

## Regional Programme Changes of NGOs in the EU<sup>75</sup>

### 5.1 Introduction

One channel of EU development assistance is provided by Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), here understood as:

“any organisation founded and governed by citizens without any formal representation of government staff or agencies. (...) [T]his includes any organisation engaged in supporting or assisting the poor by way of relief, rehabilitation or development activities in either North or the South.”<sup>76</sup>

The European Commission channels resources for development through the NGO co-financing budget line. This budget line is usually around € 200 million. ECHO also works with and through NGOs. In addition other budget lines are accessible to NGOs. An estimate of € 500 million per year is channeled as ODA by the European Commission through NGOs. European NGOs are the largest group of beneficiaries from these funds. Additionally Member States channel aid resources through NGOs.

On development co-operation the Commission's principal intermediary with NGOs is the Liaison Committee of Development NGOs to the European Union (CLONG) which has some 900 members.<sup>77</sup> In dialogue with the Commission, the CLONG sought to agree a definition of NGOs involved in development (sometimes referred to as NGDOS). This resulted in a 'Charter' that describes aspects of what constitutes NGDOS.<sup>78</sup>

This chapter identifies some major characteristics of the NGOs in the European Union. This chapter is also concerned with how the changes in Eastern Europe from 1989 have affected the work of NGOs.

### 5.2 Population

The first NGOs were established just before the end of the last century. However, as a share of the current NGO population only a relatively small number of organisations were established before 1945. More than half of the organisations were established between 1945 and 1975. The organisations included in the survey used as the

basis for this chapter are non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which have the following characteristics:

- Are non-profit making charitable organisations;
- Have a general regional orientation: they are not focused on one particular country or region;
- Implement activities in several countries outside Western Europe with the aim of bringing humanitarian assistance and of promoting development;
- Have connections with other NGOs in Western Europe through membership in one or more networks and/or family groups that are operating at that level. These may include NGOs in countries that are not members of the European Union.

The population included the membership of the European networks EuroCidse (12),<sup>79</sup> Aprodev (14), Eurostep (25)<sup>80</sup> and Voice (69), as well as the family groups of Caritas (16), International Save the Children Alliance (ISCA) (9) and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) (6). Family Groups of American origin with affiliates in European countries (such as Care and Foster Parents) were excluded. A number of NGOs solely operating in Eastern Europe (5) were included if they appeared to have close operational connections to other NGOs included in the research.<sup>81</sup> Other family groups, such as Oxfam (3),<sup>82</sup> are organised in other networks, i.e. Eurostep. A list of NGOs included in the survey can be found in annex 15.

Ninety-nine organisations were included in the analysis. A total of 110 organisations were approached. The rate of return was, therefore, 90%. This makes the outcome of the survey reliable, particularly since the entire relevant population was included.

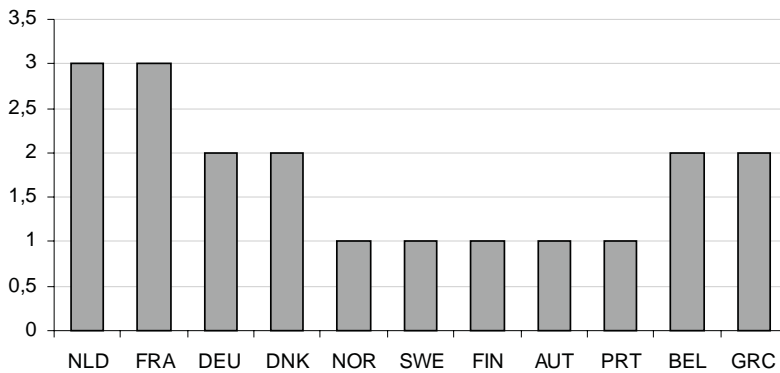
### 5.3 Characteristics of EU NGOs

Almost half of the number of all organisations (47%) do not have a religious affiliation, while one third (31%) is Catholic and 20% is identified as Protestant. Between 1989 and 1995 there was an increase in the total combined budgets of the organisations from approximately 1.3 to 2.3 billion ECU. In Germany, for instance, the total budgets of the organisations included increased from 437 to 569 million ECU. In the Dutch organisations the overall budget doubled from 211 million ECU in 1989 to 403 million ECU in 1995. In France the combined budgets increased from 71 to 210 million ECU. The UK NGOs had a very small increase only from 230 to 290 million ECU. In 1995 the largest number of NGOs came from Germany,<sup>83</sup> followed by the Netherlands, UK, France, Belgium and Italy. Germany also had the largest sum total of the programme budget for the NGOs, followed by the Nether-

lands, the UK and France. The variety between budgets of European NGOs was large.<sup>84</sup> In 1995, the NGO with the smallest budget had 160 000 ECU while the largest NGO had 176.5 million ECU. About 40% of the NGOs had a budget of under 10 million ECU and 75% had a budget of less than 30 million ECU; 11% had a budget of over 60 million ECU.

