



# CIVICUS Civil Society Index

## ITALIAN CIVIL SOCIETY FACING NEW CHALLENGES

*Second edition*

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Edited by Giovanni Moro, Roberto Ranucci and Monica Ruffa



## FOREWORD

Cittadinanzattiva (Active Citizenship) is an independent civic participation movement established in 1978 and operating in Italy and Europe. Its mission is to empower citizens as actors of the protection of rights and the care for common goods. It has 76,000 members in Italy, participating in 235 local assemblies or in federated associations. Cittadinanzattiva operates above all through networks aimed at involving citizens in policy making in different areas. The networks are the Tribunal for Patients' Rights and the Coordination of Chronically Ill Associations operating in health care and welfare; the 'Citizens' Advocates' operating in consumer protection and general interest services; the Justice for Rights network engaged in the justice system and legal intervention; the School of Active Citizenship, working on education institutions and civic education; and the Active Citizenship Network, linking about 70 national-based citizens' associations operating in 28 European Union countries. The main general result that Cittadinanzattiva has substantially contributed to achieve is the 2001 reform of Italian Constitution, introducing (art. 118.4) the principle of 'horizontal' subsidiarity, which recognises autonomous citizens' activity for the general interest as a pillar of the Republic. Cittadinanzattiva has been a member of CIVICUS since the second half of the 1990s.

In Cittadinanzattiva's tradition there is a strong link between civic action and research, as well as between domestic and international dimensions. These were the bases of our decision, taken in 2003, to carry out the Civil Society Index in Italy.

At the end of this work, I can state that this project was a very important occasion to create a common ground of knowledge on civic activism in Italy, thus enriching both the self-awareness of civil society organisations and the degree of attention of their stakeholders. The research process itself has been implemented through a strong involvement of people and organisations, thus making it truly participatory. I hope that in the same way the results of the research, reported in this document, will be used as a common tool for better knowledge and more effective action.

The Active Citizenship Foundation (FONDACA, [www.fondaca.org](http://www.fondaca.org)) played a role of crucial importance in the success of the project. FONDACA, an institution based in Rome, was created in 2001 with a mission to support the development of civic activism through social research, advanced training, cultural dialogue and the mobilisation of resources. It is inspired by the experience and mission of Cittadinanzattiva and, among others, has the role of scientific advisor of the movement, both at national and at European level, as it was for this project. I am very grateful for the contribution of FONDACA to the project.

Teresa Petrangolini, General Secretary

Cittadinanzattiva (Active Citizenship)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Civil Society Index (CSI) in Italy was carried out by Cittadinanzattiva and FONDACA in cooperation with a wide range of organisations and individuals. The project's methodology was developed by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation.

We are grateful to all the members of the Advisory Committee that offered their precious time, knowledge and experience in order to better interpret the results of the research. They are Mariano Bottaccio, Luisa Crisigiovanni, Costanza Fanelli, Diego Galli, Giangi Milesi, Toni Mira, Maddalena Pelagalli, Marina Porro, Elena Tropeano.

A special thank goes to the 90 CSOs who took part on the Organisational Survey, to the 30 relevant persons who were involved in the External Perception Survey and Massimo Blasi and Franco Malagrino who organised the focus groups and to all the persons that took part in them.

A number of persons gave general contributions to the research in its various phases. We want to thank them for making easier a very complex process. Lastly, we wish to express our appreciation to Natalie Akstein, Tracy Anderson, Yosi Evecherry Burckhardt, Andrew Firmin, David Kode, Jacob Mati and Mark Nowotny from the CIVICUS CSI team, for their selfless assistance and advice provided during the project implementation.

Vittorio Ferla, Giovanni Moro, Roberto Ranucci, Monica Ruffa

National Index Team

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**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

AC	Advisory Committee
ACN	Active Citizenship Network
CS	Civil society
CIVICUS CSI	Civil Society Index
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSO AC	Civil Society Organisations Advisory Committee
FONDACA	Active Citizenship Foundation
ISTAT	Italian Institute of Statistics
NCO	National Coordinating Organisation
NIT	National Index Team
NGO	Non-governmental organisation

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Here we present the main findings, observations and implications of the second edition of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) project in Italy, which has been carried out by Cittadinanzattiva and Active Citizenship Foundation (FONDACA).

The CSI, a participatory action-research project assessing the state of civil society in countries around the world, aims at creating a knowledge base and momentum for civil society strengthening. The CSI is initiated and implemented by, and for, civil society organisations (CSOs) at the country level, in partnership with CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation. The CSI implementation actively involves and disseminates its findings to a broad range of stakeholders, including civil society, government, the media, donors, academics and the public at large.

The research is designed to collect information and give a meaningful score to the state of civil society according to five different dimensions: civic engagement, level of organisation, practice of values, perception of impact and the external environment.

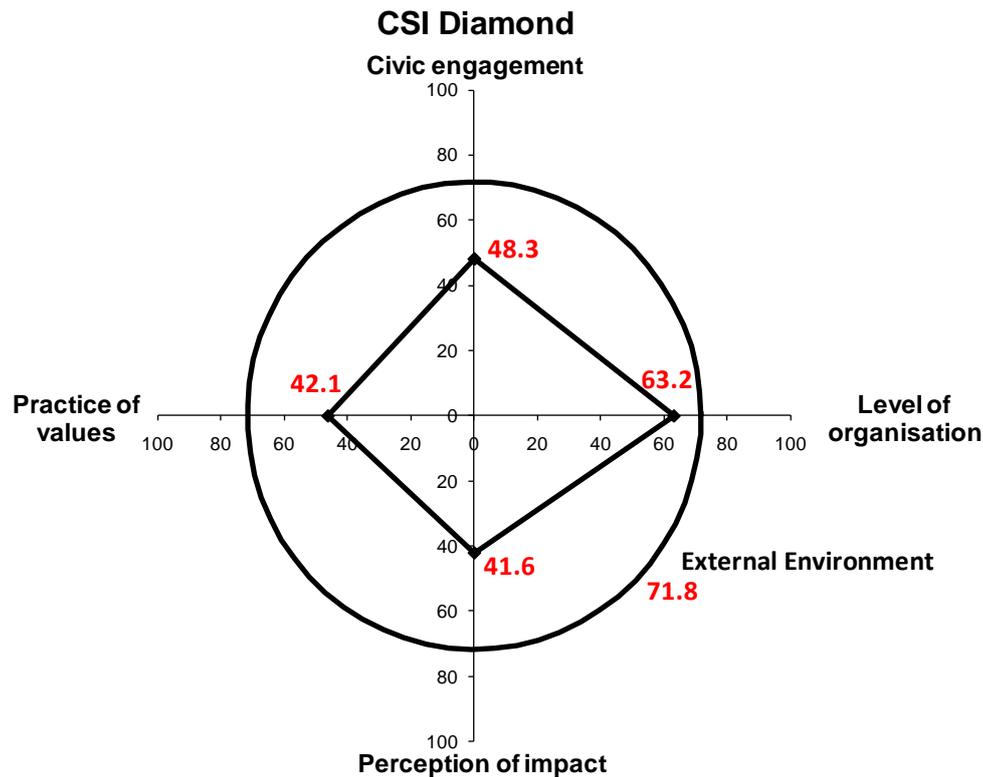
The information about Italian civil society was collected through:

- consultation of secondary data coming from international surveys;
- involvement of 90 CSOs and of 30 external stakeholders comprising experts and policy makers in two different surveys;
- drafting of four case studies focusing on four of the five dimensions of civil society;
- consultation of an Advisory Committee formed of civil society experts;
- organisation of two regional focus groups.

The results of the research are illustrated visually through the Civil Society Diamond (see Figure 1 below), which is one of the most essential and well-known components of the CSI project. To form the Civil Society Diamond, 67 quantitative indicators are aggregated into 28 sub-dimensions which are then assembled into the five final dimensions along a 0-100 scale. The Diamond's size seeks to portray an empirical picture of the state of civil society, the conditions that support or inhibit civil society's development, and the consequences of civil society's activities for society at large. The context or environment is represented visually by a circle around the axes of the Civil Society Diamond, and is not regarded as part of the state of civil society but rather as something external that still remains a crucial element for its wellbeing.

As regard the state of Italian civil society, the information collected during the research contributed to draw the following CSI diamond:

Figure 2: Italian Civil Society Diamond



The dimension that registered the highest values was the external environment, then in decreasing order the dimensions of level of organisation, civic engagement, practice of values and lastly, the perception of impact.

### **Civic Engagement**

The level of **Civic Engagement** in Italy is **48.3%**. This means that in Italy citizen's engagement in socially-based and politically-based activities is quite common, but could be higher. Looking at the available data, it seems that in Italy being an active member of one or more social organisations or political organisations is not so rare. In addition, the percentage of members of organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants, people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people or people with disabilities scored very high. We have to say that even though this category of people are numerically an important part of civil society, their presence in leadership positions within CSOs is very rare.

### **Level of Organisation**

The results here, drawn mostly from the Organisational Survey, show an average score of **63.2%** for the Level of Organisation dimension of CSI. This means that in Italy CSOs are quite well organised: they often belong to a network, have an effective system of internal governance, a good level of communication with similar organisations and regular access to technologies. However, the weak aspects of this dimension, according to the opinion of the AC, are:

- the quality of the relationship that CSOs have with other organisations, which is very often limited to a sporadic exchange of information;

- the financial resource base that, since it is characterised by a strategy of funding mix, is not particularly stable, in the opinion of many CSOs.

Lastly according to the research, international NGOs (INGOs) are quite present in Italy.

### ***Practice of Values***

The level of the **Practice of Values** in Italy scored **46.3%**. This shows that the extent to which civil society practices some core values is not so high. According to the results of the Organisational Survey, while almost all CSOs practice democratic decision-making internally and declare to have a code of conduct and policies on transparency, the number of CSOs that pay attention to labour regulations and that have a policy on environmental standards is quite limited. In addition, the values of non-violence, democracy and honesty do not emerge as having a solid base within Italian civil society.

### ***Perception of impact***

The scores for this dimension are derived from a combination of the Organisational Survey and External Perceptions Survey, with the latter surveying knowledgeable people in positions of authority outside of civil society. The level of the **Perception of Impact** in Italy was scored at **42.1%**. This means that Italian CSOs are seen as having a modest social and political impact as well as limited impact on attitudes in society. According to the results of the research it seems that external perception of impact is more positive than the internal perception: the value registered for external perception is indeed higher in two out of three indicators, albeit with a lower value registered for policy impact. Furthermore it can be added that the context in which civil society's action seems to have more impact is the social one. However, it seems that in Italy civil society has a very limited impact on attitudes.

### ***External Environment***

The level of the **External Environment** in Italy scored **71.8%**. This means that Italian CSOs occupy quite a favourable socio economic, political and cultural context.

It must be noted that Italian CSOs enjoy a relatively safe and enabling environment, both from the legal and socio-economic points of view. Civil society-state relations reflect this situation, as well as the ongoing development of positive relations with the private sector. Serious concerns do exist, however, about the socio-cultural context, a traditional weak point in the Italian environment, and the political system, which is not yet stable and so unable to fulfil properly its role. The main weak points of this dimension are the low level of public spiritedness, the high level of perceived corruption, the low level of freedom of press and the ineffectiveness of the state in enforcing law. All these elements are in some way linked to the weakness of Italian political leadership.

Compared to the past edition of CSI, the value of the perception of impact is lower and the value of the level of organisation dimension (which in the previous methodology was called structure) is higher. Since civil society in Italy has not changed in the last four years, we think that this difference is due to the difference in the methodology for collecting information in the two iterations: the first edition was mainly a collection of secondary data to which a group of experts gave an assessment, whilst in this edition such information mainly came from the opinions of a sample of CSOs. The results are in line with typically witnessed attitudes of Italian CSOs, which tend to over-estimate what they do internally and under-estimate the impact of their actions. This is a behaviour that also emerged during the past edition of the research.

According to the results of this second edition, civil society in Italy is confirmed to be a mature and solid phenomenon. The weak points that require the utmost attention, as they emerged from the research, seem to be the ability to influence the attitudes and values of Italian society in general; the inclusion and management of diversity; the attention to immigrants and their need to practice citizenship in CSOs; the commitment to emerging problems in Italy, such as social mobility and the rule of law, the increase of international links needed to face the effects of globalisation; and, of course, the enhancement of political impact, which the research confirmed to be far behind social impact.

In the meanwhile, the strong points of Italian civil society are the socio-economic context and the considerable number of citizens that are engaged both in social and politically based organisations. In particular, Italian CSOs seem to have as positive aspects stable internal governance and a democratic decision-making process; in addition they respect codes of conduct, have regular access to technologies and are often member of support networks.

At the end of the analysis we suggest the following recommendations:

- It is important for the official statistic authorities to fill the current gap in the provision of reliable data on Italian CSOs;
- the academic community should develop research projects and activities not only on perceptions and representations of CSOs' members but also on the practical and tangible aspects of these;
- the mass media should represent the actual activity and results of CSOs;
- political leaders and governmental institutions should not ignore the contribution of CSOs in policy making processes;
- CSOs should operate to remove the weaknesses related to them that emerged from this research, in order not to distract from the positive efforts and outcomes that characterise them.

## INTRODUCTION

This report presents the outcomes of the second edition of the CSI project in Italy, implemented from 2008 to 2011 as part of the international CSI project coordinated by CIVICUS.

The report has six parts. The first part presents the main aspects of the CSI project and its approach, while a description of the history and features of Italian civil society is offered in the second part of the report.

The core of the research, that is, an analysis of Italian civil society, is offered in the third part of the document. Following this is a description of the strengths and weaknesses of Italian civil society, together with a list of recommendations and some concluding comments.

### I. CIVIL SOCIETY INDEX PROJECT AND APPROACH

Civil society is playing an increasingly important role in governance and development around the world. In most countries, however, knowledge about the state and shape of civil society is limited. Moreover, opportunities for civil society stakeholders to come together to collectively discuss, reflect and act on the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities also remain limited.

