What is mixed in welfare mix? Welfare ideologies at stake in the Lithuanian case of social service delivery

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What is mixed in welfare mix? Welfare ideologies at stake in the Lithuanian case of social service delivery

Ką apima mišrus socialinės gerovės modelis? Gerovės ideologijų sandūra Lietuvoje teikiant socialines paslaugas

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The article deals with the development of social welfare and social services in Lithuania by describing cultural contexts and disclosing evaluations of social service providers and recipients and needs of social service delivery. The authors of the article discuss the changing role of the state, pose a question as to what the institutions and the actors are and to what extent should they participate in the creation of social welfare. One of the aims of this paper is to describe the development of the welfare mix in Lithuania, by showing that welfare is inevitably woven into the historical, economic, political and social context; the distinctive cultural configuration of the welfare mix in social services delivery in Lithuania is revealed. Empirical research (survey of social services recipients and providers) presented in the article discloses that actors of social services delivery experience tension and ambiguity between the demand of neoliberal policy to choose and be responsible and the expectation that the state will participate in the social service market. At the same time social services recipients and providers express a need for different actors to take an active part in the welfare system.

Keywords: Lithuania; welfare state; welfare regimes; welfare mix; social service

Raktažodžiai: Lietuva; gerovės valstybė; gerovės režimai; mišrusis gerovės modelis; socialinės paslaugas

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Introduction

A discussion on welfare states has been one of the most relevant debates in the past decades. When disputing over welfare models, welfare state and welfare systems, a question is posed as to what institutions and actors are involved and to what extent should they participate in the creation of social welfare. A role of a state as the most important institution providing welfare is questioned as well as the very concept of a welfare state. It is accepted that with the changing role of a state, with respect to the challenges of the modern global world and economic restructuring, the role of other actors and institutions should increase—the contribution of the voluntary or non-profit sector and the role of the private sector have to grow when providing welfare services. These changes are reflected in a concept of the ‘mixed economy of welfare’ that has recently emerged in the scientific discussion instead of the term ‘a welfare state’.

As Gonzales (2008) maintains, over the course of the twentieth century three approaches to welfare reform could be distinguished—political economy, moral economy and mixed economy approaches. In the Political Economy Approach, welfare state is a key unit and concept of analysis. Authors (Peckham & Meeabeau, 2007) focusing on the development of social policy say that the welfare state concept has become an object of the social policy discipline that was born during a period of expansion of the welfare state. Nevertheless, social policy has been changing lately: there has been increasing recognition of the role of other actors who contribute in important ways to individual welfare. The approach of political economy covers major typologies and classifications of a welfare state. It has to be admitted though that the role of the state is defined subject to different ideological positions, actually reflected in the Richard Titmuss’ (1968) typology of residual and institutional-redistributive welfare models. The Esping-Andersen (1990) typology of ‘welfare regimes’ (liberal, conservative and social democratic) also reflects ideological differences, as well as the state contributing to welfare in different countries and regions. These and similar classifications are criticised for significant generalisation as it would be unrealistic to expect any given country to fit exactly within such typologies (Peckham & Meeabeau, 2007). Classification and typologies became an object of criticism as an expression of ethnocentric construction and Western bias (Walker & Wong, 2004). According to these authors, this classification of welfare regimes has been formulated with reference to a small number of Western countries of advanced capitalism, which are considered as capitalist-democratic projects. Meanwhile, other countries of other types of economic, political and welfare systems have been excluded from this typology of welfare states. This typology does not include at that time non-democratic and non-capitalist countries of Central and Eastern Europe or China. Still, as Walker and Wong (2004) maintain, collapse of the former state socialist regimes of the Central and Eastern European Bloc and peaceful transformation from centrally planned economy to market socialism in China could be considered as important events with implications for new understanding of social policy. With the changing world, a need emerges to reconsider welfare systems in the regions and in countries that did not fall under the indicated classifications and did not correspond to the distinguished ideal types of welfare system. Thus a welfare state concept is too generalising and quite ethnocentric without consideration of a possible variety of this phenomenon and local peculiarities.

