



1. Civil society organisations

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Civil society is, in most general terms, a corpus of different, national and transnational, non-statutory, non-political, and non-profit organisations and institutions, founded by individuals or groups of people with the purpose to jointly achieve and/or protect particular individual, group, and/or collective interests.⁶¹⁹ This corpus includes a variety of citizens' associations, media, unions, educational institutions, research institutes, pressure groups, religious communities and sports associations.⁶²⁰

Consistent with this, civil society organisations (CSOs) can be defined as a form of self-organisation of civil society with the purpose of achieving and/or protecting specific interests or needs. The goal of their activity is not profit and, if they do, or when they do, they should invest these proceeds into future development. Also, their intention is not to win political power, or at least it is not in words. This makes them institutionally and functionally detached from government and political parties. However, this does not mean that they do not have significant political influence. Civil society organisations have flexible organisational structures and their members act autonomously in deciding about internal structure, control, and management.⁶²¹

During the last couple of decades, civil society organisations have become actors in the security sector. Good governance of the security sector is not only effective exercise of the economic, political and administrative competences of government, but also requires the involvement of non-statutory actors in the control and oversight of state institutions.⁶²² This provides for a dialogue between government and citizens, which can raise public trust in the state and state institutions and authorities. Actors participating in public con-

⁶¹⁹ For more details about the concept of civil society, see: Marina Caparini, "Civil Society and Democratic Control and oversight of the Security Sector: A Preliminary Investigation," in *Sourcebook on Security Sector Reform*, eds., Philip Flury and Miroslav Hadžić (Geneva, Belgrade: DCAF, CCMR, 2004), 176-177.

⁶²⁰ Broader definitions include the business community too.

⁶²¹ For more details, see: Srećko Mihailović, 'Kako NVO vide političku moć i kako politička moć vidi NVO u', u *Stručni skup: Analiza NVO okruženja - izazovi tranzicije*. (Beograd: ProConcept, Fond za otvoreno društvo-Srbija, 2005), 25-48.

⁶²² Caparini, Civil society and democratic control and oversight of the security sector: A preliminary investigation, 178-179.

trol and oversight of the security sector should, in synergy with governmental bodies vested with control and control and oversight powers, contribute to the achievement and maintenance of human and national security as a public good, and to the establishment of good governance in the political community (state) in question. For this purpose, CSOs oversee whether state enforcement apparatuses respect, and to what extent they operate in conformity with, the principles of constitutionality and lawfulness, and whether they comply with the requirements of professionalism and neutrality with regard to political parties and different interests. This in turn should help prevent the politicisation of state enforcement apparatuses, namely it should help prevent them becoming closed, self-sufficient and alienated centres of power.⁶²³

Below is an analysis the role of civil society organisations in the control and oversight of the security sector in Serbia. These organisations fall under the category of non-statutory actors that do not use force. They occupy Box D of the holistic matrix.

The role of civil society organisation in the Serbian security sector (before 2000)

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First civil society organisations in Serbia appeared at the beginning of the 1990s, after the introduction of political pluralism.⁶²⁴ Their development could be conditionally divided into three periods. The same periodisation applies to civil society organisations specialised in security issues. The first period covers the beginning of the 1990s when the first civil society organisations emerged. The second period took place between 1997 and 2000, when the number of CSOs increased considerably and the majority developed and acted as an opposition to the authoritarian regime. The third period began in the year 2000 and it is marked by efforts of the increasingly more developed civil society to take active part in the process of democratisation of Serbia.

Civil society organisations in Serbia were established based on the 1990 *Law on citizens' associations, social organisations and political organisations that are being founded on the territory of the SFRY*.⁶²⁵ This new pace of the development of civil society in Serbia was accelerated by the wars in the former republic

⁶²³ According to: Nicole Ball, Tsjeard Bouta and Luc van de Goor, *Enhancing democratic governance of the security sector: An institutional assessment framework* (The Hague: Clingendael Institute for the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2003), 67.

⁶²⁴ According to: Žarko Paunović, 'Deset godina NVO u SR Jugoslaviji: od ilegalaca i neprijatelja do važnih aktera društvenih promena,' *Civilno društvo* website, <http://www.civilnodrustvo.org/Tekstovi-za-sajt/Deset-godina-NVO-u-Srbiji.pdf> [accessed 22 July 2008]

⁶²⁵ *Ibid*, <http://www.civilnodrustvo.org/Tekstovi-za-sajt/Deset-godina-NVO-u-Srbiji.pdf> [accessed 22 July 2008]

lics of the SFRY, since the first initiatives of civil society were a response to these conflicts. The first initiatives of civil society from the beginning of the 1990s were related to safety issues, namely public desire to express, in an organised manner, their disagreement with government policy and to protest against the war. These initiatives were informal at first, but from these the first organisations sprouted (for instance, the Action for peace in Subotica in 1990, the Centre for anti-war action, the Vojvodina movement for peace founded in 1991 and the Fund for peace and crisis resolution from 1992). Civil society organisations opposed the war, violence and militarisation. Through their activities they developed an autonomous public sphere for debate and expression of civil disobedience in opposition to government policy. Moreover, they strived to raise public awareness on the importance of participation in debate concerning issues of interest for society.⁶²⁶



Illustration 1: 'Women in Black' during an anti-war protest in Belgrade⁶²⁷

At the time there was no consensus among political elites, government institutions, and civil society about the goals of social changes and how they could be achieved. Democratisation of Serbia, which most CSOs advocated since their foundation, was not a priority for government institutions. Consequently, government institutions and CSOs did not work together. Political elites and government institutions perceived civil society organisations as enemies and competition.

During the second period civil society organisations developed further and CSOs specialised in security issues appeared. Cooperation between government institutions and civil society organisations was absent during this period as well. The media called them enemies, traitors and spying organisations.⁶²⁸ Frequent fiscal controls, police raids, and similar methods of obstruction and

⁶²⁶ Ibid, <http://www.civilnodrustvo.org/Tekstovi-za-sajt/Deset-godina-NVO-u-Srbiji.pdf> (accessed 22 July 2008).

