacy both by votes and participation. This simple model also shows why it is important to look at all three levels simultaneously, rather than focusing on one level alone. The focus in democracy and democratic development has tended to be on one side of the spectrum, while the other spheres have been regarded as constant. No strategy or conduct is carried out in a vacuum, they are born as a reaction to each other. A positive relationship between the different levels is expected. A positive (negative) outcome or incentive leads to increased (decreased) activity.

In order to investigate the roles and approaches for the political parties in my cases, the spheres starting from civil society towards parties in the electorate will be followed. Identifying different strengths or weaknesses played by each role through the framework and how these ultimately influence the feedback to civil society, gives a good picture of the dynamic. This will shed light on the current situation and how it may progress in the near future. In the con-

tinuation, each case will be investigated level by level through the chain in order to assess the roles played and the influence of the current situation on the system as a whole. By identifying key elements on each level, the flow of each level and the feedback to civil society will hopefully become increasingly clear. Of course, there will be some difficulties in transforming public opinions or behaviors into measurable data, as some of these political roles and actions are qualitative by nature. Therefore, also quantitative data combined with case-study reports will be utilized to explain different phenomena on each level and their relationship. By investigating party roles by each step in the system, a picture of how the parties are performing their roles will be painted. This picture will then be compared to the results from the analyses of Dalton and Wattenberg (2002) of party roles in Western Europe. With a similar framework, this comparison becomes both feasible and fruitful. By going through each level focusing on the roles of the party in the framework of Key, information on the specific level that is needed in the comparative part of my study will be gathered. The exercise will be a narrative approach, where the different levels are examined by other papers, reports and books on the subject. This enables a simple comparative analysis, where patterns and data on each level are compared between my three cases and the reference mode from the old democratic regimes. Information from comparisons will identify the patterns and relationships between each level. This part of the analysis will share some traits with "trace processing" (George and Bennett, 2004: 210-216). Although the trace-processing idea is utilized to identify the pattern of relationship between each of the levels in my model, no attempt will be made to draw inferences or test the validity of a theory, which is not a possible approach considering the nature and scope of my master thesis.

4.2 Data

Second-hand source data from the three countries in my study, Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia, are used. They are both quantitative and qualitative in nature, publicly available and obtained through public channels. In chapter 3, information about the contents was presented and more details will be given in chapter 5. However, these data have some characteristics that need to be explained. In several cases, they will originate from some years back in time. This reason for not always being able to use the most recent data, indicating the possibility of some inconsistency in time, is simply that it takes more time than in old democracies before data from my selected countries are published. Language is one obstacle, especially for older data, and making the data useful for presentation consumes much time. Collecting data first-hand form my countries would require more time and resources than can be justified for this master

thesis, and trying to do so, to get access to the relevant data archives could have turned out to be very difficult. Another characteristic is the fact that the number of studies are limited, implying that for each country, one source of data will dominate. Since young democratic regimes typically are subjected to rapid changes, analyses of development are postponed in order to fully catch changes over time. This creates gaps in the sense that the 1990s are well covered, while results from the last ten years are more sporadically available. However, my goal to focus on large areas of government and civil society in order to identify a pattern for comparison will be realized with the available amount of data.

Another challenge is to define indicators for the party roles of Key's framework. This is especially relevant for the micro and meso level, and Table 4.1 shows my choices.

	Party role of Key	Indicator
Micro level	Simplifying choice for voters	Voter turnout and volatility
	Educating citizens	Membership in parties/voluntary sector
	Generating symbols for identification and loyalty	Volatility and party membership
	Mobilizing people to participate	Voter turnout and party membership
Meso level	Recruiting political leadership/ seeking governmental office	Party leadership development and parliament connections, party stability
	Training political elites	Internal and external organization, party stability
	Articulating political interest	Internal organization and actor connections, party funding
	Aggregating political interest	Internal organization and actor connections, party funding

Table 4.1 Indicators for political roles at the micro and the meso level

Unlike the roles on the micro and meso level, the roles of the parties in government (the macro level) are procedural. Since there is a clear organization, most macro level roles are filled by the mere existence of the state. To shed light on the dynamics of the system as a whole, the macro level practices are looked at and measured in relation to the observed behavior on the two preceding levels. One example is the stability of government, where meso level observations and micro level sentiments influence this variable.

The concepts of internal and external organization are collected from Lawson (1994). Internal organization is the level of internal structure in a political party, centrally. External organization is the level of contact patterns integrated into a system between political parties and civil society actors.

4.3 Cases and the ability to draw inferences

Three cases have been drawn from a pool based on certain pre-established criteria given in chapter 3. The N is small in the sense that three cases for observation are included. However, my ambition is not to test theories or to draw inferences using statistical tests given specific hypotheses. Nevertheless, qualitative method and case studies include the possibility of drawing inferences under certain circumstances (George and Bennett, 2004: 178-179). This master thesis sheds light on the roles of a political party on different levels to create a mode for comparison. The selected cases are analyzed in order to identify patterns, differences and to which extent observed behavior seems to coincide with existing theory on the field. The cases may in turn act as a means of observing challenges and areas that need more attention for further studies.

4.4 The Pedersen index

In order to measure the political stability of party systems, the Pedersen index is a popular measure (Meleshevich, 2007: 98). Scores on this index will be reported in the following chapter. It measures the net change of aggregate distribution of votes in two consecutive elections and is defined as follows:

$$V_t = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n}\left|P_{i,t} - P_{i,t-1}\right|}{2} \qquad 0 \leq V_t \leq 100$$

where

n = number of parties that are participating in two elections,

$P_{i,t}$ = percentage of the vote obtained by party *i* at election *t*

The higher the value, the lesser the degree of stability of a party system.

CHAPTER 5: OBSERVATIONS OF POLITICAL ROLES IN HUNGARY, LATVIA AND SLOVENIA

Now that the methodological aspects have been clarified, the study can proceed with detailed observations of central indicators in my cases. In this process, the indicators on all levels will shed light on the party roles according to the framework. Based on the findings, the results on each indicator will be classified by the labels low, medium, high.

5.1 The Hungarian micro level

The micro level contains key elements of political participation and closeness between party and public. This includes the support in elections and support by membership. In modern times, the link between civil society and political parties has gradually diminished. Hungary is no exception. Paradoxically, when democracy is established, the new rights given the public are not activated, they stay rather dormant. This is not what one would expect from a system where totalitarianism and suppression previously was the agenda. Hungarian participation remains low in both voter turnout and membership.

5.1.1 Voter turnout and volatility

Since the decision to democratize Hungary in 1989, there has been held five parliamentary elections. Results presented by IDEA (2009) show that the overall turnout from Hungary has dropped from 75% in the first election of 1990 and to 64% in 2006. However, the lowest score of 57% appeared in 1998. Overall voter turnout in Hungary is low, with an average of 67% and the trend is negative. This indicates that Hungarian political parties are struggling to enact the civil society to participate at elections. When compared to the voter turnout of old democratic systems over the same time period, the level is lower and the trend is similar. Combining voter turnout with volatility renders more insight into electoral behavior. The Pedersen index of volatility explained in chapter 4 yields a score of 28% for the first two elections and 34% for the second and the third (Körösényi, 1999: 104). This is a high volatility and clearly above the average for Europe of 8%. Shortly after World War II, when several Western European countries had to reestablish normal political relations, the volatility rate was on average 17% (Körösényi, 1999: 104). These figures indicate that Hungary struggles to form a strong relationship between party and voter. Voters often switch between parties.

When we look at the Hungarian campaigning strategies, we observe that they adopt a catch-all approach. This development is not unique as European parties move in the same direction (Heidar and Saglie, 2002). In Hungary, this trend seems to be apparent since the volatility rate is several points higher than the European average. Körösényi (1999: 105) points out two key reasons for low participation in Hungarian civil society. The first reason is the country's communist past. During the communist era, in Hungary there was a clear separation of power between ruling elite and civil society. The possibility for an individual to participate in any other way than through state societies was forbidden. The result was a change towards democracy, where the elites drew up the charter without incorporating the civil society, making democracy an elite project where none of the parts at the table enjoyed great legitimacy form society. Therefore, politicians in Hungary are met with skepticism and trust to political parties is generally low (Körösényi, 1999: 20).

The second reason is the role of mass media and the modern society. Hungary is a modern country where citizens are individuals removed from traditional communities (Körösényi, 1999: 30). The mass of voters act according to their own personal preferences rather than being frozen into old political thinking. The mass media provides instant information and has in many ways taken over some of the key functions on the micro level. Political parties lose their ability to educate citizens as their apparatus cannot provide information faster than modern mass media. Consequently, their role is transformed to an indirect channel for communication on public issues. A weakness of this development is the fact that mobilization and education through the political parties formed a direct relationship and first-hand experience. This development increases the distance between party and electorate.

5.1.2 Party membership and party stability

In order to understand how civil society participates on a day-to-day basis in the political sphere, the level of party membership must be considered. Membership in political parties is a direct form of participation that allows information and control over local level decisions. A study by Mair and van Biezen (2002) showed that Hungarian party membership between 1990 and 1998 was low and stable with an average of about 2%. Their analysis of 25 European countries, demonstrated that party membership in general experienced a decline, but still scored higher than Hungary. In Hungary, it seems that sivil society does not find it beneficial to engage through the internal party organization as members. Those who are involved inside

the political parties are either the core actors from the elites who participated in the roundtable negotiations of 1989 or members of the new political parties seeking governmental office.

The low participation in Hungarian parties has an effect on their role as educator and conduit between electorate and government. Political parties use the local branch of the party as training facilities for new political personnel aspiring at becoming future key leaders. Local party offices may educate citizens and create public opinion through their activities. With a low level of participation and a low level of membership, the political party's ability to fulfill these functions is diminished.

In Hungary after the transformation to democracy and electoral contest, several new parties have formed in its wake. There are, however, some very distinct features of these parties that are a direct result of the anti-party sentiment in the general population. The first political parties of Hungary did not call themselves parties, rather forums or associations. They were the pro-democratic movement pooled from the political bases (Bakke, 2002: 149). Therefore, the first political parties looked more like social movements than parties and this is an image they try to maintain. The new political parties also follow the same pattern.

Furthermore, it is important to identify the two kinds of political parties that emerged. The first one are the coalitions, consisting of smaller political groups from civil society. They aim at gaining more political influence in the national assembly, Orszaggyules, by strength in numbers. These coalitions are one form of emerging political parties which on the outside look like one entity but in reality consist of several small parties (Bakke, 2002: 152-154). The second form of new political parties is those born out of the political camps with no connection to previous movements. These parties are often very ad hoc, focusing on one specific issue or one specific part of the civil society. These parties are often small with one charismatic leader as front-runner. The party apparatus is a skeleton crew with few members. Since they are ad hoc parties, they can easily cooperate with larger parties as they have no real core ideology. Pragmatism and government focus are a key trait of the new political parties, looking more like interest-organizations or movements than parties and having a very short lifespan.

5.1.3 Membership in voluntary organizations and unions

Membership in local interest-groups and trade unions is another indicator that depicts civil society participation. Even though turnout for elections is low and party enrollment is low, participation in local interest-groups and trade unions could indicate an active civil society. In Hungary, the main interest-organizations are trade unions. In the communist period, only one state-controlled trade union existed, which contained several million of members. After the fall of the communist regime, the trade union was no longer the only alternative (Körösényi, 1999: 133). The first years after the election, new modern trade unions were organized and competition between unions became a reality. The old trade union lost members quickly after the transition and over a million members disappeared. However, as Körösényi notes, the new trade unions did not pick up the members that left the main union. His figures show that participation and membership in both new and old trade unions are low. Contrasted to the 4 million people in the 1980s, only 1.4 million remained in 1993 (Körösényi, 1999: 133-135). The host of the Hungarian civil society is not directly a member of a trade union or any other interest organization.

