

Vicente Marbán Gallego
vicente.marban@uah.es
Gregorio Rodríguez Cabrero
gregorio.rodriguez@uah.es

PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE SOCIAL THIRD SECTOR IN SPAIN:
ENVIRONMENT, DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL RESEARCH AND
CHALLENGES

Vicente Marbán Gallego is a Doctor in Economy from the University of Alcalá (2000) where he presently works as a professor. He has participated in a variety of Spanish and European research for the National R+D Plan and others of the applied form for the public administration on the socioeconomic analysis of social policy and reforms in the Welfare State, especially in those areas related to social protection, dependence, social exclusion and the Third Sector, issues on which he is author and co-author of a series of articles and books.

Gregorio Rodríguez Cabrero is a Doctor in Economic Sciences and has a degree in Law. He is currently profesor in Sociology and Director of the Master in Social Services Managment at the University of Alcalá (Madrid). He is also Director of the Spanish Journal of the Third Sector, As well as expert specialized in social policies with a focus on the Welfare State, aging, long-term care, social exclusion and Social Action Third Sector, of which he has published different publications and books.

ABSTRACT

The development of Spanish civil society is analyzed in the context of the current changes in the Welfare State as well as its social nature. Following this, the recent social history of the Third Sector (TS) is analyzed, with a special reference regarding the Social Action Third Sector (STS), its growth and development, potential and limits. On the basis of social and organizational development we touch on and evaluate social research as applied in Spain and the main guidelines for analysis developed to this day. To end, we take into account both the development of the TS in the

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double context of the mercantilization of welfare activities and the decentralization of the state, as well as the challenges at a research level the TS faces, for a better understanding of its scope, functions and impact on welfare.

KEY WORDS

Third Sector, Social Action Third Sector, Welfare State, civil society, volunteers, social exclusion.

SUMMARY

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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper purports to offer a panoramic view of the Third Sector (TS) in Spain with a special reference to what is known as the Social Action Third Sector (SATS). In offering a panoramic view we must necessarily forsake the richness of nuances the recent social history of the organizational growth, social development and contribution to social welfare of the TS in Spain. The effort required when synthesizing (Marbán and Rodríguez Cabrero, 2006) requires an outlining of the processes of the changes we will attempt to mention here, while avoiding, as much as possible, mistakes that, due to excess or lack, are found in the analysis of the TS in Spain. As a lack, we must point out the underrating of the importance of the process of change, growth and transformation which has taken place in the TS in Spain and in the SATS in particular, to which is added the still low social visibility of the phenomenon and its social impact (except in very specific cases) as well as the difficulties in internally establishing the scope of the TS and of it with the mercantile enterprise, above all in the borderline areas of social economy and the functions of an enterprise. With regards to excess, the error is usually two-fold: analyzing the TS as the center of production and distribution by excellence of welfare facing the years to come without considering the strong dependency on the Welfare State in Spain or considering the civic factor that characterizes it – participative democracy – as the epitome of democracy with detriment to the mutual and necessarily complementariness it has with representative democracy.

The analysis of the development of the TS in Spain, especially the social action, having been very intense in the last three decades, shifting from forgetting of a significative past history to an overrating of its position and potential. This is why this paper intends to shed some light on the historical roots of the TS which will allow us to understand its recent evolution, and consequently, establish some of the main challenges for its future development while determining the real situation of the SATS and of the social research carried out in the area of social reality.

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Keeping all of the above in mind, in this paper, we first highlight the importance the Welfare State is transformation as the context for in which the TS development in Spain as well as the two-fold internal development in which it has taken place: the social economy and the non-for-profit sector, that is, the democratic organizational dimension in the midst of a market economy and the non-for-profit dimension of the associative movement and of the development of foundations. Secondly, we will analyze events in the recent social history of the TS in Spain with a special view to the SATS, emphasizing its internal ambivalences and limits to its development. Thirdly, we point out the nature and importance of social research carried out on the TS in nearly the last thirty years; obviously we will try to give an outlined account of the great investigative effort carried out, part of which has been fortunately connected to research of an international scope. Lastly, we will highlight some of the challenges of the TS regarding its development (conditioned by the mercantilization of welfare services and by the decentralization of the state), as well as the research aspect, above all in the debate over research, functions and impact of the TS in general and the SATS in particular.

2. THE DEBATE REGARDING THE SCOPE OF THE THIRD SECTOR IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE WELFARE STATE

2.1. Factors conditioning the development of Spanish civil society in general and the TS in particular

Spain is an archetype historical example of the rapid transformation of a collapsed civil society (1939-1960) a precarious one (1960-1976), under a political dictatorship to a democratic civil society (1976-2008) which allows for the growth of social organizations, the birth of volunteers and the diversifying of functions in the TS organizations which range from social mobilization to the production of services for themselves and for the state, going through other functions such as advocacy and the development of participative democracy.

In order to understand the late development of Spanish civil society (Casado, 1989, 1992, 1997, 1999) we must consider two prior factors in unison, internal and external, for the sensible understanding of the historical analysis of its recent development and which we will explain in the following section. There are two **“internal factors”** – the historical path of Spanish civil society and restoration of democracy – which we must take into consideration: On the one hand, the existence until recently and still not yet totally inexistent, of a deep tradition of a scarce civil society, very corporate, typical of a country with a late process of capitalist modernization and political democracy which has been spattered by periods of hard government and political and social crises, shaping a civil society subordinated to the State, articulated corporatively and strongly fragmented in the light of a lacking democratic civic culture which could be a common denominator of a rising civil society.

As in the majority of countries in Southern Europe, the long periods of political dictatorships, the slow process of secularization, the strength of the corporate social interests and the absence of a basic consensus on the model for the development of economic and democratic mo-

dernization have hindered the development of a democratic civil society as well as a more intense process of the development of a social economy and of social organizations and foundations.