⁶²⁷ Photograph taken from the website of the CSO 'Women in Black', <http://www.zeneucrnom.org/>

⁶²⁸ Prema Tatjana Andrijašević, Gordana Popović, Ana Stanković, and Nada Veljković, 'Nevladine organizacije pre i posle 5. oktobra 2000: Nepotrebni prijatelji', *Vreme* 678, Jan. 1, 2004.

intimidation were common. Regardless of this, CSOs continued to operate and the primary focus of their activities was the protection of human rights and minorities and informal education about democracy. By 1994, 196 CSOs were registered and in the course of 1997 their number increased to 695. In the end of 1990s, the number of CSOs rose at a greater pace and in 2000 there were about 2000.⁶²⁹ During this period civil society organisations turned their attention to security topics.⁶³⁰ Protection of human and minority rights and peaceful resolution of conflict were introduced in the political discourse. Thanks to CSOs, topics about which the public had little information before the late 1990s, such as civilian democratic control and oversight over the armed forces, civil-military relations, and civil-police relations, now became part of the political discourse. In this period they began to build capacity for overseeing the security sector, as well as mechanisms for the protection of human rights which the government was not able to provide for its citizens.⁶³¹

Civil society organisations played an important role in the democratic overthrow in 2000. Besides motivating citizens (especially the young) to go out and vote, they established a partnership with opposition political parties fighting for political changes.

The third period commenced in 2000 and is still ongoing. The overthrow of the government in 2000 provided an opportunity to redefine relations between CSOs and government institutions. After government changes, the new political elite has included civil society representatives in government institutions and many experts have passed from the non-governmental to the governmental sector. Expert knowledge that existed in civil society has been incorporated into many laws and strategic documents.⁶³²

Eight years afterwards, however, the legal status of CSOs is still not properly regulated. The latest draft proposal for regulation of the sector was the *Law on associations* prepared in 2007 by the Ministry for Public Administration and Local Self-Government, in addition to a working group, alliances and associations, and representatives of CSOs. This draft has not yet reached parliamentary procedure. The work of CSOs is further impeded by the fact that laws applicable to

⁶²⁹ Andrijašević, Popović, Stanković and Veljković

⁶³⁰ In this paper we use a broad definition where security is perceived as striving for freedom from threats.

⁶³¹ For instance, Group 484 has been providing humanitarian, psycho-social, legal, and informational assistance to refugees since 1995. A larger number of organisations, such as the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (YUCOM), the Fund for Humanitarian Law, Centre for Civil-Military Relations, the European Bureau for Conscientious Objection, and a larger number of organisations for human rights protection throughout Serbia, provide legal assistance and legal advice to citizens in specific situations (e.g. refugees, conscientious objectors, citizens subject to police torture, etc).

⁶³² For more information, see Miljenko Dereta, 'Civilno društvo i demokratija', *Mreža – specijalno izdanje*, no. 45 (May 2005).

their activities are the same laws that apply to the profit sector. In addition, the profit sector is not encouraged to invest in the activities of civil society.

It seems that, in the eight years since the democratic changes, the attitude of the public towards CSOs is still negative. According to a survey conducted by Smart kolektiv (Belgrade) in November 2006, in cooperation with Strategic Marketing, the public had poor understanding of CSOs' work and attitudes towards these organisations were ambivalent.⁶³³ Just over half of respondents (54 per cent) knew what the phrase 'civil society organisation' meant, and almost half (47 per cent) had negative associations when this phrase was mentioned. A small proportion (14 per cent) believes that civil society organisations act in the best interest of Serbia. Moreover, they perceive CSO work as the least beneficial for affecting everyday life, and most beneficial in the provision of assistance to vulnerable populations (such as persons with specific needs and victims of domestic violence).

Civil society organisations are also unhappy with their working environment and their opportunities to influence reforms in society. According to a survey conducted by Civic Initiatives in 2005 on a sample of 516 CSOs,⁶³⁴ more than half of these organisations (54 per cent) think that the current political climate in the country is highly unfavourable for the development of the non-governmental sector and 60 per cent consider cooperation between the government (at the time) and the NGO sector to be poor or very poor. One of the conclusions of the survey was that the NGO sector was not sufficiently interconnected and lacked a clear structure, as well as that intra-sectoral communication was under-developed. These inadequacies probably limit the influence that these organisations have on government policy. However, it was encouraging to learn that most donors taking part in the survey (41) believed that the situation in the NGO sector was similar to that in other countries in the region.⁶³⁵

After 2000, civil society organisations continued their research and educational work, as well as public advocacy in the security sector. Non-formal education programmes developed by civil society organisations offer citizens, media, and also representatives from the government sector the opportunity to gain further insight into security sector reform. During this period civil society organisations started to work together with representatives of government institutions. There are many examples of good practice. Since 2003, ISAC Fund (Belgrade) has organised ten one-week trainings entitled 'Security sector reform school' aimed at giving professionals to the opportunity broaden their knowledge and keep up with the trends. The Centre for Management (Belgrade) has

⁶³³ 'Javno mnjenje o organizacijama civilnog društva u Srbiji – Smart kolektiv i Strateški marketing,' (2006): <http://www.smartkolektiv.org>

⁶³⁴ *NVO sektor u Srbiji* (Beograd: Građanske inicijative, 2005). This publication is available at: <http://www.gradjanske.org/admin/download/files/cms/attach?id=94>.

⁶³⁵ *NVO sektor u Srbiji*, 82-93.

since 2001 organised ten modern anti-corruption methodology trainings with the aim of enabling employees who face corruption everyday to familiarise themselves with ways of recognising and tackling it. The Centre for Civil-Military Relations was the first CSO to organise, in 2004 and 2005, seminars on security sector reform in garrisons of Serbia and Montenegro, and European security architecture for the Ministry of Defence of SaM and SaM Armed Forces. Several CSOs organised post-graduate studies at the University of Belgrade.

Civil society organisations continue to develop research capacity and initiate major theoretical research. A good example of academic research is the research 'Mapping and monitoring of the security sector' conducted by the Centre for Civil-Military Relations in 2007–2008 to develop methods and instruments for measuring and overseeing security reform sector and its integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. Among research conducted with the aim of improving practical policy, a good example is research conducted by the European Movement in Serbia and KIPRED in 2005 'Joint European Vision'. This research addressed the issues of free movement of goods and people in Kosovo and Serbia. It was designed to encourage public debate and to act as a platform for shared paths towards reaching European standards and regional integration.⁶³⁶ The Victimology Society of Serbia publishes an academic magazine, *Temida*, dealing with victimisation, human rights and gender. There are four issues a year.⁶³⁷

In the field of public advocacy, the period after 2000 saw examples of good practice in cooperation between CSOs and the security sector. One example was the educational promotional campaign 'November – the month of security', which Zaječar Initiative implemented in cooperation with the Police Directorate of Zaječar in November 2007. Joint action is still very important for success. An example is the joint initiative launched by 29 NGOs and members of academoI. In late 2008 they asked the Ministry of Defence to extend the time limit envisaged for the public debate on the draft National Security Strategy and draft Strategy for Defence from the original insufficient 15 days to 45 days. The joint action by a large number of actors contributed to the Ministry of Defence's approval of this initiative.

