

Civil Society and GMO Policy in Eastern Europe

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Diploma thesis written at:

Freie Universität  Berlin

With the support of:

DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
German Academic Exchange Service

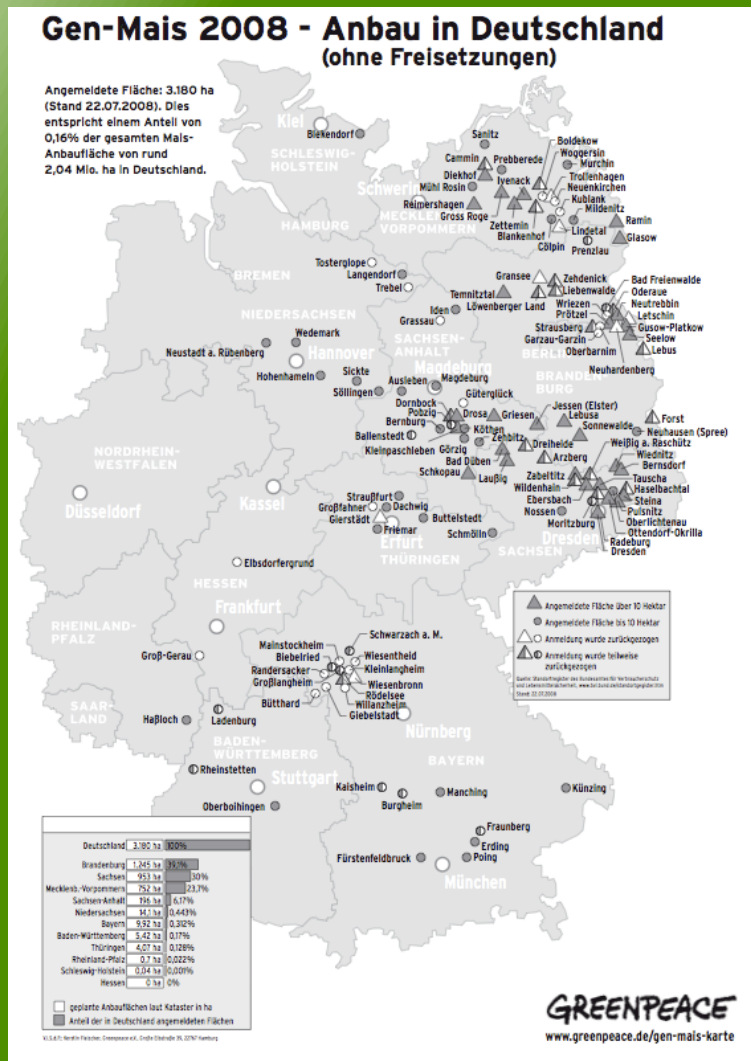


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Structure

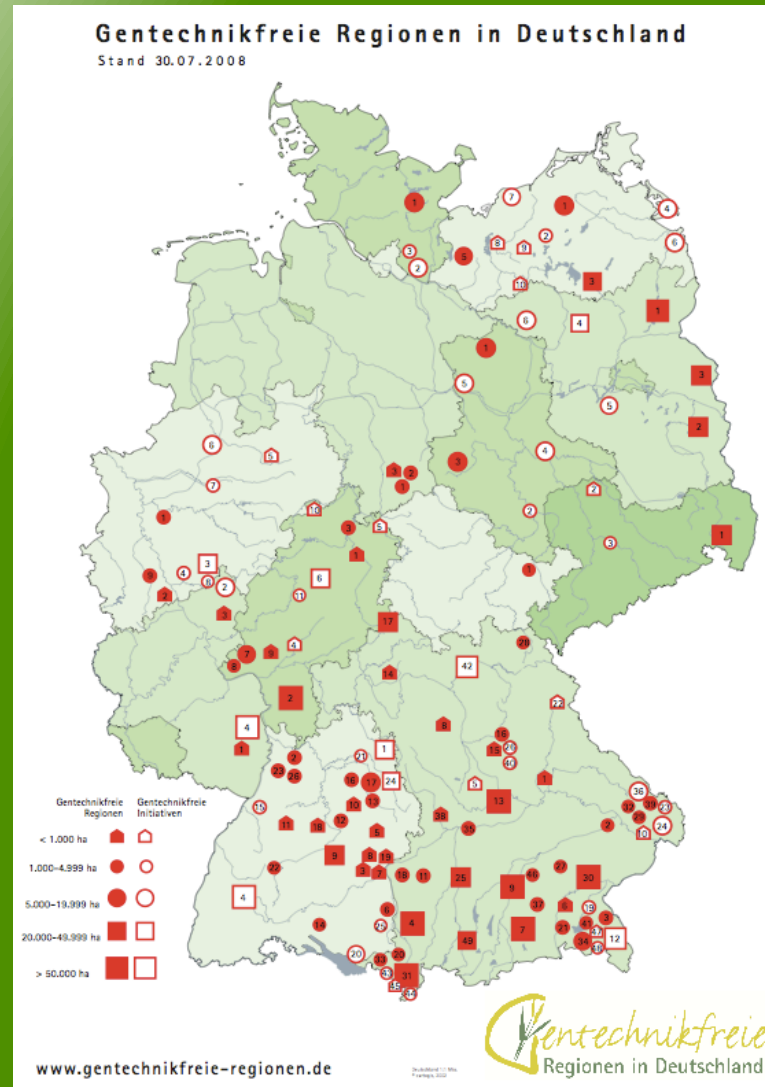
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Commercial Growing of GM Maize MON 810 in Germany (2008)