The CSI, a participatory action-research project assessing the state of civil society in countries around the world, contributes to redressing these limitations. It aims at creating a knowledge base and momentum for civil society strengthening. The CSI is initiated and implemented by, and for, civil society organisations at the country level, in partnership with CIVICUS. The CSI implementation actively involves and disseminates its findings to a broad range of stakeholders including civil society, government, the media, donors, academics, and the public at large.

The following key steps in CSI implementation take place at the country level:

1. **Assessment:** CSI uses an innovative mix of participatory research methods, data sources, and case studies to comprehensively assess the state of civil society using five dimensions: Civic Engagement, Level of Organisation, Practice of Values, Perception of Impact and the External Environment.
2. **Collective reflection:** implementation involves structured dialogue among diverse civil society stakeholders that enables the identification of civil society's specific strengths and weaknesses
3. **Joint action:** the actors involved use a participatory and consultative process to develop and implement a concrete action agenda to strengthen civil society in a country.

The following four sections provide a background of the CSI, its key principles and approaches, as well as a snapshot of the methodology used in the generation of this report in Italy, and its limitations.

### 1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The CSI first emerged as a concept over a decade ago as a follow-up to the 1997 *New Civic Atlas* publication by CIVICUS, which contained profiles of civil society in 60 countries around the world (Heinrich and Naidoo (2001). The first version of the CSI methodology, developed by CIVICUS with the help of Helmut Anheier, was unveiled in 1999. An initial pilot of the tool was carried out in 2000 in 13 countries.<sup>1</sup> The pilot implementation process and results were evaluated. This evaluation informed a revision of the

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<sup>1</sup> The pilot countries were Belarus, Canada, Croatia, Estonia, Indonesia, Mexico, New Zealand, Pakistan, Romania, South Africa, Ukraine, Uruguay, and Wales.

methodology. Subsequently, CIVICUS successfully implemented the first complete phase of the CSI between 2003 and 2006 in 53 countries worldwide. This implementation directly involved more than 7,000 civil society stakeholders (Heinrich 2008). Italy was part of this phase as well, thanks to the Cittadinanzattiva and FONDACA engagement.<sup>2</sup>

Intent on continuing to improve the research-action orientation of the tool, CIVICUS worked with the Centre for Social Investment at the University of Heidelberg, as well as with partners and other stakeholders, to rigorously evaluate and revise the CSI methodology for a second time before the start of this current phase of CSI. With this new and streamlined methodology in place, CIVICUS launched its current phase of the CSI in 2008 and selected its country partners, including both previous and new implementers, from all over the globe to participate in the project. Table 1 below includes a list of implementing countries in the current phase of the CSI.

Table 1: List of CSI implementing countries 2008-2011<sup>3</sup>

1. Albania	14. Ghana	29. Niger
2. Argentina	15. Italy	30. Philippines
3. Armenia	16. Japan	31. Russia
4. Bahrain	17. Jordan	32. Serbia
5. Belarus	18. Kazakhstan	33. Slovenia
6. Bulgaria	19. Kosovo	34. South Korea
7. Burkina Faso	20. Lebanon	35. Sudan
8. Chile	21. Liberia	36. Togo
9. Croatia	22. Macedonia	37. Turkey
10. Cyprus	23. Madagascar	38. Uganda
11. Djibouti	24. Mali	39. Ukraine
12. Democratic Republic of Congo	25. Malta	40. Uruguay
13. Georgia	26. Mexico	41. Venezuela
	27. Morocco	42. Zambia
	28. Nicaragua	

## 2. PROJECT APPROACH

The current CSI project approach (2008-2010) continues to marry assessment and evidence with reflections and action. This approach provides an important reference point for all work carried out within the framework of the CSI. As such, CSI does not produce knowledge for its own sake but instead seeks to directly apply the knowledge generated to stimulate strategies that enhance the effectiveness and role of civil society. With this in mind, the CSI's fundamental methodological bedrocks which have greatly influenced the implementation that this report is based upon include the following:<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> G. Moro, I. Vannini (2006), *Italian Civil Society facing new challenges*, CIVICUS Civil Society Index Report for Italy, Rome; G. Moro, I. Vannini (2008), *La società civile tra eredità e sfide. Rapporto sull'Italia del Civil society index*, Rubbettino, Rome.

<sup>3</sup> Note that this list was accurate as of the publication of this Analytical Country Report, but may have changed slightly since the publication, due to countries being added or dropped during the implementation cycle.

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**Inclusiveness:** The CSI framework strives to incorporate a variety of theoretical viewpoints, as well as being inclusive in terms of civil society indicators, actors and processes included in the project.

**Universality:** Since the CSI is a global project, its methodology seeks to accommodate national variations in context and concepts within its framework.

**Comparability:** The CSI aims not to rank, but instead to comparatively measure different aspects of civil society worldwide. The possibility for comparisons exists both between different countries or regions within one phase of CSI implementation and between phases.

**Versatility:** The CSI is specifically designed to achieve an appropriate balance between international comparability and national flexibility in the implementation of the project.

**Dialogue:** One of the key elements of the CSI is its participatory approach, involving a wide range of stakeholders who collectively own and run the project in their respective countries.

**Capacity development:** Country partners are firstly trained on the CSI methodology during a three day regional workshop. After the training, partners are supported through the implementation cycle by the CSI team at CIVICUS. Partners participating in the project also gain substantial skills in research, training and facilitation in implementing the CSI in-country.

**Networking:** The participatory and inclusive nature of the different CSI tools (e.g. focus groups, the Advisory Committee, the National Workshops) should create new spaces where very diverse actors can discover synergies and forge new alliances, including at a cross-sectoral level. Some countries in the last phase (2003-2005) have also participated in regional conferences to discuss the CSI findings as well as cross-national civil society issues.

**Change:** The principal aim of the CSI is to generate information that is of practical use to civil society practitioners and other primary stakeholders. Therefore, the CSI framework seeks to identify aspects of civil society that can be changed and to generate information and knowledge relevant to action-oriented goals.

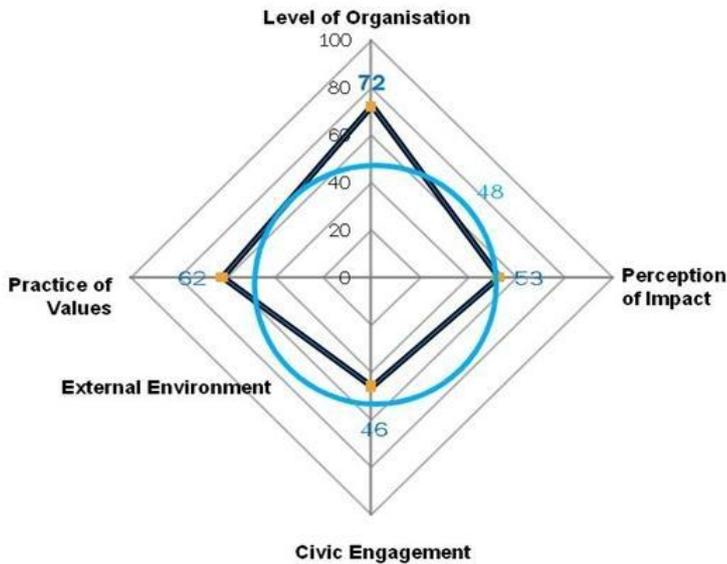
With the above mentioned foundations, the CSI methodology uses a combination of participatory and scientific research methods to generate an assessment of the state of civil society at the national level. The CSI measures the following core dimensions:

- (1) Civic Engagement
- (2) Level of Organisation
- (3) Practice of Values
- (4) Perceived Impact
- (5) External Environment

These dimensions are illustrated visually through the Civil Society Diamond (see Figure 2 below), which is one of the most essential and well-known components of the CSI project. To form the Civil Society Diamond, 67 quantitative indicators are aggregated into 28 sub-dimensions which are then assembled into the five final dimensions along a 0-100 percentage scale. The Diamond's size seeks to portray an empirical picture of the state of civil society, the conditions that support or inhibit civil society's development, as well as the consequences of civil society's activities for society at large. The context or environment is CIVICUS Civil Society Index Analytical Country Report for Italy

represented visually by a circle around the axes of the Civil Society Diamond, and is not regarded as part of the state of civil society but rather as something external that still remains a crucial element for its wellbeing.

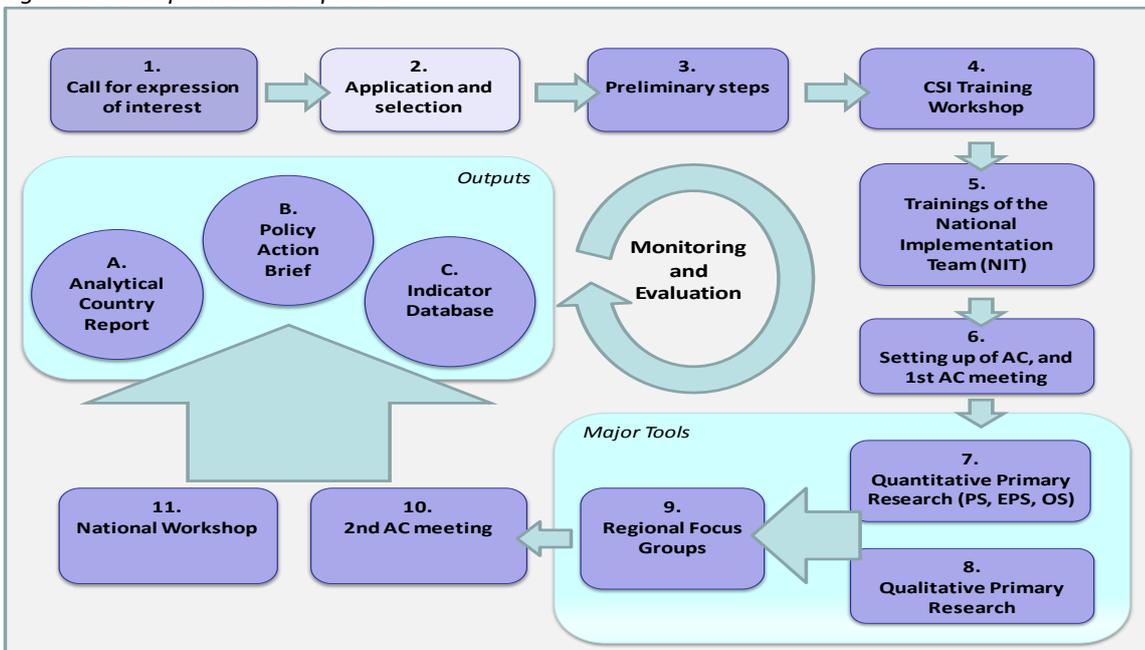
Figure 2: The Civil Society Index Diamond



### 3. CSI IMPLEMENTATION

There are several key CSI programme implementation activities as well as several structures involved, as summarised by the figure below:<sup>5</sup>

Figure 3: CSI implementation process



The major tools and elements of the CSI implementation at the national level include:

<sup>5</sup> For a detailed discussion on each of these steps in the process, please see Mati et al (cited in footnote 3).  
CIVICUS Civil Society Index Analytical Country Report for Italy

- Multiple surveys, including: (i) a **Population Survey**, gathering the views of citizens on civil society and gauging their involvement in groups and associations; (ii) an **Organisational Survey** measuring the meso-level of civil society and defining characteristics of CSOs; and (iii) an **External Perceptions Survey** aiming at measuring the perception that stakeholders, experts and policy makers in key sectors have of civil society's impact (CSI methodology allows the substitution of the Population Survey with equivalent questions from the World Values Survey where these are available, as was the case in Italy).
- Tailored **case studies** which focus on issues of importance to the specific civil society country context.
- **Advisory Committee** (AC) meetings made up of civil society experts to advise on the project and its implementation at the country level.
- Regional and thematic **focus groups** where civil society stakeholders reflect and share views on civil society's role in society.

Following this in-depth research and the extensive collection of information, the findings are presented and debated at a **National Workshop**, which brings together a large group of civil society and non-civil society stakeholders and allows interested parties to discuss and develop strategies for addressing identified priority issues.

This Analytical Country Report is one of the major outputs of the CSI implementation process in Italy, and presents highlights from the research conducted, including summaries of civil society's strengths and weaknesses as well as recommendations for strengthening civil society in Italy.

#### 4. THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION IN ITALY

The process of implementation in Italy started in December 2008 and was structured as follows:

- the consultation of secondary data coming from international surveys such as World Values survey 2000 and 2005, Social Watch and UNU World Governance survey and from international databases and indicators (Union of international Associations databases, Transparency International Corruption Perception Index, World Bank and National Statistic Bureau);
- the social forces analysis and the mapping of civil society process that allowed the NIT to build the sample for the Organisational Survey and for the External Perception Survey. The process took two months.
- the Organisational Survey, which involved 90 Italian CSOs. The three criteria through which the sample was constructed were: a) location; b) field of activity; c) significance. This phase took nine months to be completed and the 90 questionnaires were collected by the March 2010;
- the External Perception Survey, which involved 30 stakeholders with an interest in Italian civil society belonging to different parts of Italian society and chosen following the social forces analysis;
- the consultation of an Advisory Committee formed by 12 experts in Italian civil society. The committee met three times during the implementation phase of the survey;
- the organisation of two regional focus groups, held in Bologna and Cosenza, where the CSI project was presented and discussed with around 100 participants;
- the drafting of four case studies: 1) civic resources for urban safety: a survey on the role of active citizenship organisations (Civic Engagement dimension); 2) the civic integration of immigrants: a survey on the role of active citizenship organisations in the integration of immigrants (Practice of Values dimension); 3) CSOs and the requests for transparency of public administration: analysis of four campaigns (Perception

of Impact dimension); 4) EU and CSOs that operate at the local level: some evidence from the Italian case (External Environment Dimension).

The findings of the survey were presented and debated at the National Workshop in April 2011.