Representatives of CSOs who participated in the research conducted by the Centre for Civil-Military Relations 'Increasing citizens' participation in security policy', noted that not enough CSOs in Serbia are interested in security matters. Most organisations dealing with security matters are located in Belgrade and civil society does not monitor the activities of some actors in the security sector (such as institutions having some police characteristics). Institutionalised cooperation between CSOs and government institutions is absent. According to the

⁶³⁶ For more information, see the European Movement in Serbia website:

<http://www.emins.org/publikacije/knjige/index.htm>

⁶³⁷ See more information, see the Victimology Society website, <http://www.vds.org.yu/temida.htm>

experience of CSOs, it depends on personal contacts with representatives of the institutions.

Role of CSOs in Serbian security sector

In principle, CSOs in Serbia have several functions in the security sector. First of all, they support government institutions in the implementation of security sector reforms, which means that they are involved in drafting and in the public debate on constitutional-conceptual documents. They also organise the implementation of educational activities. Civil society organisations are among the sources of civil expertise and they provide expert support to government institutions in security policy creation and implementation. Several examples of good practice were noted with regard to the participation of CSOs in the legal drafting and organisation of different kinds of training.⁶³⁸ Serbian CSO expertise also actively contributes to public debate on existing legislation.⁶³⁹ As an alternative source of knowledge, civil society organisations may and should play an important role in education, i.e. in the process of acquiring new knowledge on security matters. To date civil society organisations have organised a number of different training programmes, from one-day seminars for representatives of ministries forming part of the security sector, to specialist and post-graduate studies at the University of Belgrade attended by representatives from the security sector.⁶⁴⁰

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⁶³⁸ Civil society organisations attempted to compensate for legal voids in the regulation of the security sector by preparing model laws. Thus, for instance, CSOs noted that private security companies in Serbia are not legislatively regulated and that there is a need for a law regulating their activities. Two organisations contributed to the achievement of this goal; the Centre for Civil-Military Relations, Belgrade, which prepared a model law on private security activities in 2005 (see more detail at: www.ccmr-bg.org); and the League of Experts, Belgrade, which prepared a model law on the private activity of protecting persons and property and detective activity 2006 (see more detail at: www.lex.org.yu).

⁶³⁹ At the initiative of the Centre for Civil-Military Relations, for instance, the *Law on the Armed Forces of Serbia* (adopted in December 2007) was amended to ensure that, besides parliament, the Protector of Citizens and other government authorities in accordance with their respective competences, as well as citizens and public at large could be included in the democratic and civilian control and oversight of the Armed Forces of Serbia. For more information, see Đorđe Popović, 'Komentar Nacrta zakona o odbrani i o vojsci', *Bezbednost zapadnog Balkana*, No. 7-8 (October 2007- March 2008): 120-131.

⁶⁴⁰ Precise data about the number of seminars organised by CSOs are not available. The Centre for Civil-Military Relations has, since it was founded in 1997, organised about 70 seminars, attended by more than 1500 people. So far the Centre has organised two series of seminars for members of the military with a total of 700 participants. With regard to academic education, the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights has organised post-graduate studies 'Specijalističke strukovne studije humanitarnog prava i ljudskih prava' for three generations at the School of Political Sciences. At the same school, the Centre for Civil-Military Relations organised the 'Studies of Global and National Safety' for four generations of students.

The second role played by civil society organisations is to exercise public control and oversight of security policy. CSOs monitor developments in the security sector and ensure that security policy is a subject of public debate. There are two reasons why systematic public control and oversight of the security sector in Serbia is not developed. No individual CSO has the capacity to monitor the entire security sector on its own. Likewise, continuous monitoring of larger security sector institutions, such as the military or police, is not in place, and control and oversight of less visible government authorities (for instance customs) or non-government bodies (companies that provide the services of physical-technical security) is not even mentioned. The defence and security sector was the first to be subject to control and oversight and it was even part of a report on the control and oversight of government institutions. In these reports, information about the security sector or individual institutions occupied one or several chapters.⁶⁴¹ CSOs have developed control and oversight of specific areas. Since 1997, the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights has published a synthetic report on the human rights situation in the country, including judicial and police functions which affect human rights. Several organisations attend trials related to the protection of human rights and transitional justice in front of domestic and international courts.⁶⁴² There are other examples of overseeing security matters. In 2007, the Centre for Politics and Euro-Atlantic Partnership drew up an 'Overview of the situation of human security in Serbia.'⁶⁴³ Another example is the monitoring of how the National Anti-Corruption Strategy is implemented in parliament, conducted by Transparency Serbia.⁶⁴⁴

The third and equally important activity of CSOs is public advocacy for security sector reform implementation. Advocacy of security sector reforms has been marked with the activities of CSOs from the date they were founded to this date. Two examples are the right to conscientious objection and introduction of the institute of civilian service, following efforts by CSOs. After public pressure, the right to conscientious objection was regulated (admittedly with a by-law) by the adoption of the *Decree on Military Service* (27 August 2003). With this decree, a category of civilian service as an alternative to military service was officially introduced. Representatives from the European Bureau for Conscientious

⁶⁴¹ A.g., *Godišnji izveštaj: Srbija 2007, Samoizolacija: realnost i cilj* (Beograd: Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava u Srbiji, 2007). Publication available at: <http://www.helsinki.org.yu/serbian/doc/izvestaj2007.pdf>

⁶⁴² Monitoring of the trial is performed by the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights (for more details, see: http://bgcentar.placebo.co.yu/page_sr?tag=47@sr), Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (for more details, see: <http://www.yucom.org.yu>), and the Fund for Humanitarian Law (for more details, see: <http://www.hlc-rdc.org/>).

⁶⁴³ For more information, see the Centre for Politics and Euro-Atlantic Partnership website: <http://www.atlanticpartnership.org.rs>

⁶⁴⁴ See more information at the Transparency Serbia website: <http://www.transparentnost.org.rs/>

Objection (EBCO) Balkan Section and civil society organisations from Belgrade took part in drafting the document.