Therefore, the presented typologies require critical review. A welfare state is the ideal type in Max Weber’s sense; it is a conceptual tool, the abstraction comprising the essential features and attributes of a phenomenon and naming a fixed list of features that
are characteristic of a certain case group. Real empirical cases deviate from the ideal type as a universal and generalised abstract idea. So it is necessary to analyse real empirical cases, their uniqueness and peculiarities, in order to improve the construction of the ideal type. In this respect, variety and deviations from the ideal type are observed among countries initially considered to be corresponding to a certain typology. However, new political and economic processes are distinguished—the inclusion of new welfare regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in the Asian region, into analysis presumes re-conceptualisation, i.e. reformulation of the ideal types themselves. The criticism of the welfare model and regime typologies expressed over the past two decades, as well as newly acknowledged socio-economic processes, actualise a need to further verify and question the existing typologies and models and look for new generalisations and theoretical frameworks when researching national welfare arrangements in specific regions. It is advisable to invoke greater historical awareness and sensitivity towards cross-national similarities and differences and immerse into contextually rich case studies (Clasen, 1999). New types could be offered as a search for new ideal types including groups of countries and regions, e.g. Southern Europe—Latin-rim or Mediterranean model (Ferrera, 1996; Leibfried, 1992), Central and Eastern Europe—post-communist corporativist type (Deacon, 1993) and post-socialist regime type (Aidukaitė, 2004). At the same time, the welfare state idea reflected not only the ideal type in the Weber sense but also the ideal type as a moral and civic ideal that the concept of Weber ideal type does not include. Welfare state was the optimistic utopian welfare ideal developed for a certain period of time after Second World War in certain countries of Western Europe. This concept of welfare state is substituted by the notion of post-modern welfare state (Ferge, 1997) where the variety of welfare is of significance, as well as non-European experiences, e.g. North America, Central and Eastern European welfare regimes, Confucian policies of Asia Pacific and Latin America. Another theoretical approach on welfare, distinguished by Gonzales (2008), is the Moral Economy Approach where a concept of welfare society appears instead of welfare state. Representatives of this approach criticise the excessively strong role of a state and suggest reinforcing civil processes in society, as well as social solidarity and reciprocity, democracy, participation and social obligation.

One more viewpoint that is of significance in the understanding of welfare is the Mixed Economy of Welfare. This approach has contributed to the understanding of social welfare systems by identifying a third sector. As Evers and Laville (2004) maintain, the specificity of the third sector is interpreted as being a hybridisation of different economic principles: a hybridisation between the three poles of the economy (market, non-market and non-monetary economy). In addition to market-based features, mixed economy of welfare allows a strong and active civil society with the ability to create a ‘public sphere’ made up by citizens with the rights to speak out and associate freely with a diversity of service providers. As Gonzales (2008) points out, the state, understood more broadly as the public sector, is recognised as playing a vital role in the creation of social markets—quasi-markets for social goods and services which separate purchasers, usually government agencies, from providers. The concept of the welfare mix emphasises decentralisation, institutional plurality and shared responsibility for welfare. According to this viewpoint an attempt is made to give more responsibility and autonomy to the local organisations and service providers.

Similar to the process of a welfare state concept analysis, there emerges a necessity to avoid excessive generalisation and ethnocentric attitudes and attempt to discern specific
national, regional and local conditions for the implementation of this welfare system. It is equally important in the welfare mix model to disclose diversity and possible variations. Authors who have their input in the welfare mix conceptualisation (Evers, 2005; Evers & Laville, 2004) say that the third sector varies from country to country. Literature on welfare mix demonstrates increasing efforts to define the diversity of local welfare provision and peculiar social and cultural welfare mix contexts in individual countries and regions, as well as an attempt to compare cultural conditions. New studies and research on variation and the changing mix of state and non-state provision emerge in European countries—the UK, Germany, France, Italy and Norway (Ascoli & Ranci, 2002). A separate research group could be distinguished on the investigation of welfare mix in Southern Europe (Ferreira, 2010; Guillen & Petmesidou, 2011). Consideration of welfare mix in Asia and its comparison with European countries is given increasing attention (Carrillo & Duckett, 2011; Wong, 1991). Research on welfare mix in post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Bošnjak & Stubbs, 2007; Potucek, 2007) is carried out.

