Zdenka Milivojević

# CIVIL SOCIETY IN SERBIA
SUPPRESSED DURING THE 1990s – GAINING LEGITIMACY AND RECOGNITION AFTER 2000

CIVICUS Civil Society Index Report for Serbia

CIVICUS

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Zdenka Milivojević

First holistic empirical study of
Civil Society in Serbia 2004 –2006

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FOREWORD

The CIVICUS Civil Society Index research project was carried out over a two-year period. The aim was to identify the key challenges and opportunities for civil society and to make possible comparisons with other countries. ARGUMENT, a national *think-thank*, carried out the CSI research in close cooperation with the umbrella NGO, the Centre for the Development of Non-Profit Organizations (CDNPS).

For all of us involved, the CSI research was a new and inspiring experience in many respects. The Civil Society Index is the first comprehensive empirical research of civil society that was carried out in Serbia. Until now, civil society has only been partially surveyed in works focused either on non-governmental organizations exclusively, the independent media, or specific groups, trade unions etc. Implementation of the CSI project thus constitutes a significant contribution to the broader understanding of how civil society in Serbia is developing and offers an empirical basis for future researchers and theoreticians focusing on civil society issues.

To survey civil society while it emerges,[1] in an environment that is undergoing intensive political, social and economic transition, was a challenging task. At the same time, however, the action research on civil society in Serbia presented us with an opportunity to foster that emergence and to sharpen the profiling of the role and goals of civil society organisations. Moreover, the CSI research should be regarded as a very important opportunity for raising awareness, increasing mutual support, building capacity and encouraging networking within civil society, both at the local/ national and the international level.

The Research and Analytical Center ARGUMENT is one of the first non-governmental organizations in Serbia to implement action-oriented, applied and participatory political and sociological research, aimed primarily at contributing to the development of the political culture, the promotion of democratic values and the fostering positive social change. Since its establishment in 1990, ARGUMENT has played a significant role in collecting, analysing and presenting data on topics such as political pluralism, democracy, political culture, the civil society movement, a human rights based approach to the needs of vulnerable groups, the rights of ethnic groups and minorities, barriers for democratic development (e.g. corruption, interest capture, intolerance, violence, waging war in the media etc.) – that is, all political and social issues that were not the subject of empirical surveys until the early 1990ies. ARGUMENT embodies a strong sense of responsibility for the development of democratic culture, and the non-profit sector in particular, hence the role it plays in the analysis of needs and the identification of priorities and long-term strategies in this area. To achieve such goals, it is necessary to acquire sufficient valid data, background materials, statistics, research reports and arguments that could be of use to a whole range of non-profit organizations, the state administration, corporate actors, and the public. Over the past seventeen years ARGUMENT has conducted a large number of research projects and published its findings in more than ten studies. Since 2000, ARGUMENT has placed particular focus on monitoring and evaluating Serbia's current political and social reforms and the impact of civil society's work on various social groups. Studies include the World Bank Social Assessment for SOSAC, 2003-2005 and Monitoring and Evaluation of SIF projects, 2004-2006. With the recently published study on civil society's role in relation to social policy issues entitled, Non-profit organizations – new social partners, written by Dr. Marija Kolin, ARGUMENT promotes contemporary approaches to social policy issues in Serbia, and advocates for a more prominent role of civil society actors in social and democratic governance processes.

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[1]   Emerging civil society refers to modern civli society in Serbia. As is mentioned later in the text, some forms of civil society in Serbia emerged between the two world wars, but these were not the subject of our research.

The survey also initiated new discussion of the notion of civil society among various stakeholders and civil society actors. Now, after seventeen years of struggle towards modern democracy in Serbia, this is understood more broadly than it was at the beginning of the 1990s. The actual process of conducting the CSI research was, in itself, beneficial, as it created a space for different stakeholders to discuss their current needs and the issues facing civil society, and created an opportunity to identify problems, propose solutions, clarify key issues and agree on a possible definition of civil society in Serbia at various levels (e.g. in the National Advisory Group, within the academic community, amongst students, non-profit organizations from various geographic regions, the general public, etc.).[2] The research as a whole has brought to light a quantity of concrete data, facts, comparisons and findings that are new and important.

Supported by the UNDP and EAR, the CSI research was carried out in collaboration with the Center for Development of the non-profit sector (CDNPS) and its regional networks, and in cooperation with a wide range of experts, organizations, individuals and members of the National

The Centre for the Development of Non-Profit Organizations (CDNPS) was established in 1996. As one of the main umbrella organisations in Serbia in 1990s, CDNPS has played a significant role in the development of civil society in Serbia. CDNPS aims to support the development of the non-profit sector, strengthen its capacity and provide a voice for civil society. Over the past ten years CDNPS has published more than a dozen publications aimed at strengthening non-profit organisations in Serbia. Since its establishment CDNPS has organised three Forum sessions. The mission of these Forums was to support the development of civil society and democracy through activities designed to advance the non-profit, non-governmental organizations as the key factors of civil society. While two of the Forums took place during the late 1990s, the Third Forum of NGOs, held in 2001, was aimed at offering answers to the challenges that the non-governmental sector faces after the democratic changes that took place in FR Yugoslavia. Currently CDNPS is running the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) Programme "Fund to Support Civil Society in Serbia" with the financial assistance of the CARDS Programme. The overall objective of the Programme is to contribute to the development of civil society in Serbia, to improve the legal and financial environment under which NGOs in Serbia operate and strengthen their competences in planning and implementing community development programs.

Advisory Group (NAG). This cooperation is expected to continue through the publication and presentation of project outcomes to a wider audience.

This action-oriented study will be used to inform civil society organizations, researchers, public servants, the private sector, donors and the general public about the development of civil society and its current status and perspectives in Serbia. We hope that the publication of this study will serve as an impetus for further discussion and cooperation aimed at strengthening civil society and conceptualizing its role in supporting democratic governance in post-Milošević Serbia.

Zdenka Milivojević, President

Research and Analytical Center ARGUMENT

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[2]   See Annex 2 for a complete list of the stakeholders consulted.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASNS	Association of Free and Independent Trade Unions
BIA	Security-Informative Agency in Serbia
CDNPS	Center for the Development of the Non-Profit Sector
CLDS	Center for Liberal Democratic Studies
CS	Civil society
CSI	Civil Society Index
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DP	Democratic Party
DPS	Democratic Party of Serbia
EAR	European Agency for Reconstruction
EU	European Union
FeNS	Federation of nongovernmental organisation of Serbia
FH	Freedom House
GDP	Gross domestic product
HDI	Human Development Index
ICT	International and Communication Technology
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
K&M	Kosovo and Metohija
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NAG	National Advisory Group
NCO	National Coordinating Organisation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIT	National Index Team
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RS	Regional Stakeholders
RSC	Regional Stakeholders Consultation
SFRY	Socialistic Federative Republic of Yugoslavia
SRS	Serbian Radical Party
UJDI	Association for Yugoslav Democratic Initiative
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNDP	The United Nations Development Program
USAID SI	USAID Sustainability Index
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
WB	World Bank
WVS	World Values Survey

Executive Summary...

Executive Summary

This section presents the main findings of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) project in Serbia, which was carried out by ARGUMENT and the Centre for the Development of Non-Profit Organizations (CDNPS).

Starting from the autumn of 2004 and during 2005 the CSI project collected information from a wide range of civil society stakeholders: citizens, civil society organisations (CSOs), experts and researchers. The main data sources were secondary data, a population survey, a regional stakeholder survey, policy case studies, interviews with key informants and media analysis. Using a comprehensive framework of 74 indicators and four dimensions, in addition to the wide range of data described above, the National Advisory Group assessed the overall state of civil society in Serbia, which is visually presented in the Civil Society Diamond (see figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Civil Society Diamond for Serbia
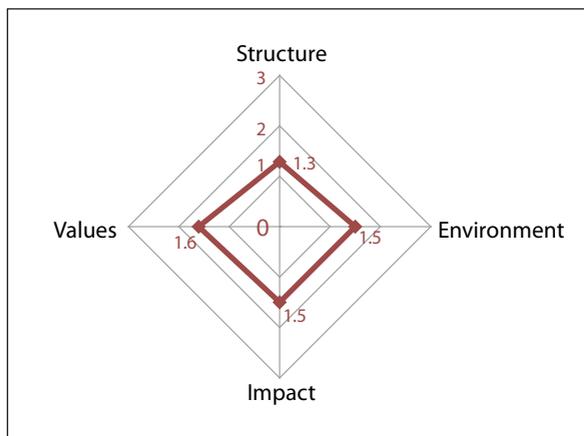
The diagram, visualising the state of civil society in Serbia the form of a Diamond, shows that civil society in Serbia is rather well balanced and of low to medium size. The structure dimension is slightly less developed and consequently includes a larger number of weaknesses than the other three dimensions.

Based on these empirical facts, the participatory CSI assessment exercise provided the first holistic empirical database of civil society in Serbia, examining the main features of its development to date and its prospects for the future, but focusing most of all on its current status. These points are briefly summarized below.

Civil Society Concept

Ever since the term civil society was revitalised – and re-emerged in public and expert discourse in Serbia, the concept of civil society has been considered as an entirely positive social force by the vast majority of actors and theoreticians, and any negative features are not classed as such. The CSI definition of civil society includes other types of association and citizen activities which, in Serbia, are not usually seen as part of civil society and fall rather into the categories of extremism, nationalism, racism or un-civil activities. Therefore, in most of the research, the team focused on organisations seen as positive in orientation while 'negative' CSOs have only been referred to at certain points throughout the report. Nonetheless, harmonisation of the national concept of civil society and the international instrument for measuring the development status and current status of civil society is deemed useful and

operative for several reasons: (a) fine-tuning international methodological tools to the local concept/context ensures relevance to the local concept and more complete utilization, (b) it adds value to the country context/concept of civil society, (c) makes possible comparison of findings at the international level, (d) it stimulates further development of civil society within the country context, and (e) establishes a solid basis and comparable framework for further civil society surveys in the country and at the international level. Finally, the international methodology of the CSI, associated with the concept of civil society as understood by the national authors/actors should contribute to a better understanding of civil society's scope, role, significance and prospects.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

For the purpose of this research, the development of civil society in Serbia can be divided into four distinct phases: **(1)** in the period before the Second World War (1941) – in the late 19th and early 20th centuries civil society manifested itself in traditional forms of solidarity in rural communities. The Eastern Orthodox Church and the royal family played a significant role in the work of these organizations since many were established under their auspices. This is also the period when the term *non-governmental organization* was first used in Serbia in the journal *Public Voice,* published in 1874; **(2)** in the period after World War II (1945) – the communist regime, characterized by "*governmental" non-governmental organizations*, virtually erased freedom and the establishment of association was extremely restricted while all interest groups and associations of citizens focusing on recreation, sports and culture became part of the state-controlled system; **(3)** civil society reappeared in the late 80s and early 90s – in the period of formally proclaimed political plurality, the increased visibility of civil society was linked to the creation of a multi-party political system, with a number of civil initiatives, such as the Association for Yugoslavian Democratic Initiative which sought a democratic solution to the deep crisis in which the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia found itself at that time. In spite of a number of democratic initiatives, however, events led society in the opposite direction. This period was characterized by the break-up of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, armed conflict and a consequent influx of internally displaced persons and refugees. Increasing numbers of citizen groups and associations formed to oppose the language of hatred, to limit and then put an end to war and violence, to assist its victims, to protect elementary human rights, etc.; **(4)** in the period after 5 October 2000 – the series of demonstrations and campaigns against the wars and the regime, organized throughout the 1990s, mostly by national CSOs, and NGOs in particular, reached its peak on 5 October 2000, when CSOs played an important role in ousting the authoritarian regime and installing a democratic political system. Suppressed and demonised by the regime during the 90s, since 2000 civil society has started to gain legitimacy, a recognized role and acknowledgement for its impact on governance processes and on key political and social issues.

THE STATE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN SERBIA

Structure

The analysis of civil society's structure revealed that this is judged to be the weakest of the CSI dimensions. Focusing on the questions of size, composition, shape and contours, the CSI analysis revealed that this dimension is weak in terms of active participation, infrastructure, cohesion and resources. Although backed by significant amounts of international aid since the early 90s, civil society's structure appears to have lost some of its strength since 2000.

Comparing current membership to that of the 90s, it appears that civil society in Serbia has grown significantly with just under half of respondents to the CSI population survey (47%) claming membership of at least one CSO (compared to 15% in 1996). However, though the number of citizens belonging to at least one CSO is three times greater and multiple membership is six times higher today, the level of citizen participation in non-partisan political actions has fallen significantly, particularly since October 2000. The data indicates that during the 1990s, in times of war, sanctions and an authoritarian regime 45% of the citizens took part in some of these activities, while the number of those active fell to almost half that (25%) after the regime was overthrown in October 2000. The most frequent forms of political action during the 90s were protests and demonstrations (39%) while the most frequent form nowadays is signing petitions (21%). Among the CSOs with the highest membership are trade unions (27%), political parties/movements (26.5%), NGOs and sports groups (both 19%) and tenants' associations (17%). A noticeably small number of citizens belong to environmental organizations – only 5%. Most CSOs do not have volunteers on a regular basis and volunteer work consists mainly of informal assistance to neighbours or family members. The public does not practice a culture of giving, since readiness for charitable is observable only in response to tragic events or under conditions of hardship. Charitable giving on a regular basis and in a systematic manner is still not exercised in Serbia, mostly due to the dire economic situation and the lack of trust among citizens. The perception of strong apathy and disengagement from civil society is widespread and people only participate in CSO activities rather superficially, even in cases when they are actually members of such organizations. Participation in collective community actions is also limited, with only a small minority attending meetings (17%) or participating in local community actions (21%).

Other specific areas of concern were identified, mainly: insufficient communication and cooperation among CSOs; lack of self-regulatory mechanisms on a sectoral basis and moderately efficient and regionally distributed support organisations. Communication within sectors is developed to some extent, but only within groups of organizations involved in similar or neighbouring spheres, such as associations of persons with disabilities, ecological organizations, women's networks, association of judges, etc. Thus these groups act more like interest groups, which communicate amongst themselves (most often on an occasional and rarely on a regular basis) but seldom with external actors. Moreover, civil society actors cooperate irregularly on issues of common interest, and the number of active networks and coalitions is modest, even among those organizations working mainly at the local level. Networks and coalitions at national and regional level are very rare. The lack of cooperation among CSOs is a reflection of the fact they no longer have a "common enemy" (the regime of Slobodan Milošević) as they did in the 1990s, when they had to work together if they wanted to achieve their goals. The geographical distribution of CSOs exposes the marked urban character of these organizations. Correspondingly, the involvement of the rural population and the poor in membership and leadership of CSOs is very limited.

The major concern with regard to the structure dimension is the limited sources of finance available to CSOs. This stems from the fact that, among the NGOs in particular, the majority are strongly characterized by foreign donor dependency and international donors are phasing out their financial commitment to the country. As resources become scarcer, solidarity among CSOs is being replaced by competition. The general lack of stable financial resources is a severe obstacle to sustainability in the sector – which is underlined by the fact that in 2001, 31% of surveyed organisations assessed themselves as being in a good to excellent financial situation while this share had dropped to 15% in 2005. Human resources appear to be both a major strength and a major weakness for civil society in Serbia: the enthusiasm and dedication of highly qualified personnel in CSOs is seen as a major strength,

while a high turn-over of professionals and the increasing discouragement of the majority of civil society activists are seen as their major weaknesses. The whole civil sector is believed to have become weaker as the best qualified and educated personnel move to more financially stable sectors. Therefore the future strengthening of civil society also depends on further investment in sustainable funding.

However, despite these weaknesses, according to the reflections of the NAG, it is important to note that civil society in Serbia is slowly becoming a locally-driven sector, the structure of which is likely to become more solid in the years to come, provided that it is more widely-supported.

Environment

In analyzing political, social, economic, cultural and legal factors and the attitudes and behaviour of state and private sector actors towards civil society, the CSI study revealed that the environment dimension is developing moderately, although it still poses numerous challenges. The external environment in Serbia strongly suppressed civil society during the 1990s and it has also been somewhat limiting since 2000, with the exception of the short promising period under Prime Minister Đinđić (2000 – 2003). In general, the current situation in Serbia is one of weak political institutions and weak parliamentarianism with the concentration of all power in the hands of ruling political parties, a high degree of corruption and growing passivity in the attitude of the citizens towards the authorities exercising power. Political reforms are centralised and there is lack of sequence and a harmonised approach to reform activities.

Currently, half-hearted implementation of laws and the lack of conducive legislative, political and socio-cultural environments in which CSOs can operate are major barriers to civil society development. In addition, two fundamental political conditions are missing; political room to manoeuvre and political culture.

Due to widespread corruption, the weak rule of law, dysfunctional institutions and the impoverishment of the population which is particularly severe among marginalised groups such as Roma, people with disabilities etc., mutual trust amongst citizens of Serbia has plummeted. The CSI study shows that distrust has been growing continually since 1996, and currently, the percentage of those who believe that the majority of their fellow citizens can be trusted has dropped to 9% according to the *Civil Society 2004* survey. At the local community level this is manifested in a decrease in the amount of collective action and the increased reluctance of individuals to engage in collective activities.

The CSI study showed that the relationship between civil society and the state is also problematic. There is not enough space for social and/or political dialogue between the state and civil society in Serbia. Social dialogue is very limited, while political confrontation is blocked by intolerance (although no longer by polarized ideologies) and the fight of political parties to win votes. In general, it can be concluded that the culture of dialogue is lacking in the political realm and the concept of dialogue is poorly understood in public discourse. Additionally, relations between the state and civil society are further undermined by the absence of a clearly demonstrated political will to recognize the role of civil society in the country's development. Civil society, on the other hand, with its large number of actors, still has not developed sufficient awareness of the character and political importance of its role in the wider community. Moreover, the state has a selective attitude towards CSOs. While it does not treat trade unions or employers' associations as important partners, it provides only modest financial support to organizations that are focused on the provision of social services and it does not recognise at all the watch dog function of CSOs. The state

entertains positive relations with those CSOs that work on poverty reduction and regards sports and cultural clubs with affection, while ignoring, or sometimes even stigmatising, CSOs dealing with burning political issues such as the Hague tribunal defendants, facing up to the past and war crimes. Relations have deteriorated with the section of civil sector and the media which initiated discussions related to war crimes, particularly the massacre in Srebrenica, and mass graves. In the opinion of the European Commission this attitude shows the government's inability to comprehend the advocacy role of civil society and the media in a democratic society and it identifies a concerning tendency of political interference in media and NGO work. In this atmosphere, neither the trade unions nor the NGOs have come to fully realize their two most pressing roles: limit the negative impact of some current reforms and exercise damage control. Neither are they able to establish real social dialogue

CSOs receive modest funding from the state, mainly as a condition posed by international multilateral and bilateral donors. However, there are no clear guidelines to govern the allocation of grants to CSOs and the process remains non-transparent. Informal links still dominate the relations between the state and civil society. Therefore, the establishment of an efficient CSO funding policy by the central state, in partnership with local authorities, which targets key policy issues, should be a priority.

The private sector does not regard civil society as either a partner or an important social actor, nor is it likely to recognize CSOs as recipients of corporate giving due to the lack of stimulating legislation. In general, the attitude of the private sector towards civil society is primarily *doubtful* (41%) or *indifferent* (36%). Local companies, especially in smaller places, occasionally assist CSOs, but this assistance is exclusively based on informal connections and relations.

Some optimistic features can be recognised in the fact that the legal framework and state-civil society relations are in an early phase of formation, and some visible progress was observed in relations between civil society and local authorities. Although the current context is not completely disabling, a wide range of different factors, ranging from political to economic and socio-cultural, are in need of improvement, if an enabling environment for civil society is to be established in Serbia.

Values

In general, the score for the values dimension indicates that civil society in Serbia is promoting and practicing positive values in a rather moderate manner, except for the practice of gender equity within civil society, which has the strongest record. A major weakness of civil society in Serbia lies in the almost equally low scores given for *internal practice* and *external promotion* of all the values examined. This came as a surprise to civil society activists, both NAG members and participants of the National Workshop held on 8 of June 2006 in Belgrade. CSOs need to develop self-regulatory strategies in order to be able to use their own value practices as a key argument in the promotion of positive values externally.

The low score given to the practice and promotion of transparency is of particular concern, as the concept of transparency underpins most other norms and values, and is crucially important for the whole society. Establishing greater transparency as part of improved internal CSO management will foster CSOs ability to promote this concept in society at large. Until now values such as the fight against corruption, accountability and legitimacy have not been practiced effectively within CSOs, nor have they been upheld by the state or the private sector.

Another major weakness of civil society's values is the very limited role CSOs play in poverty eradication. This was another unexpected finding, particularly for those CSOs that are deeply involved in the poverty reduction process. Being relevant for policy makers and CSOs alike, this assessment not only points to the weakness of those CSOs involved in poverty eradication, but it also underscores the need to develop institutional strategies to incorporate CSOs more effectively into the existing national poverty eradication plans. So far, NGOs have not been perceived as strategic partners but rather as tools for the implementation of certain actions, although the first important step in this direction has been made by establishment of the Social Innovation Fund (SIF is a transitory mechanism designed by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy of Serbia) aimed, among other things, to create value for social investment by providing incentives for innovation, quality and NGO government partnership.

CSI participants, particularly those closely involved in the poverty reduction process since the drafting of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, appeared to lack awareness of the fact that their activities on poverty eradication (however intensive, useful or influential they might be) have not been detected by the majority of other CSOs, or registered by the media and the wider public. This is a general problem faced by most NGOs, particularly when it comes to the effectiveness of their activities. Both the NAG and the National Workshop participants see dealing with the low visibility of anti-poverty activities as one of the top priorities for CSOs in Serbia. As the CSI study revealed, the role of civil society in poverty eradication is not yet broadly recognized or acknowledged in spite of the fact that NGOs are equipped to provide services (e.g. social, education, health) especially those tailor-made to the particular needs of vulnerable groups and those which are smoothly fostering the integration of the most vulnerable into mainstream society, making it possible for them to benefit from the opportunities available to the majority of citizens.

Finally, the study revealed the dedication of civil society to other social values, such as non-violence, tolerance, environmental awareness and poverty eradication. Yet, it also indicated the need for the further development of certain values, such as transparency and external promotion of democracy, which, in the opinion of NAG members, have been continuously deteriorating in a number of CSO activities since 2000.

Impact

As a consequence of its rather weak structure and the limitations of the environment, civil society in Serbia has had quite a limited impact on governance and development issues so far. Key obstacles to a more sustained policy impact are the lack of advocacy and lobbying skills among professional CSO staff. Moreover, due to the widespread mistrust prevailing in the society, CSOs have a very limited role in fostering growth of social capital amongst their membership base. It can therefore be concluded that they contribute only slightly to improving social capital among the population.

The question of the extent to which the low level of public trust is a consequence of the low ratings for civil society's transparency was explored at some regional stakeholder consultations. Participants agreed that such a connection might exist, but they also added that other factors, such as the limited work done by CSOs to present and promote their work to the public and the negative media image of some human rights NGOs (as part of the heritage from the previous regime and ongoing intermittent attacks in some media against NGOs dealing with key political issues) also contributed to rather disappointing ratings for civil society among citizens.

In general, as the Regional Stakeholder survey revealed, the effort and input invested by civil society are far greater than the actual impact achieved. This holds particularly true for civil society's anti-corruption efforts which, according to the research results, have enjoyed a very limited impact compared to the inputs invested. In the area of human rights advocacy the difference between the effort invested and the influence achieved is less drastic, while on the problem of poverty, the impact achieved by CSOs is minimal compared to efforts they have made.

Regarding the influence of CSOs on public policy in general, the consulted experts identified some progress, saying that the state is becoming more ready to engage with civil society which, in their opinion, is resulting in an increasing number of invitations to civil society representatives to participate in working groups, to submit their own reports on certain issues, to submit their reflections and suggestions on certain laws, etc. and their appointment to various councils. However, some experts consider such commitment and practice to be mostly donor driven and primarily cosmetic since, they say, most government officials are still not interested in providing a genuine space for civil society to take part in the policy making process.

When reviewing the subdimension scores, some differences become apparent. Whereas civil society's functions of empowering citizens and meeting societal needs were judged to be moderately well developed, its role as a watchdog of the state and private sector is still seen as weak. While there are already signs that CSOs in Serbia are starting to play a role in holding the state to account, the monitoring of the corporate sector is still in its initial stages. Social corporate responsibility is a new issue though, for CSOs as well as for the private sector in Serbia, particularly for local corporations.

The role of CSOs in meeting societal needs focuses mostly on the needs of marginal groups, as the state is assigned a dominant role in the welfare system. Given that Serbian society is increasingly becoming fragmented and new social groups (such as people who lost their jobs a couple of years before attaining the right to retirement, displaced persons and refugees, etc.) are likely to become marginalised, a number of key informants shared the opinion that it is essential for CSOs to play a more proactive role in addressing social issues within Serbian society.

Recommendations

In order to utilize the CSI assessment to generate action-oriented recommendations, a national workshop of around 80 participants was held at the end of the project. Specific recommendations were identified and grouped into three categories: (1) recommendations to CSOs themselves, (2) recommendations to both civil society and the state and (3) recommendations to other relevant stakeholders.

(1) Recommendations for civil society encompassed the following, among others:

- **Work on improving the public image of CSOs**. Encourage cooperation with the media, which would promote good examples of CSO achievements. Work on promoting transparency regarding sources of funding, financial operations, methods of conducting business and decision-making as examples of good practice. Promote the results of previous work to a wider public since a lot has been done and good results have been achieved, but distrust among citizens in CSOs is still present and the influence of the work performed is seen as insignificant. The precondition for improving the public image of CSOs is the establishment of mechanisms for the regulation of relations within civil society.

- **Lobbying**. Develop mechanisms to lobby for the enactment of draft laws prepared by CSOs as well as inclusion of CSOs in local and national budget drafting processes. Keep up current contacts with representatives of political parties, and National and City Assembly representatives in order to influence specific legislation or improve the position of CSO target groups.

- **Insure stable CSO funding**. Focus on obtaining funds from public budgets, at national or municipal level. This can be achieved by making partnerships with local authorities and conducting joint projects, or by lobbying for legislation which would provide increased financial resources for CSO funding by increasing budget funds designed for CSOs in national or local budgets.

- **Work on ensuring continuity of operations**. Focus on organization sustainability by providing stable sources of funding. Work on creating stronger infrastructural support for newly formed CSOs such as databases, resource centres, educational centres, and infrastructural support. Ongoing education of CSO personnel is necessary to ensure the quality level of activities and services. Develop mechanisms to prevent CSO personnel from leaving the sector, especially experienced and well-educated staff.

(2) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE STATE:

- **Promote mutual cooperation** between the state institutions, local governments and representatives of civil society.

- **Legal Framework**. Specific CSO activity should be devoted to ensuring the enactment of an appropriate legal and fiscal framework for CSO activities. CSO representatives can comment on proposed draft laws on NGOs and ensure an adequate legal framework for the functioning of civil society.

- **Make available sustainable funds for CSOs.** Work on the creation of a program budget at national and local level devoted to funding of CSO activities. This strategic measure would ensure that CSOs get a larger amount of funds from the public budget. In that way CSOs would have a more stable and more certain source of income thus ensuring the continuity of their work. The dependency on foreign donors would thus be significantly reduced.

(3) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER RELEVANT PARTICIPANTS:

- **Exchange knowledge with other relevant participants**. This could be done by exchanging expert knowledge from different areas, by associating experts from civil society, public institutions, and the private sector on similar issues. Involve experts, particularly from the private sector, in the work of CSOs through education and exchange of experience. This measure is seen as a good mechanism for building the capacities of CSOs in order to sustain their activities.

Conclusion

There are several indications that civil society in Serbia is currently negotiating treacherous ground: unable to move forward due to constraints in its operating environment and internal limiting factors such as a high turn-over of professionals and the increasing discouragement of the majority of civil society activists, and faced with the serious problem of shrinking financial resources. The interest of local entrepreneurs and local government

in cooperating with civil society initiatives is generally inhibited by the lack of a stimulative legislative framework and by debilitating (inherited) habits that favour informal connections, rather than formalized cooperation. In general, the CSI findings indicate that further sustainable development of civil society in Serbia is by no means inevitable, and will require serious attention. Sixteen years after the collapse of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, civil society is still at the beginning of the process of building institutionalised partnerships with other stakeholders in the country.

On a more positive note, it is clear that space for dialogue between stakeholders is being opened up, though this development is far more evident and promising at the local than at the national level where such relations are still weak and sporadic. As a result, there are realistic prospects for the development of a strong, locally grounded civil society; one that will work in partnership with local governments and local businesses, a development which would signify a major achievement and bodes well for long-term sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the outcomes of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) in Serbia, implemented from September 2004 to June 2006, as part of the international CSI research project coordinated by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation.

The CSI is a participatory, action oriented research project, assessing the status of civil society in countries around the world. The project links the assessment exercise with stakeholders' reflections and the development of an action plan, aimed at strengthening civil society in the areas where weaknesses or challenges were detected. By seeking to combine the results of a participatory assessment with joint actions by relevant stakeholders, the CSI aims to contribute to the development of knowledge-based policies and practices relating to civil society.

In each country, the CSI is implemented by a National Coordinating Organisation (NCO), guided by a National Advisor Group (NAG) and the CSI project team at CIVICUS. The NCO—ARGUMENT in Serbia––—collects and synthesizes the data and information on civil society from a variety of primary and secondary sources. This information is employed by the NAG to score the 74 CSI indicators, which together provide a comprehensive assessment of the state of civil society. The findings are then discussed at a National Workshop, where civil society stakeholders identify the specific strengths and weaknesses of civil society and develop recommendations for strengthening it. The international CSI project team at CIVICUS provides training, technical assistance and quality control to the NCO throughout the project implementation.

The CSI is an international comparative project currently involving more than 50 countries around the world. It was conceived with two specific objectives: (1) providing useful knowledge on civil society and (2) increasing the commitment of stakeholders to strengthen civil society. The first objective inherits a certain tension between country-specific knowledge and knowledge comparable cross-nationally on a global scale. CIVICUS sought to resolve this tension by making it possible to adapt the methodology and the set of 74 indicators to country-specific factors. ARGUMENT made a few adaptations to the project methodology, but adhered fairly closely to the project framework proposed by CIVICUS.

ARGUMENT is primarily interested in the comparability of the research findings with other Eastern European countries implementing the CSI. Comparing the research findings will provide new stimuli for discussions about the development of civil society in the region. When implementing the CSI project in Serbia we faced a number of challenges, and gained new insights, which helped to define new issues for future studies on the nature of civil society in Serbia.

STRUCTURE OF THE PUBLICATION

Section I, the "Civil Society Index Project and Approach", provides a detailed history of the CSI, its conceptual framework and its research methodology.

Section II, "Civil Society in Serbia", provides a background on civil society in Serbia and highlights some specific features of civil society in Serbia. It also describes the use of the civil society concept in Serbia, as well as the definition employed by the CSI project. Finally, it describes the exercise of developing a map of civil society, which was carried out as part of the CSI project activities in several regions in the country.

Section III, entitled "Analysis of Civil Society", is divided into four parts – Structure, Environment, Values and Impact – which correspond to the four main dimensions of the CSI. The presentation of the results according to individual dimensions and subdimensions is intended to be a resource repository, and readers looking for an overall interpretation of the report should refer to the conclusion. This section also includes the case studies, described in detail in Annexes 2 and 3.

Section IV, "Strengths and Weaknesses of Civil Society in Serbia", summarises the ideas, arguments and opinions raised at the National Workshop which was held in June 2006 in Belgrade. Participants from CSOs and academic institutions had the opportunity to comment on, criticise and supplement the findings through their participation in plenary sessions and small group discussions.

Section V, "Recommendations", presents the many recommendations made by participants at the National Workshop and other project events. These recommendations focus on concrete actions to strengthen civil society and its role in Serbia.

Finally, the conclusion in Section VI maps the Civil Society Diamond and offers an interpretation on the report's implications for the overall state of civil society in Serbia.

I Civil Society Index Project and Approach

I Civil Society Index Project and Approach

1. Project Background

The idea of a Civil Society Index (CSI) originated in 1997, when the international non-governmental organisation CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, published the *New Civic Atlas* containing profiles of civil society in 60 countries around the world (CIVICUS 1997). To improve the comparability and quality of the information contained in the *New Civic Atlas*, CIVICUS decided to embark on the development of a comprehensive assessment tool for civil society, the Civil Society Index (Heinrich/Naidoo 2001; Holloway 2001). In 1999, Helmut Anheier, the director of the Centre for Civil Society at the London School of Economics at that time, played a significant role in the creation of the CSI (Anheier 2004). The CSI concept was tested in 14 countries during a pilot phase lasting from 2000 to 2002. Upon completion of the pilot phase, the project approach was thoroughly evaluated and refined. In its current implementation phase (2004-2006), CIVICUS and its country partners are implementing the project in more than fifty countries (see table I.1.1).

Table I.1.1: Countries participating in the CSI implementation phase 2003-2005[4]

1. Argentina	19. Germany	37. Orissa (India)
2. Armenia	20. Ghana	38. Palestine
3. Azerbaijan	21. Greece*	39. Poland
4. Bolivia	22. Guatemala	40. Romania
5. Bulgaria	23. Honduras	41. Russia*
6. Burkina Faso	24. Hong Kong (VR China)	42. Scotland
7. Chile*	25. Indonesia	**43. Serbia**
8. China	26. Italy	44. Sierra Leone
9. Costa Rica	27. Jamaica	45. Slovenia
10. Croatia	28. Lebanon	46. South Korea
11. Cyprus[5]	29. Macedonia	47. Taiwan*
12. Czech Republic	30. Mauritius	48. Togo*
13. East Timor	31. Mongolia	49. Turkey
14. Ecuador	32. Montenegro*	50. Uganda
15. Egypt	33. Nepal	51. Ukraine
16. Fiji	34. Netherlands	52. Uruguay
17. Gambia	35. Nigeria	53. Vietnam*
18. Georgia*	36. Northern Ireland	54. Wales*

The CSI project is in line with ARGUMENT's mission, which is to collect, analyse and research data on social policy issues, promoting new initiatives and campaigning for a more important role for civil society in governance. It is also in line with CDNPS's efforts to strengthen civil society capacities. The CSI combines action-oriented research with a comprehensive set of instruments for civil society assessment, which result in concrete recommendations and action points for various stakeholders to strengthen civil society. This fits very well with ARGUMENT's mission as a means for building new knowledge on practical civil society issues. The project is also significant for civil society in Serbia, since

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[4] This list encompasses independent countries as well as other territories in which the CSI has been conducted, as of September 2006.

[5] The CSI assessment was carried out in parallel in the northern and southern parts of Cyprus due to the de facto division of the island. However, the CSI findings were published in a single report as a symbolic gesture for a unified Cyprus.

its findings can be compared with those of neighbouring countries. The overall goal of the project is to assess the status of civil society in Serbia, enrich our knowledge of civil society, increase awareness among all stakeholders of the importance of civil society, and to learn from comparing the project findings with other countries – in the Serbian case, mainly with transition countries and countries in Eastern Europe.

Preparations for the project implementation were intensive. In May 2004, an ARGUMENT representative participated in a CIVICUS' training workshop in Johannesburg to acquire the necessary knowledge for implementing the project. The next step was to secure the necessary financial resources, which were provided by the UNDP office in Belgrade. Project activities got underway on September 2004, and the first meeting of the NAG was held on 15 March 2005.

2. PROJECT APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The CSI is based on a broad definition of civil society and uses a comprehensive implementation approach which utilizes various research methods. In order to assess the status of civil society in a particular country, the CSI examines four key dimensions of civil society: structure, environment, values and impact. Each dimension comprises a number of subdimensions, which include a number of individual indicators. The indicators represent the basis for data collection within the CSI. The data is collected using several methods: secondary data collection, a population survey, a civil society stakeholder survey, regional workshops, a media review, structured expert consultations and several case studies. The indicators are then separately assessed and discussed by the NAG. The outcomes of the research and assessment are also discussed by the representatives of key stakeholders at the National Workshop. The task at the National Workshop is to identify specific strengths and weaknesses and to provide recommendations for key actions aimed at strengthening civil society. The CSI project approach, the conceptual framework, research and assessment methodology are described in detail in this section.

2.1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

HOW TO DEFINE CIVIL SOCIETY?

CIVICUS defines *civil society as the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market where people associate to advance common interests.*[6] The CSI has two interesting features that contrast with other civil society concepts. First, its goal is to avoid the conventional focus on formal and institutionalized civil society organizations (CSOs) by also considering informal coalitions and groups. Second, whereas civil society is sometimes perceived as an area with positive actions and values, the CSI seeks to assess both the positive and the negative manifestations of civil society. This concept consequently includes not only the humanitarian organizations and associations active in environmental protection, but also groups such as skinheads and aggressive football supporter groups. The CSI does not just assess to what extent CSOs support democracy and tolerance, but also the extent of their intolerance or even violence. In a word CSI seeks to mirror and give a comprehensive picture of civil society encompassing all its facets.

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[6]   In debates about the definition of civil society in regional stakeholder consultations, the NAG meetings and the National Workshop, participants agreed to use the word space instead of arena.

How to conceptualize the state of civil society?

To assess the state of civil society, the CSI is conducted according to four main dimensions:

- The **structure** of civil society (e.g. number of members, extent of giving and volunteering, number and features of umbrella organisations and civil society infrastructure, human and financial resources);

- The external **environment** in which civil society exists and functions (e.g. the legislative, political, cultural and economic context, the relationship between civil society and the state and the private sector);

- The **values** practiced and promoted within the civil society space (e.g. democracy, tolerance or protection of the environment) and

- The **impact** of activities pursued by civil society actors (e.g. public policy impact, empowerment of people, meeting societal needs).

Each of these main dimensions is divided into a set of subdimensions which contain a total of 74 indicators.[7] These indicators are at the heart of the CSI and form the basis of the data presented in this report. The indicator – subdimension – dimension framework underpinned the entire process of data collection, the writing of the research report, the NAG's assessment of civil society in Serbia and the presentations at the National Workshop. It was also used to structure the main sections of this publication.

FIGURE I.2.1: CIVICUS Civil Society Diamond
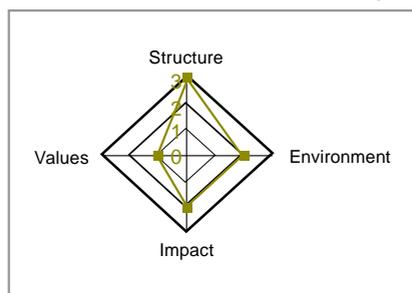
To visually present the scores of the four main dimensions, the CSI makes use of the Civil Society Diamond tool (see figure I.2.1 below as an example).[8] The Civil Society diamond graph, with its four extremities, visually summarises the strengths and weaknesses of civil society. The diagram is the result of the individual indicator scores aggregated into sub- dimension and then dimension scores. Because it captures the essence of the state of civil society across its key dimensions, the Civil Society Diamond can provide a useful starting point for interpretations and discussions on how civil society looks in a given country. As the Diamond does not aggregate the dimension scores into a single score, it cannot, and should not, be used to rank countries according to their scores for the four dimensions. Such an approach was deemed inappropriate for civil society assessment, which has so many multi-faceted dimensions, contributing factors and actors. The Diamond also depicts civil society at a certain point in time and therefore lacks a dynamic perspective. However, if applied iteratively, it can be used to chart the development of civil society over time, as well as compare the state of civil societies across countries (Anheier 2004).

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7   See Annex 1.

8   The Civil Society Diamond was developed for CIVICUS by Helmut K. Anheier (see Anheier 2004).

2.2. PROJECT METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methods used for collecting and aggregating the various sources of data used in the project.

2.2.1. Data Collection

The CSI recognized that, in order to generate a valid and comprehensive assessment of civil society, a variety of perspectives and data should be included – insider, external stakeholder and outsider views, as well as objective data ranging from the local and regional to the national level. The CSI therefore includes the following set of research methods: (1) Review of existing information, (2) Regional stakeholder consultations, (3) Population survey, (4) Media review and (5) Fact-finding studies.

It is believed that this mix of different methods is essential to generate accurate and useful data and information, and also accommodate the variations of civil society, for example in rural versus urban areas. The CSI also seeks to utilize all available sources of information to avoid 're-inventing research wheels' and wasting scarce resources. Lastly, the research methodology is explicitly designed to promote learning and, ultimately, action on the part of the participants. Besides feeding into the final national-level seminar, data collection processes also aim to contribute to participant learning. This is done, for example, through group-based approaches that challenge participants to see themselves as part of a "bigger picture", to think beyond their own organisational or sectoral context, to reflect strategically about relations within and between civil society and other parts of society, to identify key strengths and weaknesses of their civil society and assess collective needs. It is important to note that the CSI provides an aggregate needs assessment on civil society as a whole, and is not designed to map exhaustively the various actors active within civil society. However, it does examine power relations within civil society and between civil society and other sectors, and identifies key civil society actors when looking at specific indicators under the structure, values and impact dimensions.

The Serbian CSI study applied the complete list of proposed methods for data collection:

- Secondary sources: An overview of existing research data, consultations and other information relating to the issue of civil society development is summarized in the overview of civil society status in Serbia.

- Regional stakeholder survey: Representatives of CSOs, Government, the corporate sector, the media and other stakeholders were interviewed in six regions.

- Regional stakeholder consultations (RSCs): In six regions (Belgrade, Vojvodina, Central, East and South Serbia and Sandjak) representatives of various stakeholders, who had previously completed the questionnaire (185), were invited to participate in a one-day discussion on research outcomes for their respective region. The total number of participating representatives was 52.

- Survey *Civil Society 2004*: This population survey involved a representative sample of 1750 citizens of Serbia with respect to regions, age, gender, education and type of dwelling. The citizens were questioned about issues such as: CSO membership, donations, volunteering and attitudes towards CSOs.

- Media review: The reporting of seven media outlets: four daily newspapers - *Politika, Večernje novosti, Danas* and *Dnevnik* and three TV channels - *RTS 1, TV Pink* and *TV*

B92 - on civil society was reviewed over a three-month period for the printed media and over a two-month period for electronic media.

- Key informant Interview: In total 52 interviews with relevant representatives of civil society, the state and the academic community were carried out. Four of the interviews referred to the issue of CSO impact on particular policies.

The data collected refers mostly to the current status of civil society in Serbia. In the case of certain indicators, data explaining historical development which serves as a framework for assessing changes and accomplishments so far is provided. Hence, the timeframe to which this data refers is the period from 1989 to 2005, where the end of eighties/beginning of the nineties is taken as the moment at which civil society entered public discourse and, from a conceptual framework, started to be transferred into the practical and everyday life of Serbia.

2.2.2. Aggregating data

The project team collected various types of data for the draft report and structured them according to the CSI indicators, subdimensions and dimensions. Each indicator was attributed a score between 0 and 3 (0 being the lowest value and 3 the highest). Each potential indicator score (0, 1, 2 and 3) was described in either qualitative or sometimes quantitative terms. The NAG scoring exercise is modelled along a "citizen jury" approach (Jefferson Centre 2002), in which citizens come together to deliberate, and make a decision on a public issue, based on presented facts. The NAG's role is to give a score (similar to passing a judgement) on each indicator based on the evidence (or data) presented by the National Index Team (NIT) in the form of the draft country report.

The process of indicator scoring, performed by the NAG, was based on a discussion of the information provided for each indicator. Based on this discussion and the scoring matrix featuring the indicator score descriptions, the NAG decided on a score for each respective indicator.

2.3. LINKING RESEARCH WITH ACTION

The CSI is not a purely academic project. Its goal is to involve civil society actors in the research process, contribute to a discussion on civil society and provide recommendations on how to strengthen civil society. This categorizes the project as action oriented research.

Various relevant stakeholders participated in the project implementation at several levels. The NAG included representatives from CSOs, the state, the corporate sector, foreign organizations and researchers. It discussed the definition of civil society, the project methodology and assisted with calibrating certain indicator score categories. Another important component of the project was the regional consultations, organized to discuss the findings of a survey conducted in six regions. These consultations were held in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Šabac, Niš, Kragujevac, Knjaževac and Novi Pazar, which are recognised as regional centres for CSOs and convenient locations for such meetings. Representatives of various CSOs, the state, the corporate sector, the media, researchers and foreign donors participated in these workshops where they discussed key issues for civil society in Serbia, and identified regionally specific strengths and weaknesses.

The final component of the participatory CSI approach was the discussion of the draft CSI report at the National Workshop, in which participants were asked to identify the overall

strengths and weaknesses of civil society in Serbia and provide recommendations for future activities.

2.4. PROJECT OUTPUTS

The CSI implementation in Serbia delivered several products, including:

- A comprehensive report on the status of civil society in the country;

- A list of recommendations, strategies and priority actions developed by various stakeholders, aimed at strengthening civil society in Serbia;

- A press conference on key findings;

- Information on the project and its outcomes presented through several media outlets

- Media review of seven media outlets and

- Consultations with about 100 stakeholders discussing the status of civil society.

II Civil Society in Serbia

II CIVIL SOCIETY IN SERBIA

1. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Civil society in Serbia has a long tradition that can be historically, "traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries to the traditional forms of solidarity, particularly in rural communities, the influence of the Eastern Orthodox church and its under-standing of charity, and in the activities of numerous huma-nitarian, educational and other societies that operated in Yu-goslavia from the beginning of the 20th century until the Second World War" (NGO Policy Group 2001:16; Paunović 1997). Traditional forms of solidarity, particularly in rural communities, characterized this period and the Serbian Orthodox Church and the royal family played a significant role in the creation and work of these organizations as many were established under their auspices. This was also the period when the term non-governmental organization[10] was first used in the journal *Public Voice*, published in 1874. However, non-governmental organizations operated even

FIGURE II.1.1. Country Information[9]

Country size:	88,361 sq km (excluding Kosovo)
Population:	7498001 (2002 census, excluding Kosovo)
Population density:	275 per sq km
Population under 15 years:	18.1%
Urban population:	56.4%
Form of government:	Parliamentary Democracy
Freedom House Democracy rating:	Free
Seats in parliament held by women:	7.9%
Language:	Serbian
Ethnicity:	Serbs 82.86%, Hungarians 3.91%, Bosniaks/Muslim 2.1%, Roma 1.44%, Croats 0.92%, Montenegrins 0.92%, Albanians 0.82%, Slovaks 0.79%, Yugoslav 1.44%
Religion:	Orthodox 85%, Catholic 5.5%, Islamic 3.2%, Protestants 1.1%, Undeclared 3.1%, Non-believers 3.1%
HDI Score & Ranking:	0.772 (74th)
GDP per capita:	4,400$ (including Kosovo) (2005 est.)
Unemployment rate:	20.0% (2005) (31.6% with Kosovo)

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9   The World Fact book 2005 available at: https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/rb.html#Econ (accessed 10 June 2006);, UNDP Human Development Report 2005, available at: hdr.undp.org/statistics/data (accessed 10 June 2006); Freedom House 2005, available at http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0108157.html, (accessed 10 June 2006);
Census of 2002, Republic of Serbia, Republic Statistical Office avaliable at:
http://webrzs.statserb.sr.gov.yu/axd/en/index.php, (accessed 11 June 2006)

10   "In addition to the *term non-governmental organization*, the following terms were also in use: association, group, alliance and society. Then as now, non-governmental organizations were required to have statutes and operating principles and needed to be registered. The statutes were submitted to the Administration of the City of Belgrade, which would then notify the Ministry of the Interior. However, there were some exceptions to this procedure, such as the Society for Support of Serbian Literature, whose statute was approved in 1881 by the Ministry of Finance. The Guild Decree of 1847 regulated the legal status of craftsmen and their guilds, during King Aleksandar Karađorđević's rule. The operating principles of the Workers' Alliance were approved in 1903 by the Ministry of Peoples' Economy and in accordance with the Law on the Organization of the Ministry of Peoples' Economy. Although numerous associations operated before this one, this was the first time that procedures were explicitly stated in the law." For more details see Third Sector in Serbia – Status and Prospect, NGO Policy Group, Belgrade 2001 available at: http://www.crnps.org (accessed 20 December 2005)

before the enactment of the *Law on the Freedom of Associations* (1881), the *Religious Charity Association* called *Hevra Kadiša*, for instance, established in 1729. One year later the first Serbian Fund started to operate in Vojvodina.[11] With the arrival of liberalism in the 1860s, a number of new NGOs were established. However, the majority of these organizations were short-lived and some were banned by the state. One was the Society of Serbian Youth (1847 -1851) that stated in its statute that it would "strive for more freedom and democracy in the country". It was proscribed in 1851. (NGO Policy Group 2001; Petrović 1999)

Civil society's activities were more or less suspended under the authoritarian regime established during and after World War II. The communist regime virtually erased freedom and the establishment of association was extremely restricted while all interest groups involving recreation, sports and culture became part of the state-controlled system. Furthermore, after 1945, all private organizations, endowments, legacies and funds were nationalized, their property confiscated and their operations restricted. From 1945 until the end of the 1980s, as indicated in NGO Policy Group 2001, free association of citizens was not permitted and organizations could operate only within the strict limits imposed by the state and under government control. There were no obstacles to registration of organisations that did not deal with political issues; sports, recreational, professional or hobby associations, for example. The organizations that did not have political aspirations and did not strive to create or inspire social change were even allowed to operate outside official state organizations, for example the Socialist Alliance and the Alliance of Youth. Citizens' associations and so-called 'social organizations' could be established provided they operated within the dominant ideology or sought to reinforce it. Organizations established in this period had many features of non-governmental organizations: they were founded by citizens in order to address problems or pursue certain interests, they were non-profit and more or less based on voluntary activity. Nevertheless, what distinguishes them from modern non-governmental organizations is the fact that they were not autonomous from, but rather controlled by the state. Therefore, this period is characterized by "*governmental*" *non-governmental organizations,* which, until 2000, numbered as many as 19,129. The term "citizens association" is still used in the legal language in Serbia today. (NGO Policy Group 2001: 17)

In the late 1980s, independent initiatives among intellectuals began to appear in Serbia. The increased visibility of civil society in the late 1980s was linked to the creation of a multiparty political system, and some civil initiatives subsequently became political parties. In February 1989, just before the fall of the Berlin wall and thus before fundamental changes in a large part of Eastern Europe, a group of intellectuals from all the republics of Yugoslavia established the Association for Yugoslavian Democratic Initiative (UJDI). This Association sought a democratic solution to the deep crisis facing Yugoslavia at that time. In the beginning, the UJDI and the journal *Republic,* a civic initiative set up by a number of Yugoslav intellectuals, worked illegally since the authorities in Belgrade (Serbia) and Zagreb (Croatia), where these initiatives were the strongest, refused to allow their work and punished many of the more outspoken activists. However, the UJDI was finally registered in Podgorica (Montenegro) on 29th December 1989 and the first ten issues of *Republic* were printed in Zagreb (Croatia). History, however, took a very different course (Popov 1998). [12]

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[11]   For more details see *Third Sector in Serbia – Status and Prospects*, NGO Policy Group, Belgrade 2001; as well as the article of Branka Petrović, *Počeci nastajanja nevladinih organizacija u Srbiji*, published in the journal *Republika* No. 207-209, 1999.

[12]   For more details see journal Republic, No. 179-189, *The balance of a project of freedom*, author Nebojša Popov, available at http://www.yurope.com/zines/republika/arhiva/98/179/179_20.HTM, (accessed 12 June 2006)

The early 1990s witnessed the legalization of pluralism and free association of citizens and the subsequent mushrooming and diversification of NGOs. This period was characterized by the break-up of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, armed conflict, a consequent influx of refugees and IDPs, and increasing numbers of citizen groups and associations formed to oppose the language of hatred, to prevent and then to end war and violence, to assist its victims, to protect elementary human rights, etc.

The debate on civil society which started in Serbia at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s occurred in a political framework determined by two categories of actors. One category were *individual actors* (charismatic, leadership personalities) who were undemocratic and autocratic leaders, among whom the dominant figure was Slobodan Milošević. The second category comprised of three types of dynamic *collective actors* characterized by two decision-making levels. These were: (1) the institutional-normative movement (communist party) or, more precisely, the then ruling order which can be characterised as "regime-populism"; (2) the authoritarian-populist movement which, at that time, created the preconditions for armed conflicts and new homogenization, which actively supported the party-republican politics of the time and, in turn, received support from those in power. In this way, populism was set up as a dominant social force, which, besides anti-individualism and militant nationalism, was also characterized by a belief in conspiracies, the fear of the other (particularly the 'foreigner'), hatred for diversity amongst individuals and by the readiness to eliminate that diversity by force – this was "oppositional populism"; **(3)** the third type of collective actors were the alternative civil initiatives and clusters which based their political activity on the protection of fundamental civil rights and freedoms. Some of these were created to become the political opposition at a time when there were no other opportunities for action, while others were created in response to a real need of civil self-organisation, for the purpose of resolving the numerous problems of the communities in which their founders lived. These were the initial cores of various civil clusters and alternative movements aimed at creating democratic society as well as a democratic state. The future civil society builders originated from these cores.[13]

In general, the communist regime had a profound and long-lasting impact on the development of civil society in Serbia, the effects of which can still be seen today, and will be difficult to overcome. This legacy manifests itself in the mentality of citizens who do not have the habits of self-organization or social responsibility, believing it to be the responsibility of the state to solve their problems. In addition, the state still exhibits a paternalistic attitude towards citizens, and the members of certain political parties still have primary access to certain public services, particularly in the municipalities where their party is in power within local government. As a result, the public are highly distrustful, of the state and of one another.

When considering the development of civil society in Serbia over the past 17 years, it should be stressed how detrimental the highly unfavourable political environment of the 1990s was. On the one hand, the authoritarian government used the media to accuse the NGO sector of betraying Serbia's national interests and, on the other, for the international audience, it pointed to their existence as evidence that the regime was democratically oriented. Allegations by the government that such organizations were foreign hirelings, spies and national enemies, had a powerful impact on the public attitude towards CSOs. Today these attitudes are still recognizable among a subsection of the public and can still occasionally be detected in the media as well as in public discourse.

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[13]   See more in *Serbia Between the Past and the Future*, Žarko Paunović, IDN and Forum for Ethnic Relations, Belgrade, 1995, pg. 420

During the 1990s, the relationship between CSOs and the state was dominated by conflict, with the exception of the "*governmental" non-governmental organizations*, for example, certain associations of trade unions, particular associations of journalists, and some faith and ethnic based organisations that have a submissive and supportive relationship with the regime.

The demonstrations and campaigns against the wars and the regime, organized mostly by national CSOs, and NGOs in particular, reached their peak on the 5 October 2000, when CSOs played an important role in ousting the authoritarian regime and installing a truly democratic political system. The main focus of the majority of CSOs in Serbia during the 1990s was to *fight against* the regime, war, discrimination etc. Following October 2000, the majority of CSO activities had to shift from *contra* to *pro,* towards *constructive dialogue with* the state. This destabilized and disoriented the NGO scene which lacked strategic plans for further action and was ill-equipped for the challenges ahead. A word of caution from a participant at an NGO Policy Group regional meeting in 2001 is indicative: "We are so used to *criticizing* everybody that it will take some time for us to start *doing* anything positive."

In 2002, under the mandate of Prime Minister Đinđić and the then new coalition government, which was positively inclined towards the idea of civil society, better cooperation between the state and CSOs was established. CSOs were frequently invited to cooperate in the implementation of various projects, among others the PRSP strategy. However, a number of the experts consulted considered this cooperation to be no more than declarative, contributing little to the establishment of a successful partnership between the state and civil society. Months after the assassination of Prime Minister Đinđić (12th March 2003) the cooperation between the government and civil society entered a period of stagnation which lasted until recently when certain Ministries (e.g. the Ministry for Science and Environmental Protection, the Ministry for Labour, Employment and Social Policy) initiated cooperation on a new Law for the protection of the environment and social policy issues. However, generally speaking, the failure to engage CSOs as constant partners indicates that the current Government does not see the need to cooperate with civil society in policy formulation and implementation except when it is made a condition by international donor organizations.[14] Even though it is a priority of the Serbian government to establish social dialogue and reach consensus on macro social and economic policy and although social dialogue is one of the pillars of democracy and a key to many problems typical of countries in transition[15] – progress in this direction still hardly discernable.[16]

Even if consultations between CSOs and the government are nowadays more frequent, real dialogue between civil society and the state has not been established and neither has successful partnership. Legal regulations pertaining to civil society, like the law on civil associations, a stimulative tax system etc. have not yet been passed. Moreover, two

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[14]   The most recent example happend when Serbian parliament Speaker Predrag Markovic and UNDP Resident Representative in Serbia, Lance Clark, signed the Agreement on cooperation in the fight against poverty on 4th July 2006. The Agreement envisages the participation of five parliamentary committees in the project called "Including civil society in the creation of policies that contribute to the reduction of poverty", which is being financed by the European Union through the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR). For more details see Government of the Republic of Serbia, available at http://www.srbija.sr.gov.yu. (accessed 10 July 2006)

[15]   As Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica said, opening a meeting entitled "Social dialogue in Serbia – a new start", organised by the *Nezavisnost* (Independence) Trade Union Confederation and the Centre for Solidarity in Belgrade, on May 27, 2004. More available at : http://www.srbija.sr.gov.yu/vesti/vest.php?id=2518&q=civil+soci ety (accessed 12 June 2006)

[16]   "In order to improve social dialogue, it is necessary to pass legislation, increase responsibility of all participants in the dialogue - the government, trade unions and employers, include in it other segments of the civil society and avoid its politicisation, Kostunica explained." Belgrade, May 27, 2004. For more details see: http://www.srbija.sr.gov.yu/vesti/vest.php?id=2518&q=civil+society (accessed 12 June 2006)

important initiatives like the establishment of the Council for Civil Society Development and the National Foundation for Civil Society Development have not yet been undertaken.

After the events of October 2000, the widespread belief was that the social-political situation in Serbia for non-governmental organizations had changed, and that the bridge of cooperation between the state and the civil sector would finally be established. However, the position and the status of non-governmental organizations has remained the same, and after many years of endeavour to establish democracy, non-governmental organizations find themselves without either a clearly defined legislative framework within which to work, or clearly defined financial and institutional support. As far as their presentation in public is concerned, not a single step forward has been made. (FeNS 2003)[17]

Therefore, civil society in Serbia is still under-valued and, even though it is not suppressed as in the 1990s, it still lacks a recognizable role and its impact on governance processes and on key political and social issues goes largely unacknowledged. As the survey findings clearly indicate, there are many valid arguments to support these claims but it is sufficient to highlight six main problems currently faced by civil society in Serbia today: (1) lack of cooperation between CSOs and the government, (2) lack of cooperation between CSOs and the corporate sector, (3) the fact that civic engagement in social and community issues is not seen as a civic value in the country, (4) a high concentration of CSOs in urban areas only, (5) lack of transparency among CSOs and (6) lack of cohesion among CSOs even when advocating common interests or the interests of the social groups they work for, the Law on the NGO sector,[18] for example or the Law against discrimination (which has yet to be drafted).

