

Civil society has emerged as a challenging concept in political development theories. As researches claim, economic restructuring has undermined the political hegemony of authoritarian regimes and set up a scene for different autonomous associations.

The selection of the two countries (Mexico and Belarus) was conditioned by the fact that they both are representatives of “third wave” democracies and have striking similarities in the post-authoritarian development, assuming there is a undeniable possibility to learn the lesson from the differences as well.

From the viewpoint of the citizen, civil society is first and foremost a channel for protecting and promoting personal values and interests. In the authoritarian regime, however, civic freedoms rarely exist and there are limited possibilities for an independent society to function. The main goal of the civil society in the country, which is undergoing the democratic transition, should be to promote change and create all the conditions for the proper functioning of open and public civic movements, which will eventually reflect the views of the citizens through governmental actions. Another important sphere in the democracy building is free media – it helps encouraging citizenry by giving different sides of the event to people, but is often commercial, as well as political parties, which will further represent the ideas of its voters and have a say in policy-making.

The external actors, which can provide the countries with political guidelines and financial support play essential role as well.