There is a newly emerging paradigm, according to Gonzales (2008)—the Social Economy Approach. It attempts to join all the above approaches, dealing with macro processes (political economy and moral economy approaches) and, at the same time, it supports the mixed economy approach and stresses the role of the third sector, i.e. it focuses on processes at macro- and mezzo-levels. Joining of the mentioned approaches allows us to understand processes and to combine forces at the macro-structural level and at the institutional, as well as at micro-levels, levels of daily interaction.

The article deals with the development of social services, as well as their state in Lithuania when describing cultural contexts and disclosing evaluations of the current situation of social service and expectations, also the need for the development of social service delivery and specifying the roles of different actors. We assume that national systems of social welfare and social service are determined by historical, political and social factors. Ideal models gain different variations in concrete empirical contexts; moreover, the empirical analysis of concrete historical social configurations allows the transformation of known models into new models and theoretical schemes based on peculiar, culturally defined experience. The aim of the article is to discuss welfare ideologies at stake in Lithuania by disclosing providers’ and recipients’ attitude towards the roles and responsibilities of different welfare actors in social service delivery. Our assumption is that Lithuania presents a unique case of social service delivery in the so-called post-communist welfare state characterised by the interplay of different welfare ideologies and specific historical cultural configurations.

Development of social services in Lithuania

In the last century when political systems underwent fundamental changes, the economic and social welfare system in Lithuania would often find itself in the restart position, as well as state institutions and communities that had to adapt and reorganise to be able to function in the new conditions. Having regained independence in 1990, Lithuania started to create a new system of social security. The formation of social security took place in two directions. First, the state tried to recreate institutional and organisational social security systems that had functioned before the 1940 soviet occupation. Second, there were attempts to use institutional and organisational examples of social security systems
from Western countries. On the other hand, a soviet system of social provision was inherited (Aidukaitė, Bogdanova, & Guogis, 2012).

The Soviet Union welfare system can best be thought of as a form of authoritarian welfare state, based on compulsory employment with a huge redistributive mechanism (Aidukaitė, 2010). Sidorina (Сидорина, 2010) when discussing the soviet system and possible implications for social policy, defined it as paternalistic with certain characteristics of étatism demonstrated in planned economy, strict regulation of production and resource distribution. In the social sphere, paternalism demonstrated itself in the nationalising of the social sphere, direct intrusion of the state into the sphere of social services and exclusion of other potential actors able to solve social problems. Egalitarianism, another principle of the soviet paternalistic model, gives priority to equality when using material resources and services, general access to services in the spheres of education, health care, social provision and labour market. Sidorina (Сидорина, 2010) maintains that at the end of 1980 other socialist countries formally conformed to the features of the socialist democratic model described by Esping-Andersen: state-encouraged employment, obligatory insurance, redistribution of resources through taxes and other.

The formation of social policy in the post-communist countries, and the reform of social services in considering the attempt to overcome paternalism and étatism, leads to new principles being developed in order to reduce the role of the state. The authors analysing the post-communist states’ social service reform welfare mix (Bošnjak & Stubbs, 2007) and focusing on the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, state there is a transition in progress to a new welfare mix according to the principles described as the ‘3Ds’ of reform, namely, deinstitutionalisation (the move away from long-term care in residential institutions towards community-based services); diversification (the promotion of a renewed welfare mix of state and non-state providers including non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector); and decentralisation (the transfer of rights, duties and responsibilities to local populations). As Bošnjak and Stubbs (2007) say, the ‘diversification’ of service provision is connected with ‘deétatisation’, empowerment of service users and the mobilisation of their families, communities, civil society and the private sector, which is also treated as the subsidiary principle.