Civil society organisations often advocate reforms in cooperation with related organisations and with media support. A successful example is the Coalition for Free Access to Information, founded in 2005. It was created in response to the need, by joint action, to exert pressure on the authorities– the government and parliament – to promptly pass the law on free access to information. The Coalition is made up of the following organisations: Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, Centre for Anti-war Action, Centre for Advanced Legal Studies, Fund for an Open Society, Citizens' Initiatives, Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights–Yu-com and Transparency Serbia. With time, organisations from towns throughout Serbia have joined in the Coalition's activities. The Coalition has contributed to greater responsibility in implementation of the law, and also helped to make this topic relevant for the democratic process. This was done by drawing up the 'Guide for the implementation of law',⁶⁴⁵ preparing a proposal of amendments to the existing law, preparing a law proposal on the classification of information and personal data protection which will render the existing law more efficient, proposing practical polices to contribute to better accessibility of information, organising debates, and informing the public about these issues.

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Illustration 2: Poster of EBCO Balkan

⁶⁴⁵ The Guide is available at:

http://www.spikoalicija.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=24&Itemid=48

Supervisory roles of CSOs

The role of civil society organisations in the security sector is primarily supervisory. Control and oversight and control are related terms. They imply subordination of the parties implementing them as well as specific subject matter. They also involve the influence of an control and oversight or control body on the person subject to control and oversight or control.⁶⁴⁶ The difference is that control and oversight implies a continuous activity and control takes place once or more than once in the course of the control and oversight process.⁶⁴⁷ The second difference is that control was envisaged and regulated in legislative regulations. A controller is vested with legal powers in respect of the controlled entity, as regards the matter being controlled.⁶⁴⁸ This means that the control decision is legally binding for the institution subjected to the control, as opposed to control and oversight which results in non-binding recommendations. Accordingly, civil society organisations perform non-formal control of the security sector.⁶⁴⁹

Civil society organisations perform their control and oversight function by constantly bringing significant security related topics to public attention. This includes the writing of criticisms, proposals, objections and complaints about security sector institutions.⁶⁵⁰ This helps promote accountability of all actors in the security sector.

Assessment of the control and oversight function of Serbian CSOs

An assessment of the capability of CSOs to oversee the security sector was made based on several dimensions, including capacity, the rule-of-law, transparency, integration of these organisations in the security sector, and legitimacy.

We evaluate the indicated dimensions based on available data on CSOs and empirical material collected as part of an independent survey conducted by the Centre for Civil-Military Relations conducted 'Increasing citizens' participation in the security policy' in 2007 and 2008. Forty-four civil society organisations identified by researchers in the NGO directory of the Centre for the Development

⁶⁴⁶ According to: Zoran R. Tomić, 'Normativna polazišta za civilnu kontrolu vojske i policije,' in *Demokratska kontrola vojske i policije*, ed. Miroslav Hadžić. (Beograd: Centar za civilno-vojne odnose, 2001), 11-34.

⁶⁴⁷ According to: Tomić, 12.

⁶⁴⁸ According to: Tomić, 13.

⁶⁴⁹ Bogoljub Milosavljević, *Građanski nadzor nad policijom: Mogući model za Srbiju* (Beograd: Centar za antiratnu akciju, 2004), 62-65.

⁶⁵⁰ Milosavljević, 64.

of Non-Profit Sector⁶⁵¹ took part in this research. As the first empirical research conducted on CSOs involved in security, it comes with limitations. First of all, the sample of CSOs is, statistically speaking, small and as a result the conclusions are not completely reliable. Also, the CSOs themselves spoke about their activities, which put a question mark over the objectivity of findings. Considering available resources, this was the only way to collect this information. Another limitation is that right-wing movements and organisations did not take part in the survey and they are the ones most interested in security matters in Serbia.

Moreover, limited resources prevented the inclusion of a larger number of organisations outside Belgrade. Please note that this survey was a part of a pilot project and the experience gained on this occasion is a good basis for future research.

CIVIL SOCIETY'S CAPACITY TO OVERSEE THE SECURITY SECTOR

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Several indicators were used to assess CSO control and oversight capacities, such as; the number of specialised CSOs and their fields of operation; size, personnel and technical capacity; neutrality in respect of political parties, ideology and interest (independence); funding sources and sustainability; existence of networks – national and cross-border, and; presence in the public and media.

The first indicator – the existence of CSOs interested in security – is a main precondition for inclusion of these organisations among non-statutory actors in the security sector. The broadness of these organisations' field of work is indicative of the development of the sector and the preconditions that should be met to enable participation in the debate on security issues and control and oversight of the security sector.

According to some estimates, Serbia now has more than 30,000 CSOs.⁶⁵² A large number of these organisations, however, are not active. The 'Directory of non-government organisations' made by the Centre for the Development of Non-Profit Sector is a dependable source of information about civil society. CSOs voluntarily apply for registration in the directory and, at present, there are 2041 registered organisations.⁶⁵³ Of this number, 286 CSOs mention security matters, according to name or mission. This includes CSOs focused on the protection of human rights. This number does not include CSOs dealing with social-humanitarian problems (586). Research by the Centre for Civil-Military Relations

⁶⁵¹ For more information, see: <http://www.crnps.org.yu/direktorijum>

⁶⁵² According to Žarko Paunović, *Nevladine organizacije: potreba ili zavera* (Beograd: Demokratska stranka/istraživačko-izdavački centar, 2007), 8.

⁶⁵³ For more information, see: <http://www.crnps.org/>

has identified 44 CSOs dealing with security. Slightly less than one third (13) of CSOs stated that security is the main field of their interest. More than half (23) said that security is one field of interest. Eight CSOs which sporadically implement some activities in which security topics are represented also took part in the research. These CSOs address the most significant security issues, including; human rights, minority groups, military, police, security-intelligence community, corruption, organised crime, energy safety, terrorism, security co-operation and integration. Most CSOs focus on human rights and minority groups. This suggests that they were created because the public needed to organise itself to protect their rights. More than a third of CSOs are interested in security issues such as monitoring the military, police, and security-intelligence community. Interestingly, CSOs are also interested in highly specialised fields, such as in the energy security, for instance. This shows that these organisations are willing to specialise further. The fact that a large number of CSOs are interested in security issues and the fact that they monitor the most important actors in the security sector suggests that a prerequisite is in place for CSOs to take part in control and oversight of the security sector. This is only the first prerequisite considering that the number of organisations says nothing about the quality of their work.

Area	No. of CSOs	% of CSOs
Human rights	38	86
Minority groups (women, Roma)	27	61
Military	16	36
Police	18	41
Security-intelligence community	15	34
Corruption	19	43
Organised crime	16	36
Energy security	7	16
Terrorism	10	23
Security cooperation and integration	8	18

Table 22: Areas covered by civil society organisations⁶⁵⁴

A small number of CSOs conduct regular research, educational programmes, and public advocacy activities. These organisations' main field of interest is security.