There are several reasons for this development. On one hand, the civil society in most communist countries is skeptic to unions and organizations after years of forced membership (Howard, 2003: 27). On the other hand, economy was the main focus for the political sphere during the transition from plan-economy to free market. Therefore, large corporations and politicians cooperated directly when writing the new laws regarding tariffs, imports and taxes. The large corporations occupied the seats at the negotiation-table normally occupied by trade unions and local employment groups, which implied that civil society organizations lost their influence on key law proposals related to their own areas (Körösényi, 1999: 140).

5.1.4 Political roles on the Hungarian micro level

In sum, the indicators on the micro level show that Hungarian political parties are struggling to fulfill the old traditional roles in the Key framework. A decreasing turnout and high volatility show that parties do not succeed in being clear and simplify choice for voters. They are not symbols of loyalty and mobilizing political support is partly handled through the media. In the daily run of the mill, few actors participate on the local level, as indicated by membership figures for both political parties and interest-organizations and trade unions. The parties are

not mobilizing people to participate directly or indirectly at a level we expect in a democratic system. The linkage between party and civil society is weak in the Hungarian micro level.

5.2 The Hungarian meso level

The Hungarian meso level shows a political structure locked in a paradox. On one side the parties are closely connected to the state and to the government apparatus, on the other side the parties struggle to create linkages with the public through direct representation in single member constituencies. The introduction of democracy was a compromise between different elites and the special trait of the democratic design keeps complicating the political sphere in which the political parties operate.

5.2.1 Party representation and parliamentary orientation

Political parties rely on their members to fill positions inside the political apparatus. From which background they obtain members and what strategy they deploy are very different from traditional party thinking. In the old traditional style of party politics, the party gained members through the lower level. Mass membership ensured progression for the members who would obtain future positions in the higher party echelon. In modern parties, however, the attitudes towards party and representation have changed, and the Hungarian case is no exception.

In classic democratic thinking, a democracy should in government reflect the composition of the civil society. Political parties should represent all classes and strata in society, where the will of the people in sum gathered in parliament. The Hungarian parties started out with this focus when the party system was created. However, as noted by Ilonszki (1998), with the negative perception in the civil society towards political parties, the party strategy moved towards a more pragmatic and professionalized approach. She identifies two dimensions of party considerations that create conflicts. One the one hand, representatives are expected to vote in accordance with the parliamentary group to insure consensus. On the other hand, single member districts force every MP to consider their obligation to represent the local community when voting on policy (Ilonszki, 1998). In the election of 1990 and 1994, there was a change in the composition of the representatives. During the last communist regime, the share of women in government ranged over 20% and the members belonged to different lower and middle classes such as peasants and industrial workers. After the elections of 1990 and 1994, the situation was very different. The share of women in parliament was approximately

halved, creating an even more male-dominated political sphere. In addition, there was a substantial change in occupational and educational background. Direct data on this field is difficult due to the fact that new members of parliament were listed with their original occupation or background. However, Ilonszki (1998) notes that it is obvious that new members belong to a large range of specialists with high levels of education. The old professions gave way to experts within law and economy, see Table 5.1.

Type of degree	1985–1990		1990		1994	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Engineering	58	25.3	38	11.2	51	14.5
Agriculture	64	27.9	30	8.8	60	17.0
Medicine	34	14.8	39	11.5	19	5.4
Economy	21	9.2	39	11.5	55	15.6
Law	14	6.1	75	22.1	69	19.6
Pedagogy	38	16.6	96	28.2	77	21.8
Art			6	1.8	12	3.4
Theology			13	3.8	5	1.4
Military			3	0.9	5	1.4
Unknown			1	0.3		

Source: Ilonzski, 1998: 162

Table 5.1 Distribution of degrees among MPs in Hungary 1985-1994

With the changes in party orientation and the tendencies shown in Hungary, Ilonszki (1998) argues that the new age introduced a system where the radical concept of a parliament mirroring society in representation is over. In its place, we find a much more pragmatic and professionalized system. The introduction of a multi-party system has on one side opened for participation, but on the other side put up a much higher threshold for individual actors to become participants. The reason is the increased of level of professionalization, which demands a higher degree of knowledge and education.

5.2.2 Party organization

Party organization takes form both as internal and external organization. According to Ilonzski (1998), the Hungarian political parties are weakly organized when it comes to contact with political actors and other organizations on the local level. Looking at party offices and local organizations, we see that between 1990 and 1995, most of the parties established local organizations but were unable to cover the nation as a whole, see Table 5.2.

		MDF	SZDSZ	FKGP	MSZP	Fidesz	KDNP	MSZMP
Membership	1990	21	15	40	50	5	3	82
figures in	1992	30	32	60	40	13	18	n.a.
thousands	1995	23	35	70	37	10	26	25
No. of local	1990	327	320	n.a.	n.a.	150	n.a.	n.a.
organization	1992	824	900	1630	1844	468	700	n.a.
	1995	719	737	2100	433	363	684	1310

Source: Ilonzski, 1998: 167

Table 5.2. Party membership and local strength in Hungary 1990-1995

The party having local organizations is the FKGP with a total number of 2.100 branch offices nation-wide. Furthermore, political parties in Hungary have no formal connection between trade unions and party apparatus. The exception is the socialist party having formal ties with the main trade union from the communist era. The low coverage locally and the lack of a formal channel for contact between party and other organizations indicate a poor system for external input.

Internally, the political structure of Hungarian political parties is strongly connected to the Parliamentary Party Groups (PPT) and the party is heavily centralized. When it comes to leadership selection, the main competition focused on a candidate's constituency background or ambitions. Since the political parties are tied into PPTs, they adopt a very pragmatic approach to policy because the group demands consensus. Few political parties write a manifesto, and those who do, present a manifesto seldom stick to the same manifest through the period. In order to secure parliamentary positions, few political parties in Hungary adopt a clear political platform. With the large focus on constituency and personal ambitions, the parties are more like organizations consisting of single members. The ambitions and ideas of the party depend on which candidate muster the largest support. As a result, the party organization of Hungary presents yet another paradox as it is a stable system in terms of the main parties in power. However, it is at the same time inconsistent as the parties seldom adopt given political views on central political issues. The PPT and the central members in power decide what issues become important. The result is a system where the electorate has little information on differences in policy questions as the parties constantly adapt new views to policy-areas (Ilonszki, 1998).

5.2.3 Party funding

Political party funding is an important indicator on party affiliation as the political apparatus is depending on funds to drive the political machine. Traditionally, political parties were funded privately, and the mass membership approach and connection to trade unions was a way to secure funding. Through membership fees and support from trade unions, political parties got tied in with the civil society. In modern times, however, political parties are funded differently. Political parties have grown in size and with professionalization more money needs to be allocated to run the campaign machine. In modern systems, the political parties are mostly funded by the state, by large intergovernmental institutions such as the EU through the party groups in the European Parliament and by private resources, either direct actors or firms.

The Hungarian system is highly regulated when it comes to private funding of political parties. The practice is transparent and the rules for individual groups or actors to directly support a party financially are clear. However, the reality for all Hungarian parties is that the main funding is provided directly from the state. All parties receive the same support from the state in the first round of funding. In the second round of distribution, the parties in the parliament receive the rest of the total sum available based on the number of seats they occupy. This practice has a direct effect on party strategy, as funds from the state are the guarantee for the continuation of each political party. This factor could explain why Hungarian political parties have adopted the catch-all strategy, as increased electoral support strengthens the party budget. With an increased budget, a larger number of officials and experts have been hired to aid in the policy-process. In this way, Hungarian political parties are closely locked in with the state. The state acknowledges that its survival rests on the political parties and thus creates a relationship of economic dependence. The problem with moving the control of funding from civil society to state is the fact that civil society now looses one of the main channels for influence over the political parties. Earlier, parties had to take the will of the people into consideration in order to secure funds from membership and would be punished if failing to do so. With the state heavily investing in party funding, the state dictates the terms for political parties rather than the people. Paradoxically, the parties are the state making it a system where parties control the main funding of itself through government. This indicates also that the parties are more autonomous than before as the political parties are not financially tied to a civil society contributor like an interest organization or a private donor.

5.2.4 Political roles on the Hungarian meso level

Hungarian political parties do fulfill the roles given to them by Key's framework. However, the lack of a clear connection to civil society makes some roles weaker. There is a very high interest with respect to the recruitment of political leadership and seeking governmental office. Hungarian parties are extremely focused in seeking positions for government and leaders are selected based on popularity in the constituency and their political ambition. (Körösényi, 1999: 119). As regards the training of political elites, the parties are no longer the main educator. The elites now being members of the party already have an educational background or expertise that enables them to take control more directly over the party apparatus. Therefore, political parties in Hungary today hire in experts to have certain functions and enable popular leaders to follow their political ambition. Political parties aggregate political interests, however, only the interest of their members. Membership is low and the general electorate indicates through interview data that they feel political parties do not represent them (Körösényi, 1999: 119). The political interests articulated by the party are also linked to the higher echelons. The PPTs decide what policy-issue the parties should pursue and how to vote on specific issues.

5.3 The Hungarian macro level

On the macro level, the political parties of Hungary fill the roles given them in Key's framework. At a glance, the political parties create majorities in government, organize dissent and opposition and control government administration. The Hungarian system foster stability in government and the electoral design seem to create more a two-party dimension, where one electoral winner gains a clear majority of seats. In pure functional terms, the political parties do perform the functions named in the framework and the state is functioning. Next, the roles of government and how the parties in parliament organize government will be presented.

5.3.1 Election results and parties in parliament

The successful political parties in Hungary are those central during the roundtable discussions of 1989. These parties have remained at the center of parliament at a higher degree than newer political parties. One reason for this success was the ability to early form a clear catch-all strategy and to win possession in government. In Hungary, the bureaucracy is regarded as a highly trustworthy apparatus, and, therefore, the earlier parties gained support by having bureaucratic experience from the beginning.

Looking the election results from 1998 to 2006 form IDEA (2009) given in Table 5.3, we make some interesting observations. Over this period, the Hungarian political system transformed more clearly into a two-party system. Two party groups, the Fidesz/KDNP and the MSZP gained 42% and 48% of the mandates in parliaments by the election in 2006 and they scored even higher in 2002. At the same time, the number of independent representatives and minor party coalitions has been reduced. In 2002, only two of them won seats. This development is as expected, due to two factors. The first factor is the combination of proportional representation and single seat districts. A system with single member districts will typically develop a two-party system over time, like in e.g. Great Britain. The second factor is the consequence of state funding, which allocates more funds to the winners. The result is a more stable party system.