The second internal factor refers to the democratic backdrop as a new institutional base which favors the rebuilding of Spanish civil society. Political democracy being a "*sine qua non*" condition for and extensive and deep civil society, it is understandable that its growth restarted or acquired a new historical impulse in the second half of the 1960's (Ortí, 2007) in a context of rapid economic and social modernization in Spain. Along with this, there was a demand for a new framework for the regulation of its development in the context of an inevitable and necessary political democracy and that, therefore, the consolidation of political democracy as of 1977 would bring about a true potential for development of the Spanish civil society and also real on the basis of a society with a broad middle and qualified working class that pressured in favor of a wide and active civil society. Along these lines, we must point out that this late development of a civil society, no less active and ascending, is still negatively dependent of its past history – a weak and fragmented civil society – but also positively dependent on the establishing and consolidating of a political democracy that allows for the developing of a Spanish civil society with renewed energy. More so, the progressive consolidation of a mid-size Welfare State with a growing redistribution of income and social service function, progressively shapes the material and institutional base on which the TS and particularly the SATS is built, above all, since the second half of the 1980's (Garcia Roca, 1993)

However we must also point out two "**external factors**" which dynamize and shape the development of Spanish civil society. First, we will mention the impact of the entrance of Spain in the European Union on January 1, 1986. The development of the principle of subsidiarity, the learning through social projects, the progressive extension of European networks in social rights issues; the fight against social exclusion and poverty, the defense of gender equality, among others, act as a revulsive in the Spanish TS through the incorporation of a growing number of NGOs to the different European social programs, that is, to European civil society. We cannot explain in its full scope the growth of Spanish NGOs without taking into account the positive impact the continuous Europeization of social policies in Spain. Because, although the Spanish welfare state, as other welfare states, follows its own historical path in many ways, at the same time it converges progressively, not only in social protection issues (pensions, health, employment) but also in new ways of collaboration between the Welfare State and civil society on issues of social rights and in the fight for social inclusion. In short, the Europeization of social policies is an internal articulation challenge for many NGOs, requiring a modernizing in management, preeminence in the production of services in the face of mobilization and the setting up of cooperation networks with other entities in the European space.

A second factor to be pointed out in the new historical development of the TS, not nipped by any political factors as was previously mentioned, coincides with the deep restructuring begun in the European Welfare States at the end of the 1970's and which speeds up after 1989. The financial limits of the Welfare State, new social problems (social fragmentation, social exclusion and employment uncertainty) to which the state provides answers with difficulty, the new social

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demands for active participation and of satisfying the new social needs and the relative deficit of political legitimacy which the Keynesian model of Welfare State faces (Subirats, 1999; Giner y Montagut, 2005) open the way to new ways of defining and articulating the public and private fields, and in particular redefine the private-public or the civil public field.

In Spain, from the beginning of the re-establishing of democracy in 1977 and without the consolidation of a Welfare State, still in a growth stage, a debate starts taking place, common in Europe, over the limits of the Welfare State and the importance of the development of civil society and of the TS as an answer to the new social demands which the State cannot provide for, or does so with difficulty, and also as a means of developing civic or participative democracy. However, if in European countries the issue was approached as a contention of the Welfare State and new ways for civil society to develop, the problem in Spain was initially a Welfare State very limited in size and of developing a civil society originating from the associative drive and movements springing up throughout the 1965-1977 period. This is a double feature that defines the specific challenge Spanish society faces at the historical beginning of deep economic and social changes in the western growth and welfare model since World War the Second.

2.2. The limits of the Third Sector and the Social Action Third Sector

In Spain the debate on the TS scope has always been part of the European debate. In other words, if the TS is social economy or if it is the so-called non-for-profit sector. On the other hand, what the field of the SATS is or has been is also the object of debate due to the difficulty of setting its limits. We will touch upon both aspects, the general debate over the TS in general and the scope of the SATS in particular. (Ruiz Olanbuénaga, 2000)

As mentioned in section 4, the debate in Spain over the nature of the Spanish TS has also been a part of the European debate according to the document "Social Economy in the European Union" (Chaves and Monzón, 2007). In fact, in the paper mentioned, the importance of the need to overcome the opposition between the concept of social economy (continental European tradition), where the importance lies in the democratic dimension of the organizations and the production for the market of social goods, and the concept of non-for-profit sector (of Anglo-Saxon tradition) in which the emphasis is placed on the non distribution of profits which are in turn allocated to different social ends and also being centered on volunteers.

In an attempt to overcome this historical conceptual duality, the TS is defined by many authors as "social economy", characterized by features such as: the primacy of the person and the social aim over capital, voluntary and open adhesion, democratic control of its members, the common interest of the members and of the general interest, the defense of the principles of solidarity and responsibility, the independent running and independence from the public powers, and finally, the allocation of the majority of the surplus to the obtention of the aims in favor of sustainable growth, the interests of the members and of the general interest. More specifically, social economy is defined as: *the whole of private enterprises formally organized, with autonomy for decisions and free-*

dom of adhesion, created to meet the demands of their members through the market, producing goods and services insuring or financing, and in which the eventual distribution of profits or surplus among the members, as well as the decision-making is not directly subject to the capital or payments made by each member, each member having one vote. Social economy also encompasses those private entities formally organized with autonomy for decisions and freedom of adhesion which produce non-market services in favor of families, where the surpluses, if any, cannot be claimed by the economic agents which generate control or finance them."

In this way, the TS, seen as social economy, is subdivided into two areas: a) a market area that includes cooperatives, mutualities, social enterprises and certain non-for-profit companies which provide services to TS organizations and, on the other hand, b) a non-market area basically made up by associations and foundations and other entities whose production supplies goods and services predominantly free or at an insignificant cost.