- 3 200 ha
- nearly all spots can be found in the North-East, the former GDR-area
- especially towards the Polish and Czech border

GMO Free Regions in Germany (2008)



- 186 GMO Free Regions
- Acreage: 1 112 000 ha
- 30 000 farmers
- disproportional allotment towards the South-West
- only 13 per cent of the GMO free Regions situated in the ex-GDR

GMOs moving East?

„With our field trials we move to Poland, because we do not have to fear destruction of our test sites there.“

Hans-Jörg Jacobsen 2006

Romania is a „dumping ground for genetically engineered crops.“

Iza Kruszewska 2003

Eastern Europe is becoming „a playground for GM food and agriculture“

Iza Kruszewska 2001

Central Assumption

- Strength and activity of the respective civil societies in the accession countries to the European Union 2004 and 2007 have an influence on the GMO policies
- Differences in the GMO policy can be (partly) explained by differences in the structure and activity of civil society
- A lack of a critical public – to become manifest in weak civil society structures and activities – would lead to less restrictive GMO policies and/or less restrictive implementation

Civil Society – A Definition

- Civil society is an arena or sphere within society, distinct from the state, the economy and the private space.

Heinrich 2005

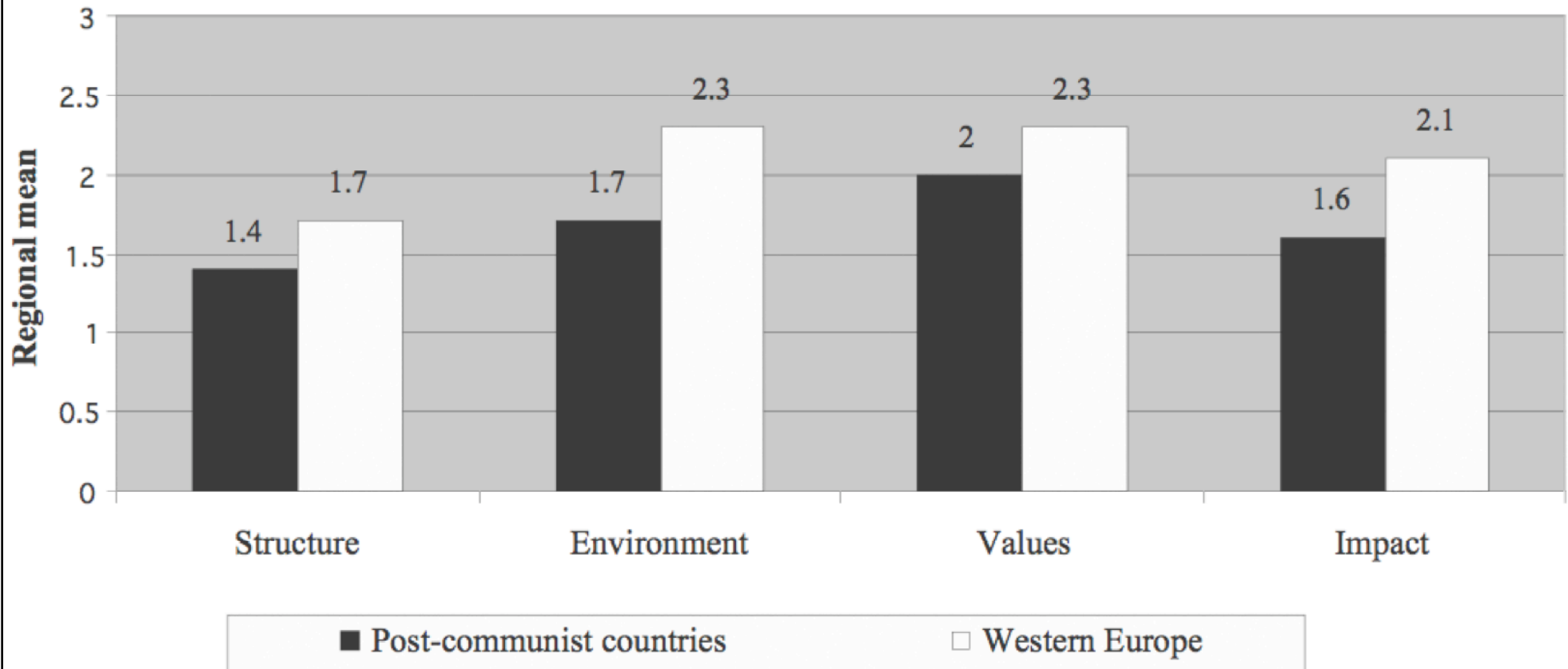
- The room „where persons become familiar and interested in public issues and where rules tend to affect the articulation of interests from society“ „It is made up of associational life that reflects the extent to which citizens share their personal grievances and demands with others. It is the arena where the private becomes public, the social becomes political [...], where values are formed and expressed [and] interests are articulated in public. It is the first station in a political input-output scenario.“