## **5. LIMITATIONS OF CSI STUDY IN ITALY**

We can highlight three general limitations of the research carried out:

1. The research cannot offer a full portrait of civil society in Italy but more properly a description or representation that different samples of people have of it. This representation, even if of fundamental importance for increasing the knowledge on civil society, risks to be partial if it's not compared with official national researches on civil society;
2. The samples for the Organisational Survey and External Perception Survey are not statistically representative of the whole phenomenon of CSOs and of the universe of CSOs stakeholders or experts. As a consequence in our opinion some results are conditioned by the kind of organisations most involved in the research or the particular topics chosen to consider;
3. Sometimes the information taken from international surveys seems not particularly well with the Italian context. For example, regarding the sub-dimension on extent of political engagement, citizens engaged in political parties, unions, environmental organisations, and consumers' associations are considered together. In Italy this does not work because these organisations are very different from each other, due to the level of institutionalisation they have, the power they exercise, and the engagement they require. Evidence for this is the fact that we do not consider political parties as a part of civil society.

## II. CIVIL SOCIETY IN ITALY

### 1. CONCEPT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The concept of civil society in Italy is in common use and, according to many people, often abused. For example, 'civil' can be interpreted both as highlighting a difference of status (i.e., different from public or private), or a moral-based difference (as opposed to 'uncivil'). It is not clear, moreover, if 'civil society' refers to an arena (as in the case of the CIVICUS definition) or an actor, generally an organisation ('civil society believes, struggles, supports ...'). Finally, sometimes 'civil society' distinguishes the state from all what is not public; and sometimes it divides the public and private sectors from 'the rest'.

For the Italian CSI, the CSI definition of civil society was adopted: *"the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market, which is created by individual and collective actions, organisations and institutions to advance shared interests."*

### 2. HISTORY OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN ITALY<sup>6</sup>

According to most scholars, modern civil society in Italy has its roots in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, when free political associations and then political parties, trade unions, cooperatives and mutual benefit societies, linked both to workers' socialist movement and to the Catholic Church, began and developed. These forces were different, autonomous and often alternative to the new nation state (established between 1860 and 1870), which looked with suspicion on these social and political actors, actively seeking to restrict them (for example, the 'Crispi Law' in 1890 confiscated the Catholic Church of all its welfare institutions).

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century up until the rise of Fascism (1922), CSOs achieved a growing role and power in Italian society, and political parties linked both to Socialist and Catholic movements became increasingly stronger, achieving a space in parliament and in society at large.

The Fascist regime (1922-1943) erased fundamental freedoms and political rights, and persecuted civil society associations, closing most of them and clashing with the Catholic Church over others. On the other hand, while inhibiting representative democracy and political rights, it promoted a form of corporatist representation (*Camera dei fasci e delle corporazioni*), which gave room to civil society organisations linked to profession, businesses and, though without any autonomy, employees. The post-war Republic, though in the framework of a re-established democratic system, privileged these CSOs and built up a labour-centred welfare system.

After the end of the Second World War, Italy became a democratic Republic and CSOs, as well as political parties closely linked to them, had a leading role in the post-war reconstruction of Italy and in the development of the new Republic. Most existing CSOs integrated themselves into the realm of state, becoming close to, and often part of, democratic institutions.

A new wave started in the 1970s (after the '68 movement),<sup>7</sup> when many new citizens' organisations and initiatives started, even as a reaction against terrorist groups. The main feature of these initiatives was their increasing autonomy from political parties and institutions, expressing an attitude of citizens to contribute

<sup>6</sup> Drawn from G. Moro, I. Vannini (2006), *Italian Civil Society facing new challenges*, Civicus Civil Society Index Report for Italy, Rome; G. Moro, I. Vannini (2008), *La società civile tra eredità e sfide. Rapporto sull'Italia del Civil society index*, Rubbettino, Rome.

<sup>7</sup> Around 1968 in many countries, including Italy, a wide social movement emerged and strongly influenced the attitudes, behaviours and culture of people as well as of institutions. This movement was lead mainly by young people, women and industry workers and aimed at deeply changing social structures and political institutions.

by themselves to the public interest. This new wave, common to most developed countries, was rooted in two major phenomena: the crisis of state resources, concerning especially the welfare system; and the crisis of trust in and legitimacy of public institutions as well as of political leaderships.

A turning point, from this point of view, is represented by the 2001 reform of the Italian Constitution, where the engagement of citizens in public affairs beyond the mere freedom of association (the liberty to associate for private purposes) was established as a constitutional matter, and the principle of horizontal subsidiarity (cooperation and support) between the state and citizens engaged in public interest matters was established as well (art. 118.4). The text of the new article of the Constitution, coming from a precise CSOs' proposal shared by the government and approved by parliament, is the following:

*The State, Regions, Provinces, Municipalities and Towns favour the free initiative of citizens, as individuals and organisations, for the accomplishment of general interest activities, on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity.*

This constitutional reform is a milestone: both because it is the point of arrival of a three-decade struggle for the recognition of CSOs as truly autonomous actors, and because it is a starting point for new developments.

### **3. MAPPING CIVIL SOCIETY**

The Italian context is made of five main features that should be taken into account. They are peculiar both in themselves and in connection to each to other. Some of them have already been mentioned.

The first key feature is a traditional, strong but presently declining, role of the state, if not in general, then in relation to areas where civil society has a strong role. The state was once presumed to be the only actor with legitimacy to deal with public issues, while both civil society, the private sector and individuals themselves were supposed to be engaged in private affairs only.

The second key feature is a traditional central role of political parties. For historical reasons, political parties in the Italian republic merged with the state. For decades they tended, on one hand, to be the only route for citizens' public participation, and on the other, to overlap their machineries and networks with civil society, the aim being to 'occupy' all civil society spaces.

The third factor is the strength of the Catholic Church, not only in religious terms, but also in social, political and public policy terms. From a civil society point of view, the Catholic Church has been a broad environment that gave rise to a number of pluralistic organisations and initiatives in some way linked to it, but that cannot be defined as 'Catholic' in a strict sense. On the other hand, it tended to hold spaces and roles which might otherwise have been held by actors with a plurality of inspirations.

The fourth feature is the special status and strength of trade unions in political, institutional and social life. It makes it impossible to compare them with other CSOs, as it is shown by the media research implemented on the occasion of the first edition of the CSI in Italy:<sup>8</sup> 865 out of 1,871 (46.2%) of media items on civil society were related to trade unions' positions and actions. Because of the Italian historical heritage and the crisis of legitimacy of political parties, in the 1970s and 1980s trade unions were supposed to represent the entire civil society, well beyond employees, and this role was recognised by public institutions. Through the reality was, and is, very different, this element cannot be underestimated.

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<sup>8</sup> G. Moro, I. Vannini (2006), *Italian Civil Society facing new challenges*, Civicus Civil Society Index Report for Italy, Rome; G. Moro, I. Vannini (2008), *La società civile tra eredità e sfide. Rapporto sull'Italia del Civil society index*, Rubbettino, Rome

The fifth feature is a big gap between Southern regions and the rest of Italy in terms of economic and social development as well as in the political and institutional situation. This gap affects civil society directly. On the one hand, CSOs are traditionally weaker in Southern regions than in the rest of Italy. On the other, CSOs have played a lead role in strongly and successfully promoting a change in this situation.

Last but not least, must be mentioned here Italy's membership in the European Union, since its first steps in the 1950s. The participation in the construction of a large union of states and peoples has had effects also on civil society. On one hand, a growing amount of powers and resources on issues of general interest has moved from the national state to EU institutions, thus moving away interlocutors and challenging traditional habits of dealing with public policies. On the other side, thanks to the EU, CSOs have been empowered as actors of relevant policies, such as those regarding consumers' rights, social inclusion and environmental protection, and have been pushed to link with CSOs belonging to other European countries. The European dimension, with its pros and cons, has therefore become part of the domestic scenario in which Italian civil society operates.

What is to be stressed with regard to these features is that they are at the same time the starting points or 'initial conditions' which affected the development of civil society in Italy, and elements that changed as CSOs developed and influenced Italian society.

### **Results of the social forces analysis conducted by the NIT**

During the early stages of the research, the NIT and the research group undertook a preliminary exercise to analyse the main social forces in Italian society, which was implemented in two steps:

- Mapping Italian society: identification and analysis of categories of actors that play a role in the public arena;
- Mapping Italian civil society: identification of forces and categories of actors that comprise civil society, as well as their powers and relationships with the others social forces of Italian society.

The first step had the objective of identifying the categories of actors that play a role in the Italian public arena, their weight and their relationships, with the aim of describing as much as possible the context within which CSOs are active.

The NIT and the research group identified 115 categories of actors that play a role within the public arena and that belong to:

- STATE: 23 categories;
- MARKET: 41 categories;
- CIVIL SOCIETY: 51 categories.

As for the influence that those categories have within the public arena the NIT and the research group reported the following pattern:

- 12.2% have a very high influence;
- 23.3% have a high influence;
- 29.6% have a low influence;
- 33.9% have a very low influence.

Therefore, 63% of the categories of actors involved in the public arena have a low or very low influence, and most of these are CSOs.

As regard the second step (mapping Italian civil society), the process had the objective of identifying the categories of actors that comprise Italian civil society and defining as much as possible their weight and relationships within the public arena.

The first output of the operation of mapping civil society was the identification of functional criteria by which CSOs could be sub-divided into macro areas. The criteria for these were the distinctive feature that characterise CSOs within the public arena (e.g. civic activism, social and cultural infrastructure, professional associations, social partners).

Therefore, the organisations belonging to the civil society macro-area have been sub-divided into:

- CIVIC ACTIVISM, organisations active in public policy-making and in defending citizenship rights;
- SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE, organisations directed to increase social capital within the community/society;
- PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIAL PARTNERS, trade unions, labour organisations and all the organisations directed to represent the world of economy and labour and to defend rights of workers and professionals.

The 51 categories of actors that make up the civil society main category were then distributed into the three clusters, as follows:

- CIVIC ACTIVISM: 31 categories;
- SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 13 categories;
- PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIAL PARTNERS: 7 categories.

As for the influence that those categories have within the macro-area of civil society it resulted that only one category of actors belonging to the 'civic activism' group (i.e. the protection of rights) obtained a degree of influence that can be assessed as high to very high, and that is the category of users' and consumers' associations.

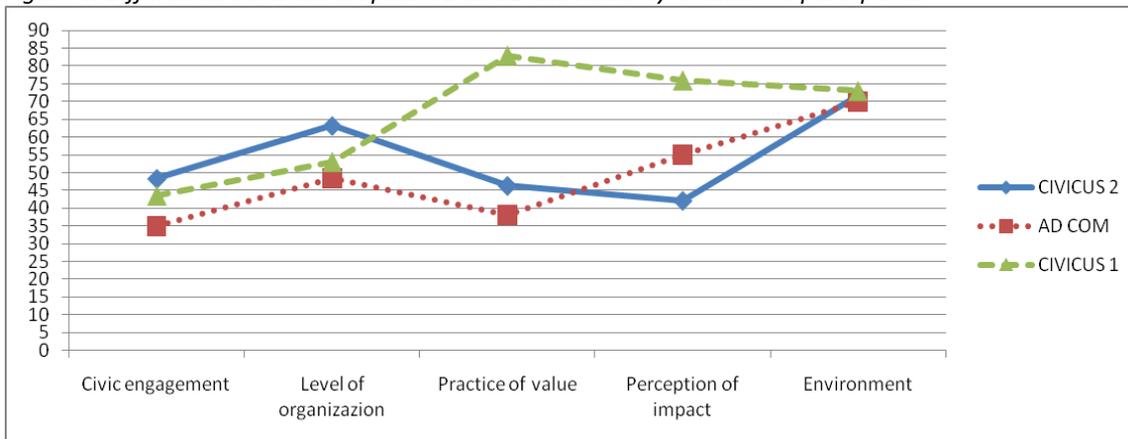
As part of this exercise it is important to specify that we did not include political parties within civil society, but we did include unions. The reason here was that in Italy political parties are entities definitely more linked to state institutions than to civil society. It is not only a matter of social perceptions, but also a matter of role, fields of engagement, and operational strategies. Unions, however, appear to be midway between CSOs and political parties, and so were considered as within civil society.

### III. ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN ITALY

Through the different activities included in this action-oriented research, we recorded data in order to conduct a thorough analysis of civil society in Italy. The NIT and the research group compared the results of the research with the perception diamond built during the first Advisory Committee (AC) meeting and with the results of the first edition of the research.<sup>9</sup> This process for the interpretation of the data was taken because the CSI methodology, in this second edition, enables the collection of data from three groups of people – the public, people who are engaged in CSOs, and people from outside the sector who have a well-informed perspective on it. These views from a large group of people merited being further examined and deepened, and compared with the opinions of a group of experts on different aspects of civil society (the AC) and with the previous CSI research.

Therefore the first action was to highlight the differences between the three diamonds: the one built in the first edition of the project, the one built during the first AC Meeting based on the AC's perceptions and predictions of the scores and the one that emerged from the gathering of the data.

Figure 4: Differences between CSI phase 1 and 2 and Advisory Committee perceptions



Since in the first edition of the CSI, the methodology was different (essentially, the existing dimensions of Civic Engagement and External Environment were combined), in order to compare the information, we used some data that was collected during the 2006 edition and which could be compared to the indicators of the Civic Engagement sub-dimension. Then we calculated an arithmetic mean.

Interesting differences in the perception of Italian civil society are evident in the Practice of Values and Perception of Impact sub-dimensions, as shown above.

In general the graph shows a similar trend between the second and the first edition of CSI. In three of the five dimensions, the values are more or less confirmed in the same proportion. As for the dimension of External Environment, the scores even appear the same. On the contrary, as far as the dimension of Practice of Values is concerned, the score of our research contradicts the first edition of CSI that showed higher values compared with the other dimensions.

Another point that the graph makes clear is that the AC members have a lower perception of the scores of the dimensions in both surveys (except on the Perception of Impact dimension, compared to this new CSI edition).

<sup>9</sup> See Annex 3

Looking at the graph, we can add that in respect to the dimension of Practice of Values, the second edition of the research appears more realistic, and also that the perception of organisations (internal perception) is here the same as the perception of the AC regarding Perception of Impact, while the point of view of the sample of external experts interviewed is more pessimistic.

In the following section we comment on the results of the research on five key dimensions of Italian civil society.