This growth of social economy towards the non-for-profit area does not have unanimous approval, although it is becoming consolidated in the field of economic research (Barea and Monzón, 2002, Garcíá Delgado, 2004a, 2004b, and 2005). The basic idea of these authors is that the Third Sector (TS) space covers both the non-for-profit sector and the social economy sector. It is a conjunction that, as we say, has not been peaceful until recently because in the Anglo-Saxon tradition the TS only considers the non-for-profit aspect, which excludes the handing out of benefits among members, whereas the social economy or solidarity economy the important thing is the democratic dimension and the usefulness of the members and of society as a whole, that is, the criteria of service to the people, in addition to being able to distribute profits among its members.

It is not just a question of nuance but the truth is that while the concept of the non-for-profit sector for the TS is the field comprised between the market and the State, the concept for the social economy of the TS is the field comprised between the capitalist sector and the public sector. In a way the non-for-profit sector regards people as aid recipients whereas social economy sees them as active agents, although the development in both sectors has led them in many ways to a certain convergence, with no lessening of the plurality of actors and organizational methods. Local tradition in each country places emphasis on one or the other approach to a greater or lesser degree.

Among the basic forms of social economy, concept which in practice substitutes the TS, or at least it is identified with it, we must highlight four: cooperatives, mutualities, associations and foundations to which we must also add others such as social enterprises, development agencies, worker's limited companies, social insertion enterprises, volunteers organizations, special employment centers or social promotion associations. In short, there seems to be a general, though not unanimous, tendency to include the social economy in the Third Sector. This concept of the TS, as an economy above all, is a response to the European market aimed at explaining its potential in employment creation. However, this concept, because it emphasizes the economic side of the TS, is pushing aside, or at least underestimating, the sociopolitical dimension of this sector, in which new needs, the defense of human rights, and those stemming from civic participation are key elements

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of its own historical nature. Obviously it is a strong tendency in the midst of social and economic research in the EU and also an important part in the Spanish research, although we have not yet reached a general and final consensus on what TS is. This ambivalence affects the definition of the TS, its internal structure and the scope of its activity. There is no doubt, at least in the European social model, that the contribution to employment, local development and innovation in production to meet new social needs, are factors which tend to a view of the TS in terms of a social economy. However, the development of expressive, demanding and participative functions goes beyond the concept of social economy and gives us a wide concept of the TS in which an ample plurality of manifestations, interests and social organizations in civil society can be included.

On the other hand, in Spain, as in the whole of the European Union, the **institutionalisation** of the TS has become a cardinal point, be it in the wider sense of social economy, aforementioned, be it in a more open sense, that is: explicit recognition on the part of the public powers; wide capacity and freedom to operate in any sector and, lastly, the recognition of their condition as interlocutors in the process of developing of public policies. Institutional visibility, recognized and stable interlocution with the State and a participation in the design of public policies are challenges faced by the Spanish TS.

On the other hand, with regards to the SATS, the defining of their scope, typology and methods of intervention is also the object of intense debate. The SATS in Spain largely comes from a past history which has provided a varied institutional heritage, with many types and sizes. The existence of unique large organizations in this sector such as *Cáritas Española*, the Red Cross and the ONCE (organization for the blind) are a specific differentiating factor in the Spanish case. The existence of different types of administrative registers and the decentralization of the State (and with it the existence of different regional registers), provides us with ample data regarding registration of organizations but not those who unregistre. It is also not easy to know which entities are active and which have no activity at all. The existing indicators in the different registries do not coincide, which makes the task of comparing extremely risky. Different studies and research which we will mention later in section 4 have attempted to provide answers to these questions through different methodological approaches without generating an ample consensus in any one of them.

On the other hand, more than half of the organizations have been created after 1990 and since then there has been not only a growth in the number of entities but also a change in their functions – a greater focus on the providing of services and less social advocacy – which has forced them to modernize their management systems and change their internal governance – with less power in the boards and more on the social managers. The creation of platforms, networks, and federations of entities to maximize efforts and create scale economies and reinforce their interlocution with the State, has emphasized the importance of training professionals, the improving of management and the creation of systems of information, in such a way that the world of the SATS entities is greatly different to the one twenty-five years ago as we will see in the following pages.

3. RECENT HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOCIAL THIRD SECTOR AND THEIR IMPACT ON GOVERNANCE

3.1. Development of the SATS: organizational growth and institutionalization

As we have previously pointed out, the establishing of a democratic State in 1977, not only consolidates the democratic social reform and favors the expansion of the Welfare State, essential condition, though not the only one, for the development of the TS, but also boosts the transformation of the social movements in the 1965-1976 period to organizations of a different type with the aim of not only defending civic rights and to channel the participative energy of civil society but also to provide services of the mutuality type or of services in cooperation with the Welfare State. This change will take place in the 1980's when the State begins to overcome its mistrust of civil organizations and the wish to control them, and these in turn, especially the SATS, partly due to their financial weakness and small scale and also due to the growing demands of civil society, start a complex path of growth, based on the cooperation with public powers, an internal organizational modernization and the articulation and coordination in the midst of the very social organizations as a means of strategic development in the long term.

As a consequence of these changes, throughout the 1990's to the present there is a consolidation of a development model of the SATS characterized by their active collaboration with the State in the provision of services and the development of programs and by an outstanding effort for economic growth and a more professional organization, which along with the very own demands of the State, lead to a growing demand of quality services on the part of society and under the pressure of a mercantile sector which competes in the profitable fields of welfare.

In this context of organizational growth there is also a sprouting of volunteer work in Spanish society which brings National Volunteer Plans and their replica, though not exact, of Autonomic Volunteer Plans. The channeling of the very diverse volunteer energy into NGOs, the management of volunteer work and its articulation with professional management, open new ways in the organizational development, in addition to the finding of resources and the creation of "umbrella" organisations through which social entities try to maximize their human and organizational potential.