Election year Party	1998	2002	2006
Fidesz/KDNP			42,5%
Fides/MDF	13,0%	48,7%	
Fidesz	29,3%		
MSZP	34,7%	46,1%	48,2%
MSZP/SzDSz		0,3%	1,5%
SzDSz	6,2%	4,9%	4,7%
MDF	0,5%		2,8%
Somogyert			0,3%
FKgP	12,4%		
MIEP	3,6%		
Independent	0,3%		

Source: IDEA, 2009

Table 5.3 Election results from Hungary 1998-2006

5.3.2 The governmental bureaucracy

Hungary as a democratic system contains a well-regulated and vast bureaucratic system. The country was organized with bureaucrats during the communist era, and their importance has not diminished since then. With the installment of democracy and inter-party competition, the bureaucracy also got linked to the political parties that form government. Key's framework states that on the macro level, it is the duty of political parties to control the state bureaucracy

and to appoint ministers to control the different offices. There is always a question as to how politicized the bureaucracy becomes, as the different political parties appoint or sack staff in order to fulfill policy objectives. Hungary has a dual system of administration, even though the state is unitary. The bureaucracy is separated into two parts, the central administrative function and the regional function. Focus is set on the central administrative functions, as the regional offices are not directly linked to government. (Körösényi, 1999: 185) describes the bureaucratic Hungary as being increasingly politicized. Civil servants participate directly in governmental procedures such as formation of legal rules. During the 1990s, the leader of the administrative state secretary, MEH, was a civil servant. This person coordinates the activities of the whole government, preparing government meetings, organizes reconciliation between ministries and represents the government in the parliamentary House Committee. This shows that the leader of the MEH is participating in political and governmental functions. In Hungary, the civil servants represent and deputize for ministers in political arenas such as parliament, government meetings and parliamentary committees (Körösényi, 1999: 185). With the politicization of the civil service, the parties tend to put people in charge that have party background. Between 1990 and 2000, the main body of civil servants had party background and only a few where "parachuted in" (Körösényi, 1999: 212).

Meyer-Sahling (2006) points at some unfortunate consequences of a politicized bureaucracy. After each of the three first selections, an average of 70% of the main administrative body was replaced. Although reappointments take place continuously, there are high peaks after change in government. Furthermore, the civil servants appointed to the job very often belong to other prominent groups or have held heavy political offices. Thus, it is not unusual to find old party leaders or local leaders as senior members of the civil service, which makes it difficult for outside actors from civil society to be included in the central parts of state bureaucracy.

Meyer-Sahling's argument is linked to another unusual trait of the appointees of government, namely the so-called returnees. When a government has been voted out of office, the civil servants are sacked and leave their jobs to perform tasks on other arenas, either locally or regionally. Given that the former government is reinstated, these civil servants are rehired back into their senior positions. This phenomenon gives the impression that a political party owns a set of senior civil servants (Meyer-Sahling, 2006).

5.3.3 Political roles on the Hungarian macro level

The Hungarian political parties clearly fill their governmental roles. The political parties form majorities and governments. Opposition is formed and policies are implemented. From the pure technical side of government, there are no functions that are left weak or inactive. The problem, however, lies in the spirit of the roles given by Key's framework. When it comes to policy and policy implementations, the important issue in the framework is that the policies should follow the manifestos and campaign promises. The problem here is that political parties change their manifestos and platforms steadily through a political period. The policy-objective sought for could easily change when political parliamentary groups are formed. Furthermore, since most candidates are elected on the basis of single member districts, but vote within the high discipline in the PPTs, there is no clear way for the public to tie the policy with their MP. This creates distance between government and civil society.

5.4 The Latvian micro level

Latvia was part of the Soviet Union, and the politics in the post-communist era dealt first and foremost with the effects of Russian immigration and citizenship. The political system started out as a mass-movement of optimism and participation. However, as the euphoria over independence diminished and real-political questions dominated the agenda, the link between ruling parties and the civil society disappeared. Participation is low. The problems with citizenship and disappointment with the governments has rendered a very low legitimacy.

5.4.1 Voter turnout and volatility

Data from IDEA (2009) shows that 81% and 89% participated in the first and the second parliamentary election, respectively, of the electorate participated. Thereafter, the turnout dropped and stabilized at 71%, until dipping to 61% in the last election of 2006. From a turnout mirroring that of other successful democracies in Western Europe like Norway and Sweden, the result of the latest election puts Latvia at the bottom part.

Figure 5.1 shows a trend of increasing rates of volatility for the first four elections in Latvia. It is collected from Meleshevich (2007: 2). The volatility measure is the Pedersen index. The scores are high and increasing, 51, 59 and 70. A similar pattern is observed for Lithuania, Russia and Ukraine, while the opposite development is found for Estonia. Meleshevich (2007:

101) describes Latvia by having a "deep electoral volatility". There can be many reasons for this pattern. Here, my focus will be on major political issues, party stability and membership.

Latvian politics in general are mostly linked to a two-way split of political area of concern. The political parties are then formed as a pro or con party in one of the two dimensions. The question of citizenship for the Russian minority has followed the agenda in the two last decades and parties have declared themselves to be either in favor or against Russian citizenship. This activity aimed at preventing political rights to their inhabitants granted by democratic principles, have been condemned by both the EU and the UN. The result has been a long struggle and the question is not fully settled. Different modes of citizenship have been established. Parties are formed in order to speak out for one side or the other. In my opinion, the lack of consistency in parties over time on this subject has contributed to an increased volatility.
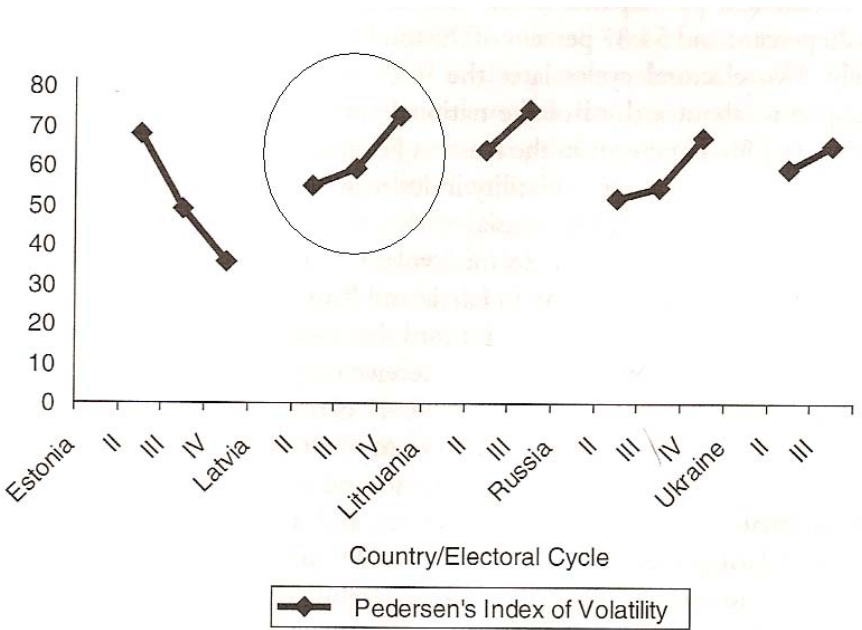
Source: Meleshevich, 2007: 101

Figure 5.1 Scores on the Pedersen index of volatility for five Eastern European countries

The second dimension on which Latvian parties form, is the economy. After the democratization, to bolster Latvia's economy became one main issue. Political parties were formed along this dimension to advocate different models of economic development. Without a competitive left-side, these were typically liberal-economic models. With changing economic con-

ditions and results below expectations, the electorate seeks for an alternative and in my opinion, this at least partly explains why volatility increases.

5.4.2 Party membership and party stability

Party memberships in Latvia are low and have been kept stably low during the 1990s and early 2000s. According to Pabriks and Purs (2002: 82), around 75% of all citizens and 90% of all non-citizens were not member of or did not participate in any political party or activity. These figures had dropped to 71% and 89%, respectively, in 1998. This is a very high portion of the civil society not engaged in political activities. The Latvian parties are struggling on several levels to attract public support. Parties are focusing on the political power and economic muscles rather than public support. The reason for this lack of participation according to the authors is a weak connection between civil society and democracy as a principle. The ideas of democracy are largely unknown to the public and the privileges of free citizens are not understood. Most political work has never been translated to Latvian, therefore there is no strong democratic tradition to look back on for guidance. Furthermore, the Soviet heritage of ignoring public opinion has been transported into the contemporary Latvian society, Pabriks and Purs (2002: 82). The result is a system where few actors from the civil society participate, while the parties remain largely vessels for political actors with governmental ambitions. The result of this practice is a very unstable party system where few parties stay on the main stage for more than a few years.

The Latvian system is a list PR system where the political parties can enter lists for the parliamentary elections. The table of lists presented for and the number of parties in government illustrate some of the problems the Latvian voters are facing.

Parliament	Submitted lists	Represented in the parliament
5th	23	8
6th	19	7
7th	21	6

Source: Pabrik and Purs, 2002: 83

Table 5.4 Number of party lists and their success in parliamentary elections in Latvia

Table 5.4 shows that for the 5th, 6th and 7th Saeima elections, the number of lists ranges from 19 to 23. In Parliament, the numbers of party represented are considerably lower, ranging

from 6 to 8 with 8 in the 5th Saeima election. The attempt to reduce the number of submitted lists after the 5th election by increasing the lower threshold from 4 to 5% of the votes, do not appear to have had a significant effect.

Another important factor that explains volatility is that Latvian parties are mainly driven by one candidate's aspiration of office and the votes gained are mainly popular votes. When the party leader resigns, it may disappear immediately from the political stage. This happened to Siegrist's party, National Movement for Latvia, who got elected to parliament as the third largest party in the 6th Saeima. In the election for the 7th Saeima, Siegrist's party did not accumulate enough votes to surpass the 5% barrier and the party disbanded and disappeared only two years after being the third largest party (Pabrik and Purs, 2002: 81). Of course, this also induces uncertain governmental platforms.

5.4.3 Membership in voluntary organizations and unions

In the voluntary sector, we observe the same pattern of membership as in the party sector. Few Latvian citizens are members of organizations or unions of any kind, and those who are active members tend to be members of religious or recreational organizations. Howard (2003) gives the following figures for 1995-1997: 13% belong to church groups, 10% to theater, orchestra or art groups and 9% to sports and recreation. The level of trade union members is also low with only 18% of the total organized public. This fact illustrates that the civil society of Latvia is largely unengaged into the political sphere. The membership rate in political parties is low, the membership in organizations that could integrate them into the political sphere is low and on the whole the trust between state and citizenry is low (Steen 1997: 201).

5.4.4 Political roles on the Latvian micro level

From the previous description of Latvian politics, it becomes clear that the political parties are struggling to fulfill their roles on the micro level. Volatility-levels in the electorate and the high instability of political parties indicate that they do not generate symbols of loyalty and identification, as the citizenry switch between parties at a high rate for every election. Mobilization is also diminishing as the voter turnout over time has decreased from a high to a low level. The success of young parties illustrates the lack of trust between the party and the electorate. Latvian politics are characterized by an unstable political system, where new political parties may appear right before an election and yet be very successful. However, these parties

are short-lived and often disappear in the next election. Pabriks and Stokenberga (2006: 66) argue that the fact that Latvians are willing to cast votes for new young parties, illustrate a low level of trust from the electorate as a whole to political parties in general. According to Pabriks and Purs (2002: 85), provided political education is low in the Latvian system. The party apparatus is characterized as both weakly rooted in society and low on resources. Therefore it cannot provide the arena for education as intended by Key's framework.

5.5 The Latvian meso level

During the description of the challenges on the micro level, some of the central issues that color the Latvian meso level were touched, namely the characteristic of the political parties as being elite-driven and linked to the leader's charismatic popularity. In this part, more information about the basis for Latvian parties' standpoints and how these affect the parties' functions will be provided. Furthermore, the elite's control over the political stage and how this relationship creates a more opaque field of operation inside the democratic institutions from the outside perspective, will be discussed.