## 1. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The level of **Civic Engagement** in Italy is **48.3%**. This means that in Italy citizens' engagement in socially-based and politically-based activities is quite common, but could be higher. The source of the data is the World Values Survey 2005.

Looking at the available data, it seems that in Italy being an active member of one or more social organisation or political organisation is not so rare (see Table 2, sub-dimensions 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5). In addition, the percentage of members of organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants, people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people or people with disabilities scored very high (sub-dimensions 1.3, 1.6). As we will see later, however, the results of these two indicators are very questionable.

Table 2: Civic Engagement Dimension

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2
<b>1. Civic Engagement</b>		<b>48.3%</b>
	1.1 Extent of socially-based engagement	<b>30.3%</b> In Italy being an active member of a social organisation is <b>not so rare</b>
	1.2 Depth of socially-based engagement	<b>41.4%</b> In Italy being an active members of more than one social organisation is <b>not so rare</b>
	1.3 Diversity of socially-based engagement	<b>79.5%</b> In Italy, the percentage of members of social organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants or people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people, people from rural communities and people with disabilities is <b>very high</b>
	1.4 Extent of political engagement	<b>30.1%</b> In Italy being an active member of a political organisation is <b>not so rare</b>
	1.5 Depth of political engagement	<b>33.0%</b> In Italy being an active member of more than one political organisation is <b>not so rare</b>
	1.6 Diversity of political	<b>75.2%</b> In Italy, the percentage of members of political organisations belonging to

	engagement	<b>social groups such as women, immigrants or people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people, people from rural communities and people with disabilities is <b>very high</b></b>
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Comparing the scores of this edition of the CSI research with the scores of the AC and the first edition of the project, we can say that the dimension of Civic Engagement appears in general to be more or less in line with the results of the first edition of the CSI.

*Table 3: Comparison of Civic Engagement scores*

Dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI 1
<b>Civic Engagement</b>	<b>48.3%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>43.5%</b>

In particular, there is a reasonable relationship between the data of the sub-dimensions related to the extension and the depth of civic engagement (between 30% and 40%) but a relevant difference in the data related to the diversity both in social and political organisations (around 75% for the second edition, 10% for the AC and between 45% and 66% for the first edition). In addition, the perception of civic engagement declared by the experts of the AC appears, in general, lower. This difference is probably due to the disparity between representation and reality: it can be assumed in a number of places in this study that people and organisations have responded on the basis of how they see and represent themselves, while on the contrary, experts based their answers on what they observed.

The case study conducted for CSI on this dimension surveyed the civic resources for urban safety as an example of civic engagement (See Annex 5). The results of the survey confirmed the presence of a good level of civic engagement in Italy, evidence that is in line with the high scores in relation to the diversity of socially-based (79.5%) and politically-based engagement (75.2%). Looking at the map of civic resources for urban safety obtained from the study, it can be observed that there are 14 different forms of self-organised citizens that are active in different ways and levels of cooperation in safety policies implemented by public bodies. This data confirms that in the Italian context, active citizenship organisations have become important partners in local safety policies. There is however very little (if any) awareness of these practices in public debate due to a lack of data and information and, most importantly, to the scarce attention the media pays to the issue.

### **1.1 Extent of socially based engagement**

The percentage of Italians who are engaged in socially-based activities, according to the CSI data, is **30.3%**. The indicators are: 1) social membership, **29.9%**, the percentage of respondents who are active members of social organisations (religious, sports, educational, art and music); 2) social volunteering, **20.6%**, the percentage of the population that volunteer with at least one social organisation and 3) community engagement, **40.5%**, the percentage of the population who engage several times a year in social activities with other people at sports clubs or voluntary/service organisations.

The percentage registered in this sub-dimension shows a good level for the Italian socially based engagement context, and this is consistent with data obtained in the first edition of CSI (see Annex 3). In addition, we can corroborate this score by looking at some data of previous surveys on Italian civic

engagement: in Italy there are 2,480,000 people who are members of volunteers' associations, while social promotion associations have a membership of 3,500,000 people, and 211,800 people are members of social cooperatives (Fivol processing on ISTAT data). In general, according to the Italian Institute of Statistics (ISTAT 2004), about 8% of the population over 14 years of age (more than 3 million people) volunteer. This situation is consistent also with the data obtained from the Organisational Survey conducted by FONDACA, where most of the 90 organisations interviewed declared the presence of volunteers in their structure.

### 1.2 Depth of socially-based engagement

This study found that the percentage of those identified above involved with more than one CSO or participating in social activities frequently is **41.4%**. The indicators are: 1) social membership, **23.8%**, the percentage of those active in social CSOs who are active in more than one; 2) social volunteering, **30.3%**, the percentage of those who volunteer for a social CSO who volunteer for more than one; 3) community engagement, **70.0%**, the percentage of the population that engage at least once a month in social activities with other people at sports clubs or voluntary/service organisations.

This sub-dimension demonstrates that in Italy it is not uncommon for people to take part in multiple civic activity. The score is in line with that which emerged in the first CSI (see Annex 3) and is confirmed by the data that emerged during the research that 25.1% of members of voluntary organisations belong to more than one of them. However, looking at the indicators, there is a very high figure for community engagement at 70%, and this may be due to a misunderstanding that included participation in demonstrations or public events organised by social organisations as social activities.

### 1.3 Diversity of socially-based engagement

The diversity of the population that is active in socially-based organisations in Italy was recorded at **79.5%**. This refers to the percentage of members of organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants or people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people, people from rural communities and people with disabilities.

This high score is confirmed looking at a previous survey of women's engagement: 7.4% of Italian women are involved in voluntary activities and represent 50.8% of the people active in voluntary organisations (ISTAT 2004). In order to support this data, FONDACA added into the standard Organisational Survey questionnaire a few questions on the diversity of Italian civic engagement, one of which was on women's engagement, from which it emerged that on average 93% of the people active in CSOs are women.

The Advisory Committee opinion is in great contrast with this data and scored only at 10%. One of the reasons for this divergence centres on the question of the level of leadership that disadvantaged social groups have in CSOs. From previous surveys we see that women are in a leading position in only three out of 10 voluntary organisations, and most of those have a prevailing women membership (Frisanco, September 2004). To give another example, in the associations belonging to one important Italian umbrella organisation, the Forum of the Third Sector, only 33 out of 157 leading roles are held by women (21%). As for immigrants, according to the CSI case study carried out on the dimension of the Practice of Values (see Annex 6), their presence inside CSOs is strictly connected with their ethnic provenance, and the roles that they assume in operating structures are almost never connected with their professional skills (they tend to be social mediators, counter clerks, and so on). It seems clear that behind the high value given for the indicator on diversity exists a rather low level of quality in regard to the presence of women, immigrants and other minorities, which is probably the real sense of diversity that the experts were referring to.

Another interesting finding is the one coming from the level of leadership questions added by FONDACA to the Organisational survey questionnaire: the level of leadership is very high both for women (90%) as for immigrants (51% of the CSOs surveyed are active in immigration related issues). In this case the great difference with the experts' score may be due to the same disparity between representation and reality as noted above. The case study on civic integration of immigrants (see Annex 6) seems to confirm that the picture may be more complex. It is clear that organisations tend to describe themselves as rich in values, even if the reality appears different to or in contrast with this representation.

#### 1.4 Extent of political engagement

The sub-dimension of the extent of political engagement was **30.1%**. The indicators are: 1) political membership, **19.3%**, the percentage of the population that are active members of political organisations (such as labour unions, political parties, environmental organisations, professional associations, consumer organisations, humanitarian or charitable organisations); 2) political volunteering, **10.3%**, the percentage of the population that does voluntary work for at least one political organisation; 3) individual activism, **60.8%**, the percentage of the population that has undertaken political activism in the past five years (such as signing a petition, joining in boycotts, or attending peaceful demonstrations).

This sub-dimension scored 30.1%, and considering that the Italian population is composed of about 60 million people, we can say that the score is in line with the data on the membership of political parties (1,400,000) and of labour unions (14,450,000). This data also supports the score of 10.3% given to the indicator on political volunteering, although it should be said, high membership in the political field is not strictly connected with a high level of voluntary engagement. For example, it is in fact a common experience, and not only in Italy, that to be member of a labour union is not always due to a choice of civic activism but more due to professional necessity that in most cases does not lead to voluntary activity inside an organisation. Although there is a result of 60.8% on individual activism, it is important to note that the question asked for the indicator covered whether someone had over a five year period undertaken undemanding activities such as signing petitions and participating in demonstrations, which are not sufficient measures of political activism in the Italian context.

#### 1.5 Depth of political engagement

The sub-dimension of the depth of political engagement scored **33.0%**. The indicators are: 1) political membership, **19.0%**, the percentage of people who are members of one organisation of a political orientation who are also members of at least one other; 2) political volunteering, **26.2%**, the percentage of people who volunteer in a political organisation who play multiple voluntary roles; 3) individual activism, **53.8%**, the percentage of people 'very actively' involved in activism of a political orientation.

The score confirms that in Italy it is not uncommon for people to take part in multiple civic activism. In the case of political activism, the quite high level is probably due to the common experience that historically correlates membership of the most important labour unions (CGIL, CISL and UIL) with membership of one of the main politic mass parties. In addition, looking at the indicator of individual activism, the high percentage is probably related to the same misunderstanding that characterised the depth of social engagement (1.2 indicator), and that included participation in demonstrations or public events organised by political organisations as political activities.

## 1.6 Diversity of political engagement

The sub-dimension of the diversity of political engagement scored **75.2%**, referring to the percentage of members of political organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants or people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people, people from rural communities and people with disabilities.

As for the indicator on the diversity of social engagement, the score appears to be in contrast with the opinion of the AC and is probably due to the same contrast between presence and leadership raised previously. For example, labour unions are historically a place where immigrants could experiment in active participation in democratic processes, but it is rare to find immigrants holding leadership roles. It should be noted, however, that the situation is rapidly changing: if we look at the presence of marginalised groups in the steering committees of the two most important labour unions, they are increasing year by year. In addition, in October 2010 a woman became the leader of the biggest Italian Labour Union (CGIL).

### Conclusion

The level of **Civic Engagement** in Italy is **48.3%**. This means that in Italy citizens' engagement in socially-based and politically-based activities is quite common, but could be higher. Looking at the available data, it seems that in Italy being an active member of one or more social organisations or political organisations is not so rare. In addition, the percentage of members of organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants, people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people or people with disabilities scored very high. We have to say that even though this category of people are numerically an important part of civil society, their presence in leadership positions within CSOs is very rare.

## 2. LEVEL OF ORGANISATION

Some of the key questions considered for the analysis of this dimension were: How well is Italian civil society organised? What challenges do CSOs face in terms of management and internal governance? What hurdles do CSOs have to deal with when acting together as a collective force? The results of the CSI, drawn mostly from the Organisational Survey, showed an average score of **63.2%** for the Level of Organisation dimension of the CSI.

This means that in Italy CSOs are quite well organised. Looking at the data, it seems that CSOs have an effective system of internal governance (Table 4, sub-dimension 2.1), that communication with similar organisations is frequent and deep (sub-dimension 2.3), that CSOs are usually members of federations or umbrella organisations (2.3) and that they have often a stable financial resource base and regular access to technologies (2.5), but they don't have a sustainable human resource base (2.4). As evidence of the presence of international linkages of Italian CSOs we can notice that, according to the research, international NGOs (INGOs) are quite present in Italy (2.6).

In the following table the values of the sub-dimensions of the Level of Organisation dimension are presented and then shortly commented.

TABLE 4: *Level of Organisation Dimension*

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2
2. Level Of Organisation		63.2%

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2
<b>2. Level Of Organisation</b>		<b>63.2%</b>
	2.1 Internal governance	<b>83.3%</b> In Italy <b>most</b> CSOs have a Board of Directors or a formal Steering Committee
	2.2 Support infrastructure	<b>71.1%</b> In Italy <b>most</b> CSOs are formal members of a federation, umbrella group or support network
	2.3 Sectoral communication	<b>82.5%</b> The communication between Italian CSOs <b>is frequent and deep</b>
	2.4 Human resources	<b>20.5%</b> Italian CSOs don't <b>have a sustainable</b> human resource base
	2.5 Financial and technological resources	<b>80.9%</b> Italian CSOs <b>very often</b> have a <b>stable financial resource</b> base and <b>regular access</b> to technologies
	2.6 International linkages	<b>40.8%</b> INGOs are <b>quite present</b> in Italy

The data of the sub-dimensions appears homogeneous with two exceptions: human resources and international linkages.

Comparing the scores of the second edition of the CSI with the scores of the AC and of the first edition of the project, we can say that the score of the Level of Organisation dimension in the second edition seems to be over-estimated.

*Table 5: Comparison of Level of Organisation scores*

Dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI 1
<b>Level of Organisation</b>	<b>63.2%</b>	<b>48.5%</b>	<b>53%</b>

This is probably due to the positive perception that the organisations have of themselves or the positive image that they want to show in the research. We well know that one of the most pressing problems of Italian CSOs is the weakness of their internal assets, and with the recent financial crisis many of them have folded.

In the following paragraphs we describe the results registered for each sub-dimension of Level of Organisation.

## 2.1 Internal governance

The indicator which measures internal governance scored **83.3%**, referring to the percentage of organisations that have a board of directors or a formal steering committee.

It should be noted that law number 460 of 1997 obliged organisations to have the above structure, and therefore this score should be considered very low. This low score shows a gap between formal structure and actual practices within the CSOs' decision-making processes. In fact, it seems that many organisations formally have a board of directors (as by law) but decisions are made through other practical means (e.g. by the members or by a recognised nominated leader in the cases of small CSOs).

## 2.2 Support infrastructure

The indicator which measures support organisations scored **71.1%**, assessing the percentage of organisations that are formal members of a federation, umbrella group or support network. The score is more or less in line with what has been expressed by the experts and the results of CSI 1. Official statistics (ISTAT 2001) state that more than 30% of Italian non-profit organisations (which is a universe much wider than CSOs) were part of a larger organisation. It would be interesting to investigate the extent to which this affiliation is effective and helps the organisations to obtain a 'higher voice' in relation to their stakeholders or if, on the contrary, their voices are overwhelmed by the federations they belong to.