The present Lithuanian social security system is comprised of social insurance and social assistance. After regaining independence in 1990, there were attempts to adapt the soviet social insurance system to the market-based economy. In the system of social security, the greatest role is assigned to social insurance based on work income and participation in the labour market. The system of social assistance comprised of benefits and social services is given a smaller role. The social assistance system is carried out with the help of the state, municipalities and non-governmental institutions. Institutions that are municipality subordinates and NGOs are the main service providers in Lithuania. Private service providers are just beginning to enter the social service market.

Historical and political conditions determine that social services do not cover an influential part in the social security system. Poor and uneven financing of NGOs leaves the delivered social services in uncertainty. The reconstruction of the major institutions inherited from the Soviet Union is a slow process, and services in these institutions are given a significant share of financing thus leaving present and potential new actors (community-based services) behind. It is related to étatism coming from the Soviet times when major institutions and not services were financed (Žalimienė & Lazutka, 2009). Since 2006 the situation has been changing with the introduction of service delivery
financing as opposed to that of the institution. The state and municipalities decide what services have to be financed and how; the recipient’s participation in decision-making is minimal.

Services of day centres, community centres and small domiciliaries for different client groups were established with support of the European Social Fund. Though the role of municipalities is the most significant in social service delivery, NGOs are of importance when creating new services. Taking into consideration demographic, political and economic conditions and poor coverage of social services, new actors of the mixed welfare system are emerging in the social service market. Service recipients, their families, communities, NGOs, municipalities and state institutions participating in this system are moving towards deinstitutionalisation, diversification and decentralisation with a different input.

**Research methods and sample**

A structured questionnaire for a written survey was created. The two scales were construed. The first scale was aimed at disclosing the attitude of social service providers and recipients towards the implementation of the principles of the main opposing ideologies of welfare—social democratic and liberal—in social service delivery (Table 1). The scale was built using the semantic differential technique enclosing nine polar-semantic items opposing social democratic and liberal welfare ideologies. Statements presented in one semantic group (left side) reflect a significant role of the state in the delivery of social services attributed to social democratic welfare ideology. Statements in the other semantic group (right side) respectively reflect a significant role of individuals and communities in the delivery of social services attributed to neoliberal welfare ideology. Using the three-rank scales, respondents evaluated the current situation of the social service delivery in Lithuania and expressed their expectations for the social service delivery.

The second scale was aimed at evaluating the attitude of social service providers and recipients towards the roles of different actors in the delivery of social services. Six social service actors were enumerated in the scale in relation with the nine enumerated functions of social service delivery (Figure 1). The three-rank scale was presented to respondents to evaluate which actor performs enumerated functions (evaluation of current situation) and which actor should perform it (expectations) in the social service delivery. The difference between the evaluation of the current situation and expectations was calculated and consequently treated as the index of need for the development of social service delivery, specifying the roles of different actors.

In both questionnaires the significance of difference between the evaluation of current situation and the expectations was estimated using the Wilcoxon signed–rank test. The significance of difference between recipients and providers was estimated using the Mann–Whitney U test.