To sum up, in the 1977-2007 period, a long thirty-year period, Spanish civil society is finally able to establish a "*sui generis*" public civil sphere, characterized, as we say, for its relative dependence on the State, an intense differentiation or duality among large organizations and a huge amount of small entities and finally, a growing development of volunteers. Particularly in the last twenty years there has been an "*institutionalization*" process in the SATS which has meant not only a growth in the number of organizations, but also and mainly, internal changes which have affected their more specific social functions. More precisely, the development of SATS is expressed, above all since 1990 to the present, as a permanent state of tension between the need for "**institutionalization**" (social recognition, reconsideration of values, fostering of volunteer work, defense of social

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rights and boosting participative democracy) and **“corporate growth”** (search for resources, organizational management, setting up of networks and platforms, professionalization).

The growth in social SATS organizations has been spectacular especially since 1990 to the present during which nearly half of all of the collective of social entities (associations and foundations) have been created. This growth has come along with the increase of professionals and volunteers, of economic and financial resources. Organizations have amplified their organizational complexity both internally – application of management techniques, organizational design, resource management, quality systems, development of audits – as internally – platform creation, federations and confederations of vertical and horizontal entities, development of transversal programs, setting up of lobbies and interest groups, among others. The providing of services has turned out in different ways of economic dependence as well as agreed cooperation with the Public Sector, which has had a significant impact in organizational development, above all in the professionalizing of the entities and a growing influence of managers at the head of the Boards. Also, NGOs must compete with the private sector, for example in the providing of services for senior citizens, financial pressure increases the risk of hurting the social aspect to the point where financial problems become the first consideration of the collective action. This is why a large number of organizations, mainly the large or very large ones, have to face the inevitable stress of semi-corporate pressure and their role in defending social rights. Therefore the SATS is not only connected to the State due to its relative dependence on the State for income, but also in the mercantile field with which it competes and collaborates at the same time. The mixed division of the Welfare State is a relatively consolidated fact which, as the SATS is concerned, creates tensions between the desirable autonomy and relative real dependence, between the development of social functions and the economic functions of the social sector.

Without a doubt the creation of organizational networks has improved the capacity for interlocution and autonomy of the SATS regarding the State and the mercantile sector which has allowed that, on the whole, not only the development into new ways of cooperation in the midst of the SATS itself, but also that the original purpose of the social entities in favor of collectives in a social exclusion situation or vulnerable continues to be the action guide of the sector.

In short, the development of the SATS in the last thirty years can be defined in the following way: a) First, social organizations form an active and central part in the process of building the Welfare State in Spain and the re-building of Spanish civil society, all this has brought about a greater commitment with social public policy, and consequently, a growing importance in the providing of public services. The dependence this function has caused seems to be solving itself, especially in the large and mid-size organizations, through the diversification of the financing sources and an improvement in the organizational and managerial management b) Secondly, the SATS selectively competes with the private sector, which, directly (providing services) and indirectly (sponsorship, marketing of causes, etc...) has fully entered the social services sector. It is a selective competition which does not take away capacity to the added value of the SATS as are innovation, organizational flexibility and ability to reach collectives at risk of exclusion c) Thirdly, organizational

growth and new social risks have created competition for resources among the NGOs themselves but also, and more and more so, have improved the cooperation methods among entities to reinforce their voice and develop joint programs both at a national level as in the European social space.

3.1 Ambivalences in the governance system

This dual nature in NGO development – organizational growth/institutionalization – without a doubt affects the governance of the SATS organizations which has become more complex and diverse. If we define governance as the good government of social organizations and specifically the obtention of the balance between the necessary institutionalization (social recognition, development of volunteers, creation of a social fabric) and the inevitable growth or corporatizing (professionalization, resource management, service providing) it so happens, that, on the one hand, the nature of governance is affected by such tension, and, on the other hand, there opens up a wide array of ways or types of governance.

Surely governance of the SATS organizations is affected in various ways by the double axis mentioned institutionalization/organizational growth. In the first place, there is an increase in the social actors which directly or indirectly intervene in the governing of social entities with new organizational developments, new ways of influence and an increase in the ways of participating in the governance, government, companies, managers, users, volunteers, private financing, partners make up a range of interests in which different ways cooperation and competition intertwine. Secondly, the governance of NGOs becomes more complex, sometimes less clear. The external and internal governance network, is subject to different demands: managerial governance versus democratic governance; economic autonomy versus economic cooperation of NGOs with the State; efficient professionalization versus the star role of the volunteers, organizational efficiency versus associative motivation. The result is that the development of NGOs, due to their very own specificity, is dual and ambivalent, having to respond at the same time to very different demands and requirements. This means, in short, that the concept of governance, that is the good governing of NGO's, is undoubtedly a very important social problem, due to the different interpretations made by the variety of social actors and organizations involved. Because, to sum up, governance is no more than the result of the strategies of the actors involved in the government of social organizations, directly or indirectly, in the context of a model for organizational development, which on the whole of the TS (but also applicable to the SATS with some exceptions) can be defined, for example according to a FBBVA survey in 2004, by the dominance of the managerial function, by an intense economic cooperation with the public sector (admitted by 84% of the organizations), by their strong local/regional factor (since 85% of the organizations have a less than national scope), by their relatively recent creation (46% have been created in the last fifteen years) and finally, by a small economic size since 63% of the organizations had a yearly expense of less than 65,000 euros a year. (Ruiz Olabuénaga, 2006)

Diversity among actors, complexity of organizational relationships, strategies of cooperation and competition, pressures on the part of the users for being heard, aspirations on the part of

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volunteers to be more than just goodwill work and to participate in the drawing up of strategies of the SATS organizations are features that condition the governance of social entities.

As a consequence of this there cannot be just one type of governance, but rather, we find different types or models because the ample variety of non-for-profit organizations, of different origin, different sizes, very different types of relations with the market and the public sector, the different nature of mutualities and altruism, among other differentiating factors or the plurality in governance systems whose analysis we cannot attempt to enter into here and now (Rodríguez Cabrero, 2006) but that express the very ample diversity of the TS in Spain and the SATS in particular.