Hyden et al. 2004

Methodology

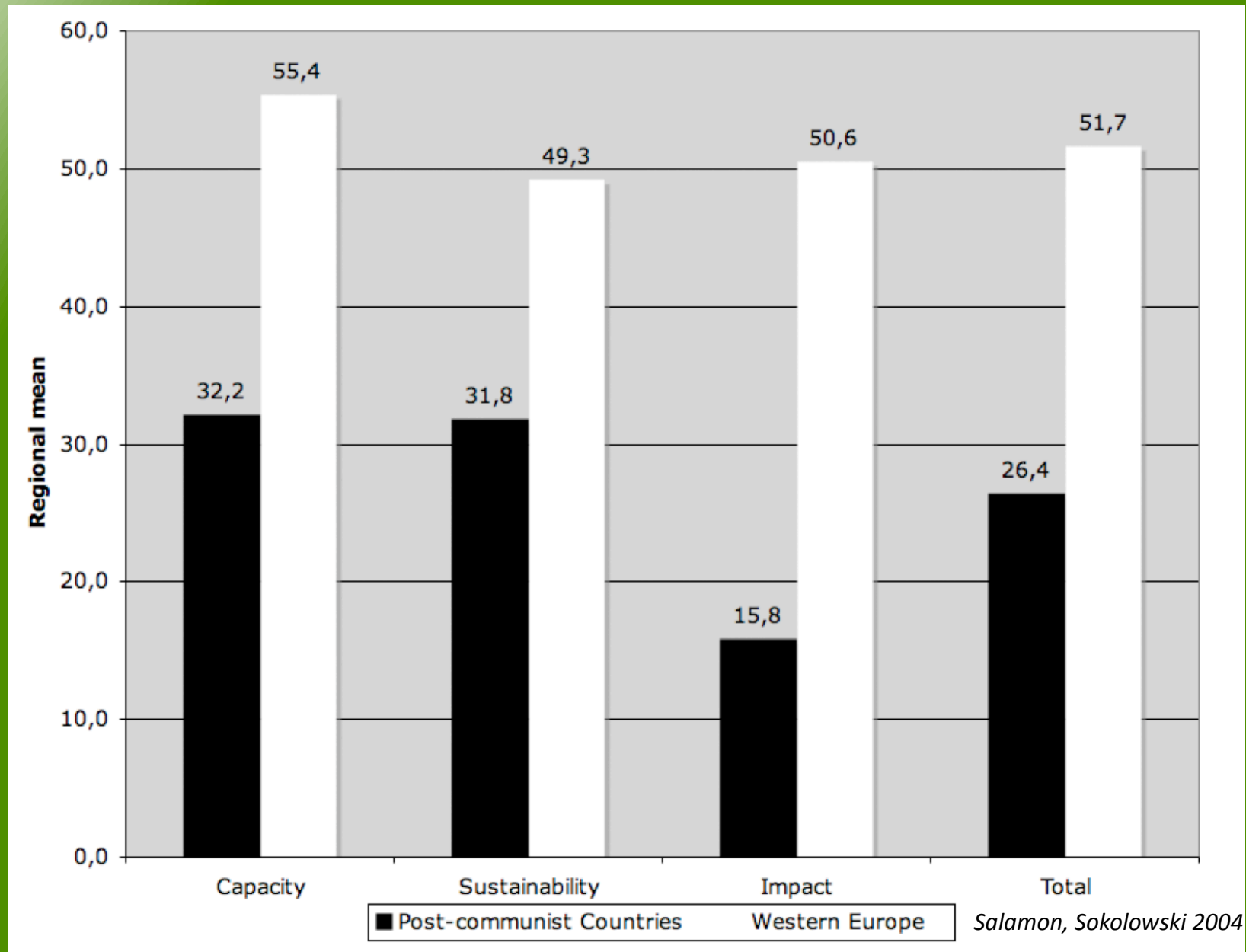
- Main unit: Post-communist EU accession countries in Eastern- and South-Eastern Europe (2004 and 2007)
- Sample: Romania, Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary
- Tools: Civicus Civil Society Index, Hopkins Global Civil Society Index
- Interviews: staff from at least two NGOs active in the GMO field per country, government staff in charge of GMO regulations (MoE; MoA)