The survey using the random sampling method was carried out across all Lithuania. Sampling covers social service recipients and providers according to age, disability, risk group, family and the place of service delivery. In total, 567 respondents (303 service providers and 264 recipients) participated in the survey.
Table 1. The attitude of social service providers and recipients towards the statements of social democratic and liberal ideologies of welfare in service delivery: the evaluation of the current situation and the expectations (%; Wilcoxon signed–rank test; \( n = 567 \)).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements of the social democratic welfare ideology</th>
<th>Or</th>
<th>Statements of the liberal welfare ideology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A state municipality allocates services to a recipient according to the state-determined priorities</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>A service recipient can choose the services and decide what services to get using voucher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current: 36 33 31</td>
<td>Expected: 29 19 52</td>
<td>Sig. = 0.01, ( z = -6.642 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The nature of social services is determined by people’s needs</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>The nature of social services is determined by providers’ opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current: 43 26 31</td>
<td>Expected: 57 16 27</td>
<td>Sig. = 0.01, ( z = -4.731 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A state/municipality finances services for everyone according to the recipient’s needs</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>A state/municipality finances services for only the most vulnerable groups of recipients according to the assessed needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current: 26 29 45</td>
<td>Expected: 43 16 41</td>
<td>Sig. = 0.01, ( z = -4.426 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social services are delivered according to equal rules and principles</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Social services are delivered considering individual needs and aims of the recipient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current: 29 29 42</td>
<td>Expected: 26 18 56</td>
<td>Sig. = 0.01, ( z = -4.297 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social services foster personal dignity and independence</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Social services satisfy the most urgent (survival) needs of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current: 35 34 31</td>
<td>Expected: 35 23 42</td>
<td>Sig. = 0.01, ( z = -2.779 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services are delivered as long as there is a recipient’s demand for that service</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Services are delivered as long as a service provider has opportunities to provide them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current: 57 24 24</td>
<td>Expected: 58 17 25</td>
<td>Sig. = 0.04, ( z = -6.6642 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipients now receive equal services irrespective of their income and financial situation</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Recipients get different services subject to income and financial situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current: 49 24 27</td>
<td>Expected: 42 18 40</td>
<td>Sig. = 0.02, ( z = -2.415 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State institutions are responsible for the supply of social services</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Individuals and the community are responsible for the supply of social services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current: 40 32 28</td>
<td>Expected: 44 30 26</td>
<td>Sig. = 0.15, ( z = -1.418 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic and organised help of highly qualified and sophisticated specialists is encouraged</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Self-support groups of people with similar destiny, as well as community activity, are encouraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current: 27 37 36</td>
<td>Expected: 44 30 26</td>
<td>Sig. = 0.01, ( z = -4.889 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

Data (see Table 1) demonstrate the ambiguity of attitudes of social service providers and recipients towards alternative social welfare ideologies. In fact, particular local and empirical social welfare representation is disclosed when some statements, even contradictory, of both opposing ideologies are underlined and other statements are dismissed.

There are some statements where respondents verge towards liberal ideology in welfare delivery. Respondents—both social service providers and receivers—have an expectation of a lesser degree of the state/municipality role allocating services according to the state-determined priorities. More individualisation of social service is expected both by service providers and receivers. Moreover, the recipients, more than providers, expect to have a right to choose services and decide what services to get using voucher preference to increase the freedom of the individual choice and to enhance their participation in the system of social service. A lesser state role, also, according to Ferge (1997, p. 22), freedom of decision-making and individual responsibility are key values in liberal thinking. Such recipients’ attitudes can be considered as aspirations for liberal social welfare system. The respondents’ attitudes verge towards liberal social welfare ideology when they proclaim that social services in the present situation in Lithuania are delivered in consideration of the needs and aims of an individual recipient and not according to equal rules and principles, so more individualisation of social services is
expected. It corresponds with Ferge’s (1997) ideas on the modern and post-modern welfare state which comply with these features of a new post-modern paradigm: individual responsibility for social reproduction, thriving inequalities in the name of individual freedom of choice (p. 22).