The growth and development of the TS and the SATS in particular has been the object of analysis and understanding on the part of social researchers and experts, whose contribution we analyze in the next section. Social research has not only given a true account of the SATS but has also indirectly contributed to its self-awareness, consolidating its identity and the social reason for its functions. The data provided by social research is a substantial element in the very social and organizational development of social entities.

4. RESEARCH IN THE SOCIAL THIRD SECTOR IN SPAIN

4.1. General overview

Research on the Third Sector in Spain is relatively a recent phenomenon which has gone behind its institutional consolidation at the beginning of the 1990's and its growing social visibility and contained current growth. Along these lines we could well say that research has been primarily reactive rather than anticipative, all the more so if we compare it to research done in the sector internationally.

In a certain way, the *tap* of research into the Third Sector in Spain was opened in the late 80's and early 90's by isolated social researchers both in the university field as well as outside of it, as well as non-for-profit entities with a special concern for the analysis of disabilities and social services with papers like those of Casado (1989, 1992), the ONCE Foundation (De Lorenzo et al., 1991; Cabra de Luna et al, 1993) o Rodríguez Piñero et al (1993) among others.

Regarding the economic analysis of the sector, this was done with certain delay, if we compare it to social research although it is true that in the last few years it has gained weight in relation to the analysis of the contribution to the GDP of the TS and to the non-monetary economy. So it seems that to the point where in the early 90's economic research was more connected to imported review and analysis of the economic theories as well as in fostering and stimulating interest of economists in getting to know the non-for-profit sector, its economic dimension and the problems to do with financing, as is literally picked up in the editorial of one of the first monographs of a Spanish journal of economy on the non-for-profit sector. (See Montserrat and Rodríguez Cabrero, 1991)

In the 90's, socioeconomic research in the Third Sector has grown exponentially as can be seen, for example, in the weight it has had in university research since 1993, where 70% of the Doctoral theses presented were read between 1993 and 2002 and with a tendency to grow. (Chaves, Monzón and Sajardo, 2004)

A large part of the proliferation of research in the academic and associative field could be due to, among other factors, the extraordinary growth of organizations which make up the Third Sector and their growing social visibility in the emergence of "new social risks" to the point where these have overloaded the capacity and reach of the Welfare State, especially regarding the aging of the population, gender inequality, immigration, labor segmentation brought about by globalization or the changes in family structure.

It is true that, despite this wide range of research, generally focused preferably on the analysis of Social Economy and the social action Third Sector, have had an ambivalent effect.

On the one hand, despite the disparity of results, they have allowed for a tentative approach to knowledge of the socioeconomic Third Sector and above all to the reaching of a basic consensus regarding the limitations and deficits of the SATS, specifically, its organizational duality (that is the disproportion between the weight of a very few large entities and the low weight of many small organizations) and their economic dependence on the Public Administration (Pérez Díaz and López Novo, 2003; Rodríguez Cabrero, coord, 2003; Martínez et al., 2000; García Delgado, 2004a), as well, the limited interassociative cooperation and coordination (Vernis, 2005; Rodríguez Cabrero, coord., 2003, Pérez Díaz and López Novo, 2003) or the high unsteadiness of work (Marbán, 2001, Martínez et al., 2000, Rodríguez Cabrero, coord, 2003; Salinas Rubio and Cerezo, I, 2001)

On the other hand, these researches have contributed to a growing entropy in the Third Sector (Marbán, 2003a) to the point where each paper is tackled with different approaches, classifications, methodology and statistical sources.

Specifically, we can see in the research on the sector substantial differences in the sources used for their measurement. This disparity leads to a distancing in the socioeconomic results, which emphasizes the relative comparability of available research and the results obtained¹.

¹For example if we compare the research done by Pérez Díaz and López Novo (2003) and García Delgado (2004) we see that the first mentions half of the social action entities in 1999 (15,400) than in the second one while surprisingly the number of volunteers is not as different as might be expected. Something similar occurs to the wide existing margin mentioned by Ruiz Olabuénaga, one million workers for all of the Third Sector (250,000) entities in 1995 and a higher number of volunteers, according to the Tomillo Foundation, for a number of entities that is significantly lower in social action (11,043) only four years later. It is also true that the same research shows a much lesser distance between the number of salaried fulltime employees of the social action NGOs that is 151,000 jobs according to Ruiz Olabuénaga in 1995 and 215,000 according to the Tomillo Foundation in more organizations, 11,000 and four years later.

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Secondly, the existing difficulties to reach a consensus and consolidate a concept and classification of the Third Sector that are rigorous enough makes it hard to develop a system for the true knowledge of the real dimension of the TS, unlike what happens with the public and private profit sectors. A lot has been written about it but the truth is that Third Sector analysis is still focused from two excessively limited points, which may be confusing to the layman, the Social Economy approach, which usually sympathizes with the Third Sector and which defines the SATS in particular as social economic entities which work in the non-market and the Non Lucrative Sector approach. A new approach seen to be developing which define the Third Sector as a "meeting point" between both (Monzón, 2006:12) or those who see it as a tree with two branches: non-for-profit Organizations (associations and foundations) and the Social Economy (Cooperatives, Mutualities, and Worker's Limited companies) (Salinas, Rubio and Cerezo, I, 2001) as we mentioned in entry 2.2

4.2. Panoramic of research into the Third Sector in Spain and subjects for (re) emerging research

It is truly harder to enumerate the documents and research on the Third Sector without leaving any out (we apologize if this is the case) It is worth mentioning for example how in the field of scientific and academic publications hundreds of articles related to the Third Sector and volunteer work go beyond the mere anecdote. We already have the publishing of monographs as in the Economists Review, issues 51, 83 and 102 (Montserrat and Rodríguez Cabrero, coord;1991,2000; García Delgado, coord, 2004b) the magazine Social Documents issues 103 (1996) and 122 (2001) the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy Magazine by CIRIEC, inevitable reference when talking about Social Economy, specially issue 37, devoted to Social Economy and the non-for-profit Sector (Sajardo and Chaves, coord., 2001) and issue 56 (Chaves and Monzón, coord, 2006) or the special issue on Volunteer Work in the Magazine of the Ministry of Labor and Social Issues (Alemán and Rubí coord. 2001). Also praiseworthy is the consolidation of specialized review on the Third Sector such as the one we publish in, The Spanish Third Sector Review (www.fundacionluisvives.org/rets/2/) which, counting this issue, now has a total of 9, since its start in 2005.