Since the organisations included in the survey are defined as 'Non-governmental Organisations' it would be expected that they are primarily financed from private sources. Nevertheless, 26 percent of the organisations in the survey were financed by government and the EC for more than 80% of their total project budget. For eleven percent government and the EC financing covered more than 95% of the total project budget. Eurostep members were over-represented in this category, with nine organisations receiving over 80% of their project funds from official sources. For four organisations official sources represented more than 95%. Government-funded NGOs are located in almost all countries.

GRAPH 4 *Distribution by country of NGOs that are at least 80% financed from government and EC*



The total financial contribution of the EC increased from approximately 170 million ECU in 1992 to 230 million ECU in 1995. This is respectively 9% and 10% of the total NGO project budgets. There are six organisations in this survey that, in 1995, depended for more than 75% of their funding on the European Commission. Eleven were more than 50% dependent on Commission funds.<sup>85</sup>

Almost all of the organisations depending heavily on Commission funding were working in Eastern Europe. For four of these, over 70% of their budgets were financed from ECHO. In 1995 the total amount of NGO financial resources from ECHO was 130 million ECU.<sup>86</sup> There were seven NGOs that received resources from

the European PHARE/TACIS programme for Eastern Europe. Total financing of NGO activities from the PHARE/TACIS EC special programmes for Eastern Europe was only around 4 million ECU.<sup>87</sup>

Governments contributed some 30% to the project budgets of NGOs.<sup>88</sup> Nineteen organisations (26%) did not receive any funding from their national government in 1995. Eleven organisations received more than 75% government financing, and 23% of all NGOs received more than half of their budget from the government.

The survey also established in which regions the organisations worked initially. Some 69% of the organisations worked in Sub-Sahara Africa when established; 53% worked in Latin America and the Caribbean; 43% worked in South and South-east Asia; 33% worked in Western Europe; 23% worked in the Mediterranean; 20% worked in Eastern Europe; and 2% worked in China.

There is a clear relationship between the year the organisation was established and the regions where activities took place at that time. Seventy percent of the organisations set up before 1950 were working in Western Europe and 53% were working in Eastern Europe. Only 29% were working in Sub-Sahara Africa, and even less were working in any other region. For those organisations established after 1950 and before 1979, 89% worked in Sub-Sahara Africa when established. Only 20% worked in Western Europe and dramatically less, 6.7%, worked in Eastern Europe. Seventy three percent of the organisations were working in Latin America, South and South-east Asia. Only 29% worked in the Mediterranean.

There is also a clear relationship between the region where the NGO is based, and the regions where the NGO worked when established, as shown in the following table.

TABLE 2 *Region of work when established and origin of NGO (in percentage)*<sup>89</sup>

<i>Region of work when established</i>	<i>Southern Europe</i>	<i>Northern Europe</i>
Western Europe	39.6	60.4
Eastern Europe	27.4	72.6
Sub Sahara Africa	57.2	42.8
Mediterranean	61.1	38.9
Latin America & Caribbean	57.7	42.3
South-east Asia	46.7	53.3
South Asia	44.7	55.3

Only two organisations – both based in Germany and established between 1959 and 1979 – worked in China when established. Proportionally, more NGOs from North European countries have worked in Western or Eastern Europe than NGOs from South European countries. Conversely, proportionally more NGOs from the South of Europe have worked in countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, the Mediterranean and Latin America than their North European counterparts. In Spain, for instance, all the organisations worked in Latin America at the time the organisation was established. This suggests that geographic proximity and historical connections play an important role in an NGO's choice of regional focus for their activities – and perhaps more so than humanitarian need.

#### 5.4 NGO networks and family groups

In 1990 three new co-ordination structures were established: EuroCidse, Aprodev and Eurostep. Groups of independent, already existing, NGOs decided to co-operate more closely at the European level. In each case the co-ordination concentrates on areas related to European Community policy. The three networks represented three different backgrounds. EuroCidse brought together organisations with a Catholic background. Aprodev's membership was formed by organisations with a Protestant affiliation. Eurostep included non-denominational organisations.