One of the primary issues is the legitimacy and accountability of CSOs, particularly NGOs, which are still seen as completely dependent on international aid and viable only as long as financial resources continue to come in from abroad. This makes civil society organisations appear to be project and donor driven, lacking roots in local communities and the consciousness of Serbian citizens. As a result, the public has been unwilling to acknowledge them as stakeholders in many contemporary development projects, and has required CSOs to justify both their existence and activities. According to the view of the majority of Serbia's citizens, CSOs are neither authorized nor supposed to interfere with politics and political matters (*CeSID 2005* survey).

These facts are likely to have a negative impact on the development of civil society in the foreseeable future unless a more conducive environment is created soon. As concluded in the NGO Policy Study 2001, it will take collaboration between a responsive government, a strong business sector and a vibrant civil society for Serbia's transition to proceed with less pain and to have more positive effects.

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[17]   Because of all this, in 2003 a number of non-governmental organizations initiated formation of a network of non-governmental organizations, having realized that only through joint activity by means of this legitimate body, could they improve their working conditions and develop a strategy for survival of the sector in Serbia. At the annual conference of the Civic Initiatives in February of 2003, the Federation of Non-governmental Organizations of Serbia (*Gradjanska inicijativa nevladinih organizacija*) (FeNS) was founded. Today, FeNS comprises 460 member-organizations from 102 municipalities in Serbia. More on Federation of Non-governmental Organisation of Serbia (FeNS) is avalaibale at http://www.fens.org.yu/eng/index.htm (accessed 20 February 2006)

[18]   Draft Law on NGO is avaliable at: http://www.gradjanske.org/eng/index.php (accessed 15 July 2006)

2. THE CIVIL SOCIETY CONCEPT IN SERBIA

The term civil society was revitalised in public and expert discourse in Serbia with the first signs of crisis and the collapse of real-socialism. Since that time the concept of civil society in Serbia has come to be seen as an entirely positive concept without negative features. This notion of civil society was largely determined by the fact that at the beginning of the 1990s at least two parallel processes occurred in Serbia –so called *populism* on one side and *citizen initiatives* on the other. *Populism* was articulated in the field of politics, mostly by the regime and nationalistic ideologues. *Citizen initiatives* were spontaneous and grass roots driven activities based on the protection of fundamental civil rights and freedoms. As a result, civil society in public and expert discourse in Serbia usually implies antimilitaristic, positive association of free citizens based on the respect of basic human rights, civil liberties, tolerance, public democracy, the rule of law and economic, social and political pluralism, taking a generally constructive stance towards democracy as the social order. In contrast to the CSI definition of civil society, other types of association and citizen activities are usually not seen as part of civil society and fall into the category of extremism, nationalism, racism or un-civil activities.

Taking into account the relatively strong path dependence of the civil society concept in Serbia, it is not surprising that prominent civil society experts held during the 1990s, and still hold today that, "Serbia belongs to those countries, in which civil society is not developed" (Pavlović 1995: 255). Moreover, "due to the extent to which civil society in Serbia is (un)developed, and in accordance with some other features, Serbia has a severe civil deficit" (Pavlović 1995:255).[19] From this perception of civil society as undeveloped, it could be concluded that the usefulness of the concept of civil society lies less in its theoretical and explanatory value than in its normative power and mobilizing role. (Pavlović 2004)

Understanding and discussion of the civil society concept is mostly limited to a narrow circle of educated members of society and among younger generations. Research conducted by the Centre for Free Elections and Democracy (CeSID) in 2005 showed that 65% of respondents do not know what the term "civil society" means while 78% do not know anything about non-governmental organizations. According to the same survey, slightly more than one third (36%) of the citizens trust non-governmental organizations, while only 6% of them have complete trust, and their activities are noticed at the local level by only one fifth, which is even less than half of the number of citizens which are included in civil society organizations - 47% as indicated in the *Civil Society 2004 survey*. If people are asked to provide an example of an NGO, they tend to mention those dealing with Hague Tribunal related issues. This is usually connected with negative attitudes and animosity towards the entire NGO sector in Serbia.

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[19]   According to same author this deficit has its *historical* and *actual* dimensions. The *historical dimension* is summarised in the claims that "in Serbia traditionally only this type of political culture dominates, which views the strong/powerful state as the sole problem solver". The *actual dimension* comprises several main issues: "(a) real-socialism strangulated civil society, (b) the negative impact of the dissolution of the Former Yugoslavia, (c) massive impoverishment of society especially among the middle class, the urban population and the young generation, together with the erosion of the material base of culture, education, art and spiritual life in general as the main preconditions for civil life and civic culture, (d) the cumulative effects of nationalistic politics and war that led the process of social deterioration all helped to create an environment hostile to the development of civil society, (e) almost total isolation of Serbia from the international community, which created a "ghetto type of society", in which the multiplication of external and internal blockades disabled the positive impact of international civil society on internal democratisation processes "(Vukašin Pavlović 1995: 257), *Potisnuto civilno društvo* (*The suppressed civil society*), ECO Centre, Belgrade 1995, pg. 257

As in the political field, which was and has remained prone to divisions between authoritarian and democratic options, civil society can be seen as a space in which NGOs and citizen's civil associations with both democratic and antidemocratic features exist. "What is not easy for the majority of us to accept, is the fact that both of these types of civilian organisations belong to the map of civil society" (Pavlović 2004:414)

However, the concept of civil society as a civilized and entirely positive domain still prevails within intellectual circles of Serbian society and among civil society actors. A fact clearly emphasized at the NAG meetings and during the National Workshop.

THE CONCEPT OF CIVIL SOCIETY APPLIED IN THIS STUDY

As mentioned in Section I.2.1., the civil society definition proposed by CIVICUS is very broad, covering both 'positive' and 'negative' organisations and informal types of organisation. NAG members and the Serbian project team regarded this broad definition as a challenging standard, which, unfortunately, it was not always possible to adhere to, due mostly to the widespread concept of civil society described above, the diametrically opposed efforts of certain groups and the unwillingness of these groups to communicate. In most of the research, the team focused on organisations, especially on 'positive ones' while 'negative' CSOs have only been referred to in certain instances throughout the report.

In order to fine-tune the CSI methodology to the national context, three analytical levels were established; citizens as individuals, associations of citizens and associations of associations. Historically the focus is on the period from the late 1980s in which contemporary civil society in Serbia started to emerge. The CSI conceptual and analytical framework has been applied whenever possible.

Fusion of the national concept of civil society and the international instrument for measuring the development status and current status of civil society is deemed useful and operative for several reasons: (a) fine-tuning international methodological tools to the local concept/context ensures their more complete utilization, (b) it adds value to the country context/concept of civil society, (c) makes possible comparison of findings at the international level, (d) stimulates further development of civil society within the country context, and (e) establishes a solid basis and comparable framework for further civil society surveys in the country and at the international level. Finally, the international methodology of the CSI, associated with the concept of civil society held by the national authors/actors should contribute to better understanding of civil society's scope, role, significance and prospects.

Apart from dealing with the issue of the breadth and scope of the civil society definition, the project team, in cooperation with the NAG members, also discussed CIVICUS' list of 20 CSO types, listing those whose membership in civil society is unresolved in the literature and strongly depends on country-specific historical factors. In the opinion of the NAG members 7 types of organisations do not belong to civil society in Serbia. (See table II.2.1.)

TABLE II.2.1: CSOs types in Serbia

Types of CSOs from the CIVICUS list:	# of NAG members who consider that CSO does not belong to civil society in Serbia
1. Farmer/fisherman group or cooperative societies	6
2. Trade or business associations	2
3. Professional associations	$\sqrt{}$[20]
4. Trade unions	$\sqrt{}$
5. House tenants' councils/ Community committee	4
6. Religious or spiritual organizations	$\sqrt{}$
7. Political group, movement or party	1
8. Cultural groups or associations	$\sqrt{}$
9. Funeral society	10
10. Credit or savings cooperative societies	4
11. Educational group	$\sqrt{}$
12. Health care groups	$\sqrt{}$
13. Sports associations	$\sqrt{}$
14. Youth group	$\sqrt{}$
15. Women's group	$\sqrt{}$
16. NGOs	$\sqrt{}$
17. Groups of national minorities	$\sqrt{}$
18. Environmental preservation and protection organizations	$\sqrt{}$
19. Hobby organizations	4
20. Other	$\sqrt{}$

Taking into account that there are several different types of CSO lists in Serbia, the NAG decided that the CIVICUS list, being considered the broadest one, could be useful in ascertaining the real picture and initiating further discussion on this issue after receiving and aggregating findings from the field. Moreover it was also concluded that the existing Serbian lists do not sufficiently match the reality and that the CIVICUS list, in terms of the civil society concept and its map in Serbia, suffered from severe imperfections too. The NAG's decision was governed by the necessity to provide comparable data and use it as a basis for the creation of a list that matches the Serbia reality.

Whether to consider political parties as part of civil society or not was disputed at a NAG meeting and during the National Workshop and it was concluded that it could be useful to analyse the civil society scene in Serbia with political parties excluded. The reasons why political parties, to some extent, belong to the civil society map lie in a fact that the first

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[20]   Cells without numbers and marked with $\sqrt{}$ indicate that this type of CSO is considered part of civil society in Serbia.

civil initiatives in the late 1980s were political initiatives and movements, and among first civil groups, political parties were numerous. The arguments used in support of claims that political parties are not a part of civil society are that they hold the greatest i.e. central power and are key pillars of the system/regime.

3. MAPPING CIVIL SOCIETY IN SERBIA

What does civil society look like in Serbia? What is its relation to other social forces in the country? To explore these issues further, in response to the demands of its members, the NAG filled in a short questionnaire, instead of conducting a social forces and civil society mapping exercise as suggested by CIVICUS. The questionnaire addressed the same questions as the social forces analysis. The data from the questionnaires was processed in SPSS during the lunch break and the findings (in the form of graphs) were presented and discussed during the NAG afternoon session.

Each graph was discussed and these discussions provided a good starting point to identify all important civil society actors and current issues. During the discussion, NAG members confirmed the main forces active in Serbian society at large and they assessed relations between civil society and these forces. The discussion made it clear that the state and government bodies occupy a dominant position, while the most influential role was assigned to the media, TV in particular. The trade unions are as weak as civil society as whole. The role of foreign donors and their organizations was recognised as relevant by some NAG members, although it was not marked in the questionnaires. Some participants attributed an important role to the Orthodox Church, which today has the same standing the army used to have more than ten years ago. In general, the visual presentation of relations among different social forces revealed a rather centralised Serbian society in which political parties and the government play the most important roles, together with the church and the asymmetrical power relations between those organizations belonging to the strong centre and the others at the margin. (See figure II.3.1.)

FIGURE II.3.1: Who, in the opinion of NAG members, has the greatest influence on society? (average scores)*
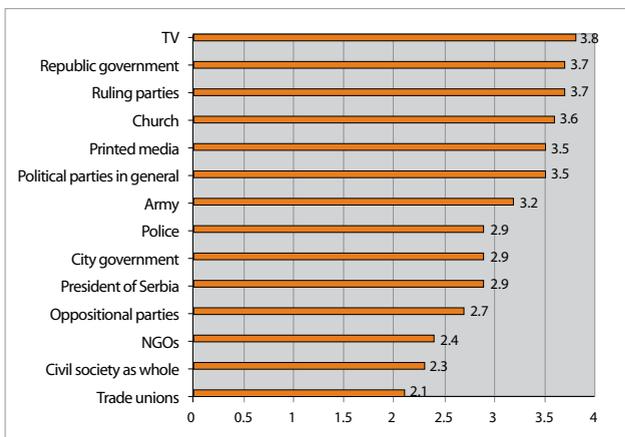
*Based on the scale from 1 to 4, where 4 means *great influence* and 1 means *no influence* whatsoever.

Having been the key pillars of state socialism, both political party(ies) and state actors, such as the central government, are still dominant, while the communist ideology has

been replaced with "national interests" as another religion amply backed by the media, particularly television. Compared to this, civil society forces are smaller in number and are seen as having less power. When analysing the relationships between social forces, it can be seen that most forces are portrayed as rather close to each other.

When discussing CSOs' influence on society, the NAG held that political parties, religious or spiritual organisations and business organisations are the most powerful, (See figure II.3.2.) while NGOs and, to a lesser extent, trade unions seem to dominate within civil society. (See figure II.3.3.)

FIGURE II.3.2: What influence, in the opinion of NAG members, do CSOs have on society? (average scores)*
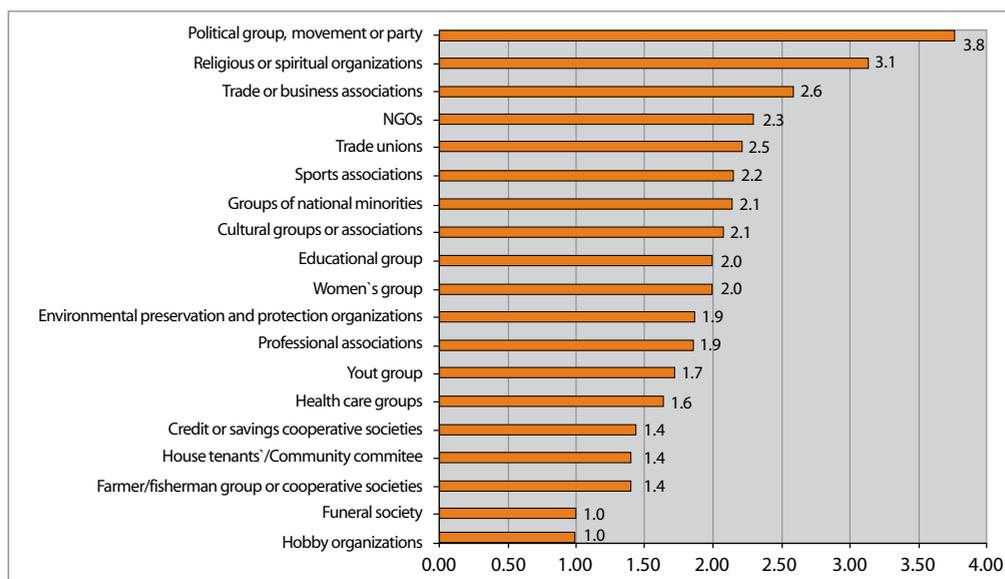
*Based on the scale from 1 to 4, where 4 means great influence and 1 means no influence whatsoever.

It was assessed that NGOs and national minority groups have the greatest influence on other civil society actors while their influence on the society as whole is half less.

FIGURE II.3.3: What influence, in the opinion of NAG members, do CSOs have on other CSOs and civil society as whole? (average scores)*
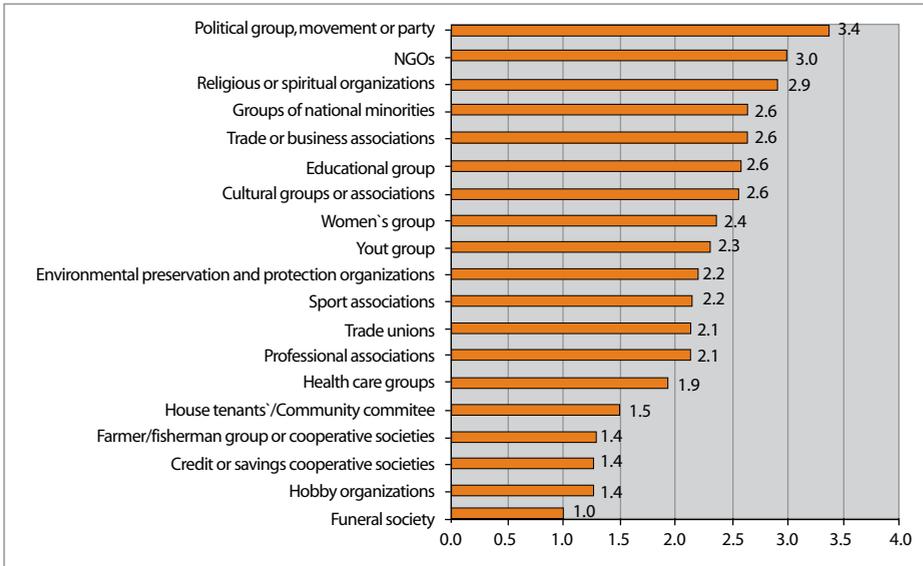
*Based on the scale from 1 to 4, where 4 means great influence and 1 means no influence whatsoever.

The social forces analysis provided important input at the start of the project. By discussing the graphs, NAG members began to perceive civil society as a rather complex and vague arena. It also enabled the NAG members to compare and situate civil society actors among other actors in Serbian society, which revealed the rather limited role CSOs play among the wider set of social actors.

III Analysis of Civil Society

III ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

In this section the bulk of the information and data collected during the course of the project is presented. The analysis is structured according to the individual indicators, subdimensions and dimensions, as a result the section is divided following the four dimensions: **Structure, Environment, Values and Impact**, which make up the CSI Diamond. At the beginning of each section, a graph provides the scores for the sub-dimensions on a scale from 0 to 3. Findings for each subdimension are then examined in detail. A separate box also provides the scores for the individual indicators for each subdimension.[21]

1. STRUCTURE

This section describes and analyses the overall size, strength and vibrancy of civil society in human, organizational, and economic terms. The score for the Structure dimension is **1.3**, indicating a low medium-sized civil society. The graph below presents the scores for the six subdimensions within the Structure dimension: extent of citizen participation; depth of citizen participation; diversity of civil society participants; level of organization; inter-relations and civil society resources.

FIGURE III.1.1: Sub-dimension scores in structure dimension

1.1. BREADTH OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN CIVIL SOCIETY

This subdimension looks at the extent of various forms of citizen participation in civil society in Serbia. Table III.1.1 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.1.1: Indicators assessing the extent of citizen participation

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.1.1	Non-partisan political action	1[22]
1.1.2	Charitable giving	1
1.1.3	CSO membership	1
1.1.4	Volunteer work	2
1.1.5	Collective Community action	0

1.1.1 Non-partisan political actions. Since life in Serbia over the last 15 years has taken place in two significantly different climates the *Civil Society 2004* survey respondents were offered the opportunity to assess their *non-partisan political activism* in the period prior to and after 5th October 2000. The data indicated that during the 1990s, in times of war, sanctions and the regime of Slobodan Milošević 45% of the citizens took part in some of these activities, while the number of those active was almost halved (25%) after the regime was overthrown, following October 5, 2000. (See Figure 1.1.1.)

FIGURE III.1.1.1: Frequency of non-partisan political actions before and after year 2000
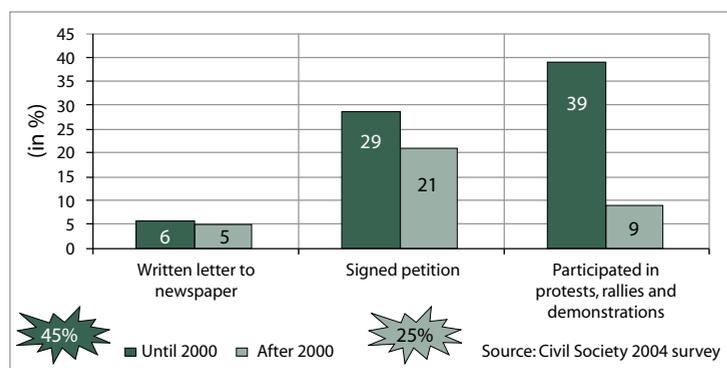
Before the fifth of October 39% of citizens participated in demonstrations, but since this date, signing petitions has become the most frequent form of political action (21%).

Generally, the number of Serbian citizens who, in the past 15 years took part in some of these activities had an upward trend during the nineties when participation went from 35% (WVS 1996) to 50%[23] in 1997. On the eve of the 2000 elections, 57% of the citizens interviewed for a pre-election survey[24] expressed their readiness to participate in protests if the results were over-turned unfairly. The demonstrations and campaigns against the previous regime during the 90s, organized mostly by national CSOs, and NGOs in particular, reached their peak on the 5 October 2000, when CSOs played an important role in ousting

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[22]   Indicator scores in the English version of the report have been rounded off to the nearest full score in order to follow the CIVICUS methodology; however for the Serbian version the scores are in decimal points to make the difference more clear for the endogenous readership.

[23]   ARGUMENT, 'Beta' Information Agency and the daily 'Naša Borba' have conducted the research "Civil awareness and civil disobedience – level of development and source of articulation"; The research was conducted from July 13 to August 4, 1997, on a sample of 1007 respondents in 26 municipalities within 6 regions.

[24]   Quoted according to: the Center for Democratic Culture - *Brochure Citizens have the word* - published just before the September 2000 local elections in Serbia. The brochure present the findings of the public opinion research conducted on a large sample of 4.000 citizens and 240 members of local elite in eight key towns in the Republic of Serbia: Belgrade, Kragujevac, Novi Pazar, Pančevo, Čačak, Niš, Novi Sad, Subotica. See more at www.cdcbgd. org.yu/publikacije/zbornici.htm. (accessed 15 December 2005)

the authoritarian regime and installing a truly democratic political system. After October 5, political activism began to decline. During 2001 it fell to 35%[25] then to 25% in 2004. It follows that, on average, only 25% of the citizens of Serbia are constantly active.

Amongst those participating in some kind of non-partisan political action, both before and after 5 October 2000, there are slightly more men (male 54%, female 46%) and there is significantly more engagement among the urban population (urban 89%, rural 11%), while the most widespread form of activism within the rural population is signing petitions (89%). Among those who are active, more are actually members of at least one CSO (65%) than are not members of any (35%), and among these, a larger number have a monthly income which today exceeds 30,000 dinars (approximately 480 USD) (17%), and markedly fewer have up to 5,000 dinars (approximately 80 USD) (7%). The data suggests that members of the destroyed middle class are the most active (65%) while the poorest groups and the wealthy are least involved in any type of action.

The National Workshop participants concluded that a score of 1 is appropriate as an average score for the entire country, though differences between regions are quite pronounced.

1.1.2 Charitable giving. The Civil Society 2004 survey indicates that, in the last 12 months, 56% of citizens donated money to charitable causes, clothes or some other in-kind aid. Compared to 2004, when this charitable giving was greatly affected by the tragic events of March in Kosovo,[26] which led to several large humanitarian campaigns, the giving during 2005, according to the *CeSID 2005*[27] research, fell to one quarter of citizens who, independently or through humanitarian organizations, provided aid in money or in-kind. With respect to gender, a somewhat more women put aside resources for charitable giving, and this giving is greater in towns than in rural areas.

The NAG members indicated that, in general, the public does not practice a culture of giving, since people tend only to make donations in response to tragic events or particular hardship. Charitable giving on a regular basis and in a systematic manner is still uncommon in Serbia, due mostly to the restrictive economic situation and the lack of trust between potential givers and recipients. Although both NAG members and the National Workshop participants shared the opinion that the score of 1 may overestimate the level of charitable giving, it was decided to attribute such a score to this indicator to recognise positive developments that seem to have got underway recently. A new understanding of solidarity and a stronger public commitment to the common good could be stimulated further by making changes to the legal framework, building greater trust between potential givers and recipients and by improving the transparency of CSOs.

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[25]   According to the World Values Survey 2001. Further information on the WVS, including background to the series, news and publications can be found at: http://wvs.isr.umich.edu/index.shtml and http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org. For general information on the World Values Surveys see http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org or http://wvs.isr.umich.edu. (accessed 17 December 2005)

[26]   On March 17, 2004, a great number of individuals and organizations from Serbia took part in collections of aid for the Serb victims in Kosovo, see more on: www.mfa.gov.yu/Srpski/Bilteni/Srpski/b260304_s.html, www.news.inet.co.yu/index.php and www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php (accessed 17 December 2005).
The action was organized by the Charitable Fund of Serbian Orthodox Church, the Center for Care of Children, the Directorate for Building Land of Belgrade and from Foundation, which collected a part of the aid also from citizens in front of the Sava Center in Belgrade. A great part of the aid was collected by these and other organizations outside the capital, where people brought aid to specific places.

[27]   *Center for Free Elections and Democracy* (*CeSID*) Another in the series of research papers entitled «Building pro-European democratic culture through building capacities of creators of public opinion». The survey was conducted July 6-13, 2005, on a sample of 1376 respondents. The research covered the entire territory of Serbia (excluding Kosovo and Metohija). The *Research of Public Opinion of Serbia*, CeSID, Srećko Mihailović, Political Divisions in Serbia in the Civil Society Context, summer 2005.

1.1.3 Membership in CSOs. Membership in civil society organizations has shown an upward trend from 1996 onwards. According to *Civil Society 2004* data, amongst the citizens of Serbia, 47% members of at least one civil society organization. This is a considerable increase of membership compared to 2001 when (according to the *World Values Survey* -WVS*)* 31.4% of the citizens claimed to be members of at least one CSO. This again is three times greater compared to 1996 (WVS) when the CSOs had a membership base of less than one seventh (15.3%) of citizens. (See Figure 1.1.3.a)

FIGURE III.1.1.3.a: **Membership in CSOs**
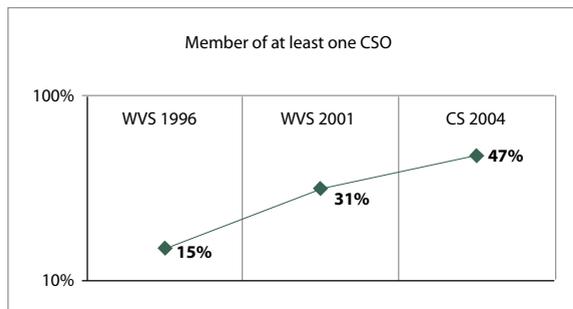
Regarding the type of organization currently attracting members, trade unions 27% and political parties 26% attract most people. The third place is taken by NGOs and sports associations with 19% of the population, followed by house tenants' committees and community committees (17%). Far fewer are members of environmental protection and conservation organizations – only 5%. (See figure 1.1.3.b.) Trade unions are the only type of organization which is represented in all six regions amongst the top five according to the number of citizens involved.

FIGURE III.1.1.3.b: **Membership in the types of CSOs**
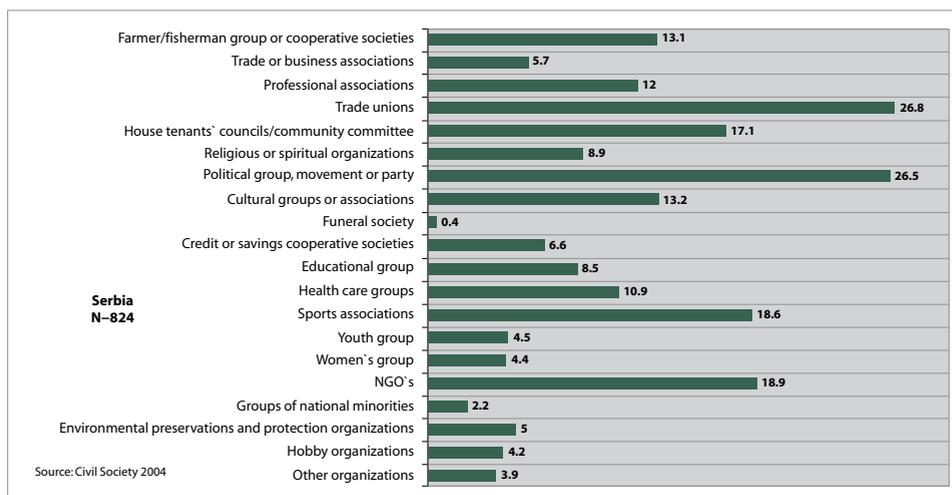
1.1.4 Volunteer work. Volunteer work is defined as actively providing support to members of the community (other than family, without payment and outside membership of any organization). The *Civil Society 2004 survey* indicates that approximately two fifths of citizens (43%) in Serbia had volunteered at least once during last year. There are almost an equal number of men and women volunteers, while in rural areas there is slightly more volunteer work than in urban areas. The most frequent kind of volunteer work was helping neighbours in the form of services, while other kinds of volunteer work are less common. (See table 1.1.4.)

TABLE **III.1.1.4: Volunteer work**

Types of volunteer work	% of citizens
Help to neighbours in form of services	28
Tutoring, advising	17
Material aid in goods and money	15
Non-specified help	15
Purchasing food stuffs and medicines for neighbours	11
Help in work	6
Assistance to handicapped and sick persons	6
Help to the elderly	4

Volunteer work remained almost the same during 2005, following *CeSID 2005* data, which indicates that individual help during the previous year had been provided by almost two fifths of citizens primarily to their neighbours and fellow citizens. This most often takes the form of small chores such as buying food stuffs and medicines for elderly people, assistance to children in learning, help to the sick and handicapped persons and, very rarely, aid in money and other material aid (5%).

Data of the *NGO Policy Group 2001*[28] indicated that the large majority (70%) of civil society organizations engage volunteers only *occasionally* and predominantly for short-term jobs, while only 12% of the organizations do not engage volunteers at all. The non-government organizations are far too focused on traditional "expertise", and are insufficiently focused on "amateur and volunteer" public work. Most organizations do not recruit volunteers in a planned and organized manner, while it is not uncommon for the main activists of organizations to work as volunteers in intermediate periods between two projects. As a result terms such as "members", "activists", "volunteers" and "employees" are most often used as synonyms and rarely to denote fundamentally different categories. For these very reasons 78% of the representatives of "associations of citizens and non-government organizations" believe that volunteer work is *inadequately represented* and *it is necessary to legally regulate it* - in the opinion of almost all representatives of these organizations (94%).[29] Another reason lies in the fact that volunteer centres, as a potential source of new personnel, are present in 13% of cases – according to the *Civil Initiatives 2005* survey.[30] The low level of volunteer engagement is directly linked to the high unemployment rate and the striking percentage of poverty, which shall be examined later.

The NAG members held that help to neighbours as one form of voluntarism contributes to increasing the percentage of volunteer work in total, and that volunteering *stricto sensu* is very rare in Serbia. Since the concept of volunteering is comprehensive and based on solidarity, regulation by law and organized within, for example, volunteer centres, individual

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[28] NGO Policy Group, *Third sector in Serbia – Status and Perspective*, 2001. (Draft version), Editor: Sanja Nikolin, *Center for the Development of Non-Profit Sectors and NGO Policy Group*, The survey used the sample of 821 NGOs in Serbia.

[29] From the «Initiatives for legal regulating of volunteers' status in Serbia-Source» research, carried out May – June 2005, conducted in 98 associations of citizens and non-government organizations with different activities in Serbia.

[30] *NGO sector in Serbia*, Civil Initiatives, Belgrade 2005. The research conducted on a sample of 516 NGOs. «Sample was stratified in three strata. Strata and realization of samples per strata is the following: 1. FENS members - 243 organizations; 2. Organizations which are not FENS members - 256 organizations; 3. Important organizations (not FENS members) - 17 organizations. These organizations are deliberately included in the sample because we believed that they had and still have great influence both on the sector and on our public life in general.» See more at: http://www.gradjanske.org/eng/civilno/centar/publikacije/index.htm (accessed 12 March 2006)

help to neighbours cannot be considered as volunteering here. The National Workshop participants considered the score of 2 to be appropriate only if volunteering is understood as the citizens' readiness to volunteer.

1.1.5 Collective community action. The *Civil Society 2004* survey revealed that 17% of citizens had attended community meetings and 21% had participated in local community actions in the 12 months prior to the survey. When considering how many participated in either event, the percentage goes up to 29%.

As indicated in the *CeSID 2005* survey, the citizens of Serbia who claim to have engaged collectively most often did so in actions connected in some way to the church – a quarter of them were involved either in their own environment, their own community (local community) or, in the case of approximately every seventh citizen, in the building where they live (house tenants' committees). In addition to church and neighbourhood, political parties are to be included, too. Just under one tenth are relatively active in trade unions and various associations, including humanitarian organizations and "sports, recreation and entertainment activities" - sports and supporters' groups, and cultural clubs. NGOs, specifically, engage approximately every twentieth respondent.

Generally, it may be concluded that the political profile of the citizens of Serbia has not altered significantly over the last ten years which is also shown in the research conducted in 2000 by the Center for Democratic Culture (See Figure 1.1.5.), while the following data only confirms this to a great extent.

FIGURE III.1.1.5:

Political profile of citizens of the Republic of Serbia in period 1996-2000

84% of citizens did not approach municipal services for providing legal assistance to citizens

94% of citizens do not participate in the work of local non-government organizations

81% does not know how many signatures should be obtained in case they would want to run as candidate at local elections for municipal assembly member

62% would be ready to participate in solidarity actions with journalists of local media if they were penalized based on the Public Information Act

77% has not required support from municipal assembly members in protecting their rights and interests

57% of citizens did not participate in common voluntary actions with their fellow-citizens in period 1996-2000

67% of citizens don't know the political map of Serbia – only 33% were could recognize in which municipalities the opposition parties ruled (1996-2000)
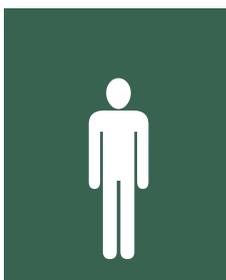
57% of citizens expressed their readiness, in the eve of the September 2000 elections, to participate in protest gathering in case of unfair annulment of results

66% did not check whether their name was entered in electoral register before the September 2000 elections

42% of citizens participated in mass gatherings, demonstrations, protests in period 1996-2000

When participating in NGO work, the citizens are mostly active in work humanitarian organization – 6% ; equally are active in human rights protection organizations and organization for protection of animals – 2%

Source: Center for Democratic Culture 2000 survey

More of these meetings were held in urban than in rural areas and meetings were attended by a greater number of males, while women recall this kind of meeting more than men. (57%), however, the number of men who participated at the meetings was somewhat greater 52%.

Participation in such actions both in rural areas and in towns is very low. The data indicates an extremely poor level of citizen participation, both in decision-making and collective activism at local community level.

In the opinion of the majority of the National Workshop participants, citizens perceive civil society through their political attitude and participate above all in those collective community actions that match their political preferences. The Workshop participants held that the citizens most engaged in civil society activities since 2000 are supporters of the Democratic Party. Referring to recent public opinion polls (*CeSID 2005*) the National Workshop participants said that activism and involvement in local civil society activities corresponds to people's political convictions, though CSOs should be non-political and neutral organisations. Another group of participants was convinced that citizens have the potential to participate actively in local community actions, but only in those they recognize as party neutral and being in their best interests. When political action or initiatives are imposed on a local community a wide positive response is not to be expected; confrontation is far more likely, except from the activists and followers of the political party which imposed the action.

1.2. DEPTH OF CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION IN CIVIL SOCIETY

This subdimension looks at the depth of various forms of citizen participation in t+he civil society of Serbia. Table III.1.2 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.1.2: Indicators assessing depth of citizen participation

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.2.1	Charitable giving	0
1.2.2	Volunteering	3
1.2.3	CSO membership	1

1.2.1 Charitable giving. This indicator refers to giving for charitable purposes defined as giving in money or in kind (food, clothes, footwear...). The *Civil Society 2004 survey* indicates that 56% of the citizens of Serbia have, in the last 12 months, given for charitable purposes (money or goods of value in money), the amounts ranging from 500 to 10,000 or more dinars (8 to 160 $US). (See Table 1.2.1.)

TABLE III.1.2.1: Charitable giving[31]

Amounts	% of citizens
500 dinars	25
501-1000 dinars	17
1001-5000 dinars	27
5001-10000 dinars	9
10001 and more dinars	7

Base: Respondents who have given money or goods
(N=974)

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[31]   Data from the 2004 Civil Society survey. For more details see Annex 3: Overview of CSI Research Methods

In rural areas, giving is, in most cases, limited to the amount of up to 500 dinars, while in urban areas the amount ranges from 1001 to 5000 dinars, where women most often give up to 500 and men up to 5000 dinars. The smallest amount of giving was the amount of 20 dinars, while the largest was of 200,000 dinars[32], (following the events in Kosovo in March 2004.)

The most frequent amount given during 2004 was 1,000 dinars (16 $ US). In terms of average salary[33] citizens allocated approximately 0.4% of funds annually for charitable purposes.

According to the *CeSID 2005* research, charitable giving in 2005, fell to one quarter of citizens who independently or through humanitarian organizations, provided aid in money or in kind. The fact that only 5% of citizens, women and men, were able to allocate more than 2,000 dinars, supports the view that to expect civil self-organizing help and solidarity to replace the social role of the Sate to a considerable extent in this kind of social environment, is extremely unrealistic because of people's limited capacities. (*CeSID 2005*).

When assessing charitable giving, NAG members concluded that the amounts of giving indicated in the surveys, although low and occasional today, point to the possibility that systematic charitable giving based on solidarity, mutual trust and stimulated by law, will be achieved when the economic situation for the majority of population has improved.

1.2.2 Volunteer work. Civil Society 2004 showed that 43% of the citizens of Serbia provide volunteer assistance. Amongst them, the majority are those that have dedicated 8.1 hours or more (42%) monthly to volunteer work, as is illustrated in the following table. There are somewhat more of this kind of volunteers in rural areas than in towns (41% in towns and 46% in rural areas) and amongst them there are slightly more men (44%) than women (40%).

TABLE III.1.2.2: Volunteer hours

Number hours	% of citizens
1-2 hours	9
2.1-5 hours	15
5.1-8 hours	7
8.1 or more hours	42
I don't know	27

Base: respondents who have given money
or goods (N=747 = 43%)

On the whole, based on data from September/October 2004, the citizens of Serbia dedicate roughly 120 hours annually, or **10 hours monthly** to assisting others, mainly by informal assistance to neighbours or family members, considered as volunteer work,

1.2.3 Membership in CSOs. The *Civil Society 2004* data indicates that among the 47% who are members of civil society, 56% of them are members of only one CSO, while 44% have multiple memberships, i.e. they are members of two or more organizations.

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[32]   This maximum amount of giving is recorded in Novi Pazar, West Serbia.

[33]   In Serbia, average earnings of the employed in December 2004 were 25,392 dinars (Source: Republic Office of Statistics www.statserb.sr.gov.yu/Pod/sao.htm), while research findings indicate that average income per house-hold October/November 2004 amounted to 21,037 dinars (337$US). (accessed 20 December 2005)

Compared to 1996 (the *World Values Survey*) single membership increased almost three times, while multiple membership increased six times (See Figure 1.2.3.), which is to be expected considering the intensive dynamics of registering new non-governmental organizations from the beginning of the nineties to the present day. From the 174 different, "civil associations, groups and initiatives" founded by 1995,[34] the pace at which new organisations were founded accelerated considerably so that, by end of 1999, there were already 947 of them recorded or registered. The growth in the number of organizations intensified particularly during 2000[35] when 255 were opened, and during 2001 when 347 new non-governmental organizations were registered. But from then on the number of newly-registered organizations in Serbia has declined continually. In all, out of the total of 1935 NGOs which are currently active in Serbia, 49% were registered by the end of 1999 and 51% have come into being since 2000.[36]

FIGURE III.1.2.3: Membership in CSOs
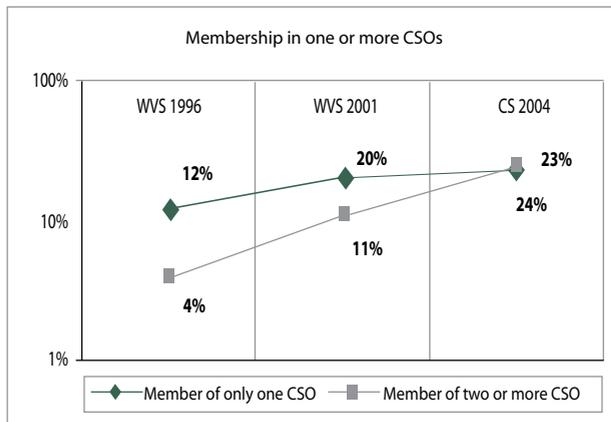
Among those who claim multiple memberships, most frequent are those who belong to two organizations (12%), while the number of those who are members of three organizations is only half as much (6%). Membership of four (3%), five (2%) and six or more (2%) organizations is rare. Observed by region, Belgrade pulls ahead according to the number of citizens who are involved in one organization, Vojvodina, leads for inclusion in two or four, while South Serbia has the greatest number of those included in three, five, six and more organizations. There are a slightly greater number of women who are members of one, three, four or five organizations, while a slightly greater number of men are included in two, six or more.

The NAG members and the participants of the National Workshop suggested that membership in CSOs should be divided into two types: *active* and *passive*. Referring to the widespread opinion that around 95% of CSOs members are *passive*, the National Workshop participants regarded this as a challenge, since it indicates that the majority of CSO members are willing to provide legitimacy for CSOs and their initiatives by becoming members and by paying the membership fee but are actually not willing to participate in any of the CSOs activities. It is reasonable to assume that the citizens' readiness to show initiative and to become active members of CSOs has been worn down over the years of demonstrations and protests during the 90s. For these reasons a score 1 was considered more accurate.

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[34]   See more in Žarko Paunović, *Serbia between the Past and the Future*, IDN and Forum for Ethnic relations, Belgrade, 1995, pg. 420.

[35]   It would be important to conduct a research on donor trends in order to assess the level of correlation between the availability of donor funding and the growth of the number of newly established CSOs.

[36]   Data from the CDNPS NGO Directory available at http://www.crnps.org (accessed 19 December 2005)

1.3. DIVERSITY OF CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPANTS

This subdimension examines the diversity of the civil society arena and examines how representative it is. It analyses whether all social groups participate equitably in civil society or whether there are any groups which are dominant or excluded. Table III.1.3 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.1.3: Indicators assessing diversity of civil society participants

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.3.1	CSO membership	2
1.3.2	CSO leadership	1
1.3.3	Distribution of CSOs around the country	1

1.3.1 CSO membership. CIVICUS specifies that the representation of five social groups, namely (1) women, (2) the rural population, (3) ethnic/language groups, (4) religious groups, and (5) the poor amongst members of CSOs should be used to assess the diversity of civil society participants.

The Civil Society 2004 survey indicated that the gender structure favours men (53%) above women included in CSOs (41%), while, according to the Regional Stakeholders, there is a preponderance of women in CSO membership in Eastern Serbia (79%) while in other regions, they are equally represented with men. The same survey showed that citizens whose income per household is below the poverty line[37] are slightly less involved (44%) in the work of civil organizations, as opposed to those whose income is above the poverty margin (52%). The situation is the same with the rural population: people from urban settlements are more (49%) involved in CSOs than those from rural environments (39%).

Looking at the regional level, a large majority of *Regional Stakeholders* (between 80 and 88%) stressed that groups of the poor are quite *inadequately represented* in CSO membership in Western and Eastern Serbia - the areas where there is the greatest percentage of poor households, particularly in rural areas. As for the rural population in both of these mostly rural regions, they are regarded as almost totally excluded, according to an even greater percentage of *Regional Stakeholders*. It is similar in Vojvodina where more than half of the *Regional Stakeholders* (68%) stated that the rural population is un-represented in this region. In the opinion of half the stakeholders in Vojvodina, (50%) ethnic and language minorities are equally represented only in Vojvodina while in the opinion of more than half the stakeholders, they are inadequately represented in Belgrade, Central, Western and South Serbia. Less than half the stakeholders (43%), mostly from Central and South Serbia and Belgrade, believe that religious minorities are also not adequately represented in CSO membership except in Vojvodina where they are equally represented in the opinion of 46% of the stakeholders.

When it comes to the type of organisations, both men and women are almost equally present in trade unions and NGOs, while in the case of political parties, there is a somewhat greater number of men. Significant differences are evident in case of agricultural cooperatives, fishermen's societies and sports associations where men are considerably more

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[37] Data on average monthly household income (21037 dinars) is grouped in two categories: households with an average income above the poverty line and households with an income below the poverty line. The value of the average consumer's basket for December 2004 was taken as a poverty line limit and it was 14,299 dinars (Source: Federal Office of Statistics www.szs.sr.gov.yu/korpa/korpa.htm), (statistical data excluding Kosovo), (accessed 22 December 2005)

involved (20%) than women (4%). Only 9% of women are included in sports associations, and an equal number of men are included in cultural organizations.

Discussing the representation of social groups the NAG members indicated that civil society in Serbia is characterised by great diversity of organisations, though poor and rural groups are not adequately represented at all, particularly in the rural areas and within the poorest regions. Religious and language minorities are also inadequately represented in most of the regions except Vojvodina.

1.3.2 CSO leadership. Social groups with inadequate representation in CSOs are similarly absent at the management level within organizations. *Regional Stakeholders* are thus of the opinion that the rural population is not represented in 77% of organizations, the poor not in 70%, while women are inadequately represented in 42%, and over-represented in 13% of organizations, which is the case in rural communities.

According to stakeholders there are not enough religious minorities in management structures - 40% of organizations, while they are equally represented in 22% of CSOs. As for the representation of the upper class and the elite, 34% of the regional actors state that they are not adequately represented, while 16% think them over-represented.

In the opinion of NGO representatives, those NGOs in which women occupy management positions, dominate in the mass media, creating the impression that women dominate in civil society in general. The *NGO Policy Group 2001* data indicate that, in general, men are far better represented in NGO committees than women and that only one quarter of the organizations have more women than men on their managing boards.

1.3.3 Distribution of CSOs. Both at the level of the Republic[38] and at the level of the State Union[39] there are no precise registers of CSOs, from which accurate data on the number and territorial distribution of CSOs in Serbia may be taken. More precisely, there is a register of CSOs at the level of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, but, according to officials, only aggregated data on CSOs are available. According to the officials from the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Governance of Serbia, the Draft Law on Association of Citizens, which this Ministry prepared in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, only now envisages regulating this area according to international conventions and European standards.[40]

For the above-mentioned reasons there is no correspondence between various sources related to the number of CSOs in Serbia. Officials from the State Ministry – the department responsible for the registration of CSOs - estimate that 9,300 CSOs were registered in compliance with the state law issued in 1990. Their estimation was that by the end of August 2005 their number would have increased to 9,500. However, the data of the State Office of Statistics[41] shows that in Serbia there are 19,129 registered social organizations and

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[38]   Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Governance - http://www.mpalsg.sr.gov.yu (accessed 28 December 2005) Only the list of political organizations of Serbia is available on this web-site of the republic Ministry. In words of senior registrars «only when the law on associations is passed will the work on the register of CSOs at Republic level commence».

[39]   State Ministry of Human and Minority Rights available at http://www.humanrights.gov.yu/srpski/index.htm (accessed 23 December 2005)

[40]   In the meantime, the officials stated, a «tacit agreement was made between the responsible state bodies that the CSOs will be registered at State level, and that political parties will continue to be registered with the Republic Ministry». The authorized persons from the sector responsible for registration of organizations say that records on the number on CSOs are also kept in the State Ministry.

[41]   Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia, Federal Office of statistics, Belgrade, 2000, pg. 47.

associations of citizens, which are geographically distributed in the manner shown in the following Table taken from the *NGO Policy Group 2001* research.

Type of organization	Serbia			
	Vojvodina	Central Serbia	Kosovo	Total
Associations of citizens	692	792	69	1,553
Social organizations	5,526	10,888	1,162	17,576
Total:	6,218	11,680	1,231	19,129

In Serbia, according to the *USAID Sustainability Index 2004*, there are 3,000 non-governmental organizations, 1,935 of which are active according to the *Directory of the CRNPS 2005*. According to the *Civil Initiatives 2005* survey, 8,476 legal entities and organizations or associations of citizens have been founded in Serbia since 1991, while in the NGO– Civil Initiatives Directory there are 1,286 organizations.

Regarding the geographical distribution of CSOs, 85% of the *Regional Stakeholders* assume that CSOs are predominantly concentrated in the bigger towns (41%) and urban areas of Serbia (44%). Only 8% of them believe that they are present in all but the most remote parts of the country, while 5% of them believe that CSOs are present even in the most remote areas.

Interviewed key informants and experts from all sectors hold uniformly that the concentration of CSOs is higher in big towns (Belgrade, Niš, Kragujevac) and in richer regions of the country i.e. Vojvodina. In communities with developed urban centres, the civil sector is also developed and operative, as are various kinds of CSOs. The representatives of all sectors, including representatives of local authorities and the private sector, unanimously assent that the distribution of CSOs is not disputable and that the differences in geographical distribution are to be explained by the following factors:

- economically more developed and more affluent parts of the country,
- politically and culturally more developed towns/places,
- higher level of education of those active/employed in CSOs,
- year in which CSOs were founded – organizations which were founded before 2000 have the advantage over those founded after the democratic changes.

Sandjak, in the opinion of representatives of all sectors from this region, is the most developed part of the country, as far as civil society is concerned.[42] A typical characteristic of the civil society sector in Eastern and Western Serbia is the dominance of one or two organizations in the region by which the whole civil sector is recognized, while the field of activity of smaller organizations is primarily focused on the local level. The civil society sector is, in the opinion of the majority of stakeholders, most developed/most numerous in Belgrade, Vojvodina and Central Serbia.

The NAG members indicated that the distribution of CSOs exhibits a negative trend due to the high level of migrations from rural to urban areas, which increases the population density and thus the density of CSOs in urban areas.

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[42]   It is important to note here that perceptions on the level of development do not necessarily reflect the reality.

1.4. ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL OF CSOS

This subdimension looks at the extent of infrastructure and internal organisation within civil society in Serbia. Table III.1.5 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.1.4: **Indicators assessing level of organisation**

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.4.1	Existence of umbrella bodies	1
1.4.2	Effectiveness of umbrella bodies	2
1.4.3	Self-regulation within civil society	1
1.4.4	Support infrastructure	2
1.4.5	International linkages	1

1.4.1 Existence of CSO umbrella bodies. Just slightly over a third (35%) of the *Regional Stakeholders* share the opinion that, in the CS sector which they know best, between 20 and 40 percent of organizations are included in federations, supporting bodies or networks, while just slightly less than a third (32%) holds that less than 20 percent of organizations are included in such bodies. One eighth (13%) believes that between 40 and 60 percent of organizations are included in various bodies, federations and networks, while only 9% believes that 60 percent of organizations are included. A total of 11% of the stakeholders expressed that they did not know or did not want to speak about this theme.

The majority of the *Regional Stakeholders* (89%) believe in the necessity of umbrella organizations, 75% believe that the key role of these organizations should be the *coordination of CSOs, the private sector and the Government.* 84% believe that CSOs have so far been mostly engaged in *educating members and distributing information.* Last year 39% of stakeholders requested services - mostly advisory, professional services and exchange of experience (24%) and information (18%). 30% were ready to pay for "umbrella" services, mostly for professional assistance (8%), mediation in applying for projects (3%), and for education/ training (6%). 21% of organizations have so far already occasionally paid for these services.

The data indicates that there has not been much change regarding networking amongst NGOs since 2001 when, according to the *NGO Policy Group* research*,* it was found that the "greatest number of organizations work independently and from one centre (66%), while 35% of them work as part of an NGO network." Today, just as then, it occasionally happens that CSOs confuse networking and/or functional cooperation with managing external relations such as communication and relations with other organizations. In the opinion of the Regional Stakeholders, a large number of CS organizations in Serbia are not fully conversant with the concepts of networking, coalition building and CSO-federations. One possible explanation is that the *network concept* is still today most often used as a synonym or is completely equated with the concepts of *umbrella organizations* or *federations (the NGO Policy Group 2001).*

With regard to coalitions, umbrella organizations and CSO-networks, two parallel processes are taking place. One refers to national and regional coalitions, which have already been established for several decades and which have mostly become moribund or are dieing out or which died out during the break-up of Yugoslavia. These are commonly coalitions of persons with disabilities, scouts associations, youth unions, once with large memberships, clubs of mountaineers, fishermen and hunters etc, and even some social organizations, a few of which have adjusted their mode of work to the current conditions, and which

are very active today (such as the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities[43] or the Research Station Petnica).[44] The second process is the current establishment of new federations, coalitions and networks, which are mostly formed within a group dealing with the same, similar or neighbouring problems and are rarely of national character. Both of these processes have been ongoing since the beginning of the nineties; the first one being more intensive during the first half of the nineties, and the second intensifying from 2000 onward. This also explains the relatively small number of CSOs which are included in them.

The *Regional Stakeholders* state that, to date, there are 103[45] different networks, which means that their number has been reduced, compared to the data from the *NGO Policy Group 2001* research according to which there were 181 different networks. Today, the federation most often mentioned is FENS –33%, the umbrella organization the CDNPS –10% and Civil Initiatives - 8% and various women's networks (5%), while a considerable number of stakeholders mentioned belonging to organizations which, in fact, were not networks. The *USAID Sustainability Index 2004* states that the, "Federation of NGOs (FENS) is still the largest coalition of NGOs and, although it brings together 400 members, some of the most active organizations have not yet joined it. The Government is not in partnership with NGOs unless as a condition imposed by international donors. Exceptions to this are a few organizations founded by ruling political parties, because they have received considerable attention in state media. Coalitions of organizations are often made on an *ad hoc* basis in response to particular issues/problems and last only during the campaign".

1.4.2 Effectiveness of CSO umbrella bodies. In the opinion of more than half (52%) the *Regional Stakeholders*, the CSO umbrella bodies are *moderately efficient* in fulfilling planned goals. That they are *for the most part inefficient* is the opinion of somewhat more then one fourth (27%) of the stakeholders, while five percent stated that they are completely *inefficient*, and only 12% considered them *efficient*.

The explanation for such assessments, as stated by the *Regional Stakeholders,* is associated to their role, and particularly to the services which they provide or should provide. In the opinion of the large majority (80% – 89%) of the stakeholders, the most important services which the umbrella bodies should provide to their members, besides common provision of information related to sources of financing and calls for proposals for projects, are the following:

- Organizing training for network members

- Representing and protecting the interests of organizations members of network/ federation

- Ensuring communication with lawmakers, providing updated legal changes and amendments of regulations, primarily in relation to the tax system, then information

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43   The Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities is an independent, non-party, social organization in which municipalities and towns voluntarily associate for mutual cooperation, exchange of experiences and joint activities, for the purpose of common interests specified in this Statute, law and other enactments, as stipulated in current Statute of this organization founded in 1953.

44   During the interwievs *Regional Stakeholders* were asked to name the network to which their organisation belongs.

45   RC Petnica is an independent, non-government and non-profit organization, unique in Yugoslavia and in this part of Europe. It was founded in summer 1982 in the premises of the old elementary school in the village of Petnica near Valjevo. The founders are young people, students and high-school pupils interested in science, and who are not satisfied with the existing schooling system and the place of science in it. For this, they had great support, amongst others, from a number of reputable scientists, university professors and academicians, as well as the town of Valjevo and the Young Researchers of Serbia. – as stated on the web-site of this non-government organization.

in the sphere of legal regulations on the work of CSOs (on taxes, manner of operation, engagement of personnel,...),

■ Keeping records of member organizations and building databases on network/ federation members,

■ Advancing the work of CSOs as a whole and per sectors, exchanging databases, sending bulletins covering various fields, electronic magazines, publishing data-bases on network/federation members,

■ Lobbying for interests of network/federation members

■ Financial support to network/federation members

■ Providing professional assistance to network/federation members, enabling hori-zontal transfer of knowledge on setting up projects, mode of work, communication, strategic planning, business plans, etc.

■ Coordinating activities and cooperation of network/federation members, for improving mutual communication and cooperation, and particularly for creating platforms for joint action towards the authorities or for carrying out some activities related to certain target groups, or for developing interests of regions or even the entire country,

■ Technical support to network/federation members.

However, a smaller number of stakeholders share the opinion that umbrella organizations should be fund providers, announce calls for proposals and finance CSO activities.

Average scores of umbrella body efficiency are given in the following Table.

TABLE III.1.4.2: Average scores of efficiency of CS organization umbrella bodies

	Average score
Organizing training for network members	3.56
Representing interests of organizations members of network/federation	3.01
Keeping records of member organizations and building databases on network/ federation members	3.33
Publishing databases on network/federation members	2.99
Lobbying for interests of network/federation members	2.82
Financial support to network/federation members	2.09
Providing professional assistance to network/federation members	3.08
Coordinating activities and cooperation of network/federation members	3.07
Technical support to network/federation members	2.68

Discussing the effectiveness of CSO umbrella bodies, the participants at the National Workshop challenged the score of 2, since it indicates that only rare umbrella bodies should be considered as effective – their effectiveness is closely related to their coverage level - the higher the level, the less effective they are.

1.4.3 Self-regulation. This indicator refers to measuring self-regulation within CSOs and within civil society as a whole. The majority of the *Regional Stakeholders* (90%) argue that the

CS organizations, of which they are members have rulebooks on business operations and other required documents regulating to the business operations of organizations. At the same time, 6% of organizations do not have these rule books, 14% thereof are from Central and 10% from South Serbia, while representatives of 20% of organizations from Vojvodina state that they do not know whether their organization has or does not have a rule book on business operations.

As for the question "Have there been efforts made within civil society to establish codes of conduct or other means of self-regulation of CSOs"[46] the majority (53%) of the Regional Stakeholders shared the opinion that the *efforts are at an initial phase and that the effects are still very modest*. (See Table 1.4.3.)

TABLE III.1.4.3: CSOs self-regulation

	%
There were no efforts made	15
Efforts are in initial phase and that the effects are still very modest	53
There are some effects of self-regulation but engagement and impact of CSOs are modest	24
There are mechanisms of self-regulation and they are very effective. Their impact is obvious	3
Don't know	4

A smaller portion of the *Stakeholders,* mostly from Central Serbia, believe, "that civil society has no need for self-regulation" and state, "that the sector does not need a written code, because every organization in its statute has regulated mutual relations and behaviour, so there is no need for additional regulation. In a broader sense, in the CS there are no written, but rather unwritten rules and they are abided by most of the CS actors. However, these rules are not stringent and refer to mutual respect."

One fifth of the *Stakeholders* are of the opinion that regulation should refer only to those spheres which would represent a common denominator for various kinds of association. This group believes that a code which would apply to all CSOs should be made, and that such mechanisms would be particularly useful to smaller organizations since they require more assistance and equal opportunities for advancement. This group of *Stakeholders* doubts that any regulatory mechanisms would be respected due to the customary practice of ignoring rules. Because of which, as stated, it would be necessary to work on raising awareness of and respect for these rules in parallel with the process of preparing the code.