5.5.1 Party representation and parliamentary orientation

Latvian parties form as a result of two cleavages in society, one ethnic and one economic. The ethnic cleavage stems from the large Russian contingent inside the Latvian society. The question of citizenship is a key issue in contemporary Latvia. The move by Latvia during the 1990s to make the large Russian ethnic group non-citizens, led to condemnation from both the UN and the EU. In 1998, the World Bank labeled Latvia as a type II country, indicating that the nation violates basic democratic rights. In order to restore its position in Europe and renew the hope for EU membership, the country naturalized more citizens of Russian decent into the civil sphere. However, the handling of this question has led to government-change and the dismantling of political parties.

The reason why this political question is of such potency is linked to the public opinion and nationalistic sentiments after the Soviet era. According to Pabriks and Purs (2002: 75), Latvia's post-Soviet sentiment was to restore the country to the shape and ethnicity it held between the two world wars. The Russian contingent, on the other hand, wished to keep Latvia close to Russia. Political parties sprung into this atmosphere and they promised to keep the Russian influence low. Figure 5.2 shows clearly why this question is of such controversy.
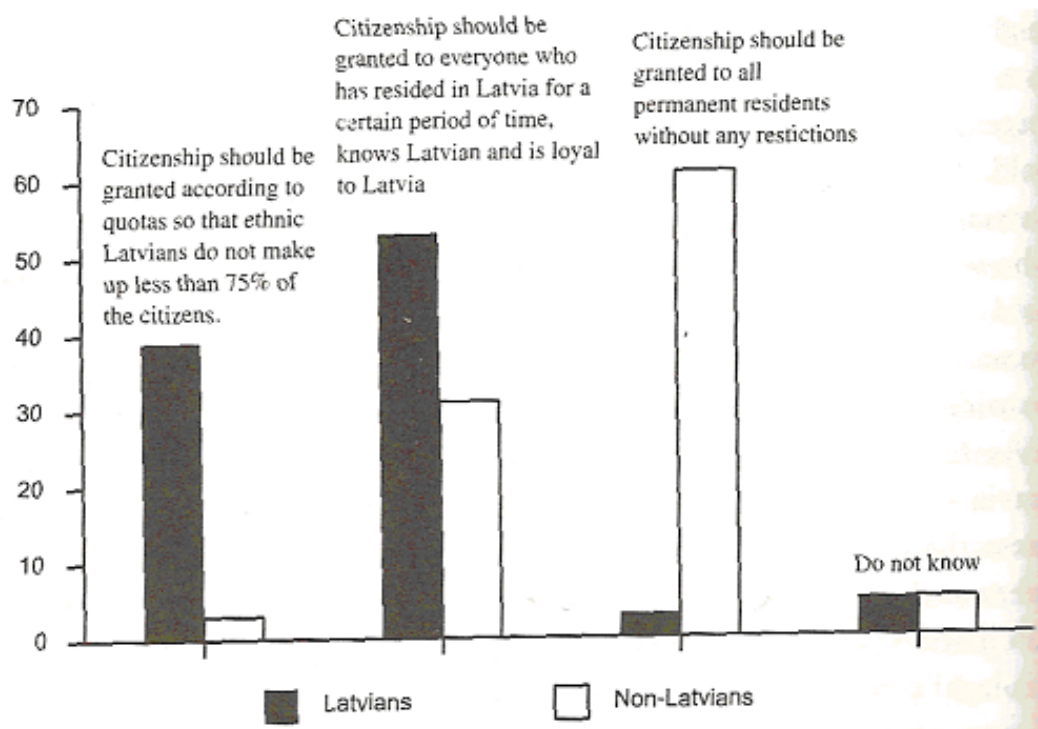
Source: Pabrik and Purs, 2002: 76

Figure 5.2 The three most favored citizenship models in Latvia in 1993

This graph clearly demonstrates the preference of both ethnic groups. There are two state-solutions favored by each of them and the attitudes are completely opposite each other.

The second cleavage in the Latvian society is the eco-political cleavage. Following the end of the Soviet rule, the Latvian society had to adapt to a very different political and social reality. The move from plan-economy to market economy changed the dynamics of society, and in the void that followed different political parties presented them as the economic solution (Pabriks and Stokenberga, 2006: 54).

The consequence of having a party-system built on two cleavages is that political parties have little or no orientation when it comes to other political questions. In a survey, Latvians repor-ted they could not tell what ideological background the political parties represented. In total, most of the political parties were said to belong to the center/right of the political spectrum (Pabriks and Purs, 2002: 84). The second consequence of this structure is ad hoc parties and party groups. In order to reply to a demand from the public political parties are sprung often very close to an election to gather votes and support from a specific segment of the electorate.

When the issue has been solved, the political party loses its main reason for existence and as a result disappears in the next election.

5.5.2 Party organization

We have seen that the Latvian political parties are very volatile and that many of them are short-lived. Consequently, political parties develop in an atmosphere where the internal and external political organization are very weak. Pabriks and Purs (2002: 85) note that Latvian political parties share some common characteristics. They have very few resources. They are mainly a construct of individual political leaders that the party remains at disposal for. Intra-party processes are not institutionalized to a great extent, and the party's future remains in the hands of the party leader. Pabriks and Purs argue that the reason for this problem lies with the elites. Parties are organized around a small group and have marginal contact with average party members. If the leader disappears, the group has no structural or formal channels to replace her/him (Pabriks and Purs, 2002: 85). Since the Latvian political parties are so tied in to a small political elite, and the life-expectancy is low, the political institutionalization of political parties is low. Parties normally build up a stable inter-party system over time, but in Latvia they are seldom allowed to. The consequence is instability and distance between the political parties and the electorate.

The result is a system where there is little trust between the civil society and the governmental institutions and the parties. The frustration from the electorate manifests itself in public support for very young political parties as a vote of protest. This practice is undoubtedly unhealthy for a system in transition as it leads to very unstable parties. This puts a strain on how well the system can integrate new actors. Recent development indicates also that some parties are at the disposal of business interests and elites controlling their sector (Pabriks and Purs, 2002: 85).

5.5.3 Party Funding

Political parties depend on funds either officially from the state or from the civil society through donations or member-fees. The challenge for Latvian parties lies in the weak organization of the party and the Latvian financial act of 1993 that opens for donations, but not state funding. In the previous discussion, we saw how Latvian parties are unorganized, and this presents problems when it comes to finances. Pabriks and Stokenberga (2006: 63) classify

parties in three types. The first type is closed or personnel parties that have few members and consist of professional politicians. The second type is the mass party characterized with a huge organization and vast membership rate. These parties use the members as a tool for future development and for income. The last kind of party is the voter's party. These parties are run by popular figures that are already well known in society. The party is often established close to an election and has little or no organization. This latter kind of party is typical for the Latvian political sphere. Financially, the political party has no member-mass to draw income from. The nature of modern campaigning with mass media being the prime medium requires a vast budget. In order to secure the finances needed in the campaign, they rely heavily on donations from individuals and corporations (Pabriks and Stokenberga, 2006: 63).

The problem with these direct forms of donations is the suspicion it creates between the political parties and the electorate. Some of the PR-activities staged by the political parties in the campaigns are regarded as mere paybacks to the corporations or individuals providing the funds. This damages the already fragile relationship between voter and party, and in a survey conducted after the election of 2002, the respondents reported that they believed political parties to be more corrupt than any other political body in the state apparatus (Pabriks and Stokenberga, 2006: 63).

5.5.4 Political roles on the Latvian meso level

When we look at the nature of the Latvian political parties and compare them to the roles given to them by Key's framework, we see a rather peculiar pattern in the execution of the roles. In Latvia, the political parties are first and foremost a vessel for political elites. The first role a political party holds, is recruiting political leadership and seeking governmental office. The Latvian system generates political leaders, however as the discussion above indicate, the relationship between elite and party is backward. Political elites recruit political parties in order to seek governmental office. The central actor with political ambition creates a political party rather than joining existing parties and work through the party structure. The result of this practice also weakens the role of training political elites. The spirit in this role is to gradually train the political elites to master political tasks until they are ready for ascension. In Latvia's system, the parties are short-lived and offer direct political experience. However, they cannot function as a factor of stability and continuation when political elites are not trained incrementally.

When it comes to articulating and aggregating political interests, we observe once more that the relationship is backward. The political elites create the party as a result of observed interests in the electorate. The political pressure aggregates the party and not the party aggregating the interest and support. Opportunistic actors seek governmental influence riding the wave of public support, however as politics are dominated by more issues than just two factors, they fail to aggregate or articulate expanded interests over time and thus lose their electoral support. The result is a meso level that is underdeveloped and causes political instability. Furthermore, the parties fail to incorporate the main hub of the civil society into the political sphere. The effect is a chasm between the parties and the civil society where distrust from the latter towards the former is evident.

5.6 The Latvian macro level

The previous sections have unearthed a system with volatile parties and a civil society that remains largely inactivated. These factors create challenges for the Latvian government as well, as the volatility of parties creates a difficult environment for policy agendas. Focus will now be set on the role of the elites inside the government and how this group is a closed actor within the state apparatus.

5.6.1 Election results and parties in parliament

Between 1993 and 1998, Latvia had eight different governments. Due to different circumstances within the ruling body, ministers left their positions and new coalitions had to be formed. One example indicating this instability is the rate of MPs switching allegiance or coalition within the governmental cycle. Between the 6th and the 7th Saeima, 25% of all MPs switched party or coalition. A second example is the party called the Latvia's Way. During the 1990s, there was only one party that survived the first three elections and was part of every Latvian government. Latvia's Way was a political party born by an elite movement from the communist period. According to Ivans, the political decision-making moved from the open scene to "dark rooms" (Pabriks and Purs, 2002: 68). One of the first organizations of this kind was the Club 21, consisting of powerful reform communist figures and elites from the opposition. From this organization the party Latvia's Way was born. It was the most successful political party during the 1990s and provided the Latvian government with leadership figures. Latvia's Way was the most structured party and did over time function as the bearer of continuation inside a very chaotic party system. However, the trend of party volatility

carried over into the 2000s, and at the 8th Saeima elections, Latvia's Way got only 4.9% of the votes and disappeared. The members left the party to form new parties or join other coalitions. The fate of Latvia's Way is an example of how strong party organization inside the Latvian system bears little security to future existence. Although the 9th Saeima election in 2006 reinstated Latvia's Way as part of a coalition, this reinstatement of the party had little to do with its former success, but rather with the popularity of the party leader Ivars Godmeins. The system of Latvia still suffers from this in-stability as recent events in 2009 indicated. Ivars Godmeins had to resign as Latvia's prime minister as the financial crisis sparked uproar in the public and the capital was blocked by riots on the 13th of January 2009 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7901902.stm.

5.6.2 The governmental bureaucracy

In a modern democratic state, the bureaucracy functions as the government's administrative arm. The bureaucracy is assigned by appointments made by the senior staff, who in turn is assigned by government. The bureaucratic office is important as it functions as an independent body under the will of the government. The degree of politization of the bureaucracy is an area that is under constant debate. To what degree should the bureaucratic system reflect the political will and ideology of the current government? Ideally, the bureaucracy functions as a control mechanism where accountability for policy implementations and sound plans are worked out in order to secure the civil societies interest in the governmental sphere. Now, the elite formations on the Latvian level will be discussed. This will show why there is a problem with both penetration of the system from a civil society perspective, and why there is little horizontal accountability in the Latvian system.