There are also groups of organisations that can be categorised as 'families' in which the members are national representations of the family as a whole. The oldest family group is Caritas, established at the beginning of the century. The International Save the Children Alliance (ISCA) was also established in the early part of this century. These organisations originally sought to bring relief to war-torn Europe. The family of Médecins Sans Frontières is a relatively young grouping, founded in the eighties.

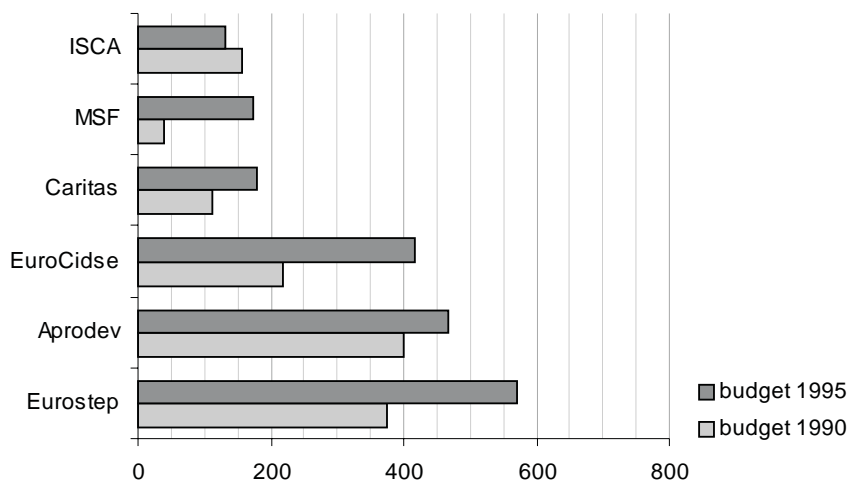
The Oxfam family is slightly different, because it acts like a 'family' of organisations seeking to establish coherent policies in all aspects of their work. It only expanded within Europe in the nineties, partly by incorporating already existing organisations from other countries. All the European members of the group are, directly or indirectly, part of Eurostep. For this reason, the family is not separately identified in this survey.

Of these different groups, Eurostep has the largest membership. This is compounded by the fact that several of its members are national co-ordinating structures with an NGO membership from that country. However, these are counted in this survey as one organisation.<sup>90</sup> In terms of size Aprodev, EuroCidse, Caritas, International Save the Children and MSF follow respectively. In relation to pro-

ject budgets for overseas activities, Eurostep also represents the largest group. MSF is the group with the largest budget on average per member. If the European Oxfams were included as a family group separately from Eurostep, they would have collectively ranked between EuroCidse and Caritas, in terms of the overall budget.

The combined MSF budget grew rapidly from approximately 30 million ECU in 1989 to 173 million ECU in 1995. Eurostep's total membership budget increased sharply from about 340 million ECU in 1989 and 375 million ECU in 1990 to 570 million ECU in 1995. The total budget of EuroCidse members also almost doubled from about 200 million ECU in 1989/90 to 400 million ECU in 1995. Aprodev's combined budget increased from 380 million ECU in 1989 and 400 in 1990 to approximately 470 million ECU in 1995. The International Save the Children Alliance was the only grouping whose total project budget decreased between 1989 and 1995.

GRAPH 5 *Comparison of combined project budgets of European networks and families in 1989 and 1995 (million ECU)*



There are clear distinctions between the family groups based on the year that they were established. The Caritas family is an old grouping, being almost fully established by 1963. In comparison, the members of EuroCidse were all established after 1956. Aprodev members are also relatively old, with 90% of its members having been established before 1962. The organisations of MSF were all founded in the seventies and eighties. Most of Eurostep's members were established in the sixties and

seventies, but the network has a large spread over the entire range, from the end of the last century up until the present day.

The NGO networks and family groups can also be distinguished according to the region of work when the member-organisations were established. For instance EuroCidse, Eurostep and MSF have no members that worked in Eastern Europe when the member organisations were established. This is consistent with these groups being the ones with the youngest membership, predominantly being established after 1950. In contrast, Aprodev and the Save the Children Alliance have many members who worked in Eastern Europe when they were founded. An even larger number of members of these groups worked in Western Europe when they were set up, which is also the case for Caritas. For many organisations from EuroCidse and Eurostep Latin America and Asia were regions in which they worked from the outset.