Regarding theoretical and empirical research and work on the Third Sector we come across some with a more integral and fully comprehensive nature (Ruiz de Olabuénaga, 2000 a,b, 2006; Barea and Monzón, 1992,2002; Chaves and Monzón, 2007; García Delgado, 2004; Cabra de Luna, 1998; Sajardo,1996, Faura et al, 2003...); other more sectorial ones focused specifically on social action (Martínez et al, 2000; Rodríguez Cabrero and Montserrat 1996; Rodríguez Cabrero, coord., 2003; Perez Diaz and Lopez Novo, 2003; Platform of Social Action NGO's, 2006) or partially learning towards it (Esplai Foundation, 2002) Fantova, 2005, Carpio, coord., 1999; Salinas, Rubio and Cerezo, 2001; Alvarez, Martin and Martinez, 1998; Jerez,1997); Monzón et 2003... or rather more transversal topics, among others, management (Fantova, 2001; Vernis, 2005; Vernis et al, 1998, 2004...) or of volunteer work (Cortes, Hernan and Lopez, 1997; Garcia Roca, 2001; Madrid 2001; Garcia Inda and Martinez de Pison, cords, 2001; Ariño, 2001 and Ariño et el, 1998; Zurdo, 2003...)

Among the research mentioned we would like to briefly stop on the ones by Ruiz Olabuénaga for the BBVA Foundation (Ruiz de Olanbuénaga,2000 a,b,2006) the Barea and Monzón one (2002) and Chaves and Monzón (2007) on Social Economy, the one coordinated by Garcia Delgado (2004a) or the more specific ones for the social action Third Sector of the Tomillo Foundation (Martinez et al, 2000) or the FOESSA Foundation (Rodriguez Cabrero, coord,2003) or the one coordinated by Perez Diaz and Lopez Novo (2003).

In the research for the BBVA Foundation, which must be put into a comparative international study jointly with the John Hopkins University, there were 250,000 non-for-profit organizations² in Spain in 1995, which provided 475,000 salaried full-time employees (4.5% of the total non-agricultural employment in Spain) which would place our Third Sector in intermediate positions, slightly below the average of the 22 countries studied (4.8%) and quite below the average in western European countries (7%). Regarding volunteers there is a margin of between 2,900,000 volunteers in the widest sense (dedicating a minimum of one hour a month) and a million volunteers (dedicating more than 16 hours a month) and a GNP contribution around 4.6%. In the whole of the Third Sector we must point out the organizations aimed at social actions as the most labor intensive, despite representing 3.1% (7922 entities) they absorb 32% of the total employment in the sector (151,000) and mobilize 295,000 volunteers or 496,000, in the strictest sense or in the most wide sense.

This research has been updated with a survey of 500 associations and 100 foundations in the field of health, social services, culture-sports and education and widened to the study of governance, institutional mediation between the Third Sector and the Public Sector, its financing and social impact (Ruiz de Olabuénaga, 2006). Among the most important quantitative results we can see the drive of this sector in the last years, because between the first and latter papers that is, between 1995 and 2002, we have gone from 253,000 non-for-profit organizations to more than 360,000, the number of volunteers has grown a 43.5% reaching 4.2 million in the most ample sense and 1.76 in the strict sense, salaried employees a 46% (reaching 692,336, a 4.3% of total employment) and the equivalent volunteer work has nearly doubled (from 253,600 to 489,446).

The research headed by Barea and Monzón, in synthesis, is basically based in part on the Social Economy, such as cooperatives, workers' companies, social provision mutualities and non-for-profit social action organizations. Firstly, their significant growth in employment in Social Economy in the 1990's, not only because during this decade employment in this sector grew four times more than employment in the whole of the economy but also because of the anti-cyclical behavior in the 91-95 years where cooperatives were able to keep their numbers of employment as opposed to the generalized loss of employment in the Spanish economy.

² Within these entities the following have been included: associations, foundations, cooperatives, social provision mutualities, educational centers, sports clubs – except those turned into limited companies – savings and loans with social works and hospitals.

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Secondly, we would point out their participation in the Spanish economy in the year 2000, that is 7.1% of the GNP in Spain, 355,000 jobs in cooperatives, workers companies and social provision mutualities and 215,000 in non-for-profit social action organizations.

This research has been updated as an integral part of a study regarding cooperatives, mutualities and associations in the EU for the 2002-2003 period. (Chaves and Monzón, 2007) in which we obtain results that confirm the growth in Social Economy in the last few years. In particular, it is estimated that these organizations provide around 6% of the total employment in the EU with over eleven million salaried employees, out of which a little over seven million work in associations. In the case of Spain, cooperatives, mutualities and other similar entities have gone from an estimated 35,700 in the previous paper, to 48,545 in the year 2005 and 127,000 associations and foundations (2001). The total employment in the Social Economy in Spain is placed at over 870,000 most of which are in cooperatives and 380,000 in associations, which would place us in 5th position in the European rating, after Germany, France, United Kingdom and Italy, 2nd in employment created in cooperatives and 6th in employment created in associations.

The paper also analyzes the standing of the wider ample concept of Social Economy in the EU and reaches very interesting conclusions such as: *it is not easy to find countries where the more ample concept of Social Economy is clearly inbred. The most common, where it is accepted, is to find it unclearly, be it towards the part of enterprises producers of market in the Social Economy (case of Spain) or the part of non-market entities in the Social Economy (the concept of the non-for-profit Sector – Volunteer Sector) in some countries, such as Italy and Spain, have diverging concepts of the field of Social Economy: there co-exist a corporate approach to Social economy, made up mainly by cooperatives, with a concept of non-market of the Social Economy, mainly made up by associations, social cooperatives and other non-for-profit entities* (Chaves and Monzón: pg. 39).