In the old communist regime, the level of education was the standard for the elites. In order to become part of the communist elite, one needed to have a university degree. In Latvia, this heritage has continued into the transition and manifested itself as part of the Latvian society today. This is confirmed by Steen (1997: 59). In the Latvian government, 91% of the junior members of the bureaucracy have a university degree. This creates two factors in government that is unhealthy. The first factor is the lack for the ordinary citizenry to occupy posts in both central as local government, creating an unofficial gatekeeper within the political sphere. The second problem with this practice is that the elites use their networks in order to secure policy-objectives. Furthermore, the administrative elite is the only one active inside the political parties (Steen, 1997: 123). Steen's analysis shows that the other elites belonging to

economy or industry are seldom members of political parties. The result is a system where it is hard to separate the administrative wing and the political wing of the party, as they are intertwined. The elites meet frequently outside the party setting, which is an indication that contacts are made on a personal level. This in turn challenges the level of horizontal accountability. Maleshevich (2007: 109) shows that the Latvian system becomes more unstable as the government gains autonomy.
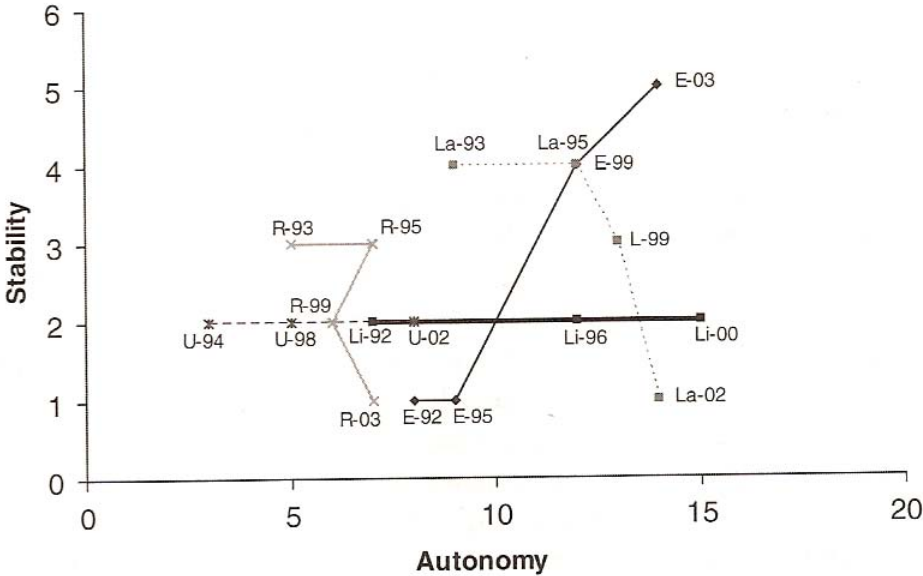
Source: Meleshevich, 2007: 109

Figure 5.3 Autonomy and stability in Eastern European countries 1992-2003

Figure 5.3 shows the stability of systems based on the volatility rate and autonomy. Autonomy is the degree of which the state is able to appoint and carry out policy objectives. For Latvia (La-) we observe that when the government becomes more autonomous, the volatility increases. This can be interpreted as a result of the practice Steen identified above. The elites inside the government appoint and carry out policy objectives outside the main channel. The political parties are flimsy and unorganized so the appointments are done within the institutions themselves. This creates a more opaque system where personal contacts and elite orientation influence the agenda. This increases the distrust between the electorate and the government. The democratic response through the electoral channel would then be to punish the sitting parties. However, as the parties are only vessels for the leaders, punishing them does not change the foundation of the networks. As they become more autonomous, the more volatility it creates in the electoral channel.

5.6.3 Political roles at the Latvian macro level

In the Latvian system, parties in government fulfill their roles of policy-making and imple-mentation. They form government and opposition and put policy objectives into law. How-ever, there are some questions around the roles of ensuring responsibility for government actions and fostering stability in government. My presentation has shown how the instability of parties induces unstable governments, where central political leaders are removed from office frequently during their elected term. The nature of the contact between elite leaders in the administrative and the economic sphere also shows that accountability is an issue inside the Latvian government. With electoral volatility increasing alongside government autonomy, one could argue that the distance between civil society and government is widening, and that the reaction inside the legal framework renders the system untouched. The riots in Riga 13th of January 2009 could be an indication that the Latvian society opts for changes and that democracy could break down unless there is real political change.

5.7 The Slovenian micro level

Slovenia's transition to democracy is marked with the same challenges and characteristics of most modern democracies. The political parties struggle to build a solid relationship between themselves and the electorate. The voter turnout is falling over time, while parties keep a catch-all strategy. The factor that separates Slovenia from most of the new democracies deve-loped in the same time period is the high level of organizatorial integration. This in turn sug-gests a civil society more connected to the government than in other democratic regimes in transition.

The Slovenian micro level is characterized by an integrated civil society as a whole, where the membership of trade unions and other civil society voluntary organizations is high. Political party membership however is low and the participation in elections has declined during the last two decades. The Slovenian society was highly developed in the organizatorial sense as different actors and groups in society involved themselves in the democratization process. The result is a civil society engaged on the civil plane, yet politically the parties remain alien.

5.7.1 Voter turnout and voter volatility

Data from IDEA (2009) show that there has been a slow decline from the top in 1992 with a turnout of 85% to the latest result from the 2008 election, when only 63% participated. The

same development is observed for presidential elections. The level of participation mimics well the development in the western European systems. The average turnout from the Slovenian elections is 72%, which is considerably higher than the average of 65% for the 8 new EU countries of the 2002 expansion. The average for the old 15 countries of the EU is 76.5% (Jungerstam-Mulders, 2006: 14).

The average volatility rate measured by the Pedersen index for elections 1994-2004 in Slovenia is high, scoring 20.7, as compared to the average for Europe as a whole of 12.0. On the other hand, the score is lower than the corresponding one for both Hungary (27.5) and Latvia (42.6) (Jungerstam-Mulders, 2006: 15). Furthermore, the voters of Slovenia switch position between parties. The decline in participation over time combined with a relatively high rate of volatility suggests that the Slovenian political parties are struggling to cement their position with the Slovenian electorate. The Slovenian parties are described as elitist and incorporate a catch-all strategy, which combined with a high number of political parties opens for a wide variety of choices for the electorate. Since the political system is young, the voters switch party support between elections.

5.7.2 Party membership and party stability

The party enrollment in Slovenia is low and has remained low since the democratic process began in the early 1990s. The number of parties born in Slovenia after the process started has soared and the total number of parties in 1992 was 75 (Fink-Hafner 2006: 208). This element indicates that volatility is inevitable when a host of political parties submit lists for general elections. During the 1980s, the membership in the different socio-political organizations and parties declined. This trend continued into the 1990s, and as the democratic system transformed into a pluralistic democracy, the total membership rate had dropped to very low levels. Even though the total share of new parties rose sharply, the Slovenian citizens did not decide to become members. According to the Slovenian public opinion poll (SPO) in 1991, the number of party members between January 1991 and November 1992 dropped from 9% to 4.5% (Fink-Hafner, 2006: 208). These figures show that the parties with most members are the new predominantly center-right parties. However, according to Fink-Hafner the party membership rate does not seem to be correlated with the parties overall level of resources or electoral support in the last election (Fink-Hafner, 2006: 209).

The general public shows an increasing distrust in political parties in general, and therefore there is distance between electorate and parties. In the different SPOs during 1995 to 2003, this sentiment manifests itself in the survey data. Table 5.5 shows the survey response on the question "Do you feel close to any party?" This table shows how the respondents identify the pattern of distance between the parties and the electorate.

	1995(3)	1996 (1+2)	1997(1)	2000(1)	2001(2)	2003(1)	2003 (3+4)
yes	20.4	13.5	20.0	23.6	18.3	21.5	17.7
no	69.0	81.3	72.5	68.3	74.6	75.5	80.4
don't know	10.5	5.2	7.5	8.1	7.1	3.0	1.8

Source: Fink-Hafner, 2006: 208

Table 5.5 Survey response in Slovenia to the question of whether the respondent feels close to any party 1995-2003

This table shows how the respondents identify the pattern of distance between the parties and the electorate. The share of citizens that responded "yes" on the question varies between 13.5% (1996) and 23.6% (2000-1). The share that replied "no" on the survey question ranged from 68.3% (2000-1) to 81.3% (1996). The majority of the Slovenian citizenry has never felt close to any political party during the transition and continues to feel distant towards them into the 2000s. The table also shows that this is an either-or question as the "don't know" respondent group is very low. This is further illustrated by the fact the lowest share of "yes" respondents occurs in the year with the highest share of "no" respondents (1996) and vice versa (2003-3+4). The distance between political parties and the civil society in Slovenia is high and stable.

The transition-period has not formed the expected new and closer ties between political party and public. The expectation for the proportion of adult citizens to be active in political parties was 8%, which is the same proportion of ruling political parties in the parliament. This fore-cast was not accurate as the number of members declined steadily, 5.4% as per 2003 (Fink-Hafner, 2006: 208).

5.7.3 Membership in voluntary organizations and unions

In its initial move towards democracy, the role of different voluntary organizations and move-ments were central in Slovenia. The relationship between different organizations and the Slo-venian citizenry was positive and many civilians participated either as active or passive mem-bers through membership and funding. This was, and still is, very important in the Slovenian civil and political sphere. The nature of this relationship will be presented closer in the meso and macro level analysis of Slovenia and its political tradition.

The Slovenian citizenry is among the highest integrated in a voluntary perspective. In an ana-lysis made of the new democracies, Slovenia got a score of 1.3, while e.g. Hungary and Latvia got a score of 0.8 and 0.7, respectively. The average Slovenian is member of more than one voluntary organization, which places them among the old democratic states. The score is on the same level as Spain. The U.S. top this list with an average of 3.6. These figures are col-lected from Howard (2003: 80).

During the transition period, new voluntary organizations were formed in Slovenia as the Yugoslavian monopoly slowly ceased to exist. For example, the state monopoly on trade unions disappeared and in its wake four new trade unions based on different professions where established. The different trade unions cover 60% of the total work-force. Table 5.6 shows the membership figures.

The other voluntary organizations in Slovenia are either local-based with focus on local issues, or national organizations focusing on problems such as alcohol and drugs. The Lions organization is an example of the latter. Other established organizations are sports and recre-ational organizations. The overall impression is that the civil society of Slovenia is much en-gaged in the voluntary sector.

Trade Unions	no. of members
Association of Free Trade Unions of Slovenia	439,850
Independence - Confederation of New Trade Unions of Slovenia	163,000
Confederation of Trade Unions '90 of Slovenia	49,512
Confederation of Trade Unions PERGAM	31,286

Source: Fink-Hafner, 1997: 134

Table 5.6 Membership of four Slovenian federations or confederations of trade unions 1994

### 5.7.4 Political roles on the Slovenian micro level

This analysis shows that the Slovenian political parties are struggling to root themselves to the civil society. We have observed a declining voter turnout and an increasing rate of volatility. This suggests that the parties are struggling to mobilize the electorate and are poor symbols of loyalty. The high number of political parties does not simplify the choice for the voters. Furthermore, the parties do not function as main educators of the civil society. The party membership rate is very low and the number of people responding in the SPOs feeling no connection or closeness to any political party indicates a large distance. The civil society itself is quite engaged in political and recreational activities through the voluntary sector and thus receives education in an organized environment outside political parties. This fact indicates that civil society is willing to participate. However, the political parties have failed to build a strategy that attracts the active citizenry to become members.

5.8 The Slovenian meso level

The focus is now on the organization of Slovenian political parties in order to see if they are fulfilling their roles according to Key's framework. There is a system where the political parties have attempted to find modes of organization, both internal and external, where the latter has the highest priority. The result is a party system where the political parties have incorporated external contacts between themselves and interest groups and organizations. Internally, the organization is lacking. The party is formed around a small party elite.