As has been suggested, the networks and family groups can be categorised by religious affiliation. The Aprodev network stems from the World Council of Churches, while the Headquarters of Caritas is in Rome, closely connected with the Roman Catholic Church. EuroCidse is also a network of Catholic organisations. Eurostep is the only network with some religious (Catholic) organisations amongst its, mainly, non-confessional membership. Some of these stem originally from a confessional background such as, for instance, Intermon and Novib that were established by Catholics, and Oxfam UKI that was set up by Quakers. Eurostep's binding factor is that all the organisations are presently non-denominational.

The Protestant network is, for obvious reasons, based firmly in the North of Europe. As the number of NGOs in the North is much larger than in the South of Europe, the Catholic networks still draw a large proportion, more than 50%, of their membership from the North of Europe. But they have a relatively stronger base in the South. Médecins Sans Frontières has the strongest base in Southern Europe.<sup>91</sup>

## 5.5 Humanitarian versus development NGOs

There is also a regional dimension to the nature of assistance, that is being humanitarian or development oriented. Of the organisations in Southern Europe a significant number described themselves as being of humanitarian in nature. Those describing themselves as being of a pure development character are predominantly based in Northern Europe.

It is often suggested that the post cold-war period could be characterised by an increase in humanitarian activity. The survey confirms this idea. In the period

1990-1995 the aid for humanitarian assistance did indeed increase. Thirty-eight percent of the organisations proportionally increased their budget for humanitarian activities.<sup>92</sup> Some organisations increased their proportional budget for development activities (17%). The remaining (45%) kept their relative budgets for these areas at the same level.

A more detailed look at activities implemented by NGOs show that a majority of NGOs predominantly still implement development activities. A large number (29) has a mixture of activities and these organisations are mainly based in the North of Europe. This is also the case for organisations concentrating on special groups, such as refugees and children. In contrast health is an activity on which most organisations in the South of Europe concentrate.

In absolute terms the sum of the project budgets of health and humanitarian organisations together increased from a little more than 100 million ECU to 400 million ECU between 1989 and 1995, accounting for less than a fifth of the total budget for that year. Nevertheless the sum of the budget of development organisations still remained larger in size, and increased from 600 million ECU in 1989 to a little over 900 million ECU in 1995. The 'mixed organisations' grew from approximately 460 million ECU in 1989 to 750 million ECU in 1995. The development and 'mixed' organisations account for almost 75% of the total budget for that year. Despite the growth of humanitarian assistance, this has not been directly at the expense of the resources for development.

## 5.6 Regional budget changes between 1990 and 1995

During the period 1990-1995 EU NGOs increased their budgets to Eastern Europe and to Sub-Sahara Africa. Between 1990 and 1995 Sub-Sahara Africa has remained a priority for all NGOs and 46% of the organisations increased their budget to this region. Notably, only 9 NGOs did not have such a programme – and this number included NGOs especially established to support activities in Eastern Europe. In rank order by number of organisations with a programme in the region, Sub-Saharan Africa is followed by Central and South America, and then South-east Asia. Next follows Eastern Europe, followed by South Asia, the Mediterranean, and the remaining regions, including the Gulf countries and China. A number of organisations indicated having programmes in Western Europe as well – but this was not systematically researched in the survey. MSF, for instance, implements programmes in Belgium, France and Spain.

Table 3 shows the changes of budget that went to the different regions. Some 49% of the organisations increased their budgets to Eastern Europe and 46% to

Africa. Fifteen organisations registered a decrease for South America, yet, on balance, still more organisations claimed to have increased their budget to that region. There is a relatively large increase of financial resources to South-east Asia. In 1995 61% of the organisations had included Eastern Europe as a region of work. This is a significant increase from before 1989, when 65% of the organisations did not include Eastern Europe in their working mandate.