On the other hand, the respondents expect more social democratic and social welfare regimes when claiming that client needs should determine the nature of social services and not the opportunities of providers. According to more than half of the respondents (58%), there is an expectation that services should be delivered as long as there is a demand for those services. Fewer respondents (25%) agreed with the statement that services should be delivered as long as the service provider has opportunities to provide them. These results show respondents’ preference of social democratic ideology. Also, recipients have a stronger inclination towards this belief than providers. According to more than one-third of the respondents (36%) in the current situation, self-support groups, as well as community activity, are encouraged. More than one quarter of the respondents (27%) agreed with the statement that systemic and organised help of highly qualified and sophisticated specialists is encouraged. While almost half of the respondents (44%) expect that more systemic and organised help should be provided, only one quarter of respondents (26%) agrees with the statement that self-support groups of people with a similar destiny, etc., should be encouraged.

Ferge (1997) notes that in the post-modern state, the role of the state in service delivery is minimized, while family and NGO sectors are encouraged and the market and quasi-market is dominant. The new actors—NGO and private providers—appear (see also Evers & Laville, 2004; Gonzales, 2008). Data demonstrate that respondents verging more towards social democratic ideology than state institutions see them as having main responsibility for the supply of social services and even expect it. According to less than a half of respondents (40%), the responsibility for the supply of social services in the current situation is attributed to the state institutions and the same role of the state is expected, while the statement that an individual and the community are responsible for the supply of social services was supported by more than one quarter of the respondents (28%) in the current situation and even less expected for the future. That means that the principle of subsidiary is not considered as a matter significant enough for majority of respondents. On the one hand, it implies that the individual and communities are barely envisaged as responsible for the supply of social services. In Lithuania, public services are dominant in regard to non-profit and profit providers of social care services which are underdeveloped. On the other hand, the network of public services is negligible and family and informal caregivers are the main providers of social care for older people, people with disability and other groups of people. It corresponds with Ferge’s description of a modern state paradigm when the state tries to keep the major role in service delivery while the market is marginalised. The role of family prevails quite significantly. Some authors name it refamilisation as a result of the process of deinstitutionalisation during last 20 years in Lithuania.

There are some statements where respondents verge towards both social democratic and liberal ideologies. More than one-third of the respondents (35%) agree that at the current situation, social services foster personal dignity and independence and less than one-third of the respondents (31%) agree that social services satisfy the most urgent needs of people. But when expressing their expectations, almost half of the respondents (42%) supported the statement that social services should satisfy the most urgent needs of people, while expectations regarding dignity and independence in social services are the
same as evaluations of the current situation. The data demonstrate that in the country where the supply of social services is poor, people are more for the necessity of social services than for personal dignity and independence. Human rights and human dignity are significant ideas for both ideologies—either for social democrats or for liberals. According to Ferge (1997), the right to dignity is the foundation of modern citizenship. This idea resounds with social democratic ideology, which stresses the maximalist scope of implementation of dignity and the universality of welfare provision. It is noteworthy that, in countries with dominant liberal ideology, social services are residual and ensure a dignified minimum of welfare delivery, while in post-modern neoliberalism ideology, human dignity is neglected by the acceptance of natural begging, homelessness, garbage collection, etc. According to almost half of the respondents (49%), in the current situation services are delivered irrespective of the recipient’s financial situation. A similar statement is expected later on. Nonetheless, almost half of respondents (40%) expect that more recipients would receive different services depending on their income and financial situation. While evaluating the current situation, only 27% of respondents observe this practice in social services delivery. It shows a lower level of de-commodification and inclination to liberal ideology statement on the recipient’s copayment of services. Considering that residual services—the attribute of neoliberal welfare ideology—dominate in Lithuania, the network of social services is being developed depending on the recipients’ financial situation. However, it has to be noted that with the appearance of recipients paying and not paying for the services, the not-paying ones are in danger of being driven out of the service market. Naujanienė (2007) has revealed this process in the field of gerontological social work in the Lithuanian context.