Frequency of activities	No. of CSOs	% of CSOs
Security issues are regularly present in the research conducted by our CSO	13	29.5
Security issues are regularly a part of our public advocacy activities	23	52.3
Security issues are a part of educational activities regularly implemented by our CSO	8	18.2
Total	44	100

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Table 23: Frequency of security related activities regularly implemented by CSOs

Almost all CSOs interviewed in this survey have done some security related research. The least frequently conducted is academic research, probably because of high scientific-methodological criteria, a lack of experts and/or knowledge, or due to orientation towards public advocacy, lobbying, and exerting pressure on authorities. Nine CSOs interviewed for the survey had conducted academic research. For instance, the Victimology Society of Serbia conducted research *People trafficking in Serbia*. This was the first research aimed at closer and more comprehensive insight into trafficking.⁶⁵⁵ More than four fifths of CSOs carried out research with the goal of conducting analysis and providing recommendations for practical application. These included, for instance, public opinion surveys organised by the Centre for Civil-Military Relations and the Atlantic Council of Serbia which, at the time when they were conducted, were the only public opinion surveys addressing security related issues. Two thirds of CSOs have conducted research designed to draw up policy proposals and whose recommendations became part of documents drafted by the government. Recommendations of research conducted by the Centre for Minority Rights, *Protection of the Rights of Roma*, for instance, are included in action plans for Roma

⁶⁵⁴ Overview of how security issues rank among the activities of individual organisations can be seen in the publication *Direktorijum organizacija i institucija zainteresovanih za bezbednosne teme* (Beograd: Centar za civilno-vojne odnose, 2008), 17-19.

⁶⁵⁵ For more information, see: <http://www.vds.org.yu/>

adopted by the government in January 2005, and the Centre for Minority Rights is mentioned as a CSO responsible for overseeing their implementation.

Type of research activity	No. of CSOs	% of CSOs
Scientific / academic research	12	27,3
Practical research	37	84,1
Practical policy recommendations	21	67,4
Total	70	178.8

Table 24: Types of research activities implemented by CSOs⁶⁵⁶

Almost every CSO included in the sample has some form of educational activity, suggesting that organisations, as well as donors, recognise the importance of education. CSOs did not develop capacity to autonomously conduct training programmes since, as they themselves indicate, they normally out-source when they perform these activities. Evaluation of target groups, programmes and lecturers, and the number and profile of the participants in these programmes could provide information about the capacity of respective CSOs. This information goes beyond the content of the questionnaire used in this survey and the results below are only a starting point for future research of CSOs educational capacity.

Forms of educational capacity	No. of CSOs	% of CSOs
Trainings lasting more than five days	15	34.1
Seminars lasting up to five days	37	84.1
Conferences	30	68.2
Round tables	37	84.1
Total	119	270.5

Table 25: Forms of educational activities implemented by CSOs
Publications enable CSOs to share findings with large number of beneficiar-

⁶⁵⁶ Sum total percentages in the columns equals more than 100 per cent because CSOs were given the option to chose more than one answer.

ies. Information collected in this survey relates only to the type of publications issued by CSOs. Almost all CSOs involved in this survey have issued some type of publication that refers to security topics.

Types of publication	No. of CSOs	% of CSOs
Books	26	59.1
Model laws	14	31.8
Analysis – scientific and practical	32	72.7
Journals	14	31.8
Bulletins	19	43.2
Brochures	28	63.6
Manuals	19	43.2
Total	152	

Table 26: Type of security related publications issued by CSOs

The results reveal that every CSO with any interest in security has publicly advocated security sector reform. More than half of CSOs have appeared in TV and radio programmes, and more than a third of them have participated in promotional activities, conferences and media releases. This leads to the conclusion that CSOs have the experience and capability to publicly initiate topics of interest for security. There is no doubt government institutions can count on co-operation with CSOs to inform the public about important security issues. Petitions to amend laws are the least frequently used method. The reasons are many. Besides getting the required number of signatures, the process of law adoption and amendments is protracted. Moreover, CSOs probably believe that some other public advocacy methods offer them more opportunity to achieve their goals and ensure results.

Forms of public advocacy	No. of CSOs	% of CSOs
Petitions for amendments to laws	4	9.1
Law proposals/drafts	18	40.9
Policy change campaigns	28	63.6
Promotional activity	30	68.2
Communications, media conferences	32	72.7
TV and radio programmes	25	56.8
Total	137	

Table 27: Forms of public advocacy implemented by CSOs

The second indicator is important because CSOs capacity is determined by the people who work for them. In our survey we tried to find out the profile of leaders, members, and associates of CSOs interested in security. According to CSO representatives, the number of associates varies depending on current projects and a reliable estimate would be hard to make. Most employees are university educated and are solely employed by the CSO. Teachers and/or researchers employed by universities or institutes account for more than half of CSO associates, increasing the likelihood that CSOs will be competent to oversee the security sector. According to the results of the survey, former members of the armed forces are willing to take part in the activities of these organisations. Their participation has a positive effect on raising capacity and capability in the CSO sector, considering that former members of the armed forces have knowledge of the security system 'from the inside'.

Technical facilities are prerequisites for efficiency and, due to a large number of CSOs, it is hard to appraise these competencies. Representatives of CSOs interviewed were content with their technical environment.

The third indicator – neutrality from political parties, ideology, or interest – is one of the preconditions for independent control and oversight. Cooperation between CSOs and political parties has existed ever since CSOs were founded. In the early 1990s, some CSOs joined together with opposition political parties to fight for democratisation and implementation of reforms in society. At the same time, ethno-nationalistic movements developed whose anti-democratic inclinations⁶⁵⁷ were, inter alia, expressed by their view that civil society should not

⁶⁵⁷ Vukašin Pavlović, 'Civilno društvo i politika' in *Između autoritarizma i demokratije: Srbija, Crna Gora, Hrvatska (Knjiga. 2, Civilno društvo i politička kultura)*, ed. Dragica Vujadinović, Lino Veljak, Vladimir Goati, Veselin Pavićević. (Beograd: CEDET, 2004)

oversee the security sector. The process of civil society development was similar in other ex-republics of SFRY.⁶⁵⁸ A large number of CSOs supported opposition parties before 5 October 2000, either directly or indirectly. After the democratic changes, a number of people from the 'non-government' sector joined the 'government' sector. In this way, political parties were a channel through which the CSO 'elite' passed to the government elite.⁶⁵⁹ Some organisations, such as G17 or Otpor, transformed into political parties, more or less successfully. Civil society organisations still support political parties' initiatives and their members belong to political parties. In this survey, about a quarter of CSOs stated that their associates are present or former political activists. Informal influence from political parties on CSOs is almost impossible to estimate.