The majority emphasizes that there is a need for a CSO code of conduct, although they doubt the possibility of preparing one code that could apply to a very wide spectrum of CSOs. The solution they propose is to prepare a code[47] for NGOs and separate ones for various sectors (political parties, media,[48] trade unions, etc.). This group points out, "certain kinds of abuse occur in joint work on projects. Some of the Stakeholders are concerned about projects being stolen. It is due to this perception that they do not respond to calls for

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[46]   Question B6 from the Regional Stakeholders Questionnaire.

[47]   A smaller number of Stakeholders, primarily from South Serbia and Belgrade, highlights that «there was an initiative within FENS for preparing a FENS code in which around 300 organizations would be included, however, such a code has not yet been adopted.«

[48]   At the "*Freedom and responsibility: preserving of expression through media self-regulation*" round table organized by the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, in cooperation with the Media Center, on December 8, 2005, the need for making a uniform code of ethics and forming an independent, impartial Media Council was emphasized.

proposals, since they fear this may only be a ruse to collect ideas. Joint efforts are sometimes presented as personal ones, based on which financial resources are obtained."

Most of the *Stakeholders* also believe that civil society necessitates mechanisms of self-regulation. Through these, better mutual relations and communication would be established. They would, primarily, regulate mutual relations, exchange of information, rules of work and behaviour and protect the interests of organizations within civil society. They need to cover basic issues such as modes of organizing and goals of work, and should become the base for establishing and developing relations further. Organizations and individuals that have been working for many years and having achieved certain positive results believe that new people disrespecting rules may jeopardize the reputation of the sector. That is why the mechanisms of self-regulation need to include the following:

- respect of the organization's statute and goals,
- ethical codes which regulate mutual respect and consideration,
- protection against unfair competition and rivalry,
- protection against unfair competition for financial resources,
- defining and respecting the criteria for joining network and umbrella organizations,
- protection against stealing project ideas, concealing data,
- patenting ideas and projects, rules of mutual relations - ethics of mutual relations,
- rules of work on joint projects and rules of behaviour,
- providing equal opportunities and conditions for all organizations,
- promoting certain moral norms and virtues such as truth, honesty, mutual help and cooperation, which should apply to all CSOs,
- protection of sectors against damage to reputation.

As for the issue of creating certain self-regulation mechanisms, it can be concluded, that the stakeholders insisted especially on creating an ethical code, which would eradicate malpractice and establish behavioural norms and mutual understanding and relations. The creation of other standards relevant to developed civil societies, such as quality of services, quality standards, organizational procedures, procedures of joint action, inter-sectoral cooperation, etc. were given less priority.

1.4.4 Support Infrastructure. The concept of *supporting infrastructure* includes those institutions and organizations whose primary goal is to support civil society development (e.g. resource centres, organizations for capacity building and training, technical support programs, databases, networks).

In the opinion of 50% of the *Regional Stakeholders,* there is *limited* infrastructural support in Serbia, only 2% of them believe that the support was *well developed*, while 14% state that such support *did not exist at all*, and 32% believe that there was a *medium developed* infrastructural support.

Although it is the dominant opinion in all regions that there is limited infrastructural support, the opinion that such support does not exist at all is also present in all regions, most noticeably in Vojvodina (25%) and South Serbia (16%). Infrastructural support is well developed for 4% of the organizations of Vojvodina, and for 3% of the organizations of South and Eastern Serbia.

USAID SI Infrastructural support:
2004. = 3.7
2003. = 3.4
2002. = 3.4
2001. = 3.0
2000. = 4.0
1999. = 5.0
1998. = 5.0

The *USAID Sustainability Index 2004* states that the "greatest center for support to NGOs, is located in Belgrade, has opened offices in several regions of the country and is primarily a center for gathering and disseminating data, which are of importance to NGOs. The EU and other international donors have recently assisted in creating other NGO information centers as well, which provide information on NGO activities and project call for proposals by EU donors."

The same source states that, "the Federation of NGOs (FENS) is still the largest coalition of NGOs and, although it brings together 400 members, some of the most active organizations have not yet joined. The Government does not engage in partnerships with NGOs unless conditioned by international donors. The exception to this are a few organizations, founded by ruling political parties, because they have received considerable attention in the state media. Coalitions of organizations are often made on an *ad hoc* basis and to respond to particular issues and problems. They last only during the campaign". According to the *USAID Sustainability Index 2004*, the Infrastructural Support Index has, compared to the nineties, become medium developed with an Index of 3.7. [49]

1.4.5 International linkages. This indicator looks at the extent to which Serbian CSOs are linked to global civil society. In response to the question, "how many civil society organizations coming from the part of civil society you know best, belong to international networks?"[50], more than a half (53%) of the *Regional Stakeholders* say that the *number is very small,* 10% believe that a *considerable number of them are included*, while 27% believe that a *moderate number of them are included.* Only 3% of the Stakeholders state that not one is included. It is indicative that, when observed across the regions, the assessment that there are a considerable number of organizations included is found in all regions, save in Belgrade.

Also, the *Stakeholders* gave an almost identical response to the question, "How many civil society organizations, which you know best, participate in international events related to the civil sector?".[51]

According to the data of CDNPS from Serbia, 10.6%[52] of non-governmental organizations operate at the international level, while the data of the *Civil Initiatives 2005* research indicates that, "26% of the NGOs are members of international networks. International projects, that is, cooperation projects with NGOs from neighbouring countries were carried out by 48%[53] of the interviewed NGOs. NGOs from Belgrade have cooperated with countries of the region considerably more often, while only every third NGO from Central Serbia has had that kind of cooperation. Members of domestic and international networks state the following as

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49   Which is within the value of 3-5, meaning moderately developed – mid-transition.

50   Question B10 for the Questionnaire for the Regional Stakeholders.

51   Question B11 for the Questionnaire for the Regional Stakeholders.

52   Out of 1,935 active NGOs – at state level 30.4% are operating, at Republic level 9.4%, at local 35.1%, and for 14.4% there are no data.

53   Out of the total of 516 NGOs.

being the main reasons for joining a network: achieving goals and joint interests more easily, need for jointly resolving problems (63%), development of the NGO sector (49%)."

The extent of the linkages with international organizations depends on the areas of activity of the individual organizations or groups/networks of organizations, and linkages occur most often on an individual basis. For a smaller number of organizations, international cooperation is a basic goal and primary mission. This is particularly the case for those countries, which were created during the nineties in the territory of former Yugoslavia (e.g. the Center for Regionalism of Novi Sad) or in the case of the accession of Serbia to EU and promotion of European values (e.g. the European Movement in Serbia[54]), or for cooperation with other Balkan countries. A small number of organizations have intensive, continual and long-term cooperation with international organizations (e.g. the Fund for Humanitarian Law), and here with regard to the Hague Tribunal defendants. A certain number of organizations occasionally or on an *ad hoc* basis realized cooperation on issues related to reducing corruption, human rights, poverty reduction, persons with disabilities, etc. A certain number of organizations realize international cooperation through education and exchange of experiences, while a large majority see international organizations as key sources for finance.

1.5. INTER-RELATIONS IN CIVIL SOCIETY

This subdimension analyses the relations among civil society actors in Serbia. Table III.1.6 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.1.5: **Indicators assessing inter-relations within civil society**

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.5.1	Communication between CSOs	2
1.5.2	Cooperation between CSOs	1

1.5.1 Communication. In Serbia, there are no magazines or bulletins that deal with civil society as a whole. There are several magazines or bulletins, which deal with issues related to the work of non-governmental organizations (e.g. *Mreža*[55] and *Neprofitni sektor*[56]). For example, trade unions have an electronic newsletter (e.g. Bulletin *Nezavisnost*), as well as social organizations (e.g. magazine *Local self-governance*[57]) etc. Bigger non-governmental organizations also have various kinds of bulletins. Smaller organizations mainly rely on statements, leaflets and direct provision of information to the interested public.

Communication within sectors is developed to some extent only within groups of organizations involved in similar or neighbouring spheres: associations of persons with disabilities, ecological organizations, women's networks, association of judges, organizations for displaced persons and refugees, professional associations, trade unions, fishermen,

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[54]   The Movement is part of the international European non-governmental organization the European Movement (Mouvement European - European Movement) based in Brussels.

[55]   The Center for Development of Non-profit Sectors bulletin (published since 1996, so far 30 issues published). Also, on the CRNPS web-site, news from civil sector is published and electronic bulletin "Weekly review of news on non-government organizations" sent.

[56]   The Center for Development of Non-profit Sectors bulletin (published since 1996, so far 30 issues published). Also, on the CRNPS web-site, news from civil sector is published and electronic bulletin «Weekly review of news on non-government organizations» sent.

[57]   Monthly magazine of the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities social organization - 'Local self-governance' (so far 8 issues published).

hunters, ecologists, etc. Thus these groups act like "interest groups", with often weak internal communication and no communication between various interest groups.

Due to these reasons, more than half (55%) of the *Regional Stakeholders* hold that mutual communication of civil society actors is *average,* 14% believe that it is *poor*, less than one fifth (24%) is of the opinion that it is *good,* and in the opinion of only 5% of them it is *very good*.

1.5.2 Cooperation. To the question "are there cases of civil society organizations forming alliances /networks or coalitions for the purpose of accomplishing some common interest?"[58] just over one third of the *Regional Stakeholders* (38%) answered that there is a *very small number* of examples. The opinion of other Stakeholders is divided between those who believe that such alliances do not exist (5%), then that there is a *moderate number* (29%), while a quarter (26%) of them state that they *do not know* whether there are any of such alliances and coalitions at all. Only 2% believe that there are a *significant number* of such alliances whereby most of them are in Belgrade, while in the opinion of 14% of the Stakeholders such cooperation *does not exist at all* in Vojvodina, Western Serbia (10%) and South Serbia (3%).

This is also supported by data from the *Civil Initiatives 2005* research where, out of 516 NGOs, "98% have so far had contacts with other NGOs.[59] Amongst different types of cooperation, those that are most often mentioned are: mutual assistance in activities (77% of those who have cooperated), cooperation within NGO networks (65%), implementing joint projects (64%), training for members (50%), joint requests to donors (48%), support in equipment and making premises available for use (44%). The difference between the members and non-members of FENS is only in cooperation within the NGO network - FENS members have more often cooperated within the NGO network than those non-governmental organizations which do not belong to FENS (78% against 54%)."

In contrast to the nineties[60], today, joint work on issues of social and common interests is rare, is established on an *ad hoc* and one-time basis and among a small number of organizations. The least included segments of civil society in these alliances and coalitions are Roma non-governmental organizations, with which cooperation is established only on an ad-hoc basis to resolve the Roma's problems.

More than half the Stakeholders cannot identify any example of such networks/alliances or coalitions, while amongst those who can, the names of umbrella bodies are mainly stated

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58   Question B9a from the Questionnaire of Regional Stakeholders.

59   "Here it should be emphasized that contact meant any form of cooperation (support to the activities and in equipment, cooperation in network, jointly announcing projects...)." is in form of note in this Civil Initiatives publication entitled *NGO sector in Serbia*. Publication is available at:

      http://www.gradjanske.org/eng/civilno/centar/publikacije/index.htm (accessed 12 March 2006)

60   Both the USAID *Sustainability Index 2004 and NGO Policy Group 2001* research show that NGOs, during the nineties, through creating ad hoc networks and movements, based on their own experience learnt about the importance of networking, joint activities and solidarity with other organizations. During the last ten years in Serbia, some hundred NGO networks and coalitions operated at all levels: local, regional, national. At that time, this experience was acquired through joint activities focused on eradicating political barriers and the NGOs would most often congregate to resolve a specific common problem where such cooperation would mostly be short-term. So, «at the beginning of the nineties, an anti-war movement in Serbia took place, followed by students' movement which emerged every second year (1992, 1994, 1996...), then by the civil movement for the protection of election results in 1996/97, Civil Movement of Serbia and Yugoslav Action (during NATO bombing campaign), Council for Cooperation of NGOs, NGO Union of Serbia, National Movement Otpor, Izlaz 2000 – NGO for democratic and fair elections, Forum of Yugoslav NGOs, etc. The activities of these networks often do not have continuity, so that sometimes it is very difficult to determine whether the same networks still exist.»

and only several examples of coalitions, in which, in the opinion of Stakeholders, a minimum of 5 and, very seldom, a maximum of 25 organizations took part. These are the following:

- Ecological movements, fishermen, hunters and ecologists - the «Danube problem» – 4%
- Coalition for acquitting Serbian people of responsibility» – 4%
- Protection of human rights – 2%,
- Bridges of the Balkans, Balkan Network, Balkan Cult – 3%
- Ad hoc coalitions at local level - 3%
- Working on Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency NGO, Red Cross – 2%
- 9th May, the day in memory of AIDS victims– 2%
- Campaign against drugs in Novi Pazar – 2%
- Urban in, Kultcentar, Belgrade organizations in combating drugs, impact on the law – 2%
- Students' Union of Kragujevac and Union of the Blind – 2%
- Fruit-Growers and Stock Farmers - development of agriculture – 2%
- Trade unions, schools and other NGOs together in combating drugs – 1%
- Civil Forum and Women's Network in Novi Pazar – 1%
- Coalition against discrimination – 1%

It may be concluded that civil society actors both inadequately and irregularly cooperate among themselves on issues of common interest, and that the number of active networks and coalitions is modest, even among those focusing on the local level. Networks and coalitions at national and regional level are very rare.

Validating the score of 1 for cooperation among CSOs the National Workshop participants expressed two opposing views: some predicted that cooperation would decrease while others were convinced that it will increase. The first group believed that the lack of cooperation among CSOs is a reflection of the fact that CSOs do not currently have a "common enemy" as they did in the 1990s when they were forced to work together. Therefore cooperation will decrease even more in the future unless certain common goals and interests are identified. The other group of participants shared the view that the main problem lies in the lack of legal regulations but believed that as soon as the law on CSOs was introduced, cooperation would increase, since the need of citizens to be organized exists. Another severe problem is the fact that international donors are leaving the country while the national sources of funding are still not available to the extent needed.

1.6. Civil society resources

This subdimension examines the resources available for civil society organisations in Serbia. Table III.1.7 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.1.6: Indicators assessing civil society resources

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
1.6.1	Financial resources	1
1.6.2	Human resources	2
1.6.3	Technical and infrastructural resources	1

1.6.1 Financial resources. In the opinion of the *Regional Stakeholders,* financial resources, of CSOs *are completely inadequate,* or *inadequate* for 52% of CSOs, while for 40% of CSOs they are *to a great extent adequate* or *adequate.* (See Figure 1.6.1.)

FIGURE III.1.6.1: CSOs financial resources

How adequate is the financial resource base of the CSOs to achieve their defined goals? (in %)

Source: Regional Stakeholder Survey 2005
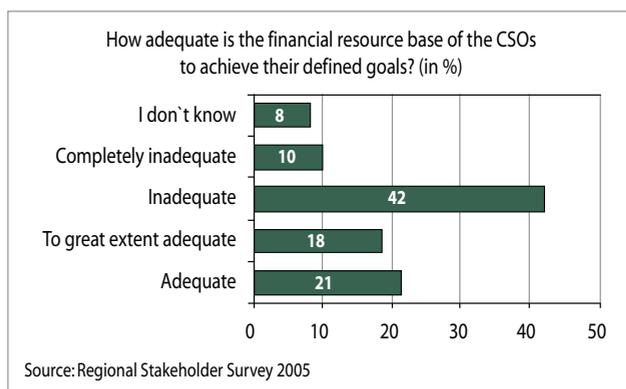
Following the estimations of the *Stakeholders* the financial insecurity of most NGOs has grown as of 2001 since when the number of international donors has been continually decreasing. According to the *NGO Policy Group* data, the shortage of financial resources was a major problem in 2001, as stated by 60% of the organizations, and 63% of them stated in December 2004 that they did not succeed in securing the necessary resources for work in 2005 (the *Civil Initiative 2005).* Currently, the number of financially stable organizations has been halved compared to 2001. (See table 1.6.1.)

TABLE III.1.6.1: Comparative overview of NGO financial status in the period 2001-2005

Financial status compared to previous period	Source: *NGO Policy Group 2001* (organizations in %)	Source: *Civil Initiatives 2005* (organizations in %)
Finances remained unchanged	30*	25**
Finances increased	55*	30**
Finances reduced	11*	39**
Assessment of current financial situation status of organizations:	Source: *NGO Policy Group 2001* (organizations in %)	Source: *Civil Initiatives 2005* (organizations in %)
Financial status is very poor, barely surviving	--	29
Financial status is moderately poor	--	26
Financial status is moderate	--	29
There are no financial barriers, Financial status is good, excellent	31	15

* The data refers to estimation compared to the previous year (2000)

**The data refers to estimation in the past 3 years

In the opinion of the *Regional Stakeholders,* CSOs from Central (61%), South (59%) and Eastern Serbia (54%) have inadequate finances, while in other regions there is a slightly smaller number of organizations with inadequate finances – ranging between 43% and 46%.

Financial resources are *to a great extent adequate, or adequate* for 57% of organizations in Belgrade, while in other regions this assessment holds for 32% of organizations in Vojvodina, and 45% of organizations in Eastern Serbia. In Vojvodina and Western Serbia, the majority of *Stakeholders did not know* how to assess the adequacy of finances.

The National Workshop participants emphasized that those CSOs whose financial reports are not transparent have not accomplished so-called fluent legitimacy, by making financial reports publicly available.

1.6.2 Human resources. The opinion of the *Regional Stakeholders* regarding the capacities and adequacy of the people working in organizations is extremely high: from the perspective of achieving their goals, 89% of them believe that the skills of people in their organizations are adequate (58%) or to a great extent adequate (31%). Only 5% of the *Stakeholders* regarded human resources to be *inadequate*, while there was no opinion that they were *entirely inadequate*. Dissatisfaction with human resources was expressed in all regions, except in Belgrade. Most of them are from Eastern Serbia (9%), Central Serbia (8%), South Serbia (6%), Vojvodina (4%) and Western Serbia (%).

These assessments were to be expected knowing that the educational profile of people engaged in NGOs is extremely high, compared to the educational structure of most of the citizens and those employed in other sectors. According to the *NGO Policy Group 2001* data, most of the NGO activists have a university degree (58%), 8% higher education, 5% completed master's studies, 4% are doctors of science, while one fifth (20%) completed high school, and there are only 3% of activists who have only completed elementary school, while only 0.94% of them have not completed elementary education. In the meantime, 80% of the organizations, "organized training for their staff" (the *Civil Initiatives 2005*), which were attended by, "managers and some of the members" (55%) or all members of the organization (36%). "The general assessment of the staff's educational level is 3.59 (on a 5-degree scale where 1 means *not satisfied at all* and 5 means *completely satisfied*), which corresponds to a moderate satisfaction regarding this issue." (*Civil Initiatives 2005*).

The human resource problems which the CSOs are still facing today are the following:

- There is high turnover of staff - it is easy to join an CSO and even easier to leave it; there is no adequate mechanism to sustain and renew teams. High turnover of staff is draining and put demands on staff time. There are a large number of members, "on paper" but as far as volunteer work is concerned, only a few of them are in fact active. There is great fluctuation of staff, management and responsibility (as stated by the *Regional Stakeholders* and representatives of international organizations, the *Argument 2002*)

> Our non-government organizations have become a source of possible careers. I know people who have been professional activists for 15 years, although this is contrary to the logics of activism. In Western countries, the civil sector has people who have excess time and money, while here this was not possible, and the professionals could not be avoided, but the problem is that some stayed too long. Žarko Puhovski, founder of Croatian Helsinki Committee. Daily *POLITIKA, November 28, 2005.*

- 70% of organizations only occasionally engage volunteers (*NGO Policy Group 2001*)

- 76% of organizations employ new staff depending on projects and without a developed system or procedure. (Civil Initiatives 2005)

1.6.3 Technological and infrastructural resources. The evaluation of technical equipment and infrastructural organization given by the *Regional Stakeholders 2005* is the following:

■ A total of 44% of organizations is dissatisfied, and believe that they have *inadequate* (35%) or *completely inadequate* (9%) technical equipment and infrastructure. In addition to defective and obsolete existing equipment, there is also a shortage of premises, difficulties in covering basic administrative expenses, maintenance of equipment, and acquisition of legal software. The number of organizations belonging to this group has fallen slightly compared to 2001 when more than a half (53%) of organizations were dissatisfied with equipment and infrastructure (the *NGO Policy Group*). This is also confirmed by the *Civil Initiatives 2005* research in which it is stated that today "1/3, and sometimes as much as a 1/2 of the organizations complain that the situation in their organization is unsatisfactory regarding technical equipment - computers, telephone lines, faxes, vehicles, cameras, etc."

■ A total of 51% of the organizations, in the opinion of the *Regional Stakeholders,* considers that their technological and infrastructural resources are *to a great extent adequate* (33%) or *adequate* (17%). The number of organizations in this group has increased compared to 2001 when, based on self-assessment, 40% stated that they had good working conditions, while only 6% of them believed that these conditions were excellent. The organizations which have their own premises and the equipment necessary for efficient work, are those which are satisfied (the *NGO Policy Group 2001*). The *Civil Initiatives 2005* research indicates that today only 6% of organizations own premises, while as many as 22% have none at all. The remaining 72% of the NGOs either rent or have premises given to them for use (for which they have to pay rent). Over 3/4 of the NGOs own at least one computer, printer and telephone line. Over ½ also have a modem, fax and scanner. As may be expected, larger organizations are better equipped, as well as those founded earlier on and those based in Belgrade, as stated in the *Civil Initiatives 2005* research.

The increased number of organizations having adequate technical infrastructure may be explained also as a consequence of the "Support to Civil Society in Eastern and Western Serbia" project which was implemented during 2003 by the Fund for Support of Civil Society in Serbia, founded on a behalf of the consortium - the European Movement in Serbia and Expert Network (with the support of the European Agency for Reconstruction). This Fund has provided support in form of technical equipment to non-governmental organizations from 51 municipalities (the *Civil Initiatives 2005*).

Across regions, in the opinion of the *Regional Stakeholders* 2005, 9% of the organizations had inadequate technical infrastructure, 47% of these organizations are based in Central Serbia, 44% in South Serbia, and 42% in Eastern Serbia.

In the opinion of National Workshop participants, the score of 2 for the *technological and infrastructural resources* is considered to be too high as it implies, not only having computers and printers, but also having legal software and legal anti-virus programs and most of the CSOs actually do not have these at present. Moreover, the CSOs do not even have the financial resources to afford legal software and subsequent equipment and this is another reason why this score was considered too high and should be lower, even though legal software is more common in non-profit than in other sectors.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of civil society's structure revealed that this dimension is assessed as the weakest among the CSI dimensions. Focusing on the questions of its size, composition, shape and contours, the CSI analysis revealed that this dimension is weak in terms of active participation, infrastructure, cohesion and resources. Although backed by relevant amounts of international aid since the early 90s, civil society's structure appears to have partly lost its strength after 2000.

Comparing its current membership with that one from the 90s, it appears that civil society in Serbia has grown significantly with almost half of the respondents to the CSI population survey (47%) being members of at least one CSO (compared to 15% in 1996). Even though the number of citizens who are members of at least one CSO is three times greater and multiply membership is six times higher today, the level of citizen participation in non-partisan political actions fell significantly, particularly after October 2000. The data indicates that during the 1990s, in times of war, sanctions and authoritarian regime 45% of the citizens took part in some of these activities, while the number of those active was almost halved (25%) after the regime was overthrown in October 2000. The most frequent forms of political actions during the 90s were protests and demonstrations (39%) while the most frequent form after nowadays is signing petitions (21%). Among the CSOs with the highest membership are trade unions (27%), political parties/movements (26.5%), NGOs and sports groups (both 19%) as well as tenants' associations (17%). Very few citizens are members of environmental protection organizations – only 5%. Most CSOs do not have volunteers on a regular basis and volunteering is characterized mainly by informal assistance to neighbours or family members. The public does not practice a culture of giving, since charitable giving occurs only in response to tragic events or conditions of hardship. Charitable giving on a regular basis and in a systematic manner is still not common in Serbia, mostly due to the restrictive economic situation and the lack of trust among citizens. The perception of strong apathy and disengagement of Serbian citizens from civil society is widespread and citizens participate in CSOs' activities rather superficially, even in cases when they are actually members of such organizations. In terms of citizens' participation in collective community actions, only a small minority attends meetings (17%) or participates in local community actions (21%). In general, looking at the individual level, the assessment of civil society's structure indicated that personal activism at the local level is still based mainly on the political preferences of individuals, as was the case during the 90s.

Other specific areas of concern were identified, mainly: insufficient communication and cooperation among CSOs; lack of self-regulatory mechanisms on a sectoral basis and moderately efficient and regionally distributed support organisations. Communication within sectors is developed to some extent only within groups of organizations involved in similar or neighbouring spheres, such as associations of persons with disabilities, ecological organizations, women's networks, association of judges, etc. Thus these groups act more like interest groups, which communicate amongst themselves (most often on an occasional and rarely a regular basis) but seldom with external actors. Moreover, civil society actors cooperate irregularly on issues of common interest, and the number of active networks and coalitions is modest, even among those organizations focusing on the local level. Networks and coalitions at national and regional level are very rare. The lack of cooperation among CSOs is a reflection of the fact that CSOs no longer have a "common enemy" as they did in the 1990s, when they had to work together if they wanted to achieve their goals. The geographical distribution of CSOs exposes the clearly urban character of these organizations. Correspondingly, representation of the rural population and the poor in membership and leadership of CSOs is very limited.

The major concern with regard to the structure dimension is the limited financial basis available to CSOs, which stems from the fact that the majority of NGOs are strongly characterized by foreign donor dependency and that international donors are phasing out their financial commitment to the country. Amid scarce resources, solidarity among CSOs is being replaced by competition. The general lack of stable financial resources is a severe obstacle to sustainability in the sector – which is underlined by the fact that in 2001, 31% of surveyed organisations assessed themselves as being in a good to excellent financial situation while the share had dropped to 15% in 2005. Consequently, another severe problem is the lack of legal computer software and legal anti-virus programs - many of the CSOs do not even have the financial resources to afford legal software and subsequent equipment. Human resources appear to be both a major strength and a major weakness for civil society in Serbia: the enthusiasm and dedication of highly qualified personnel in CSOs is seen as a major strength, while a high turn-over of professionals and the increasing discouragement of the majority of civil society activists is seen as their major weakness. The whole civil sector is believed to have become weaker as the best qualified and educated personnel move to more financially stable sectors. Therefore the future strengthening of civil society also depends considerably on further investment in appropriate human resources.

However, despite these weaknesses, according to the reflections of the NAG, it is important to note that civil society in Serbia is slowly becoming a locally-driven sector, whose structure is likely to become more solid in the years to come, provided that it is more widely-supported.

2. Environment

This section describes and analyses the overall political, social, economic, cultural and legal environment in which civil society exists and functions. The score for the Environment Dimension is 1.5, indicating not so conducive an environment for civil society in terms of political context and legal environment. Figure III.2.1 presents the scores for the seven subdimensions within the Environment dimension.

Figure III.2.1: Subdimension scores in environment dimension
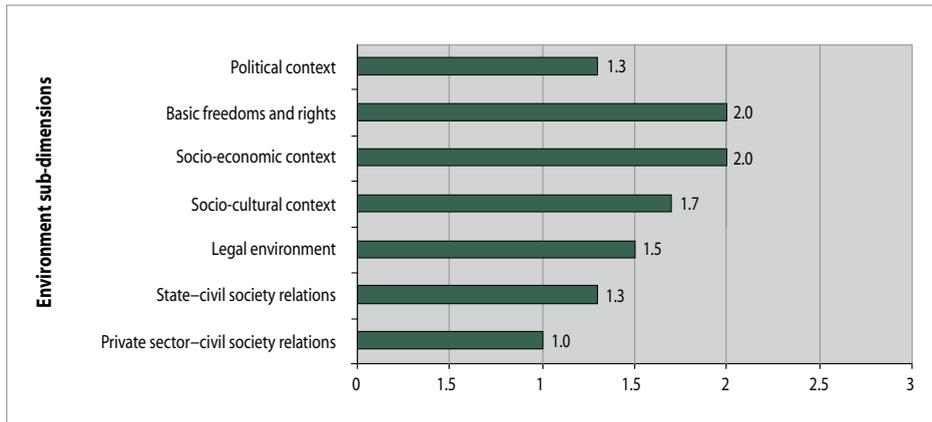
2.1. Political context

This subdimension examines the political situation in Serbia and its impact on civil society. Table III.2.1 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.2.1: Indicators assessing political context

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
2.1.1	Political Rights	2
2.1.2	Political competition	2
2.1.3	Rule of law	1
2.1.4	Corruption	1
2.1.5	State effectiveness	1
2.1.6	Decentralisation	1

2.1.1 Political rights. Today the citizens of Serbia may freely participate in political processes, elect political leaders through fair elections, and freely organize in political parties. As for freedom of association, new legislation is under preparation in Serbia, which will separately regulate the status of political associations and the status of non-government organizations, trade unions and the like. In the meantime, civil society is particularly faced with difficulties resulting from the lack of an appropriate legal framework.

The new Law on Political Party Financing has reached the statute book. The Law on Association of Citizens has not yet been passed and legal restrictions for trade unions do not

exist, and they do not show autonomy in practice, as stated in the *Feasibility Study*.[61] Since 2000, elections have been held at all levels. Election rules and procedures are for the most part in compliance with democratic standards, although they require further improvement, particularly in updating the electoral rolls. Previous regulations in Serbian legislation, because of which the unsuccessful presidential elections were repeated, were finally altered in February 2004. This removed obstacles to the democratic election of a President in June 2004, as stated in the *Feasibility Study*. After the several-month crisis, the Government in Serbia held parliamentary elections in December 2003 and Serbia got a new minority Government. In the successful presidential elections in June 2004, the first democratic president of the Republic was elected.[62]

As a result, in terms of political rights, Serbia today belongs to the group of "free" countries, with a score of 3, as per the Freedom of the World 2005 data.[63]

TABLE III.2.1.1: Political Rights Index in Serbia in the past ten years

	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1996
Serbia and Montenegro	3 F	3 F	3 HF	4 HF	5 HF	6 NF	6 NF

However, the rule of law in Serbia is still weakened by the inheritance of the Milošević regime, i.e. strong ties between organized crime, war crimes and political extremism and their continual obstructive presence in some parts of the existing political, institutional and military system, as well as in the state security system (Feasibility Study). Hence the indicator of general political climate, measured by a reply given to the question "How do citizens assess the course which the country is following", in July 2003, 39% of adult citizens believed that this course was good, 38% that it was bad, while 23% of citizens did not have any opinion on this at all, as stated in the research of the Belgrade Center for Human Rights 2004.[64]

2.1.2 Political competition. The number of political parties in Serbia, after the pluralistic option was officially accepted in 1989[65], when 44 parties competed in the first free elections (December 1990), has increased to 319 according to the Register of Political Organizations[66], namely, to 325 according to unofficial data. This number of parties covers the whole political spectrum – from the extreme right, through parties of the center, to the extreme left, also including 13 parliamentary[67] political parties, amongst which are also those that have (barely) passed legal census of 5% of the votes. Political party financing needs to be

[61]   *Feasibility Study*, unauthorized translation, Brussels, 12.04.2005, Working Paper of the European Commission, Report on the readiness of Serbia and Montenegro for negotiations on signing the Stabilization and Accession Agreement (See on: http://www.info.gov.yu/default.php?id=134&je=) (accessed 28 December 2005)

[62]   Besides, Serbia was without a president since December 29, 2002 when the mandate of Milan Milutinović, who is on trial in the Hague Tribunal expired. After that, due to the census, three election cycles failed.

[63]   Freedom House Political Right Index 2005. Scores for the level of political rights range from 1 to 7, where 1 mean «free» and has the highest level of political rights, while 7 means «not-free» - lowest level of political rights. NF means not free, HF means half-free, F means free.

[64]   Human rights in the consciousness of citizens of Serbia and Montenegro 2004, Belgrade Human Rights Center, 2004, p. 379

[65]   Political pluralism was officially accepted in December 1989 at the XI Congress of the Communist Party of Serbia. Quoted according to: Vladimir Goati, Parties and Party System in Serbia between the Past and the Future, IFST, Forum for Ethnic Relations, Belgrade, 1995, pg. 150.

[66]   Data of the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Governance: http://www.mpalsg.sr.gov.yu (accessed 28 December 2005)

[67]   See on: http://www.parlament.sr.gov.yu/content/cir/sastav/stranke.asp (accessed 28 December 2005)

regulated by law, given that the current Law on Political Party Financing of 1997[68] does not provide transparency and does not recognise the obligation of announcing a report on financial operations as well as stringent sanctions for presenting false data.

There is growing rivalry between parliamentary political parties which is characterized as a "battle for survival", where "party devours party," and the parties in Serbia which consider themselves to be democratic, are behaving in precisely this way, while the epilogue of this battle must be a stable democracy.[69] Hence significant division prevails amongst the followers of political parties as well as in the perception of one's own life and social life in general (CeSID 2005). While the citizens wait for a better future, the members of the ruling coalition are preoccupied, according to the commentator Vladimir Goati, with, "resolving almost daily conflicts within the coalitions".70 This means that the Government of Serbia wastes a great deal of time on cooling tempers and developing compromises with unruly coalition partners, in order to secure its own survival.

These relations between the political parties seriously affect voter opinion, as indicated in the November *CeSID-a 2005* survey, according to which every third citizen is indecisive (32%), every fifth claims they will not go to the polls (22%), and only 45% intend to vote.

2.1.3 Rule of law. In general, the current situation in Serbia is one of undeveloped political institutions, rudimentary forms of parliamentarianism with the concentration of all power in the hands of political parties, a high degree of corruption and growing passivity in the attitude of the citizens towards the authorities exercising power. Last year, a summary on establishing democratic standards was developed, encompassing the following goals:

- Reducing the number of centres of informal power and greater transparency of a large number of state institutions
- Reducing the number of corruptive activities in privatization processes
- Reducing organized crime activities and strengthening the public safety of citizens
- Innovations in implementing fiscal policy in accordance with European societies
- Accelerated the passage of great number of significant legal regulations.[71]

However, in Serbia, a balance of power still cannot be established – and the bearers of legislative and executive power in fact dominate professionals in the judiciary.

It appears that the legislative and executive, regardless of rhetoric, still do not want to surrender to the judiciary what actually belongs to it. In fact, they are trying to erode the authority of the courts even more, and reduce their impact. Since there are no systemic

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[68]   This Law provides budgetary support to parties, prohibits donations by foreign persons and limits donations of companies and other persons to parties of up to maximum 50 average earnings in the Republic monthly. However, it does not prescribe any limitations for physical persons and also allows anonymous donations, up to 3 percent compared to the last-year income of the parties. Income of parties is not transparent, while penalties for possible violations are symbolic. That is why at many public debates a new law is passed, because no party, both ruling party or opposition, has the interest to disclose financial operations of the party, while the names of individual donors are particularly concealed.

[69]   Jovan Komšić, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, Daily *Danas*, 20 May 2004, available at: http://www.danas.co.yu/ (accessed 15 January 2006)

[70]   Vladimir Goati: Government as a "half bread", Forum RTV B92, June 1, 2004

[71]   Said in Thessalonica, April 14-17, 2005 at the seminar within the «Rule of Right in Serbia» project at which the delegation of the Faculties of Law of Serbia participated. See on: http://www.prafak.ni.ac.yu/sr/Izvestaj1.html (accessed 28 December 2005)

guarantees, the judiciary is still in real danger of becoming completely subordinated to legislative and executive power if another authoritarian political party takes control. By changing judiciary laws and forming the High Judiciary Council,[72] as proposed by the Venetian Commission,[73] a significant move was made towards establishing an independent judicial arm. In order to make further necessary progress however, an independent court budget and court administration must be established. (*Society of Judges of Serbia 2005*.)[74]

In the past four years, the Parliament of Serbia has faced serious challenges because of political instability and violations of parliamentary procedure. Nevertheless, legislative activity intensified significantly last year. Although the legislative procedure has become more transparent, the consultative procedure is not yet satisfactory and the Parliament lacks professional personnel (*Feasibility Study*).

According to World Bank data, the rule of law in Serbia is still at a low level with the Index of minus 0.72. However, this is still two times higher than it was in 1996 when it was –1.20. For comparison, the law in Serbia is almost three times less abided by than in Switzerland (1.98) and two times less than in the USA (1.58).

TABLE III.2.1.3: Rule of Law Index in Serbia since 1996 onwards

	2004	2002	2000	1998	1996
Serbia and Montenegro	-0.72	-0.95	-0.98	-0.91	-1.20

Professional observers and a part of the general public believe that the judicial system in Serbia has perhaps never been in a more difficult situation and they pose questions such as: What will the State do to make citizens feel that some protection of their rights really does exist? What will the State do for the citizens to feel that legal security exists? What will the State do to ensure that the most competent and most experienced judges are selected from the most professional and experienced law graduates? What will the State do to secure adequate working conditions for judges, and remuneration for the functions/offices they perform, so that they are not burdened with the problem of how to satisfy their elementary needs? (*Society of Judges of Serbia*).[75] Citizens of Serbia neither trust the executive nor the legislative power, nor the judicial power, and the distrust for these institutions is growing, according to the data from the *Civil Society 2004.*

2.1.4 Corruption. During the nineties corruption was almost entirely tolerated socially and hence a "normal" occurrence and the only way of resolving most of the problems faced in Serbia. Corruption spread from the street to border crossings and towards the top people of institutions while, on the other hand, the leaders of institutions had already joined organized crime syndicates, and their organisations were riddled, through and through, with the virus of corruption which was continually present for seven, to ten years. (*Medojević: 2001*.)[76]

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[72]   The National Assembly of Serbia, on November 6 adopted the Law on High Judiciary Council, which establishes the Council as an expert body, which will propose to the Assembly holders of judiciary functions. The High Judiciary Council shall commence work on January 1, 2002. Belgrade November 6, 2001. (Source: *Beta News Agency* available at http://www.beta.co.yu/) (accessed 6 January 2006)

[73]   The European Commission for Democracy, through law (Venetian Commission) at the 64th plenary session held on October 21-22, 2005, adopted the Opinion on Provisions on Judiciary in the Draft Constitution of the Republic of Serbia. For more see: http://www.judge.org.yu/Members/milos/vesti/vest_venecijanska_komisija (accessed 29 December 2005)

[74]   For more see: http://www.judge.org.yu/list_publicstatamens (accessed 29 December 2005)

[75]   For more see: http://www.judge.org.yu/static_content/forum/ForumFolder.2004-09-21.4419159690/ankete-sudstvo/389960114299 (accessed 29 December 2005)

[76]   *Open on Corruption – Customs, Round Tables on Corruption* project, Publisher: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Belgrade 2001, available in **Serbian only** at http://www.transparentnost.org.yu/english/PUBLICATIONS/index.html (accessed 20 January 2006)

The *CLDS 2001* data[77] indicates that citizens believe corruption to be, both in the recent past and at the present, *an extremely widespread phenomenon in the society* (80%). There have been no significant changes in perceptions regarding the prevalence of corruption over the past five years. Looking at the *average score of occurrence of corruption,* for these two periods (on the scale from 1 to 5, from *very small to very much*) we see that the present (4.14) is only slightly more positively scored than five years ago (4.16). Judging by the average scores given by citizens for the extent of corruption, the spheres or institutions to which this phenomenon is mostly related are the Customs Administration (4.35), the Tax Administration (4.12), the Judiciary (4.11) and the Police (4.06). The Presidency of Yugoslavia (2.42), the Office of Statistics (2.58) and the Military (2.73) are the institutions in which, the public believe, corruption is least prevalent. As is also stated in the *Feasibility Study*, Serbia is ranked 97th out of 158 countries for corruption and has the highest Corruption Index in the region, which for 2005 was 2.8.[78]

According to World Bank[79] data, corruption's grip on Serbia is gradually loosening from its levels in 1996, when it was twice as high as it is today. (See Table 2.1.4.)

TABLE III.2.1.4: Corruption control in Serbia during the past ten years[80]

	2004	2002	2000	1998	1996
Serbia and Montenegro	-0.48	-0.74	-1.05	-0.97	-0.92

Corruption cannot be suppressed entirely, but it can be kept under control, which is, for comparison, best illustrated by those countries in which this has been carried out successfully. Denmark is an example, since in 2004, among 208 countries, it has had the highest Corruption Control Index (2.38), or Switzerland (2.17), and slightly less, the USA (1.83), as opposed to Serbia where it is minus 0.48.

2.1.5 State effectiveness. In Serbia during the nineties, almost all key institutions were repeatedly devastated or completely ruined so that today the process of their reconstruction is slow and painful. The attitude of citizens towards the State has, to date, remained ambivalent. The State's effectiveness, facing the tasks it does, may be scored as the lowest possible. Widespread tax evasion also occurs to a great extent because of this. The bureaucracy still treats citizens as its subjects and boring suppliants. Whoever takes

> In the daily *Blic,* Vladimir Goati, Associate of the Institute of Social Sciences, describes the work of the Government of Serbia so far as, "a car using more oil than petrol". The coalition of "low intensity", as he describes the minority government of DSS, G17 plus and SPO in his recently published book *Parties and the party system in Serbia* is a product of compromise. Vladimir Goati: Government as "half breed", Forum RTV B92, June 1, 2004,

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[77] Research of Public Opinion on Corruption in Serbia, conducted by Center for Liberal-Democratic Studies, Belgrade, 2001. The research was conducted from 23-31 January 2001 on a sample of 1,632 respondents (planned 1,640), in Serbia excluding Kosovo and Metohija. The sample included adult citizens and it was realized in 82 local communities in 60 municipalities. The Research was carried out on a sample of a quota type by respecting six criteria: gender, age, education, urban-rural status, national affiliation, and belonging to larger demographic regions. For more see: http://www.clds.org.yu/newsite/eng_naslovna.html (accessed 29 December 2005)

[78] Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2005. Level of corruption evaluated from: 10 being the lowest level of corruption, and 1, being the highest level of corruption in the country. For comparison, the index of corruption in Finland 9.7, in the USA 7.5, in Slovenia 6.0, in Croatia 3.5, and in B&H 3.1. For more see: www.tansparency.org, (accessed 29 December 2005)

[79] World Bank Governance Indicators 1996-2004, available at: www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/wp-governance.htm (accessed 29 December 2005)

[80] Ibidem.

the official path, achieves their goal slowly if at all; hence the common practice, whenever possible, to use personal connections.[81]

The number of employees in the public administration has significantly increased, particularly after absorption of employees from the former federal level. The social impact of future redundancies will present a great challenge and could be taken as a reason to resist reform. It is necessary to establish clear legal instruments for resolving the problem of political interference in the work of the administration and the web of political influence which affects the institutional and political continuity within State services. In November 2004 the Government adopted a comprehensive strategy which anticipated a series of specific measures and deadlines for establishing professional, accountable, de-politicized and decentralized state services. The lack of clear budget projections save for expected donations, however, brings into question its long-term sustainability. The Government has adopted draft laws on the Government and State administration. The regulations on government employees and their salaries are in the preparation stage, as is the law establishing an Ombudsman institution. (*Feasibility Study*).

Further erosion of institutional effectiveness ceased in 2000 when, according to the World Bank data, state effectiveness in Serbia was minus 1.0. Since that time it has gradually increased but is still low and in 2004 its rank was below zero (-0.21). (See Table 2.1.5.)

TABLE III.2.1.5: **State/Government effectiveness in Serbia during the past ten years**

	2004	2002	2000	1998	1996
Serbia and Montenegro	-0.21	-0.69	-1.00	-1.02	-0.60

Comparisons within the region show that in Serbia state effectiveness is almost the lowest and is just above Albania (-0.36) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (-0.54), as opposed to Slovenia (1.02) and Croatia (0.32) where it is above zero and is significantly higher. Wider comparisons show that the citizens of Switzerland have the most effective state (2.25) as well as the citizens of Denmark (2.15), while, for example, the USA has an Index of 1.80.

2.1.6 Decentralization. The Law on Local Self-Governance was passed in February 2002, however, amendments are planned as a part of the implementation of the new state administration reform strategy (the *Feasibility Study*). The legacy of centralization is still present in state structures today; to an extent that inhibits the implementation of laws. Hence decentralization remains a highly political topic, and is less often perceived as an economic and social issue. The strengthening of the local community's autonomy at all of these three levels is a slow process, progressing with difficulty. This especially holds true for the political level, since there is insufficient capacity on either side for creating partnership relations between local authorities and the State. Neither the State, nor the majority of local communities have strategic planning and management capacity, there is no coordination between sectors, while political cleavages slow down development and rule of law. The share of local government in aggregate public expenditure amounted to approximately 25.5% in 2003.[82]

Besides all the novelties it brought about, the law on decentralization over-looks the key issue, which lies in the fact that there are quite a number of disparities in income per

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[81]   The opinions of the citizens are available on: http://www.medijaklub.cg.yu/zanimljivi/zanimljivi%202001/FEB-RUARY/26.htm (accessed 15 January 2006)

[82]   Antony Levitas, Local Self-Governance Financing System Reform in Serbia, Publisher: PALGO Center, 2004, pg. 236

capita among the various self-governance units.[83] For example, the richest municipalities in 2003 had almost ten times greater income per capita than the poorest one. It is even more important that 15% of the entire population of the country lives in municipalities in which income per capita is rather below 50% of the national average (3,600 compared to 8,900 dinars, which is equivalent to 50 US$ compared to 125 US$). In other words and in terms of public finances, it is not clear whether the system of local self-governance financing in Serbia is «horizontally balanced», that is, whether all local self-governance units have the resources necessary to provide basic services to an appropriate standard. All the more so because the percentage of local self-governance income coming from limited surrendered tax revenues varies significantly between groups of municipalities, ranging from over 30% in the group of the poorest municipalities to around 15% in the group of the richest municipalities and towns. This is the reason why the absolute value of resources per capita which the local self-governance units receive through revenues is similar for the first three groups, while almost doubled for urban municipalities which have more than 5 times greater income per capita than those in the first group and more than three times greater than those in the second group. It can be said that the *average* local self-governance unit has a sufficient income for financing its activities, but this is not the same as saying that *all* local self-governance units have sufficient incomes for financing their activities. Basically, the lawmakers must ask themselves what differences in wealth and therefore in basic public services they consider to be socially desirable or acceptable.[84]

2.2. Basic freedoms and rights

This subdimension examines to what extent basic freedoms are ensured by law and in practice in Serbia. Table III.2.2 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

Table III.2.2: Indicators assessing basic rights and freedoms

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
2.2.1	Civil liberties	2
2.2.2	Information rights	2
2.2.3	Press Freedom	2

2.2.1 Civil liberties. In the sections referring to individual freedoms, rights and responsibilities, the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia guarantees citizens the freedom of expression, association and assembly. According to the *Freedom of the World 2005*[85] data, Serbia's level of freedom is three times higher than it was in the nineties. It reached the index 2, which indicates that rights are exercised and respected, however, not fully.

Table III.2.2.1: Civil Freedoms Index in Serbia[86] in the period 1997-2004

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
Serbia and Montenegro	2	2	3	4	5	6	6	6

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[83]   Serbia has 24 districts and 161 municipalities. See on: www.webrzs.sr.gov.yu (accessed 25 November 2005)

[84]   Antony Levitas, Local Self-Governance Financing System Reform in Serbia, Publisher: PALGO Center, 2004, pg. 246.

[85]   Level of civil rights (1-the highest level; 7 – the lowest level of civil rights)

[86]   Freedom House Civil Liberties Index 2005 available at http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/pdf/Charts2006. pdf#search='Freedom%20House%20Civil%20Liberties%20Index%202005' (accessed 20 January 2006)

Citizens of Serbia have the right to gather, demonstrate and send petitions, and they exercise these. As assessed by the European Commission's Feasibility Study, in the sphere of respecting human rights there no progress was made in passing the law on »Lustratio«. No charges were brought after discovering mass graves on Serbian territory. In the sphere of preventing torture there was small progress, and this particularly refers to charges against human rights violations during the state of emergency in 2003. In case of religious freedoms in Serbia, there was no progress on passing the law, which aims to establish the equality of religious organizations and the principle of separating church from State. No progress was made in passing an Anti-Discrimination law either. It is evident that the level of protection against discrimination is still far from the EU standards. The most vulnerable group in this respect are the Roma, who, although the Roma National Council was founded, still suffer discrimination at all levels.

2.2.2 Information rights. The National Assembly of Serbia adopted the new Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance in November 2004, the office of the Trustee for Information commenced work on July 1, 2005. However, citizens, almost as much as journalists, still have to develop the habit of exercising this right, and Government employees of granting it at all and developing adequate implementation procedures.[87] The issue of whether and to what extent official state documents are

> Except for the non-government sector, amongst journalists and citizens for whom this law is intended there are not many examples indicating application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Interest. This Law should serve journalists as a tool for obtaining accurate information, and it seems that research journalism in Serbia has become numb. *News Agency Beta* reported from the round table *«Relation of public authority bodies and non-government organizations towards fulfillment of rights to free access to information of public interest»*, organized by the Lawyers' Human Rights Committee on January 31, 2006

accessible or restricted for citizens is not now linked so much to the legal framework as it is connected to the wide-spread habit of disrespecting the law. Since they are not aware of it, citizens do not exercise their right to request and obtain information, and they do not know which information to ask for and what they can expect from officials. Government employees exercise bureaucratic habits and they are not able to differentiate between the "information the public has a justified interest to know," and that which it does not. The time required for the Law on Free Access to Public Information, to start functioning as a powerful mechanism of control over public power, in fact provides space for corruption, political propaganda, demagogy, "disinformation" and the orchestration of scandals. This Law should serve as an invaluable political tool. If the implementation of the Law is stalled, public officials could not be held to account. Indeed, the impact of civil society organizations suffers from a double restraint: on the one hand, from the absence of support from the poorly informed majority and, on the other, from the absence of a common platform comprising most civil society organizations. This also explains the small impact of the few CSOs, which insist on the implementation and improvement of this law.

All key informants,[88] regardless of which sectors of society they come from, have an identical attitude related to the issue of information accessibility – the Law has been adopted, but it has still not been applied. The kind of information, and thus the area of social life from which the information is requested, is the most important factor affecting its accessibility to the public. Access to public information, in the opinion of representatives of NGOs, CSOs, political parties and Government, depends on the institution to which it

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[87]   «Representatives of non-government organization judged that during further implementation of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance today, there is a need for a program of educating citizens and government bodies on its application.» as reported by the Beta News Agency from the mentioned round table.

[88]   CIVICUS – Fact finding, August 2005. See more in annex 3: Overview of CSI Research Methods.

turns for information,89 on the employees of the institution, previous cooperation with institutions, contacts, that is, acquaintance with the employees of the institutions and the kind of information which is requested. The NGO Representatives who helped prepare the draft law believe that, for the effective application of the Law on Free Access to Information, it will be necessary to pass a Law on Confidential data and a Law on the Opening of Dossiers. In this way, a coherent legal framework would be created, which would allow citizens appropriate access to information, but which would also provide for the protection of data which belongs to the private sphere. Only if these legal provisions are harmonized, will a framework for improving human rights and freedoms and fortifying the legal system be created.

2.2.3 Press freedoms. It is estimated that in Serbia there are currently around 1,600 electronic media, out of which 300 are in public ownership, and 120 printed media.90 The picture which the state media fostered during the 90s, was completely opposite to reality. This was the time when the regime controlled the state media and when respectable independent journalists were killed by "unknown" attackers.91 Accordingly, since the beginning of the 90s the media in Serbia have played a crucial role in shaping public opinion in general and that on NGOs in particular. The dominant discourse of the state-controlled media during the 90s served the regime and the politics of nationalism and war, and it prevailed over the voice of hundreds of new independent outlets, which mushroomed at that time.92 Consequently, "the legacy of misuse and devastation of the media is still visible and makes the present media landscape in Serbia, as a product of that devastation in the 1990s and the slow and insufficient reforms after 2000, one of the most unsettled and unregulated media industries in Europe' (EUMAP, *Monitoring Reports 2005:1320).*

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89   At request, in terms provided for by the law, the following do not reply: the Government of the Republc of Serbia, National Assembly, Ministry of the Economy, Ministry of Internal Affairs, District Court, Supreme Court, Constitutional Court, City of Belgrade, Local self-governance bodies in towns of Niš and Zaječar, as well as JAT, and Ministry of Defense of SCG either. The Report on the research of implementation of the Law on Free Access to Information in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, Sarajevo, September 2005. See more at www.yucom. org.yu (accessed 24 January 2006)

90   Different sources give different estimations of number of media outlets in Serbia. On the Site of the Media Center, Belgrade http://www.mediacenter.org.yu/code/navigate.asp?Id=16 there is a database with data of most of the important media in Serbia and Montenegro. "It has been estimated that Serbia has, for some years, had up to 1,500 media outlets, of which the majority are broadcast media. In early July 2005, in addition to the State broadcaster, Radio-Television Serbia (RTS), there were 755 radio and television stations in Serbia – 543 radio stations, 73 television stations and 139 stations broadcasting radio and television programmes. However, such a high number reflects a regulatory chaos, rather than a prospering industry. Financial sources supporting the present excessive number of media are not transparent." Open Society Institute/EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program, *Television across Europe: regulation, policy and independence, Monitoring Reports 2005,* released on 11 October 2005 in Brussels, available at http://www.eumap.org/topics/media/television_europe or http://www.soros.org/initiatives/media/articles_publications/publications/eurotv_20051011 (accessed 26 June 2006), (hereafter, EUMAP, *Monitoring Reports 2005).*

91   Freedom House Country Reports: http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2005&country =6898 (accessed 15 January 2006)

92   For a complex analysis of the role of media during the 1990s, see: Nebojša Popov (ed.), *Serbia's Road to War*, CEU Press, Budapest, 1996. For an analysis of the media content of major State and independent media before 1998, see: Snježana Milivojević, and Jovanka Matić, *Ekranizacija izbora, (Televised Elections),* Vreme knjige, Belgrade, 1993. For a detailed analysis of the role of individual media see, for example: Miodrag Marović, *Politika i Politika, (Politika and Politics),* Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, Belgrade, 2002. For a documented chronology of the misuse of licensing policy, see: Slobodan Djorić, *Bela knjiga o radiodifuziji 1990–2000, (White Book of Broadcasting 1990–2000),* Spektar, Belgrade, 2002. For an analysis of current state o media in Serbia see: Open Society Institute/EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program, *Television across Europe: regulation, policy and independence,* Monitoring Reports 2005, released on 11 October 2005 in Brussels, available at http://www.eumap.org/topics/media/television_europe or

http://www.soros.org/initiatives/media/articles_publications/publications/eurotv_20051011 (accessed 15 January 2006) (accessed 26 June 2006), (hereafter, EUMAP, *Monitoring Reports 2005).*

According to the *Freedom House Index*, in Serbia today, there is "partial freedom of the media"[93] with an index of 40, which, compared to the freedom of the media in the region of the former Yugoslavia, takes the third place, considering that Croatia has an index of 37, Slovenia of 19, B&H of 48, and Macedonia of 53. For comparison, amongst countries the countries with the greatest level of freedom of media are: Switzerland (9), Denmark (8), and Belgium (9), while the USA freedom of media index is 13. (See Table 2.2.3.).

TABLE III.2.2.3: Freedom of Media Index in Serbia (FH Index from 1994 do 2004)

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994
Serbia and Montenegro	40	40	45	56	81	81	75	75	77	87	86

The current situation in the media was highlighted by the "Five minutes of thundering silence", an action organized by the Press Association of Serbia and the Trade Union of Journalists of Serbia on the Day of Freedom of the Media on 3rd May, 2005.[94] The goal of the action was to show that freedom of media, at this point in Serbia, is little more than a matter of theory, because the laws are mostly not being applied. The freedom of expression of the media has been improved by abolishing the sentence of imprisonment. However, it is of concern that there have been cases of threats against journalists by state officials. The European Commission is of the opinion that the adopted amendments to the Law on Broadcasting contain provisions which undermine the independence of the electronic media, particularly at the local level, and postpone the initialization of their privatization. These provisions centralize the work of the Broadcasting Council and do not recognize the specific features of Vojvodina.95

A statement by the President's Office also stated that the freedom of the media in Serbia has not reached the required level, and that the Law on free access to information, public information, broadcasting, and telecommunications had not been applied and the Copyright Law had not been passed.[96]

2.3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

This sub-dimension measures socio-economic situation in Serbia and its impact on the civil society. Table III.2.3 shows the respective indicator score.

TABLE III.2.3: Indicator assessing socio-economic context

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
2.3.1	Socio-economic context	2

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[93] Freedom House, Freedom of the Press 2005. Freedom of Media Index (Freedom House) – Index units: 1-30=Free, 31-60=Partially free, 61-100=Not free.

[94] «Freedom of Media World Day was established on May 3, 1991 when, at the UN Conference in the Namibian town of Windhoek, the Declaration on the freedom of media was adopted which proclaims censorship as a gross violation of human rights. At that time, in Serbia freedom of the media was only theoretic- time of non-freedom had begun, while much worse times were yet to come.» as stated by Media Center in Belgrade – 5 May 2005 available at http://www.mediacenter.org.yu/code/navigate.asp?Id=698 (accessed 14 January 2006) (accessed 14 January 2006)

[95] Daily Danas, November 14, 2005.

[96] Media Center, May 4, 2005, available at: http://www.mediacenter.org.yu/code/navigate.asp?Id=698 (accessed 14 January 2006)

1. *Widespread poverty – does more than 40% of the citizens of Serbia live on less than $2 daily?* No. According to the latest World Bank research, in 2002 when the WB used the margin of $2.4 daily 10.6% of the citizens (or 250,000 households, that is, around 800,000 people) lived below the poverty line, while roughly another 30%97 lived on the very line. However, today 20 percent of Serbia's citizens are poor, as indicated by the new WB methodology, which takes $2.9

The poverty line (without non-cash benefits) is 19, 000 dollars for families and 9,500 dollars for individuals in America. Back in 1999 (according to the findings of Cox and Alm) 72 percent of the «poor» in America had one or more cars, 50 percent had air-conditioning, 72 percent had washing machines, and even 41 percent had a house privately owned! What would the Serbian poor people give for a piece of this! Daily Danas, October 12, 2005

daily per capita as the poverty line. This means that every citizen of Serbia with monthly earnings of less than 6,000 dinars is in the poverty zone.98 There is a difference between the urban and rural areas regarding poverty, and according to this research, in 2003, it was greater in rural areas (15%) than urban areas were 7% were poor. The greatest share of the poor live in Southeast Serbia (24%), while the smallest are in Belgrade (4%). Four key factors, according to the WB, are closely related to the level of poverty and they are the following: (1) low level of education, (2) a high unemployment rate,99 (3) underdevelopment of a region, and (4) presence of socially deprived groups (such as internally displaced persons and the Roma). Compared to countries in the region, poverty in Serbia is approximately the same as in Romania, less than in Albania, and greater than in Bulgaria and Poland.100

2. *Civil war -were there armed conflicts in the country in the last 5 years?* **No**. Since the wars in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, during the nineties and the NATO bombing in 1999, no armed conflicts have occurred in Serbia. However, in Kosovo, which has been under the UN protectorate since 1999, serious armed incidents have periodically occurred. The most recent serious incident happened in March 2004.