5.8.1 Party representation and parliamentary orientation

The Slovenian political parties are often referred to as catch-all parties. This kind of party is a low membership and stream-lined political party which seeks to gain support from the electorate across segments (Fink-Hafner, 2006: 209). The strategy is therefore to appeal broadly to the public as a whole. Fink-Hafner argues that the Slovenian political parties are closer to Mair's cartel party structure, where the political parties are more or less cut loose from the civil society as a whole. Slovenian parties have experimented with different types of organization, but according to Fink-Hafner all the political parties can be described as "cartel", "elitist" and "catch-all" (Fink-Hafner, 2006: 209). These party types are all characterized by a small membership base and a closed internal elite. The party is hard to penetrate from the outside. Fink-Hafner presents a graphic presentation that illustrates this problem. Figure 5.4 below shows the development of parties and other organizations from 1987 to 1994.
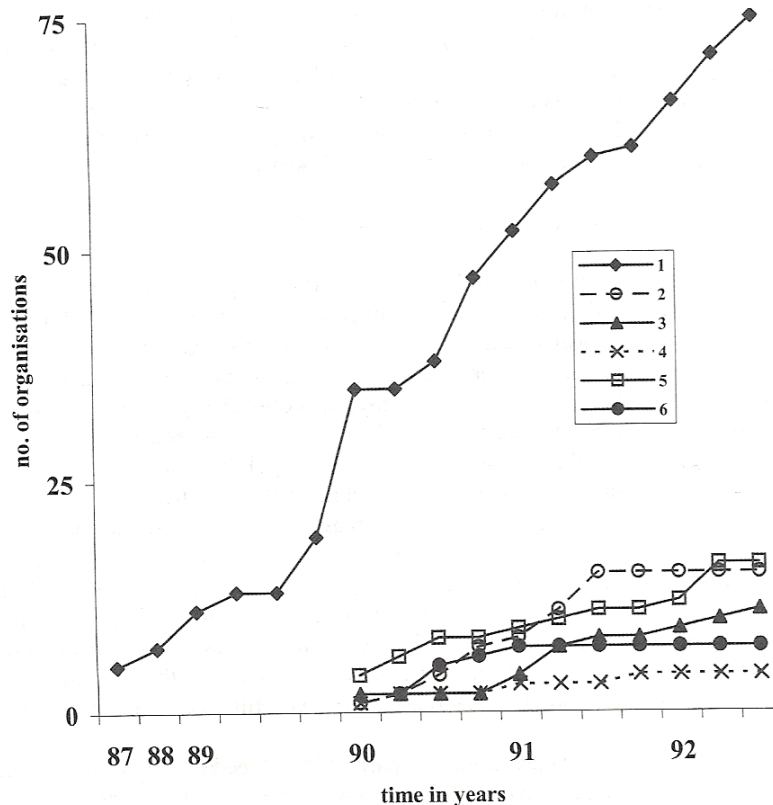
Source: Fink-Hafner, 2006: 206

Figure 5.4. Number of political organizations in Slovenia 1987-1992

This graph shows the increase in different political organizations in the early stages of Slovenia's move to democracy. The largest increase is the number of political parties, from four parties in 1987 to 75 parties in 1992. The largest increase occurred just before the first

elections in 1991. The graph shows that the other political organizations started to manifest themselves around the start of the democratic transition, but to a far lesser degree than the establishment of political parties. For example, in category 2 we find the political party's local organization, which increased from zero in 1990 to around 15 in 1992. This fact indicates a huge gap between the number of parties and their level of local organization. This picture shows how Slovenian political parties lack an internal dimension of organization. The result is seen in the SPOs where the civil actors clearly state that they feel little to no connection or relation with the political parties.

The second interesting observation is category 4, which is the youth and women's organizations. Political parties in the old democratic states often use these organizations in the party to attract future leadership-figures (Fink-Hafner, 2006: 207). By allowing the young aspiring actors to participate in the leadership positions in a youth organization or women's organization, the party trains the political elites for ascension. In the Slovenian system, however, the development of youth and women's organizations has not enjoyed a significant boost compared to the total number of political parties. The lack of internal organization with local bodies and youth and women's organizations creates a problem where the political parties are unable to build political capital based on local experience. The lack of such organizations also widens the gap between the political parties and civil society as a whole. The parties are mainly focusing on the governmental stage rather than the local stage. This is a trait that is common for Mair's cartel parties (Katz and Mair, 1996).

5.8.2 Party organization

External organization is a measure of how well political parties interact with other groups in the political sphere. The Slovenian national parties have close ties to interest-groups according to both SPO surveys among the civilian population and between the MPs themselves. The relationship between the parties and interest-organizations follows from the special distribution of seats in parliament, where the lower chamber dedicates seats to interest groups and organizations. This special arrangement dictates that a relationship between the organizations and the parties must be established. The problem is the nature of the arrangements, which rests on the MPs personal preferences. There have been several political scandals that have made the subject a more restricted matter. Fink-Hafner notes that the number of groups mentioned by MPs in Slovenia seems to be very small compared to the official number of all

organizations (Ilonzski, 1998). She argues therefore that personalized representation continues to prevail in Slovenia.

In 1994, the parliamentary survey showed that the contact between MPs and interest-groups was high. The MPs themselves reported that they felt that an increasing number of organizations attempted to gain political position (Fink-Hafner, 1997:118). Table 5.7 shows the frequency of contact between an MP and interest-groups.

Frequency of contacts between MPs and interest groups

Frequency	% of MPs
daily	11.0
weekly	37.0
monthly	35.6
less than monthly	9.6
no answer	6.8

Source: Fink-Hafner, 1997: 118

Table 5.7 Frequency of contacts between MPs and interest groups in Slovenia 1992

The question of personal link to an organization also revealed that 49.3% of all the MPs felt they had a personal link to a certain organization or association (Fink-Hafner, 1997: 119). When it came to the nature of the personal link, the main factor was profession with 39.7%, second homestead and personal interests such as sports with 24.7% each. Table 5.8 shows both these questionnaire data. We learn that there is an external organization of parties in Slovenia and that they have over time worked out a dynamic network between them. The MPs are in daily or weekly contact with other organizations. This is not surprising when we take into account that representatives from the interest-groups are sitting in the lower house of parliament. Note that as many as 46% declared that they did not want to answer the question. This strongly indicates that this is a difficult subject.

The proportion of MPs who feel they are personally linked to a certain organization, association or group

Existence of personal linkages	% of MPs
- yes	49.3
- no	38.4
- cannot say	9.6
- no answer	2.7

The nature of the personal link between MPs and interest groups

Types of personal linkages	% of MPs
- profession	39.7
- home place	24.7
- personal interests (culture, sport, hobbies…)	24.7
- other linkages	6.8
- no answer	46.6

Source: Fink-Hafner and Robbins, 1997: 119

Table 5.8 Personal links between MPs and other organizations and groups in Slovenia 1992

5.8.3 Party funding

The level and allocation of finances to political parties are important for the political structure and well-being of the system as a whole. With modern campaigning, being both expensive and time-consuming, the ability to raise funds is essential. The modern states have all incorporated a form of state-funding, where political parties receive funds in order to ensure as equal opportunity as possible for all parties to run campaigns. The Slovenian case is no exception from this practice. The political parties struggled hard after the transition to democracy in the 1990s. The political parties had few resources and little experience to build on. In order to stabilize the party system and make competition fairer, the state became the main funder of political parties by the party Law on Political Parties and the Law of Election Campaigns of 1994 (Fink-Hafner, 2006: 210). The result of this new practice brought about a huge increase in party funding. Political parties in Slovenia received from the state budget as well as from funds from the parliamentary administration in total an amount of around 123 million SIT (Slovenian tolars) in 1993. Three years later, this amount had increased at 903 million SIT and in 2003, it was 1.4 billion SIT (Fink-Hafner, 2006: 209-210).

This arrangement has led to two observations in Slovenian contemporary politics. The first observation is a decrease in the total number of parties receiving funds. The parties that fail to

gain seats in parliament receive less funding and disappear over time. This is in accordance with the principle behind state funding, namely that it will decrease the number of parties and over time create a more stable party system. This practice was also observed in the Hungarian case with the same outcome. The problem behind such a practice lies in the threshold it creates for other parties to emerge. The danger is creating a cartel of a few parties that over time come to control all government and parliament branches (Katz and Mair, 1996). The second observation in the Slovenian case with state funding is the lack of transparency as the parties are merely obliged to present their financial reports. However, there is no institution in Slovenia with the sovereignty of auditing political parties. This has been a strain on the relationship between civil society and the political parties. Several cases of corruption, explicitly denounced unclear reports on party financing, financial scandals entailing misuse of public position and clear cases of clientilism towards specific political parties, have rendered the relationship between electorate and parties cold. The political party that held the prime-ministerial post between 1992 and 2004, the SDS, is perceived in Slovenia as the most corrupt party on the political stage (Fink-Hafner, 2006: 210) . The parliamentary parties have fought this problem by passing stricter anti-corruption rules, but the damage between party and civil society has already manifested itself.

5.8.4 Political roles on the Slovenian meso level

The roles on the meso level for a political party rest much on its organization. The parties should provide political capital through human resources, train the political elites and aggregate and articulate political interests. Recruiting political leadership and seeking governmental office, we observe a phenomenon where the leadership forms the party and not the other way around. Political parties are recruited to serve as functionary to an actor with political ambitions. There is a lack in internal organization in Slovenian parties that inhibits them from fully training political elites. The establishment of local youth and women's branches of the parties is low and the ability to train elites for the future is as advocated earlier. Parties do articulate political interest, but with low internal organization and low membership-base, this is left to a small group of actors. The aggregated political interests find place externally between political parties and interest organizations. Governmental roles are generally stronger than the roles that involve civil society and low echelon members.

5.9 The Slovenian macro level

The Slovenian macro level is characterized by a parliamentary system with a president as head of state. The presidential role is one of ceremonial functions. The Slovenian parliament consists of political parties that seek to form broad coalitions in government. This practice ensures broad majority governments. The parliamentary system also incorporates the interest-sector through the allocation of seats for the largest interest groups. The parliament reflects the pluralist tendencies in the Slovenian party system.

5.9.1 Election results and parties in parliament

The Slovenian party system is characterized by stability in government. The parties seek to build broad coalitions so that they form a ruling majority government. The high level of integration of parties and interests in the model of Slovenia, has led to a wide parliament with several national parties represented. Table 5.9 shows different countries and their number of average party in the national assembly after an election.

The Slovenian system had an average of 5.0 parties in parliament between 1994 and 2004. Compared to other regimes, Hungary had the lowest average of 2.8, while Latvia had the highest of 6.0. The average for the eight new EU members was 4.3 parties in parliament, while the average of the old 15 members was 4.0.

Country	Average effective number of parliamentary parties 1994-2004
Czech Republic	3.78
Estonia	4.77
Hungary	2.83
Latvia	6.03
Lithuania	3.73
Poland	3.28
Slovakia	5.09
Slovenia	4.99
Average 8 new EU member states	**4.3**
Average 15 old EU member states	**4.0**

Source: Fink-Hafner, 2006:230

Table 5.9 Average number of parliamentary parties in Slovenia 1994-2004

Slovenia shows a fragmented party system. Slovenia has two strong political parties that dominate the field, while several smaller contenders battle for positions. This fact indicates that the Slovenian system is able to bring both balance to the government through two dominating parties, while the plurality of the civil society as a whole is reflected through the numbers of effective electoral parties. This observation may suggest that the Slovenian system is becoming more stable. The Political Party Act of 1994 expressed a minimum requirement of organization that removed many ad-hoc parties. Posting state funding to parties in the national assembly would have a balancing effect over time, and the previous tables suggest it is setting the party-system cast.