We would lastly point out how the authors highlight the contribution of the social economy to social cohesion by reinforcing social participation and the labor integration of people and territories, to local and territorial development, for example keeping activities at risk of disappearing, innovation in methods of organization and the creation of new markets, to the creation of new jobs or the European construction.

In the research headed by García Delgado different sources of information were used, both qualitative (10 discussion groups and 50 in-depth interviews of high level people in the Public Administration and executives in Social Economy organizations) and quantitative (1999 surveys to executives and managers and 2500 telephone interviews to people over 18). This research, differently to the previous one, includes in addition to cooperatives, workers associations, social provision mutualities, also associations and foundations related to social action and other fields such as cultural, recreational, educational, sports, political, religious.... To sum up, there are 165,000 entities which bring together 4.2 million volunteers (equivalent to 488,000 fulltime jobs) and 835,000 salaried employees (equivalent to 722,000 jobs). Regarding social action organizations we confirm the data from previous studies of their financial dependency on the public sector (57% of their

income came from this sector) for a total of 27,000 entities with an estimated equivalent of 318,000 fulltime jobs, of which 111,000 would be volunteers and 207,000 salaried. Regarding cooperatives, mutualities and workers associations, they would represent 341,600 jobs representing 2.6% of employment in the Spanish economy in the year 2001.

Regarding social action, from the Tomillo Foundation they estimated that some 11,000 social action entities created around 445,000 full-time jobs, 215,000 salaried and 230,000 volunteer (which would be equal to the sporadic activity of 1,070,000 volunteers). As a result of a sample of 201 personal surveys this paper confirms the high unsteadiness and financial dependence on public funds (53%) (11% of donations).

Interdisciplinary research in the FOESSA Foundation covers the analysis of the Spanish volunteer social action organizations from a quantitative (surveys to entities at 0,52% taxable income) as well as qualitative (discussion groups and in-depth surveys of volunteers, former volunteers, volunteer entities managers and administration experts) also including a wide variety of secondary sources (CIS surveys, European and World Value Surveys, press...). From the quantitative and financial point of view, it is clear that social action organizations have a strong dependence on the Public Sector (53% of their income is public) as well as the polarization of social action in budget management, due to the fact that only 2% of the total number of organizations manage 44% of the budget for the sector. Regarding the sponsorship activities for social action on the part of corporations, it can be seen that it is practically insignificant in relation to the GDP (0.001%) above all if we compare it to 0.61% of the GNP which is the real cost managed by social action organizations. It is equally confirmed through the analysis of the surveys and questionnaires to entities of 0.52% the high financial dependence on the public administrations and the unsteadiness among social action entities (54% of the contracts).

In the research by Pérez Díaz and López Novo (2003) we can also see how difficult it is to estimate the world of entities that make up social action. After certain cleansing of worlds and samples the estimate of them came to a little over 15, 400 organizations from which a sample of 10% was analyzed.

Among the more significant results there were an estimated 198,000 salaried employees in the social action Third Sector and 734,000 volunteers (with a primarily feminine profile, under 35, with an above average education and whose dedication to volunteer work is no more than 5 hours a week). Regarding the organizational and volunteer structure of the studied organizations, these would be young organizations (47% were set up since 1991) of a predominantly local nature in the case of associations and regional in the case of Foundations, not very professionalized (1 employee for every 4 volunteers and a 47% have no salaried employees) and highly dependent on public funds (mostly in associations and as they increase in size).

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Table 1: Panoramic view of research into the Third Sector in Spain

	Number/ type of Organization	Sources of information	Volunteer work		Salaried	
			Total	Equal to Full-time	Total	Equal to Full-time
BBVA Foundation (Ruiz de Olanbuenaga 2000 a,b)	253,507 non-for-profit organizations ³ (1995) Social action: 7,922 entities	Ministry of Education and Culture, Social Services and Health, INE, Statistic Institutes of the Basque Country and Catalonia	1,026,482	254,000	548,366	475,179
			295,000	73,016	180,028	151,224
Ruiz de Olanbuenaga (2006)	362,654 non-for-profit entities (2002) 9,929 social action Entities	Secondary report analysis, catalogs memoirs, surveys to 500 associa- tions and 100 foundations in health, social services, culture- sports and education In Madrid, Barcelona, Sevilla, Valencia, Alicante, Pamplona, Bilbao and Vigo	1,765,549	489,446		692,336
			497,044	132,351		212,617

³ Includes associations, foundations, cooperatives, social provision mutualities, educational centers, sports clubs, except those which have become public limited, savings and loans with social works and non-for-profit hospitals

PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE SOCIAL THIRD SECTOR IN SPAIN: ENVIRONMENT, DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL RESEARCH AND CHALLENGES

	Number/ type of Organization	Sources of information	Volunteer work		Salaried	
			Total	Equal to Full-time	Total	Equal to Full-time
Barea and Monzon	35,269 cooperatives workers associations And 443 social provision Mutualities 11,000 social action entities (1998) ⁴	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs General Labor Secretariat, General Directorate for the fostering of Social Economy and the European Social Fund. CIRIEC Spain; Spanish Agricultural Cooperative Confederation, Users and Consumers cooperatives (Hispacoop. UNC- CUE), CONCOVI, CNEPS			355,000	
					215,000	
Chaves and Monzón	48,545 cooperatives, mutualities and othe similar ones 127,000 associations. And foundations (2001)				488,606	
					380,000	

⁴In the case of social action entities this paper refers to the data of the surveys of the Tomillo Foundation, that's why they coincide.