TABLE 3 *Comparison of regional programme changes by percentage between 1989 and 1995*

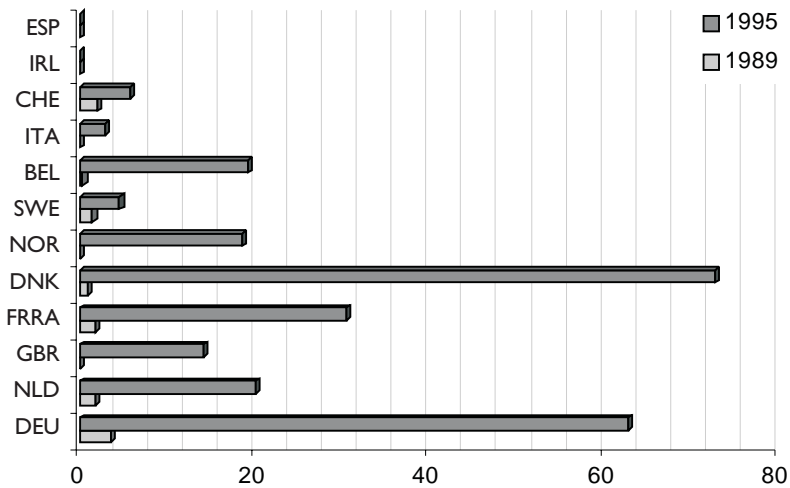
	<i>Increased</i>	<i>Decreased</i>	<i>Maintained</i>	<i>No programme</i>
Sub-Sahara Africa	46	8	37	9
Central America	20	10	46	24
South America	18	17	39	26
South-east Asia	21	11	38	31
Eastern Europe	49	2	11	37
South Asia	15	6	38	42
Mediterranean	14	11	15	60
Gulf countries	2	7	7	84
<i>China</i>	9	0	14	77

NGO funding available for Eastern Europe increased from approximately 23 million ECU in 1989 to 214 million ECU in 1995 – almost one hundred times. Proportionally the budget for Eastern Europe in relation to the total budget was 1.7% in 1989 which had risen to 10% in 1995.

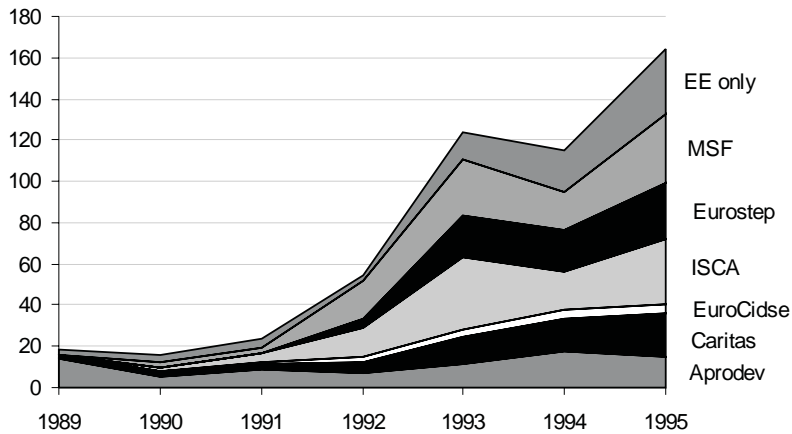
Graph 6 shows that the total budget of Danish NGOs for Eastern Europe was very large. Yet, not all the NGOs in Denmark implemented programmes for Eastern Europe. As one would have expected, German NGOs were proportionately well involved in Eastern Europe, as were those from France. The NGOs from the UK and the Netherlands contributed relatively little to Eastern Europe.

Even though the membership of Aprove had the highest contribution to Eastern Europe in 1989 and almost all members contributed to Eastern Europe at that time, the network did not generate the largest budget for the region by 1995. In that year much more financial resources were generated from within the memberships of MSF, Caritas and Eurostep. This is illustrated in graph 7 showing the cumulative resources by each NGO-group generated between 1989 and 1995.

GRAPH 6 *Total project budget for Eastern Europe (in million ECU) per country 1989-1995*



GRAPH 7 *Budget for Eastern Europe by NGO group (cumulative in million ECU)*



The contribution of Save the Children fluctuated quite dramatically in these years. EuroCidse consistently remained the lowest contributor to Eastern Europe. Eurostep and Caritas built slowly, but steadily to budgets larger than those from Aprodev.

Twenty-one organisations set up other organisations to channel aid to Eastern Europe – but only a few of them used that as an exclusive mechanism. The majority of these new organisations were set up between 1991 and 1994. Many of these were in Germany and in Eastern Europe itself.

The following table shows the ranking of East European countries in terms of the number of NGOs working in these countries. Fifty percent of the organisations worked in Bosnia. The total aid of the NGOs to ex-Yugoslavia amounted to at least 100 million ECU in 1995.