## 2.3 Sectoral communication

The sub-dimension of sectoral communication scored **82.5%**. The indicators are: 1) the percentage of organisations, **85.4%**, that recently (within the past three months) held meetings with other organisations working on similar issues; and the percentage of organisations, **79.5%**, that have exchanged information (e.g. documents, reports, data) with another organisation.

The score registered for this sub-dimension seems to be very high, especially in comparison with the perception of the AC and the results of the CSI 1 (see Annex 3). From this it is clear that the representatives of the organisations interviewed have a great perception of their relationships with other organisations working on similar issues, holding meetings, exchanging information and documentation. As emerged in the previous CSI, Italian CSOs are more used to cooperating on occasional public campaigns or specific initiatives rather than on a general or permanent basis. What was expressed by the experts appears to confirm this information, which is probably due to the fact that there is a perception of competition and, in spite of declared intentions, cooperation among CSOs seems to be definitely less frequent than it appears.

In addition, this lack of cooperation between different CSOs is confirmed looking at what emerged from the case study implemented for the Perception of Impact dimension (see Annex 7). During the analysis of the four campaigns for transparency launched by CSOs in different fields, it emerged that the lack of interest and cooperation of the other organisations active in the same fields has been one of the most crucial obstacles of the success of the campaigns in two cases.

Another interesting piece of data on how CSOs communicate is in the responses given on the relationship with public institutions added by FONDACA to the Organisational Survey questionnaire: 97.8% declared they speak with public institutions but 75.6% do so on their own initiative. Is it clear from this that the communication between CSOs and public institutions is very frequent but it is almost unidirectional, instigated largely by CSOs rather than systematised.

## 2.4 Human resources

The indicator which measures the sub-dimension of human resources scored **20.5%**. This describes the percentage of organisations with a sustainable human resource base (defined as volunteers comprising less than 25% of the organisation's average staff base). This very low score is however countered by the fact that most organisations involved in CSI find unrealistic the belief that their sustainability depends on having a low percentage of volunteers. This is an interpretation based on a normative and not practical approach and cannot be considered particularly a useful indicator to measure the sustainability of Italian CSOs. For example, all voluntary organisations would be considered unsustainable based on this interpretation. The Organisational Survey reported that in 66.7% of organisations the number of volunteers is higher than paid staff. This trend emerged in the first CSI, where it was noticed that 80.2% of non-profit organisations used voluntary resources, and in 7 out of 10 of them, these were the only human resources available. Despite this, 91% of CSO stakeholders interviewed on that occasion declared that human resource conditions were suitable. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the CSI's Experts Committee in the first edition had reported serious problems caused by a lack of human resources that could be related to the fact that leaders of CSOs felt, and probably still feel, inadequately resourced to face increasing responsibilities.

## 2.5 Financial and technological resources

The sub-dimension of financial and technological resources scored **80.9%**. The indicators are: 1) financial sustainability, **65.1%**, the percentage of organisations with a stable financial resource base, calculated over whether the ratio of income to expenditure has improved or worsened from one year to the next; and 2) technological resources, **96.6%**, the percentage of organisations that have regular access to technologies such as computers, telephones and email.

The score registered in this sub-dimension is very high and is in a great contrast with what the experts said, and with the results of the first research (see Annex 3). It seems that the different levels are due to differing concepts of financial sustainability. Most experts thought that a sustainable organisation is one that has a five year contract with a private agency, company or public institution that could help CSOs in this period of financial crisis. Looking at what emerged from the Organisational Survey we can say that there is a great heterogeneity in the financial resources and funding mix of Italian CSOs, but it is very rare to find organisations with stable contracts with public or private bodies.

As far as technological resources are concerned we can see a great improvement in Italian CSOs: from the 69% of organisations that had use of a computer (CSI 1), there are now 96.6%, while 93.3% have websites. In addition, FONDACA added some questions on the use of the web by CSOs and the answers showed that many of them often use Skype (43.3%), Facebook (40.0%), share videos on YouTube (34.4%) and have a forum on their websites (32.2%).

## 2.6 International linkages

The sub-dimension of international linkages scored **40.8%**. This indicator expresses the percentage of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) present in Italy as a ratio to the total number of known INGOs. The source is the Union of International Associations Database.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> FONDACA and CIVICUS are grateful to the Union of International Associations for this information.

From that result we can say that in Italy CSOs seem to have international linkages even if, going deeper into this indicator, in the first edition of the research 48.1% of stakeholders interviewed declared that CSO membership of international organisations was rare. We think it unlikely that the situation would have changed markedly in four years.

### Conclusion

The results of the CSI, drawn mostly from the Organisational Survey, showed an average score of **63.2%** for the Level of Organisation dimension of the CSI. This means that in Italy CSOs are quite well organised: they often belong to a network, have an effective system of internal governance, a good level of communication with similar organisations and a regular access to technologies. The weak aspects of this dimension, according to the opinion of the AC, are:

- the quality of the relationship that CSOs have with other organisations, very often limited to a sporadic exchange of information;
- the financial resource base that, since characterised by a strategy of funding mix, is not particularly stable.

## 3. PRACTICE OF VALUES

The level of the **Practice of Values** in Italy scored **46.3%**. This shows that the extent to which civil society practices some core values is not so high. According to the results of the Organisational Survey, while almost all CSOs practice democratic decision-making internally (sub-dimension 3.1) and seem to have a code of conduct and policies on transparency (3.3), the number of CSOs that pay attention to labour regulations and that have a policy on environmental standards is quite limited (3.2, 3.4). In addition, the values of non-violence, democracy and honesty do not emerge as having a solid base within Italian civil society (3.5).

In the following table we present the values of the sub-dimension of the Practice of Values dimension and a short comment on the results.

*Table 6: Practice of Values dimension*

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2
<b>3. Practice of Values</b>		<b>46.3%</b>
	3.1 Democratic decision-making governance	<b>82.2%</b> <b>In Italy almost all CSOs practice democratic decision-making internally</b>
	3.2 Labour regulations	<b>29.0%</b> <b>In Italy the number of CSOs that pay attention to labour regulation is quite limited</b>
	3.3 Code of conduct and	<b>54.8%</b>

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2
<b>3. Practice of Values</b>		<b>46.3%</b>
	transparency	<b>In Italy the number of CSOs that have a code of conduct and policies on transparency is satisfactory</b>
	3.4 Environmental standards	<b>28.1%</b> <b>In Italy the number of CSOs that have a policy on environmental standards is quite limited</b>
	3.5 Perception of values in civil society as a whole	<b>37.5%</b> <b>The values of non violence, democracy and honesty do not have a solid base within Italian civil society</b>

We should also point out that issues that are taken into account in sub-dimensions 3.1 and 3.3 are in Italy regulated by law<sup>11</sup> so the fact that higher values were registered in those two sub-dimensions is predictable. It is interesting to compare these with the presence of low values in the sub-dimensions regarding labour regulation and the policy on environmental standards, issues that are not regulated by the law and so are dependent on the sensibility of each CSO. This evidence suggests that Italian CSOs need to improve their demonstration of values that are voluntary.

Based on a comparison between the scores of the second edition of CSI and those of the AC and the first edition of the project, we can say that the score of the Practice of Values dimension in this second edition seems to be under-estimated. This is probably due to the kind of questions that were asked in the Organisational Survey, which were focused more on the formal recognition of values, rather than their daily manifestation in the daily practice of an organisation's activities.

*Table 7: Comparison of Practice of Values scores*

Dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI 1
<b>Practice of Values</b>	<b>46.3%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>83%</b>

But this evidence allows us to add another consideration. The higher value registered during the first edition of the CSI project is probably due to the fact that the research was mainly based on secondary data; as a consequence the presence of a law that regulates some aspects of the Practice of Values made the value increase. Given that in the second edition of the research the information about this dimension was taken from the experience of CSOs and taking into account that the members of the AC know well the dynamics of CSOs, it can be assumed that a more realistic value is now captured.

The data registered in the sub-dimension 3.5 is quite discouraging, especially in a country in which civil society plays an important role both in answering to the needs of people and in building social capital. In our opinion, those who answered to the question had in mind not the whole phenomenon of civil society

<sup>11</sup> D.Lgl 460/97, art. 5 and 10.

but only that part of civil society that sometimes during public protests is not a good example of non-violence and peace.

In order to go deeper into the topic of the Practice of Values dimension, we carried out a case study on the integration of first and second-generation immigrants within Italian CSOs (see Annex 6). Our hypothesis assumed that Italian CSOs are organisations that promote the value of integration of immigrants.

According to the results of the case study, it can be confirmed that the CSOs most positive towards integration of immigrants are those that focus their activities on the theme of immigration. On the contrary, the presence of immigrants in CSOs in general remains very limited. As the research has shown, immigrants rarely hold leadership positions in Italian CSOs. However, immigrants have begun to be increasingly involved not only in activities based on their origin (such as cultural mediators), but also in tasks that are essential for the operations of their organisations.

This research has also revealed that the integration process, particularly in specific CSOs and in unions, seems to be quite advanced and shows good results. Further, it can be argued that Italian CSOs have embarked well on the path of integration of immigrants, but there remains much work to do before we can speak of full integration of both first- and second-generation immigrants in Italian CSOs.

### 3.1 Democratic decision-making governance

The sub-dimension of democratic decision-making governance scored **82.2%**. This refers to the percentage of organisations that report they practice democratic decision-making internally, for example through appointment or election of a council or a leader, or through a poll of their members. The score describes in general a democratic system of governance (which is established by the law)<sup>12</sup> but probably this approach is somewhat formal and more attention needs to be given to how decision-making is actually working. Looking at the first CSI project, 95.4% of voluntary organisations stated that their volunteers were always involved in the decision-making processes, but looking in detail we can see that this involvement referred more to decisions on specific activities (92.3%) than in the annual planning of an organisation (75%), its evaluation (74%) or operating strategies (58.6%). We can say that democratic procedures seem to be respected, but democratic practices and mechanisms do not seem to characterise the usual operation of CSOs and participation seems to be rather related to the design, implementation and evaluation of specific projects and activities.

### 3.2 Labour regulations

The sub-dimension of labour regulations scored **29.0%**. The indicators which measured it were: 1) equal opportunities, **30.7%**, which measures the percentage of organisations that have written policies in place regarding equal opportunities and/or equal pay for equal work for women; 2) members of labour unions, **30.6%**, the percentage of paid staff within organisations that are members of labour unions; 3) labour rights trainings, **33.3%**, the percentage of organisations that report conducting specific training on labour rights for new staff members; and 4) publicly available policy for labour standards, **21.3%**, referring to the percentage of organisations that have such policies.

The score for this sub-dimension would seem a quite low for a western European country and, in particular, looking at the indicator that relates to the percentage of organisations with publicly available policies for

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<sup>12</sup> D. Lgl. N. 460/97.

labour standards (as established by law), which scored only 21.3% , we can say that this reflects a low attention to labour issues by CSOs (with the exclusion of labour unions).

### 3.3 Code of conduct and transparency

The sub-dimension of code of conduct and transparency scored **54.8%**. The indicators which measured it were: 1) percentage of organisations that have a publicly available code of conduct for their staff, **47.2%**; and 2) transparency, scoring for the percentage of organisations, **62.4%**, which make financial information publicly available.

The results registered on this sub-dimension differ highly from those declared by the AC, which estimated this sub-dimension had a score of only 5%. The Committee points out that to provide financial information is stipulated by law in Italy, and only when this is publicly delivered, for example on an organisation's website, can it be said to be really transparent. Looking at the previous edition of the CSI, in an analysis of 19 CSO's websites, only two of them provided such information.

### 3.4 Environmental standards

The sub-dimension of environmental standards scored **28.1%**, for the percentage of organisations that have a publicly available policy for environmental standards. It would be interesting to analyse further, however, how many of these organisations make their policies available on their websites.

### 3.5 Perception of values in civil society as a whole

The sub-dimension of perception of values in civil society as a whole scored **37.5%**. The indicators which measured it were: 1) perceived non-violence, **12.3%**; 2) perceived internal democracy, **65.4%**; 3) perceived levels of corruption, **3.4%**; 4) perceived intolerance, **25.0%** which refers to racist and discriminatory forces within civil society; 5) perceived weight of intolerant groups, **60.8%**, referring to the isolation and denouncement of violent practices and groups within civil society; 6) perceived promotion of non-violence and peace, **58.0%**.

The perception of values in civil society as a whole appears to be low and gives a rather negative assessment of the perception of the role of Italian civil society as a whole in this sphere. In particular, looking at the indicators, we can observe that the lowest and thus most negative scores are assigned to values such as intolerance (25.0%), the use of violence (12.3%) and corruption (3.4%). For this latter, looking at, for example, the last surveys on the level of corruption within Italy we can see that Transparency International assigned in 2010 a score of 3.4 on its scale of 1 to 10 on the Corruption Perceptions Index, a very high figure for a member country of the G-20. However, it must be said that the CSI corruption score is still far too low (considering also the higher value given by the experts), and there has likely been a misunderstanding with some respondents basing their answers on their perceptions of the Italian system and/or society as a whole rather than on CSOs only.

## Conclusion

The level of the **Practice of Values** in Italy scored **46.3%**. This shows that the extent to which civil society practices some core values is not so high. According to the results of the Organisational Survey, while almost all CSOs practice democratic decision-making internally and declare to have a code of conduct and policies on transparency, the number of CSOs that pay attention to labour regulations and that have a

policy on environmental standards is quite limited. In addition, the values of non-violence, democracy and honesty do not emerge as having a solid base within Italian civil society.

#### 4. PERCEPTION OF IMPACT

The scores for this dimension are derived from a combination of the Organisational Survey and External Perceptions Survey, with the latter surveying knowledgeable people in positions of authority outside of civil society. The level of the **Perception of Impact** in Italy was scored at **42.1%**. This means that Italian CSOs are seen as having a modest social and political impact as well as limited impact on attitudes in society. According to the results of the research it seems that external perception of the impact is more positive than the internal perception: the value registered for external perception is indeed higher in two out of three indicators, albeit with a lower value registered for policy impact. Furthermore it can be added that the context in which civil society's action seems to have more impact is the social one. Compared to this, it seems that in Italy civil society has a very limited impact on attitudes.