Staff structure	No. of CSOs	% of CSOs
Teachers and/or researchers employed with universities or institutes	24	54,5
University-educated individuals to whom this is the only employment	39	88,6
Former members of the armed forces	5	11,6
Present or former political activists/political party activists	12	27,3
Journalists	9	20,5
Total	89	202,5

Table 28: Staff structure of CSOs interested in security issues

The fourth indicator concerns funding sources and sustainability. Data from the tables below suggest that CSOs rely primarily on foreign funding sources. Less than a third of CSOs have taken funds from Serbian government institutions and more than four fifths have received funds from foreign governments.

⁶⁵⁸ Compare with Lino Veljak, "Civilno društvo i politika u Hrvatskoj", in *Između autoritarizma i demokratije: Srbija, Crna Gora, Hrvatska (Knjiga. 2, Civilno društvo i politička kultura)*, ed. Dragica Vujadinović, Lino Veljak, Vladimir Goati, Veselin Pavićević. (Beograd: CEDET, 2004)

⁶⁵⁹ According to: Vladimir Goati, 'Partije i akteri civilnog društva u Srbiji', in *Između autoritarizma i demokratije: Srbija, Crna Gora, Hrvatska (Knjiga. 2, Civilno društvo i politička kultura)*, ed. Dragica Vujadinović, Lino Veljak, Vladimir Goati, Veselin Pavićević. (Beograd: CEDET, 2004), 260.

CSOs' dependence on foreign funding sources, however, may result in their activities being directed by the interests of foreign donors. They may have to adjust their activities to priorities forced on them from outside. Another consequence may be that the local community perceive CSOs as 'foreign mercenaries'. This is why it is important for government institutions to understand the importance of independent control and oversight and to allocate funds for CSOs. These organisations do not plan their funding sources and they do not normally make five-year plans. A developed fund-raising plan is important for effective control and oversight of the security sector, considering that control and oversight is a long-term effort.

Domestic funding sources	No. of CSOs	% of CSOs
NGOs	10	22,7
Government institutions	12	27,3
Academic institutions	4	9,1
International institutions and organisations established in Serbia	34	77,3
Private foundations	8	18,2
Total	68	

Table 29: Domestic funding sources used by CSOs

Foreign funding sources	No. of CSOs	% of CSOs
NGOs	30	68,2
Governments	36	81,8
Academic institutions	12	27,3
International institutions and organisations	39	88,6
Private foundations	26	59,1
Total	143	

Table 30: Foreign funding sources used by CSOs

The fifth indicator relates to national and cross-border interconnectedness. Implementation of joint initiatives and activities increases the impact of CSOs

on processes and reforms in society. Almost half of CSOs taking part in the survey have continuous, and two fifths sporadic, cooperation with other organisations. About a third of organisations have formalised cooperation. Implementation of joint projects in which CSOs share responsibilities is still quite rare, which suggests that CSOs have failed to establish mutual trust.

Most CSOs acknowledge the importance of interconnectedness, considering that it increases visibility, impact, and the lawfulness of their activities. This is confirmed by data suggests that most CSOs (80 per cent) are members of mostly informal networks. Networks and coalitions are most represented in the activities of public advocacy, and examples of successful networks and collations include the Coalition for Free Access to Information, the Coalition of Women for Peace (which supports the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325/2000⁶⁶⁰) and the Network of the Committees for Human Rights in Serbia (which provides free legal assistance to citizens in six towns of Serbia). Most CSOs taking part in this survey are members of the Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations (FENS), the largest domestic network with 519 member organisations. The Federation calls for the improvement of the position of CSOs. Joining the network is probably also a result of prevailing trends, taking into account that donors support joint action. A high percentage of CSOs belong to cross-border networks – international (55 per cent) and regional (25 per cent). However, almost half (45 per cent) belong to a domestic network. This data is not unusual considering foreign grants almost always specify affiliation to specific networks.

Membership	No. of CSOs	% of CSOs
CSO is a member of a network of institutions and/or organisations	35	80
CSO is not a member of a network of institutions and/or organisations	9	20
Total	44	100

Table 31: Membership in networks of institutions and/or organisations

The sixth indicator – presence in the public and media – is important considering that media constitute the most significant channel for the transmission

⁶⁶⁰ This Resolution recommends that states build mechanisms for conflict resolution based on gender equality. For more information, see Women in Black website: <http://www.zeneucnom.org/>

of information. Most CSOs had cooperation with the media. However, there is no regular empirical research about the CSOs presence in the media in Serbia. A good illustration of this is research conducted by Pro Concept in 2004 and 2005, analysing CSO work environments.⁶⁶¹ This research observed and analysed media reporting about CSOs. According to the results, CSOs receive only marginal publicity in the printed media. This is confirmed by the number of published articles (an average ten texts per journal in a month), and their structure (mostly short forms). Connotative value of the texts was negative in a high proportion (29 per cent), as opposed to affirmative (15 per cent). More than half of texts (56 per cent) transmitted the information neutrally. The context of reporting was especially negative with regard to CSOs dealing with war crimes and trials at the Hague War Crimes Tribunal. The above results lead to the conclusion that presence of these organisations in the media is not adequate and, therefore, their work is not fully accessible to the public.

Grade: 3 (three)

THE RULE OF LAW

The rule of law can be used to assess the legal status of CSOs. In other words, does it facilitate or impede control and oversight over the security sector, and what legal recourses are available to CSOs? For this purpose we have tried to evaluate whether provisions regulating the operation of CSOs comply with the legal system, whether constitutional and legal authorisations for participating in the control and oversight of the security sector are in place, whether legislative norms are in line with international standards, and how CSO funding and taxation are regulated.

CSOs are regulated by the *Law on social organisations and citizens' associations* of 1990. The law is outdated, inappropriate, and derives from the present Constitution and laws that refer to business activity in general terms (the *Accounting and auditing law*, the *Law on payment transactions and the Labour law*). It can be therefore said that legislation concerning the CSO sector is not harmonised with the legal system.