TABLE 4 *Number of NGOs (in percentages) working in specific countries in Eastern Europe (1990-1995)*

Country	# NGO (%)	Country	# NGOs (%)	Country	# NGOs (%)
Bosnia	49	Bulgaria	19	Czech Rep	12
Rumania	36	Lithuania	19	Kyrgystan	11
Serbia	32	Tadzhikistan	17	Slovenia	10
Croatia	35	Hungary	16	Slovak Rep	9
Armenia	25	Latvia	15	Uzbekistan	9
Russia	25	Estonia	15	Kazakhstan	8
Albania	28	Azerbaijan	15	Chernobyl	8
Georgia	23	Macedonia	12	Moldavia	7
Poland	20	Belarus	12	former DDR	4
Chechnya	19	Ukraine	12	Turkmenistan	4

Development oriented and mixed organisations were particularly active in a number of Central European countries: Rumania, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary and Albania.

### 5.7 Differences in motivations and justifications

In the survey respondents were not only asked whether their organisation changed policy but also to offer explanations for the policy the organisation chose to follow. In the following tables the justifications given are contrasted in relation to the two possible policy decisions; to work in Eastern Europe, or not.<sup>93</sup> Table 5 looks at the arguments used within organisations to justify their decision as to whether to work in Eastern Europe before 1989.

TABLE 5 *Arguments used to justify decisions about involvement in Eastern Europe before 1989*

We did not implement projects in EE before 1989 because:	We implemented projects in EE before 1989 because:
- No projects were identified	- We received applications from there
- There was no demand, was not debated	- Our partners requested this
- We had no mandate to do so	- We offer assistance without discrimination of race, religion, ... or political affiliation
- Our focus is on the Third World	- We helped victims of 2nd World War, secure peace in the future
- We focus on the poorest	- We help people in need, victims of man-made disasters and of unjust social and economic circumstances
- We started with various missions in Africa	- We started in Greece in 1942
- Our experience is in the other continents	- We give humanitarian assistance
- It was not possible, and vulnerable groups were not known	- There were needs and possibilities for help
- It was not a priority	- Emergency assistance was needed
- There are other organisations for this.	
Everyone needs to stick to their own job	

Table 6 looks at the arguments used for justifying decisions taken about working in Eastern Europe between 1989 and 1995. Again similar arguments are used to justify either policy decision taken either way.<sup>94</sup> The important question is, therefore, how people in organisations decide which arguments to use and whether organisational characteristics play a role in this process.

TABLE 6 *Arguments used to justify decisions about involvement in Eastern Europe between 1989 and 1995*

<i>We did not work in EE between 1989 and 1995 because:</i>	<i>We worked in EE between 1989 and 1995 because:</i>
- We choose to work in developing countries	- We responded to the demands of our partners
- There are other organisations for that	- Doors were opened for Christian NGOs
- It was not a priority	- It was a new priority
- We had a problem of personnel capacity	- There were new possibilities and developments
- We want to continue with our speciality	- Of the political change: the end of the Cold War did not bring peace in Eastern Europe
- Our human and financial resources are limited	- There was a humanitarian and emergency crisis
- We are too small	- The population was in a crisis situation
- We have a selection of countries based on UN poverty listing of LDCs	- Needs were discovered
- We had no mandate to do so	- We got new definition of the mandate
- We took the decision not to change focus	- We decided to promote solidarity for the South and help establish Third World activities in EE

### 5.7.1 *Characteristics of NGOs working in Eastern Europe*

There is a correlation between the regions on which the organisations were focussed when established and the decision as to whether to work in Eastern Europe after 1989. Proportionally many fewer organisations established at the height of the Cold War decided to work in Eastern Europe after 1989. Organisations established towards the end of the Cold War start activities in Eastern Europe more easily as did those that had worked in the region before the Cold War period.

TABLE 7 *NGO working in Eastern Europe in 1995 and year of foundation (in % per column)*

<i>Working in EE</i>	<i>1988-1950</i>	<i>1950-1979</i>	<i>1980-1995</i>
No	8	44	35
Yes	92	56	65

The relationship between certain features of NGOs and the country in which they are based also underscored the idea that there might be a correlation between the country of origin and their decision on working in Eastern Europe. The results to this question allowed the division of NGOs into four categories.

TABLE 8 *Percentage of NGOs working in Eastern Europe by country*

<i>% of NGOs working in Eastern Europe</i>	<i>Country</i>
80-100%	Germany, France, Luxembourg
60-80%	UK, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden
40-60%	Greece, Italy
0-40%	Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Belgium

Interestingly, the categories broadly reflect two criteria: (1) whether the country is in the North or South of Europe and (2) whether the country is in the proximity of Eastern Europe. Note that France 'behaves' as a country that is in the North of Europe and in the close proximity to Eastern Europe.