According to almost half of the respondents (45%), in the current situation in Lithuania, the state/municipality is financing only the most vulnerable groups of recipients according to their assessed needs. Still there is an expectation of service recipients that services should be financed for all recipients according to their needs. However, service providers have more liberal expectations that the state/municipality has to support only the most vulnerable society groups, that would point to some lack of solidarity between service recipients and providers. While only about a quarter of respondents (26%) agree that in the current situation a state/municipality finances services for everyone according to the recipient’s needs, but almost half of respondents (43%) agreed that they expect it. This demonstrates a tendency towards a social democratic attitude among recipients with the expectation that the state has to take main responsibility for financing social services according to the needs of people, so assuring universal accessibility to all citizens. Rauch, while discussing the Scandinavian welfare model, states that social services are considered as universal in regard to universal accessibility to all citizens; ‘selective services, which can only be accessed by a limited user group’ are considered as opposite to universal services (2007, p. 251).

The overall attitude of service recipients and providers shows that the current social service situation is rather liberal with the encouragement of self-support and residual approach to service delivery, but even more freedom is expected when choosing services according to the individual needs and financial situation of the recipients. At the same time, significant state regulation is expected in the field of social services with responsibility for service supply and payment ensuring a system of social services with highly qualified specialists. Data show the Lithuanian social service providers and recipients explicitly join liberal and social democratic welfare ideologies, aggregating
the individualisation of social services and the state’s supply of the social service system.

The analysis (Figure 1) of the need for social services development (difference between the evaluation of the current situation and the expectations) specifying roles of different actors demonstrates the same respondents’ attitudes to joint liberal and social democratic ideologies, attributing some roles of social service delivery to the state (municipalities included) and other roles—to recipients, as well as to their families, communities, NGOs and private providers. Respondents point to the need that the service recipient would play a significant role among other actors in social service delivery, when making decisions about service variety, inclusion in the service strategy formation, service provision, deciding on service extension, deciding how to and who is paying for services, etc. However, it is important to note that the need for recipients’ participation in payment for services and delivery is rather small. This difference between the evaluation of the current situation and the expectations for recipients to pay for services could be interpreted as recipients’ unwillingness or incapability to pay for services more than they pay today. On the contrary, the need for private business participation in social service delivery is unexpectedly high. This tendency could be explained by referring to a small role of private business in welfare delivery today and a high expectation for further development. The participation of the recipient’s family in social service delivery is considered as an important factor for future development in all functions of social service delivery. Municipality is the main provider of welfare delivery today. Looking at the need for development expressed by respondents, municipality role in future is seen as quite important in payment for services, decision-making about service variety and strategy formation. In addition, respondents point to the need for relatively high levels of community and NGO roles in social service delivery, formation of the service strategy and deciding about service variety. Looking at the need for development expressed by respondents, the state’s role in future is seen as quite important in payment for services and still important in delivery of services.

Data show a slightly different need of service providers and recipients regarding the role of social service actors. Service recipients prioritise the role of communities and NGOs in delivering and choosing social services, deciding about their extension, service variety and payment \((p = 0.01)\). The role of private business in choosing services and deciding about how to and who is going to pay for the services is also stressed more by service recipients \((p = 0.01)\). Recipients also prioritise family participation in choosing services and their providers \((p = 0.01)\). Respectively, recipients express a greater demand than providers for their higher role in choosing services \((p = 0.01)\). What is more, service recipients prioritise the role of municipalities and the state in social service delivery (social service provision, their choice, strategy formation, decision on service extension and payment for service) more than service providers \((p = 0.01)\).

The research shows that all actors of welfare delivery should contribute to welfare development. Recipients of social services are seen as active actors in development. The increased role of the recipient’s family, NGOs, community and private business is seen as a more important factor for welfare development than the change of the role of the municipality and the state, while the financing services made an exception, being attributed by respondents to municipality and state.
Conclusions