The Constitution does not explicitly define the right for civil society to take part in control and oversight of the security sector. Laws adopted after 2000 offer some instruments that enabled society and citizens to participate in control and oversight of the security sector. The *Law on Armed Forces* is the only law that

⁶⁶¹ ProConcept and Open Society Fund – Serbia, Professional Gathering ‘Analysing the NGO Environment – Challenges and Transitions’ (June 2005); http://www.proconcept.rs/prog-civilno/zbirna_analiza.pdf

contains a provision on citizens' democratic control and oversight.⁶⁶² The *Law on defence*⁶⁶³ and the *Law on police*⁶⁶⁴ also introduced a possibility for including citizens in the implementation of security policy and control and oversight of the security sector. The *Law on free access to information of public importance* as well as the *Law on public procurements* offer CSOs and citizens some instruments that enable them to exercise public control and oversight. The *Law on public procurements* defines the transparency of public procurements, and the *Law on free access to information of public importance* introduces the term 'information of public importance.' A claimant can turn to the Commissioner for Information if he is not provided with suitable information. However, these laws have some deficiencies. The *Law on Armed Forces* provision relating to citizen inclusion is overly generalised and is unclear what mechanism can be used to exercise this control and oversight. The *Law on free access to information* does not contain any penal provisions to sanction non-observance and it therefore common that institutions fail to respond to requests from civil society.⁶⁶⁵ Data presented by the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance confirms that the security sector is the least transparent part of the public administration. According to this information, the two institutions which have disregarded the most citizens' requests and failed to provide information to the public are the Security Intelligence Agency and the Ministry of Interior.⁶⁶⁶ Secondly, the absence of legislation on the classification of secret information means that information is unnecessarily designated as secret. This limits the participation of civil society in public control and oversight.⁶⁶⁷ According to research conducted by the Coalition for Free Access to Information, the law on data classification

⁶⁶² According to *Zakon o vojsci*, čl. 29, Službeni glasnik RS, br. 116–07.

⁶⁶³ Compare with: *Zakon o odbrani*, Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije 116-07, član 76

⁶⁶⁴ Compare with: *Zakon o policiji*, Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije, 101-2005, Art. 6, 180, and 188

⁶⁶⁵ In 12 months of monitoring the implementation of the *Law on free access to information of public importance*, the Youth Initiative for Human Rights submitted 747 requests for free access to information and 214 complaints to the Commissioner because of non-compliance with the Law. Based on these submissions, the Initiative initiated ten minor offence proceedings, inter alia, against the Security Intelligence Agency, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice. For more information, see the Youth Initiative for Human Rights website: http://www.yi.org.yu/actions.php?id=5&lang=_bhs

⁶⁶⁶ For more information, see the annual reports of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance at the Commissioner's website: <http://www.poverenik.org.yu/dokumentacija.asp?ID=6>

⁶⁶⁷ One example is the rejected request from B92 TV to the Ministry of Interior for the official record of the interview with Milorad Ulemek, the first defendant in the assassination of Zoran Djindjic, given on the night of his surrender. The Minister of Police stated that the record could not be presented while court proceedings are still in progress. The spokesperson for the District Court Special Department, however, stated that this official record is of no value since the court does not address issues outside those contained in the bill of indictment for the assassination. For more information, see the Coalition for Free Access to Information website: http://www.spikoalicija.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=71&Itemid=59&limit=9&limitstart=18

is needed to enable full legislative regulation in this field.⁶⁶⁸ The *Law on public procurements* (article 7) defines confidential procurements which are exempt from public insight.⁶⁶⁹

The following international regulations the activities of civil society; the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights, International Pact on Civil and Political Rights, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights. The operational standards for CSOs are defined in the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.⁶⁷⁰

The right of association is the first standard recognised by the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights. Freedom of association is incorporated in article 55 of the Serbian Constitution, which reads; "Freedom of political, union and any other forms of association shall be guaranteed, as well as the right to stay out of any association." Secondly, the right to take action and for action to be free and protected from government interference, is provided for by the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights. This right is also regulated in article 55 of the Constitution. It spells out that; "Associations shall be formed without prior approval and entered in the register kept by a state body, in accordance with the law." Thirdly, there is the right to freedom of expression and communication with domestic and international partners. In Serbia, respect for this right is confirmed by data presented in this chapter about CSOs co-operation and networks. Fourth is the right for organisations to request and provide operating funds from legal sources. More precisely, it provides that regulations do not prevent organisations receiving funds from abroad. Although this is not incorporated into domestic regulations, it can be concluded from the survey of CSOs interested in security issues that the government does not prevent organisations from seeking operating funds. Most of the organisations receive funds through foreign grants and the government does not encourage any funding of civil society activities.

⁶⁶⁸ Analysis is available at the Coalition for Free Access to Information website: <http://www.spikoalicija.org/>

⁶⁶⁹ Article 7, paragraph 4 reads that "procurements for which specific regulations provide that they can be declared confidential and with regard to which the competent authority, based on its powers referred to in the specific regulation, has issued a decision to designate them confidential, in view of the fact that security of the state or citizens could be affected by unauthorised persons' knowledge that such procurements are being implemented or knowledge that the objects of procurement have particular specifications or that procurement is implemented from a particular bidder."

⁶⁷⁰ More detailed analysis of internationally-recognised rights can be found in the report of the International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) and the World Movement for Democracy Secretariat at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED); *Defending civil society: A report of the World Movement for Democracy* (February 2008):<http://www.wmd.org/documents/Defending%20Civil%20Society%20-%20English.pdf>

The OSCE 'Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security' lists international standards in the field of security. Part VII of the Code (paragraph 20) recommends integration of the armed forces with civil society as a key expression of democracy. Although general in nature the provision underlines the importance of democratic legitimacy of the security sector. The participation of civil society in democratic civic control, understood in general terms, is recognised in the *Law on Armed Forces*. Article 29 states that "democratic and civilian control of the Armed Forces of Serbia shall be exercised by the parliament, the Protector of Citizens, and other government authorities, in accordance with their respective competences, citizens and the public." International norms provide a general framework for enabling CSOs to act freely and express their interest in security issues.

Legislative provisions governing the funding and taxation of CSOs are identical to regulations applying to any legal person. They oblige organisations to open a bank account, to maintain funds and make payments through that account, in accordance with the *Law on payment transactions*. All legal persons are obliged to keep business books. They must prepare financial reports according to the *Accounting and auditing law*. A CSO that employs people for specific jobs has, according to the *Labour law*, all the rights and obligations as any other employer. The law does not regulate nor stimulate funding (by exempting donors from tax liability) and does not provide tax discounts for CSOs.