3. *Serious ethnic and/or religious conflicts?* **Yes**. Ethnic conflicts in Kosovo and profound inter-ethnic haltered are the source of continual conflicts. Furthermore, articles may occasionally appear in the press in which the Association of Serbia-Jewish Friendship severely condemns outbursts of anti-Semitic hatred in Serbia101 or reports that, "according to data from the Provincial Government (of Vojvodina) the recorded incidents involving participants of different nationality, in Vojvodina in one period of last year numbered 300 out of which one hundred were of a purely ethic nature."102

4. *Great economic crisis – is the external debt of the country greater than its GDP?* No. The external debt of Serbia has fallen considerably from 133% of GDP in 2000 to 44.5% in 2006. However, the outstanding external debt exceeds exports by 2.2 times, new indebtedness in

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97   World Bank Development Indicators available at: http://devdata.worldbank.org/wdi2005/Section2.htm (accessed 14 January 2006)

98   Minister of Labor, employment and social policy Slobodan Lalović, Daily Danas, One fifth of the citizens of Serbia are poor, October 11, 2005.

99   In Serbia, currently there are 895,000 unemployed, out of which around 170,000 are over 50 years of age and without the possibility of finding a job. The number of unemployed women is greater. The unemployment rate has grown compared to 2001 –when it was 21%, while in 2005, according to various estimates, it ranges between 27% and 31.6% (UNHDR 2005). For comparison in Poland the unemployment rate is 8.9%.

100 See ECAPOV II, World Bank, 2005 available at http://ipm.by/pdf/Seminars/29.11.05/02-Dabrowski.pdf#search='E CAPOV%20II%20World%20Bank' (accessed 15 January 2006)

101 *Večernje novosti* 1.4.2005, while in daily paper *Politika*, of April 3, 2005, there were articles on analysis of frequent anti-Semitic, nationalistic and extremist graffiti and incidents.

102 Daily Danas, 1 February 2005, quotes the Center for Civil Society Development research, Zrenjanin. Besides this article, Daily *Danas* also quotes data of the Center relating to the same subject on several other occasions.

2005 was 3.8 billion, and the anticipated new indebtedness for 2006 is estimated at around 2 billion. In this context, the National Bank of Serbia has announced the reduction of interventions in the foreign exchange market and the greater influence of banks in forming exchange rates. The National Bank's proposed measures are based on the understanding that the key

> The Minister of Finance Mlađan Dinkić explains that Serbia began 2006 with a public debt which was 19.4 percent of GDP, wherein external debt was only 29 percent of GDP. Now that part of our debt, according to the Paris Club has been written-off, that percentage is even lower and amounts 44.5 percent of GDP, while the share of external debt is reduced to 25.2 percent. Since one of the topics on negotiating final status of Kosovo will surely also be the write-off of debt of over 1.5 billion dollars relating to this province, which at this time figures as debt of Serbia, Dinkić hopes that, the complete participation of external debt in GDP will be reduced to 40.1 while external debt to 20.7 percent of GDP- Countries with so low participation of debt in GDP in no way can be a country with a crisis in servicing debts that have become due - believes Dinkić. Daily *Danas*, February 13, 2006

for reducing inflation is consumption control at all levels. The IMF's representatives believe, however, that a lot still remains to be done and that the risks the Government will face are still extremely high. This, on the one hand, means the continuation of a restrictive monetary policy, greater reliance on market mechanisms with an accent on restraining the expansion of loans in the short term and, on the other, keeping a firm hold on the reins of fiscal policy, in which controlled increase of earnings constitutes a significant part. [103]

5. Great social crisis – during last 2 years? **No.** Although transition for 5 years in Serbia is a "great social crisis" for the poorest groups which are the ones who bear the brunt of this process. Some towns resemble "valleys of hunger," (e.g. Bor or Kragujevac) the

> Meat once a week, clothes in two decades. For purpose of illustrating, most of the pensioners can barely buy meat and cakes once a month, and as for clothes and shoes many have not renewed them for even twenty years. Daily Danas, March 14, 2005

poor pensioners helping their jobless children, the continual growth of unemployment, the slow rise of production, and the political scandals, all make the situation appear even more hopeless from the perspective of the poor people. This segment of the population was adversely affected by the two-digit inflation of last year[104] (the highest in Europe) the increase in unemployment and cynical social benefits. Adverse effect was only partly mediated by theincrease of GDP per capita (GDP has increased in five years by more than 3.5 times) or stabilization of the banking system (the banks have regained trust so that citizens' foreign currency savings in 47 commercial banks are approaching two billion EUR). Positive trends include the fact that the total public debt dropped below half GDP and foreign exchange reserves have doubled so that currently they are three times larger than the total money supply in the country. This only indicates that what has been accomplished in the last five years in the economy has two faces and can be assessed in different ways depending from the perspective. However, positive or negative trends are emphasized for political purposes.

6. Great socio-economic injustice – is the Gini coefficient > 0.4? **No.** In Serbia the Gini coefficient which measures inequality in income distribution is, according to World Bank 2000 data, 0.28. The main problem which social policy in Serbia faces today is the low coverage of, and inadequate

> Every third child in Serbia does not have three basic meals a day, as stated by the representatives of the Institute for Health Protection of Serbia, of the Ministary of Health and the UNICEF. News Agency Beta, March 29, 2004

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[103] Daily *Danas*, 13 February 2006 available at: http://www.danas.co.yu/ (accessed 25 February 2006)

[104] See more at Ministry of Finance (Macroeconomic Developments in the period 2001 – 2005) available at: http://www.mfin.sr.gov.yu/html/modules.php?op=modload&name=Subjects&file=index&req=viewpage&pageid=17 15 (accessed 22 December 2006)

financial support for poor households. Household analysis *WB 2003* shows that, in that year, only 4% of the poor received financial benefits (FFB), and that the same year only 0.1.% of GDP was utilized for the FFB, which is considerably less than in other counties in the region. The same analysis shows that a great number of households do not know what the criteria and procedures are for applying for financial benefits. So, almost 80% of internally displaced Roma (the poorest Roma sub-group) did not, during 2003, apply for FFB. This is also related to very small amounts of individual benefits, so beneficiaries are not motivated to apply or often not informed on their entitlements. Social financial support today amounts to 1,800 dinars (around $25), while children's allowance is 1,500 dinars ($21).

7. Great illiteracy of adults – are more than 40% of the adult illiterate? **No**. According to the 2002 Census, in Serbia, without Kosovo and Metohija, 3.45% of the population older than 10 years of age are illiterate, out of which 85% are women.[105] Most of the illiterate are from agricultural households in the south of Serbia. Also, the highest percentage of the illiterate are found amongst members of the Roma nationality (19.65 percent) in which group it is of concern that out of this number 48 percent are between 10 and 14 years of age. It may be said that every fifth Roma is illiterate. When speaking about the level of education, amongst the Serbia population 65% or two thirds have a high-school education, while 23.9 percent only elementary school. 11 percent of the people have university or higher education. It must be said that war and (three-digit) inflation at the beginning of the nineties contributed to this situation. A large number of young people have left the country, and not only the young but the educated as well. Amongst those that left, a year before the 1991 census, 15 percent had university or higher education. In the group of those that left the country in the period between the two censuses (from 1991 to 2002), 9.7 percent had university or higher education.[106] When speaking of ethnic communities, the lowest levels of illiteracy are found among the Hungarians, 1.09 percent, while in the case of the Vlasi it is rather different; illiteracy runs at 10.52 percent. A high percentage of illiteracy is also found among the Albanians in the south of Serbia, 7.7 percent. Far more of the illiterate live in rural areas (75 percent) than in towns (25 percent), and there are somewhat less of them in Vojvodina compared to Central Serbia. The analysts of the Republic Statistical Office, who processed the census data, proclaimed Belgrade as being the most literate town in Serbia.

8. Lack of infrastructure for information technologies – are there less than 5 servers to 10,000 citizens? **No**. As opposed to most of the countries using information and communications technologies (ICT) for their development, in Serbia the ICT is neither a constituent part of the development policy nor has it been encouraged by the Government of the Republic of Serbia. The National Strategy for the Information Society in Serbia was adopted in October 2006, after a long delay, while the implementation has not started yet. The Law on e-signature was adopted by the end of 2004, but is still not being applied due to lack of technical and organizational conditions. The Telecommunications Agency was formed 2

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[105]   «However, a glance at the bottom of the educational scale shows the other half-illiterate Serbia. Amongst the population of 15 years of age and older, 357,552 of the population (5.7 % of the total number) are without any school qualifications, while 227,039 of them are completely illiterate. 126,127 of the population (two percent of total number) has completed first, second or third grade of elementary school, while 2,862 are illiterate. Therefore, in Serbia, 229,902 or 3.64 % of the total number of the illiterate are in the population older than 15 years of age. Since 896,847 of the population or 14.2 % of the population have completed elementary school from fourth to seventh grade, this, together with those who have attended lower grades, gives a high 16.2 % of the uneducated population. And this is where we reach data of which Serbia is not proud: together with the illiterate, 21.9 % of the population have not attended school, that is, every fifth citizen. Since elementary school certificates were acquired by 1,509,462 citizens, together with those with a lower educational level, they almost account for half (45.8 %) the entire population of Serbia.» Helsinki Charter 2005.

[106]   More information is available at Statistical Office of Serbia available at: http://webrzs.statserb.sr.gov.yu/axd/en/ index.php, (accessed 11 June 2006)

years after expiry of the time scale set by law, while adoption of the Telecommunications Development Strategy is already running late by 2.5 years. In all of the Southeast European countries in 2005 an increase of trade in ICT products was recorded. In Serbia in 2005, the trade in ICT products dropped by 30% compared to the previous year. In Serbia and Montenegro 3.7% of the citizens have a PC.[107] The average citizen of SCG, with an average salary of 212 EUR would have to allocate at least 1,574 EUR, i.e. 7.4% of average salary for a computer, legal software and training (345 EUR for PC, 664 EUR for software, and 565 EUR for training). In Serbia there is a relatively poor IT infrastructure with 26.22 connections per 10,000 citizens. According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) 2003, Serbia and Montenegro has 18 hosts per 10,000 citizens.

Analysis of civil society's socio-economic environment showed that only the variable on *serious ethnic and/or religious conflicts* exists in Serbia, referring mostly to the ethnic conflicts in Kosovo and occasional ethnic incidents in Vojvodina. The variable *serious ethnic and/or religious conflicts* initiated a discussion on whether or not conflicts in Kosovo belong to this category since the status of Kosovo is currently under negotiation while basically Kosovo does not have any type of relationship with the rest of Serbia and has not been under Serbia's jurisdiction since 1999. Therefore part of the National Workshop participants as well as NAG members stated that conflicts in Kosovo should not be taken into consideration within this variable and the answer on this variable should be *no* instead of *yes*. The other part of participants, however, was of the opinion that it should be assessed as *yes* due to the current occasional ethnic incidents in Vojvodina and recently destroyed mosque in Belgrade (March 2004), incitement to hatred in the media and in public, etc.

Nevertheless, it can be concluded that the current socio-economic environment is not fully conducive to civil society development. The barriers for civil society development, when compared to other countries in the region, exist in the legacy of war, the continuing ethnic conflict and the long-lasting economic crisis, which has slowed down the formation of a new middle class.

2.4. SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT

This sub-dimension defines the extent to which the existing socio-cultural norms and attitudes are favorable or detrimental for civil society. Table III.2.4 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.2.4: Indicators assessing socio-cultural context

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
2.4.1	Trust	0
2.4.2	Tolerance	2
2.4.3	Public spiritedness	3

2.4.1 Trust. Due to widespread corruption, non-compliance and non-appliance of law, dysfunctional institutions, severely impoverished citizens and societal value disorientation, in the last ten years, mutual trust amongst Serbia citizens is on decrease. Research shows that distrust has been continually growing since 1996, and since then, the percentage of those who believe that the majority of their fellow citizens can be trusted dropped to 9%. (See Figure 2.4.1.)

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[107] International Telecommunication Union, Geneva (ITU), available at: http://www.itu.int/home/index.html (accessed 27 June 2006)

FIGURE III.2.4.1: Mutual trust of citizens of Serbia

Trust other people

WVS 1996 — 30%
WVS 2001 — 19%
CS 2004 — 9%
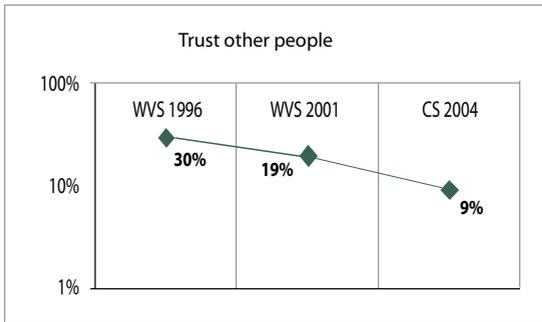
With this increased distrust, social capital also declines, which in turn encourages dissatisfaction and de-stimulates the development of awareness of general, common welfare. At the local community level this is manifested through a decrease in the amount of collective action and the increased disinclination of individuals to engage in collective activities. Considering that the majority of the poor have to struggle with everyday problems, it is unrealistic to expect, without building prior trust, that the majority will take an interest in associating in the spheres of education, culture, human rights, ecology or gender equality, or that they will exert pressure on politics for the reforms to be implemented. Yet, without extensive participation of citizens at local level we cannot speak of an active civil society.

2.4.2 Tolerance. The *Civil society 2004* data indicate that a large majority of citizens in Serbia do not have anything against neighbours of another race or religion. Immigrants and foreign workers are not welcome as neighbours for one sixth of the citizens of Serbia, while more than a third of citizens do not wish to have people in their neighbourhood who have contracted AIDS and people with mental disabilities. Citizens show the greatest intolerance to persons with different sexual orientation. (See Figure 2.4.2.)

Direct discrimination is manifested in a situation when a health-care worker refuses to provide assistance to the Roma, also including verbal violence and degrading treatment. Indirect discrimination is manifested most often through so called «neutral» legislation, policy and practice. The reasons for such treatment are manifold. The basic one lies in the fact that the healthcare institutions in Serbia are centralized and responsible only to the Ministry of Health. Health centers realize their services based on central planning and without considering the needs and requirements of the local community. That is why one of the main recommendations is that it is necessary to transfer responsibility for local healthcare institutions from the Ministry of Health to local authorities. Daily *Danas*, November 14, 2005

FIGURE III.2.4.2: Which of the stated groups of people you wouldn't like to have as neighbours?

People of other race — 12
People of other religion (Catholics, Protestants) — 12
Immigrants, foreign workers — 16
People who have contracted AIDS — 39
Homosexuals/Lesbians — 48

(in %)

Source: Civil Society 2004
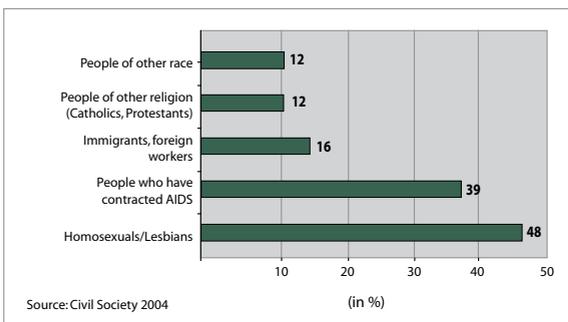
Analysis shows that social distance is equally present in both sexes. Intolerance towards homosexuals and lesbians is more pronounced among men. Distance in general, is expressed more by citizens from rural areas, except in the case of immigrants and foreign workers, where it is lower in urban areas. Overall, the tolerance of Serbian citizens has doubled in comparison to 1996. (See figure 2.4.2.a), which is a significant indicator of headway in the development of individual political culture, but also at the same time a hint that the majority of the citizens of Serbia are not that much interested in "democratic nationalism" as might be concluded from the currently growing rating of the Radicals.

FIGURE III.2.4.2.a: Average score of intolerance[108]
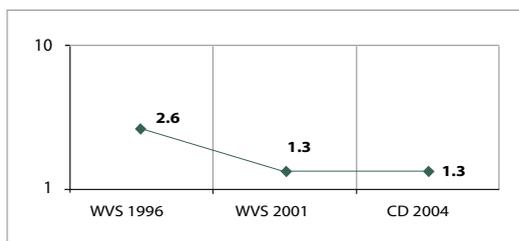
Responsibility for the currently high rating of the Radicals lies with the democratic bloc and its poor ability to parry the right in a better connected way. A serious problem is that in the left to the center of the political spectrum there is no serious power which could draw the votes of the dissatisfied, poor, and those affected by economic measures. These voters vote for the Radicals not because they agree with their ideology and values, but because they do not have another option except for the Radical social demagogy. Vukašin Pavlović in interview for Daily *Danas*, Monday, 4 April, 2005

2.4.3 Public spiritedness. Public awareness presents an indicator consisting of 3 dimensions, requesting benefits to which they are not entitled to from the State, avoiding payment on public transportation and tax evasion.

FIGURE III.2.4.3: Public spiritedness of the citizens of Serbia

Source: Civil Society 2004 survey
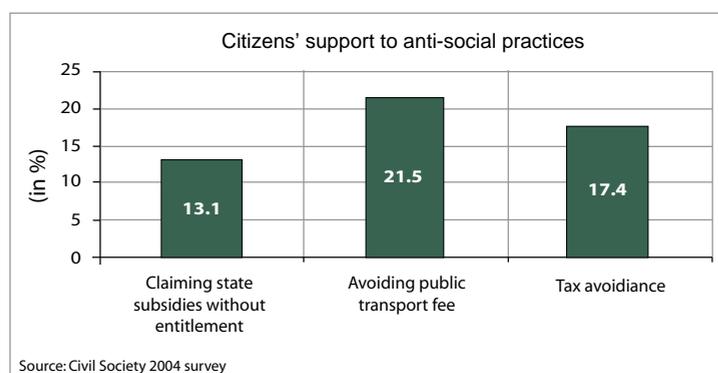
To all three variables within this indicator, most of the citizens show a very high level of commitment. In other words, a large majority of citizens consider that it is never justified, "to apply for state benefits to which you are not entitled" (86%), "to avoid paying for public transportation" (77%) or "tax evasion" (81%). Viewed according to gender, women, as opposed to men, exhibit a stronger spirit of social justice on all variables. The level of public spiritedness in Serbia has grown during the last ten years as shown in the following table.

TABLE III.2.4.3: Average score of public spiritedness in Serbia in last ten years[109]

Civil Society 2004	WVS 2001	WVS 1996
1.2	1.9	2.5

Having lived for over a decade in a completely opposite reality where tax evasion was the rule, the grey economy a source of income, and not paying for public transportation an everyday habit, expectations that the state will resolve all problems is the dominant attitude.

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108   Values range from 0 to 6, where 6 mean the lowest level of tolerance.

109   Scores range from 1 to 3, where 3 mean the lowest level of public spiritedness.

2.5. LEGAL ENVIRONMENT

This subdimension examines the legal environment for civil society and assesses to what extent it is enabling or disabling to civil society. Table III.2.5 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.2.5: Indicators assessing legal environment

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
2.5.1	CSO registration	2
2.5.2	Freedom of CSOs to criticise the government	2
2.5.3	Tax laws favourable to CSOs	1
2.5.4	Tax benefits for philanthropy	1

2.5.1 Registration of civil society organizations. Civil society organizations in Serbia operate within an unclear and inconsistent legal framework, as stated in the USAID *Sustainability Index 2004*, because of which the legal framework has the index of 4.5 and has not significantly changed since the nineties. This assessment still applies today although the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Governance in cooperation with the OCSE Office in Serbia and Montenegro and an NGO Working Group publicly presented the new Draft Law of Associations in November 2005. This law will regulate the process of NGO registration and operations, and it is now only a matter of time

USAID SI
LEGAL FRAMEWORK:
2004. = 4.5
2003. = 4.5
2002. = 4.5
2001. = 5.0
2000. = 5.0
1999. = 6.0
1998. = 5.0

until it enters parliament. Until then, the establishment and work of CSOs in Serbia will still be legally governed by two laws: a) the State Law on Association of Citizens into Associations, social organizations and political organizations founded in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, from 1990, and b) the Republic "Law on Social Organizations and Associations of Citizens", from 1982, which was last amended in 1989. Both the laws in force were passed in entirely different social and political contexts. They protect values which do not exist any longer, in the opinion of most of the key informants. This is thought to apply first of all in relation to classifications of activities of associations and non-governmental organizations, which are considered not to be precise enough, hence a certain number of CSOs have difficulty "fitting in" their operational goals. Although they acknowledge that the legal regulations are outdated, representatives of the Government and umbrella organizations believe that the federal Law from 1990 is extremely liberal because, in their opinion, it does not provide discretion rights, which would restrict registration of associations. They argue it would only restrict those organizations which threaten to overthrow the constitutionally established system by force; which jeopardize the territorial integrity and independence of the country; which violate the rights and freedoms of people and citizens guaranteed by the Constitution or which incite national, racial and religious hatred and intolerance.

All categories of key informants and the large majority of the *Regional Stakeholders* unanimously hold that the procedure of registering CSOs is equal for all (74%), that the registration is relatively inexpensive (74%) and that it does not deviate from legal regulations (73%). They think it is prompt (69%) and simple (67%). The process of founding is easy, on average lasts two to four weeks, and in the process of registration it is necessary to pay administrative charges of 4000 dinars (57US$) for registration at state level, or 3000 dinars (43US$) for registration at republic level. Most of them also think that the registration procedure is much simpler based on the federal law, so that the majority of associations opt

for this course. In their founding statutes they state that they will operate in the territory of SCG, regardless of tacitly different intentions.

NGO representatives from all regions state that the new law should above all reduce the number of founders from the existing ten to three, which is already requirement in the surrounding countries. The representatives of umbrella organizations believe that the founding of associations and foundations (organizations without members) should be fully regulated – an area which is currently regulated by obsolete laws. In this way, the issue of international organization operations in Serbia would be resolved, because it has so far not been regulated by law. The possibility of founding associations will also be provided under specific requirements to foreign citizens and underage persons in conformity the Convention on the Right of the Child. All these issues should be harmonized with respective European standards.

2.5.2 Allowable advocacy activities. This indicator measures to what extent the CSOs are free to engage in advocacy and criticize the Government. In the opinion of 64% *Regional Stakeholders 2005,* the existing law restricts and impedes the work of the CSOs. 48% of them believe that these are *reasonable restrictions*, and 17% are of the opinion that it is a matter of *improperly severe* restrictions. Twenty two percent of the interviewed Stakeholders share the opinion that *there are no legal restrictions*, while 14% of them did not know the answer to this question. CSOs are allowed to criticise the government and its activities; however, the regional consultations revealed that many CSOs, have their own self-censorship mechanisms as part of the one-party-system legacy.

On the other hand, two fundamental preconditions are lacking for such CSO activities in Serbia - both are of a political nature: One of them is political space, the other is political culture. Political space is dominated by the political elites, and there is little opportunity for dialogue with persons of different views. Since civil society does not have a particularly widely recognised role it remains pushed to the margins. Criticism of the Government or some of the civil society advocacy activities emerge in the first place only when themes which are not compatible to national democracy are in question – this is the case with mass graves, truth and reconciliation, Srebrenica victims, war criminals in the former Yugoslavia, etc., however, and even then it happens that these very themes serve for pronouncing civil society, particularly non-governmental organizations, to be enemies of their own nation, while the essence remains swept under the carpet.

Another set of reasons explaining the lack of criticism of the authorities by most CSOs is the lack of legitimacy of organizations, decomposed social capital in the society as a whole, and in the sector itself, and (inherited) hostile[110] and negative relations towards non-governmental organizations, given that occasionally there are still public campaigns

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[110]   Amnesty International, November 29, 2005 – Human rights activists and independent journalists in Serbia are growingly endangered and are even experiencing physical assaults in order to prevent a debate on past atrocities, a new Amnesty International report said today. Their premises are covered with insulting graffiti and they are threatened with prosecution or initiating something that may be called a «malicious hunt».

against the non-government sector in Serbia, particularly against CSOs dealing with human rights.[111]

In Serbia today, there are only a few civil society organizations which, individually or in smaller groups, occasionally publicly criticize the authorities on issues of respect for human rights, facing up to the past, respecting and implementing laws, reducing corruption and conflicts of interests, respecting the right to information of public importance, The Hague defendants, etc. (e.g. Fund for Humanitarian Law, Transparency Serbia, Yucom, CeSID). Other organizations, or rather organizations focused on social issues, the problems of marginalized groups, the position of the Roma national groups, ecological problems, women's issues, organizations of refugees and the displaced, persons with disabilities, etc. rarely or considerably less frequently level criticism at the authorities.

2.5.3 Tax laws favorable to CSOs. The fact is that non-governmental organizations pay more in contributions and taxes than in any other surrounding country. The CSOs which are in the VAT system (having an annual turnover exceeding 2 million dinars - approximately 23,000€), must

> **VAT for social institutions.** Shelters for adults, although caring for the most vulnerable, pay value added tax on food they buy for the homeless. In the restaurant of the National Assembly of Serbia, the members for example do not pay VAT. Daily *Politika*, February 26, 2005

pay VAT at the rate of 18% of the tax base on all payments received without certification of VAT exemption,. Other tax and contributions, which are paid, are: 1.731278% on employees *salary*, 1.2658227% on *royalties* for engaging professionals (for instance translators), 1.50624% on *work on contract* for engaging (for example, field associates). Given that they are classified by the tax administration as small enterprises, all of the civil society organizations are, against their final accounts, obliged to pay income tax for the previous year by March 10 of the running year – for calculating tax for 2004, an average rate of 12.33% was applied.

With regard to the tax policy for which CSOs are liable, the *Key informants* from all categories express a negative opinion. The current tax policy is assessed as a burden for CSOs, which greatly aggravates the work of the organizations. The basic criticism by representatives of non-governmental organizations relates to the level of various taxes, for which these organizations are liable.

The opinion of the majority of representatives of CSOs, NGOs and donors is that the key problem lies in equating CSOs with enterprises even though they are completely different. The State is criticized for treating profit generating companies and NGOs whose operations are not oriented towards profit generation in the same way.

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[111]   «In the last few weeks there has been an intensive campaign against several non-government organizations, particularly those engaged in human rights and which have all this time been calling attention to war crimes and inviting cooperation with the Hague Tribunal, as stated by Sonja Biserko, President of the Helsinki Human Rights Committee of Serbia. – The odium, because of growing pressure of the international community on Serbia to fully cooperate with the Tribunal, is being conveyed to those organizations, which have become some kind of collateral damage of the current "normal" relations between the international community and official Belgrade, said Biserko to the *Beta News Agency*. President of the Helsinki Committee stated that changes in Serbia are not possible only at official level, but must also be carried out within the society itself, in which the non-government sector proved to be one of the relevant factors. Biserko called attention to the banners which were carried by the people at the SPS gathering protesting against Nataša Kandić, Borka Pavićević and herself, stating that although this was an expression of weakness and fear of those people, it did not mean that they were harmless. At the protest meeting held on Tuesday on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of extraditing the former president of the FRY and Serbia Slobodan Milošević to the Hague Tribunal, the people at the gathering also carried banners against Nataša Kandić, Director of the Fund for Humanitarian Law, Sonja Biserko, President of the Helsinki Human Rights Committee of Serbia and the dramatist Borka Pavićević.» Daily *Danas*, Friday, July 1, 2005. (available at: http://www.danas.co.yu/ accessed 20 February 2006)

The representatives of the CSO sector think that the State collects a great deal of money from them, thus hampering their development. The money which goes into the budget would, in their opinion, be used to better effect by investing in projects and activities earmarked for end beneficiaries. An additional difficulty for CSOs is the fact that the whole area related to taxation is very complicated. The provisions related to CSO operations are often unclear so that they involve a lot of communication with the tax administrations and responsible ministries. The situation is additionally aggravated by the fact that this area is subject to frequent changes and it is difficult to keep up to date. A particularly absurd fact, in the opinion of NGO representatives, is that VAT is levied on imported humanitarian aid. In some cases, when no allowance was made for paying VAT, the humanitarian aid had to be returned or tax exemption was granted in some instances through ordinances, often following a public campaign. Requests for VAT refunds are submitted yearly, on June 30 of the year in which the aid was received. By the amendments of the VAT Law from July 2005, humanitarian aid is exempt from this tax as are goods that are subject to agreements on foreign donations.

2.5.4 Tax benefits for philanthropy. In Serbia there is a Law on Donations and Humanitarian Aid,[112] which is applicable to the rights and obligations of the recipients of donations and humanitarian aid. However, there is no law pertaining to tax relief for charitable purposes and philanthropic giving. In the opinion of the representatives of all sectors, particularly from the civil sector, the key issue which should be elaborated is developing mechanisms for tax relief for philanthropic giving by local private companies. As yet, the tax policy does not encourage any form of giving to civil society organizations. The tax exemptions that exist in the current tax system refer to the Law on Capital Gains Tax, according to which the exemption may be up to 3% of the total profit. For that part of profit which is given for the realization of certain CSOs goals, the tax base is deducted. However, most of the CSO representatives are not adequately informed about this. This can be explained by a general lack of knowledge of the tax system in Serbia. One of the segments indicated by a donor representative refers to heightening awareness of certain tax exemptions intended for charitable giving to CSOs.

The representatives of NGOs, CSOs and foreign donors concluded that the tax policy must be changed and become more open to potential donors from the private sector. The private sector is viewed as a new source of finance for civil society activities in a situation where foreign donors who represented the dominant and most important source of financing are currently withdrawing.

2.6. STATE-CIVIL SOCIETY RELATIONS

This subdimension describes and assesses the nature and quality of relations between civil society and the Serbian state. Table III.2.6 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.2.6: Indicators assessing state-civil society relations

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
2.6.1	Autonomy of CSOs	2
2.6.2	Dialogue between CSOs and the state	1
2.6.3	Support for CSOs on the part of the state	1

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[112] "Official Gazette of FRY", issue 53/2001, 61/2001. According to this Law, political parties may not be recipients of donations, however the state bodies, units of local self-governance, public companies, other organizations and communities which are not profit-generating, as well as local and foreign humanitarian organizations may receive donations and humanitarian aid.

2.6.1 Autonomy. The Government does not, to put it euphemistically, have friendly[113] relations with trade unions any more than it does with those organizations which advocate enforcement of the Law on the Accessibility of Information of Public Interest, the reduction of corruption, non-interference in the work of the judiciary, issues related to the military or ecological organizations.[114] Partnership relations are not developed and occasional beatings, obstructions [115] and confiscations,[116] etc., occur. Similar to the behaviour of officials at the time of Milošević, the current authorities are occasionally inclined to *"Blacken non-governmental organizations and create a negative public attitude towards them",* in the opinion of the *Regional Stakeholders* (7%). The most frequently expressed opinion of the *Stakeholders* is that the State *sometimes* (40%), or *often* (15%) interferes in the work of civil society.

Relations between the state and civil society are made significantly more difficult by the absence of the political will to recognize the role of civil society and to establish constructive dialogue with its actors. Civil society, on the other hand, with its large number of actors, still has not developed sufficient awareness of the character and political importance of its role in the wider community. Nor is its role, in the eyes of the wider public, well enough developed. According to some interviewees this reinforces the state's restrictions against CSO work, especially on certain issues. Occasional interference by government takes the form of requests for changes in the Draft Law on the Association of Citizens, for example, which was harmonized with the Council of Europe standards during the mandate of the previous government, or the intention that social organizations, sports and humanitarian organizations be transformed into non-governmental ones.[117] Another tactic is to stall discussions on the 'improved' text of the Law at the Government of Serbia's parliamentary sessions, the high taxes which place CSOs on a par with companies and the absence of a strategy to provide financial support to civil society.[118] - The greatest impediment to civil society development is thought to be the absence of the necessary economic preconditions.

On the other hand, the state has a selective attitude towards civil society organizations. It does not, for example, intervene in the work of house tenant's committees, it, to a certain extent, financially supports organizations, which are focused on healthcare and social issues.

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[113] Association of Free and Independent Trade Unions (ASNS) condemned beating of the participants of the protest in Belgrade by the police, which was organized by this trade union. Ranko Savić, President of the Association of Free and Independent Trade Unions (ASNS), denied police allegations that force was not used against workers at the protest. Daily *Danas Večernje novosti, Politika*, 1.4.2005. and 2.4.2005. Association of Free and Independent Trade Unions (ASNS addressed a protest letter to state officials regarding political violence over trade union activists. *Politika*, 2 April 2005.

[114] "The Ministry of Science and the Environment denied yesterday allegations of the Ecological Movement of Novi Sad and Ecological Movement of SCG that the draft Law on Protection Against Ionizing Radiation provides that the Law on Prohibiting Building Nuclear Power Stations cease to be valid." The Ecological Movement of Novi Sad, Ecological Movement of SCG. *Politika* 1.2.2005.

[115] Misunderstandings between the local authorities in Novi Pazar and Cultural Center in relation to who has the right to give premises for use. Politika 8.4. 2005.

[116] Group of non-government organizations requested the President of the Military Department of District Court to return to the Helsinki Human Rights Committee entire confiscated circulation of the book by Vladan Vlajković "Military Secret". Daily *Danas*, 18 February 2005, (available at: http://www.danas.co.yu/ (accessed 2 February 2006)

[117] «One of the key problems in preparing the Draft Law on Association of Citizens is that the proposal of the Law was the desire of the Ministry to transform social, sports and humanitarian organizations into non-government organizations, which is impossible and this must be regulated by the new law – as emphasized by Miljenko Dereta, Executive Director of the Civil Initiatives», Daily *Danas*, 12 January, 2005, (available at: http://www.danas.co.yu/ (accessed 2 February 2006)

[118] The Daily *Danas* interlocutor Dereta emphasizes that the problem is that there is no budgetary financing, but that there is a readiness in the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Governance to change the status of the third sector to some extent. Daily Danas, 12 January 2005.

With the part of the sector focused on poverty reduction, the state maintains partnership relations and it regards sports and cultural clubs with affection. However, "relations deteriorated with the section of civil sector and the media which initiated discussions related to war crimes, particularly the massacre in Srebrenica, and mass graves. In the opinion of the European Commission this attitude shows the Government's inability to comprehend the role of civil society and the media in a democratic society and it identifies a concerning tendency of political interference in media and NGO work." (Daily *Danas*, November 14, 2005).

2.6.2 Dialogue. Assessing the current communication between the State and civil society, a large majority of the *Regional Stakeholders* believe that it is *limited* (47%) or *moderate* 40%. That there is no communication at all is assessed by 11% of the Stakeholders, while only 3% share the opinion that the communication of the civil society and the State is *developed.*

Political changes are still driven from the centre and there is noticeable disagreement regarding the course and sequencing of changes amongst various social actors and within the authorities. There is neither social nor political dialogue between the state and civil society in Serbia. Social dialogue is blocked politically, while the political is hampered by intolerance, although not any longer by polarized ideologies, and the fight of political parties for better ratings. In general, it can be concluded that the culture of dialogue is lacking in the political realm and the concept of dialogue is poorly understood in public discourse.

The established dialogue[119] between the State and civil society, initiated after the events of October 5, 2000, lost momentum with the assassination of Prime Minister Đinđić, and the new 2004 Government reverted to spradic communication and lack of inclusion of non-governmental organizations in policy dialogue. As for the trade unions, for several reasons, social dialogue both then and today has remained a "bone in the throat" of each government over the past five years.

The State does not treat trade unions or the association of employers as equal partners, which makes it difficult to establish the necessary climate of trust out of which belief in the possibility of three-party cooperation could develop. Associations of employers do not have any strong motives to confront the principles of neo-liberal economics, and the trade unions often lack the capacities to change momentary agreements.[120] On the other hand,

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[119] «The change of the regime in Serbia and Yugoslavia also brought about changes in relations between the authorities and non-governmental organizations. This is also expressed in the dialogue which is being established in relation to many legal initiatives which are currently under preparation– Laws on amnesty, citizenship, provision of information, university and, the one which is most important to us, the Law on Non-Governmental Organizations. In all of the listed cases, experts from the NGO sector made considerable contributions by representing the interests of the groups, to which the laws refer. However, this is still far from a broad public discussion, which must proceed passing such laws and in which as many as possible of interested citizens, professional associations and NGOs should take part.» Miljenko Dereta, Executive Director of the Civil Initiatives, NEW NETWORK FOR NEW TIME, Bulletin NETWORK – news and information for non-government organizations, Number 3 – January 2001.

[120] Trade unions which are fragmented, without influence and do no enjoy much trust of the workers and citizen, are not in a position to determine the political market and have important negotiating power or political influence. As opposed to this, consensus on minimum joint goals and uniform negotiating position and tactics would be a clear signal and warning to the authorities that this is a matter of the strategic social partner's demand. At the same time, this is the only way, at least partially, to cushion negative effects of a ruined economy and higher unemployment rate on negotiating positions and power of the trade unions. Zoran Stoiljković, UGS Nezavisnost, Bulletin No.28.

while trade unions[121] in Serbia often complain that there is no representative association of employers as a social partner with whom they could engage in dialogue, the employers, who are in any case weak and fragmented, invest little effort in social dialogue, seeing nothing to gain in playing a more active role in collective negotiations with workers' representatives. Moreover, the associations of employers are dominated by managers from the public sector and large companies, and private business people, particularly those running small enterprises, are very poorly represented.[122]

These are the key reasons why, despite occasional efforts,[123] the three-party mechanism of dialogue is still not established in Serbia in the way it is done in the EU, where three-party commissions actively participate in developing policy. Another two key reasons contribute to the slow pace of establishing social dialogue: the lower level of trust in and amongst institutions,[124] alienation on behalf of many citizens of Serbia, form the Government and political parties, and the fact the Sate has marginalized social partners._

Instead of a dialogue, the State and civil society in Serbia communicate on an *ad hoc* basis and occasionally at meetings,[125] round tables, panels, most often through the media and more rarely by letter. In contrast to other countries undergoing transition, Serbia lacks the possibility of direct and continual Internet communication between civil society and the ministries or relevant bodies within the Government.

Meetings between the Government and civil society have mostly been consultative and often appeared to be more like business talks, where the Government controls the agenda, makes one-sided changes in the course of the process and makes proposals which are not further discussed by all stakeholders. The reasons for not establishing appropriate dialogue are numerous; they include the central role of the State, the depth of the economic crisis, the impact of international financial institutions on creating policy, the weakening of trade

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[121] The trade unions are strong in the public sector or state-owned factories, while they are weak in the private sector which is the future. This is another kind of representation and future social dialogue shall become more bilateral – employers and trade unions will take part because the state will no longer be the owner, Frank Hantke, Regional Project Manager. Labor relations and Social Dialogue in Southeastern Europe. Fridrih Ebert Foundation. Daily *Danas*, 14 March 2005 available at: http://www.danas.co.yu/ (accessed 15 January 2006)

[122] Summarized from the speech of Lori Clements, representative American Center for International Workers' Solidarity in Serbia and Montenegro, at the gathering *Social dialogue in Serbia – the new beginning*. Daily Danas, Friday, 23rd. July, 2004. The gathering, in the organization of Partnership for democratic Changes and Solidarity Center, held 22nd July, 2004 in Hotel Palas.

[123] Socio-Economic Council was constituted on March 28, 2005. «The goal of establishing the Socio-Economic Council is adopting a long-term social program; the Council is faced with important social task to foster work as a value and to contribute to social changes which shall be founded on agreement of social partners – as yesterday said Premiere of Serbia Vojislav Koštunica in opening constitutive session of the Socio-Economic Council. Koštunica said that "the heavy and painful burden of the transition should be equally spread" and that one of the most important transition tasks shall be restructuring big economic system, public companies.» Daily Danas, 29th March, 2005

[124] Branislav Čanak, President of the United Branch Unions "Nezavisnost" stated to the press that that representative trade union is freezing its membership in the Council, having that the social partners do not have equal working conditions. In this context, he requested that "Nezavisnost" should get part of the union's property, so that this union would no longer be burdened with unacceptably high rental which it pays for working premises. Daily Danas, 29 March 2005 available at: http://www.danas.co.yu/ (accessed 5 Februaru 2006)

[125] "Unlike other countries I have visited, in Serbia there is a lot of social dialogue, but here established social dialogue means a lot of meetings. The highest representatives of all partners – from the Government to trade unions – are sitting at the table fairly often. However, the results of that so-called social dialogue so far have been very small. I think that political culture is still not adequately developed for engaging in true social dialogue, since dialogue presumes documentation, challenging, but listening as well. It is necessary to understand the interests, perceptions and ideas of the other party. However, real dialogue, exchange of opinions, listening to the other, is not in the tradition of the former system. Besides that, social dialogue also means assuming 'coresponsibility' which is a system of norms, which has to be learnt. Even in Germany these norms were not learned and internalized over night. Time and experience are needed and we have to be patient." Frank Hantke, Regional Project Manager, Labor Relations and Social Dialogue Working Relations and Social Dialogue in Southeastern Europe. Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Daily *Danas*, 14 March, 2005

unions, the growing number of small private enterprises without trade unions, the lack of interest on behalf of employers, lack of expertise and funds and weak links between trade unions.[126]

Today the frequency of consultations is much lower than in the time of Prime Minister Đinđić, when the Civil Society Advisory Committee, together with the Government worked on designing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and on designing the Law on the Association of Citizens. With the assassination of the Prime Minister and the establishment of the new Government, communication between the State and CSOs has regressed and civil society organizations again find themselves in a role very similar to the one they occupied at the time of Milošević. That is why NGOs today, when it comes to the issue of the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy or the issue of "remembering" or "forgetting" the past,[127] find themselves engaging mostly in monologue. That is why implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy was halted, and the efforts to establish proper legal regulation of citizens' associations, which was stipulated during the previous Government and harmonized with the Council of Europe standards has, with the change of government, been set right back to the beginning. The current 'improved' version of this law has not yet reached the agenda of the Assembly. It is not unreasonable to ask, whether it will at all find a place on that agenda during the mandate of this Government.

In this atmosphere, neither the trade unions nor the non-governmental organizations, or civil society as a whole, are able to realize their two most pressing roles – to limit the negative impact of the reforms and exercise damage control. Neither are they able to establish real social dialogue, which presumes more than consultations – these are "principled negotiations" where the importance of the real interests of the parties is emphasized, and not the stands which are taken in relation to these interests.[128]

2.6.3 Cooperation/support. Most of the non-governmental organizations today are predominantly financed by international organizations, while the rest of the civil society organizations, such as sports associations, fishermen's committees, house tenants' committees, trade and business associations etc., are mostly financed through membership fees and their own income generating activities.

According to data from the questionnaire of the *Regional Stakeholders,* the most significant sources of financing for the greatest number organizations are foreign donors, membership fees and local government. The data of the *Regional Stakeholders* research shows that, out of 205 of the CSOs, in which they are engaged themselves, the Republic Government is, on average, the majority source of financing (68.6%) only for 25 of the CSOs, while for 53 of the CSOs it is local government. Out of 205 of the CSOs, for 62 of them the majority source of financing comes from the membership fee and for 69 CSOs, the greatest source of financing is foreign donors. (See table 2.6.3.)

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[126] Summarized from the speech of Lori Clements...

[127]   «There is an impression that the state bodies in Serbia are still not ready or are burdened with other problems, they don't have time to engage in issues of " remembering " or " forgetting" the past. That is why it is not surprising that the entire process of truth and reconciliation so far has progressed at the level of civil society. However, what is concerning is primarily the absence of dialogue, that is, coordination between the authorities and civil society. Thus, for example, the Commission for Truth and Reconciliation, which was established by the President of FRY, does not have, in its ranks, either representatives of non-government organizations or a clear concept of cooperation and exchange of information with them.» Vesna Nikolic-Ristanovic, the author is President of Victimology Society of Serbia and Research Associate of the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research in Belgrade. DIALOGUE Friday, 20 December 2002.

[128]   «Trade unions, employers and other civil social groups should not limit their influence to development of social programs, but rather jointly work on issues such as industrial policy, trade, local industry, domestic and foreign investments, deficit and other areas, which are important to national economic development. These issues of "macro-economic dialogue" are the very fields in which the governments are either pressed by international financial institutions controlling them or ready to consent only to limited participation of these groups. These issues are often not included in public debates or consultations, while it would be useful to participate in a transparent dialogue.» Lori Clements.

Table III.2.6.3: Assess how many resources, in the previous fiscal year, reached the CSO in which you are engaged from some of the following sources? *(the percentage of total resources entered)?*

Source financing	Number organization which are financed	Average financing per organization
	N	%
Republic Government	25	68.6%
Local self-governance	53	59.3%
Local private companies	23	21.0%
Foreign donors	69	88.8%
Individual donors	35	35.3%
Membership fee	62	74.7%
Money from sale/rendered services	14	49.7%
Other	5	55.0%

Out of 25 organizations, as reported by the regional stakeholders, the Republic Government finances nine various kinds of civil society organizations as follows:

1. Eight healthcare groups, that is, associations of persons with disabilities – with 65% of resources on average

2. Three groups of national minorities (the Roma, Slovaks, Bunjevci) – with 37% of resources

3. Two women's groups – with 20% of resources on average

4. Three professional associations (scientific research of religion, associations of teachers and school boards) – with 47% of resources on average

5. Four NGOs/*associations of citizens* – with 11% of resources on average

6. Two environmental preservation organizations – with 23% of resources on average

7. One hobby organization (hunter's club) – with 2% of resources on average

8. One political group – with 100%

9. One sports club – with 20% of resources

2.7. Private sector-civil society relations

This subdimension describes and assesses the nature and quality of relations between civil society and the private sector. Table III.2.7 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

Table III.2.7: Indicators assessing private sector – civil society relations

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
2.7.1	Private sector attitude to Civil Society	1
2.7.2	Corporate social responsibility	1
2.7.3	Corporate philanthropy	1

2.7.1 Private sector attitude. The large majority of *Regional Stakeholders* said that the attitude of the private sector towards civil society is primarily *doubtful* (41%) or *indifferent* (36%). Only 13% of the respondents share the opinion that the private sector has a *supportive* attitude towards civil society. (See Figure 2.7.1.)

FIGURE **III.2.7.1: Attitude of the private sectors towards the CSOs**

What is, in your experience, the attitude of the private sector towards civil society as a whole? (in %)

Category	Value
I don't know	3
Supporting	13
Protectionist	5
Indifferent	36
Distrustful	41
Hostile	2

Source: Regional Stakeholder Survey 2005
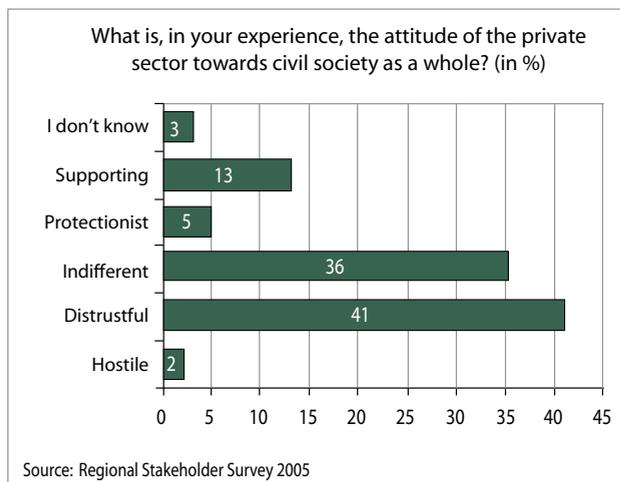
The private sector in Serbia, especially in smaller places, occasionally assists civil society organizations, but this assistance is exclusively based on inter-personal and informal connections and relations, since the framework of institutional cooperation is not developed or identified. This is confirmed also by the regional analysis – the number of *Stakeholders,* which believe that the private sector has a *supportive* attitude, is the smallest in big towns, for instance, in Belgrade (1 respondent), and the greatest in the South (16%), Eastern (13%) and Western Serbia (16%).

Half of the *Regional Stakeholders* also believe that business associations *rarely* (49%) participate in civil society initiatives, around one third, 38%, is of the opinion that they participate *occasionally*, while 4% of Stakeholders think they *never were included* or are *often* included.

The situation is the same with upper classes and the elite – almost half of the Stakeholders (48%), mostly from West and, South Serbia and Vojvodina, believe that the upper class and the elite are inadequately represented in the membership of CSOs, the same number of them believe that they are equally represented in Eastern Serbia and Belgrade.

2.7.2 Corporate social responsibility. The opinion of one third of the *Regional Stakeholders* (36%) is that the social responsibility of companies in Serbia is *limited*, one quarter that it is *moderate* (25%), and 12% judge that the responsibility of companies is *insignificant*. Nine percent of the Stakeholders do not have an opinion on this topic. That the social responsibility of large companies in Serbia is *significant* is an opinion held by only 17% of the Stakeholders.

South Serbia has the largest number of respondents, (19%) who believe that the social responsibility of large companies is insignificant. This data should be interpreted in the context of the towns where the survey was conducted, in which two big domestic companies were privatized; Zdravlje in Leskovac and the Tobacco Industry in Niš. In Vojvodina a very high percentage of respondents (43%) see the social responsibility of companies as *significant*, while such a view is the least common in Belgrade and Eastern Serbia, where it is held by only 7% of the respondents.

Although the *Attitudes towards socially responsible business in Serbia* survey (*Strategic Marketing 2005)* did not directly address issue of holding companies responsible for the potential negative effects of their operations, the conclusions of the survey are:

1. awareness of the importance of a topic certainly does not also imply readiness for personal engagement – this is indicated by the fact that *conservation of the environment* (the topic most often associated with Corporate Social Responsibility -CSR), is at the same time also assessed as the most neglected topic, i.e. the area in the worst condition in Serbia,

2. most of the representatives of companies expressed the opinion that topics such as *rights of women, minorities and vulnerable groups* should be the concern of socially responsible business operations (CSR), however, the *absence of social discrimination* as a topic of the CSR was spontaneously mentioned only by 5% of domestic and 14% of international companies,

3. as an institution, which should be responsible for public welfare, the Republic Assembly and Republic Government (96%) were most often identified, while large international companies and NGOs are placed on the bottom of the list (76% and 51%),

4. Topics stated as being the most pressing for Serbia (in field of CSR) at the moment are: business ethics, laws, safety of products, and relations with consumers. It is interesting that the companies state these topics as being the most important, but they do not state the activities which they carry out in practice in this field.

2.7.3 Corporate philanthropy. Local private companies finance less than a quarter of the CSOs and their participation in financing these organizations is around one fifth of the organization's budget (*Regional Stakeholders*). On the other hand, the «*Attitudes towards socially responsible business operations in Serbia*» survey (*Strategic Marketing 2005[129]*) showed that:

■ 14% of the companies realize some kind of cooperation with the local community and believe that a small number of them participate in the development of the local community;

■ 18% of the companies believe that there is close cooperation with the local community. The companies were not initiators, but have participated in a number of actions initiated by the local community;

■ 65% of the companies are in close cooperation with the local community, and often not only realized but also initiated actions at the local level;

■ only 37% of companies cooperated with the local NGOs.

According to the same survey data, the engagement of most of the companies in the field of CSR is reduced to philanthropy actions (donations and sponsorship). Most domestic (65%) and almost all international companies (93%) argue that they have an action plan in the field of CSR for the next two years, however, philanthropy actions dominate in these plans in spite the fact that most of them declare that they systematically and in an organized way deal with all basic topics related to the CSR.

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[129]   The summary of the findings become recently available at the address http://www.smartkolektiv.org/corporate_social_responsibility_in_Serbia.pdf (accessed 18 June 2006)

CONCLUSION

In analyzing political, social, economic, cultural and legal factors as well as the attitudes and behaviour of state and private sector actors towards civil society, the CSI study revealed that the environment dimension is developing moderately, although it still poses numerous challenges. The external environment in Serbia strongly suppressed civil society during the 90s and it has also been somewhat limiting since 2000, with the exception of the short promising period under Prime Minister Đinđić (2000 – 2003). In general, the current situation in Serbia is one of underdeveloped political institutions, rudimentary forms of parliamentarianism with the concentration of all power in the hands of political parties, a high degree of corruption and growing passivity in the attitude of the citizens towards the authorities exercising power. Political reforms are rather centralised and there is noticeable disagreement regarding the course and sequencing of reforms amongst various social actors and within public authorities themselves.

Currently the problematic and half-hearted implementation of laws and the lack of conducive legislative, political and socio-cultural environments in which CSOs can operate, are major barriers to civil society's development. In addition, two fundamental political conditions are missing; political room to manoeuvre and political culture. Political space is congested with political actors and this is aggravated by the absence of a culture of dialogue between different observers or opponents. This is seen as a disabling factor to civil society development and as a restraint on the efforts of civil society to establish a transparent political role for itself. Due to this, it continues to be relegated to the margins.

Due to widespread corruption, weak rule of law, dysfunctional institutions and severe impoverishment of the population, mutual trust amongst Serbian citizens has plummeted. CSI study shows that distrust has been continually growing since 1996, and currently, the percentage of those who believe that the majority of their fellow citizens can be trusted dropped to 9%. With this increased distrust, social capital has also declined. At the local community level this is manifested through a decrease in the amount of collective action and the increased reluctance of individuals to engage in collective activities.

The CSI study showed that the relationship between civil society and the state is also problematic. There is neither social nor political dialogue between the state and civil society in Serbia. Social dialogue is very limited, while political confrontation is stained by intolerance (although no longer by polarized ideologies) and the fight of political parties to win voters' support. In general, it can be concluded that the culture of dialogue is lacking in the political realm and the concept of dialogue is poorly understood in public discourse. Additionally, relations between the state and civil society are further undermined by the absence of the political will to recognize the role of civil society in the country's development. Civil society, on the other hand, with its large number of actors, still has not developed sufficient awareness of the character and political importance of its role in the wider community. Moreover, the state has a selective attitude towards CSOs. While it does not treat trade unions or employers' associations as important interlocutors, it provides modest financial supports to organizations that are focused on the provision of social services, such as healthcare. The state entertains positive relations with those CSOs that work on poverty reduction and regards sports and cultural clubs with affection, while ignoring, or sometimes even stigmatising, CSOs dealing with burning political issues such as Hague tribunal defendants, facing the past issues and war crimes. However, relations deteriorated with the section of civil sector and the media which initiated discussions related to war crimes, particularly the massacre in Srebrenica, and mass graves. In the opinion of the European Commission this attitude shows the government's inability to

comprehend the advocacy role of civil society and the media in a democratic society and it identifies a concerning tendency of political interference in media and NGO work. In this atmosphere, neither the trade unions nor the NGOs have come fully to realize their two most pressing roles: limit the negative impact of some current reforms and exercise damage control. Neither are they able to establish real social dialogue, which requires much more than consultations.

CSOs receive modest funding from the state, mainly as a condition posed by international aid and bilateral donors. However, there are no clear guidelines to govern the allocation of grants to CSOs and the process remains non-transparent. Informal links still dominate the relations between the state and civil society. Therefore, the establishment of an efficient CSO funding policy by the central state, in partnership with local authorities, which targets key policy issues, should be a key priority.

The private sector does not regard civil society as either a partner or an important social actor, nor is it likely to start recognizing CSOs as recipients of corporate giving due to the lack of stimulating legislation. In general, the attitude of the private sector towards civil society is primarily *doubtful* (41%) or *indifferent* (36%). Local companies, especially in smaller places, occasionally assist CSOs, but this assistance is exclusively based on informal connections and relations.

The analysis of civil society's structure found the political environment to be a crucial obstacle to development, together with economic instability, tax pressures, legal instability, fairly widespread corruption, the inefficient centralised state and the high level of public distrust towards the government and the political parties. This all contributes to people's passivity in public life, which manifests itself in a rather low score for the socio-cultural environment when measuring the levels of social trust, tolerance and public spiritedness among Serbian citizens. This indicates that the societal basis for a strong civil society is not yet in place and that attitudes such as tolerance, public spiritedness, and particularly inter-personal trust, which are crucial for a healthy civil society, are not yet widespread. Moreover, according to the reflections of the national workshop participants, the fact that political parties (such as the Serbian Radical Party), which are extremely intolerant, enjoy high levels of support could indicate a rather low level of tolerance within the society.

Most domestic (65%) and almost all international companies (93%) have an action plan in the field of CSR for the next two years and philanthropy actions dominate in these plans.

Some optimistic features can be recognised in the fact that the legal framework and state-civil society relations are in an early phase of formation, and in some visible progress in relations between civil society and local authorities. Although the current context is not completely disabling, a wide range of different factors, ranging from political to economic and socio-cultural, are in need of improvement, if an enabling environment for civil society is to be established in Serbia.

3. VALUES

This section describes and analyses the values promoted and practiced by civil society in Serbia. The score for the Values Dimension is **1.6**, reflecting a positive value basis of Serbian civil society. Figure III.3.1 presents the scores for the seven subdimensions within the Values dimension. Only the low score for the transparency subdimension stands out as a problematic area.

FIGURE III.3.1: Subdimension scores in values dimension
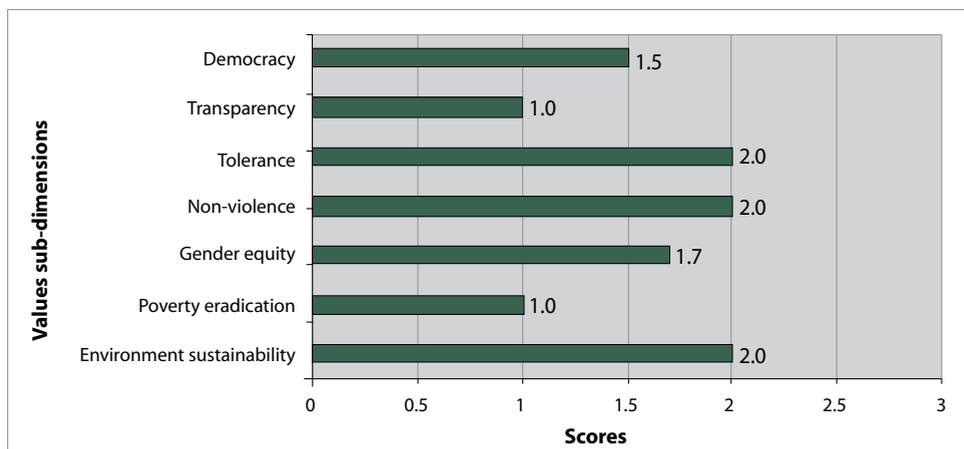
3.1. DEMOCRACY

This subdimension examines the extent to which civil society actors practice and promote democracy. Table III.3.1 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.3.1: INDICATORS ASSESSING DEMOCRACY

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.1.1	Democratic practices within CSOs	1
3.1.2	Civil society actions to promote democracy	2

3.1.1 Democratic practices within CSOs. This indicator refers to measuring democracy within CSOs such as management appointment procedures and the degree to which the members of organizations influence decision-making.