This article is our attempt to recognise and understand the welfare regime in Lithuania in the field of social service delivery. Various social welfare classifications and typologies were employed. In our research, we tried to refer to social democratic, conservative and liberal ideologies that focus on the exclusive role of different welfare actors: state, market, family and community. It was determined that the social service system in Lithuania does not conform to traditional welfare regime classification, which is based on the idea that one of these ideologies dominates in a certain country or region. Welfare regime typologies are criticised for generalisation, on the one hand, and for certain ethnocentrism, on the other. Accepting the idea of historical and regional distinction of welfare regimes, we tried to identify the features of national social welfare in the field of social delivery. Aidukaitė (2004, 2010) and others (Deacon, 1993; Fenger, 2007) have described the social welfare model of post-communist countries like Lithuania as a peculiar model. Still these generalisations for the most part rely on the analysis of social insurance and benefit area without covering the field of social service delivery.

Lithuania, as well as other post-communist countries, is characterised by distinctive convergence of configurations of former historical periods and modern welfare regimes relying on various ideologies. In her discussion of welfare regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, Aidukaitė (2010) maintained that after the collapse of communism, significant welfare regime changes took place in these countries and social welfare systems were remarkably reformed. At present, prominent features of neoliberalism are observed in these countries. Gradually, more and more market elements are introduced and partial privatisation of social policy is taking place in the system of social welfare where the state so far has played the overall role. At the same time, the state has vital influence in social protection. Thus elements of the social democratic model shaped in the Soviet period—solidarity, universalism, egalitarianism, caring role of the state and paternalism—characteristic of this system—are still strong. In the post-communist welfare regime, in addition to expressions of liberal social democratic ideologies, the features of corporative-conservative welfare type are discovered, which most often occur in the area of social insurance and benefit.

The research showed that the interplay of various ideologies is observed in social service delivery in Lithuania covering historical embedment, the present situation and future expectations. Actors of social service delivery, when assessing the current situation of social service delivery and expressing their expectations, point to a nostalgic need for a caring, paternalistic state, expecting it to play an important role in the supply of social services and thus express the provisions of social democratic welfare ideology. On the other hand, actors support the principles of neoliberal welfare ideology, hoping for freedom of service choice and individualisation of social service. The need for private business participation in social service delivery is high. The respondents point to the need for more significant community and NGO roles in social service delivery, formation of the service strategy and deciding about service variety.

The Lithuanian experience shows that models of social welfare, depending on the present context acquire a distinctive configuration that could not be found in the described cases of national welfare systems. Four welfare approaches described by Gonzales are research discourses substituting one another historically when the understanding of the exceptional role of the welfare state (political economy approach) is changed by the conception of the society role and reinforcement of civic processes.
(moral economy approach) and moving further to the reinforcement of private business and the third-sector role (mixed economy approach). Finally, the provisions of all the named approaches are coordinated when moving to the newly emerging paradigm (social economy approach). Our analysis shows that the processes in social service delivery in Lithuania can be characterised by applying the new social economy approach. However, Lithuania as a post-communist country has to combine and foster all the other approaches when market economy and civic society processes have not been developed historically. Welfare participants are facing neoliberal ideology and market economy in a country that was used to planned economy, centralised government and repressed civic participation. Research results show that there is a need for all actors—state, NGO, community, private business and family—with different roles in order to participate in the development of social service delivery system.

On the other hand, exposure to the free market and reinforcement of civic participation raise new challenges for actors. In the welfare capitalism countries, where economy is continuously functioning in the conditions of the free market, principles of neoliberalism are applied in the sphere of social welfare. Quasi market is active where the state performs the role of a mediator, the third party between supply and demand, or between the provider and the recipient (Healy, 2005). In Lithuania, where the free market and democratic experience are short, the neoliberal policy is transferred to the social sphere and the state is reducing its role or not performing it at all, thus leaving individual responsibility for problem solution to the recipients. Due to essential political reconstructions and deep economic crises, citizens have not accumulated financial or social capital. Actors of social services experience tension and ambiguity between the demand of neoliberal policy to choose and be responsible and the expectation that the state will participate in the social service market. At the same time, the actors of social services express a need for different actors to take an active part in the welfare system.

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