Dimensions of civil society. Western and Eastern Europe compared (CSI)



Fioramonti, Heinrich 2007

Dimensions of civil society. Western and Eastern Europe compared (HGCSI)



Romania

- country has an open policy towards GMOs
- until 2006 Europe's biggest commercial grower of GM crop (soy)
- GMO laws and regulations rather lax, serious enforcement problems
- limited civil society activity (small number of actors, structural weaknesses, no mass mobilisation)

Romania – GMO Soy Acreage

| Year | Total Acreage (ha) | GMO Acreage (ha) | Share (%) |
|------|--------------------|------------------|-----------|
| 1999 | 99 800 | 15 000 | 15.0 |
| 2000 | 117 000 | 36 000 | 30.8 |
| 2001 | 44 800 | 18 000 | 40.2 |
| 2002 | 69 793 | 35 000 | 50.1 |
| 2003 | 122 224 | 36 000 | 29.5 |
| 2004 | 112 243 | 100 000 | 89.1 |
| 2005 | 130 752 | 86 700 | 66.3 |
| 2006 | 177 481 | 136 000 | 76.6 |
| 2007 | 113 748 | 0 (officially) | 0.0 |

Czech Republic

- together with Romania one of the staunchest advocates of GMOs in the EU
- commercial growing of MON 810 since 2005
- regulations in place, participation of civil society actors have been systematically cut down
- civil society actors mainly failed to take up the issue of GMOs and left the public discourse to a pro-biotech lobby organisation

Czech Republic – MON 810 Acreage

| Year | Total Acreage (ha) | GMO Acreage (ha) | Share (%) |
|------|--------------------|------------------|-----------|
| 2004 | 89 921 | 0 | 0.0 |
| 2005 | 98 044 | 270 | 0.3 |
| 2006 | 89 798 | 1 290 | 1.4 |
| 2007 | 93 065 | 6 000 | 6.5 |

Poland

- Successes of Polish civil society actors campaigning against GMOs:
 - Poland as a GMO Free Zone (started 2004)
 - Government ban on all 17 GMO maize varieties (2005)
 - Ban on GMO imports (2008, delayed)
- Threat: court action through the European Court of Justice by the EU commission

Hungary

- strict policy approach towards GMOs
- double net to guarantee a GMO free Hungary:
 - Safeguard clause invoked (MON 810)
 - Co-existence regulations would make a commercial growing nearly impossible
- Civil society actors have briefed the government with expertise since the 1990s
- Co-operation between the government and civil society in the field is institutionalised

What makes civil societies successful?

- surrounding conditions for successful policy interventions of civil society actors (RAPID model)
 - external influences (international factors, donor strategies, economic conditions, cultural influences)
 - political context (institutional settings, policy windows,...)
 - links (between policy makers and other stakeholders)
 - evidence (the quality and relevance of the message transported)

Pollard, Court 2005

Thank you!

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