FIGURE III.3.1.1: Means of selecting CSO leadership

6%   1%   5%

☐ Self-election
☐ Appointing to dutv
☐ Elected by members
☐ Don`t know

88%

Source: Regional Stekeholders Survey 2005
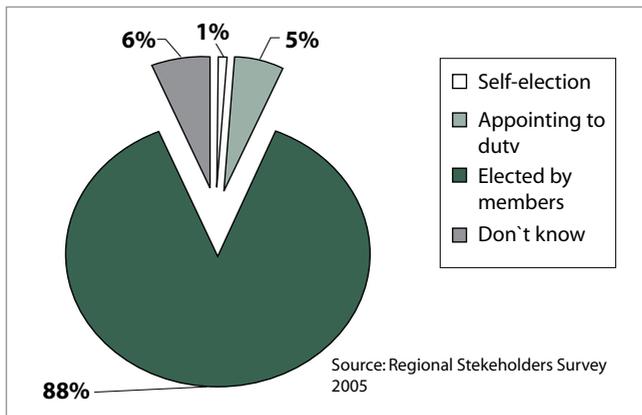
In three quarters of the 205 civil society organizations in the *Regional Stakeholders* survey[130] management is elected by the members at the assembly of the organization. Two organizations have a self-appointed leader. (See Figure 3.1.1.)

The members have *great influence* on the decision-making process in more than half the organizations (63%), *moderate* influence in 26%, and *small influence* in only four percent of the CSOs.

Opinions vary considerably among most of the *key informants*, that is, representatives of local authorities, academic institutions, trade unions, political parties, non-government organizations, and other civil society organizations. In the opinion of the majority, the CSOs within themselves are not democratic and they think that democracy is very developed in only a small number of them. Explanations for such assessments are grouped around several key reasons stated by the *key informants*. Amongst these the following arise most often:

■ Concepts that are related to the issue of democratic practice within CSOs most often refer to behaviour in understanding **leader and leadership** and the need of people to relate to that individual. Cultural patterns in Serbia are viewed as being the cause of this phenomenon. What is most difficult, according to the *key informants*, is to change the decision-making system, the distribution of power and the delegation of responsibilities due on the one hand to the *leader's* fear of fragmentation, and on the other, due to the members' fear of assuming responsibility and risks.

■ Many organizations work according to the *'one man band'* principle or, which is typical for the Roma non-government organizations, operate as "*family businesses,*" in which married couples head the organizations, and the members are close relatives (which is understandable to some extent considering the multiple marginalization of the Roma in society. The influence of the members in these organizations is the same as in the case of the re-election of the management - to great extent unnecessary. This was highlighted by some international donors and representatives of the local authorities, especially in Belgrade, and by a certain number of representatives of the Roma non-governmental organizations inland.

■ The motive, which still prevails when founding non-governmental organizations in Serbia, is the need to "*find a job for oneself*" and to provide a means of personal livelihood. This is why it is not a rare case that the president of a non-government organization is considered as an employer, and working in an NGO only as a source of income. This indeed additionally inhibits the influence of the members so that even the question of re-election is not included on the agenda, and when it is

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130   Within *Regional Stakeholder Survey* 2005, 185 respondents answered the questionnaire, out of which 157 were CSO representatives and amongst them there were those who are members of as many as three organizations – so that information was obtained for 205 organizations.

included – the result is known beforehand. For these reasons, a greater percentage of NGO representatives believe that statutes as documents exist in every organization, but that they are not applied in most of them. These representatives also believe that democracy is expressed to a large extent only in project activities, while strategic decisions relating to formulating the mission of the organization and the course of its development are made by people at the top of organization. A very small number of non-governmental organizations in Serbia were established with the primary goal of protecting the interests of the majority, or specific target groups, which is in great part confirmed also by the data that a considerable number of organizations "are all over the field" (which mainly results from their dependence on international donors), while most of organizations have just started taking the first steps in the process of profiling their activities.

■   The problem of internally applied democracy is most pronounced in *smaller* organizations, i.e. those with fewer members. Organizations with a membership base tend to have more developed mechanisms, statutes and work guidelines. They have developed procedures to regulate the election of leaders and the process of decision-making, which are fully respected. This opinion is shared by representatives of trade unions, academic institutions, political parties, and representatives of local authorities.

Finally, it is a widely held belief that the influence the membership should exert is conditioned by the kind of organization they belong to. At one end of the spectrum are large organizations with thousands of volunteers[131], where the issue of influence of members/volunteers should be regarded differently than in smaller organizations that are at the other side of a spectrum i.e. organizations which were established as a result of the enthusiasm of groups of parents whose children have some form of disability and where the roles are distributed differently, and the issue of members' influence is not raised.

In assessing democracy within civil society organizations as a whole, the representatives of the sector conclude that democratic structures and procedures are much more rigorously applied in non-governmental organizations than in political parties, trade unions or state institutions, where roles are assigned based on the principle of party affiliation while assembly mandates are treated as goods on the market – they go to "the highest bidder."

3.1.2 CS actions to promote democracy. The majority of the interlocutors during the CIVICUS survey (both *Regional Stakeholders* and key informants) unanimously agree that the arrival of the idea of democracy in Serbia is mostly thanks to civil society and that promoting democracy is precisely its most important contribution, especially during the time of the authoritarian regime during the nineties.

Another unanimous assessment of the majority is that, compared to that period, civil society is currently campaigning much less for democracy and its values. Representatives of international organizations and some representatives of the sector explain this with the fact that the civil society in Serbia has become *tired and sleepy, and activists are dosing or frightened* after the democratic changes, which presented the greatest success of their actions in promoting democracy.

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[131]   Such an example is CeSID - Center for Free Elections and Democracy – non-government, non-party and non-profit organization with a great network consisting of 21,000 volunteers/observers, 165 municipal teams, 16 local and 5 regional offices. In this way, the CeSID is able to, through a wide network, with its activities cover every municipality in Serbia and perform diverse activities in both scope and duration. Available at: http://www.cesid.org/onama/index.jsp (accessed 10 December 2005)

Some of the representatives of local authorities go even further and believe that the civil society *no longer promotes democracy as it did during the previous regime, when the sector operated like the then opposition and endeavoured to impose itself as a leader in promoting democracy even against stiff opposition*.

Some of the representatives of international organizations believe that civil society in Serbia would be more successful in promoting democratic values if it found a better *connection with the citizens* and if it spoke the *language which the citizens understood better*. Then the impact of civil society would be much greater than it is now. An identical opinion is shared by a certain number of representatives of the sectors who believe that civil society actively promotes democracy but the language in which most organizations address the citizens is intended for and understandable only to the donors.

In assessing the current role of civil society in promoting democracy, only slightly more that one third (38%) of the *Regional Stakeholders* are of opinion that it is nowadays *important,* while more than a half of the Stakeholders (63%) cannot state any example of such a campaign in the past year. Rare stakeholders (16%) recall *a lot of examples* of campaigns in which civil society promoted democracy during last year. These are most often examples of national campaigns from two to three years ago, which are remembered by 1.5 to 3.5% of the *Stakeholders*: a campaign of the resistance movement Otpor in 2000 – "*We're watching you!*" then the CeSID Election Campaign, various panels of the Helsinki Human Rights Committee, Abolishing the Law on Support to the Hague Tribunal Defendants, marking the 9th May – European Union Day, marking Human Rights Day, Women's Political Rights, Women in Politics, and the campaign against family violence, the campaign for Family Law and Labour Law, the ANEM campaign, which in the last two or three years, referred to putting in order/democratization of the media scene in Serbia, and the current campaign – named, Endeavours of a group of eight NGOs supporting the requests submitted to the Parliament related to the adoption of a declaration on Srebrenica, etc.

Among campaigns at the level of the local community, the following are remembered (by less than 1%): Enough Crime in Sokobanja, Support to municipalities of Eastern Serbia, Women Can Do It, About Education and Rights of Women, Democratic Relations Amongst Parties in Local Self-governance, Electing a Civil Defender in the Local Self-governance of Leskovac, Education for the Youth Networks, Standing Forum of Citizens Campaign in Novi Pazar, Committee of Protection of Human Rights in Schools, Establishment, Support and Work of Pupils' Parliament, The Beauty of Diversity - Timok Club, Against Corruption Force-Novi Sad, etc.

The media (in February/April 2005) recorded only 17 examples, mainly of actions of individual activists who spoke on human rights and discrimination,[132] a smaller number of

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[132] A special supplement to the Daily *Danas* dedicated to the issue of discrimination of various kinds is published on eight pages. A very extensive and detailed analysis of discrimination cases, possibility for the citizens to be legally protected against it, with a review of how discrimination is sanctioned by laws of other countries. In the supplement, legal aspect and data on specific cases of discrimination on any ground - gender, national and particularly issue of discrimination of those affected by the HIV are included. In the observed period, the daily paper Daily *Danas* is the only media which had a supplement of this kind and which was dedicated to human rights. Interlocutors are representatives of academic institutions and the smaller number of NGOs. Daily *Danas*, 24 February 2005 available at: http://www.danas.co.yu/ (accessed 24 February 2006)

public debates[133] and the actions of a certain number of non-governmental organizations,[134] but not one campaign. Only a small number of contributions in the media speak in favour of the thesis that democracy is, to a great extent, achieved and it is no longer necessary to work much on it.

Assessing this indicator the national workshop participants indicated a moderate role for civil society in the promotion of democracy, since these activities has decreased in recent years. This was partly explained due to new trends in development aid, since donors have reduced their financing of activities related to the promotion of democracy. Therefore the score of 2 is considered appropriate.

3.2. TRANSPARENCY

This subdimension analyses the extent to which civil society actors in Serbia practice and promote transparency. Table III.3.2 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.3.2: Indicators assessing transparency

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.2.1	Corruption within civil society	1
3.2.2	Financial transparency of CSOs	1
3.2.3	Civil Society actions to promote transparency	1

3.2.1 Corruption within civil society. In the opinion 39% of the *Regional Stakeholders,* corruption within civil society is *frequent or very frequent,* while there are just as many (38%) of those who believe that cases of corruption *sometimes occur.* (See Figure 3.2.1.). The regional analysis indicates that the opinions on corruption in civil society have the same percentage in almost all regions, except for Belgrade where the greatest number of Stakeholders (73%) scores corruption as *frequent.*

FIGURE III.3.2.1: Corruption within civil society (in %)

Source: Regional Stakeholder Survey 2005
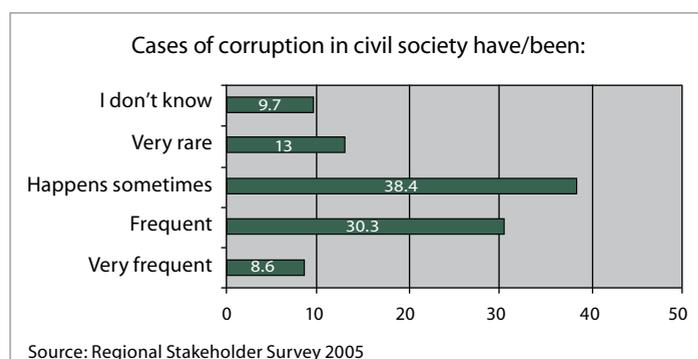
Such assessments are in accord with the reasons for which stakeholders opinions that establishing mechanisms of self-regulation is necessary and important. As stated by one Stakeholder, the explanation of this kind of assessment is that, amongst civil society actors, there are some "more equal than

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[133] The public debate on "Violation of right to conscientious objection in SCG" – statement of the Belgrade Office of the European Bureau for conscientious objection, Daily Danas, 7 February 2005 available at: http://www.danas.co.yu/ (accessed 24 February 2006)

[134] The group of non-government organizations accused Minister of Police Dragan Jočić and Head of Security-Informative Agency (BIA) Rade Bulatović for being directly responsible for hiding, as they say "truth on the incineration of bodies of Albanians from Kosovo in the Mačkatica Factory in Surdulica"- Fund for Humanitarian Law, Civil Initiatives, Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, Initiative of the Young for Human Rights, Helsinki Human Rights Committees in Serbia. Daily *Večernje novosti,* 4.2.2005

others", against a background of "elitist behaviour" from a number of organizations. There is anecdotal evidence of unprincipled coalitions, guided by the unwritten rule of give and take. Sometimes civil society organizations are too close to political centres of power, i.e. political parties, influential groups or individual and sometimes international organizations. These coalitions act as interest groups and are not conducive to the development of the third sector as a whole.

In the newspapers, there were only three articles related to this topic all on the same story – the initiative committee for the relieve of duty of the National Council of the Roma national Minority accused management of this body of financial embezzlement and requested that an early Electoral Assembly be held". (Daily *Danas*, March 15, 2005)

The National Workshop participants indicated that corruption within civil society is not only connected to misuse of money but also abuse of power and various trades of influence from some CSO staff. Pointing out that the cases of corruption in some organizations shed a negative light on the sector as a whole it was concluded that CSOs themselves should pay more attention to their financial transparency. The National Workshop participants also articulated the possibility that political parties might contribute even more to the negative picture of CSOs transparency. If political parties are counted as part of civil society, then the score of 1 should be considered as too high.

3.2.2 Financial transparency of CSOs. The measurement of transparency proposed by the CIVICUS is the number of organizations which submitted their financial reports to public insight. A review of around 200 civil society organization websites[135] showed that not one organization had placed a report of its financial operations on the web. At the same time, the *Regional Stakeholders expressed their* believes that, in 87% of organizations the financial operations are transparent, exposed to public examination and assessment, and that only 6% of organizations are not transparent, while 8% of the Stakeholders stated that they *do not know*.

The *NGO Policy Group 2001* data indicates that, out of 821 organizations which participated in this survey, representatives of only 52% were ready to disclose their budgets for the last twelve months. In the survey of *Civil Initiatives 2005*, out of 516 organizations, 73% of them were ready to talk about their budgets. This indicates that awareness of the need for non-governmental organizations to be financially transparent has been changing. However, the same survey showed the following – in responding to the question, "has your organization been financially audited by independent auditor", the data obtained shows that the organizations performed audits at project level in 22% of the cases, at level of entire organizations in 8%, while the most common response was that they were not audited - 68% of them."

The National Workshop participants questioned whether political parties and trade unions were part of civil society and shared the opinion that they reduced the transparency of CSOs even more, since the political parties were considered to be the exclusive holders of power and decision makers.

3.2.3 Actions taken by CS to promote transparency. Only 19% of the *Regional Stakeholders* believe that the role of civil society in lobbying for more transparency in Government is *significant*, most of them assess it as *moderate* (40%), while 11% of them consider it to be *insignificant*.

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[135]   According to CDNPS in Serbia, out of total 1935 active NGOs, 346 (17.9 %) have web-site, 1370 (70,8 %) have e-mail address.

One half of the *Regional Stakeholders* cannot *remember* (36%) or *do not know* anything (15%) about campaigns, actions or programs of civil society in the previous year, which aimed at lobbying for more transparent work in Government. The other half remembers only one or two examples of such campaigns (20%), part of them know of several examples (27%), while only two percent of the *Stakeholders* know of numerous examples of such campaigns. When asked to state an example of a campaign or activity related to this topic, most of the *Regional Stakeholders* (61%) could not remember any. The rest of them stated the names of organizations or examples, which are not directly connected to this topic. A small number of the stakeholders (2 to 5 respondents) state surveys and round tables as examples of campaigns, which advocated transparency in public procurement, the enforcement of the Law on Public Procurement, the Law on Preventing Conflict of Interest in Performance of Public Office, the supplementary Law on Political Party Finances, free access to information of public importance, and for reducing corruption. In this context, Transparency Serbia, CeSID and Yucom are most often mentioned.

Media representatives stated that in Serbia the awareness that authority should be transparent has still not developed enough, while monitoring of the media shows that the press dedicates three articles monthly\to this topic, the TV two and a half. These contributions are most often published during weekends, which are usually not overbooked with daily-political news, except for B92, which broadcasts contributions when the event in fact happened. The media most often write about survey data on corruption, publish collected papers on this subject including information on active endeavours of CSOs in fighting corruption requests for transparent financing of political parties and petitions calling for concrete action to abolish the immunity to members of the assembly who are involved in corruption scandals.

The majority of social sector representatives agree that civil society organizations cannot devote their full attention to this kind of activity, and that only a small number of those are trained to invest constant efforts in fighting bribery, corruption and the negative aspects of money in politics and society. However, not enough organizations have taken over the role of a *'think tank' or 'watchdog'*, which, in the opinion of most of the interlocutors from these sectors have the potential to deal with these problems. The interviewees hold that not enough is being done in Serbia to promote the transparency of money flows and of the work of the Government. The corrective role of control and vigilance over the authorities should be developed to a greater extent and it would be useful if this were supported by the civil sector. In the opinion of key informants, the media should support civil society by publishing information.

As for the active promotion of transparency, the key informants from the civil sector believe that state institutions do not cooperate readily. Representatives of the private sector believe that civil society should insist on transparency even though little can be done. The cultural heritage, the mentality of not interfering in politics and general poverty in society, in the opinion of the representatives of non-governmental organizations, is an aggravating factor in the fight against corruption. Another such factor is the fact that citizens are still mostly of the opinion that NGOs do not have the right to ask about "matters concerning authority" and that only assembly members are entitled to deal with that. Some key informants from non-governmental organizations believe that some CSOs are more interested in the transparency of local self-government than in that of the national level. This kind of attitude is explained by the fact that the decisions of local self-governance more directly affect citizens, hence the former have more interest in them. The opinion of this category of respondents is that it is much more difficult to obtain information related to the work of local authorities because they are more closed. Church representatives, on the one hand, believe that CSOs make

efforts to promote the transparency of the Government, but on the other hand they believe that the non-government sector is insufficiently transparent.

Regardless of the success achieved by the non-governmental sector in the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, the full implementation of the law still lies ahead, as well as the initiative for changing some of its provisions related to the exemption of certain Government bodies for the complaints of the Commissioner for information of public importance.[136]

3.3. TOLERANCE

This subdimension examines the extent to which civil society actors and organisations in Serbia practice and promote tolerance. Table III.3.3 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.3.3: Indicators assessing tolerance

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.3.1	Tolerance within the civil society arena	2
3.3.2	Civil society activities to promote tolerance	2

3.3.1 Tolerance within CS. The Regional Stakeholders survey shows that almost a half (41%) of the civil society key actors do not know, or for various reasons do not want to speak about examples of non-tolerance, discrimination, neo-Nazism and racism within civil society. Amongst those who have knowledge about it, and speak, the majority (34.1%) of them believe that there are one or two examples of such organizations.

Those who speak about these groups the most are CS key actors from Belgrade, while actors who respond to this question most often with, "I don't know" mainly come from South Serbia. Amongst examples of these groups the most mentioned are *Obraz* (34%), *Skinheads* (18%), *Serbian Radical Party* (4%), *Nomokanon* (2%), and, finally, with the smallest percentage, various sects and supporters, amongst them also the *Nacionalni stroj* (1%) a neo-Nazi organization which lately engaged in, "thuggish activities" and against 18 members of which, charges were brought, according to the daily *Politika* (January 9, 2006)[137].

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[136] As indicated at the round table "Relation of public authority bodies non-governmental organizations towards the right to free access to information" which was organized in the Belgrade Media Center by the Lawyer's Committee for Human Rights (YUCOM) on 31 January, 2006, as reported by the *Beta News Agency*.

[137] «President of the Lawyer's Committee for Human Rights (Yucom) Biljana Kovačević-Vučo welcomed prosecuting the members of "Nacionalnog stroja" and said it was "some kind of redemption by the State". "In our country, violence is institutionalized, because most powerful political parties are more responsible for stirring national, religious and racial hatred, than extremist groups", said Vučo to News Agency *Tanjug*.» As stated in daily Politika, 10.1.2006

FIGURE **III.3.3.1: Position of intolerant groups**

What is the position of these groups in civil society (in %)

I don`t know	14.6
Totally isolated and not accepted by the rest of the CS actors	36.2
Marginalized actors of the CS	32.4
Significant actors of the CS	14.6
Dominating the CS	2.2

Source: Regional Stakeholder Survey 2005
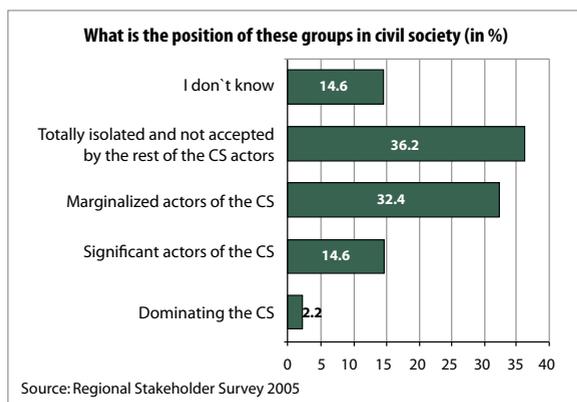
Two thirds of the *Stakeholders* (69%) believe that such groups are no more than marginalized actors (32%) or that they are groups which are completely isolated and unaccepted by other actors (36%) in the sector. In this group are the stakeholders which, in this context did not mention the Serbian Radical Party (SRP). Part of civil society represented by 17% of the stakeholders is convinced that the mentioned groups are important actors in civil society (15%), while two percent of them even believe that they dominate, this in reference most of all to the Serbian Radical Party, then to *Skinheads* and finally to *Obraz*. (See Figure 3.3.1.). The civil society Stakeholders belonging to this group are mostly from Vojvodina, and a part is from Roma civil society whose members most often suffer from the aggression of the *Skinheads*.

When discussing this indicator some of the NAG members declared that even CSOs that promote tolerance should not be tolerant of certain issues or activities of some organisations such as *Obraz* or *Skinheads.* However, since these examples are limited and those organizations are not part of mainstream civil society, NAG members concluded that civil society in Serbia can be regarded as a quite tolerant space. This was reflected in the rather high score of 2. Therefore, the national workshop participants stated that the two terms *civil society* and *citizens society* do not have the same meaning and that this was a rather conceptual issue which should be discussed further in order to define which organisations belong to civil society and which do not.

3.3.2 CS actions for promoting tolerance. Almost two fifths of the *Regional Stakeholders* (39%) stated that the role of civil society in promoting tolerance is *significant,* only 7% of them assess that it is *insignificant.*

A great majority of the *Regional Stakeholders* (83%) share the opinion that civil society promotes tolerance, but more than half (51%) of them cannot recall an example of an action promoting tolerance. Only three campaigns are remembered: *For the neighbour's cow to live and be healthy* (4%), *It is not hard to be nice* (3%) and the emphatic statement that there are a lot of *various organizations carrying out actions for promoting tolerance* (14%).

Monitoring shows that the media (February/April 2005) in 40 contributions covered CS actions promoting tolerance. The analyzed press published on average 13 articles monthly each on this subject, while the TV stations monitored had four each, all of which were positive in tone (total 40 contributions). According to contents, the media covered a wide range of CS actions on sensitizing the public to values of tolerance: beginning with pointing out the importance of the principle of tolerance in general,[138] to encouraging tolerance

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138   The panel in the "Center for Cultural decontamination "Public word and public lynch" Daily Danas 18.4.2005; Within the project "Coexistence and understanding" which is a part of the youth programs of the European Commission in Novi Sad, the young from B&H, Slovenia, Macedonia, Belgium and Portugal, Snežana Bačlija from the Novi Sad branch of the Balkans Idea, Dnevnik, 11.4. 2005.g.

according to all kinds of diversity beginning from those of nation, gender, race, religion,[139] sex orientation, persons with disabilities,[140] and concern for behaviour of politicians towards journalists,[141] etc. The smallest number of texts was about the Roma and tolerance towards them.[142]

3.4. NON-VIOLENCE

This subdimension describes and assesses the extent to which civil society actors and organisations in Serbia practice and promote non-violence. Table III.3.4 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.3.4: Indicators assessing non-violence

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.4.1	Non-violence within the CS arena	2
3.4.2	CS actions to promote non-violence	2

3.4.1 Non-violence within CS arena. The Regional Stakeholders survey shows that in civil society three various opinions are present: one according to which violent groups are *isolated groups which sometimes use violence* (32%), second according to which they are individual groups which are regularly violent (29%) and third, which is shared by one third of the civil society key actors, that civil society organizations are rarely violent.

The regional picture shows that those *individual groups, which are regularly violent* are most frequently found in Vojvodina and Eastern Serbia and that their number is equally large in both of these regions (43%). The opinion that these are *isolated groups, which are sometimes violent* is dominant in Central (34%), Western (41 %) and South Serbia (32%). Amongst the Belgrade stakeholders, the most frequent opinion is that being violent on behalf of a CSO is very rare (33%).

More than two thirds of the stakeholders do not know about an example of violent behaviour in the sector, while just under a quarter state an example of an organization. The most frequent examples are *Skinheads* (9%), *Obraz* (6%), Serbian Radical Party (2%) and with the least percentage *fascist groups – Hungarian Serbia*, *religious sects,* and examples of *setting mosques on fire.*

All cases of violence, according to the stakeholders' opinions, were criticized by 85% of the remaining civil society actors, although the criticism and condemnation of violent behaviour is present *always* only with 22% organizations, while 6% of the organizations have never or rarely criticized such behaviour, this opinion is particularly prevalent in Vojvodina.

The print media did not report any examples of violence within civil society, while the electronic media, in the three months analysed, mentioned the occurrence of organizations

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[139] The round table on the draft law on religious organizations – Helsinski Human Rights Committee in Serbia, Christian Adventist Church, Minister for Religions Milan Radulovic, Daily *Danas*, 3.2.2005

[140] The campaign in Vojvodina for reducing the distance towards persons with disabilities -- Center "Upright living" – Daily *Danas*, 8 February 2005, available at: http://www.danas.co.yu/ (accessed 27 February 2006)

[141] The Press Association of Serbia expressed its concern because of the behavior of some politicians towards journalists, Dnevnik. 1 April 2005.

[142] The anniversary of broadcasting first news of the Roma TV Glas, Daily *Danas*, 10 Februry 2005, available at: http://www.danas.co.yu/ (accessed 27 February 2006)

using violent means such as damaging property, writing graffiti with intolerant contents and verbal violence in advertising materials in 4 items i.e. 3%. The TV station B92, as was the case with other topics related to civil society, had the most to say on this topic, while RTS[143] had the least. The neo-Nazi group, *Nacionalni stroj* was particularly singled out after writing racist, anti-Semitic and chauvinist graffiti in November 2005. It also broke in on an antifascist conference held in Novi Sad. These actions drew the attention of the public to this problem. However, broad criticism by civil society did not materialise. Only a few individuals or individual organizations from the ranks of civil society responded to this occurrence.

3.4.2 CS actions to promote non-violence and peace. To the merit of the sector is the fact that violence is discussed in society and that the CSOs are regarded as being leaders in promoting non-violence, tolerance, peace and the peaceful conflict resolution. Their activism was particularly evident during the war years. Nowadays, the campaigns related to peace, facing the past and marking the 10th anniversary of the crime in Srebrenica constitute the most important contributions to combating violence and respecting human rights.

There are also very strong women's organizations, which cooperate with institutions, centres for social work and the police on problems of incest, violence against children, abuse and neglect of children (e.g. the Autonomous Women's Center). Civil society is also actively dealing with the problems of violence against women and there are a lot or organizations which deal with that problem and undertaking concrete activities such as programs of psycho-social help, opening shelters for women and child victims of violence (e.g. Safe House). A certain number of women's organizations are active in the field of anti-trafficking (e.g. Astra).

However, bearing in mind the existence of neo-Nazi groups and the extent to which these are present in civil society itself, about which the *Regional Stakeholders* speak, it may be said that the CSOs are not active enough related to this issue. The *Regional Stakeholders* survey data also states that just over a third of the key actors believe that the role of civil society in promoting non-violence and/or peaceful conflict resolution at the level of society is *insignificant* (38%), while 20% believe that it is *limited* or *insignificant* (7%). This role of civil society gets the best scores in South Serbia, and the worst in Vojvodina, while in other regions the relation towards it is more or less ambivalent. When it is necessary to quote an example of such actions during the last year, a large number of the key actors (55%) cannot do so or quote names of organizations. Amongst those who do remember, the most frequent examples of campaigns/organizations mentioned are the following: *School without violence* - 7 respondents, *Women in Black* - 7 respondents, *Women's group* - 3 respondents The lowest level of campaigning against violence was in Vojvodina, where lately excesses of violence were frequent in the opinion of civil society key actors, and the most frequent in Belgrade.

The Key informants, representatives of all social sectors, believe that civil society in Serbia does promote non-violence and peace, but, not continually and not sufficiently. Civil society also inadequately deals with the issue of violence amongst young people in high schools, which is highlighted by a representative of local authorities in Vojvodina, who believes that little is spoken of violence, especially about violence among young people, and that the State needs to engage more in resolving this problem. Based on surveys conducted by the Secretariat for Youth within the Provincial Government, violence is present in Novi Sad high schools. In support of this opinion, a representative of local authorities from Central Serbia stated that the new Government discontinued the Section for the National Strategy for Youth, which went unnoticed by the media and civil society.

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143   The abbreviation RTS stands for the national information service, Radio and Television of Serbia.

The cooperation of civil society organizations with the State and media is considered to be of key importance for the success of activities planned for promoting non-violence and non-violently resolving conflicts. Up to now mechanisms for efficient and effective links between the police, social services, healthcare institutions and CSOs have not been established.

The CSO activities planned for promoting non-violence and peace have not received adequate media coverage, so that a true impression of their scope and effects cannot be presented to a broader public. In the opinion of the NGO representative, this problem could be solved by educating and sensitizing journalists to the extent of the problem who would then present CSO activities and their results more effectively.

In contrast to violent behaviour within civil society, the electronic media is much more active in covering actions promoting tolerance. The TV stations monitored covered this subject in 17 items – i.e. 14% of contributions. This means that there are 5-6 items per month dedicated to the activities through which civil society promotes non-violence.[144] The press covered this topic in 36 articles, which account for 4% of the total. The actions for promoting non-violence are mostly recorded in shorter texts, in which appeals are made in the context of broader social or national problems.

3.5. GENDER EQUALITY

This subdimension analyses the extent to which civil society actors in Serbia practice and promote gender equity. Table III.3.5 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.3.5: Indicators assessing gender equality

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.5.1	Gender equity within the CS arena	3
3.5.2	Gender equitable practices within CSOs	1
3.5.3	CS actions to promote gender equity	1

3.5.1 Gender equality in civil society sector. Gender equality is fully represented in the civil society arena. The sector respects gender equality principles to a great extent. Some key informants explain this positive tendency with the fact that the concept is relatively new. A dominant opinion among civil society representatives is that the situation on gender equality is much better in CSOs than in society in general. The CSO representatives believe that there are more women engaged within CSOs than men. There are fewer women in business, professional associations, trade unions and political parties, and therefore, *there is no adequate representation of gender equality*.

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[144]   Most contributions are on RTS1 – 7 contributions, then on TVB92 -6 contributions and TV Pink - 3 contributions and those speak of the following: Engaging the Pedagogical Society of Serbia in the project work of prevention and re-socialization of children with behavioral problems and preventing violence in schools and among juveniles. Requests of organizations for the application of human rights protection for the perpetrators and for minorities in Kosovo and Metohija, i.e. punishment in compliance with international law. Several non-governmental organizations, besides condemning violent behavior, advocate tolerant behavior through the media. The Serbian Orthodox Church has, during its visit to the USA in talks with State Department and United Nations representatives, appealed for a non-violent conflict resolution in Kosovo and inter-ethnic reconciliation. Initiatives of youth human rights groups reported intolerant behavior of a taxi driver, who insulted a client on a national basis to its services requesting that his work permit be withdrawn. Activists of «Kapiraj» have at the site where journalist Slavko Ćuruvija was killed, organized the action under the name «Don't even think about it», aimed at preempting violence against persons with different political views. Following the activities of the Humanitarian Law Fund on shedding light on war crimes, the response of the State bodies in conducting investigations, which would check the allegations of the organization, was recorded.

The opinion of 44% *Regional Stakeholders* is that sexist groups within civil society are insignificant or that their role is *limited* (19%). A small number of the *Stakeholders* estimate the importance of such groups as *moderate* (16%) or the discrimination against women as *significant* in civil society (2%). Such an assessment comes from non-governmental organizations dealing with the position of the Roma ethnic groups and whose representatives highlight that Roma women in Serbia are doubly discriminated against: first within their own ethnic group, and then also within the majority environment. It is most likely that 17% of the *Stakeholders*, which responded to this question with *I don't know*, belong to this group.

Ninety three percent of the Stakeholders could not state any example of a sexist group, while rare examples referred to a negative attitude toward the gay parade and people with a different sexual orientation.

Most of the *Stakeholders* (58%) state that even when there are examples of discrimination against women they draw criticism from other CS organizations, while only 16% believe that such cases are *always* criticized. Around one eight (12%) of the *Stakeholders* believe that examples of sexist behaviour and attitudes are *rarely* criticized, while only 2% are of the opinion that these groups are never criticized. The same picture is given by the regional distribution of answers to this question.

In the observed period, the media have not recorded any contribution, article or report on the issue of gender (in)equality in the civil society sector.

3.5.2 Gender equitable practices within CSOs. In more than one third of the civil society organizations (37%) there are written rules on equal rights and opportunities of women, is the opinion of the *Regional Stakeholders*. Most of the organizations with such rules are in Belgrade (71%), while the fewest are in Vojvodina (30%).

FIGURE III.3.5.2: Rules on gender equality

Is there any written rule in the organization on equal opportunities or equal salaries/rights for women?

7%

37%

56%

Yes
No
Don`t know

Source: Regional Stakeholder Survey 2005
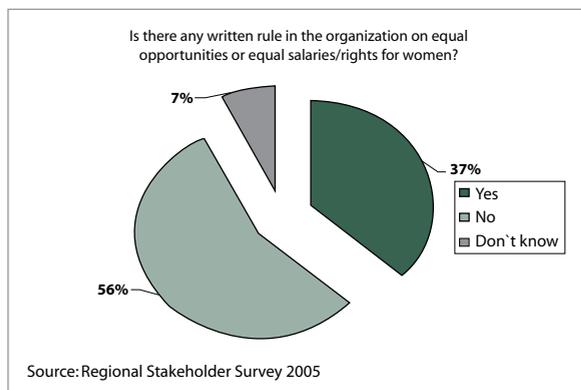
Key actors from all sectors, also including local authorities and private persons, have no knowledge on whether the CSOs have a defined policy, which guarantees gender equality, or not. The NGO representatives believe that currently there are more women who are present in political organizations and political life owing to normative regulation of their presence, but that this is still far from enough. However, these initiatives only formally contribute to the presence of women in politics, while their influence in this field cannot be governed by law.

3.5.3 CS actions to promote gender equity. The role of civil society in promoting gender equality is *significant* in the opinion of only one quarter (24%) of the *Regional Stakeholders*, while in the opinion of 18% it is completely *insignificant*, 26% of the stakeholders hold the opinion that it is *limited*, while 29% stated that this role of civil society is *moderate*. This is also the opinion shared by a large majority of the citizens of Serbia, considering that only

3% of them believe that organizations dealing with women's issues and gender equality are significant. *(Civil Society 2004)*

Key informants believe that gender equality is represented within civil society but, on the other hand, civil society inadequately promotes gender equality at the national level. The CSO representatives indicate that the fact gender equality is identified as a problem to be resolved may be considered a success. The CSO representatives state that *women's groups which consider this their own topic* deal with the gender equality problem the most. The impression of the CSO representatives is that this is a topic reserved for them, and that it is problematic for other organizations dealing exclusively with these issues, to promote this civil society value at the social level.

The representative of the Provincial/local authorities is of the opinion that, although a Secretariat for gender equality has been formed in Vojvodina, although an assistant Provincial ombudsman for gender equality has been appointed, many women do not realise they have the right to approach this official for help. Hence, the local authorities believe that civil society still has a lot to do in order to better promote gender equality, but also indicate that the mentality of citizens is the main problem in promoting the principle of equal opportunities. A representative of local self-governance in South Serbia states the example of a Commission for Gender Equality which is formed at the municipal level and through which representatives of 5 women's NGOs together with the support of the town realize educative programs in schools.

The survey shows that two fifths of the *Regional Stakeholders* (40%) *don't know* or *can't remember* any example of a public campaign, action or program instigated by civil society which was, during last year, dedicated to promoting gender equality, while only 8% of them remember quit a lot of examples of such actions. Amongst rare examples, the most frequently remembered actions are: *Women in Black – 16 days of activism against violence* (6 respondents), action *For 30% of women to be in the Assembly* (4 respondents) and *The Voice of Difference* (3 respondents).

At the conference on gender equality in March 2005, it was emphasized that the analysis of text books shows that stereotypical comprehension of gender roles still prevails because of which the project titled "School of equality: a first step towards including themes of gender equality in regular programs for teachers and pupils in Serbia" was initiated. "We attempted to propose new extracurricular classes at which teachers would make efforts to change of this stereotypical comprehension of gender roles," explained the representative of the Center for Women's Studies and Gender Survey at the Faculty of Political Sciences. In the attempt to include the issue of gender equality in school programs, the Center organized seminars on gender equality which were attended by more than 300 teachers from nine towns of Serbia. (Daily Danas, March 29, 2005)

The activities of civil society in promoting gender equality were mentioned in 20 printed articles and only 2 items in the electronic media (February/April 2005). In general, however, the issue of gender (in)equality is slowly emerging in public/media discourse. CS actions for promoting gender equality were recorded in the form of panels with the topic of sexism and abuse of women and women's bodies for advertising purposes. In addition to coverage of the panels organized by women's groups, the attention of the media was attracted by the case of a woman who was beaten, and her attacker only fined. The woman is still being threatened by the same person, and a lawyer of behalf of the Human Rights Committee has pointed out the paradox of the current law which proscribes penalties which may be

up to three times higher for causing traffic accidents and material damage than for causing serious body injuries.

According to the reflections of the National Workshop participants gender equity is respected within civil society to a great extent. However this assessment does not hold truth for political parties and politics in general – women hold e.g. only 7.9% of seats in parliament. Therefore it was suggested that CSOs should do more to promote gender equity in the wider society.

3.6. Poverty eradication

This subdimension examines to what extent civil society actors in Serbia promote poverty eradication. Table III.3.6 presents the indicator score.

Table III.3.6: Indicator assessing poverty eradication

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.6.1	CS actions to eradicate poverty	1

3.6.1 CS actions to eradicate poverty. The role of civil society in poverty reduction is not recognized by the Serbian public, while there is no majority agreement on the importance of civil society in this process, even within the sector. The importance of its role is recognized by just under one third (30%) of the *Regional Stakeholders.* Their opinion is that, since the State is the main actor in poverty reduction, civil society has an indirect, though strategically important role in all social fields at the local level – from economic development to environmental protection. Civil society is seen as having a stake in building social consensus, building participative democracy, providing direct social services, including the provision of information and education to citizens, and in encouraging a culture of entrepreneurship for the purpose of reducing unemployment. The opinion of *other stakeholders is divided:* 18% are convinced that it is completely *insignificant,* 22% believe it to be *limited* or *moderate* (27%) and three percent of stakeholders do not have an opinion.

More than half of the *Regional Stakeholders* (53%) cannot recall any example of a public campaign, action or program of civil society which, during the last year had the goal of poverty reduction, while those stakeholders, who remember a *lot of examples* (11%) are as a rule those who themselves participated in some of these actions. Amongst the rare examples two dominate: The Poverty Reduction Strategy, which is stated by 16% of the *Regional Stakeholders* and the example of the Social Innovation Fund, through which joint projects of CSOs and social protection institutions intended to relieve the poverty of the most vulnerable groups, are financed.[145]

One quarter of the Stakeholders (23%) who remember *only one or two examples* cite actions in specific municipalities, where the CSOs work on drawing up action plans for poverty reduction or, in cooperation with the representatives of local self-governance, organize round tables at which modes of implementing the Strategy at local level are discussed. The rest, with less than 1% percent, state educational panels, soup kitchens, support to the

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[145] To the Second Call for Proposals of the Social Innovation Fund (SIF), authorized organizations (institutions of the social protection system, local NGOs, public companies, local self-governance bodies, private entrepreneurs etc.) applied 365 project proposals. For project financing, the EU, though EAR, provided 900,000 EUR, while the Government of Serbia additional 32,000,000 dinars from the Budget. Bulletin on making Poverty Reduction Strategy No. 5. Financing of 51 proposals was approved for which, in cooperation with the SIF, monitoring is carried out by non-government organizations. More information is avaliable at: www.sif.minrzs.sr.gov.yu (accessed 26 June 2006)

Roma in education, support to children with disabilities and employment and promotion of women's cooperatives.

One third (34%), who say that they remember *only several examples,* mostly mention institutions/organizations dealing with poverty, such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, State Unions and the Braće Karić Foundation, (a charitable foundation set up and managed by the Karić family who rose to prominence as private businessmen under the patronage of Slobodan Milošević), and the *Serbia without poverty* network.

The issue of poverty is quite well covered in print media. The daily papers analyzed carried 85 articles (9.7% out of the total number or approximately every tenth), as opposed to three modest items in the electronic media, showing themselves to be considerably ahead with respect to the level of interest for the activism of civil society on poverty reduction. The most frequently mentioned civil society organizations are those which advocate the interests of particularly vulnerable groups (The Roma, refugees, internally displaced persons, the handicapped and the unemployed). The context in which this theme is written about indicates the extreme shortage of overall social resources which reduces the impact and hinders the efforts of civil society actions, considering that these groups are not able to satisfy even their elementary needs. The electronic media dedicated their attention to the "Decade of the Roma," a long-term campaign organized by the World Bank and Open Society Fund, the goal of which is the full integration of the Roma community into society. The priority field of action is in the areas of employment, housing, education, and healthcare protection. The focus of actions is fully to include the Roma in all these spheres of social life in the next 10 years.

The NAG members, particularly those that are strongly involved in the poverty reduction process since the drafting of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, regard the current cooperation between the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) and NGOs as an important move towards improved cooperation between the state and civil society on poverty related issues. Namely, intending to stimulate local NGOs, especially the poor themselves, SIF has started to support innovative social initiatives which aim at poverty reduction at the local level. However, while agreeing that this kind of action could contribute to a certain extent, the National Workshop participants were concerned that its effectiveness would be limited since local NGOs were more likely to be treated as tools for the implementation of certain actions than as strategic partners.

In addition, the national workshop participants, aware of the lack of available sources for this particular indicator as a major weakness, suggested that this indicator should be divided into two: (a) CSOs actions to eradicate poverty and (b) CSOs actions to promote eradication of poverty.

3.7. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

This subdimension analyses the extent to which civil society actors in Serbia practice and promote environmental sustainability. Table III.3.7 presents the indicator score.

TABLE III.3.7: Indicator assessing environmental sustainability

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
3.7.1	CS actions to sustain the environment	2

3.7.1 CS actions to sustain the environment. While just fewer than half the *Regional Stakeholders* (41%) believe that the CS role in environmental conservation is *significant*, only 1% of the citizens of Serbia share their opinion.[146] (*Civil Society 2004*) Eight percent of the stakeholders consider that the role of civil society is completely *insignificant,* 30% share the opinion that it is *moderate* and 20% stated that it is *limited.*

Most of the representatives of local authorities believe that pressures for resolving ecological problems are exerted by civil society, but that these problems are, as they say, too great for only the CSOs to deal with. Representatives of political parties are almost unanimous in assessing that civil society is the loudest and most active in exerting pressure on the polluters. The majority of the *key informants* state the important role of the State in resolving ecological problems, because civil society and NGOs cannot assume the State's responsibility, they cannot do something which the State should do such as harmonizing the existing regulations with European legislation, because many declarations proclaim the right to a healthy environment as being one of the fundamental human rights. In this context, the prime role of civil society organizations must lie in raising the ecological awareness of citizens, equally, at local and at national level.

In the opinion of the representatives of academic institutions, the first ecological activities were initiated in Serbia under socialism, and ecological organizations were more active 15 years ago than they are today, when their impact is small in proportion to the ecological problems of the country, particularly after the NATO bombing campaign of 1999.

In Serbia, there are 212 ecological organizations, societies and movements,[147] and, in the opinion of most of the representatives of all social sectors, like civil society as a whole, they inadequately promote and advocate for the issue of environmental protection. There is also a widespread belief that ecological activities are reduced to campaigns dedicated to certain dates or ecological incidents and that they are often reduced to individual activities in which only a small number of people are involved. The Church representative holds that there are a lot of ecological associations in Serbia, but his criticism was that there is no *ecological party,* which would deal with the issue of the environment in general. It is also stated that the projects of local ecological NGOs have low budgets and are earmarked for resolving small specific problems, while greater problems such as industrial pollution, waste waters and sewerage must be solved at a higher level and by employing greater resources. The activities focused on resolving this kind of problem require a developed strategy and unremitting attention, but in Serbia, systematic nature conservation work does not exist. Therefore, in the opinion of the majority of the interlocutors in the CIVICUS surveys, the civil society sector does not have any adequate strategy. The greatest problems for the better promotion of nature conservation and for civil society development are low standards and the widespread opinion that the issue of ecological damage is far less important than the source of income which the perpetrators of ecological damage provide to the people they employ.

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[146] Based on the responses provided from Serbian citizens on the question No. **1.3. Of all the organizations and groups to which you belong, which two are currently the most important to you?** - within the Civil society 2004 survey. *The list of CSOs were included in the table under the question.*

[147] According to CDNPS Directory available at: http://directory.crnps.org.yu/browse_type.asp (accessed 20 June 2006)

The conclusion of the NGO representatives is that the overall situation in Serbia has an adverse effect on successfully addressing environmental protection[148] and that the authorities, on their chosen path to European integration, have to cooperate more closely with NGOs.

Almost half (47%) of the *Regional Stakeholders* remember last year's civil society campaigns and actions for environmental preservation, 22% remember *lots of examples,* while only 10% of the interviewed cannot remember any. The most frequent examples stated by one third of the Stakeholders are *local actions for environmental protection and cleaning towns or rivers* carried out under the Local Ecological Action Plan (LEAP). These plans are an attempt at systematic action in the sphere of the environmental protection. Based on an analysis of the existing conditions, an attempt was made to create local ecological strategies.[149] As examples of good practice they mention the municipal "Ekofond" in Užice, from which CSO actions are financed. It is not possible to determine whether and to what extent these plans are efficient, what phase of design they have reached, or in which municipalities they have been implemented.

Out of the national campaigns, only the one related to *Rescuing the river Tara – We want the Tara we don't want a muddy pool* (9%) was recalled by *Regional Stakeholders*.

The press covered civil society activism to preserve the environment in 63 articles (7% of the total), while electronic media attach hardly any importance to this subject, on which there was only one item. The daily papers monitored show that the network of ecological CSOs is quite well developed. This does not, however, apply to the ecological awareness of the citizens. They also show that civil society ecological organizations often appeal to state institutions to take a more active approach towards ecological problems and to conceive a sustainable strategy of environmental protection. From the media announcements it may be concluded that the CSOs make a considerable contribution first and foremost towards shaping the ecological awareness of the broader public.

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[148] Setting up ambitious legislative programs in the field of environmental protection was mainly managed by the Ministry of Protection of Natural Wealth and Environment, founded in 2002, in spring 2004, the new Government abolished the Ministry and made the environment the responsibility of the Administration for Environmental Protection within the Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection. There is still a shortage of administrative resources in the sphere of the environment, while the sphere of the environment must be given a prominent place on the agenda of the current Government. While some charges are directly reserved for the purpose of environmental protection, the use of financial instruments for environmental protection, in compliance with the principle «polluter pays», is still not developed. Source: Feasibility Study.

[149] A big step forward has also been made in cooperation with local communities developing local ecological action plans. During this year, the implementation of the project «Support of local communities in three municipalities in Serbia and Montenegro in resolving environmental problems» worth 2,000,000 EUR has been continued. The project is implemented in municipalities of Bačka Topola, Bečej and Kikinda. This form of cooperation with local communities will also be continued in 2006 and will be one of the priorities in engaging REC in SCG. Source: Bulletin REC (Regional Center for the Environment for Central and Eastern Europe - REC was founded on 1990, and activated in Serbia and Montenegro since 1999.) In 2005, the most important accomplishments of the REC include successfully completing the Yuogolex project that has made a great contribution to the development of regulations on environmental protection, and within the program support of the Republic of Finland. The total value of the project was 603,000 EUR. The Office in SCG, September-October 2003, available at: www.recyu.org/yu/izdanja/Knjige/sep-okt03.pdf (accessed 20 June 2006).

Conclusion

In general, the score for the values dimension indicates that civil society in Serbia is promoting and practicing positive values in a rather moderate manner, except for the practice of gender equity within civil society, which has the strongest record. A major weakness of civil society in Serbia lies in the almost equally low scores given for *internal practice* and *external promotion* of all the values examined, which was not expected by civil society activists. CSOs need to develop self-regulatory strategies in order to be able to use their own value practices as a key argument in the promotion of positive values externally.

The low score given to the practice and promotion of transparency is of particular concern, as the concept of transparency underpins most other norms and values, and is crucially important for the whole society. Establishing greater transparency as part of improved internal CSO management will foster CSOs ability to promote this challenging concept in society at large. Until now values such as the fight against corruption, accountability and legitimacy have not been practiced effectively within CSOs, nor have they been upheld by the state and the private sector.

Another major weakness of civil society's values is the very limited role CSOs play in poverty eradication. This was another unexpected finding, particularly for those CSOs that are deeply involved in the poverty reduction process. Being relevant for policy makers and CSOs alike, this assessment not only points to the weakness of those CSOs involved in poverty eradication, but it also underscores need to develop institutional strategies to incorporate CSOs more effectively into the existing national poverty eradication plans. So far, NGOs have not been perceived as strategic partners but rather as tools for the implementation of certain actions, although the Social Innovation Fund is the first important step in this direction.

CSI participants, particularly those closely involved in the poverty reduction process since the drafting of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, appeared to be rather unaware of the fact that their activities on poverty eradication (however intensive, useful or influential they might be) have not been detected by the majority of other CSOs, neither have they been registered by the media and the wider public. This is a general problem faced by most CSOs, particularly when it comes to the effectiveness of their activities. Both the NAG and the National Workshop participants see dealing with these challenges as one of the top priorities for CSOs in Serbia. As the CSI study revealed, the role of civil society in poverty eradication is not yet broadly recognized and acknowledged in spite of the fact that CSOs are equipped to provide services (e.g. social, education, health) especially those tailor-made to the particular needs of vulnerable groups and those which are smoothly fostering the integration of the most vulnerable into mainstream society, making it possible for them to benefit from the opportunities available to the majority of citizens.

Finally, the study revealed the dedication of civil society to other social values, such as non-violence, tolerance, environmental awareness and poverty eradication. Yet, it also indicated the need for the further development of certain values, such as transparency and external promotion of democracy, which, in the opinion of NAG members, have been continuously deteriorating in a number of CSO activities since 2000.

4. Impact

This section describes and analyses the extent to which civil society is active and successful in fulfilling several essential functions within Serbian society. The score for the Impact Dimension is 1.5, reflecting a low level of impact for civil society in Serbia. Figure III.4.1 presents the scores for the five subdimensions within the Impact dimension. Here, the low score for civil society's watchdog role is noticeable.

Figure III.4.1: Subdimension scores in impact dimension
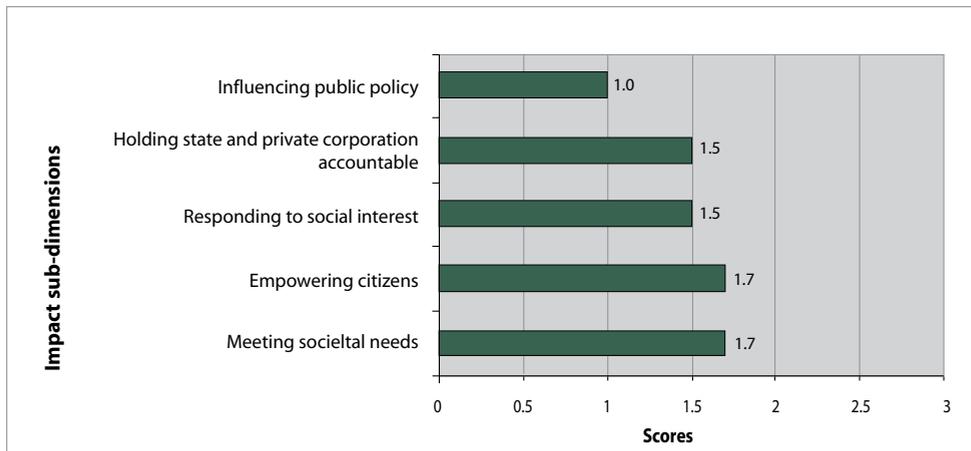
4.1. Influencing public policy

This subdimension describes and assesses the extent to which civil society is active and successful in influencing public policy in Serbia. Table III.4.1 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

Table III.4.1: Indicators assessing influencing public policy

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
4.1.1	Human rights impact	1
4.1.2	Social policy impact	2
4.1.3	Impact on national budgeting process	0

In Serbia the concept of *influencing public policy* is rarely, either in broader public discourse or in the vocabulary of the public sector, related to civil society or non-governmental organizations. There have been no surveys aiming to measure the *influence* of civil society or non-governmental organizations *on public policy* before the CIVICUS CSI survey was conducted, nor are any sources, publicized reports or documents available except the assessment of the *USAID Sustainability Index 2004*. When accounting for the score of 3.8 given by the *USAID Sustainability Index 2004*, it seems likely that the leadership given by civil society during 2000, in the overthrow of the regime in Serbia, was taken into account – this can be taken as the greatest impact of civil society, so far. Since then, the civil society movement has fragmented and is no longer able to resume a national advocacy campaign as it did then. The sector had some success when cooperating with the Ðinđić Government on the institutionalisation of a legal framework, but since Prime Minister Ðinđić was

assassinated in March 2003 and Prime Minister's Koštunica Government inaugurated in March 2004, Non-Governmental Organizations have not played a more significant role at national level. Right now, only a few stronger organizations are able to carry out their watchdog role and keep the issue of human rights violation in the public domain.

USAID SI Advocacy:
2004. = 3.8
2003. = 3.2
2002. = 3.3
2001. = 3.5
2000. = 4.0
1999. = 6.0
1998. = 6.0

Within the CSI project, the issue of CSOs impact on public policy was examined through several studies: (1) regional stakeholder surveys and consultations, (2) case studies on social policy, human rights policy and the national budget issue and (3) expert interviews. Following the CIVICUS' guidelines, the priority concerns of the population were used to select the case studies on social and human rights policy in order to allow for an unbiased and independent selection of the policy issues. In the case of Serbia, poverty and human rights were selected as the social policy issues.

*4.1.1 Human rights impact***.** The issue of human rights was a top priority for CSO endeavours in Serbia and was therefore selected as a public policy case study. (See annex 4. for the full case study).

In the opinion of *Regional Stakeholders* the CSOs have been *active* (39%) and *very active* (16%) in influencing public policy in the field of human rights. (See tables III. 4.1.2 and 4.1.2a)

TABLE **III.4.1.1: To what extent is civil society *active* in human rights issues (%)**

Active	Not active at all	Active to a limited extent	Active	Very active	DK/NA
	5.4	37.9	38.9	16.2	1.6

Source: Regional stakeholder survey

TABLE **III. 4.1.1.a: To what extent was civil society *successful* in influencing public policy decision making on human rights issues? (%)**

Successful	Non successful	Successful to some extent	Successful	Very successful	DK/NA
	14.6	58.4	20.0	3.2	3.8

Source: Regional stakeholder survey

In the opinion of the *Regional Stakeholders,* successful public campaigns include: in first place fighting HIV (36%), then protection of human rights (23%) and in third place are poverty reduction campaigns (10%).

Media analysis shows that civil society is quite active in its endeavours to influence the implementation of human rights policy, but the actual success of its endeavours is still uncertain. The press covered the activity of civil society in 115 articles (13% of the total number), and electronic media in 16 reports (13% of the total number).

The analyzed media (February-April 2005) provide the following examples of CSO efforts in respect of human rights:

- «Center for Minority Rights» non-government organization has filed criminal charges against X.Y. policeman, for abuse of office and inflicting minor body injuries to an underage boy of Roma nationality.

- «Amnesty International» organization endeavours to improve the position of minority communities in Kosovo and demands that perpetrators of violent actions in March in Kosovo be brought to justice.

- The League for Protection of Private Property and Restitution Network are calling for the Serbian Government to withdraw the Law on Recording of Confiscated Property from parliamentary procedure and for the passage of a Law on Restitution by which property confiscated after the Second World War would be returned to their owners rather than only officially recorded.

- A lawyer acting on behalf of the Human Rights Committee requested that legal sanctions for the criminal act of inflicting physical injuries be more stringent.

- The representatives of the Association of Business Women have reacted to the announcement that maternity leave will be cut from 12 to 6 months. The representatives of the Association believe the proposal to be a disincentive both for women and, indirectly, for the birth rate in Serbia.

- Examples of endeavours to defend human rights can also be seen in the activities of the Serbian Orthodox Church whose representatives, during visits to the USA and in communication with the State Department and United Nations, requested guarantees for respect of the elementary human and religious rights of minorities in Kosovo.

- An example of cooperation between UNICEF, the NGO "Astra" and state bodies in investigating the problem of human trafficking in Serbia and Montenegro was reported as were efforts to inform the public about the problem and joint action taken to fight human trafficking and traffickers.

- The annual report of the Helsinki Human Rights Committee related to assessing the status of human rights in Serbia emphasizes that in Serbia advantage is given to reforms over democratization. Neither the rule of law nor democratization is included in the list of priorities. The Report also states that Serbia is an incompletely organized state and unable to define its policy of human rights.

- In a case where the life of person with specific information on war crimes was threatened by unknown individuals, the Fund for Humanitarian Law called on the Minister for Internal Affairs and the Special Prosecutor for war crimes to protect that person and arrest those who made the threats.