In the following table we present the values of the sub-dimensions of the Practice of Value dimension and a short comment on the results.

*Table 8: Practice of Values dimension*

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2
<b>4. Perception of Impact</b>		<b>42.1%</b>
	4.1 Responsiveness (internal)	<b>39.0%</b> CSOs have a <b>modest</b> capability of responding on issues of social mobility and respect for the rule of law
	4.2 Social impact (internal)	<b>58.8%</b> CSOs are <b>quite effective</b> in achieving social impact
	4.3 Policy impact (internal )	<b>41.8%</b> CSOs have a <b>modest</b> impact on policies
	4.4 Responsiveness (external perception)	<b>43.4%</b> CSOs have a <b>modest</b> capability of responding on issues of social mobility and respect for the rule of law
	4.5 Social impact (external)	<b>61.2%</b> CSOs are <b>quite effective</b> in achieving social impact
	4.6 Policy impact (external)	<b>31.0%</b> CSOs have a <b>modest</b> impact on policies
	4.7 Impact of civil society on attitudes	<b>19.6%</b>

		<b>Italian civil society has a <b>limited</b> impact on attitudes</b>
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Comparing the scores of this second edition of the research with those of the AC and of the first edition of CSI, we can say that the value of impact is under-estimated here. This reflects a chronic challenge of Italian CSOs that they very often have an image of themselves as weak organisations with a limited power in society.

This attitude was also highlighted in the past edition of the research. On that occasion we reported that the impact of CSOs was in fact quite high, especially when civil society can act directly in order to protect rights, deliver services, meet people's needs, inform and educate citizens, and push for state and public sector transparency and accountability. The level of trust in CSOs – the highest level of trust in an organisation type in Italy – confirms this remark.

*Table 9: Comparison of Perception of Impact scores*

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>CSI 2</b>	<b>AC</b>	<b>CSI 1</b>
<b>Perception of Impact</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>76%</b>

The case study on the dimension of impact surveyed four campaigns for the transparency of public administration implemented by CSOs (See Annex 7). The results of the research show a good level of impact of civil society, which is in line (48.8%) with the score obtained in this dimension. If we look at the analysis of the campaigns and in particular at the feedback obtained from public opinion, media and other CSOs, there is however a low level of cooperation. It seems that transparency still is not considered of great importance in Italy, even though it is related to accountability, and hence, democracy.

#### **4.1 /4.4 Responsiveness (internal versus external perceptions)**

The sub-dimension of internal perception of responsiveness scored **39.0%**. The indicators which measured it were: 1) impact on the first key social concern, **29.1%**, measuring self-assessment of the impact of Italian civil society on social mobility; and 2) impact on the second key social concern, **48.8%**, indicating self-assessment of the impact of Italian civil society when it comes to respect for the rule of law.

The corresponding scores from external perceptions were **43.4%** for responsiveness, **36.7%** for impact on social mobility and **50%** for impact on respect for the rule of law.

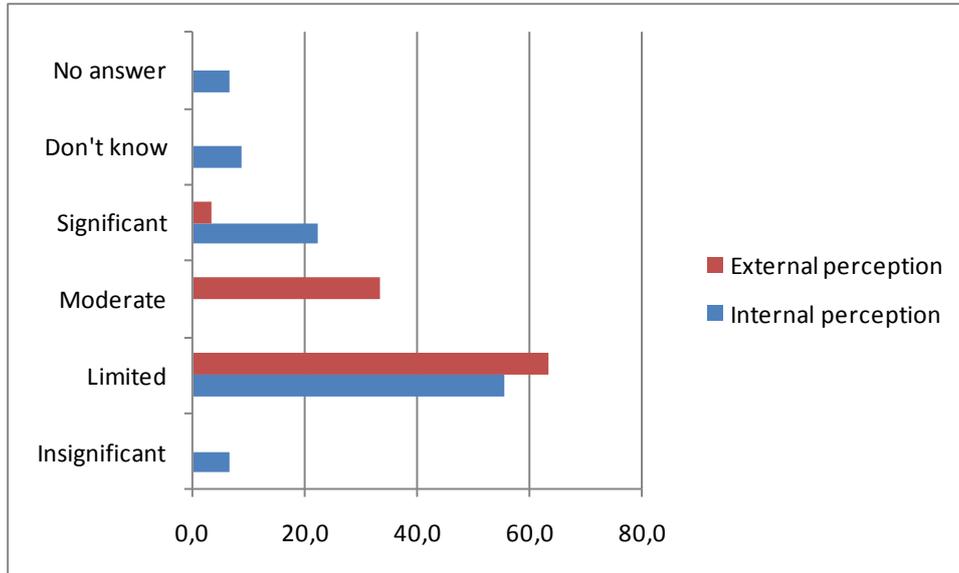
During the first AC meeting, the experts chose these two topics since in Italy social mobility, that is the degree to which an individual's or group's status limits his/her ability to change position in the social hierarchy, and respect for laws, are both very problematic issues.

As regards social mobility, in a recent piece of research it emerged that while 41% of 50 year old people declared that the status of their family had improved, only 6% of 20 year old people had the same impression (Italia Futura 2010). In addition, as regards respect for law, the very high levels of corruption mentioned earlier, where 43% of citizens declare that in Italy the level of corruption is 3.2 on a scale of 1 to 5 (Transparency, 2010) is relevant.

What is the role of CSOs in changing these perceptions, spreading best practices of social mobility (which could include, for example, opening leadership positions to young people) and of encouraging respect of laws?

In the following graph we have reported the difference in percentages between organisations' and experts' perceptions for each answer on the question on social concern 1 (social mobility).

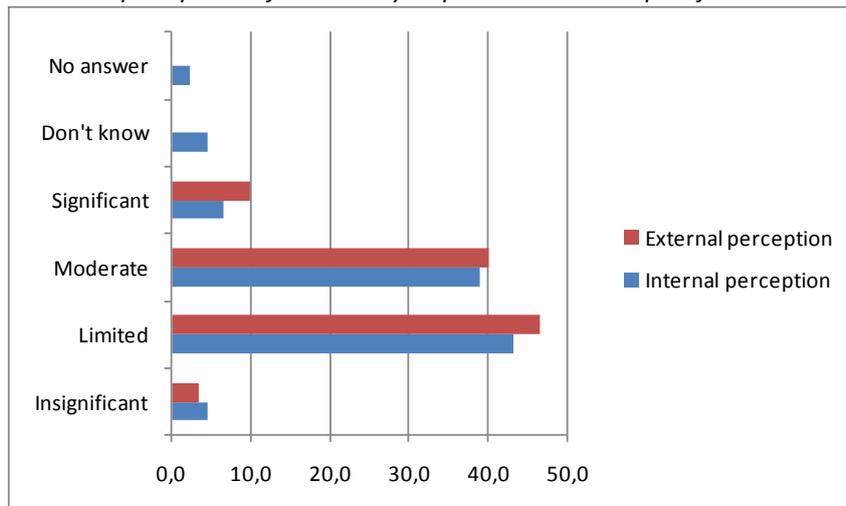
Figure 5: Internal and external perceptions of civil society responsiveness on social mobility



As we can see, the two samples agreed in recognising a limited impact of CSOs on social mobility. We have to say that about the relations between social mobility and CSOs there is little information: we think that people may have answered 'limited' because of the limited amount of data regarding this topic.

More significant perhaps was the answer to the question regarding the second social concern: respect for law.

Figure 6: Internal and external perceptions of civil society responsiveness on respect for law



As regards the second concern, respect for law, the data coming from the two samples are quite similar. The differences in percentages are not so relevant and we can say that the answers that obtained the higher percentages across the board are 'limited' and 'tangible'. In particular, it is the view of 38.9% of

organisations that they have a tangible impact, and this matches the view of 40% of experts that CSOs achieve tangible impact in this field. It can be noticed in the graph that the opinion of the experts is more positive than that of the CSOs.

#### 4.2 /4.5 Social impact (internal versus external perceptions)

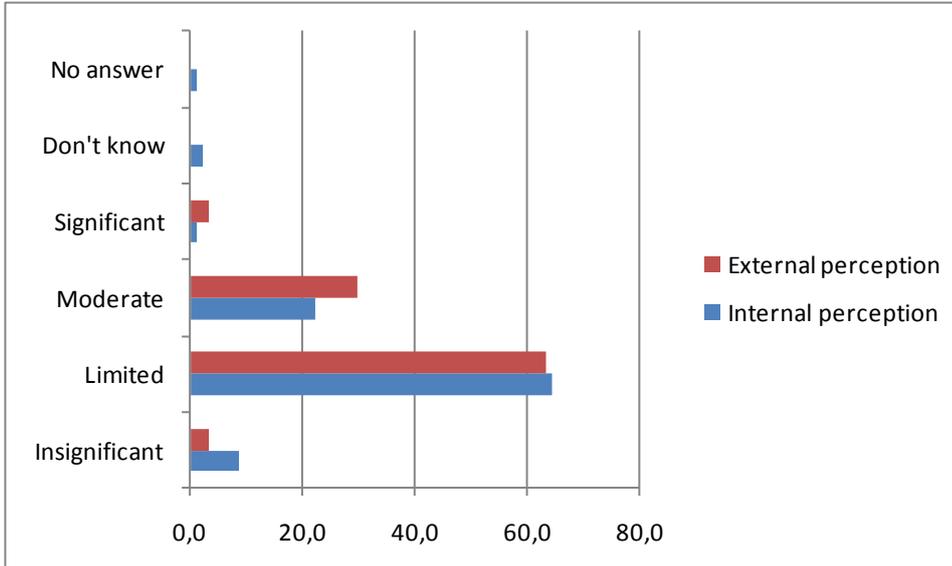
The sub-dimension of internal perception of social impact scored **58.8%**, while the sub-dimension of external perception of social impact scored **61.2%**. It is interesting to note that the fields in which CSOs are perceived to have higher impact are similar with respect to the kind of field but different regarding the percentages. The internal sample chose housing (21.7%), social development (14.5%) and education (13.2%) while the second sample chose food (22.4%), education (22.4%) and social development (19.0%). Looking at the selected fields we can say that CSOs in Italy seem to be effective both in building social capital within Italian society (as is related by the percentages on education and social development) and in addressing concrete problems such as health, employment or food.

#### 4.3 / 4.6 Policy impact (internal versus external perceptions)

The sub-dimension of internal perception of policy impact scored **41.8%**, while the sub-dimension of external perception of policy impact scored **31.0%**. This is the only area where the external value is lower than the internal one.

If we look at the results coming from the two samples regarding the impact on policy making we note that the opinions are quite similar.

Figure 7: Internal and external perceptions of civil society policy impact



This aspect of the impact dimension highlights a weakness of Italian CSOs that emerged also in the first edition of the CSI project, that is a distinction between the good level of impact that CSOs have in solving social issues and their scanty political relevance, evidence that is acknowledged both internally and externally.

#### 4.7 Impact of civil society on attitudes

The sub-dimension of impact of civil society on attitudes scored **19.6%**. The source for this is secondary data (*World Values Survey 2005*). The indicators through which it was measured were: 1) difference in trust

between civil society members and non-members, scoring **21.0%**; 2) difference in tolerance levels between civil society members and non-members, scoring **11.7%**; 3) difference in public spiritedness between civil society members and non-members, scoring **2.6%**; 4) and trust in civil society, scoring **43.1%**.

This low level of impact on attitudes sparked an interesting discussion during the AC meeting. The experts highlighted the fact that assuming a significant difference between people who are members of CSOs and people who are not in terms of tolerance, trust or public spiritedness is a something of a value judgement, and the information collected seemed to all the members not to correspond to the reality of Italian society.

## Conclusion

The **Perception of Impact** score of **42.1%** means that Italian CSOs are seen as having a modest social and political impact as well as limited impact on attitudes in society. According to the results of the research it seems that external perception of the impact is more positive than the internal perception: the value registered for external perception is indeed higher in two out of three indicators, albeit with a lower value registered for policy impact. Furthermore it can be added that the context in which civil society's actions seems to have more impact is the social one. Compared to this, it seems that in Italy civil society has a very limited impact on attitudes.

## 5. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

The level of the **External Environment** in Italy scored **71.8%**. This means that Italian CSOs occupy quite a favourable socio-economic, political and cultural context.

It must be noted that Italian CSOs enjoy a relatively safe and enabling environment, both from the legal and socio-economic points of view. Civil society-state relations reflect this situation, as well as the ongoing development of positive relations with the private sector. Serious concerns do exist, however, about the socio-cultural context, a traditional weak point in the Italian environment, and the political system, which is not yet stable and so unable to fulfil properly its role. The main weak points of this dimension are the low level of public spiritedness, the high level of perceived corruption, the low level of freedom of press and the ineffectiveness of the state in enforcing law. All these elements are in some way linked to the weakness of Italian political leadership.

In contrast to the results however, the experts of the Advisory Committee highlighted an episode in relation to Italian civil society and the context in which it operates. In 2001 in Genoa, during the G8 Summit 300,000 people demonstrated for a 'new globalisation' and were victims of a brutal police repression, with one young man being killed. That episode of great intolerance and violence represents the highest point of contrast between the Italian state and the movements of civil society and it is still part of the common memory of Italy of the negative side of Italian institutions.

In the following table we present the values of the sub-dimension of the External Environment dimension and a short comment on the results.

*Table 10: External Environment dimension*

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2
<b>5. External Environment Dimension</b>		<b>71.8%</b>

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2
<b>5. External Environment Dimension</b>		<b>71.8%</b>
	5.1 Socio-economic context	<b>70.5%</b> Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>favourable</b> socio- economic context
	5.2 Socio-political context	<b>77.7%</b> Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>favourable</b> socio-political context
	5.3 Socio-cultural context	<b>67.1%</b> Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>quite favourable</b> socio-cultural context

A comparison between the scores of the second edition of the research and those of the AC and of the first edition of the project show that there are not any considerable differences.