5.9.2 Political parties and the interest organization in parliament

The Slovenian democracy has dealt with the country's vast organizational heritage in a unique way when it comes to representation of different interest groups. The practice in Slovenia is to empower political interests through representation in a lower chamber of parliament (Bakke, 2002: 168). The representatives for the interest organizations have no executive power, however, they have an advisory function in the legislative process. When a law or regulation is proposed for an area of civil society that these organizations represent, the representatives for this branch will be taken into council. This practice secures that interests in civil society is taken into consideration when policies are pursued (Bakke, 2002: 168-169). This is a unique way to cope with a problem that many young democratic regimes struggle with. The civil society has interests and organizations but the way to incorporate them into the decision-making process is a powder-keg issue. The informal organization of interests in other regimes has led to wide criticism and distrust between the government and society. The Slovenian system made a more formalized approach by allocating seats for the interest groups. This move also increased the legitimacy of contact between political parties and interest organizations. The fact that civil society interests are covered by organizations in parliament, increases the security that the public will is taken into consideration. In Slovenia, the membership in such organizations is high. Thus, actors' interests are indirectly articulated by the system as a whole through the representatives in parliament.

The council in the second chamber works as a legislative initiative, as it is allowed to suggest laws and regulations, and as an oversee committee, as the council may ask for a referendum or the formation of independent enquiries. Consequently, the council holds a double function. This is a move to ensure that vital interests in society regard themselves as represented at the

same time as the horizontal accountability is strengthened. In theory, the second chamber becomes, together with the independent courts, a check-and-balance system for the government. This increases the legitimacy both in terms of representation and in terms of ensuring scrutiny and accountability for government actions.

5.9.3 Political roles on the Slovenian macro level

The Slovenian government is an example of a system where the different roles given the political parties are filled to satisfactory levels. The parties seek majorities in government and organize it after the elections. The losing parties organize the opposition and acts as a body for dissent. The government administration is integrated into the system where the parties nominate the members freely. The constant building of majority governments fosters stability in government, and as the data from the elections indicate that the party system has stabilized over time with an average of five parties in parliament. The separation of the parliament with two chambers, where the interest organizations work both as policy initiative takers and as independent guard-dog of the system as a whole, ensures to a larger degree that the government actions are checked upon and that single MPs are accountable for the actions made by government.

CHAPTER 6: OBSERVATION AND COMPARISON

As explained in chapter 4, the theoretical framework of my master thesis is to open the black box in the model of Easton (1990) by incorporating Key's framework. This chapter consists of three parts building on the presentation in chapter 5. First, the main results from the selected countries, Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia, will be presented and compared. Second, the observed pattern from these young democratic regimes will be compared with results from old democratic states to learn about similarities and differences. Finally, some considerations around the successfulness of incorporating Key's framework in order to capture new dynamics in the political sphere will be offered.

6.1 Comparison among selected cases

Table 6.1 presents the findings on Key's party roles described in chapter 1 at all levels for Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia by utilizing the indicators defined in chapter 4 and putting the results into broad categories: low, medium and high.

Micro level	Hungary	Latvia	Slovenia
Voter turnout (last election)	Low	Low	Low
Volatility	High	High	High
Party membership	Low	Low	Low
Membership in voluntary sector	Low	Low	Medium
Meso level			
Internal organization	Low	Low	Low
External organization	Low	Low	Medium
Training political elites	Low	Low	Low
Seeking governmental office	High	High	High
Macro level			
Party stability	Medium	Low	Medium
Bureaucratic control	High	High	High
Majority governments	High	High	High
Government stability	High	Low	High

Table 6.1 Results on indicators at all levels for Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia

Table 6.1 shows that there are several similarities among my cases. Starting on the micro level, the voter turnout in the last election was low in all countries (and following a declining trend), while the volatility rate was high (from the beginning). Latvia has the highest scores and their volatility rate is also increasing, as opposed to the two others. Party membership is low in all countries, while Slovenia scores higher on membership in the voluntary sector, justifying a classification of medium. The overall impression from the micro level is that the results coincide.

This is also true for the meso level and the macro level. On the meso level, both the internal and the external organization as well as the training of political elites are not well developed, while the interest of aligning with government and state is high. The exception is Slovenia, because there is a higher degree of contact with voluntary organizations. On the macro level, we have observed that the parties have control over the state apparatus and thus are labeled high on this parameter. Hungary and Slovenia have introduced state funding of political parties and thus experience a more stable party system (medium) than Latvia (low). This has a significant impact on government stability, which therefore is high in Hungary and Slovenia and low in Latvia. Finally, all countries seek broad majority in governments and get the label high on this issue.

The pattern in the table shows that the countries struggle to fulfill some of the roles assigned to them by Key's framework. This is especially apparent on the two lowest levels. Moreover, we observe that a challenge on a lower level carries over to a higher level. For example, low voter turnout, accompanied by high volatility and low membership rates induce a low level of organization. Due to reactions from state, a similar effect on the highest level is presented. For example, state funding and laws dictating the level of contact between parties and the electorate have over time increased stability.

This example also illustrates the dynamic between levels. A problem originated on the low level affects the medium level and later affected the system as a whole. However, measures were taken on the highest level in reaction to this, and policy decisions were fed back into the system, which successfully moved behavior in a positive direction.

6.2 Comparison between selected states and old democracies

Table 6.2 compares the findings in my three cases with the situation in old democracies. The labels low, medium and high for old democracies are given in accordance with the results presented in Dalton and Wattenberg (2002) and Scarrow, Webb and Farrell (2002), as presented in chapter 2 of this master thesis.

Micro level	HLS	Old democracies
Voter turnout (last election)	Low	Low
Volatility	High	Medium
Party membership	Low	Medium
Membership in voluntary sector	Low+	Medium
Meso level		
Internal organization	Low	High
External organization	Low+	High
Training political elites	Low	High
Seeking governmental office	High	High
Macro level		
Party stability	Medium–	High
Bureaucratic control	High	High
Majority governments	High	High
Government stability	High–	High

Table 6.2 Results on indicators at all levels for Eastern European cases and old democracies

At first glance, the results in the table seem to be very different. This is especially apparent on the two lowest levels. Old democracies get more favorable outcomes although they experience much of the same development, cf. chapter 2. Two examples help clarifying why this is so. On the micro level, party membership in old democracies is declining as the parties move from mass-party strategies toward catch-all strategies. The same catch-all strategies are adopted by the young democratic regimes, however, their initial situation was very different. Since parties in old democracies have had a long tradition of mass-party strategies, there was a substantial body of party members when the modernization began. Although this has reduced the number of party members substantially, the level is clearly higher than what is found in my cases, simply because Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia did not benefit from a high membership

base. Modern democratic parties are more streamlined and focus on competence from its members. The incentives to build large membership bases are not present.

A parallel example is found on the meso level in the role of training political elites. The old democratic parties enjoy a long heritage in this area through a strong party organization. Elites are incorporated from the bottom, and they work their way through the system. This creates a clear career path for potential future leaders. In young democratic systems, such kind of party organization is not found. Consequently, there is not a corresponding career path through existing parties and ambitious actors have to construct their own parties to reach their goals. In recent years, the situation in Hungary is more favorable than in Latvia and Slovenia on this issue.

These examples illustrate that even though the labels in Table 6.2 on the two lower levels in most cases are different, they face the same challenges of modernization.

6.3 Pattern of behavior in observed indicators linked to Key's framework

The tables above of indicators show the pattern of democratic challenges in my three cases and in the old democracies as well. Now that the pattern in the indicators has been identified, they need to be linked to the roles in the framework to show the challenges here at all levels.

6.3.1 Micro level development

Key's framework provides four central roles on the micro level. These are the role of simplifying choice for voters, educate the citizens, generate symbols of identification and loyalty and finally to mobilize people to participate. The indicators utilized in the two previous figures shows that there are challenges to the ability of modern democratic parties to fulfill these roles.

Voter turnout in my cases and in the old democracies are decreasing over time and reaching a low level. The voter instability is in the same time increasing to a high level, while in the old democracies, the volatility rate is classified as medium. These two elements indicate that political parties in a modern democratic regime are struggling to act as a mobilizing force towards participation and to present themselves as clear choices for the electorate. The result is a lo-

wer degree of electoral participation at elections as well as an increase in volatility, as those who do participate, switch party support between elections.

Party membership in both young and old democracies is in decline as indicated by my findings above. The political parties mobilize citizens to participate also through party membership on a local level and in the process educate them into the political sphere. With the reduction in membership these two roles are diminishing. The side-effect of this trend is a situation where political campaigning becomes linked to mass media and reduced as a possible ground for local level mobilization in campaigning. The effect is a decrease in the political party's symbolic value as the distance between electorate and party increases.

The final indicator on this level is the overall membership in the voluntary sector. This one is an indirect connection to party roles, but nevertheless important in establishing the challenges on the micro level. Political parties interact with civil society through other means than just elections. Political parties also interact with interest-groups and organization on the local level. Furthermore, civil society's participation in this sector will also increase the activity between said groups and political parties. This would strengthen the party role as educator as it would open for possible exchanges between political parties and interest organizations, indirectly educate the citizenry and provide political interest. The indicator, however, show that in general the civilian participation on the micro level is low+ in the three young regimes and at a medium level in the old democracies. In old democracies, the total number of members in interest organizations has diminished over time, while in my eastern European cases the membership mass in new organizations did not increase, even though new organizations were quickly established after the fall of the Soviet Union or communist domination. The reason for the + in this label is the fact that Slovenia experience a higher degree of membership with an average of 1.30 memberships per person in interest organizations, as compared to Hungary and Latvia with an average of less than 1.

On the whole, we see that the roles of the micro level are diminishing in both young and old democratic regimes, however the level is different. The old regimes still have the system and the heritage to lean on. The young regimes are struggling with both a skeptic civil society towards both participation and parties as a whole inherited from the experience with an oppressive regime.

6.3.2 Meso level development

On the meso level, there are also four central roles dictated by the framework and the indicators, cf. Table 6.1 and 6.2. The first party role of recruiting political leadership and seeking governmental office is linked to the party's internal organization and ability to over time produce leaders and electoral support for ascension to parliament. This role has two aspects. As the indicators show, this role is present, although challenged, in young democratic regimes. The political parties in both old and new democracies do seek governmental office, as the label high indicates. The second part of the role, however, state that a political party should recruit political leaders, and here we find the main difference between the old and my new democratic regimes. The young regimes score low on the ability to recruit political leadership. The reason for this lies in the party's internal organization and the formation of political parties. In Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia, political elites form political parties in order to seek governmental office. The party is recruited in order to become vessels for the already established political elite. With the low level of internal integration, the party is not able to stably recruit political leadership over time through the internal mechanisms as the role suggests. The old democratic regimes are faced with the same challenge as membership rates are declining over time and their access to future leaders decrease. Both the internal and external organization are well developed and therefore act as a buffer for instability. The young regimes do not have this strong party organization and therefore score lower on organization.

The level of internal and external integration is a challenge to the young democratic regimes. The low level influences their ability to both articulate and aggregate political interests plus train political elites. This makes them unable to fully act out their roles on the meso level. The low internal organization, for example provides, an underdeveloped channel for training political elites. Future elites are typically trained through the internal structures of the party, so that they over time build a sound political portfolio. The lack of party members and the fact that parties are formed to carry out the political ambition of a closed group or a single charismatic leader, challenge the party's ability to train political elites. The articulation of interests become more particular, and not broad, as the power-base in the party is constrained to the upper echelon. The lack of an internal structure also influences the external structure and the analysis in chapter 5 showed. Contact between parties and interest groups are low and informal. This weakens the party's ability to both articulate the interests from outside organizations and to aggregate political interests from within. On this level, we see how the lack of

closeness between civil society and the political parties on a micro level create challenges on the meso level, for example through the fact that low membership rates influence on the party's role as a trainer of political elites.