4.1.2 Social policy impact. The issue of poverty eradication was considered a top social concern by the general public, and was therefore selected as a public policy case study (see annex 4. for the full case study). The main finding of the case study is that the most important role of civil society has so far been directing public attention to poverty reduction and the urgency of the need to resolve it. This was pointed out as one of the greater accomplishments of civil society. Another great accomplishment was the fact that civil society, through the Civil Society Advisory Committee (CSAC), greatly contributed to the final version of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), since it continually insisted on a multidimensional approach to poverty. This yielded the inclusion of human rights in the final version of the Paper – particularly for the vulnerable groups such as refugees, women, children, Roma population and elderly people. Upon adopting the Strategy, the CSAC, during 2004/5, continued actively to promote this national development document both through the work with its own as well as through other organizations, local communities and regions, and through the work of the Committee. The Strategy document understands poverty not only as a matter of lacking money, but rather primarily as a matter of a

disrespect of human rights, as was emphasized by representatives of the non-governmental organizations.

In the opinion of more than half (58%) *Regional Stakeholders* civil society is active to a limited extent in poverty reduction issues and it has been successful to some extent as indicated by 65% of the stakeholders. (See tables III. 4.1.1 and 4.1.1a). However, assessing public campaigns related to poverty reduction *Regional Stakeholders* placed them in third place as being only 10% successful.

TABLE III.4.1.2: To what extent is civil society *active* in poverty reduction issues (%)

Active	Not active at all	Active to a limited extent	Active	Very active	DK/NA
	10.3	57.8	24.3	7.0	.5

Source: Regional stakeholder survey

TABLE III.4.1.2.a: To what extent was civil society *successful* in influencing public policy decision making on poverty issues? (%)

Successful	Non successful	Successful to some extent	Successful	Very successful	DK/NA
	23.2	64.9	7.6	2.2	2.2

Source: Regional stakeholder survey

From February-April 2005 the press carried only 18 articles and the electronic media only two items on this topic. The analysis shows that the printed media mostly write on topics related to the dispute between trade union representatives and the Ministry of Labour, then on the need to establish social dialogue in Serbia, labour/working class solidarity on the eve the Labour Day, relations among trade union leaders and the material and social position of employees in Serbia and Montenegro. The electronic media reported on the activities of the Private Medical Association of Serbia which called on the relevant Ministry to make state and private healthcare completely equal, adding that it is part of the European standard for all patients to have the right to choose their own doctor. There is no report in the media on CSO activities aimed at influencing social policy. The explanation for this could lie in the fact that civil society actors are aware that this is unlikely, while in the media there is some doubt as to whether civil society may effectively influence social policy contents at all, considering the impoverishment of the society and the very scarce resources which should be redistributed.

4.1.3 CS impact on national budgeting process case study. The national budget process was selected as a relevant policy issue, since it is the most important financial policy decision made by the Serbian government. The national budget process is not open to the overall civil society comment and civil society organizations have no impact on how the national budget is drawn up. Their activities focused on influencing and monitoring the budget is insignificant. The case study revealed only two examples of CSO interest in the national budget: one at the local and one at the national level (see annex 4. for the full case study).

The Budget Calendar is defined in Article 14 of the Budget System Law[150] and it presents the process of preparation and adoption of the budget, as follows:

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[150] BUDGET SYSTEM LAW -"Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia" No. 9, 26 February 2002/, available at:

 http://www.mfin.sr.gov.yu/html/modules.php?op=modload&name=Subjects&file=index&req=viewpage&pageid=138 (accessed 20 June 2006.)

1. The calendar of the Republic budget:

April 30	- the Minister, in co-operation with the bodies responsible for economic development, shall prepare the Budget Memorandum, detailing the economic and fiscal policies and outlook for the budget year and two subsequent years.
May 15	- the Government shall adopt the Budget Memorandum;
June 1	- the Minister shall issue instructions for preparing the draft Republic Budget;
June 1	- the Minister shall provide the adopted Budget Memorandum to local authorities and the mandatory social security organisations, as well as the proposal of the framework of participation of local governments in Republic tax revenues;
August 1	- Direct budget beneficiaries and mandatory social security organisations shall submit their proposed financial plans to the Ministry;
October 1	- the Minister of Finance and the Economy shall revise the Budget Memorandum to take into account any updating of the macro-economic framework that has occurred since April 30;
October 15	- the Minister shall submit the draft Republic Budget and financial plans of mandatory social security organisations to the Government;
November 1	- the Government shall adopt the proposed Republic Budget and submit it with the Budget Memorandum and financial plans of mandatory social security organisations to the National Assembly;
December 15	- the National Assembly shall pass the Republic Budget.

2. The calendar of local authority budget:

June 15	- the body of the local authority responsible for finance shall issue instructions for preparing the local authority draft budget;
July 15	- direct beneficiaries of local budget funds shall submit financial plans to the body of the local authority responsible for finance;
September 15	- the local authority body responsible for finance shall submit the draft budget to the relevant executive body of the local authority;
October 5	- the relevant executive body of the local authority shall submit the budget proposal to the local assembly and to the Ministry;
December 15	- the local assembly shall pass the local budget;
December 25	– the relevant executive body of the local authority responsible for finance shall submit the local authority budget to the Minister.

The dates in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article represent the due dates in the budget calendar (Budget System Law 2002).

Only some 10% of the *Regional Stakeholders* believe that CSOs play active role, while only 3% say that they are successful in influencing the budget process (See tables 4.1.3 and 4.1.3a).

TABLE III.4.1.3: To what extent is civil society *active* in national budget issues (%)

Active	Not active at all	Active to a limited extent	Active	Very active	DK/NA
	26.5	58.4	9.7	2.7	2.7

Source: Regional stakeholder survey

Among CSOs that are, in the opinion of *Regional Stakeholders*, active to a limited extent (58%) and successful to some extent (38%) are some political parties, trade unions, vocational organisations and rare local NGOs who have been active in regard to the local government budget, influencing it only at the level of individual cases of the poorest Roma families (e.g. NGOs RIC[151] and NGO YUROM Center[152]).

TABLE III.4.1.3.a: To what extent was civil society successful in influencing public policy decision making on budget issues? (%)

Successful	Non successful	Successful to some extent	Successful	Very successful	DK/NA
	52.4	38.4	3.2	0.5	5.4

Source: Regional stakeholder survey

However, there is no independent *think-tank* organization that systematically addresses this area and there are no relevant experiences of CSOs being involved in the overall budgeting process. There are, however, some examples of attempts to participate in the process. Examples of such an attempt are the occasional voices of rural associations which are heard advocating greater investment in agricultural production. Trade unions and representatives from vocational associations also address, from time to time, the issues of funds allocated to health and educational institutions.

Analysis of the media revealed only two articles in the press. Both articles referred to fierce criticism of a proposal for a so-called "bachelor-tax", that is, additional taxation of families with no children or with one child only in order to boost a severely low birth rate. The proposal for this kind of taxation was submitted by the association against decline in the birth rate "Survival".

While participants at the regional consultations pointed out that the first, though limited, steps are being taken by civil society, such as the Civic Initiatives handbook on "Directions for starting the process of securing support from the budgets of local self-governance for the purpose of running NGOs",[153] the discussions at the National Workshop pointed out that civil society needs to become more active regarding the budgets of local government.

4.2. HOLDING THE STATE AND PRIVATE CORPORATIONS ACCOUNTABLE

This subdimension analyses the extent to which civil society in Serbia is active and successful in holding the state and private corporations accountable. Table III.4.3 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.4.2: Indicators assessing holding state and private corporations accountable

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
4.2.1	Holding the state accountable	2
4.2.2	Holding private corporations accountable	1

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[151] More about Roma Information Center is available at http://www.ric.org.yu/Podaci/aboutus.htm (accessed on 25 March 2006)

[152] More about YOUROM Center is available at http://www.yuromcentar.org.yu/about.htm (accessed on 25 March 2006)

[153] This Civic Intiatives handbook is avaliable at the http://www.gradjanske.org/eng/index.php (accessed 20 July 2006)

4.2.1 Holding the state accountable. From the time when the national movement of resistance "*Otpor*" in the first year of new Government rule (2000) came out with the slogan "We are watching you!", NGOs in Serbia have organized several smaller scale campaigns aimed at calling the state to account related to the issue of "truth and reconciliation", "facing the past" and "remembering the victims of Srebrenica".

Less than half of the *Regional Stakeholders (44%)* believe that civil society is *active* (34%) or *very active* (10%) in calling the state to account, and only 4% of them believe that civil society is *successful,* while 63% of the stakeholders shared the opinion that the impact of civil society is *limited*. (See table 4.2.1 and 4.2.1a)

TABLE III.4.2.1: To what extents is civil society *active* in holding the state accountable? (%)

Not active at all	12.4
Active to a limited extent	41.6
Active	34.1
Very active	9.7
DK/NA	2.2

TABLE III.4.2.1.a: To what extents is civil society *successful* in holding the state accountable? (%)

Non successful	**29.7**
Successful to some extent	62.7
Successful	4.3
DK/NA	3.2

However, in the opinion of the key informants CSOs are not even effective in monitoring local Government's policies and commitments, except for some rare local NGOs working on environmental issues and some NGOs from Roma civil society that are advocating for school enrolment and social services for the Roma population at the municipal level. (e.g. NGO RIC and NGO YUROM Center). However, in the opinion of key informants these instances of calling the local government to account are mostly based on informal and personal connections and thus successful.

Although experts in the field of human rights identified several areas in which CSOs are holding the state accountable, particularly on the donor priority issues of human rights, and war crimes, the overall impact is still relatively low. Most of these examples are published in the media. The media (6 articles in the press, 18 items on television) give proof of civil society's active endeavours to monitor the activities of the State on the following issues (February-April 2005):

■ Politicization of judicial authority and its tendency to hush up certain cases (political cases in particular). The Human Rights Committee of Lawyers announces that non-government organizations, expert teams of lawyers and attorneys, shall initiate proceedings against administrators of judicial office engaged in hushing up and hiding the facts in court proceedings.

■ The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Serbia and Montenegro expressed concern at the postponement of the adoption of the law against

discrimination in the State Union which is necessary for fighting all forms of discrimination.

■ At the round table at which the publication "Profession and corruption" was presented, the participants agreed that the judiciary was most to blame for the failure to reduce corruption in Serbia. Attention was called to the major problem of bribing Government officials, whereby citizens pay for what they are in fact entitled to, while that money, which could be better used in improving public services, ends up filling private pockets.

■ Calling the State officials to more actively and responsibly approach cooperation with the International Court for War Crimes in The Hague.

■ The Association of Jewish Municipalities of Serbia and Montenegro called on the Government in Serbia to suppress religious, national and racial hatred and xenophobia more efficiently and also to include education on the holocaust, related to the recent anti-Semitic provocations.

■ Youth organizations criticized the announced proposal of the state bodies to restrict the freedom of movement of the young without parental escort after midnight.

■ During the protests organized by the Restitution Network, there were requests to pass a law which would realize restitution of property confiscated and nationalized after World War II, as well as to withdraw the law by which such property would only be recorded from parliamentary procedure.

■ Criticism of anti-corruption regulations, then criticism on account of the State in the field of education and schools and faculties which are not tailored to the needs of pupils and students with disabilities.

■ The Fund for Humanitarian Law continuously advocates on the need of initiating investigation procedures in shedding light on war crimes.

■ The representatives of one political movement accused the Government of concealing organized economic crimes, stating that the rich rule the State and that they have already supplied information on financial embezzlement to the prosecutor's office, but have received no answer.

The concrete effects of these criticisms and instances of calling the state to account are impossible to identify. This indicates that CSOs are still not effective in monitoring the Government's policies and commitments, primarily because they are not recognised as legitimate actors to fulfill this role.

4.2.2 Holding private corporations accountable. In general, the concept of holding private corporations accountable is rather new for Serbian society and for the CSOs. Therefore, not much civil society activity in monitoring the corporate sector's responsibility was detected except some first steps towards sensitizing society in Serbia on this topic. Accordingly, civil society's activity with regard to calling private enterprises to account is assessed by the stakeholders as either inactive (45%), or as only active to a certain extent (30%). The assessment of civil society's success in this area is even more modest. More than half the respondents (63%) consider civil society actions in this field to be unsuccessful and only a bit more than a quarter (27%) consider it successful to some extent, hence only four of them believe that they are also *successful*. To this group, to the largest extent, belong the CSOs engaged in environmental protection and holding private companies accountable related

to the issue of reducing pollution in rivers, protection of bio-diversity and smuggling of rare birds (Eko Forum[154]).

A few new initiatives have emerged in last couple of years. One of them is a group named Responsible Business Initiative (RBI) which aims to develop and advance the area of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) through a series of concrete activities[155]. As a first step, RBI has conducted a study on Corporate Social Responsibility.[156]

Another two CSR related activities were: the Conference Philanthropy and Corporate Social Responsibility held on 30th of November 2004 and the seminar on Corporate Social Responsibility held on the 17th of January 2005 organised by Civic Initiatives.[157]

While the discussions at regional consultations showed that civil society participants usually could not articulate what the concept of holding the corporate sector accountable implies, the key informants shared the opinion that this issue is not yet firmly on the agenda of civil society in Serbia. National workshop participants, however, raised concerns about the capacities of CSOs to hold corporations accountable due to the lack of an institutional framework for civil society to call upon and the low index of abiding by the law in Serbia. This additionally can explain such a poor engagement of the CSOs in calling private companies to account.

4.3. RESPONDING TO SOCIAL INTERESTS

This subdimension analyses the extent to which civil society actors in Serbia are responsive to social interests. Table III.4.4 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE III.4.3: Indicators assessing responding to social interests

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
4.3.1	Responsiveness	2
4.3.2	Public trust in CSOs	1

4.3.1 Responsiveness. There is no social problem to which civil society organizations did not respond with some kind of campaign or activity. In the opinion of the *Regional Stakeholders,* successful public campaigns include: in first place fighting HIV (36%), then protection of human rights, second (23%), and third poverty reduction campaigns (10%). Anti-corruption campaigns proved to be unsuccessful (5%) almost the same as the success of the CSOs to have more influence over the budget decisions and government spending (4%).

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[154] More about EkoForum and smuggled birds scandal is available at: http://www.ekoforum.org.yu/news/Balkan_birds_scandal_gets_to_the_Italian_court.htm, (accessed 25 July 2006)

[155] A group of individuals (The Initiative Board), institutions and economic entities named itself the **Responsible Business Initiative (RBI)** and initiated the namesake project. The main goal of the project is to promote and standardize the area of Corporate Social Responsibility in Serbia and to initiate various activities involving cooperation across several sectors. RBI is a project of instigating and institutionalizing the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Serbia. RBI tends to engage the private sector in meeting the complex social challenges which our present society faces. Promoting and developing new modes of cross-sectoral cooperation in order to discover perspectives for sustainable development of communities, civic initiatives and civil society, stated in the RBI leaflet, Belgrade, 20.05.2005. More about RBI is avaliable at: http://www.smartkolektiv.org/rbi.html and, http://www.smartkolektiv.org/corporate_social_responsibility_in_Serbia.pdf (accessed 18 June 2006)

[156]   The findings of this study have been utilised under the 2.7.2 indicator of this report.

[157] More about these CSR activities is available at the following address http://www.gradjanske.org/eng (accessed on 18 June 2006)

On the other hand, only 3% of citizens believe that civil society organizations can be efficient in the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (MDG 1) which, in the opinion of 75% of the citizens is the priority social problem in Serbia. In the opinion of over two thirds of the citizens (71%), the key role in resolving this problem should be played by the Serbian Government. The citizens also share the same opinion on all the other Millennium Goals and all the other social problems including corruption, unemployment, and the position of marginalized groups, etc. (*Civil Society 2004*).

The image of civil society in the media is very pale, judging by the number of items which voice the opinion that civil society is not efficient enough or ready to respond to social problems. The electronic media speak about this topic in the context of civil society in only 5 items (4%). These rare examples refer to the readiness of religious organizations to engage more in alleviating the burden of transition for citizens and the Society for the Fight against Cancer which, due to the increased number of the afflicted, is offering free checkups and tests. The printed media mentioned the sensitivity of civil society to priority social problems, in only 7% contributions. It is quite indicative, however, that all observed Dnevnik newspapers contained 10% of texts indirectly or directly related to the promotion of the Millennium Goals, but none of them mentioned any CSO in Serbia which was active in promoting or accomplishing these goals. It should be pointed out that the analyzed printed media gave much more space on their front pages to the engagement of CSOs which react to current political issues while the actions of civil society organizations covering priority social problems and the Millennium Goals were given significantly less publicity. The majority of such news was printed on the back pages and "far corners" of the pages as if they were printed more to fill in space than because they really deserve to be there. Nevertheless, the impression that civil society in Serbia lives in a virtual reality is hard to avoid, taking into account that their endeavours and their efficiency in reducing key social problems are not noticed by the population at large, although the media coverage is not satisfactory and contributes to the lack of awareness of the general population.

4.3.2 Public trust. In Serbia, 65% of citizens know nothing about civil society, and 78% know nothing about non-governmental organizations *(CeSID 2005.).* Slightly more than one third (36%) of the citizens trust non-governmental organizations, while only 6% of them have full trust, and their activities are observed at the local level by only one fifth, which is even less that half the number of citizens involved in civil society organizations - 47%. (*Civil Society 2004).*

The Church is the only institution in Serbia today in which more than half the population place their trust, while ten years ago it used to be the Army. In general, all other institutions and organizations "managed to maintain" the continuity of lack of trust of more than a half of the Serbian population in the last ten years (See Table 4.3.2).

In the last ten years, the trust of one third of the citizens of Serbia in non-government organizations has remained relatively stable and it is two to three times greater than the trust which political parties enjoyed in the same period and greater than trust in the Serbian Government in 2004. The Church is the only institution with a growing number of those who trust it as opposed to large campaigns, political parties and Serbian Government, where the case is entirely the reverse – the number of citizens who trust them is decreasing. Trust in the Police, Army and media went slightly up after October 5[158], but in the years that followed, the trust in both these institutions, particularly in the case of the Army, fell drastically. Paradoxically, the organizations which have the greatest number of members, such as political parties and trade unions, enjoy the least trust from the citizens.

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[158]   Which is obvious from World Values Survey conducted at the end of year 2000, however data published only in 2001.

TABLE III.4.3.2: The level of trust of the citizens in CSOs and other social and political actors in Serbia in the last ten years (in %)

	WVS 1996		WVS 2001		Civil Society 2004	
	Trust	Distrust	Trust	Distrust	Trust	Distrust
Churches [religious groups]	38	62	53	47	65	32
Armed forces	62	38	74	26	41	57
Press	23	77	29	71	20	79
Television	25	75	29	71	27	72
Trade unions	25	75	23	77	19	70
Police	45	56	47	53	36	63
Serbian Government	35	65	31	69	27	68
Political parties	17	83	15	85	12	85
NGOs	37	63	42	58	36	57
Big companies	33	67	32	68	29	63
Other civil organizations	33	67	29	71	25	62

The CeSID 2005 survey results[159] show a further increase of trust in the Church (72%), a significant increase of trust in the media (press 40%, TV – 42%), trade unions (34%), political parties (30%), and a mild decline of trust in non-governmental organizations (34%).

As additional information, the CSI asked which types of CSOs were the most important to the respondents to the population survey. According to 23% of them, human rights organizations and sports associations are among the five most important civil society organizations. The third and fourth places are taken by political groups, movements or parties (21%) and trade unions (15%). The fifth place is taken by professional associations - 9% of the citizens. Groups of the young, women's groups, religious and spiritual organizations, healthcare groups/social protection associations are assessed as the five least important ones – with only 3% of the citizens saying that they are important. Environmental protection organizations are considered the least important – only 1% of citizens believe them to be important. Interpretations for such ratings are versatile and the most frequent explanations are connected to socializing and social contacts (24%), for pleasure and leisure (19%), closeness of ideas and values promoted by the organization (16%). Only 6% of the citizens state that this is, "because of decisions related to the environment in which we live in" or because of, "preserving tradition and national values, patriotism and religion", and only 5% of them assess the organization as such as being important because through the former they can, "exercise their rights and achieve their goals". Material goals, money and better earnings, are the reasons for assessing the importance of organizations that take the sixth place. Only a small number of the citizens, less than 1%, recognize the importance of CS organizations in that they can help them in "resolving a problem", related either to education, healthcare, agriculture or problems of the youth. 7% of citizens included in such organizations believe that the organization is important because it may, "contribute to political and social changes", which indirectly tells us something about the role and impact of CSOs.

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[159]   *CeSID: Political divisions in Serbia – five years later*, Public opinion poll, Serbia, spring 2005 available at: http://www.cesid.org/eng/index.jsp (accessed 25 Janury 2006)

Generally speaking, the increase or decrease of trust is influenced by party membership and also by everyday political events and periodical concentration of public scandals that propel the increase in the number of citizens with *total lack of trust*. The negative effect on the social capital is in the fact that the *total distrust* is several times greater than *full trust* with all the institutions and organizations except for the Church.

4.4. EMPOWERING CITIZENS

This subdimension describes and assesses the extent to which civil society in Serbia is active and successful in empowering citizens, especially traditionally marginalized groups, to shape decisions that affect their lives. Table III.4.5 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

TABLE **III.4.4: Indicators assessing empowering citizens**

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
4.4.1	Informing/educating citizens	2
4.4.2	Building capacity for collective action and resolving joint problems	2
4.4.3	Empowering marginalized people	2
4.4.4	Empowering women	2
4.4.5	Building social capital	1
4.4.6	Supporting/creating livelihoods	1

4.4.1 Informing/educating citizens. Slightly over a third of citizens of Serbia (37%) state that civil society organizations offer information and education on issues of public importance (Civil society 2004). Slightly over two thirds of the Regional Stakeholders share the opinion that civil society is active in this area (37%) or very active (19%). 60% of the stakeholders believe that, related to information/education of citizens, civil society is successful only to a certain extent, while only 4% think that it is very successful.

Both the press (15%) and the electronic media (18%) gave a lot of coverage to civil society's activities in this regard (February-April 2005). Some CSO activity in this field involved informing the public about an opinion poll of employees on the need for changes and reforms in Serbia. Information is most often provided through press conferences aimed at presenting the results of specific surveys, the presentation of studies devoted to significant social topics, etc. An example of this is the conference held by a group of organizations which were engaged in researching human trafficking in Serbia and Montenegro (Astra). In addition the presentation of results from the study on the situation of the media in Serbia by Media Center was covered. CSOs kept the public informed on healthcare protection issues and on the number of people affected by particular diseases in Serbia, while some organizations which specialize in fighting particular diseases were also engaged in public education. The advisory centres for the young in some towns are engaged both in the provision of information and in education related to reproductive health and problems related to sexually transmittable diseases. The public are also informed on the level of corruption in Serbia and on the legal action that should be taken to reduce corruption. Some organizations informed citizens through the media on the status of human rights in Serbia. The Media Center, Advisory Center for the Young, Society for the Fight against Cancer and the "Hallo for a Healthy Baby" call centre are engaged primarily in the provision of information and education. It is not possible, based on media analysis, to draw reliable conclusions on the efficiency of these organizations and their activities.

When reviewing the media it can be seen that the level of communication of civil society with the wider public and other social sectors is very poor. During primetime informative broadcasts,[160] over the 53 days monitored, the general public had the opportunity to hear about CSO activities in 3.1 reports daily or, on average, just less than one minute per day. During the 89 covered days, the press[161] wrote on average 2.1% articles a day about the activities of civil society, most often in the form of reports (69.9%) and very rarely in the form of interviews (2.6%), and the space taken was on average not more than one quarter of a page daily. Civil society organizations are most active in this very field and there are no topics, or problems on which they have not attempted to inform citizens or educate them, while human rights is the most frequently addressed.

4.4.2 Building capacity for collective action. The low level of mutual trust among citizens together with noticeable distrust in almost all institutions and organizations, block to a great extent, collective actions at local level. That is one of the key reasons why the opinion of citizens on the activism of CSOs in building the capacities of local communities differ somewhat from opinions shared on this issue by the *Regional Stakeholders*. Only 29% of citizens confirm that CSOs help the local community to agree and act related to concrete problems, while just under half the stakeholders (44%) share the opinion that CS is *active* in building capacities for collective action but that they are *successful only to a certain extent* (62%). The stakeholders whose opinion is that CSOs are *very successful* in this field (4%) are rare, or *successful* (12%), and they are precisely those who, without difficulty, cite concrete examples of collective action conducted in the local community:

- Reconstruction of plumbing, water testing,
- Joint lobbying in favour of projects of different organizations,
- Landscaping of villages, children's playgrounds,
- Safe houses for women victims of violence,
- Renovation of infirmaries,
- Building of schools and youth cultural centres,
- Collective action on establishing democratic institutions,
- The Roma organizations participate in forming a National Office…

Observed across regions, the smallest number of such actions is in Belgrade, while the greatest is in Western and Southern Serbia, where the poverty is most profound and most severe.[162]

The persistence of civil society organizations in building capacities for collective action at local level represents one of the reasons why they maintain a stable level of trust with one third of the citizens of Serbia. Together with continuous educative and informative actions, this is at the same time an indicator that civil society has a solid basis for further local community social capital building.

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[160]   Analysis of electronic media, from March 9 to April 30, 2005, covered primetime informative broadcasts on three TV channels with top viewer ratings (in case of news) as follows: (1) Dnevnik 2 at 7:30 p.m. on the first channel of the Radio Television of Serbia, (2) News at 7:15 p.m. on B92 Radio Television, and (3) Infotop at 6:50 p.m. at Pink Radio Television. In this period, 132 reports on civil society were recorded and analyzed.

[161]   Analysis of printed media, in period from February to April 30, 2005, included analysis of daily papers Vecernje Novosti, Daily Danas and Dnevnik of Novi Sad. These papers in period observed wrote about civil society activities in 874 contributions.

[162]   Serbian Government Data available at: http://www.prsp.sr.gov.yu/dokumenta.jsp (accessed 20 June 2006)

4.4.3 Empowering marginalized people. The general assessment of the representatives of civil society, Government and local self-governments is that civil society organizations, through various forms of activity, contribute to a large extent to empower marginalized groups of citizens.[163] The representatives of all sectors unanimously agree that civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations in particular, made the greatest contribution precisely in promoting rights and generally empowering women, refugees, displaced persons, children, the elderly and retired citizens, persons with disabilities and youth. The representatives of international organizations/donors share an identical opinion and point out that civil society in Serbia has changed the awareness of citizens because it indicated the needs, rights and common problems of the most vulnerable groups. In this way, through their activities, the marginalized groups have become socially visible, which is the basic prerequisite for a change in their unenviable position.

Civil society has also supported refugees coming to Serbia in the last decade of the 20th century. Refugee influx was followed by the influx of the displaced persons from Kosovo during and after the NATO airstrikes in 1999. The representatives of NGOs argue that civil society has not done enough to empower marginalized groups and that it has not achieved noticeable results, primarily because it lacks more partnership cooperation with the authorities and institutions and because the society still does not have a developed attitude to civil society as an actor working on burning social problems, which is a consequence of prejudices towards this sector. These interlocutors explain that the success of civil society is primarily due to the linking of international and local levels. The introduction of new knowledge and experience both in personal work and in the work of institutions, such as centres for social work, significantly improves the quality of services to end beneficiaries.

In the opinion of local authorities, the lack of financial resources has prevented civil society from doing more and because of that reduced its contribution to empowering marginalized groups. Local authorities further state that civil society has only recently devoted its attention to the problems of children with special needs and people with disabilities.

In the opinion of NGO representatives and umbrella organizations, the CSOs that deal with the category of sexual minorities are the least numerous. This area is least covered by the activities of the sector. These key informants also share the opinion that the success achieved in empowering the Roma is lower than in the case of other vulnerable groups. This is based on comparing the level of resources allocated for activities focused on empowerment of the Roma and the impact of these activities, as perceived by key informants.

Media analysis revealed press coverage of work empowering marginalized groups in 54 articles, while the electronic media devoted seven items to these activities. Media analysis shows the opinion that CSOs are more active and successful in creating favourable conditions for improving the position of marginalized groups than is the state institution network. CSOs offer concrete support to those on the margins of society who are not able to impose their interests as social priorities. The strategy of civil society is based on the idea that the marginalized sections of the population have to take a more proactive approach towards their position in the society and to a great extent emancipate themselves so that they do not expect somebody else to take care of their needs. Examples of CS activities in the media report the endeavours of civil society organizations to permanently improve the position of marginalized groups. These actions have long-term goals and planned effects. One of the goals of these activities is enabling the marginalized population to take control over their own lives. However, although several actions in this field have been noticed,

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[163]   CIVICUS – CSI - Fact finding research – Detailed interviews with crucial informers, summer 2005. For more details see Aneex 3: Overview of CSI Research Methods.

it seems, from the analysis of media coverage, that they lack wide social support and influence.

The conclusion of all key informants is that CSOs are successful in recognizing problems, informing the general public about them and solving the problem to a certain extent. The limitations lie in the fact that, without full cooperation between CSOs and relevant state institutions, especially policy makers that create social policy, none of the problems of marginalized groups can be solved. Together with all this, when we add the fact that only 25% of citizens[164] know that the CSOs in their local communities have, in concrete ways, supported the poor and improved their standards of living, it becomes obvious that civil society, although lately very active in this respect, for the time being has a small range and limited impact. That it has successfully "broken the ice," however, and created a solid foundation for achieving greater and more sustainable effects is clear.

4.4.4 Empowering women. One representative of a CSO informed us that the number of unemployed in his region has doubled over the previous year. He said that there was visible poverty among women and that this was particularly grave if they belonged to marginalized groups.

This statement is indicative of the level of gender equality in Serbia today. Furthermore, the data shows that, due to poorer qualifications and shorter work experience, women on average earn 15% less then men. Elderly women living in villages, single mothers, housewives, Roma women, refugees, uneducated and unemployed women, the sick, women with disabilities and female victims of violence are under the increased risk of poverty.[165]

Civil society key informants state that local NGO activities aimed at empowering women centre primarily on various types of training courses. The most frequently organized training courses are computer literacy courses, foreign languages, sewing, weaving, etc. The interest of women in such training courses is great, as they see in them opportunities for employment, as the only way of permanently improving their position. In the last few years, the number of organizations responding to the problems of family violence and violence against women has grown, while CSOs which have worked on anti-trafficking, are also active. Although, according to one source, there are currently 102 groups of women in Serbia and Montenegro,[166] and according to another 120, key civil society informants emphasized that other organizations, and especially those concerned with human rights, include women in their activities and advocate for gender equality and women's rights.

The *Civil Society 2004* survey results indicate that only 13% of Serbian citizens had noticed in the last twelve months that civil society organizations had provided concrete support to women in the local community, in order to improve their standards of living. So far the results of civil society in this area are assessed as modest and limited; it is a very small circle of women who are actually supported, in the opinion of the interlocutors in the CIVICUS survey.

The media, more precisely the press, devoted 32 articles to civil society endeavours to empower and encourage women to take a more active approach towards their "unenviable social position". In contrast to the press, the TV stations remained closed to information on the part played by civil society with regard to the issue of women - only two items. Relying on the media picture, it may be concluded that civil society is playing a more active part

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[164]   Data from *Serbian Civil Society 2004*. For more details see Aneex 3: Overview of CSI Research Methods.

[165]   Data from Serbian Government available at: http://www.prsp.sr.gov.yu/dokumenta.jsp   (accessed 20 June 2006)

[166]   Directory of non-government organizations CDNPS available at: http://directory.crnps.org.yu/browse_type.asp (accessed 20 June 2006)

in the process of empowering women. It is obvious that civil society simultaneously covers many areas, primarily those areas where the unfavourable position of women is manifested in a more drastic way. The media suggest that the efforts of civil society do not present only a sporadic supplement to state intervention in the process of empowering women but rather are the only social actors in this domain. The CSOs demonstrate growing success with regard to raising women's own awareness of their position and consequently of their mobilization for the purpose of improving their status.

4.4.5 Building social capital. By comparing the levels of trust, tolerance and public awareness among those who are members of at least one CSO, to those who do not belong to any, it appears that civil society in Serbia has not contributed much to building social capital. Data from the *Civil Society 2004* survey indicates that there is no significant difference which would speak positively in favour of those who belong to CSOs as opposed to those who do not. In some instances it is even the case that the distance CSO members feel towards the various social groups is very slightly larger than is the case with non-members. (See table 4.4.5.)

TABLE III.4.4.5: Social Capital Strengthening

Trust:	% of members of the CSOs and non members that believe:					
	CSOs Members in WVS 1996	Non members in WVS 1996	CSOs Members in WVS 2001	Non members in WVS 2001	CSOs Members in Civil Society 2004	Non members in Civil Society 2004
Majority can be trusted	35	29	22	17	10	9
You have to be cautious	65	71	78	83	90	91
Tolerance:	% of members of the CSOs and non members who wouldn't like to have in their neighborhood:					
	CSOs Members in WVS 1996	Non members in WVS 1996	CSOs Members in WVS 2001	Non members in WVS 2001	CSOs Members in Civil Society 2004	Non members in Civil Society 2004
People of different race	--	--	4	7	14	13
People of different religion	--	--	13	14	14	14
Immigrants, foreign workers	--	--	7	8	19	18
AIDS, mental disorders	--	--	50	52	43	46
Homosexual/Lesbians	--	--	50	49	54	56
Public trust:	% of members of the CSOs and non members who:					
	CSOs Members in WVS 1996	Non members in WVS 1996	CSOs Members in WVS 2001	Non members in WVS 2001	CSOs Members in Civil Society 2004	Non members in Civil Society 2004
Requesting from the State benefits they are not entitled to	--	--	--	--	13	13
Avoiding to pay for public transportation	--	--	--	--	26	19
The evasion taxes when possible	--	--	--	--	19	17

The above table clearly indicates that civil society members do not differ positively from non-members of CSOs and therefore civil society cannot be considered a strong source of social capital. Neither can it be a taken as a generator of social capital at a wider societal level.

4.4.6 Supporting livelihoods. Public opinion in Serbia related to this issue is divided into those who believe that civil society cannot and should not have a role in reducing the unemployment rate, and others who believe that it can and, to certain extent, already has this role. Such division of opinions, however, works to the detriment of the unemployed and hinders civil society in attaining better results. The first group is larger in number and the element dividing the two groups is their understanding of the role of the State.

The first group includes a greater number of civil society representatives and key informants who believe that a significant civil society contribution to unemployment reduction is out of the question. The following reasons are, in their opinion, decisive: "the lack of relevant projects and programs dealing with it," "insufficient information on income-generating possibilities," "the high unemployment rate in society and the growing number of people requiring support,"[167] and particularly "not comprehending the role of civil society in this field." A large number of the representatives of local authorities, private persons and the Church believe that the State plays the prime role in this field, first of all due to the declining economy at the local level, the increase in the number of unemployed (women in particular) and the growth in the long-term unemployment rate. (See Table 4.4.6.) All this indicates that the problem should not be tackled by CSO/NGOs. In the opinion of most of the representatives of local authorities, private persons and the Church the role of the State is much more important and more essential than the role of civil society. The media analysis did not reveal much interest in this particular topic, except in 6 items (4 press articles and 2 TV reports).

TABLE III.4.4.6: Unemployment rate in Serbia and Montenegro[168]

1997.	1998.	1999.	2000.	2001.	2002.	2003.	2005.
25.6	27.2	27.4	26.6	27.5	26.0	27.5	27.10[169] – 31.6[170]

In the other group are international donors who emphasize that civil society must engage more actively in realizing programs, which will, offer more opportunities, especially to the women, to earn, since the unemployment rate of women in Serbia is higher than that of men. Representatives of academic institutions add that, by tackling the issues related to marginalized groups and women civil society hasome visible impact. However, no concrete success examples were given. As an example of good practice, some representatives of local

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[167]   In Serbia, according to the National employment Bulleting of the Republic of Serbia, in November 2005, 896,190 unemployed registered in November 2005 including 486917 women (54.3%). For more see: http://www.rztr. co.yu/uizradieng.htm (accessed 24 Decemeber 2005)

[168]   According to the data from - The Statistical Yearbook of the Economic Commission for Europe 2005, available at: http://w3-dev.unece.org/stat/stat.asp or http://laborsta.ilo.org/ (1999 data for SCG without Kosovo and Meto-hia). (accessed 20 June 2006)

[169]   Data for 2005 taken from the November 2005 Bulletin. National Employment Office of the Republic of Serbia, available at: www.rztr.co.yu ; Unemployment rate available at: http://www.info.gov.yu/view.php?jezik=e&tid=4 or http://www.minrzs.sr.gov.yu/vest.asp?l=s&v=v&ID=169 or http://search.yahoo.com/search?p=UNEMPLOYM ENT+RATE+IN+sERBIA&sm=Yahoo%21+Search&toggle=1&ei=UTF-8&fr=FP-tab-web-t&b=11; (accessed 20 June 2006)

[170]   CIA - The World Factbook - Serbia and Montenegro, updated on 10 January 2006. For more see: https://www.cia. gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html (accessed 10 January 2006) Just under a half of the mentioned number has been broadcast on TV B92.

authorities point to Vojvodina and several organizations which, through concrete example, showed that these opportunities might be developed. (Positive examples: "Vrbas" the Women's Weaving Workshop, "Čovekoljublje"). The local authorities also cite an example of cooperation between non-governmental organizations on the project of women's handwork and the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade, but believe that it cannot be of much help in finding more permanent sources of earnings. The "Women Can Do It" project in Vojvodina is offered as yet another example. A smaller number of representatives of civil society mention several initiatives aimed at supporting and providing earnings, such as: "The Association of Business Women", "Lastavica" NGO originally created as a women's project and that initiated women's catering service as an economically viable business. In general, these projects were initiated as the projects of psychosocial support in the last decade when Serbia faced an influx of refugees and internally displaced people. Apart from a variety of training courses, micro-credits are seen as potentially successful empowering mechanisms, for women in particular.

Another example is the NGO LINGVA from Kraljevo, which is implementing the project – a women's program for the economic empowerment of women. The women make clothes and have linked themselves to retailers who buy their products. There are 100 women beneficiaries. Also, through social cooperatives, the attempt is being made to help some families. A social cooperative-bookkeeping agency has been established where two socially vulnerable women are working and the entire profit they realise, based on a contract with this NGO, is allocated to the employment of new beneficiaries. This is a pilot program. In addition to these, in the last four years a crediting program has also been introduced through which some 700 families were engaged. Around 45% of the beneficiaries of these credits are women, as stated by a representative of the organization. In order to generate employment, according to the statements of the CSOs, civil society as a whole needs better cooperation with employment bureaus which have specific programs. Both sides recognize each other as partners. However, according to the CSOs, despite the fact that there are credit lines available for women, the problem is that they are often not eligible because they have no property. In this way, a new vicious circle of inequality begins. According to CSOs, women are completely blocked even if they want to go into business, and even though worldwide experience shows that it is worth investing in women as they carefully assess their business opportunities and demonstrate high loan return rate. The CSO representatives believe that civil society can help women acquire additional knowledge that would make them more competitive on the labour market (through computer literacy courses, sewing courses, etc.). A media representative shares the same opinion.

Precisely for the abovementioned reasons, only 12% of the citizens of Serbia state that, in the last twelve months, civil society organizations have supported members of their local community to start up activities yielding income. (*Civil Society 2004*)

4.5. MEETING SOCIETAL NEEDS

This subdimension examines the extent to which civil society in Serbia is active and successful in meeting societal needs, especially those of poor people and other marginalized groups. Table III.4.6 summarizes the respective indicator scores.

Table III.4.5: Indicators assessing meeting societal needs

Ref. #	Indicators	Score
4.5.1	Lobbying for state service provision	1
4.5.2	Meeting societal needs directly	2
4.5.3	Meeting the needs of marginalized groups	2

4.5.1 Lobbying for state service provision. Regional Stakeholders 2005 survey results show that less than half the stakeholders (42%) could remember individual examples of civil society lobbying the Government to provide public services. The problems on which CSOs lobbied the Government were one-off cases concerning: the people's attorney - accessibility to information (10%), opening a people's office in Vlasotinci where complaints can be filed (4%), the stories of the dossiers (3%), people with disabilities and removing structural barriers (3%), SOS hotline for women victims of violence, personal assistance for people with disabilities (4%), municipal service centres, creating favourable conditions for parliament members to receive their constituencies constituents placement of displaced persons, introducing an ombudsman (5%), more frequent medical check-ups for the elderly, efficient work of state bodies, new local self-governance legislation, etc. (The percentage is not shown for the examples ranging around 1%).

USAID SI providing services:
2004. = 4.5
2003. = 4.1
2002. = 4.2
2001. = 3.8
2000. = 4.0
1999. = 4.0

Such lobbying activities for provision of public services to citizens are least often remembered by stakeholders from Vojvodina (25%), and most in Belgrade (53%). One quarter of the stakeholders answered the question to what extent civil society was successful in lobbying the Government on this problem and their opinions were divided between those who believe that it was *unsuccessful* (9%), or *successful to some extent* (35%), on the one hand, and those who believe that is was *successful* (41%) or *very successful* (7%), on the other.

The analysis of the media shows that television was significantly more interested in CS activities encouraging the State/Government to respond to the burning needs of various social groups. In the electronic media,[171] there were 30 reports (17% from a total of 132), which makes this the second most widely covered issue related to civil society. In the press there were 30 related articles (3% of 874), almost symmetrically distributed over the daily papers analyzed. The media emphasize that lobbying and advocacy is a necessary and inevitable method of requesting solutions from the State/Government. In general, civil society advocacy actions and lobbying of Government rarely yielded concrete results, according to the media.

4.5.2 Meeting pressing societal needs directly. The public perception of the extent to which CSOs respond to the problems of the society differs greatly from that of the regional stakeholders. Only 22% of citizens could state that there are organizations which have, in the previous 12 months, improved the living conditions of members of the local community, or have informed them of their rights (*Civil Society 2004).* In contrast, 83% of the *Regional Stakeholders* state that CS organizations provide specific services to citizens, while only half of them believe that their work is *successful* (42%), and only 7% believe that CSOs work is *very successful*. The majority of civil society organizations (70%) also state that their target group is the entire population, 10% of organizations target poor communities and their inhabitants, for 6% of organizations the target group is refugees and displaced persons, while for 4% it is women.

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171   Just under a half of the mentioned number has been broadcast on TV B92.

Such a contrast in perception is due to the poor visibility of CSOs, partially because of poor PR activities, and partially because of insufficient media interest.

According to slightly over one fourth of the *Regional Stakeholders* (27%), the CSO role in resolving social problems is *significant*. This result can be explained by the fact that non-governmental organizations are still labelled "foreign mercenaries" and "traitors of the national interest," as they were in the 90s. To this it is necessary to add the inherited political culture in which the State plays the key role in meeting the pressing social needs of individuals and vulnerable groups. The same opinion is also held by the citizens and representatives of most CSOs, although it is decreasing. It is obvious that the state shall remain the first port of call in the search for funds for various social needs for some time to come. The CSOs, however, attempt to suggest to citizens that it is not advisable to expect the State/Government to generously meet their needs.

Despite the hostile environment, the CSOs continue to render a vast variety of services including social support, education, environmental protection, etc. The most required services, according to the *USAID 2004 Sustainability Index,* are those concerned with human rights. In explaining the Index 4.5, it is stated that, "like groups for representation which face growing problems, service providers are also concerned that the implementation of restrictive laws will make their work more difficult and demanding." *CeSID* is cited as the most famous NGO for the national monitoring of elections which experienced problems in getting the necessary permits to monitor recent elections, because the Government first prohibited their accesses to polling stations and then, following pressure of the CSOs (specifically NGO community), permitted it.

4.5.3 Meeting needs of marginalized groups. In general, almost twice as many citizens (55%) believe that civil society organizations provide better services to marginalized groups than state institutions.

FIGURE III.4.5.3: Meeting the needs of marginalized groups

Who provides better services to marginalized groups?

Source: Civil Society 2004 survey
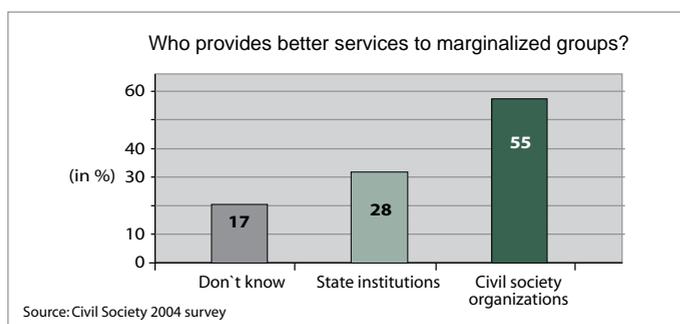
In the last 12 months 25% of citizens requested support in person both from state institutions and from non-profit organizations. In answer to the question which was more helpful, 48% said that the state institutions were more responsive while 52% thought non-profit organizations performed better. Bearing in mind that non-governmental organizations in Serbia are more focused on the local than on the national level, their profiling is moving more and more towards providing services and support to marginalized groups such as the poor, persons with disabilities, etc. In the 90s, when they were "struggling with their own identity and had sporadic and undeveloped relations with the Beneficiaries," (NGO Policy Group 2001) CSOs functioned much more as architects of civil society. A great number of these NGOs still do not manage to include the beneficiaries as a key aspect of their operations in a systematic and understandable way. This applies more to the NGO's established during the 90s and after, while associations of citizens with a long history in working with persons with

disabilities are facing a completely different challenge: how to transform a medical model of relations towards their beneficiaries into a social one - based on human rights. Yet other organizations are engaged in activities intended to help refugees and displaced persons whose 10-year problems have not yet been completely solved.

In the opinion of the majority of representatives of all sectors, civil society is insufficiently engaged in addressing drug addiction and substance abuse problems. CSOs should be more active in this area, considering the fact that it is present everywhere, that it is least spoken of in the media, and that it mostly affects the young. It is necessary to carry out collective action, in which local authorities, the police, law courts, public prosecution, centres of social work, non-governmental organizations and schools would take part.

In the context of decentralization, in resolving the problems of marginalized groups in Belgrade, Vojvodina and Central Serbia, state organizations are more active than non-profit organizations, while in the remaining regions, especially the regions where poverty is most obvious, the quality of service from the non-governmental organizations is better. (See Table 4.5.3.)

TABLE III.4.5.3: In the last 12 month when you addressed a charity organization or a state institution where did you find better response? [172]

	Belgrade = 4.2% of the poor[7]	Vojvodina = 7.9% poor	West Serbia = 13.2% poor	Central Serbia = 9.7% poor	Eastern Serbia	Southern Serbia
					23.5% poor	
Charity organizations	8.6%	12.6%	22.2%	4.1%	19.6%	17.0%
State institutions	8.6%	14.6%	12.2%	12.0%	8.7%	14.0%
No communication with these institutions	74.0%	67.9%	60.9%	78.0%	58.7%	60.0%
Don't know	8.9%	4.9%	4.7%	5.8%	13.0%	9.0%

Although the development of civil society represents a significant factor in the further development of democracy, it could be concluded that its influence on the state and public policy is sporadic, while the influence which it has on target groups, and the general public in Serbia is inadequate. The strength of civil society in Serbia is scattered, uneven and heterogeneous and the issue of creating joint platforms for further actions has not been discussed enough.

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[172]   Percentage data on the poor taken from the address of the Serbian Government available at: http://www.prsp. sr.gov.yu/dokumenta.jsp (accessed 12 January 2006)

Conclusion

As a consequence of its rather weak structure and the limitations of the environment, civil society in Serbia has had quite a limited impact on governance and development issues so far. Key obstacles to a more sustained policy impact are the lack of advocacy and lobbying skills among CSO staff, but lack of responsiveness. Moreover, due to the widespread mistrust prevailing in the society, CSOs have a very limited role in creating social capital amongst their membership base. It can therefore be concluded that they contribute only slightly to the overall growth of social capital.

The question of the extent to which the low level of public trust is a consequence of the low ratings of civil society's transparency was explored at some regional stakeholder consultations. Participants agreed that such a connection might exist, but they also added that other factors, such as the limited work done by CSOs to present and promote their work to the public and the negative media image of some human rights NGOs (as a part of heritage from the previous regime and current occasional insults over some media against NGOs dealing with key political issues) also contributed to rather disappointing ratings for civil society among citizens.

In general, as the Regional Stakeholder survey revealed, the effort and input invested by civil society outweigh the actual impact achieved. This holds particularly true for civil society's anti-corruption efforts which, according to the research results, have enjoyed a very limited impact compared to the inputs invested. In the area of human rights advocacy the difference between the invested efforts and the achieved influence is less drastic, while on the problem of poverty, the impact achieved by CSOs is minimal compared to efforts made by CSOs.

Regarding the influence of CSOs on public policy in general, the consulted experts identified some progress, saying that the state is becoming more ready to engage with civil society which, in their opinion, is resulting in an increasing number of invitations to civil society representatives to participate in working groups, to being appointed to various councils, to submit their own reports on certain issues, to submit their reflections and suggestions on certain laws, etc. However, some experts consider such commitment and practice to be mostly donor driven and primarily cosmetic since, according to them, most government officials are still not interested in providing real space for civil society to take part in the policy making process.

When reviewing the subdimension scores, some differences become apparent. Whereas civil society's functions of empowering citizens and meeting societal needs were assessed as moderately well developed, its role as a watchdog of the state and private sector is still weak. While there are already signs that Serbian CSOs are starting to play a role in holding the state to account, the monitoring of the corporate sector is still in its initial stages. However, social corporate responsibility is a new issue for CSOs as well as for the private sector in Serbia, particularly for local corporations.

The role of CSOs in meeting societal needs focuses mostly on the needs of marginal groups, as the state is assigned a dominant role in the welfare system. Given that Serbian society is increasingly becoming fragmented and new social groups (such as people who lost their job couple of years before accomplishing the right to retirement, displaced persons and refugees, etc.) are likely to become marginalised, a number of key informants shared the opinion that it is essential for CSOs to play a more proactive role in addressing social issues within Serbian society.

IV Strengths and Weaknesses of Civil Society in Serbia

IV STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN SERBIA

This section summarizes the discussions and results of the National Workshop, held at the end of the project – on 8 June 2006. Some 80 participants from CSOs, government and public institutions, the private sector, the media and researchers participated in the workshop. After presentation of the project findings, participants were invited to analyze the respective civil society dimensions and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of civil society in Serbia and to come up with comments, suggestions and recommendations on how to strengthen civil society. The participants worked in four small groups and each group examined one dimension of the CSI: structure, environment, values and impact. Though each group was concerned with a different dimension, certain common topics and issues were identified among them.

The discussions at the National Workshop, regional consultations and NAG meetings indicated the ability of civil society representatives to analyse and assess the development issues facing civil society in Serbia today. In the discussions, they were critical and open to dialogue with other participants, and recognized more weaknesses than strengths present within civil society in Serbia. In examining the strengths, the participants insisted on recognizing the positive trends in particular development areas, even though some of the scores indicated a currently weak state of affairs.

STRENGTHS

The following section captures the main strengths identified and discussed during the course of the National Workshop. As they cover a disparate set of issues and themes, they are listed in bullet-point form:

Civic engagement:

■ *Volunteering.* There is a willingness of citizens to help other people and take part in volunteer activities in local environments. However, it was emphasized that the vast majority of people want to help persons that they know, that is persons with whom they have some form of contact. As underlined by National Workshop participants, this could be seen as a solid basis for the creation of new types of solidarity.

■ *Collective community action.* It was emphasized that signs exist of increasing engagement and readiness from people outside CSOs to take part in collective community actions in some regions, particularly in activities that are of general significance for the local community.

■ *CSO membership diversity.* Almost all social groups are represented within CSOs, which ensures diversity in social dynamics and prompts versatility and variety of the themes as well as target groups.

Level of organisation:

■ *International linkages.* It was emphasized that a number of CSOs, especially NGOs, have established good cooperation with international organizations and donors. Representatives of CSOs believe that they have very good relations with CSOs from surrounding countries, which is illustrated by a number of cross-border projects. International linkages can be further strengthened by supporting the participation

of CSOs in international networks, coalitions or forums dedicated to solving concrete problems. Cooperation with international networks can help Serbian CSOs identify best practices and models that can be adapted to the particularities of the Serbian society.

Inter-relations:

- *Cooperation.* It was emphasized that a large number of CSOs cooperate among themselves, especially those CSOs that deal with the same subject matter. Also, it was observed that CSOs show a willingness to establish *ad hoc* cooperation and cooperation through various networks and coalitions thus enabling the fast flow of information, exchange of experience and mutual learning.

Resources:

- *Human resources.* The membership of CSOs is regarded as one of the greatest potentials for the successful development of civil society; the people engaged in CSOs were deemed to be educated experts, also characterised by a self-critical attitude, innovative and capable of reacting quickly when problems in the society are observed.

State-civil society relations:

- *Cooperation/support.* Cooperation between CSOs and the state is increasing, particularly with the establishment of the Social Innovation Fund (SIF). It was perceived that the state, though SIF and international donations, supports CSOs by setting aside assets from the budget for CS or by publishing tender notices for CSO projects. The National Workshop participants singled out support of social activities and services as particularly significant.

Democracy:

- *Civil society actions to promote democracy.* Civil society and particularly NGOs are seen as active promoters of democratic values. Democratic values are promoted by various activities designed to raise the awareness of citizens, and also by advocacy for an adequate legal framework which would improve protection and realization of citizen's rights.

Most groups promote tolerance in society:

- *Civil society activities to promote tolerance.* Many CSO's are active in promoting tolerance. Promotion of tolerance towards certain minority groups and the promotion and protection of their rights, form a significant part of civil sector activities.

Poverty eradication:

- *Civil society actions to eradicate poverty.* A significant part of civil society strives to reduce poverty, particularly those organizations with a social development mission. Marginalized groups such as the poor, people with disabilities, Roma people, single parents, refugees and internally displaced people have become visible to the public thanks to NGO activities. Many activities have been performed including direct humanitarian aid, and later educational and capacity building programs aimed at poverty reduction.

Responding to social interests:

■ *Responsiveness.* Civil society was deemed to have the sensitivity and responsiveness necessary to cope with social problems. CSOs were seen to be very efficient in identifying problems in societies and the needs of their target groups. CSOs are ready to act fast and to solve those problems.

WEAKNESSES

Based on the research findings, and the discussions at the regional consultations, NAG meetings and the National Workshop, a large number of weaknesses and challenges for civil society in Serbia were identified. The main challenges for civil society in Serbia are the following:

Civic engagement:

■ *Non-partisan political action.* The number of independent political actions by citizens is in general on the decline. Nevertheless, it can be said that now citizen's activities are focused on the local level action in comparison to the previous period when their goal was the establishment of a democratic system.

Diversity of civil society participants:

■ *CSO leadership.* Large numbers of CSOs are viewed as organizations in which one person (the president) has a great deal of influence and which, on occasion, begin to look like "*one man bands.*" Also, very frequently, the management structures or boards of managers have not changed for years. This is considered unsatisfactory because it may limit the number of new, innovative ideas considered and hold up improvements in working practices.

■ *Distribution of CSOs.* From a geographical perspective, civil society in Serbia is unevenly developed. Stronger CSOs are mainly located in the larger towns.

Level of organisation:

■ *Self-regulation.* Many CSO's do not have developed mechanisms of self-regulation. Although the organizations have statutes in which the procedure for decision-making and the organization of work are laid down, these are seldom adhered to. Organizations tend rather to adapt themselves to changing situations. Regulation of relations between CSOs is also lacking, although this would enhance the credibility of the sector.

■ *Support infrastructure.* It was emphasized that not enough has been done to strengthen new organizations. Members of new CSOs must acquire many of the skills necessary for their work.

Inter-relations:

■ *Cooperation.* Opinions regarding cooperation between CSOs are divided. A significant number of people believe that cooperation between CSOs is already very good, that there are well-developed channels of communication and that the exchange of information and the work undertaken by networks and coalitions is effective. This cooperation, however, mainly connects CSOs that work in similar

fields. But the belief prevails that there are disagreements between CSOs, and that conflicts of interest, conceit and unfair competition occur.

Resources:

- *Financial resources.* Many CSOs lack financial resources and it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain funds for the realization of CSO activities. This makes the work of organizations quite uncertain. NGOs are highly dependent on donations from the international community and the financing of projects from domestic sources is still insufficient. This makes the work of organizations unpredictable and it is hard to sustain efforts and impact.

- *Human resources.* Although human resources have been cited as one of the major advantages of CSOs, some elements that can be viewed as disadvantages were also mentioned. For instance, the drain of personnel from CSOs to other sectors where incomes are larger and financing more certain was seen a problem. The whole civil sector was considered to have become weaker because the best-qualified and educated personnel are leaving. Moreover, although CSOs have many members, it must be assumed that only a small number of these are actively involved in their work.

Legal environment:

- *CSO registration.* The entire legal and fiscal framework of civil society in Serbia is seen as inadequate. Although there are numerous attempts underway to enact a new law that would regulate the work of CSOs, civil society has still to benefit from any significant results.

State-civil society relations:

- *Autonomy.* The work of CSO is, in some ways, limited by frequent political changes, particularly the change of authorities at the local community level. These changes in local administrations interrupt the continuity of CSO cooperation with local authorities and make it necessary to initiate that cooperation over and over again, and all the while, public confidence is declining due to lack of continuity in services and activities. Political stability was pinpointed as the factor which would ensure a clear and stable setting for civil society.

Democratic practices within CSOs:

- *Democratic practice within CSO.* A section of civil society was judged to be insufficiently democratic internally. It was also seen as problematic that the wider membership does not take part in reaching significant decisions on the work of the organization. The influence of the leaders of organizations was deemed to be exceptionally high.

Transparency:

- *Financial transparency of CSO.* Most CSOs were considered inadequately transparent in their financial operations. Only a small number of organizations publicize financial data. Lack of transparency contributes to the existing bad image of civil society as a sector with large amounts of money and good earnings that are not accounted for.

Some intolerant groups within civil society:

■ *Tolerance within civil society*. Although a large number of CSOs promote tolerance in society, examples of intolerant behaviour can be found within civil society. Conflicts between CSOs promoting opposite values were recognized as a possibility, i.e. conflict could be associated with CSOs which promote human rights and democratic values and organizations promoting hatred and intolerance.

Influencing public policy:

■ *Social policy impact.* It has been noticed that the work and effort of CSOs in this area was much greater than the actual results/impact. When looking into the reasons of this low level of CSO influence in the sphere of social policies (and the influence of CSOs on the whole of society as well) it can be seen that there is a lack of mechanisms for making results known to the public, as well as a lack of developed mechanisms for evaluating effects. It is believed that one of the significant factors limiting impact is a small number of CSOs which are focused on the realization of the social and economic rights of citizens.