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	Number/ type of Organization	Sources of information	Volunteer work		Salaried	
			Total	Equal to Full-time	Total	Equal to Full-time
Garcia Delgado (2004a)	165,000 entities of Social Economy ⁵ (2001)	Discussion groups, in-depth interviews to Public Administration officials and managers of Economy organiza- tions. Surveys to managers and direc- tors a phone surveys to Spaniards over 18. Ministries Labor of Home Affairs and Social Affairs, Foundations, Confederation of foundations, Regional Governments National Confederation of Cooperatives of Associated Work	4,245,000	488,000	835,000	722,000
	Of social action 27,000		965,000	110,000		207,000
Tomillo Foundation	Social action 11,043 (1998)	Personal interviews to managers, experts and executives in NGOs. Ministry of Home Affairs and Social Affairs, Confederation of foundations, Regional Governments National Confederation of Cooperatives of associated work				
Perez Diaz and Lopez Novo	Social action 15,400 (1999)	Surveys to Social Action Entities National Association Registry, updated Tomillo Foundation, Ministry of Labor and Social Affair, CONFER	734,000		199,000	

⁵Includes cooperatives, workers associations, social provision mutualities, associations and foundations related to social action fields, cultural, recreational, educational, sports, political, religious....

In the last few years more importance is being given to topics of research which are re-emerging in the TS in Spain which were usually dealt with at a tangent and for which there are currently more ad hoc surveys. We are talking about areas such as training, the contribution of the TS to social capital (Marcuello, 2007), the new information technologies or aspects related to management as the implementation of quality systems in the TS with social objectives or relational management.

In the case of training, there is an ever-growing writing of human resources reports, university and non-university training (Rojo and Alvarez) and on the transfer of knowledge in NGOs (Ruiz de Gauna et al, 2007) starting from the evaluation and analysis of how training must contribute to a change of attitude, internal organizational change and social change in the context of a global world. (Aranguren, 2007)

Regarding management, we are focusing beyond the idea of management to a relational management which also includes criteria such as accountability, human capital and governance (Vernis et al, 2004), paying a close attention to the analysis of the implementing of quality systems in the SATS (Aliena, 2007) to the point that there are more and more associations and foundations that are professionalizing their management systems and certifying themselves in quality systems (De Asis et al, 2007)

Lastly, regarding the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the Third Sector, although we have already mentioned some of the experiences applied to the processes in the search for volunteers, distance training, or free on-line advice, or of programs such as RED CONECTA or the Virtual Forum of NGOs fostered by the Esplai Foundation, new studies are focused on the diffusion, positioning, and attitudes in the associative sector regarding ICT (Cabrera, dir. 2005). This research shows that although NGOs are "losing the fear" of ICT and have picked up a good speed in their computerization processes there still are training and know-how problems and an underuse of ICT in the non-for-profit social action entities (Bip bip Foundation, 2005).

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5. CHALLENGES AND TENDENCIES FOR CHANGE IN THE THIRD SECTOR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SOCIAL THIRD SECTOR

We find the challenges and tendencies of change to be particularly interesting (Alvarez, Martin and Martinez, 1998; Rodriguez Cabrero, 2003) associated to factors such as the appearance of markets in the social action spaces, administrative decentralization and the selective universalization of certain social services in the Welfare State, as well as the methodology and information on the Third Sector.

In the first place, and in a general sense, the SATS will have to **consolidate the process of institutionalization** started a few decades ago, strengthening their image and social recognition, differentiating their activities and added value with regards to the creation a social fabric, civic participation and defense of social rights, and also, managing to be one common voice in the public sector and in the whole of civil society.

With regards to the **market role** in the spaces of social action which are likely to be more profitable, volunteer entities will have to take on the challenge of competing while sticking to their functions of social and civic development avoiding risks and conflicts with their non-for-profit organizational culture stemming from the introduction of an institutional logic coming from the market. (Lopez Rey, 2007). A part of the answer seems to be the growing diversification of action fields in some NGOs, especially towards combined spaces with the social, as in the socio-health, socio-educational or sociolabor fields.

Regarding the **growing political-administrative decentralization of the Welfare State**, it may lead to a certain organizational dismemberation in SATS and a shift in networking towards the local field to the point where their territorial scope of action and negotiation is becoming more limited. In this way, the effort made in the SATS entities, organizing themselves into federations and confederations with the aim of taking advantage synergies and scale economies that allow them to increase their scope of actions and their capacity for obtaining public resources, must be reconsidered from a more local viewpoint, ushering in new strategic alliances which may be reversible between local and autonomous NGOs with the aim of achieving a desirable balance between decentralization and inter-territorial solidarity.

Regarding **the selective universalization of social services** such as those associated to attention to long-term care it , may mean, on one hand, an incentive so that the SATS as a whole pressures in favor of a universalization of social services as a whole. On the contrary, it could also bring about a certain fragmentation of the SATS to the point where a very powerful part of it has already seen its main demands to be met, since we cannot ignore the underlying risk that the senior citizen organizations turn their focus to the following of a universalization of this contingency in detriment of a more general aim, which is the extensive universalization of all social services, the true fourth pillar of the Welfare State.

Finally, no less important are the challenges in the **design of methodologies and consolidated sources of information** which are of reference for the analysis of the SATS. The flow of research which we have referred to has been extensive and, as previously mentioned, has contributed to the general awareness of the SATS and a greater social rationality in its indirect actions. But we cannot forget that the different methodological approaches, with very important partial coincidences, have not managed to achieve a basic consensus around certain sector key issues as are the ones regarding their world, typologies, and even regarding their social functions. A certain degree of convergence on these quantitative aspects is essential and this does not forsake different qualitative approaches and interpretations of the institutional processes in which the SATS activity takes place.

In short, the consolidation of the institutionalization of SATS, the consolidation of the co-operation relationships with the State, mainly, and, the market on the basis of their autonomy, the adapting to the decentralization of the State without losing the global perspective of the whole of Spanish civil society, their contribution to the universalization of social services from the grounds of a weakening secular assistance tradition and the achievement of a research consensus regarding the universe and types of social organizations, are the challenges the SATS in Spain must rise to.

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