The old democratic systems, as we see, score high on these functions. The reason for this is their well developed organization. The situation is different, as well incorporated structures, both internal and external, have built a stronger democratic tradition over time.

6.3.3 Macro level development

On the macro level, the roles given a political party are procedural and therefore easier to identify directly. The existent of state and government is in itself an indicator of functional parties on this level. When we look at the labels in tables 6.1 and 6.2, this is indicated by the fact that all scores read high for the old democracies, while two read medium and high- for the young regimes. The different ones provide the link between the lower levels and the governmental level. The reason for the medium- label on party stability is the overall lack of party stability in Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia. Hungary and Slovenia have through party funding been able to stabilize the party system as the central parties in parliament get more resources than parties outside. Latvia, on the other hand, shows continued instability through the 2000s. The three countries have few party members, low organization and this follows them into the macro level as well. This is reflected on the party stability indicator, which also influences the role of political parties in fostering stable governments.

The parties inside government are in Hungary and Slovenia to an extent able to form stable governments. MPs change sometimes affiliations but the overall stability is high. Latvia shows great governmental instability making the label a high– on governmental stability. The lack of a clear intra-body for the political parties on the meso level also influences the party role of ensuring responsibility for government actions. The relationship between interests and parties is harder to systemize. This factor made horizontal accountability more difficult in my cases than in old democratic states. The questions on the macro level are similar for both old and young regimes, however, the democratic heritage and solid institutions found in the old regimes help them to find sound solutions to these problems. In young regimes, the lack of a clear channel directly from civil society to parties in government makes the challenges induce more uncertainty. In many ways, the difference between the old regimes and my cases is their starting point. This difference in situation with the challenges presented and how they in sum

influence the regime as a whole, resembles stable and unstable equilibriums (Sterman, 2000: 351). The old regimes with their strong institutions and long democratic tradition are like stable equilibriums. Challenges to the system are contained, dampened and resolved within the democratic system. When a challenge pushes the regime away from the democratic forms, equally strong institutions through check and balances draw the regime back in line. Young democratic regimes lack this foundation thus resemble unstable equilibriums. The challenges to their democratic systems and other large issues could push them in two directions, either backwards away from democracy or forwards towards a stronger democratic regime. This analogy, and the observations made in my analysis, strengthen the claim from chapter 2 that the democratic systems in old democracies dampen and inert the challenges in the observed behavior.

6.4 Further discussion of findings

The first major observation is that the pattern found in old democratic regimes according to Dalton and Wattenberg (2002) is also apparent in my cases. The modernization of political parties and the internationalization of politics clearly influence the development in young democratic regimes. My initial findings strengthen the claim that the trend is universal.
By utilizing Key's framework on these issues, changes and challenges regarding the development of democracy have been identified. However, as we have learnt from the previous discussion, the framework struggles to establish connections outside the electorial channel. The contemporary political reality has opened more channels into political engagement than the reality of the 1960s, when Key developed the political roles in his framework. The foundation in his model is a system where the roles are exclusively linked to parties. My cases demonstrate that the roles still exist, however, they are obtained by other political linkages. For example, mobilization of the electorate and education of the citizenry are now functions of the mass media.

Figure 6.1 demonstrates the challenge of connecting new political linkages to each other. It turns out that incorporating the logic from my cases creates a system where interest organizations and political elites are ceded from civil society. However, it is not possible through this framework to identify channels between them. Thus, this becomes a challenge because the elites and the interest organizations are part of and interact with civil society.
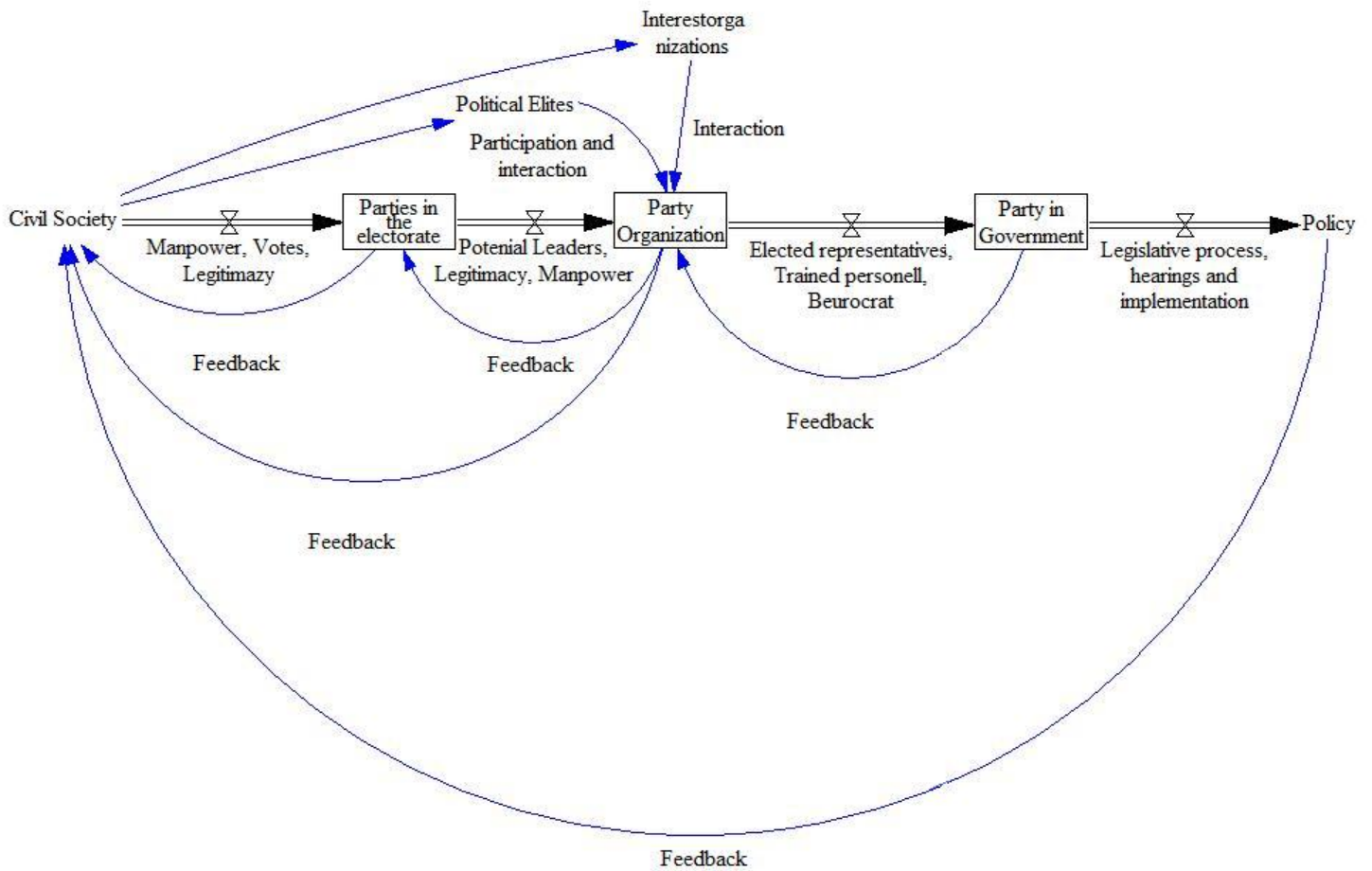
Figure 6.1 Stock-and-flow diagram with political elites and interest organizations

This is in line with the view of Ilonszki (1998), who claims that even after thorough re-search, it has not been possible to systematically identify the relationship between interest groups and political parties in Hungary.

During the presentation of countries in my study, we encountered the characteristics of cartel-lization of parties. The notion of a cartel party was given by Katz and Mair (1994), who portrayed a picture of a political cartel with long distance between civil society and government. The cartel parties would act as clients between civil society actors and state. Through economic independence and close ties to government, the parties would enjoy large autonomy. On the one hand, the cases illustrate that this is a possibility. However, the cartel system has not solved the problem of new political linkages, as this approach is also not able to pick up the new dynamics.

Heidar and Saglie (2002) point out that although the dynamics between party and electorate have changed, there are several positive sides associated with this. The changes in party dynamics challenge our understanding of democracy. The traditional links are replaced by modern solutions. The expansion of education, for example, provides political parties with trained functionaries, an increased expertise inside a political party will secure sound policy objectives. The traditional view that a large membership base is a sufficient requirement for party legitimacy is no longer valid as the political parties must adapt to a new reality. The internationalization of political issues e.g. through the EU, increases the security of appropriate political decisions due to the duality from the fact that leaders are held responsible both by intergovernmental organizations and their own civil society.

Furthermore, old mass party bodies consisted largely of passive members. When the political dynamics appeared together with the modernization of society during the 1990s, the passive member broke free from the old party structure. Those who chose to remain were dedicated, active members. My argument is that a more dynamic system with interested and eager members is a healthier system as key leadership roles and positions are held by more educated and focused members. They are also trained inside the new dynamic system and will use their connections for the common good. As Heidar and Saglie (2002) point out, the implication of change is not automatically a threat to democracy.

Regarding cartel parties, the dynamic view presented by Easton (1990) directly challenges their ability to dislocate from society as a whole. This master thesis has provided arguments that the change in observed electoral behavior does not necessarily indicate a civil society filled with apathy. The actors inside a political system are always members of civil society. Previous models treated party elites as an alien group with peculiar objectives. However, as we see by using Key's framework, parts of civil society are always active. The challenges that the links are not easily visible, as it would require insight into the daily practices and contacts between civil society and party. A good example of this is found in Hungary, where the MPs have decided to spend much more time in their constituencies than earlier. This indicates that a valuable connection for the MPs is found locally, even though we are not able to measure this.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUDING REMARKS

The most important findings in my master thesis are the following. The notion of a universal pattern in modern political systems has been strengthened by my cases. My initial assumption was that finding the same pattern in young democratic regimes, would pose larger challenges on their shoulders, as they have less heritage and institutions to fall back on. The findings from Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia presented here are in line with my assumption.

The Key framework incorporated here demonstrated that the roles of political parties are connected through the various levels. However, as the roles are no longer exclusively linked to political parties, this older framework has failed to pick up and identify new links. Future research on the roles of political parties would benefit from finding and establishing them. These links are different from traditional ones, and in order to fully understand these modern dynamics and to reach them, alternative approaches need to be employed. This is, of course, a demanding mission, where more information on low-level contact must be observed and interpreted, and their consequences for higher-level activity must be determined. The system has to be regarded as an entity including all spheres. Democracies are inherently dynamic and must be analyzed as such. An event in one sphere will spark reaction and counter-reaction in other spheres, since they are intertwined.

Although a pattern has been identified, more detailed information is required to be able to make firmer conclusions. It would a larger scope and a more resources devoted to such a mission. My goal has been to highlight the problems and to broaden the approach by including several dimensions. The fact that my framework is based on an old theory, has made it possible to identify how young democratic operate in a different manner. However, the roles and the issues are the same, but the dynamics are different. Some roles have been dedicated other actors, as the parties are no longer the exclusive channel for political interaction.

Utilizing three cases enabled the identification of patterns. On the other, the ability to go into very specific details was sacrificed. Using a single case would have made such details possible and could more strongly contribute to identifying new dynamics. However, it was necessary to establish the pattern and the challenges first, implying that my study can be viewed as a starting point.

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