Grade: 2 (two)

TRANSPARENCY

CSOs are not subject to the provisions of the *Law on free access to information*, since they are not founded or funded by government bodies. All CSOs taking part in this survey are citizens' associations and, therefore, do not fall within the scope of the law.

Financial transparency is guaranteed by legislative provisions which oblige CSOs to keep business books and to prepare financial reports prescribed for all legal persons (the *Accounting and auditing law*).

Transparency of CSOs is important because, by disclosing information about their activities and business operations, they set a good example of business practices, avoid secrecy, and the build trust of both actors in the security sector and the general public. To observe transparency of CSOs we have included the following indicators; public accessibility of information about CSO missions, competences, and scope, as well as about projects and actions. In addition, there is also public accessibility to information about CSO funding sources and about the way grants are spent.

A large number of CSOs in Serbia have websites which provide information about their aims and work. Only two (out of 44) CSOs covered by this research do not have a website. The websites provide information about organisational structure, mission, and activities. In most cases it is also possible to download publications, and some of them offer the data about the number of hits.

In most cases donors oblige CSOs to present the information about where they receive support. CSOs are accountable to donors with regard to the use of resources and the public is usually not allowed insight into funding sources and the way in which the funds are spent. Independent audits are not legal obligations and there is practically no information about which CSOs have implemented such financial scrutiny. Information on CSOs budgets is not publicly available.

Information about CSO activities is generally available through their individual websites but CSOs are still not financially transparent.

Grade: **2.5 (two point five)**

INTEGRATEDNESS OF CSOs IN THE SECURITY SECTOR

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Integratedness of CSOs was measured by two indicators. The first implies that the position of CSO in the security sector must be recognised and defined in regulatory and strategic documents. The second indicator relates to the actual participation of CSOs in the process of security policy creation and implementation.

The existing laws governing the security sector require the Armed Forces to consult civil society when creating and implementing security policy. Through interviews with the Serbian Ministry of Defence we have learnt that there are no internal rulebooks that specify cooperation between the Ministry and CSOs. Cooperation normally depends on informal contacts. There is no institutionalised cooperation involving CSOs and the authorities. The Government of the Republic of Serbia Office for EU Integration has, however, signed 'Memorandums on cooperation in the European integration process' with more than 30 CSOs, and has designated priorities as cooperation in education and training, agriculture, youth policy issues, protection of human rights, and environmental protection.⁶⁷¹

Initiatives for cooperation almost always originate from CSOs and their success is usually determined by daily politics. Some attempts have been made to build mechanisms for institutionalising cooperation between government and

⁶⁷¹ See more detail at the Office for EU Integration website: <http://www.seio.sr.gov.yu/code/navigate.asp?ld=192>

civil society, such the 'National Covenant on the EU', which is intended to gather together all actors involved in the process of EU integration. Moreover, this should enable dialogue between the government and the non-government sector. The Covenant has a working group dealing with the judiciary, freedom and safety.⁶⁷² The Covenant was launched in 2006, but the idea did not progress due to the existence of 'technical' government and interruption of EU negotiations. It was launched again in late 2008. The Covenant will make recommendations to the government in regard to taking positions, implementing actions, and preparing strategies related to particular issues.

Accordingly, we conclude that civil society organisations are not integrated into the security sector. However, the grade for this indicator takes into account efforts to institutionalise cooperation since 2000.

Grade: 2 (two)

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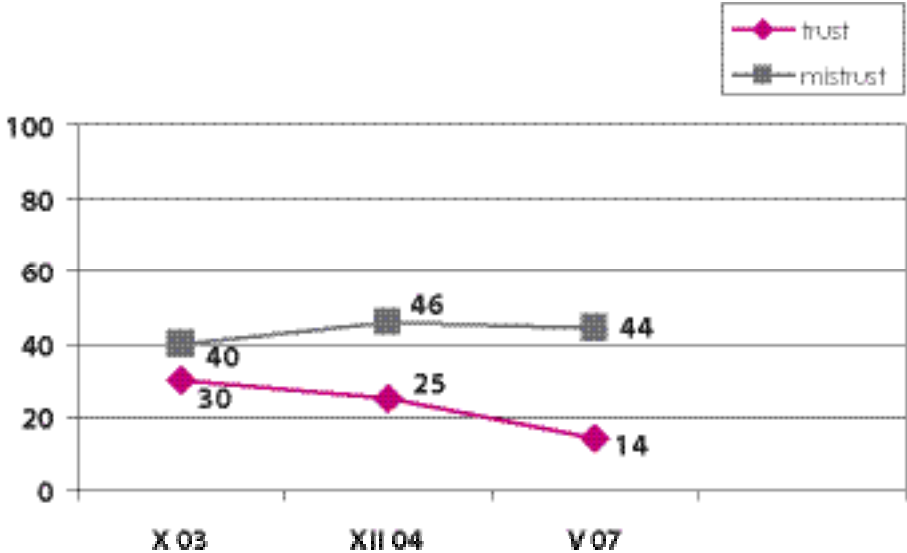


Chart 17: Trust in NGOs⁶⁷³

⁶⁷² See more detail about the structure and work groups of the National Convention on European Union in Serbia at the European Movement in Serbia website: <http://www.emins.org/projekti/aktivni/nkeu/index.htm>

⁶⁷³ Note: The result for 2007 was based on the integrated results about trust in domestic and foreign NGOs. The graph shows results of a survey conducted by the Institute of Social Sciences Centre for Political Research and Public Opinion, Belgrade. Source: <http://www.idn.org.yu>

LEGITIMACY

The Serbian public expresses extremely low levels of trust in civil society organisations. Since 2000, surveys conducted by the Institute for Political Sciences have shown that distrust exceeds trust.⁶⁷⁴

There are many reasons for this situation. A survey conducted in late 2006 suggested that distrust is caused partially by a lack of information about the activities of CSOs. According to the survey, only 16 per cent of respondents know about the issues tackled by CSOs and more than two fifths cannot name a single CSO. The survey also found that the citizens do not believe that CSOs have a deep impact on society and do not recognise them as actors in security sector reform. Further, citizens tend to associate the work of CSOs with human rights and assistance to vulnerable groups. It is, however, not possible to grade the neutrality or independence of these organisations since they were not covered by the public opinion survey. Nevertheless, it is highly likely that the negative image of CSOs in the media has contributed much to this negative image.

Grade: **2 (two)**

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⁶⁷⁴ See more detail at the Centre for Political Research and Public Opinion website: <http://www.cpijm.org.yu/>