Low trust in civil society:

■ *Public trust in CSOs.* Since the 1990's the public image of CSOs has increasingly been improving, particularly that of NGOs. However, a large number of citizens still hold negative views and do not have much trust in the work of these organisations. The most significant reasons for the distrust of the public in CSOs are the residual distrust from the Milošević years, the fragmentation of the sector and the non-transparency in their financial operations. In addition, the media were criticized for not giving enough coverage to the results of CSO activities and thus failing to contribute to the pace of change in public perceptions.

V Recommendation

V Recommendations _____

Specific recommendations were identified based on the weaknesses listed above, and grouped into three categories: (1) recommendations to CSOs themselves, (2) recommendations to both, civil society and the state and (3) recommendations to other relevant stakeholders.

Recommendations for civil society:

- **Develop democratic procedures within CSOs**. This can be achieved by the formation of external supervising bodies and through the development of mechanisms for the promotion of good governance and democratic leadership and by involving more CSO members in the processes of decision-making.

- **Work on improving the public image**. Encourage cooperation with the media, which would promote good examples of CSO achievements. Work on promoting transparency regarding financial sources, financial operations, methods of conducting business and decision-making as examples of good practice. Promote the results of previous work to a wider public since a lot has been done and good results have been achieved, but distrust among citizens in CSOs is still present and the influence of the work performed is seen as small. The precondition for improving the public image of CSOs is establishment of regulatory mechanisms within civil society.

- **Work on further promotion of cooperation with international organizations**. Get involved in the work of international bodies, coalitions and forums in such a way as to ensure the increase of transparency and promotion and make new contacts, acquire new skills and benefit from a wider pool of experience.

- **Lobbying**. Develop mechanisms to lobby for the enactment of draft laws prepared by CSOs and for participation in local and national budgeting processes. Keep up current contacts with representatives of political parties, and National and City Assembly representatives in order to influence specific legislation and / or improve the position of CSO target groups.

- **Insure sustainable CSO funding**. CSOs should place focus on obtaining funds from local budgets, at national or municipal level. This can be achieved by creating partnerships with local authorities and conducting joint projects, or by lobbying for legislation which would provide increased financial resources for CSO funding by increasing budget funds designed for CSOs in national or local budgets.

- **Knowledge and information sharing within civil society and interaction with other sectors.** Transfer of knowledge and information within civil society could be achieved by creating networks, coalitions and exchanging information and knowledge with other CSOs. The creation of a conjoint and accessible database would further enhance activities and information sharing. Create possibilities for cooperation with other sectors (private and state) by making contacts with experts from different fields and establishing cooperation with them.

- **Develop financial transparency of CSO's financial operations**. Provide for public insight in the form of annual financial reports posted on the organizations' websites.

■ **Work on ensuring sustainability of operations**. Focus on organization sustainability by providing sustainable sources of funding, so that projects are not abandoned because of lack of funding. This could be achieved by focusing on obtaining funds from local budgets, thus preventing the uncertainty of donor withdrawals and ensuring long-term operation. Work on creating stronger infrastructural support for newly formed CSOs like databases, resource centres, educational centres, and infrastructural support. Ongoing education of CSO personnel is necessary to ensure the quality level of activities and services. Develop mechanisms to help CSO retain personnel, especially experienced and well-educated staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE STATE:

■ **Promote mutual cooperation** between the state, institutes, local governments and representatives of civil society.

■ **Develop models and practices according to the country context**. No reproduction of models and practices from the West. Although some models proved to be good in the West, they should be adapted to our context and our specific needs. Cooperate with state institutions in establishing the specific needs of different target groups or the best form of legal regulations in order to get the best results.

■ **Work on CSO development**. Especially in those areas in which they are not experienced enough, in order to equalize the level of development over the whole of civil society. This could be done by creating educational centres, support centres, resource centres for CSOs which can provide knowledge, information, and publications on "how to do..." etc. Additionally, a joint database on services intended for citizens organized either by CSO or state institutions could be created.

■ **Develop sustainable funds for CSOs.** Work on the formation of a program budget with funds earmarked for CSOs at national level. This strategic measure would ensure that CSOs get a larger amount of funds from the national budget. In that way CSOs would have a more stable and more certain source of income thus ensuring continuity in work. The dependency on foreign donors would thus be significantly reduced.

■ **Legal Framework**. Specific CSO activity should be devoted to ensuring the enactment of an appropriate legal and fiscal environment for CSOs. CSO representatives should comment on proposed draft laws on NGOs and ensure an adequate legal framework for the functioning of civil society.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS:

■ **Exchange of knowledge**. This could be done by exchanging expert knowledge from different areas, by associating experts from civil society, the state, public institutions, and the private sector on similar issues. Involve experts, particularly from the private sector, in the work of CSOs through education and exchange of experience. This measure is seen as a good mechanism for building the capacities of CSOs in order to make additional sources of CSOs revenue and develop sustainability.

- **Enhance mutual cooperation between the media and civil society**. The media can contribute by informing the public about civil society, its work and its achievements in the last decade. Special attention should be given to media which work on the national level because they have access to the widest audience. The recommendation is to create partnerships with the media, which could present the work of civil society to the wider public and thus improve the public image of civil society.

VI Conclusion

VI Conclusions

The conclusions draw together the main findings of CSI project in Serbia and can be summarized in form of the Civil Society Diamond for Serbia (see figure IV.1.1).

FIGURE IV.1.1: Civil society diamond in Serbia
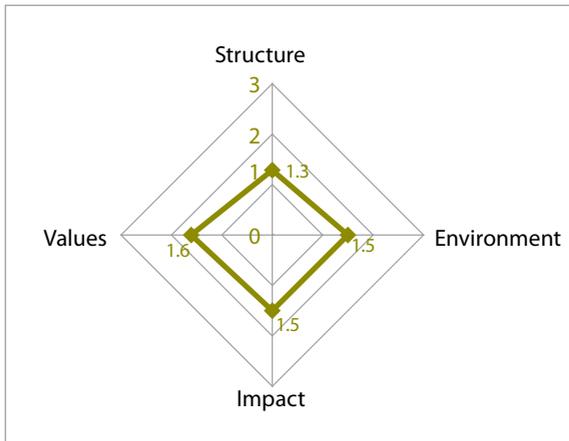
The diagram, visualising the state of civil society in Serbia in the form of the Civil Society Diamond, shows that civil society in Serbia is rather well balanced and of small to medium size. The structure dimension is slightly less developed and as a result includes a larger number of weaknesses than the other three dimensions.

The key concern with civil society's structure is the lack of widespread and active membership in CSOs and the lack of civic engagement at the community level which should be understood mostly as a result of decomposed social capital and partly as fatigue after long-term protest and demonstrations during the 90s. This additionally explains the discrepancy between the increasing membership in CSOs and the presence of a majority of passive members. Referring to the widespread opinion that most CSOs members are *passive*, the National Workshop participants regarded this as a challenge, since it indicates that the majority of CSO members are willing to provide legitimacy for CSOs and their initiatives by becoming members and by paying the membership fee but are actually not willing to participate in any of the CSOs activities. In addition, poor networking and insufficient cooperation among CSOs have appeared as a result of the low level of trust between these organisations, while the lack of self-regulatory mechanisms is perpetuating it further. The geographical distribution of CSOs indicates the noticeably urban character of these organizations. According to the CSI data and available sources, Serbian CSOs should improve their networking at the international level, though a certain number of National Workshop participants stated that some CSOs, especially NGOs, have established good cooperation with international organizations and donors.

Further major concerns with regard to the structure dimension are limited financial and infrastructural resources originating in the fact that the majority of NGOs are strongly characterized by foreign donor dependency. The general lack of stable financial resources is a severe obstacle to sustainability in the sector. In this regard, some interesting recommendations have been made in this report, such as the formation of a national budget program for civil society in order to ensure continuity in work. This, in the opinion of the National workshop participants, might reduce significantly the dependency on foreign donors and ensure a stable and more sustainable source of funding. Viewing the structure dimension as the "basis" for civil society, comprising membership, public philanthropy, human resources, finance, technical infrastructure, and the ability to cooperate, it might be

concluded that civil society's impact is based mostly on civil society human resources as a major strength and on its values. However, human resources appeared to be both a major strength and a major weakness for civil society in Serbia. The whole civil sector is believed to have become weaker as the best qualified and educated personnel move to more financially stable sectors. Therefore the future strengthening of civil society also depends considerably on further investment in appropriate human resources.

It transpired that, although the environment is partly conducive to the development of civil society and that civil society exerts influence on governance and development in Serbia, both these dimensions are not more than moderately developed. The main structural factors that restrain the development of civil society are the socio-economic situation, the legacy of war and the previous regime, the political culture in general and the overall negative image of civil society in Serbia, particularly of the NGO sector. However, as is shown in greater detail in the main body of this report, the general lack of political will to recognize the significance of civil society and to foster its development and sustainability overarches all of the above limiting factors and occasionally intensifies into verbal attacks on NGO representatives.

Regarding the more fluid and less persistent context issues, such as state-civil society relations, both positive and negative developments can be noted. However, the negative signs of state-civil society relations still prevail and among them the unfavourable tax regulations for civil society and the lack of an adequate legislative framework for its operation are critical for further sustainable development. CSOs pay the same percentage of taxes as the largest private enterprises and the postponement of laws in favour of civil society is indicative of the extent to which civil society is currently marginalised.

The positive signs of state-civil society relations, however, are twofold. The financial support granted by various levels of government to civil society is significant even if basically donor driven. On the other side, most local government-civil society relations are grounded on informal private contacts. The lack of formalized and officially regulated cooperation between local government and civil society is partly an aspect of the political culture and a legacy of the previous regime. The corporate sector does not show an increasing interest in cooperating with civil society actors and current private sector-civil society relations are mostly based on informal private contacts at the local level where cooperation has been taking place primarily with small and medium entrepreneurs.

The values dimension indicates that, whereas CSOs exercise and advocate for a broad range of positive values, the perception created by the media and accepted by the public is that they are non-transparent and sometimes even operating in illegal manner, as the persistent allegations of money-laundering in CSOs operations imply. It seems that rare instances of corruption in some CSOs have created a negative picture of the entire sector, which makes calls for increased financial transparency all the more justified. In general transparency, accountability and democracy are some of the specific areas in which public trust must still be earned by civil society in Serbia. With regard to civil society's role in promoting certain values within society, a striking finding emerges. The CSI study found that, despite high and growing levels of poverty, Serbian CSOs, though very active, are not legitimized, nor widely recognized as significant actors in the fight to eradicate poverty and mobilise society around this social concern. This limited role is certainly a legacy of socialist times, when the state was regarded as the sole responsible actor on social issues. However, as the current state seems to be preoccupied with higher political issues than effectively tackling poverty, civil society needs to take on the challenge more seriously in terms of advocacy and promotion activities in order to achieve a recognised role in sensitizing and mobilizing society for poverty eradication.

Civil society's impact on governance and development in Serbia is moderate and only slightly more developed than the structure dimension. According to the results of the CSI case studies conducted in the priority areas of social policy and human rights protection, any signs that might indicate an expanding role for CSOs in Serbian governance are still weak. In these areas civil society acts as a vanguard in establishing a new institutional infrastructure for serving emerging social needs and continues to play a role in meeting the needs of marginalized groups. However, civil society in Serbia is far from becoming an effective public watchdog that holds government and the corporate sector accountable. Also, the widespread mistrust present in society does not stop at the gates of CSO offices. CSO members do not show stronger civil norms and values than citizens who are not engaged in civil society activities. Consequently, CSOs do not appear to be significant generators of social capital. This fact certainly deserves additional discussion and analysis.

What are the prospects for civil society in Serbia? There are several indications that civil society in Serbia is currently in a pat position: unable to move forward due to the environmental constrains mentioned above and linked to internal limiting factors such as a high turn-over of staff and the increasing discouragement of the majority of civil society activists as a result of fatigue from long-term intensive endeavour on one hand and dissatisfaction with moderate impact and unrecognized efforts on the other, not to mention occasional mud slinging in the media and above all the lack of sustainable financial resources faced by the majority of NGOs. The interest of local entrepreneurs and local government to cooperate with civil society initiatives is generally blocked by the lack of a conducive legislative and fiscal framework as well as by inverse (inherited) habits that favour informal connections over formalized cooperation. In general, according to the CSI findings, further sustainable development of civil society in Serbia is currently under threat and in need of significant attention from state representatives and civil society participants and stakeholders, even though some small number of core CSOs are making increasing progress. Moreover, civil society is, after sixteen years of endeavour, still at the beginning of the process of building partnership with other stakeholders in the country.

However, it should be admitted that considerable space for dialogue among different stakeholders is being opened up and is far more evident and promising at local levels, while these relations at national level are still weak, mostly due to the lack of initiatives that hold government to account. As a result, there are realistic prospects for the development of a strong locally grounded civil society; one that will work in partnership with local governments and local businesses, a development which would signify a major achievement and bode well for the long-term sustainability of civil society in Serbia.

List of Annexes

ANNEX 1: List of National Advisory Group Members

List members and affiliations here

Balić Osman	YU ROM Centre
Dereta Miljenko	Civic Initiatives
Ješić Goran	Mayor of the municipality of Inđija
Kiš Jelena	R E C
Kuburić Zorica	CEIR and the Faculty of Philosophy Novi Sad
Maletin Biljana	Voice of Difference
Orlandić Lukšić Tamara	Fond for Open Society
Petrović Vesna	Belgrade Centre for Human Rights
Plavšić Željko	Education center Leskovac
Satarić Nada	Amity
Stefanović Danica	NGO Panonija
Stepanović Žarko	Belgrade Fond for Political Excellence
Stevanović Ivana	RTV B92
Stošić Dragoljub	United Free Trade Unions of Yugoslavia
Tatić Damjan	Centre for Independent Living
Vuković Danilo	Social Innovation Fond
Žiravac Borko	Employers Union of Serbia and Montenegro

ANNEX 2: List of Stakeholders Consulted 159

1. Aida Ćorović, Urban in
2. Aneta Ilić, Association of Paraplegics Nis
3. Biljana Davidovski, Women's Center Sabac
4. Blagoje Stanisavljević, Employers Union Nis
5. Bogdan Đurović, Yunir
6. Bogdan Kavazović, Employers Union of Serbia
7. Branka Pavlović, NGO »Down«
8. Čedomir Cicović, Novi Sad Association of Students with Disability
9. Darko Savić, Center for Creative Development
10. Dragan Savkić, Television Šabac
11. Dragana Đorđević, Association of Paraplegics of Nisava Region
12. Dragiša Vučić, Association of Entrepreneurs
13. Đura Simić, Yugoslav Alliance of Roma
14. Đurđica Kovačević, G17+
15. Emir Mustafić, Youth Response
16. Gordana Vladisavljević, NGO ''Hope''
17. Ismet Suljović, Muslim Humanitarian Association ''Merhamed-Sandžak''
18. Jastra Stevanović, »Roma Students Association«
19. Jelena Vujović, Integra Partner
20. Jordan Erčević, Association of Artists Kragujevac
21. Lidija Vučković, Center for Human Rights Niš
22. Ljubica Simić, Homohomini
23. Marina Kocić, Democratic Party of Serbia
24. Marko Mirković, Novi Sad Alliance of Students with Disability
25. Milan Grbović, Association of Paraplegics Kragujevac
26. Milutin Milutinović, The Power of Village
27. Minja Ilijeva, Society for Protection of Suva planina
28. Miroljub Nokolić, Caritas
29. Mirsad Jusufović, Center for Children and Youth ''Rainbow''
30. Muamer Dolovac, Civic Forum Novi Pazar
31. Nada Jovanović, Red Cross
32. Nebojša Zekić, Society ''Rom – Sait Balić''
33. Nenad Ristović, Radio and Television Kragujevac
34. Nenad Živadinović, The Other Color
35. Ninoslav Krstić, The Committee for Civic Initiative
36. Predrag Jevtić, Association of Blind and Visually Impaired People of Serbia "White Cane"
37. Rade Ćirić, Center for Human Resources
38. Radiša Biorac, Association of Free and Independent Trade Unions
39. Ramiz Crnišanin, Sandzak Intellectual Circle
40. Sanja Džakula, The Timok Club
41. Saša Srećković, Society "Spring"
42. Sava Ibraimović, Society ''Rom – Sait Balić''
43. Slavica Bošković, Philanthropy Society
44. Slavoljub Đorđević, Roma Information Center
45. Slobodan Nikolić, Village Doorstep '98
46. Slobodan Peladić, Association of Artists Sabac
47. Smiljka Vukelić, NGO »Vojvođanka«
48. Srećko Pavićević, Dover's Association Sabac
49. Tahir Delić, Association for the Help of Mentally Insufficiently Developed Persons Novi Pazar
50. Tomislav Kovačević, Labor Union »Independence«
51. Trifun Drobnjak, Sabac Ecological Movement
52. Veronika Mitro, Women's Studies and Research Center
53. Vesna Nestorović, Radio "Beograd 202"
54. Vladimir Paunović, NGO ''Millennium''
55. Vojislav Aranđelović, Literary Club »Branko Miljković«
56. Vukoslav Ristić, Confederation of Autonomous Trade Union of Serbia
57. Živan Veselinović, Beekeeper Union Sabac

ANNEX 3: OVERVIEW OF CSI RESEARCH METHODS

For the implementation of the Civil Society Index project (CSI) in Serbia, the following research methods were implemented: regional stakeholder survey, regional stakeholder consultations, representative community sample survey, review of secondary data sources, structured interviews with experts, case studies, and a media review. The approach of each data collection method is described in greater detail below.

REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

The regional stakeholder survey was carried out from the beginning of June 2005 till end of July 2005. The selection of the regional stakeholder sample was made in cooperation with the NAG members from various regions. The aim was to contact a diverse group of approximately 30 participants in each region, who would represent the full range of CSOs. In selecting the stakeholders, close attention was paid to establishing a well-balanced representation of various CSO types, based on their areas of activity. To this end the CDNPS Directory of NGOs was used, as well as contacts with/from CDNPS' regional offices and local CSOs. Stakeholders from outside the civil society sector included: representatives of the state; public sector; county, city and local government bodies; actors from the corporate sector; media; research organizations and foreign donor organizations.

A phone survey was used for this research activity. Initial contact with all the stakeholders was made by phone or e-mail to set up the time for phone interview. Altogether, 185 phone interviews were conducted within six regions and 12 municipalities of Serbia. Among the total number of interviewed stakeholders 79.5% were the representatives of various CSOs and 20.5% were representatives out of civil society. (See table A.1)

TABLE A.1: Type of stakeholder organizations participating in regional stakeholder survey

Type of respondents within civil society:	Sample share (%)	Total % of respondents
Farmer/Fisherman group or cooperative society	.7	
Trade or business associations	3.4	
Professional associations	7.5	
Workers' trade unions	4.8	
Religious or spiritual organizations	.7	
Political groups, movements or parties	9.5	
Cultural groups or associations	7.5	
Educational groups	2.0	
Health service groups/Associations for social help/ support	6.1	79.5
Sports associations	2.7	
Youth groups	3.4	
Women's groups	8.2	
NGO	28.6	
Groups of national minorities	4.1	
Organizations for environment preservation and protection	6.1	
Hobby organizations	4.8	
Type of respondents out of civil society:	Sample share (%)	Total % of respondents
Local state officials and public sector	23.7	
Corporate/business sector	39.5	20.5
Media	36.8	

When looking at the profile of the respondents (see table A.2.), the number of male respondents is slightly higher than the number of female respondents. The female population slightly prevails in CSOs but more males are engaged in a number of workplaces that cooperate with CSOs in the civil and public services. In terms of education, individuals who received high education dominate in the sample, which mirrors the overall composition of civil society and of the external stakeholders involved in civil society issues. The age structure of the sample is dispersed in accordance with the population structure in general, and, as expected, the only under-represented groups are individuals over the age of 60 and young people from 20-29 age. According to national and religious affiliation, the sample corresponds by and large to the national ethnical and religious composition.

Table A.2: Characteristics of respondents

	Sample	General population (2002 census)
Gender structure		
Women	30.8%	51.4%
Men	69.2%	48.6%
Educational structure		
PhD	2.2%	--
MA	7.0%	--
High education	46.5%	6.5%
Higher education	21.6%	4.5%
Graduated (4 years)	22.2%	41.1%
Elementary school	.5%	23.9%
Other (unfinished elementary school)	0.5%	16.2%
Nationality		
Serbs	74.6%	82.9%
Bosnians	4.9%	1.8%
Hungarians	2.2.	3.9
Roma	1.6%	1.4%
Croats	1.1%	0.9%
Declared as Citizens of the world	4.9%	--
Declared as Citizens of the city	2.7%	0.2%
Yugoslav	2.2%	1.1%
Other	5.8%	--
Religion		
Orthodox	72.4%	85.0
Catholic	5.9%	5.5
Muslim	5.4%	3.2
Undeclared	13%	2.6
Other	2.1%	--
Age structure (population older than 20 years)		
20-29	7.0%	13.6%
30-39	30.8%	12.8%
40-49	31.4%	15.4%
50-59	25.9%	12.8%
60+	4.9%	22.5%

REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

Seven regional consultations involving respondents of the regional stakeholder survey from various groups and sectors were organized in the following sequences: Belgrade 28 September, Niš 29 September, Novi Pazar 30 September, Kragujevac 3 October, Šabac 4 October, Novi Sad 5 October and Knjaževac 6 October 2005. The regional stakeholder consultations were held to gather input and opinions from all around the country. The goal of these consultations was to create a common standpoint on important issues, build a consensus and/or clarify themes on which they disagreed.

Table A.3: Participation at regional stakeholder consultations

Region	Number of participants	Response rate (%)
Belgrade	5	33
Nis	11	79
Novi Pazar	7	44
Kragujevac	9	56
Šabac	13	81
Novi Sad	5	38
Knjaževac	7	50
Total	57	55

Each regional consultation lasted almost a whole day (from around 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.) and comprised three main blocks: (1) the goal of the CSI project, methodology and implementation methods were presented and a discussion was held on the topic of what 'civil society' actually is, (2) the regional survey's responses were presented and discussed and (3) issues related to the strengths and weaknesses of civil society within the respective region were raised. Two ARGUMENT representatives participated in each consultation. They presented the outcomes, moderated the discussion, participated in discussions and took notes. In each consultation, a written evaluation was carried out.

The first section of the consultation was dedicated to presenting the CSI project, its goals and current state of implementation in Serbia. The participants were free to ask additional questions and provide comments. Participants often had difficulty with the suggested definition of civil society. They were reluctant to accept the concept of an 'arena', and offered instead the concept of a 'space' as a more adequate definition, as 'arena' is pointing on fight. However, at the end of discussion it was agreed that CSI definition would remain as it is. Some participants found the concept of 'the stakeholder' difficult to understand. The question of whether trade unions and political parties should be included within the concept of civil society was brought up and discussed repeatedly and in one moment it was even decided to exclude political parties from the CSI definition of civil society. Though, discussing pro and contra arguments it was concluded that it should be better to use the CSI list of CSOs in order to make the data comparable and to provide actual picture from the field.

In the second section, the outcomes of the regional stakeholder survey were presented. Separate discussions were held on each of the four dimensions of the CSI Diamond. Participants raised issues, and provided examples for initiatives and achievements in the specific region, and also provided comments regarding the development of civil society

in general. ARGUMENT compared the respective survey results across the regions and a considerable effort was made to explain / analyse the specific regional features.

In the third section of each consultation, a final discussion was carried out on the strengths and weaknesses of civil society in the particular region. Within this context, the need to initiate actions and new projects was discussed.

The dynamics of discussions varied from region to region but in all consultations, participants offered many practical examples for the issues under discussion. The consultations also contributed to networking among regional civil society groups, and they were a place for mutual information exchange and horizontal knowledge sharing. A significant portion of participants showed interest in generating a civil society assessment for their specific region through using the CSI methodology. The project leaders received a significant amount of useful information, gained insights particularly into the regions' current events as well as into the specifics of civil society in and across different regions in Serbia.

REPRESENTATIVE POPULATION SURVEY - CIVIL SOCIETY 2004 SURVEY

In the period from October to November 2004 a survey of a representative sample of the Serbian population was carried out by ARGUMENT titled *Civil Society 2004*. The representative study focused on the current attitudes of the Serbian population towards membership, donations, and voluntary activities within CSOs. Data collection was conducted through a »face to face« questionnaire on a representative sample of 1750 citizens aged 18 and over within 31 municipalities and 6 regions in Serbia. (See table A.4.) After pilot testing the questionnaire underwent only those petty changes which did not affect the contents of the very questions. The aim of this research was to determine the degree of inclusion of the citizens of Serbia in civil society organizations, to explore their attitudes towards CS, as well as to measure their readiness to engage in civil sector activities within their local communities.

TABLE A. 4: Distribution of sample per regions and municipalities

REGIONS	# of municipalities	Total # of questionnaires conducted per region:
1. Belgrade	4	350
2. Vojvodina	8	492
3. Central Serbia	6	291
4. West Serbia	4	279
5. East Serbia	5	138
6. South Serbia	4	200
Total	31	1750

REVIEW OF SECONDARY DATA SOURCES

The CSI project methodology included a review of relevant national and international secondary data sources.

The ARGUMENT team reviewed more than 500 national and international secondary sources, studies and publications and around 800 web sites of local and international organizations. The collected data was e analyzed and incorporated in this study

Analysis of domestic secondary sources comprised most of the available documents and data which have not been published (e.g. studies, essays, available researches, statistical data gathered on behalf of civil society organizations, government agencies, databases, directories, official CSO registers and available CSO research results, academic institutions, and other). (See more in Literature chapter of the report.)

Analysis of international secondary sources included the data obtained from surveys of international organizations such as the following: Amnesty International, *Country Report Serbia and Montenegro 2004;* Baćević, L., Institute of Social Sciences - Center for Political Studies and Public Opinion Research, University of Belgrade, Serbia, *World Values Survey 2001;* Freedom House Report, *Freedom of the Press Serbia [Serbia and Montenegro] 2005;* Freedom House Country Report, *Kosovo [Serbia and Montenegro] 2005;* International Monetary Fund, *Government Finance Statistics Yearbook 2005;* Transparency International, *Global Corruption Barometer 2005;* Transparency International, *Corruption Perceptions Index 2005;* United Nations University (UNU), *World Governance Survey 2004;* USAID, *NGO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia 2005;* World Bank, *Social Capital Initiative (SCI)* available on http://www1.worldbank.org/prem/poverty/scapital; World Bank – Governance date set; http://www.worldbank.org; World Bank, *Decentralization Net* available on www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/decentralization. (See more in Bibliography chapter of the report.)

Finally, data was also collected through 52 in-depth interviews with experts, representatives of international organizations in Serbia, researchers and key informants from various sectors within 11 municipalities, i.e. 6 regions of Serbia. The list of key informants was made in cooperation with the NAG members.

LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS AND EXPERTS

1. Aida Ćorović, Urban in

2. Aleksandar Milojković, The Democratic Party Sokobanja

3. Aleksandar Resanović, Center for Antiwar Action

4. Azem Hajdarević, Municipal Assembly Novi Pazar

5. Danijel Pantić, European Movement in Serbia

6. Dejan Milenković, Lawyers Committee for Human Rights - Yucom

7. Dejana Razić – Ilić, Government of the Republic of Serbia,

8. Dragan Bogićević, Sabac Dairy

9. Dragan Dobrašinović, Toplica Center for Democracy and Human Rights

10. Dragan Srojić, Interdrvo

11. Dragica Vujadinović, Law Faculty

12. Dragiša Vučić, Giga taxi

13. Dragoslav Pop-Mitić, Uzice Center for Human Rights and Democracy

14. Dubravka Velat, Civic Initiatives

15. Dušan Bajec, Belgrade City Council

16. Duško Morić, Olea

17. Duško Torbica, Open University Subotica

18. Imre Kern, The Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians

19. Jasmina Milutinović, Municipal Assembly Sabac

20. Jelena Marković, Deputy Minister of Human and Minorities Rights

21. Jovan Nicić, Humanitarian Law Center

22. Ksenija Vlavić, Fortuna

23. Svetlana Đukić, European Agency for Reconstruction

24. Ljubica Nikolić, Municipal Assembly Knjazevac

25. Ljubinko Milenković, Tourist Organization of Sokobanja

26. Marija Žikić, Sokograd

27. Milomir šljivić, Serbian Renewal Movement

28. Milomir Sredojević, The Democratic Party Uzice

29. Miodrag Shrestha, Group 484

30. Mira Ćirković, Serbian Sisters´ Circle

31. Miroslav Đorđević, Municipal Assembly Nis

32. Nada Satarić, Amity

33. Nemanja Nenadić, Transparency Serbia

34. Radovan Milićević, Lingva

35. Rajko Božić, Citizens' Pact for South Eastern Europe

36. Saša Milenić, Deputy Meyer Kragujevac

37. Sibina Golubović, The Association of Independent Electronic Media

38. Slobodan Donovski, Ministry of Human and Minorities Rights

39. Snežana Stanković, Secretariat for Sports and Youth Novi Sad

40. Sonja Biserko, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia

41. Srđan Nikolić, G17+ Lekovac

42. Tamara Gojković, Resurs centar Leskovac

43. Tigrin Kačar, Stig

44. Velibor Petković, The Committee for Civic Initiative

45. Vesna Ječmenica, Nitea

46. Vladimir Živaljević, PaCom

47. Žarko Šunderić, Outreach and Communication Deputy Prime Minister's PRS Implementation Focal Point

48. Zeljko Jovanović, Freedom House

49. Zibija Šarenkapić, Cultural Center "DAMAD"

50. Zivica Tucić, Magazine "Pravoslavlje"

51. Zivka Vasilevska, The Center for the Development of Non-Profit Sector

52. Zoran Stoiljković, Labor Union of Serbia

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCHES AND CASE STUDIES

The case and overview studies focused on selected fields of CSO activity. Each study was processed by the ARGUMENT team from September to November 2005. Each of the papers was approximately 20 pages long.

The following case studies were conducted:[173]

- Impact of Civil Society on Human rights

- Impact of Civil Society on Poverty Eradication

- Impact of Civil Society on the Process of Preparing, Adopting and Implementing the State Budget

MEDIA REVIEW

The CSI project methodology included a review of the relevant media and it's reporting on civil society issues.[174] The media review comprised the review of four daily newspapers published in Serbia: *Večernje novosti, Politika, Danas* and *Dnevnik* in the period from February 1st until April 30th, 2005. Furthermore, the content analysis of the electronic media included the following three TV stations and their main daily-information programs: RTS 1; Dnevnik 2, 19.30 hrs; TV Pink; Infotop, 18.50 hrs; TV B92; Dnevnik, 19.15 hrs in the period from March 9th until April 30th, 2005. The media review was performed according to the methodology developed by CIVICUS. The articles and broadcasts analysed were classified according to the respective indicators and their summary and actors included in the standardized database. The aim of this analysis was to determine how the media write/talk about Serbia's civil society and to learn how the media portrays civil society. In the analysis, particularly important articles were singled out to serve as illustrative examples for crucial issues pertaining to the civil society in Serbia.

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[173]   See Annex 4 Policy Impact Studies

[174]   See Annex 5 for the results of the study on how civil society is represented in the media.

ANNEX 4: POLICY IMPACT STUDIES

Within the CSI project, in order to gauge civil society's impact on public policy, different policy analysis were conducted. These looked at civil society from the perspectives of human rights, poverty reduction and the national budget process. The policy issues studied were selected on the basis of the regional stakeholder survey and consultations which revealed that civil society invests far more efforts compared to the level of influence it has.

Due to the lack of adequate sources and data the selected case studies were based mostly on the findings from the in-depth interviews with the experts and key informants from the state and civil society field and from the media analysis.

CIVIL SOCIETY IMPACT ON PUBLIC POLICY IN GENERAL

As indicated by CSI findings the term *influencing public policy* is both in broader public discourse and in the vocabulary of the public sector rarely related to civil society or non-governmental organizations in Serbia, regardless of the social sphere. No surveys were conducted to measure the *influence* of civil society or non-governmental organizations *on public policy* in Serbia until this CIVICUS CSI survey, nor were there available sources, publicized reports or documents. The only topic treated and issue measured was the *social power[175] of civil society organizations with regard to the strength of their contribution to the country's overcoming of the crisis* (CeSID, Mihailović 2005:19). This public opinion survey was conducted by CeSID in spring 2005. This poll revealed that as many as two thirds of the citizens believe that «amongst the civil social actors and institutions, the media may contribute *a lot* (26%) or at least *to some extent* (40%) in overcoming the crisis. All other civil society actors and institutions trade unions, associations of employers, the Church, NGOs and professional associations, in the opinion of approximately half of the citizens, play a more or less positive role in overcoming the crisis. Their role is considered important only by every seventh or eighth respondent. That the civil sector could play *only a partial*, *supplementary and corrective* positive role is the opinion of one third of the citizens, that is, two fifths of the respondents with regard to the trade unions. (CeSID 2005). On the other hand, during the CSI in-depth interviews with key informants and experts, some human rights experts declared "certain segments of civil society are not in its function such as church which is more likely in function of the state and national project".

Concluding from the above, the focal point of civil society's impact on public policy seems to be the legitimacy and accountability of civil society as whole, as well as the legitimacy and accountability the single CSOs. The findings collected from the in-depth interviews with experts indicated that civil society's impact on public policy has to be considered with regard to the type of organization, since e.g. the church has both legitimacy and power to influence public policy, while NGOs and trade unions are often questioned on these issues. Their legitimacy is lesser not only because the majority of citizens do not have (enough) confidence in their power and strength, but also because these civil society actors themselves share to a great extent the same attitude. Another barrier to the establishment of legitimacy and accountability of CSOs is the negative image of civil society and NGOs

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[175] The measurement of social power was based on «the estimation of the extent of their contribution to overcoming the crisis. If citizens as our referees estimate that a CSO is playing an important and large scale role in overcoming the crisis, we can conclude that that a particular CSO has significant social power.« CeSID, Serbian Public Opinion Poll, spring 2005, Civil Society Political Divisions in Serbia, (*Basic Consensus Possibilities and Democratic Block Formation Possibilities*) available on Serbian at http://www.cesid.org.yu (accessed 10 February 2006)

in particular, which the media and a certain number of intellectuals in Serbia sustain. (See more in Annex 5.)

On the other side, by looking after a strong and powerful state, the majority of Serbia's inhabitants still do not consider themselves as accountable citizens guided by rights and obligations but as (subordinated) residents whose life is in the hands of the state and whose problems are a matter for the state.[176] This concept narrows the room for civil initiatives and has reduced the impact of CSOs. In addition it means that the character of legitimacy given to the state differs from that of CSOs, especially NGOs. The legitimacy given to the state is based on political "pro-patriotic" ideology rooted in the collective ethno-nationalistic identity, while the legitimacy given to the CSOs is divided between the organisations that support the type of nation-state as described above (e.g. radical political parties, anti Hague lobbies and groups, groups of "pro-patriotic" academicians and university professors, church leaders, etc.) and those that take proactive steps to protect human rights and the rule of law, and to promote *a citizen*, rather than *ethnos* (e.g. rights based/focused NGOs, antiwar women groups, centres for democracy, democratic movements, etc.[177]). These two types of legitimacy of CSOs divides civil society into two sections that function in two opposite directions: CSOs from the first section deny the legitimacy as basic democratic concern and those from the second make democracy a key precondition.

Consequently, the impact of the CSOs from the first section is much greater than the impact of the second ones and this is one of the main reasons why the role of civil society is still unrecognized and why the claims that there is no civil society in Serbia are to some extent still cogent.

When taking into account the score 3.8 given by the *USAID Sustainability Index 2004,* it is obvious that, during 2000, the democratic movement led by civil society with great public support overthrew the regime in Serbia. Since then, the civil society movement has been scattered and no longer able to resume a national advocacy campaign as it did then. The sector had some success when cooperating with the Đinđić Government on the institutionalisation of a legal framework for CSOs, but since Prime Minister Đinđić was assassinated in March 2003 and Prime Minister's Koštunica Government inaugurated in March 2004, Non-Governmental Organizations have not played a more significant role at national level. Right now, only a few stronger organizations are strong enough to keep the issue of human rights in the public discourse.

The relationship between the government and civil society has still not been formalized, i.e. in regards to the government's responsibility for shaping the legal, regulatory, policy and resource environments in which non-profit and civil society organizations operate. However, the first steps towards the establishment of a mutually beneficial relationship have been made, since the government entered into contracts with non-profit organizations for the delivery of social services. In the absence of a partnership between government agencies and NGOs, and with a media landscape which does not communicate certain issues and which is not interested in or sensitive enough for various social topics, the mechanisms through which NGOs can channel their influence on public policy are round tables, summer schools, workshops, occasional press conferences, signing petitions, raising their voice and advocating, forwarding relevant reports/findings to competent domestic and international institutions, reporting on various issues at international conferences and forums, etc. Often

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[176]   In Serbia today "there are several political options, but two are basic. One option considers that Serbia should be a national state while the other is convinced that it should be state of citizens. There are also views which are attempting to combine both of these options, or at least some of their ingredients." (Vučina Vasović 2004:7)

[177]   "Therefore non-governmental organizations are perceived as a liberal, cosmopolitan alternative eager to "re-educate the Serbian people." (Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia 2004)

representatives of international organisations have meetings with NGOs during their visits to government officials. It can thus be concluded that NGOs have an indirect rather than a direct impact on public policies.

1. Impact of Civil Society on Poverty Eradication (Social Policy)

Introduction

This issue was selected based on its overarching relevance for all CSOs working in the social service field making it a key social policy issue. In order to assess civil society's impact on this issue, the following research methods were used: expert interviews, a media review and a desk review of relevant articles and other information.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in Serbia was adopted on October 16, 2003, in the session of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. The Strategy is publicly received as a national document developed as a result of political will, the work of local experts, and through a broad consultative process, which included a large number of Serbian cities. The Word Bank assessed the PRSP as one of the most successful documents of this kind. The World Bank's current Country Assistance Strategy for the period 2005-2007 centres on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) (CSAC Brochure, 2005).

Research findings

The activities for the preparation of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy in Serbia commenced in 2002. In the consultative process, committees were formed for representing the interests of the citizens of Serbia in various fields. That is how the initiative for establishing the Civil Advisory Committee (CSAC) for poverty reduction started. The Committee was established in autumn 2002. The members are representatives of 11 non-governmental organizations nominated by 3 large networks of Serbian non-governmental organizations – Civic Initiatives, the Center for the Development of the Non-Profit Sector and the Network Serbia without Poverty. During this preparation process for the PRSP, the CSAC activated around 250 non-governmental organizations in Serbia, through the network, to participate in this consultative process. Through the continual and professional support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the CSAC processed the received comments and forwarded conclusions and recommendations to the expert working group preparing the Strategy Paper. During 2003, the CSAC was also active in the Poverty Reduction Strategy of local initiatives (Brochures CSAC, 2005).

The representatives of all social sectors agree that poverty is a great problem in Serbia, however, the widespread opinion is that it is not to be expected that civil society will influence poverty reduction at all. They argue that currently even the state cannot contribute to its reduction without the assistance of international organizations, bearing in mind the fact that it is necessary to provide support to 2 or 3 million of poor people. Most of the interlocutors, beginning with representatives of local authorities to the Church representatives, believe that the state has a key role to play in reducing poverty and that it should respond to it with an adequate social policy. Since civil society does not have enough financial resources, as emphasized by most of the representatives of other sectors, it may only to a certain extent participate in poverty reduction. However, civil society is not thought to contribute much, and its impact is seen as rather indirect and limited. In the opinion of most of private persons, representatives of political parties and the church, it is seen as only alleviating the consequences of poverty, and it may contribute much more to educating the public and citizens than it may directly reduce the root causes of poverty.

As was articulated by a Government representative, the future role of the civil society sector is seen first of all in creating actions and measures of efficient social policy and promoting strategy documents at the local level. In contrast NGO representatives believe that the state has still neither started to implement the Strategy, nor has the goal to establish national ownership over the PRSP process been achieved. The *Key informants*, particularly from South and Western Serbia, where poverty is widest spread also believe that during the last year projects earmarked for poverty reduction were halted.

The poverty issue is quite extensively covered in the media. The analyzed daily papers contained 85 articles (9.7% out of the total number or approximately every tenth), as opposed to three modest contributions in the electronic media, are considerably ahead in respect to covering civil society activities addressing poverty reduction. Most often they covered civil society organizations which advocate for the interest of particularly vulnerable groups (the Roma, refugees, internally displaced persons, people with disabilities, the unemployed). The context in which this topic is placed indicates an extreme shortage of overall social resources. This in turn contributes to minimizing the effects and efforts of civil society organizations, considering that these are the groups which are not able to satisfy even elementary needs. The electronic media dedicated attention to the «Decade of the Roma», a long-term campaign organized by the World Bank and the Open Society Fund whose goal was full integration of the Roma community in the society. The priority fields of the action are in the areas of employment, housing, education, and healthcare protection. The focus of activities is to fully include the Roma in all the listed spheres of social life over the next 10 years.

CONCLUSION

The representatives of all sectors unanimously assessed that the most important role of civil society has so far been directing public attention to poverty reduction and the urgency of the need to resolve it. This was pointed out as one of the greater accomplishments of civil society. Another great accomplishment was the fact that civil society, through the Civil Society Advisory Committee (CSAC)[178], greatly contributed to the final version of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), since it continually insisted on a multidimensional approach to poverty. This yielded the inclusion of human rights in the final version of the Paper. Upon adopting the Strategy, the CSAC, during 2004/5, continued to actively promote this national development document both through the work with its own organisations, other partner organizations, local communities and regions, and through the work of the Committee.[179] The Strategy document understands poverty not only as a matter of lacking

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[178] Activities of preparing the National Poverty Reduction Strategy in Serbia commenced in 2002. In the consultative process, committees were formed for representing the interests of the citizens of Serbia in various fields. That is how the initiative for establishing the Civil Advisory Committee for poverty reduction was initiated. The Committee was established in autumn 2002. The members are representatives of 11 non-governmental organizations nominated by 3 large networks of Serbian non-governmental organizations – Civic Initiatives, the Center for the Development of the Non-Profit Sector and Network Serbia without Poverty. During the process of preparing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for Serbia, the CSAC activated around 250 non-governmental organizations in Serbia, through the network, to participate in this consultative process. Through the continual and professional support of the United Nations – United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the CSAC processed the received comments and forwarded conclusions and recommendations to the expert working group preparing the Strategy Paper. During 2003, the CSAC was also active in the Poverty Reduction Strategy of local initiatives. Brochures CSAC, 2005.

[179] In cooperation with the UNDP, CSAC fully contributed to preparing a publication on the participation of civil society in the poverty reduction process in Serbia from different sectoral perspectives with a review of case studies. The Study entitled Poverty Reduction in Serbia – the Role of civil society, was printed and promoted on 14.10.2005.

money, but rather primarily as a matter of a disrespect of human rights, as was emphasized by representatives of the non-governmental organizations.

2. Impact of Civil Society on Human rights

Introduction

This study looks at the extent to which CSOs have been active and successful in influencing public policy. Advancing an active human rights policy is considered to be one of the important issues relevant to the citizens of Serbia for three crucial reasons. Firstly, in regard to the state, the main hurdles that still have a negative influence and are slowing down the practice of human rights are the following: no consensus has yet been reached on the strategy for development, national interests and common goals, reforms are slow and inconsistent. Institution building in today's Serbia is still unfinished and processes are therefore still inefficient and ineffective. Secondly, the majority of citizens are still not familiar with human rights; they are not empowered to claim their rights. Although being on the retreat the political culture of real-socialism is still to a certain extent prevalent and there is a lack of experience in exercising and respecting human rights and of where to make claims and requests. Thirdly, non-governmental and other organizations in Serbia, particularly those focused on human rights, are the only mechanism that takes proactive steps to protect human rights and the rule of law, and promote the citizen, rather than ethnic groups.[180] (Helsinki Committee for Human Rights 2004)

Research findings

The first important impact of NGOs is that human rights entered the public discourse and became visible in public thanks, above all, to NGOs. From the 1990s, NGOs have been quite active in protecting and promoting human rights and particularly in raising the awareness on the human rights of vulnerable groups and various ethnic groups.

The widespread opinion among civil society experts is that NGOs dealing with human rights (e.g. YUCOM, Humanitarian Law Center, Helsinki Committee, etc.) have achieved much more in regards to advancing human rights than all other NGOs in their field of work. However their influence on public opinion is only small due to the negative image that the powerful media campaign against the NGO sector presents.[181] (See more in Annex 5.).

Much before a number of the main political and human rights issues were officially regulated, the NGOs had addressed them publicly. An example is what happened with the *civilian army service*, which was advocated mostly by the NGO YUCOM from 2000. It was made possible in 2003 and the terms of the civilian army service were amended under a decree enacted in January 2005.[182] Another example is the Ombudsman Law - "after

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[180] "Thus, they are stigmatized as "disseminators of evil for the sake of the dominant American and Anglo-Saxon in-fluence." Advocacy of the concept of human rights – which only logically implies advocacy on the issues related to war crimes and The Hague Tribunal – is taken for annulment of national sovereignty and, consequently, of national identity. (Human Rights and Collective Identity - Serbia 2004, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia 2004:14, *HUMAN SECURITY IN AN UNFINISHED STATE*, Serbia 2005, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia 2005:90) See more on: http://www.helsinki.org.yu/report.php?lang=en (accessed 26 July 2006)

[181] "In the forefront of the campaign against non-governmental organizations are academicians and university pro-fessors – and they are amply backed by the media. Recognized as the most influential "the media most actively campaign against leaders of non-governmental organizations: they particularly discredit and demonize those focused on human rights. Nearly all academicians and intellectuals from the "patriotic bloc" have had their say about the concept of human rights. See more in *Human Rights and Collective Identity, Serbia 2004*, Helsinki Com-mittee for Human Rights in Serbia 2004:34/35). Annual Report, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia 2005:90.

[182] For more details see: http://www.helsinki.org.yu/report.php?lang=en (accessed 27 July 2006).

endless deliberations and unjustified postponement, the Serbian parliament eventually, in September 2005, passed the Ombudsman Law"[183] after years of prior NGOs advocacy. The same applies to the Law on Access to Information[184], the necessity of meeting the country's obligations to The Hague Tribunal,[185] the rights of ethnic minorities,[186] the Law on associations,[187] free elections,[188] facing the past,[189] etc.

Attention was brought to the issues of women's rights, sex trafficking, family violence and child abuse in Serbia in recent years by cases deserving the attention of the general public. The media was very supportive in putting these cases on public agenda. This additionally strengthened the position of women's organizations, advocating women's human rights, in particular of those providing services and accommodation to the victims of family violence. (e.g. NGO Astra, NGO Anti Trafficking Center, etc). Multiple discrimination against Roma women was also articulated and addressed and not only by Roma NGOs. (e.g. NGO Bibija).

Besides raising awareness and advocating for human rights, a number of NGOs are providing free legal assistance for all social groups including Roma people, Internally displaced persons, refugees, etc. (e.g. YUCOM, Humanitarian Law Center, NGO Group 484, Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Užice, etc.).

Consultations between the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and NGOs were held on the issues of the law against discrimination and on monitoring of human rights standards (NGO YUCOM); with the Center for Regionalism (Novi Sad) on the *Igman Initiative*; with the Helsinki Committee in Vojvodina on the protection of minority rights; with Albanian NGOs in the municipality of Preševo on youth issues in South Serbia; with the Belgrade Center for Human Rights on publicizing a Guide for human rights, etc. However, critical analysis of these consultations between government agencies and non-profit organizations suggests that these arrangements are not partnerships between 'equals' – considering that there are various 'degrees of partnership'.

Conclusion

As there are no sources on impact available it is not clear to what extent CSOs have influenced changes in regulations so far or whether those were simply results of the 'pressure' exerted by the international community, or both.

The views on civil society's impact on human rights public policy vary among experts and key informants. Most of the regional key informants are convinced that NGOs do not have significant impact on public policy while familiarizing citizens at the local level with human rights is regarded as high. Interviewed state representatives share the opposite attitude and some of them claimed that the impact of CSOs on public policy is boundless. They are of the opinion that NGOs have a certain degree of influence on political elites, and that the latter would change policies in order to avoid confrontation with NGOs. Representatives of human rights NGO share the opinion that it is no civil society who has an impact on public policy

[183]   Ibid

[184]   See more on: http://www.cesid.org/eng/onama/index.jsp (accessed 27 July 2006).

[185]   See more on: http://www.hlc.org.yu/english/Facing_The_Past/Reports/index.php (accessed 14 July 2006).

[186]   For more details see: http://www.helsinki.org.yu/report.php?lang=en (accessed 14 July 2006).

[187]   The draft law on associations was practically deadlocked throughout 2005. The only step taken was the one by the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-government – actually, the Ministry adopted the recommendations of the expert team of the Council of Europe and amended the first version of the law drafted in November 2004. For more details see: http://www.helsinki.org.yu/report.php?lang=en (accessed 14 July 2006).

[188]   See more on: http://www.cesid.org/eng/onama/index.jsp (accessed 15 July 2006).

[189]   See more on: http://www.b92.net/doc/kazimir/ebart-e.php and http://www.helsinki.org.yu/confront.php?lang=en (accessed 16 July 2006).

but only the NGO sector. When asked to describe the influence of NGOs on political elites one of them stated: "We are like mosquitoes because we do not allow them to sleep".

This variety of statements results from several reasons and the most important are: (a) the way media report on the activities and impact of certain NGOs, (b) the absence of partnerships between government agencies and non-profit organizations - where both work together in pursuit of a common goal and (c) the severe lack of solidarity among CSOs.

3. IMPACT OF CIVIL SOCIETY ON THE PROCESS OF PREPARING, ADOPTING, IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE STATE BUDGET

INTRODUCTION

The national budget is considered as a major policy activity of the national government. It is not only a financial but also a political document, since it is an expression of political choice and thus of the priorities set by the governing political forces in a society. Therefore in a number of countries all over the world particular civil society organisations were established during the last decade of the 20th century to enlighten the motives of specific decisions during the budget preparation phase and to make the entire budgeting process more transparent, accessible and closer to citizens. However, no civil society budget group from Serbia can be found on the website of the International Budget Project 2004[190].

The CSI examined civil society's influence on the national budget processes and this study is aimed at ascertaining to what extent CSOs in Serbia concern themselves with this process in all four stages – the preparatory stage, the legislative stage, implementation and monitoring, both on the national and the local level. It is worthwhile to assume that NGOs meet and discuss and promote changes to the budget in certain areas (e.g. the fight against poverty, childcare, equal opportunities for women, sustainable development, etc.) and are concerned with the budget process as such, i.e. how transparent it is, the formalisation of procedures, compliance with deadlines etc. The task of this study was to explain the activities of NGOs in the individual phases of the budgetary process, and to assess their scope and impact. The study is based on secondary sources and interviews with expert and key informants from the state and the civil society sector.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

No CSO activity could be detected in regards to analysing and dealing with the budgetary process itself. All interviewed experts and key informants unanimously stated that CSOs are neither involved in any of the stages of the budget process nor do they show interest in it – except to some extent some NGOs in a very limited number of local communities.

Only two examples of NGOs dealing with budget related issue were found – one at the local and one at the national level. The local NGO Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Toplice has, in a one-year project, prepared and distributed a leaflet, which briefly presents all the main local municipality budget issues and items to local residents. The representative of this organisation stated that the project goal was to introduce local residents to the budget of their local government, as none of them had ever seen or learned anything about it before. The leaflet with graphs and figures clearly indicated that the municipal self-maintenance costs are twice as high as all other expenditures, which means that there are three times more employed officials than necessary – this appeared to be the case for almost

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190   See on: www.internationalbudget.org (accessed 29 June 2006).

all municipalities in Serbia. A key informant said that when they were confronted with these graphs, local officials regretted that they had 'allowed' the printing of the leaflet.

Another example was detected in the study entitled *Is there money to fight sex trafficking*[191] (Belgrade Centre for Human Rights 2004) where the budgeting process was analysed in connection with sex trafficking issues. The study indicates that the Serbian public does not show enough interest in the national budget issue and consequently political decision makers do not consider rendering accounts as a priority. This contributes to making the budget and its stages appear to be a 'black box' for the average citizen and civil society. As indicated in the study, the formal constitutional regulations for state organs are not sufficient and it is necessary to establish additional guarantees for transparency throughout the whole budgeting process. Free access to information as a key precondition is already established in Serbia but it also is not sufficient. It is central for the transparency of the budget cycle that civil society organisations become much more active in educating citizens and in encouraging them to participate in the preparation of the national budget. The list of methods for encouragement is long, starting from preparing and distributing leaflets and organising debates and round tables up to various types of guides like the one that was published in Croatia in 2000.[192] Further options are the training of journalists, members of the state administration, NGO activists, etc. - as concluded in this study.

CONCLUSION

Generally speaking the budget is mainly perceived as a matter for economists and state officials while the work of civil society on the national or local communities' budget is absent. There are no CSOs that explicitly deal with this issue and no donor has offered a grant to support such activities so far.

This can be explained by the high level of international monetary donations to the Serbian budgetary expenditures. Financial injections are still highly necessary at this stage of transition in Serbia and this may be one of the reasons why CSOs seem not overly concerned by the issue of budgetary transparency.

As a result, the CSI study found that Serbia's civil society does not regard the national budgeting process as an important or viable avenue to influence the government's policy. Hopefully this examination of civil society's work on the budgeting process will provide an impulse to those CSOs concerned with the government's social and economic policies. It is hoped that they will follow the example of civil society in many developing and transition countries in that they will begin to monitor and influence the national budget.

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[191]   See more on: http://www.bgcentar.org.yu/index.php?p=269 (accessed 1 July 2006).

[192]   See The Citizen's Guide to the Budget Katarina Ott (ed.), Institute for public finance, Zagreb, 2000, (www.ijf.hr) http://www.ijf.hr/eng/budget-guide/guide.pdf (accessed 2 July 2006).

ANNEX 5:
MEDIA ANALYSIS - STUDY ON CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE MEDIA

1. INTRODUCTION

As part of the CSI project, the representation of civil society in the media was monitored over a period of three months – the printed media covered the period from 1 February to 30 April, 2005, while the electronic media covered a period of two months: from 9 March to 30 April, 2005. The media monitoring process was guided by the criteria outlined by CIVICUS, which involved an initial screening of the media for civil society related news, followed by the classification of these according to standardized criteria. The collected data was then entered and processed within the MS Access database, prepared by CIVICUS.

The ARGUMENT media team carried out media monitoring of seven media outlets, amongst them three electronic media. Among electronic media, three with national coverage were monitored: RTS1,[193] TV Pink[194] and TVB92.[195] The four analyzed Serbian daily newspapers were: *Politika, Večernje novosti, Danas* and *Dnevnik*. The first three are national dailies while the last one is a regional newspaper. All of the outlets monitored belong to different facets of the ideological spectrum, ranging from populist, pro-government to leftist. (See table A.5.)

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[193] The present public enterprise RTS1 is the main State broadcaster, Radio Television Serbia (*Radiotelevizija Srbije* – RTS) founded in 1929, when Radio Beograd was established and broadcasting was introduced into Serbia. RTS, together with other state-owned outlets and agencies, constituted one of the pillars of Milošević's regime. "The majority of the largest, oldest and most prestigious media – led by the publishing house Politika, the State broadcaster, Radio Television Serbia (*Radiotelevizija Srbije* – RTS), and the State news agency Tanjug – readily supported the regime, after the authorities crushed initial resistance by some journalists in these organisations. State television always maintained strong coverage of news and current affairs, but also had a high-quality production of drama, documentary, children's and educational programmes". (EUMAP, *Monitoring Reports 2005:1320*).

[194] TV Pink started operating in 1994. It was one of the commercial media first granted broadcast licences and, while devoted entirely to entertainment, it was politically supportive of the regime. TV Pink is the most successful of the private broadcasters, in terms of both market and audience share. (EUMAP, *Monitoring Reports 2005:1324*).

[195] B92, established as a youth radio station in 1989, started operating as B92 radio in the 1990s and as B92 television in September 2000. B92 belongs to the media that has built up strong audiences for alternative programmes and has high ratings due to one of the biggest successes of media freedom struggles before 2000. The celebrated radio station Radio B92 initiated ANEM, a network of independent electronic media in 1993, as an alternative to the dominant RTS at the time. At present, the network comprises 16 television stations and 28 radio stations, and has over 70 affiliates. Therefore TV B92 – the offshoot of Radio B92, which became Serbia's most famous independent radio station during the Milošević years – is a rare exception among private media, in that it places the public interest ahead of commercial benefits (EUMAP *Monitoring Reports 2005:1333*). More information on TVB92 is available at http://www.b92.net/english/aboutus/ownershipstructure

(accessed 4 July 2006). More information on ANEM is available on the ANEM website at http://www.anem.org.yu/eng/clanice/index.html (accessed 4 July 2006).

Table A.5: Reviewed media, circulation/coverage[196], ownership and orientation

Printed media	Circulation	Ownership	Orientation
Politika	95.000	State	Neutral/Pro-government
Danas	25.000	Private	Left / Liberal
Dnevnik	15.000	Private	Neutral / No consistent policy indicating left or right orientation
Večernje novosti	220.000	State	Populist/conservative
Electronic media	Technical coverage (%)[197]	Ownership	Orientation
RTS 1	98.3	State	Neutral/Pro-government
TV Pink	91.8	Private	Commercial
TV B92	88.6	Private	Left / Liberal

All sections of the four newspapers were monitored, including their respective regional sections, except for the entertainment, sports and crime sections since they were unlikely to report on civil society. Within the electronic media the objects of monitoring were their main daily informative programs broadcast as follows: RTS1, Dnevnik 2, 19:30h; TV Pink, Infotop, 18:50h and TV B92, Dnevnik, 19:15h.

2. Research Findings

The following section describes how civil society is presented in the media in Serbia, and addresses the following four issues:

1) Main features of civil society reporting in the media;

2) The thematic areas which receive special attention;

3) Civil society actors and issues, and

4) Civil society's image in the media.

2.1. Main features of civil society reporting in the media

Frequency of reporting

During the three months monitoring period civil society related issues were featured in 874 articles that appeared in the four dailies under review and 126 reports were broadcast by the reviewed electronic media. Analysis shows that, during 53 of the monitored days, the electronic media broadcast on average 2.4 contributions per day on civil society issues in Serbia and more than half appeared on TV B92 (55%). Within all the printed media almost 10 (or 2.5%) texts on CSOs activities appeared on average per day during the three months (89 days) of monitoring and *Večernje novosti* had the smallest share. (See table A.6).

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196   "With press circulation remaining among the lowest in Europe – estimated at less than 100 copies sold per 1,000 inhabitants – television continues to be the most important medium in terms of social influence. Television is the most important medium, in terms of both market and audience share." (EUMAP, *Monitoring Reports 2005:1329*).