The following table shows the relationship between these countries and the work of NGOs in Eastern Europe (weighed percentages, n=97).

TABLE 9 *Country (in groups) by number of NGOs working in Eastern Europe in 1995*

<i>Row %</i>	<i>No EE</i>	<i>Yes EE</i>
<i>Total %</i>		
Group 1: Germany, France, Luxembourg	9.4	90.6
	1.8	17.0
Group 2: UK, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden	29.0	71.0
	12.6	30.9
Group 3: Greece, Italy	46.2	53.8
	8.9	10.4
Group 4: Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Belgium	66.7	33.3
	12.3	6.1
Total	35.6	64.4

This table shows that there is a clear relationship between the location of the NGO and the decision to work in Eastern Europe. The location plays a role in two distinct manners. More NGOs from the North had activities in Eastern Europe than NGOs from the South of Europe. Within these two groups more NGOs of coun-

tries closer to Eastern Europe had activities than NGO from countries further away.<sup>95</sup>

Additionally, almost all the Protestant organisations worked in Eastern Europe between 1989 and 1995. More of the Catholic organisations and even more so of the organisations without a religious affiliation did not work in Eastern Europe between 1989 and 1995.

All the members of the humanitarian group of MSF worked in Eastern Europe between 1989 and 1995. Most of the members of Caritas, Aprovech and the International Save the Children Alliance also implemented activities in Eastern Europe. The majority of members of these three groups all originate from before the 1950s. The networks with a much younger membership – predominantly from between 1950 and 1979, had a majority of members who had not started working in Eastern Europe by 1995.

A relationship could also be established between the membership of networks/family groups and decisions of members to work in Eastern Europe. It also appeared that the more humanitarian oriented organisations (MSF) are much more attracted to work in Eastern Europe than the development oriented ones (Eurostep). Since the networks were only established in 1990 it has to be assumed that network pressure played a limited role in the policy decision-making of individual members.

It has been suggested that a connection could be expected between the region where an organisation worked when it was established and its decision on working in Eastern Europe. The survey confirms this hypothesis. Almost all the organisations, which worked in Eastern Europe when they were first set up, worked again in Eastern Europe during 1989-1995. Most of these organisations had not worked in Eastern Europe since the 1950s. Of the organisations, which were not working in Eastern Europe between 1989 and 1995, a majority (91%) worked in Africa when the organisation was set up.

It can be concluded that there is significant evidence that the original region where the organisation worked when it was established affects the NGO's decision on working in Eastern Europe after 1989. There is also a clear relationship between the nature of an organisation's activities and the decision on working in Eastern Europe before 1995. In addition there is also correspondence between the size of the NGO and the decision to work in Eastern Europe. Organisations with an average size (between 10 and 30 million ECU) and the very large NGO (over 60 million ECU) have a very high chance of having activities in Eastern Europe by 1995.

TABLE 10 *Size of organisations and activities in Eastern Europe in 1995 for weight cases in row percentages*

Budget size	No EE	Yes EE
0-10 MECU	44	56
10-30 MECU	19	81
30-60 MECU	42	58
60-200 MECU	9	91

Humanitarian organisations were almost all located within the category of organisations with budgets under 10 million ECU. Of the organisations in this category of smallest organisations, the NGOs working in Eastern Europe are predominantly humanitarian organisations and some are 'mixed'. Almost all the development organisations in this category declined to work in Eastern Europe. One small development organisation illustrates this with the explanation why it does not work in Eastern Europe:

"There are other organisations existing for that. One should do one's own job."<sup>96</sup>

This was not the view of the smallest humanitarian NGOs, who took the decision to work in Eastern Europe.

The largest NGOs with budgets of more than 60 million ECU predominantly categorised themselves as pure development NGOs. These did work in Eastern Europe. They were less reliant on a strict interpretation of their core developmental mandate when making their decisions, more easily finding other ways of dealing with the changing working mandate. They either channelled funds through organisations specifically set up for this purpose or found ways to earmark specific funding for Eastern Europe. As one organisation explained:

"[ Our ] policy is not to divert funds from the South to Eastern and Central Europe.

All funding in Eastern and Central European countries is therefore on the basis of especially earmarked funds."