*Table 11: Comparison of External Environment scores*

Dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI 1
<b>External Environment</b>	<b>71.8%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>73%</b>

Considering the European Union institutions as being a significant part of the external environment of Italian CSOs, we also carried out a case study on the relationship between the European Union and civic organisations that operate at the local level in Italy (See Annex 8). This relationship has been explored by delimiting the research field to the information processes and the participative policies promoted at the European level, as they constitute the main factor for the involvement of the CSOs in the community, making, at the same time, the European Union a concrete presence in the overall context in which these organisations operate. The results of the research show that the presence of the European Union solicits a broader reflection on the environment in which Italian CSOs exist and operate. In particular, from the socio-political point of view, the EU has recognised the role of CSOs in treaties (see art. 11 of the Lisbon Treaty) and in official documents, considering civil society as a crucial actor for the achievement of its objectives. Moreover, the Union has promoted various kinds of initiatives in order to strengthen and involve CSOs in EU dynamics. Despite this highly favourable open attitude, the study showed that European information and participation policies are not fully known or utilised by Italian local CSOs that, in general, feel themselves 'distant' from the EU and find difficulties in being involved at this level. In general, even if the relationship between CSOs and the EU institutions shows some difficulties it appears quite positive. In particular, CSOs' approach to the EU seems to be more pragmatic than utilitarian as the organisations showed a not obvious interest in being part of the EU dynamics, not only for the funding opportunities that could result.

### 5.1 Socio-economic context

This sub-dimension aimed at investigating how favourable the socio-economic context is for the development of civil society (assessing general health and education, corruption, inequality and macro-economic context), scoring **70.5%**. The indicators which measured it were: 1) Basic Capabilities Index, scoring **99.5%**, as the simple average of the following three criteria covering health and basic educational provision: the percentage of children who reach fifth grade at school; the percentage of children who survive until at least their fifth year (based on mortality statistics); and the percentage of births attended by health professionals. It has a possible range of 0–100, where higher values indicate higher levels of human capabilities. The source is Social Watch; 2) Corruption, which scored **48.0%** for the level of perceived corruption in the public sector. The source is Transparency International Corruption Perception Index; 3) Inequality, scoring **64.0%** on the level of inequality in a range from 0 to 100, where 0 is complete inequality and 100 is complete equality. The source is the Gini coefficient, inverted to be compatible with the CSI methodology of higher scores being more positive (World Bank, National Statistics Bureau).

It appears clear from this data that the level of the socio-economic context has lowered with the coefficient of corruption representing a very low score for one of the most important members of the EU.

### 5.2 Socio-political context

This sub-dimension aimed at investigating how favourable the socio-political context is for the development of civil society (political rights and freedoms, rule of law, associational and organisational rights, legal framework, state effectiveness) and scored **77.7%**. The indicators which measured it were: 1) political rights and freedoms, which scored **95.0%** on Freedom House's Index of Political Rights. Source: Freedom House; 2) rule of law and personal freedoms, which scored **87.5%**, calculated by using three of the four indicators which form the Freedom House Index of Civil Liberties: rule of law; personal autonomy and individual rights; freedom of expression and belief. Source: Freedom House; 3) associational and organisational rights, scoring **100%**, calculated through one of the four indicators which form the Index of Civil Liberties: freedom of associational and organisational rights. Source: Freedom House; 4) experience of legal framework, which scored **49.4%** and investigated subjective ratings of the legal framework. Source: CSI Organisational Survey; 5) state effectiveness, scoring **56.6%**, describing the extent to which the Italian state is able to fulfil its defined functions. Source: World Bank Governance Dataset (UNU World Governance Survey).

As appears clear the scores that lower the general performance of the socio-political context sub-dimension are the indicators of legal framework and state effectiveness that describe a lack of efficiency of Italian institutions and a general spirit of no confidence with the legal framework of the Italian political system. In particular, this second data is a historical characteristic of the perception that Italian citizens have of their political representatives, its climax being during the period 1992-1994, well known as 'Tangentopoli' (a journalistic neologism that is a metaphor for 'Bribesville'), when most of the politicians of the period were arrested or accused of corruption.

### 5.3 Socio-cultural context

This sub-dimension aimed at investigating how favourable is the socio-cultural context for the development of civil society (looking at levels of interpersonal trust, tolerance and public spiritedness taken from the World Values Survey 2005), scoring **67.1%**. The indicators which measured it were: 1) trust, scoring **29.2%** for levels of how much people trust each other; 2) tolerance, scoring **81.0%** for the level of tolerance

towards marginalised categories of people (such as drug addicts, people of a different race, people who have HIV/AIDS, immigrants and foreign workers, and homosexuals), and 3) public spiritedness, scoring **91.1%**.

Looking at the public trust data, Italians seem to be quite wary of other people, apart from family members and close circles of friends, thus reflecting a traditional Italian culture pattern. In addition, the score confirms what emerged from research in the first edition of the CSI project, in which 80% of the sample interviewed declared that it was necessary to be very cautious in dealing with other people and 75% expressed the belief that other people could take advantage of his/her good faith.

This is probably due to a projection of the general distrust in public life into their private lives and it is assumable that this low level of social trust inhibits Italian civil society's effectiveness.

### Conclusion

The level of the **External Environment** in Italy scored **71.8%**. This means that Italian CSOs occupy quite a favourable socio economic, political and cultural context. Italian CSOs enjoy a relatively safe and enabling environment, both from the legal and socio-economic points of view. Civil society-state relations reflect this situation, as well as the ongoing development of positive relations with the private sector. Serious concerns do exist, however, about the socio-cultural context, a traditional weak point in the Italian environment, and the political system, which is not yet stable and so unable to fulfil properly its role. The main weak points of this dimension are the low level of public spiritedness, the high level of perceived corruption, the low level of freedom of press and the ineffectiveness of the state in enforcing law. All these elements are in some way linked to the weakness of Italian political leadership.

## IV. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF ITALIAN CIVIL SOCIETY

According to the data collected, the strengths and weaknesses of Italian civil society can be synthesised in the following table.

*Table 12: Strengths and Weaknesses of Italian Civil Society*

Dimension	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Civic engagement	A considerable number of citizens are engaged both in social and politically-based organisations	The presence and role of people belonging to distinct social groups is high in the mind of civil society's actors but very low in practice

Level of organisation	CSOs have stable internal governance, are members of support networks and have regular access to technologies	The presence of support infrastructures and communication processes between CSOs is more formal than substantial  Many CSOs have a strong volunteer presence, an aspect that could be a point of strength or of weakness depending on the type of organisation  CSOs do not have stable financial resources
Practice of values	CSOs practice democratic decision making internally and respect codes of conduct	CSOs pay limited attention to labour regulation and environmental standards
Perception of impact	CSOs tend to underestimate their capability in being responsive to emerging issues, and in having social impact	CSOs tend to overestimate their capability to have impact on policies
External environment	In Italy CSOs have a favourable socio economic and political context	In Italy CSOs have quite favourable socio cultural context

Civil society in Italy is confirmed to be a mature and solid phenomenon, as can easily be argued looking at the table. The weak points that require the utmost attention, as they emerged from the research, seem to be the ability to influence the attitudes and values of Italian society in general; the inclusion and management of diversity; the attention to immigrants and their need to practice citizenship in CSOs; the commitment to emerging problems in Italy, such as social mobility and the rule of law; the increase of international links needed to face the effects of globalisation; and, of course, the enhancement of policy impact, which the research confirmed to be much lower than social impact.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of the research, some main recommendations can be defined, to follow up the research results.

The first regards official statistics. The CSI has confirmed the lack of general and reliable official data on CSOs in Italy. Available official statistical data describes non-profit organisations, a wider set of institutions with no common features nor social or cultural meanings. The statistic authority should quickly solve this problem, putting at public disposal quantitative and qualitative data on CSOs.

The second recommendation regards the scientific community engaged in civil society studies. It is necessary to develop research projects and activities not only on representations and perceptions of CSOs'

members or leaders as well as of their interlocutors, but also, and mostly, on practical aspects such as structure, membership, culture and operations of CSOs. Without a sound base of information on the concrete characteristics of CSOs, there is indeed the risk of arbitrariness and of prevailing of ideal models on actual reality.

The third recommendation concerns mass media coverage of CSOs' existence and activity. The way in which the media system represents CSOs does not reflect their actual engagement and results, and tends to reinforce an abstract and ideal vision of these organisations, often quite far from reality. This situation risks hiding the value of CSOs as actors of social development, strengthening democracy and promoting sustainability.

The fourth recommendation is targeted towards political leaderships and governmental institutions. The low policy impact of CSOs is without any doubt the effect of a closure of the political system towards them. But not only can the inclusion of CSOs in policy making processes enhance the effectiveness of public policies; it can also increase the public trust of political and governmental actors and the legitimacy of the policy process itself. Continuing to ignore the contribution of CSOs would thus be a counterproductive decision for political and government leaderships.

A last, but not less important recommendation, concerns CSOs themselves. The research has shown both strong and weak elements that characterise these organisations. As for the weaknesses, it is very important that CSOs operate to remove them, in order not to imperil their positive efforts and outcomes. The points that require the utmost attention, as they emerged from the research, seem to be the ability to influence the attitudes and values of Italian society in general; the inclusion and management of diversity; the attention to immigrants and their need to practice citizenship into CSOs; the commitment to emerging problems in Italy, such as social mobility and the rule of law; the increase of international links needed to face the effects of globalisation; and, of course, the enhancement of policy impact, which the research confirmed to be much lower than social impact.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

Civil society in Italy is a mature and solid phenomenon, a permanent actor of the social, cultural, economic and political life of the country. Moreover, it is a phenomenon that enjoys of a favourable context for its development. The values registered in each dimension are quite high and this evidence shows that Italian civil society has all the potentialities that are necessary to in order to solve the weaker aspects highlighted in this research.

It is interesting to reflect on the fact that, when comparing the internal and the external representation of civil society, it seems that CSOs tend to describe themselves as having in mind a model of political correctness (i.e. presence of code of conduct, collaboration with other organisations, democratic decision making process and so on) that is exactly what their observers and their interlocutors expect from them. The irony is that external representation, coming from the opinion of the sample involved in the External Perception Survey and from the Advisory Committee, seems to be closer to the reality of the phenomenon. Again, as was the case in the first edition of the project, a sort of inferiority complex on the part of CSOs emerges here that is the cause of an overestimation of formal aspect (e.g. respect of laws that regulate CSOs) and an underestimation of the impact on Italian society.

During the two focus groups the participants found the information coming from the analysis of the Level of Organisation and the Practice of Values dimensions particularly interesting. They noticed that the daily life of organisations is somewhat different from the quantitative scores:

- As regards the dimension of the Level of Organisation, CSOs are less well organised than they are described and above all the communication process is more complex than it seems from the research. Most of the representatives of CSOs declared they felt isolated even if they participate in network, especially if they are based in small provinces.
- As regard the Practice of Values, the representatives of CSOS that took part in the focus groups highlighted that there is a sound practice of values within organisations that is not regulated by law but is very present in organisations, such as the value of respect of CSOs missions, the level of trust in work teams, and the availability in meeting the needs of staff members and. All these aspects do not emerge in the research but are fundamental for the implementation of CSO activities.

Those two considerations reinforce what we expressed in the second recommendation about the need for a sound base of information on the concrete characteristics of CSOs in order to overcome the risk of arbitrariness and of ideal models prevailing over actual reality.

In the end what we hope, and what we plan following publication of this report, is that, as was the case for the first edition of the project, this report will become a base of information for discussing and reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of civil society, not only with the citizens who take part in the phenomenon but also with CSO stakeholders, with the aim of strengthening civil society and recognising the real contribution that CSOs make to democracy, respect for law and the building of social capital in Italy.

## **APPENDICES**

- 1. CIVICUS CSI INDICATOR MATRIX**
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## ANNEX 1

## CIVICUS CSI INDICATOR MATRIX

<i>Dimension, Sub-dimension and Indicators</i>			<b>Scores (%)</b>
<b>1) Dimension: Civic Engagement</b>			<b>48.3</b>
1.1 Extent of socially-based engagement			30.3
	1.1.1	Social membership 1	29.9
	1.1.2	Social volunteering 1	20.6
	1.1.3	Community engagement 1	40.5
1.2 Depth of socially-based engagement			41.4
	1.2.1	Social membership 2	23.8
	1.2.2	Social volunteering 2	30.3
	1.2.3	Community engagement 2	70.0
1.3 Diversity of socially-based engagement			79.5
	1.3.1	Diversity of socially-based engagement	79.5
1.4 Extent of political engagement			30.1
	1.4.1	Political membership 1	19.3
	1.4.2	Political volunteering 1	10.3
	1.4.3	Individual activism 1	60.8
1.5 Depth of political engagement			33.0
	1.5.1	Political membership 2	19.0
	1.5.2	Political volunteering 2	26.2
	1.5.3	Individual activism 2	53.8
1.6 Diversity of political engagement			75.2

	1.6.1	Diversity of political engagement	75.2
<b>2) Dimension: Level of Organisation</b>			<b>63.2</b>
2.1 Internal governance			83.3
	2.1.1	Management	83.3
2.2 Infrastructure			71.1
	2.2.1	Support organisations	71.1
2.3 Sectoral communication			82.5
	2.3.1	Peer-to-peer communication 1	85.4
	2.3.2	Peer-to-peer communication 2	79.5
2.4 Human resources			20.5
	2.4.1	Sustainability of human resources	20.5
2.5 Financial and technological resources			80.9
	2.5.1	Financial sustainability	65.1
	2.5.2	Technological resources	96.6
2.6 International linkages			40.8
	2.6.1	International linkages	40.8
<b>3) Dimension: Practice of Values</b>			<b>46.3</b>
3.1 Democratic decision-making governance			82.2
	3.1.1	Decision-making	82.2
3.2 Labour regulations			29.0
	3.2.1	Equal opportunities	30.7
	3.2.2	Members of labour unions	30.6
	3.2.3	Labour rights trainings	33.3
	3.2.4	Publicly available policy for labour standards	21.3
3.3 Code of conduct and transparency			54.8