197   AGB Nielsen Media Research, overview of the Serbian television scene January-July 2005, available in Serbian at http://www.agbnielsen.co.yu/srpski/vesti/index.shtml#37 (accessed 1 July 2006), (hereafter, AGB Nielsen Media Research, Overview: January-July 2005).

TABLE A.6: Number and percentage of articles/contributions addressing civil society topics

Printed media	# of articles addressing civil society issues	% of total number of identified articles
Politika	251	28.7
Danas	232	26.5
Dnevnik	234	26.8
Večernje Novosti	157	18.0
Total	874	100.0
Electronic media	# of contributions addressing civil society issues	% of total number of identified contributions
RTS 1 / Dnevnik 2	31	24.6
TV Pink / Infotop	26	20.6
TV B92 / Dnevnik	69	54.8
Total	126	100.0

When looking at the number of media items, civil society activities do not attract a lot of media attention. Calculations show that each of the monitored dailies carried approximately 100 to 170 texts in total per day and civil society issues took up on average only 2% of this over the 89 days of the monitoring period. Within the electronic media, which broadcast approximately 23 and 26 news items in total per day, items related to civil society accounted on average for about 3% per day over the 53 monitored days – thus limited time dedicated to civil society issues per day.

PLACEMENT WITHIN THE MEDIA OUTLET

During the monitoring period only 70 articles (8%) related to civil society appeared on the front page of the newspapers and only five were selected as first (or among three one if the first) contributions on the three television channels (TVB92 had 3, - TV Pink and RTS 1 had 1 each). Out of 70 of the prime civil society news 34 appeared on the front page of the regional daily *Dnevnik* and the rest was distributed between Belgrade's dailies *Danas* (16), *Večernjih novosti* (12) and *Politika* (8). The majority of articles were placed in the "society" section (44%) and in the section of "internal politics" (30%). Seventeen percent of articles were grouped into the column section.

Usually civil society is not subject of the prime-time news and it can be concluded that a lot of civil society related topics serve to cover 'empty spots' in the newspapers. Exceptions are CSOs activities linked to political issues such as cooperation with the Hague Tribunal, punishment of war crimes and activities connected with the assassinations of Prime Minister Zoran Đinđic and the journalist Slavko Ćuruvija, who used to be the owner of *Dnevni Telegraf*.

FORMS OF REPORTING

When examining the form of reporting on civil society it was found that civil society is rarely the focus of media analysis beyond news reporting and short summaries. (See table A.7.). The large majority of items monitored (70%) were reports relevant to civil society. This might indicate that civil society representatives supply reporters with press releases or call them to initiate an interview. Interestingly, only 2.3% of items were opinion pieces about civil society activities. Linked to this, only a small share of items directly quotes civil society actors. Thus, the CSOs' ability to put their own views forward in the media is extremely limited. The data indicates that civil society in Serbia seems to be a rather superficial object of media coverage, yet not an influential shaper of public opinion through the media.

TABLE A.7: Number of articles presented in different news types

Type of item	Printed media		TV	
	N	%	N	%
Report	611	70	111	88
In brief/short	190	22	14	11
Editorial	2	.2	0	0
Opinion piece	20	2.3	0	0
Feature/news analysis	23	3	0	0
Opinion pool	1	.1	0	0
Interview	23	3	1	.8
Letters to editor	3	.3	0	0
Other	1	.1	0	0
Total	**874**	**100.0**	**126**	**100.0**

Out of 874 items in newspapers one fifth (20%) were accompanied by pictures or graphs. They were composed as reports, opinion pieces and interviews and information on civil society is typically presented in a rather dry manner.

2.2. THE THEMATIC FOCUS

THE MAIN TOPICS

The CSI methodology required each civil society related article to be classified according to a primary and a secondary topic most central to the article. The articles were classified according to a list of 36 CIVICUS topics covered in relation to civil society news in Serbia.

TABLE A.8: Main media topics on civil society

Topic	Printed media		TV	
	N	%	N	%
Corruption – including bribery, fraud – within all sectors of society	37	4.2	13	10.3
Education / Training – education policies, and all matters of formal and informal education as well as capacity building & training	74	8.5	16	12.7
Poverty – policy on poverty alleviation, communities affected by poverty	65	7.4	5	4.0
Human Rights – incidents of human rights violations, and other human rights related issues	285	32.6	32	25.4
Racism, Ethnicity, Xenophobia, Caste – incidents of racism or discrimination based on a person's ethnicity, nationality or caste, includes institutional racism, ethnic conflicts, xenophobic attitudes	58	6.6	19	15.1
Gender Issues- legislation on gender equality, gender equality advocacy, gender discrimination and gender violence	32	3.7	2	1.6
Sexuality / Sexual rights - this refers to issues pertaining to information on sexual rights, protecting and promoting reproductive health and rights, issues of sexual orientation including gay and lesbian rights and issues of sexuality	1	1	0	0
Children – this includes issues of children's rights, child abuse, child-care.	82	9.4	21	16.7
Media & ICT - new media (internet), print media, broadcasters, freedom of expression,	54	6.2	5	4.0
Civil Society specific issues - e.g. networking and collaboration amongst CSOs, workshops organized by and for CSOs	37	4.2	8	6.3
Sustainable Development – includes environmental issues, tourism, economic development	73	8.4	1	.8
Culture, Tradition, Religion and Language issues – cultural, traditional and religious beliefs, practices and language issues.	79	9.0	16	12.7
Health – general health issues and policies including diseases such as cancer, tuberculosis and HIV/Aids	68	7.8	10	7.9
Total	874	100.0	126	100.0

As table A.8. indicates the topics most often covered in both types of media outlet were human rights. Almost every third analyzed item in the dailies was dedicated to human rights addressing mostly the activities of CSOs in connection with the promotion and protection of those rights, as well as with war crimes, ethnic incidents in Vojvodina, discrimination against Roma, males and particularly females, etc. All other topics were presented three to seven times less than the issues of human rights, except for sexuality and sexual rights which appeared in only one article. Almost the same held for the electronic media, though the difference between the quantities and variety of items is not as large like within the printed media. As regards quantities, topics such as children's rights, child abuse and childcare and issues of ethnicity and ethnic conflicts took second and third place in the electronic media. Issues like education policies, capacity building & training together with

items touching upon tradition and religion shared the fourth place with 16 items broadcast (12.7%). The least newsworthy topics within the electronic media were CSOs activities related to sustainable development, including environmental issues, tourism and economic development, then gender and sexual rights issues. As expected, the prevailing items were mostly aired on TVB92.

Geographic focus

Both media, i.e. newspapers (51.6%) and daily informative programmes (57.9%), dealt in more than half of the items with CSO activities taking place at the national-level. (See table A.9.) This may be a consequence of the national media coverage and the rather centralized news focus. Locally based CSOs are considered less newsworthy by newspapers (11.2%) compared to the TV informative programmes where their activities came in second place with 31.7% of items. It is reasonable to expect that, with the changed public image of NGOs in the future and with the recognized role of civil society, locally based organisations will attract more attention and become more visible in the media.

Table A.9: Geographical focus

Origin	Printed media		TV	
	N	%	N	%
International	109	12.5	11	8.7
National	451	51.6	73	57.9
Provincial/Regional	98	11.2	2	1.6
Local	216	24.7	40	31.7
Total	874	100.0	126	100.0

Newspapers are more interested in the international activities of CSOs than the TV. The limited integration of Serbian CSOs into international networks was visible from 12.5% of articles and 8.7% of TV items. This could also be understood as the impact of a modest number of organisations that deal with international issues, particularly on the regional level.

2.3. Civil Society actors and issues

As CSI in Serbia adhered to the CIVICUS list and typology of CSOs it is necessary to point out that only political parties were excluded from the list for media monitoring due to the fact that their activities prevail in the news of both media outlets. This may also be one of the main causes of the lower coverage of civil society groups in general. As for the lower coverage of CSOs, such as social service and environmental CSOs, student and youth associations, potential reasons could be their less media-worthy activities, less developed media skills or lack of contacts with individual journalists.

As for specific types of CSO, both media reported frequently and almost equally on the activities of advocacy CSOs in 27.1% items in print media and 23.0% on TV. In addition, faith-based organisations received significant attention in the electronic media, while all other CSOs were presented in less than ten percent of printed and electronic media items. Both types of media had a number of items where a particular CSO was not mentioned. (See table A.10. bellow)

Table A.10: Reporting on CSO actors

CSO Type	Printed media		TV	
	N	%	N	%
Trade unions	52	5.9	7	5.5
Faith-based organisations	13	1.5	19	15.1
Advocacy CSOs (e.g. civic action, social justice, peace, human rights, consumers' groups)	237	27.1	29	23.0
Service CSOs (e.g. CSOs supporting community development, literacy, health, social services)	30	3.4	7	5.5
CSOs active in education, training & research (e.g. think tanks, resource centres, public education organisations)	71	8.1	9	7.1
Non-profit media	16	1.8	2	1.6
Women's associations	26	3.0	3	2.4
Student and youth associations	58	6.6	11	8.7
Associations of socio-economically marginalised groups (e.g. poor people, homeless, landless, immigrants, refugees)	79	9.0	6	4.8
Ethnic/traditional/indigenous organisations	82	9.4	4	3.2
Environmental CSOs	52	5.9	1	.8
CSO networks/federations/support organisations/single issue coalitions	39	4.5	8	6.3
Social movements (e.g. landless people, peace movement)	19	2.2	0	0
None particular CSO mentioned	106	12.1	20	15.9
Total	874	100.0	126	100.0

Reporting on CSOs is to some extent connected to the main themes covered by the media such as: the status of Kosovo, cooperation with the Hague Tribunal and the consequences of the lack of cooperation with the Tribunal mostly in Danas and to some extent in Politika. The daily Večernje novosti mostly reported on CSOs dealing with culture, health, social issues and specific social groups such as children, the cultural associations of Serbian ethnic groups, etc. The regional daily Dnevnik is mostly oriented towards the local level and those issues related to the Vojvodina region. To a lesser degree it covers topics related to the main national news.

CIVIL SOCIETY ISSUES

When analysing the media reporting with respect to the four dimensions of the CSI diamond the printed and electronic media had a different focus. The monitored dailies were more focused on the Environment dimension (39%), while informative broadcasts were mostly interested in the activities of CSOs related to their concrete achievements and impact (42%). (See graph A.1. and A.2.).

FIGURE A.1: Distribution of the Dimensions in the television channels

Print media

Structure 15%
Environment 39%
Values 14%
Impact 32%

Base: total # of the dimension related items
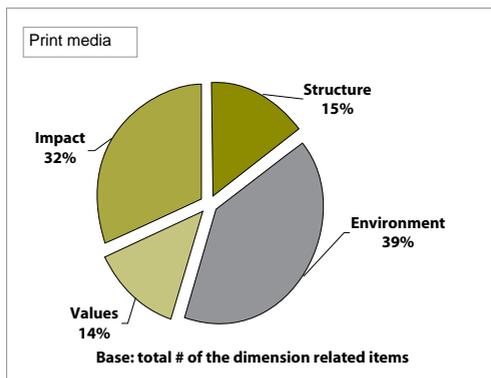
FIGURE A. 2: Distribution of the Dimensions in the newspapers

Television

Structure 21%
Environment 16%
Values 21%
Impact 32%

Base: total # of the dimension related items
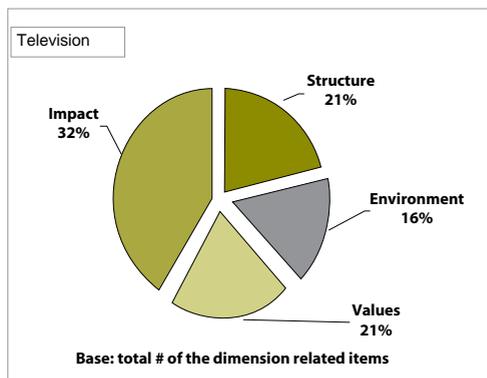
This difference in focus between print media and TV is partly a result of a twofold media approach: print media conducted more in-depth analysis and investigated the character of civil society and its activities and explored their impact in the light of environmental conditions. In contrast, the TV tended to present all three other dimensions as background information or the main civil society news related info from the impact dimension. This can be seen from the fact that, out of 874 articles in the newspapers, 761 of them dealt with indicators from the Environment dimension and 106 items (out of 126 items in total) were related to the Impact dimension indicators on the TV.

Frequency of reporting per indicator

Within the 874 articles and 126 TV items on civil society monitored, 64 indicators (out of the 74 CIVICUS CSI indicators in total) were identified.

Civil society structure in media

The structure dimension was covered by 295 texts in the print media and 55 items within the main daily-informative programmes of the TV. Within the structure dimension, the sub-dimension breadth of citizen participation was the focus of both print and electronic media, while inter-relations among CSOs dominated on TV. It can be assumed that the depth of citizen participation as well as the diversity of civil society participants was considered to be the least newsworthy by both media outlets. At the same time, the TV channels showed almost three times higher interest in CSOs resources than the daily newspapers, while the latter were almost ten times more interested in the level of organisation of CSOs. (See table A.11.)

TABLE A.11: Number of articles per indicator within Structure Dimension

1 – Structure Subdimension	Indicator	Printed media		TV		% Per sub-dimension	
		N	%	N	%	Print	TV
1.1– Breadth of citizen participation	1.1.1 Non-partisan political action	16	5.4	0	0	36.6	30.9
	1.1.2 Charitable giving	10	3.4	4	7.3		
	1.1.3 CSO membership	1	.3	1	1.8		
	1.1.4 Volunteering	4	1.4	2	3.6		
	1.1.5 Collective community action	77	26.2	10	18.2		
1.2 – Depth of citizen participation	1.2.1 Charitable giving	7	2.4	1	1.8	2.7	1.8
	1.2.3 CSO membership	1	.3	0	0		
1.3 – Diversity of civil society participants	1.3.1 CSO membership	1	.3	1	1.8	1.7	1.8
	1.3.2 CSO leadership	3	1.0	0	0		
	1.3.3 Distribution of CSOs	1	.3	0	0		
1.4 – Level of organisation	1.4.1 Existence of CSO umbrella bodies	4	1.4	0	0	28.5	3.6
	1.4.3 Self-regulation	1	.3	0	0		
	1.4.5 International linkages	79	26.8	2	3.6		
1.5 – Inter-relations	1.5.1 Communication	17	5.8	3	5.5	23.4	41.8
	1.5.2 Cooperation	52	17.6	20	36.4		
1.6 – Resources	1.6.1 Financial resources	19	6.4	2	3.6	7.1	20
	1.6.2 Human resources	0	0	2	3.6		
	1.6.3 Technological and infrastructural resources	2	0.7	7	12.7		
Total	18 indicators out of 21 in total	295	100.0	55	100.0	100.0	100.0

CIVIL SOCIETY ENVIRONMENT IN THE MEDIA

The environment dimension was covered in 761 printed items and in 41 electronic media items with quite unequal distribution among the subdimensions. It is obvious that CSOs most frequently address these topics particularly in regard to the political context. The issues of political rights and political competition were only marginally represented in the media, as compared to the rule of law and state effectiveness for example. (See table A.12.)

Rule of law and state effectiveness issues appeared in the coverage of all other topics and were connected with a wide array of themes - from the everyday protection of human rights, corruption, trust, dialogue between CSOs and state etc. to the delayed implementation of a multitude of newly introduced laws. The stagnating process of democratic transition was often touched upon, i.e. slow and insufficient reforms, particularly after 2004 when the Government under Vojislav Koštunica, erased the belief that Serbia would undergo a

transition faster than any other country in the region as was previously suggested by the Government led by Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić (2001–2003).

It may be concluded that many issues in Serbia are still highly interrelated with politics. This may explain why the Serbian media are overwhelmed with political environment topics as well as why civil society activities related to the political context frequently gain significant media attention.

TABLE A.12: Number of articles per indicator within Environment Dimension

2 – Environment Subdimension	Indicator	Print media		TV		% Per sub-dimension	
		N	%	N	%	Print	TV
2.1 – Political context	2.1.1 Political rights	3	0.4	1	2.4	67.4	51.2
	2.1.2 Political competition	1	0.2	2	4.9		
	2.1.3 Rule of law	258	33.9	3	7.3		
	2.1.4 Corruption	23	3.0	13	31.7		
	2.1.5 State effectiveness	228	29.9	2	4.9		
2.2 – Basic freedoms and rights	2.2.1 Civil liberties	9	1.2	4	9.8	7.6	22
	2.2.2 Information rights	9	1.2	1	2.4		
	2.2.3 Press freedoms	40	5.3	4	9.8		
2.3 – Socio-economic context	2.3.1 Socio-economic context	15	1.9	1	2.4	2	2.4
2.4 – Socio-cultural context	2.4.1 Trust	12	1.5	0	0	4.7	0
	2.4.2 Tolerance	2	0.3	0	0		
	2.4.3 Public spiritedness	22	2.9	0	0		
2.5 – Legal environment	2.5.1 CSO registration	19	2.5	0	0	3.2	0
	2.5.3 Tax laws favourable to CSOs	5	0.7	0	0		
2.6 – State-civil society relations	2.6.1 Autonomy	11	1.4	1	2.4	13.7	24.4
	2.6.2 Dialogue	52	6.8	7	17.1		
	2.6.3 Cooperation / support	41	5.4	2	4.9		
2.7 – Private sector-civil society relations	2.7.1 Private sector attitude	1	0.2	0	0	1.4	0
	2.7.3 Corporate philanthropy	10	1.3	0	0		
Total	19 indicators out of 23 in total	761	100.0	41	100.0	100.0	100.0

CIVIL SOCIETY VALUES IN THE MEDIA

The values dimension was described in 263 items of the printed and in 55 items of the electronic media. The poverty eradication and environmental sustainability subdimensions

featured in the largest number of items in the printed media, while the electronic media gave more attention to the tolerance and non-violence subdimensions. (See table A.13.)

TABLE A.13: Number of articles per indicator within Values Dimension

3 – Values Subdimension	Indicator	Printed media		TV		% Per sub-dimension	
		N	%	N	%	Print	TV
3.1 – Democracy	3.1.1 Democratic practices within CSOs	1	0.4	0	0	4.6	10.9
	3.1.2 Civil society actions to promote democracy	11	4.2	6	11		
3.2 – Transparency	3.2.1 Corruption within civil society	3	1.2	0	0	3	9.1
	3.2.3 Civil society actions to promote transparency	5	1.9	5	9.1		
3.3 – Tolerance	3.3.1 Tolerance within the civil society arena	1	0.4	5	9.1	14.8	32.7
	3.3.2 Civil society actions to promote tolerance	38	14.4	13	23.6		
3.4 – Non-violence	3.4.1 Non-violence within the civil society arena	0	0	4	7.3	13.7	36.4
	3.4.2 Civil society actions to promote non-violence and peace	36	13.7	16	29		
3.5 – Gender equity	3.5.3 Civil society actions to promote gender equity	20	7.6	2	3.6	7.6	3.6
3.6 – Poverty eradication	3.6.1 Civil society actions to eradicate poverty	85	32.3	3	5.5	32.3	5.5
3.7 - Environmental sustainability	3.7.1 Civil society actions to sustain the environment	63	23.9	1	1.8	23.9	1.8
Total	12 indicators out of 14 in total	263	100.0	55	100.0	100.0	100.0

It happened that the media did not have much to say about the values within civil society. Accordingly items were frequently focused on CSOs activities promoting certain democratic values within the environment, such as democracy, tolerance, non-violence and peace. Such a distribution of media items within all subdimensions may be the result of two factors: (a) most CSOs do not challenge the values of civil society itself nor do they actively seek to do so (b) the media do not consider civil society a newsworthy area primarily thanks to the fact that its role has not yet been publicly established and acknowledged and that the term 'Civil Society' does not yet belong to the key words of the dominant public discourse. However, media attention is often drawn by the activities of those organizations which relate to the

main political news or crucial social issues such as poverty, non-violence and tolerance or actions to sustain the environment.

CIVIL SOCIETY IMPACT IN THE MEDIA

The impact dimension was the second most frequently represented dimension in both media outlets, with the print media carrying 613 articles and the TV 106 items. The media monitoring findings indicated that CSOs are the least active and effective in holding the state and private corporations accountable, in supporting livelihoods. The same conclusion holds for the national budgeting process and issues of public trust. CSOs achieved the greatest impact in informing and educating citizens, promoting and protecting human rights and in meeting the needs of marginalised groups. (See table A.14.) In contrast to the print media, the electronic media placed more focus on lobbying for state service provision and on holding the state accountable.

TABLE A.14: Number of articles per indicator within Impact Dimension

4 – Impact Subdimension	Indicator	Printed media		TV		% Per sub-dimension	
		N	%	N	%	Print	TV
4.1 - Influencing public policy	4.1.1 Human Rights	115	18.8	16	15.1	22	17
	4.1.2 Social Policy	18	2.9	2	1.9		
	4.1.3 Impact on National Budgeting process	2	0.3	0	0		
4.2 - Holding state and private corporations accountable	4.2.1 Holding state accountable	6	1	18	17	1.8	17
	4.2.2 Holding private corporations accountable	5	0.8	0	0		
4.3 - Responding to social interests	4.3.1 Responsiveness	63	10.3	6	5.7	10.4	5.6
	4.3.2 Public Trust	1	0.2	0	0		
4.4 - Empowering citizens	4.4.1 Informing/ educating citizens	129	21	24	22.6	39.6	34
	4.4.2 Building capacity for collective action	24	3.9	1	0.9		
	4.4.3 Empowering marginalized people	54	8.8	7	6.6		
	4.4.4 Empowering women	32	5.2	2	1.9		
	4.4.6 Supporting livelihoods	4	0.6	2	1.9		
4.5 - Meeting societal needs	4.5.1 Lobbying for state service provision	30	4.9	21	19.8	26.1	26.4
	4.5.2 Meeting pressing societal needs directly	30	4.9	3	2.8		
	4.5.3 Meeting needs of marginalised groups	100	16.3	4	3.8		
Total	15 indicators out of 16 in total	613	100.0	106	100.0	100.0	100.0

2.4. CIVIL SOCIETY'S IMAGE IN THE MEDIA

Both media outlets reported on civil society mostly in a neutral manner, while the negative representation of civil society in the monitored media was marginal. The print media

reported negatively only in 1.9% of the items, while the monitored electronic media employed a higher percentage of negative reporting vis à vis CSOs (2.4%). The large number of neutral articles about civil society may be directly linked to the fact that the majority of items monitored were brief news stories on civil society events.

TABLE A.15: Civil society's image in the media

The way CSOs are presented in the media	Printed media		TV	
	N	%	N	%
The item clearly represents CSOs negatively	17	1.9	3	2.4
The item clearly represents CSOs in neutral manner	742	85.0	77	61.1
The item clearly represents CSOs positively	9	1.0	26	20.6
No CSO mentioned in the item	106	12.1	20	15.9
Total	874	100.0	126	100.0

Civil society received the most negative coverage in the daily newspaper *Večernje novosti*, in the populist orientation which plays a strong role. The dailies *Danas, Politika* and *Dnevnik,* which reported on civil society more frequently and in a dominantly neutral manner, carried a smaller number of articles which did not mention particular CSOs than was the case with *Večernje novosti*.

TABLE A.16: Civil society's image per media monitored

The way CSOs are presented in the media	Printed media								TV					
	Danas		Politika		Dnevnik		V. novosti		RTS1		TV Pink		TVB92	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Negatively	1	0.4	3	1.2	3	1.3	10	6.4	1	3.2	0	0	2	2.9
Neutral manner	210	90.5	210	85.3	203	88.0	119	77.1	14	45.2	15	57.7	48	69.6
Positively	3	1.3	1	0.4	2	0.9	3	1.9	9	29.0	7	26.9	10	14.5
No CSO mentioned in the item	18	7.8	37	13.1	26	9.8	25	14.6	7	22.6	4	15.4	9	13.0
Total	232	100	251	100	234	100	157	100	31	100	26	100	69	100

3. CONCLUSION

The media are recognized as being the most influential and active campaigners against leaders of non-governmental organizations: they particularly demonize those focused on human rights, branding them 'national traitors' or 'foreign mercenaries, militating against the Serbian people'. In the forefront of the campaign against non-governmental organizations are academics and university professors – and they are amply backed by the media. Nearly all academics and intellectuals from the "patriotic bloc" have had their say about the concept of human rights.[198] More frequent assaults upon NGO representatives, including physical attacks, can be seen as a logical follow-up to the powerful media campaign against the non-governmental sector. (Annual Report, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia 2004:35)

This negative media campaign has been intensifying during the past several months and, similar to the one conducted under Slobodan Milošević's followers, it portrays NGOs and their activists as "foreign mercenaries, militating against the Serbian people." (Annual Report, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia 2004:35). The anti-NGO campaign is very broad and it comprises the incumbent political authorities, the opposition, political analysts, tabloids and "serious" media alike, representatives of "approved" NGOs and independent individuals. The starting point in vilification and denial of the NGO sector is the allegation that they are a modern invention, imported from the West, and consequently anti-Orthodox and anti-Serb (Annual Report, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia 2005:90).

From the monitoring of the four dailies and three TV channels as part of the media analysis for this research, it can be concluded that the media do not provide sufficient space for civil society coverage. This is an important finding since both the quantity and the quality of information in these media outlets place civil society issues considerably on the margins of public discourse, which in turn helps to create the impression that CSOs are insignificant actors in the public eye.

Advocacy NGOs clearly dominate reporting; however, most of the coverage does not involve civil society actors themselves and is limited to a factual presentation of events. Civil society groups and individuals do not seem to have sufficient space and influence to present their own views in the media. Besides, according to the media review, only a small number of

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[198] "Mirjana Vasovic, professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, says, "NGOs are informal centers of power, particularly those dealing with human rights. They make predominant political elite, i.e. para-political elite, and they jeopardize the healthy core of the political elite. They are extremely agile and aggressive. They disable an articulated political action, that is, they stand in the way of a political consensus. Our state is exposed to tremendous attacks and blows of these informal centers of power. They have not been recruited to form a natural elite, but from the circles that have been firstly privileged and then deprived of privileges. This means, as a rule, that they only keep their own interests in mind. They badmouth our people, they demur at the entire nation. The stereotypes imposed by them have had an impact on the international public… Their legitimacy derives from the values and interests they share with foreign centers of power. They are eager to reeducate, they behave as commissioners. They have taken to the 'political' woods and are now engaged in subversive activities against their own state. They are eternal admirers of someone's 'person and deeds' - adherents of informal centers of power that pursue their missions through advocacy of 'receiverships' and unparliamentarily democracy. According to Kosta Cavoski, professor at the Faculty of Law, "nongovernmental organizations were non-governmental only when it came to organizations were non-governmental only when it came to Milosevic's regime, but were actually hirelings of foreign governments – American, in the first place, then European Union's and of certain European countries." "To this very day," says Cavoski, "these non-governmental organizations are financed from foreign governmental sources…all this is about non-governmental organizations that belonged either to foreign governments or to our government at the time of Zoran Djindjic. Therefore, they are not at all non-governmental organizations from the angle of Western legal and political the name of that aggressive policy, act against the best interests of their own people." Ekmecic says, "A friend told me that the funds spent on various nongovernmental organizations throughout Serbia by far exceed the budget of the official Serbian government." (Annual Report, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia 2004:34/35).

journalists consider civil society to be an important source of information. In sum, treatment of civil society issues in the Serbian media is rather general, yet superficial and focused on a small subset of CSOs. Consequently, the outcomes of the media review indicate that important political decisions in the country are still made without the voice of civil society.

Even though the majority of the monitored media items may present civil society in a neutral manner the damage of the widespread negative image of NGOs and their activists in the media still needs to be improved. The picture of NGOs in the media was never good.[199] As a result of these media campaigns the entire NGO sector was stigmatized. Unfortunately, these articles have not yet drawn the attention of a wider number of civil society representatives and as yet no responses have been articulated towards these negative representations of civil society.

The media image of civil society actors could be improved through more active cooperation between CSOs and the media. Their cooperation is important at this stage of civil society's development. CSOs require more space in the media thief they are to attract the attention of the wider public, in order to mobilize more significant support for the realization of their goals. CSOs also need more skills and knowledge on effectively articulating their messages to the media, while journalists need to be introduced more closely to the concept and meaning of 'Civil Society'. Building the PR capacities of NGOs and other civil society actors and providing exchange between media and civil society activists could address this concern. One of the main preconditions, however, is to make space for civil society issues within a public arena congested with political and ideological disputes in areas where dialog should govern.

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[199] For more on the campaigns against leaders of non-governmental organizations in Serbia see: *Serbia and Montenegro, The Writing on the Wall: Serbian Human Rights Defenders at Risk, Amnesty International 29 November 2005* available at http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engeur700162005 (accessed 31 June 2006).

ANNEX 6: CSI Scoring Matrix _____

1 - STRUCTURE

1.1 – Breadth of citizen participation

Description: **How widespread is citizen involvement in civil society? What proportion of citizens engage in civil society activities?**

1.1.1 - Non-partisan political action

Description: What percentage of people have ever undertaken any form of non-partisan political action (e.g. written a letter to a newspaper, signed a petition, attended a demonstration)?

A very small minority (less than 10%).	Score 0
A minority (10% to 30%)	Score 1
A significant proportion (31% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.1.2 - Charitable giving

Description: What percentage of people donate to charity on a regular basis?

A very small minority (less than 10%)	Score 0
A minority (10% to 30%)	Score 1
A significant proportion (31% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.1.3 - CSO membership

Description: What percentage of people belong to at least one CSO?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% to 50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.1.4 - Volunteering

Description: What percentage of people undertake volunteer work on a regular basis (at least once a year)?

A very small minority (less than 10%)	Score 0
A small minority (10% to 30%)	Score 1
A minority (31% to 50%)	Score 2
A majority (more than 50%)	Score 3

1.1.5 - Collective community action

Description: What percentage of people have participated in a collective community action within the last year (e.g. attended a community meeting, participated in a community-organised event or a collective effort to solve a community problem)?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% -50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.2 – DEPTH OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Description: How deep/meaningful is citizen participation in civil society? How frequently/extensively do people engage in civil society activities?

1. 2.1 - Charitable giving

Description: How much (i.e. what percentage of personal income) do people who give to charity on a regular basis donate, on average, per year?

Less than 1%	Score 0
1% to 2%	Score 1
2.1% to 3%	Score 2
More than 3%	Score 3

1.2.2 - Volunteering

Description: How many hours per month, on average, do volunteers devote to volunteer work?

Less than 2 hours	Score 0
2 to 5 hours	Score 1
5.1 to 8 hours	Score 2
More than 8 hours.	Score 3

1.2.3 - CSO membership

Description: What percentage of CSO members belong to more than one CSO?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% to 50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

1.3 – DIVERSITY OF CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPANTS

Description: How diverse/representative is the civil society arena? Do all social groups participate equitably in civil society? Are any groups dominant or excluded?

1.3.1 - CSO membership

Description: To what extent do CSOs represent all significant social groups (e.g. women, rural dwellers, poor people and minorities)?

Significant social groups are absent / excluded from CSOs.	Score 0
Significant social groups are largely absent from CSOs.	Score 1
Significant social groups are under-represented in CSOs.	Score 2
CSOs equitably represent all social groups. No group is noticeably under-represented.	Score 3

1.3.2 - CSO leadership

Description: To what extent is there diversity in CSO leadership? To what extent does CSO leadership represent all significant social groups (e.g. women, rural dwellers, poor people, and minorities)?

Significant social groups are absent / excluded from CSO leadership roles.	Score 0
Significant social groups are largely absent from CSO leadership roles.	Score 1
Significant social groups are under-represented in CSO leadership roles.	Score 2
CSO leadership equitably represents all social groups. No group is noticeably under-represented.	Score 3

1.3.3 Distribution of CSOs

Description: How are CSOs distributed throughout the country?

CSOs are highly concentrated in the major urban centres.	Score 0
CSOs are largely concentrated in urban areas.	Score 1
CSOs are present in all but the most remote areas of the country.	Score 2
CSOs are present in all areas of the country.	Score 3

1.4 – LEVEL OF ORGANISATION

Description: How well-organised is civil society? What kind of infrastructure exists for civil society?

1.4.1 - Existence of CSO umbrella bodies

Description: What percentage of CSOs belong to a federation or umbrella body of related organisations?

A small minority (less than 30%)	Score 0
A minority (30% to 50%)	Score 1
A majority (51% to 70%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 70%)	Score 3

1.4.2 - Effectiveness of CSO umbrella bodies

Description: How effective do CSO stakeholders judge existing federations or umbrella bodies to be in achieving their defined goals?

Completely ineffective (or non-existent)	Score 0
Largely ineffective	Score 1
Somewhat effective	Score 2
Effective	Score 3

1.4.3 - Self-regulation

Description: Are there efforts among CSOs to self-regulate? How effective and enforceable are existing selfregulatory mechanisms? What percentage of CSOs abide by a collective code of conduct (or some other form of self-regulation)?

There are no efforts among CSOs to self-regulate.	Score 0
Preliminary efforts have been to self-regulate but only a small minority of CSOs are involved and impact is extremely limited.	Score 1
Some mechanisms for CSO self-regulation are in place but only some sectors of CSOs are involved and there is no effective method of enforcement. As a result, impact is limited.	Score 2
Mechanisms for CSO self-regulation are in place and function quite effectively. A discernible impact on CSO behaviour can be detected.	Score 3

1.4.4 - Support infrastructure

Description: What is the level of support infrastructure for civil society? How many civil society support organisations exist in the country? Are they effective?

There is no support infrastructure for civil society.	Score 0
There is very limited infrastructure for civil society.	Score 1
Support infrastructure exists for some sectors of civil society and is expanding.	Score 2
There is a well-developed support infrastructure for civil society.	Score 3

1.4.5 - International linkages

Description: What proportion of CSOs have international linkages (e.g. are members of international networks, participate in global events)?

Only a handful of "elite" CSOs have international linkages.	Score 0
A limited number of (mainly national-level) CSOs have international linkages.	Score 1
A moderate number of (mainly national-level) CSOs have international linkages.	Score 2
A significant number of CSOs from different sectors and different levels (grassroots to national) have international linkages.	Score 3

1.5 - INTER-RELATIONS

Description: How strong / productive are relations among civil society actors?

1.5.1 - Communication

Description: What is the extent of communication between civil society actors?

Very little	Score 0
Limited	Score 1
Moderate	Score 2
Significant	Score 3

1.5.2 – Cooperation

Description: How much do civil society actors cooperate with each other on issues of common concern? Can examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances/coalitions (around a specific issue or common concern) be identified?

CS actors do not cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. No examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances/coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 0
It is very rare that CS actors cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. Very few examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances / coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 1
CS actors on occasion cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. Some examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances / coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 2
CS actors regularly cooperate with each other on issues of common concern. Numerous examples of cross-sectoral CSO alliances / coalitions can be identified / detected.	Score 3

1.6 – RESOURCES

Description: To what extent do CSOs have adequate resources to achieve their goals?

1.6.1 - Financial resources

Description: How adequate is the level of financial resources for CSOs?

On average, CSOs suffer from a serious financial resource problem.	Score 0
On average, CSOs have inadequate financial resources to achieve their goals.	Score 1
On average, CSOs have most of the financial resources they require to achieve their defined goals.	Score 2
On average, CSOs have an adequate and secure financial resource base.	Score 3

1.6.2 - Human resources

Description: How adequate is the level of human resources for CSOs?

On average, CSOs suffer from a serious human resource problem.	Score 0
On average, CSOs have inadequate human resources to achieve their goal.	Score 1
On average, CSOs have most of the human resources they require to achieve their defined goals.	Score 2
On average, CSOs have an adequate and secure human resource base.	Score 3

1.6.3 - Technological and infrastructural resources

Description: How adequate is the level of technological and infrastructural resources for CSOs?

On average, CSOs suffer from a serious technological and infrastructural resource problem.	Score 0
On average, CSOs have inadequate technological and infrastructural resources to achieve their goals.	Score 1
On average, CSOs have most of the technological and infrastructural resources they require to achieve their defined goals.	Score 2
On average, CSOs have an adequate and secure technological and infrastructural resource base.	Score 3

2 – ENVIRONMENT[200]

2.1 – POLITICAL CONTEXT

Description: **What is the political situation in the country and its impact on civil society?**

2.1.1 - Political rights

Description: How strong are the restrictions on citizens' political rights (e.g. to participate freely in political processes, elect political leaders through free and fair elections, freely organise in political parties)?

There are severe restrictions on the political rights of citizens. Citizens cannot participate in political processes.	Score 0
There are some restrictions on the political rights of citizens and their participation in political processes.	Score 1
Citizens are endowed with substantial political rights and meaningful opportunities for political participation. There are minor and isolated restrictions on the full freedom of citizens' political rights and their participation in political processes.	Score 2
People have the full freedom and choice to exercise their political rights and meaningfully participate in political processes.	Score 3

2.1.2 - Political competition

Description: What are the main characteristics of the party system in terms of number of parties, ideological spectrum, institutionalisation and party competition?

Single party system.	Score 0
Small number of parties based on personalism, clientelism or appealing to identity politics.	Score 1
Multiple parties, but weakly institutionalised and / or lacking ideological distinction.	Score 2
Robust, multi-party competition, with well-institutionalised and ideologically diverse parties.	Score 3

2.1.3 - Rule of law

Description: To what extent is the rule of law entrenched in the country?

There is general disregard for the law by citizens and the state.	Score 0
There is low confidence in and frequent violations of the law by citizens and the state.	Score 1
There is a moderate level of confidence in the law. Violations of the law by citizens and the state are not uncommon.	Score 2
Society is governed by fair and predictable rules, which are generally abided by.	Score 3

2.1.4 – Corruption

Description: What is the level of perceived corruption in the public sector?

High	Score 0
Substantial	Score 1
Moderate	Score 2
Low	Score 3

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[200] For most of the indicators, secondary data sources are available for a broad range of countries. For each indicator, the scores indicate how to translate the original secondary data into the 4-point scale of the CSI scoring matrix.

2.1.5 – State effectiveness

Description: To what extent is the state able to fulfil its defined functions?

The state bureaucracy has collapsed or is entirely ineffective (e.g. due to political, economic or social crisis).	Score 0
The capacity of the state bureaucracy is extremely limited.	Score 1
State bureaucracy is functional but perceived as incompetent and / or non-responsive.	Score 2
State bureaucracy is fully functional and perceived to work in the public's interests.	Score 3

2.1.6 – Decentralisation

Description: To what extent is government expenditure devolved to sub-national authorities?

Sub national share of government expenditure is less than 20.0%.	Score 0
Sub national share of government expenditure is between 20.0% and 34.9%.	Score 1
Sub national share of government expenditure is between 35.0% than 49.9%.	Score 2
Sub national share of government expenditure is more than 49.9%.	Score 3

2.2 – BASIC FREEDOMS AND RIGHTS

Description: To what extent are basic freedoms ensured by law and in practice?

2.2.1 - Civil liberties

Description: To what extent are civil liberties (e.g. freedom of expression, association, assembly) ensured by law and in practice?

Civil liberties are systematically violated.	Score 0
There are frequent violations of civil liberties.	Score 1
There are isolated or occasional violations of civil liberties.	Score 2
Civil liberties are fully ensured by law and in practice.	Score 3

2.2.2 - Information rights

Description: To what extent is public access to information guaranteed by law? How accessible are government documents to the public?

No laws guarantee information rights. Citizen access to government documents is extremely limited.	Score 0
Citizen access to government documents is limited but expanding.	Score 1
Legislation regarding public access to information is in place, but in practice, it is difficult to obtain government documents.	Score 2
Government documents are broadly and easily accessible to the public.	Score 3

2.2.3 - Press freedoms

Description: To what extent are press freedoms ensured by law and in practice?

Press freedoms are systematically violated.	Score 0
There are frequent violations of press freedoms.	Score 1
There are isolated violations of press freedoms.	Score 2
Freedom of the press is fully ensured by law and in practice.	Score 3

2.3 - Socio-economic context[201]

Description: What is the socio-economic situation in the country and its impact on civil society?

2.3.1 - Socio-economic context

Description: How much do socio-economic conditions in the country represent a barrier to the effective functioning of civil society?

Social and economic conditions represent a serious barrier to the effective functioning of civil society. More than five of the following conditions are present: 1. Widespread poverty (e.g. more than 40% of people live on $2 per day) 2. Civil war (armed conflict in last 5 years) 3. Severe ethnic and/or religious conflict 4. Severe economic crisis (e.g. external debt is more than GNP) 5. Severe social crisis (over last 2 years) 6. Severe socio-economic inequities (Gini coefficient > 0.4) 7. Pervasive adult illiteracy (over 40%) 8. Lack of IT infrastructure (i.e. less than 5 hosts per 10.000 inhabitants)	Score 0
Social and economic conditions significantly limit the effective functioning of civil society. Three, four or five of the conditions indicated are present.	Score 1
Social and economic conditions somewhat limit the effective functioning of civil society. One or two of the conditions indicated are present.	Score 2
Social and economic conditions do not represent a barrier to the effective functioning of civil society. None of the conditions indicated is present.	Score 3

2.4 – Socio-cultural context

Description: To what extent are socio-cultural norms and attitudes conducive or detrimental to civil society?

2.4.1 - Trust

Description: How much do members of society trust one another?

Relationships among members of society are characterised by mistrust (e.g. less than 10% of people score on the World Value Survey (WVS) trust indicator).	Score 0
There is widespread mistrust among members of society (e.g. 10% to 30% of people score on the WVS trust indicator).	Score 1
There is a moderate level of trust among members of society (e.g. 31% to 50% of people score on the WVS trust indicator).	Score 2
There is a high level of trust among members of society (e.g. more than 50% of people score on the WVS trust indicator).	Score 3

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[201] To simplify scoring and make it easier, this subdimension/indicator is not broken up into individual indicators to facilitate and simplify scoring. The subdimension/indicator consists of 8 socio-economic conditions which are of importance to civil society. The scores for this indicator are designed in such a way that they indicate how many socio-economic obstacles are there for civil society (max: 8; min: 0). The task for the NAG scoring meeting is to simply verify the number of obstacles (as identified by the secondary data) and assign the score accordingly.

2.4.2 - Tolerance

Description: How tolerant are members of society?

Society is characterised by widespread intolerance (e.g. average score on WVS derived tolerance indicator is 3.0 or higher).	Score 0
Society is characterised by a low level of tolerance (e.g. indicator between 2.0 and 2.9).	Score 1
Society is characterised by a moderate level of tolerance (e.g. indicator between 1.0 and 1.9).	Score 2
Society is characterised by a high level of tolerance (e.g. indicator less than 1.0).	Score 3

2.4.3 - Public spiritedness[202]

Description: How strong is the sense of public spiritedness among members of society?

Very low level of public spiritedness in society (e.g. average score on WVS derived public spiritedness indicator is more than 3.5).	Score 0
Low level of public spiritedness (e.g. indicator between 2.6 and 3.5).	Score 1
Moderate level of public spiritedness (e.g. indicator between 1.5 and 2.5).	Score 2
High level of public spiritedness (e.g. indicator less than 1.5).	Score 3

2.5 – LEGAL ENVIRONMENT

Description: To what extent is the existing legal environment enabling or disabling to civil society?

2.5.1 - CSO registration[203]

Description: How supportive is the CSO registration process? Is the process (1) simple, (2) quick, (3) inexpensive, (4) following legal provisions and (5) consistently applied?

The CSO registration process is not supportive at all. Four or five of the quality characteristics are absent.	Score 0
The CSO registration is not very supportive. Two or three quality characteristics are absent.	Score 1
The CSO registration process can be judged as relatively supportive. One quality characteristic is absent.	Score 2
The CSO registration process is supportive. None of the quality characteristics is absent.	Score 3

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[202]   The score is derived by averaging the means for the three variables (1. claiming government benefits, 2. avoiding a fare on public transport and 3. cheating on taxes).

[203]   This indicator combines a number of individual quality characteristics of the registration, namely whether the registration is (1) simple, (2) quick, (3) inexpensive, (4) fairly applied and (5) consistently applied. The process of using these five 'Yes/No' variables for the scoring of the CSO registration indicator by the NAG follows the process outlined for subdimension 3. The indicator scores are defined by how many of these five quality characteristics are existent/absent.

2.5.2 - Allowable advocacy activities

Description: To what extent are CSOs free to engage in advocacy / criticize government?

CSOs are not allowed to engage in advocacy or criticise the government.	Score 0
There are excessive and / or vaguely defined constraints on advocacy activities.	Score 1
Constraints on CSOs' advocacy activities are minimal and clearly defined, such as prohibitions on political campaigning.	Score 2
CSOs are permitted to freely engage in advocacy and criticism of government.	Score 3

2.5.3 - Tax laws favourable to CSOs

Description: How favourable is the tax system to CSOs? How narrow/broad is the range of CSOs that are eligible for tax exemptions, if any? How significant are these exemptions?

The tax system impedes CSOs. No tax exemption or preference of any kind is available for CSOs.	Score 0
The tax system is burdensome to CSOs. Tax exemptions or preferences are available only for a narrow range of CSOs (e.g. humanitarian organisations) or for limited sources of income (e.g. grants or donations).	Score 1
The tax system contains some incentives favouring CSOs. Only a narrow range of CSOs is excluded from tax exemptions, preferences and/or exemptions, or preferences are available from some taxes and some activities.	Score 2
The tax system provides favourable treatment for CSOs. Exemptions or preferences are available from a range of taxes and for a range of activities, limited only in appropriate circumstances.	Score 3

2.5.4 - Tax benefits for philanthropy

Description: How broadly available are tax deductions or credits, or other tax benefits, to encourage individual and corporate giving?

No tax benefits are available (to individuals or corporations) for charitable giving.	Score 0
Tax benefits are available for a very limited set of purposes or types of organisations.	Score 1
Tax benefits are available for a fairly broad set of purposes or types of organisations.	Score 2
Significant tax benefits are available for a broad set of purposes or types of organisations.	Score 3

2.6 – STATE-CIVIL SOCIETY RELATIONS

***Description:* What is the nature and quality of relations between civil society and the state?**

2.6.1 – Autonomy

Description: To what extent can civil society exist and function independently of the state? To what extent are CSOs free to operate without excessive government interference? Is government oversight reasonably designed and limited to protect legitimate public interests?

The state controls civil society.	Score 0
CSOs are subject to frequent unwarranted interference in their operations.	Score 1
The state accepts the existence of an independent civil society but CSOs are subject to occasional unwarranted government interference.	Score 2
CSOs operate freely. They are subject only to reasonable oversight linked to clear and legitimate public interests.	Score 3

2.6.2 - Dialogue

Description: To what extent does the state dialogue with civil society? How inclusive and institutionalized are the terms and rules of engagement, if they exist?

There is no meaningful dialogue between civil society and the state.	Score 0
The state only seeks to dialogue with a small sub-set of CSOs on an ad hoc basis.	Score 1
The state dialogues with a relatively broad range of CSOs but on a largely ad hoc basis.	Score 2
Mechanisms are in place to facilitate systematic dialogue between the state and a broad and diverse	Score 3

2.6.3 - Cooperation / support

Description: How narrow/broad is the range of CSOs that receive state resources (in the form of grants, contracts, etc.)?

The level of state resources channelled through CSOs is insignificant.	Score 0
Only a very limited range of CSOs receives state resources.	Score 1
A moderate range of CSOs receives state resources.	Score 2
The state channels significant resources to a large range of CSOs.	Score 3

2.7 – PRIVATE SECTOR-CIVIL SOCIETY RELATIONS

Description: What is the nature and quality of relations between civil society and the private sector?

2.7.1 - Private sector attitude

Description: What is the general attitude of the private sector towards civil society actors?

Generally hostile	Score 0
Generally indifferent	Score 1
Generally positive	Score 2
Generally supportive	Score 3

2.7.2 - Corporate social responsibility

Description: How developed are notions and actions of corporate social responsibility?

Major companies show no concern about the social and environmental impacts of their operations.	Score 0
Major companies pay lip service to notions of corporate social responsibility. However, in their operations they frequently disregard negative social and environmental impacts.	Score 1
Major companies are beginning to take the potential negative social and environmental impacts of their operations into account.	Score 2
Major companies take effective measures to protect against negative social and environmental impacts.	Score 3

2.7.3 - Corporate philanthropy[204]

Description: How narrow/broad is the range of CSOs that receive support from the private sector?

Corporate philanthropy is insignificant.	Score 0
Only a very limited range of CSOs receives funding from the private sector.	Score 1
A moderate range of CSOs receives funding from the private sector.	Score 2
The private sector channels resources to a large range of CSOs.	Score 3

3 - VALUES

3.1 – DEMOCRACY

Description: To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote democracy?

3.1.1 - Democratic practices within CSOs

Description: To what extent do CSOs practice internal democracy? How much control do members have over

decision-making? Are leaders selected through democratic elections?

A large majority (i.e. more than 75%) of CSOs do not practice internal democracy (e.g. members have little / no control over decision-making, CSOs are characterised by patronage, nepotism).	Score 0
A majority of CSOs (i.e. more than 50%) do not practice internal democracy (e.g. members have little/no control over decision-making, CSOs are characterised by patronage, nepotism).	Score 1
A majority of CSOs (i.e. more than 50%) practice internal democracy (e.g. members have significant control over decision-making; leaders are selected through democratic elections).	Score 2
A large majority of CSOs (i.e. more than 75%) practice internal democracy (e.g. members have significant control over decision-making; leaders are selected through democratic elections).	Score 3

3.1.2 – Civil society actions to promote democracy

Description: How much does civil society actively promote democracy at a societal level?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a democratic society. CS activities in this area enjoy broadbased support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

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[204] The NAG's task in scoring the indicator is to assess the significance of corporate support to civil society. Here, the score descriptions focus on two elements: (1) the overall size of corporate support to civil society and (2) the range of CSOs supported by the corporate sector. Both elements are combined in the indicator score descriptions.

3.2 – TRANSPARENCY

Description: **To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote transparency?**

3.2.1 - Corruption within civil society

Description: How widespread is corruption within CS?

Instances of corrupt behaviour within CS are very frequent.	Score 0
Instances of corrupt behaviour within CS are frequent.	Score 1
There are occasional instances of corrupt behaviour within CS.	Score 2
Instances of corrupt behaviour within CS are very rare.	Score 3

3.2.2 - Financial transparency of CSOs

Description: How many CSOs are financially transparent? What percentage of CSOs make their financial accounts publicly available?

A small minority of CSOs (less than 30%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 0
A minority of CSOs (30% -50%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 1
A small majority of CSOs (51% -65%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 2
A large majority of CSOs (more than 65%) make their financial accounts publicly available.	Score 3

3.2.3 – Civil society actions to promote transparency

Description: How much does civil society actively promote government and corporate transparency?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and/or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in demanding government and corporate transparency. CS activities in this	Score 3

3.3 – TOLERANCE

Description: **To what extent do civil society actors and organisations practice and promote tolerance?**

3.3.1 Tolerance within the civil society arena

Description: To what extent is civil society a tolerant arena?

CS is dominated by intolerant forces. The expression of only a narrow sub-set of views is tolerated.	Score 0
Significant forces within civil society do not tolerate others' views without encountering protest from civil society at large.	Score 1
There are some intolerant forces within civil society, but they are isolated from civil society at large.	Score 2
Civil society is an open arena where the expression of all viewpoints is actively encouraged. Intolerant behaviour is strongly denounced by civil society at large.	Score 3

3.3.2 – Civil society actions to promote tolerance

Description: How much does civil society actively promote tolerance at a societal level?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and/or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a tolerant society. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

3.4 - NON-VIOLENCE

Description: **To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote non-violence?**

3.4.1 - Non-violence within the civil society arena

Description: How widespread is the use of violent means (such as damage to property or personal violence) among civil society actors to express their interests in the public sphere?

Significant mass-based groups within CS use violence as the primary means of expressing their interests.	Score 0
Some isolated groups within CS regularly use violence to express their interests without encountering protest from civil society at large.	Score 1
Some isolated groups within CS occasionally resort to violent actions, but are broadly denounced by CS at large.	Score 2
There is a high level of consensus within CS regarding the principle of non-violence. Acts of violence by CS actors are extremely rare and strongly denounced.	Score 3

3.4.2 – Civil society actions to promote non-violence and peace

Description: How much does civil society actively promote a non-violent society? For example, how much does civil society support the non-violent resolution of social conflicts and peace? Address issues of violence against women, child abuse, violence among youths etc.?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions actually contribute to societal violence.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a non-violent society. CS actions in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility	Score 3

3.5 - GENDER EQUITY

Description: **To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote gender equity?**

3.5.1 - Gender equity within the civil society arena

Description: To what extent is civil society a gender equitable arena?

Women are excluded from civil society leadership roles.	Score 0
Women are largely absent from civil society leadership roles.	Score 1
Women are under-represented in civil society leadership positions.	Score 2
Women are equitably represented as leaders and members of CS.	Score 3

3.5.2 - Gender equitable practices within CSOs

Description: How much do CSOs practice gender equity? What percentage of CSOs with paid employees have policies in place to ensure gender equity?

A small minority (less than 20%)	Score 0
A minority (20%-50%)	Score 1
A small majority (51%-65%)	Score 2
A large majority (more than 65%)	Score 3

3.5.3 – Civil society actions to promote gender equity

Description: How much does civil society actively promote gender equity at the societal level?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions actually contribute to gender inequity.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in promoting a gender equitable society. CS activities in this area enjoy broadbased support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

3.6 - POVERTY ERADICATION

Description: To what extent do civil society actors promote poverty eradication?

3.6.1 – Civil society actions to eradicate poverty

Description: To what extent does civil society actively seek to eradicate poverty?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions serve to sustain existing economic inequities.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in the struggle to eradicate poverty. CS activities in this area enjoy broadbased support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

3.7 - ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Description: To what extent do civil society actors practice and promote environmental sustainability?

3.7.1 – Civil society actions to sustain the environment

Description: How much does civil society actively seek to sustain the environment?

No active role. No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected. Some CS actions serve to reinforce unsustainable practices.	Score 0
Only a few CS activities in this area can be detected. Their visibility is low and these issues are not attributed much importance by CS as a whole.	Score 1
A number of CS activities in this area can be detected. Broad-based support and / or public visibility of such initiatives, however, are lacking.	Score 2
CS is a driving force in protecting the environment. CS activities in this area enjoy broad-based support and / or strong public visibility.	Score 3

4 – IMPACT

4.1 - INFLUENCING PUBLIC POLICY

Description: How active and successful is civil society in influencing public policy?

4.1.1 – 4.1.2 - Human Rights and Social Policy Impact Case Studies

Description: How active and successful is civil society in influencing public policy?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.1.3 - Civil Society's Impact on National Budgeting process Case Study

Description: How active and successful is civil society in influencing the overall national budgeting process?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and focused only on specific budget components.[203]	Score 1
Civil society is active in the overall budgeting process, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role in the overall budgeting process. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.2 - HOLDING STATE AND PRIVATE CORPORATIONS ACCOUNTABLE

Description: How active and successful is civil society in holding the state and private corporations accountable?

4.2.1 - Holding state accountable

Description: How active and successful is civil society in monitoring state performance and holding the state accountable?

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[205] The term "specific budget component" refers to a single issue or sub-section of the budget, such as the defence budget or welfare grants. Higher scores are assigned for those civil society activities, which provide an analysis, input and advocacy work on the overall budget.

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.2.2 - Holding private corporations accountable

Description: How active and successful is civil society in holding private corporations accountable?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.3 - RESPONDING TO SOCIAL INTERESTS

Description: **How much are civil society actors responding to social interests?**

4.3.1 - Responsiveness

Description: How effectively do civil society actors respond to priority social concerns?

Civil society actors are out of touch with the crucial concerns of the population.	Score 0
There are frequent examples of crucial social concerns that did not find a voice among existing civil society actors.	Score 1
There are isolated examples of crucial social concerns that did not find a voice among existing civil society actors.	Score 2
Civil society actors are very effective in taking up the crucial concerns of the population.	Score 3

4.3.2 - Public Trust

Description: What percentage of the population has trust in civil society actors?

A small minority (< 25%)	Score 0
A large minority (25%-50%)	Score 1
A small majority (51%-75%)	Score 2
A large majority (> 75%)	Score 3

4.4 - EMPOWERING CITIZENS

Description: **How active and successful is civil society in empowering citizens, especially traditionally marginalised groups, to shape decisions that affect their lives?**

4.4.1 - Informing/ educating citizens

Description: How active and successful is civil society in informing and educating citizens on public issues?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.2 - Building capacity for collective action

Description: How active and successful is civil society in building the capacity of people to organise

themselves, mobilise resources and work together to solve common problems?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.3 - Empowering marginalized people

Description: How active and successful is civil society in empowering marginalized people?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.4 - Empowering women

Description: How active and successful is civil society in empowering women, i.e. to give them real choice and control over their lives?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.4.5 - Building social capital[206]

Description: To what extent does civil society build social capital among its members? How do levels of trust, tolerance and public spiritedness of members of civil society compare to those of non-members?

Civil society diminishes the stock of social capital in society.	Score 0
Civil society does not contribute to building social capital in society.	Score 1
Civil society does contribute moderately to building social capital in society.	Score 2
Civil Society does contribute strongly to building social capital in society.	Score 3

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[206] To score this indicator, we make use of the measure of trust (see subdimension socio-cultural norms in Environment dimension): 1) Compute the three measures for two sub-groups of the population: (1) CSO members and (2) non-CSO members and 2) Compare each measure's score for the two sub-groups and establish which sub-group has the better score (i.e. indicating higher trust).

4.4.6 - Supporting livelihoods

Description: How active and successful is civil society in creating / supporting employment and/or incomegenerating opportunities (especially for poor people and women)?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.5 - MEETING SOCIETAL NEEDS

Description: How active and successful is civil society in meeting societal needs, especially those of poor people and other marginalised groups?

4.5.1 - Lobbying for state service provision

Description: How active and successful is civil society in lobbying the government to meet pressing societal needs?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.5.2 - Meeting pressing societal needs directly

Description: How active and successful is civil society in directly meeting pressing societal needs (through service delivery or the promotion of self-help initiatives)?

No CS activity of any consequence in this area can be detected.	Score 0
CS activity in this area is very limited and there is no discernible impact.	Score 1
Civil society is active in this area, but impact is limited.	Score 2
Civil society plays an important role. Examples of significant success / impact can be detected.	Score 3

4.5.3 - Meeting needs of marginalised groups

Description: To what extent are CSOs more or less effective than the state in delivering services to marginalised groups?

CSOs are less effective than the state.	Score 0
CSOs are as effective as the state.	Score 1
CSOs are slightly more effective than the state.	Score 2
CSOs are significantly more effective than the state.	Score 3

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