It can be concluded that humanitarian organisations have moved to Eastern Europe irrespective of their size, while for development organisation size was a key factor determining their policy on working in Eastern Europe.

### 5.7.2 *Outside pressure to change policies*

The survey also looked at the role of outside pressure in taking policy decisions. This is, perhaps, particularly relevant given the large number of NGOs dependent upon public funding. Respondents were asked to comment on the pressure felt

from outside funders to change to work in Eastern Europe. They suggested that the policy change did not always happen voluntarily. This is demonstrated by the following comments made by respondents:

“The NGOs have often been put under pressure by official funders to orientate their aid to the East”;

“To meet expectations of the churches and at the request of the World Council of Churches”;

“To include ‘countries in transition’ as defined by the Ministry for Development Co-operation”;

“We went to Eastern Europe to include the countries from the PHARE and TACIS funding”.

This shows that NGOs are not insensitive to requirements or possibilities offered by their funders. Notably, no remark was found about possible pressure from public opinion. All pressure identified was from national governments or the availability of EC funding. This shows that while NGOs, as independent stakeholders, are perceived to influence the policy of national governments and the EU, the reverse could also be true, with policies of NGOs being influenced by national governments or the EU.

## 5.8 Conclusion

Two thirds (64%) of the organisations included in this survey did not work in Eastern Europe in 1989. In 1995, however, 61% of the organisations had included Eastern Europe as a region in which they worked. Elements that helped determine whether NGO worked in Eastern Europe between 1989 and 1995 related strongly to:

- The year the organisation was established. Those which were established between 1959 and 1979, when the Cold War reached its height, were more reluctant to work in Eastern Europe after 1989.
- The original mandate of the organisation. The organisation was much more likely to work in Eastern Europe after 1989 if the NGO worked in Eastern Europe when it was founded. This was the case even if these NGOs had not worked in Eastern Europe between 1950 and 1989, and worked only in the South. Conversely, of the organisations that did not work in Eastern Europe after 1989, the majority worked only in Africa when the NGO was founded.

- The location of the organisation. Organisations based in countries close to Eastern Europe were more likely to work in Eastern Europe after 1989. Organisations based in the North of Western Europe were also more likely to work in Eastern Europe.
- The religion of the organisation. Almost all the Protestant organisations worked in Eastern Europe after 1989. Organisations who did not start activities in Eastern Europe were mostly non-confessional.
- The nature of activities of the organisation. Many of the humanitarian organisations started working in Eastern Europe after 1989. Most organisations aimed at special groups, such as children and refugees, started to work in Eastern Europe, as did the majority of health related organisations. Most of the organisations, which decided not to work in Eastern Europe, identified themselves as development oriented or had mixed activities. The relationship between these factors and activity in Eastern Europe was very clear notwithstanding the difficulty, commented upon by a large number of organisations, to distinguish between humanitarian and development activity.
- The membership of the organisation. The organisations that were members of MSF, Caritas, Aprovech and ISCA were much more likely to work in Eastern Europe after 1989. This coincides with the characteristics of membership for each group, and corresponds to a number of factors mentioned above, such as year of establishment, religious affiliation and the nature of activity.
- The size of the organisation. The largest 10% of organisations were, almost without exception, working in Eastern Europe, irrespective of any of the other factors mentioned above.

The differences in approaches towards Eastern Europe during the 1990-1995 period seem to suggest fundamentally different perceptions of Eastern Europe's relation to the EU. Nevertheless, the reasons given for justifying both the decision to work in Eastern Europe or not to do so by NGOs are very similar. In a few instances, the motivations reflected an acknowledgement of the particular nature of Eastern Europe, which is fundamentally distinct compared to regions elsewhere. More commonly, the justifications were a reflection of the specific identity of a given NGO. National determinants also seemed to be relatively important in determining the policies of the NGOs.

The expanded role of NGOs in terms of resources and scope should contribute to greater political involvement which demand coherence between European development policies and other policies affecting third countries. This is contrary to the increased attention given to humanitarian approaches which often seek to avoid political processes. Appreciating the particular complexity of the problems

in Eastern Europe and in its relationship with the EU, NGOs could be more visionary and creative in developing thinking on the EU's aspirations and responsibilities vis-à-vis Eastern Europe. The changes in Eastern Europe point directly to the heart of the EU's identity as a global player, to which national responses alone are inadequate. NGOs, which, by definition, define themselves as an alternative to government action and reflection, could play an important role in determining the identity, the role and responsibilities of the EU towards Eastern Europe.