	3.3.1	Publicly available code of conduct	47.2
	3.3.2	Transparency	62.4
3.4 Environmental standards			28.1
	3.4.1	Environmental standards	28.1
3.5 Perception of values in civil society as a whole			37.5
	3.5.1	Perceived non-violence	12.3
	3.5.2	Perceived internal democracy	65.4
	3.5.3	Perceived levels of corruption	3.4
	3.5.4	Perceived intolerance	25.0
	3.5.5	Perceived weight of intolerant groups	60.8
	3.5.6	Perceived promotion on non-violence and peace	58.0
<b>4) Dimension: Perception of Impact</b>			<b>42.1</b>
4.1 Responsiveness (internal perception)			39.0
	4.1.1	Impact on social concern 1	29.1
	4.1.2	Impact on social concern 2	48.8
4.2 Social impact (internal perception)			58.8
	4.2.1	General social impact	60.2
	4.2.2	Social impact of own organisation	57.3
4.3 Policy impact (internal perception)			41.8
	4.3.1	General policy impact	24.1
	4.3.2	Policy activity of own organisation	68.9
	4.3.3	Policy impact of own organisation	32.3
4.4 Responsiveness (external perception)			43.4
	4.4.1	Impact on social concern 1	36.7

	4.4.2	Impact on social concern 2	50.0
4.5 Social impact (external perception)			61.2
	4.5.1	Social impact selected concerns	72.4
	4.5.2	Social impact general	50.0
4.6 Policy impact (external perception)			31.0
	4.6.1	Policy impact specific fields 1-3	28.6
	4.6.2	Policy impact general	33.3
4.7 Impact of civil society on attitudes			19.6
	4.7.1	Difference in trust between civil society members and non-members	21.0
	4.7.2	Difference in tolerance levels between civil society members and non-members	11.7
	4.7.3	Difference in public spiritedness between civil society members and non-members	2.6
	4.7.4	Trust in civil society	43.1
<b>5) Dimension: External Environment</b>			<b>71.8</b>
5.1 Socio-economic context			70.5
	5.1.1	Basic Capabilities Index	99.5
	5.1.2	Corruption	48.0
	5.1.3	Inequality	64.0
5.2 Socio-political context			77.7
	5.2.1	Political rights and freedoms	95.0
	5.2.2	Rule of law and personal freedoms	87.5
	5.2.3	Associational and organisational rights	100.0
	5.2.4	Experience of legal framework	49.4
	5.2.5	State effectiveness	56.6

5.3 Socio-cultural context			67.1
	5.3.1	Trust	29.2
	5.3.2	Tolerance	81.0
	5.3.3	Public spiritedness	91.1

**ANNEX 2 : List of Participants in the CSI project****LIST OF FIELD RESEARCHERS**

<b>LUCIA MAZZUCA</b>	RESEARCHER
<b>GIOVANNI MORO</b>	RESEARCH COORDINATOR
<b>ROBERTO RANUCCI</b>	RESEARCHER
<b>MONICA RUFFA</b>	RESEARCH COORDINATOR

**LIST OF NIT MEMBERS**

<b>VITTORINO FERLA</b>	CITTADINANZATTIVA	PROJECT COORDINATOR
<b>DANIELA QUAGGIA</b>	CITTADINANZATTIVA	PROJECT ASSISTANT
<b>VALENTINA CONDO'</b>	CITTADINANZATTIVA	PROJECT ASSISTANT

**LIST OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

<b>Mariano BOTTACCIO</b>	Coordinamento Nazionale Comunità d'Accoglienza
<b>Luisa CRISIGIOVANNI</b>	Altroconsumo
<b>Francesca DANESE</b>	CESV Lazio
<b>Costanza FANELLI</b>	Legacoop Sociali
<b>Diego GALLI</b>	Radio Radicale
<b>Andrea LA REGINA</b>	Caritas Italiana
<b>Giangi MILESI</b>	CESVI - Cooperazione e Sviluppo

<b>Toni MIRA</b>	Avvenire
<b>Rosario MURDICA</b>	Arcigay
<b>Maddalena PELAGALLI</b>	CNAMC – Coordinamento Nazionale Associazioni Malati Cronici
<b>Marina PORRO</b>	Unione Generale del Lavoro
<b>Elena TROPEANO</b>	Formez

## ANNEX 3:

## COMPARATIVE TABLE OF THE RESULTS

## 1. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

TABLE III.1.1: Civic Engagement Dimension

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI1
1. Civic Engagement		48.3%	35%	
	1.1 Extent of socially-based engagement	30.3% In Italy being an active member of a social organisation is <b>not so rare</b>	55% In Italy being an active member of a social organisation is <b>quite common</b>	33%*** In Italy being an active member of a social organisation is <b>not so rare</b>
	1.2 Depth** of socially-based engagement	41.4% In Italy being an active member of more than one social organisation is <b>not so rare</b>	40% In Italy being an active member of more than one social organisation is <b>not so rare</b>	43*** In Italy being an active member of more than one social organisation is <b>not so rare</b>
	1.3 Diversity of socially-based engagement	79.5% In Italy, the percentage of members of social organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants or people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people, people from rural communities and people with disabilities is <b>very high</b>	10% In Italy, the percentage of members of social organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants or people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people, people from rural communities and people with disabilities is <b>very low</b>	66%*** In Italy, the percentage of members of social organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants or people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people, people from rural communities and people with disabilities is <b>high</b>
	1.4 Extent of political engagement	30.1% In Italy being an active member of a political organisation is <b>not so</b>	60% In Italy being an active member of a political organisation is <b>quite</b>	33%*** In Italy being an active member of a political organisation is <b>not so</b>

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI1
1. Civic Engagement		48.3%	35%	
		rare	common	rare
	1.5 Depth of political engagement	33.0% In Italy being an active member of more than one political organisations is <b>not so rare</b>	35% In Italy being an active member of more than one political organisations is <b>not so rare</b>	43%*** In Italy being an active member of more than one political organisations is <b>not so rare</b>
	1.6 Diversity of political engagement	75.2% In Italy, the percentage of members of political organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants or people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people, people from rural communities and people with disabilities is <b>very high</b>	10% In Italy, the percentage of members of political organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants or people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people, people from rural communities and people with disabilities is <b>very low</b>	43%*** In Italy, the percentage of members of political organisations belonging to social groups such as women, immigrants or people of a different ethnicity, disadvantaged people, people from rural communities and people with disabilities is <b>satisfactory</b>

## 2. LEVEL OF ORGANISATION

**TABLE III.2.1: Level of Organisation Dimension**

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI 1
		63.2%	48,5%	53%
	2.1 Internal Governance	83.3% In Italy <b>most</b> CSOs have a board of directors or a formal steering committee	85% In Italy <b>most</b> CSOs have a board of directors or a formal steering committee	
	2.2 Support	71.1%	60%	66%

	infrastructure	In Italy <b>most</b> CSOs are formal members of a federation, umbrella group or support network	In Italy <b>lots</b> of CSOs are formal members of a federation, umbrella group or support network	In Italy <b>lots</b> CSOs are formal members of a federation, umbrella group or support network
	2.3 Sectoral communication	<b>82.5%</b> The communication between Italian CSOs <b>is frequent and deep</b>	<b>30%</b> The communication between Italian CSOs <b>is not so frequent and deep</b>	<b>33%</b> The communication between Italian CSOs <b>is not so frequent and deep</b>
	2.4 Human resources	<b>20.5%</b> Italian CSOs <b>do not have sustainable</b> human resource base	<b>11%</b> Italian CSOs <b>do not have sustainable</b> human resource base	<b>66%</b> Italian CSOs <b>have sustainable</b> human resource base
	2.5 Financial and technological resources	<b>80.9%</b> Italian CSOs <b>very often</b> have a <b>stable financial resource</b> basis and <b>regular access</b> to technologies	<b>25%</b> Italian CSOs <b>rarely</b> have a <b>stable financial resource</b> basis and <b>regular access</b> to technologies	<b>50%</b> Italian CSOs <b>usually</b> have a <b>stable financial resource</b> basis and <b>regular access</b> to technologies
	2.6 International linkages	<b>40.8%</b> INGOs are <b>quite present</b> in Italy	<b>80%</b> INGOs are <b>largely present</b> in Italy	<b>33%</b> INGOs are <b>quite present</b> in Italy

\*Source: Union of international Associations Database

### 3.PRACTICE OF VALUES

**TABLE III.3.1: Practice of Values Dimension**

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI 1
<b>3. Practice of Values</b>		<b>46.3%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>83%</b>
	3.1 Democratic decision-making	<b>82.2%</b> In Italy <b>almost all</b> CSOs practice democratic decision-making	<b>70%</b> In Italy <b>a satisfactory number of</b> CSOs practice democratic	<b>100%</b> In Italy <b>all</b> CSOs practice democratic decision-making

		internally	decision-making internally	internally
	3.2 Labour regulations	29.0% In Italy the number of CSOs that pay attention to labour regulations <b>is quite limited</b>	10% In Italy the number of CSOs that pay attention to labour regulations <b>is very limited</b>	
	3.3 Code of conduct and transparency	54.8% In Italy the number of CSOs that have a code of conduct and policies on transparency <b>is satisfactory</b>	5% In Italy the number of CSOs that have a code of conduct and policies on transparency <b>is very limited</b>	
	3.4 Environmental standards	28.1% In Italy the number of CSOs that have a policy on environmental standards <b>is quite limited</b>	25% In Italy the number of CSOs that have a policy on environmental standards <b>is quite limited</b>	
	3.5 Perception of values in civil society as a whole	37.5% The values of non violence, democracy and honesty <b>do not have a solid base</b> within Italian civil society	80% The values of non violence, democracy and honesty <b>have a solid base</b> within Italian civil society	

#### 4.PERCEPTION OF IMPACT

**TABLE III.4.1: Perception of Impact Dimension**

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI 1
4. Perception Of Impact		42.1%	55%	76%

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI 1
<b>4. Perception Of Impact</b>		<b>42.1%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>76%</b>
	4.1 Responsiveness (internal perception)	<b>39.0%</b> CSOs have a <b>modest</b> capability of responding on issues of social mobility and respect for the rule of law	<b>30%</b> CSOs have a <b>modest</b> capability of responding on issues of social mobility and respect for the rule of law	
	4.2 Social impact (internal)	<b>58.8%</b> CSOs are <b>quite effective</b> in having a social impact	<b>45%</b> CSOs are <b>quite effective</b> in having a social impact	
	4.3 Policy Impact (Internal )	<b>41.8%</b> CSOs have a <b>modest</b> impact on policies	<b>65%</b> CSOs have a <b>strong</b> impact on policies	
	4.4 Responsiveness (External perception)	<b>43.4%</b> CSOs have a <b>modest</b> capability of responding on issues of social mobility and respect for the rule of law		<b>66%</b> CSOs have a <b>very good</b> capability of responding on issues of social mobility and respect for the rule of law
	4.5 Social Impact (External)	<b>61.2%</b> CSOs are <b>quite effective</b> in having a social impact		
	4.6 Policy Impact (External)	<b>31.0%</b> CSOs have a <b>modest</b> impact on policies		<b>56%</b> CSOs have a <b>good</b> impact on policies
	4.7 Impact of Civil Society on attitudes	<b>19.6%</b> Italian civil society has a <b>limited</b> impact	<b>80%</b> Italian civil society has a <b>strong</b> impact	

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI 1
4. Perception Of Impact		42.1%	55%	76%
		on attitudes	on attitudes	

## 5. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

**TABLE III.5: Environment Dimension**

Dimension	Sub-dimension	CSI 2	AC	CSI 1
5. Environment Dimension		71.8%	70.0%	73%
	5.1 Socio-economic context	70.5% Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>favourable</b> socio economic context	80.0% Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>favourable</b> socio economic context	100% Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>very favourable</b> socio economic context
	5.2 Socio-political context	77.7% Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>favourable</b> socio political context	75.0% Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>favourable</b> socio political context	60% Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>quite favourable</b> socio political context
	5.3 Socio-cultural context	67.1% Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>quite favourable</b> socio cultural context	55.0% Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>quite favourable</b> socio cultural context	43% Italian CSOs seem to have a <b>quite favourable</b> socio cultural context

Annex 4:  
SOCIAL FORCES ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

During the early stages of the research, the NIT undertook a preliminary exercise to analyse the main social forces in Italian society, which had two steps:

- **Mapping Italian society:** identification and analysis of categories of actors that play a role in the public arena;
- **Mapping Italian civil society:** identification of forces and categories of actors that comprise civil society, their powers and relationships with the other social forces of Italian society.

### **1. Mapping Italian society**

#### **Objective**

The objective was to identify the categories of actors that play a role in the Italian public arena, their weight and their relationships and to describe as much as possible the context within which CSOs are active.

#### **Methodology and structure**

Through a process of brainstorming the NIT took the following steps:

1. Draw up of a list of categories of actors that composed Italian society;
2. Breakdown of categories of actors into three main areas (state, market and civil society);
3. Award the degree of influence to each category of actors within the public arena.

#### **Output**

The NIT and the research group identified 115 categories of actors that play a role within the public arena

STATE: 23 categories

MARKET: 41 categories

CIVIL SOCIETY: 51 categories

As far as the influence that those categories have within the public arena we reported the following pattern:

- 12.2% have a very high influence;
- 23.3% have a high influence;
- 29.6% have a low influence;
- 33.9% have a very low influence.

Therefore, 63% of the categories of actors involved in the public arena have a low or very low influence, and most of them are CSOs.

## **2. Mapping Italian civil society**

### **Objective**

The objective was to identify the categories of actors that comprise Italian civil society and to define as much as possible their weight and relationships within the public arena.

### **Methodology and structure**

Through a process of brainstorming the NIT has completed the following steps:

- a. Revisit the list of categories of actors identified in the mapping phase of Italian society;
- b. Reflect on the criteria to be used to create sub-dimensions within the vast area of civil society;
- c. Identify functional criteria of sub-divisions for our research;
- d. Analysis of the degree of influence of each category of actors within civil society

### **Output**

The first output of the operation of mapping civil society was the identification of functional criteria by which CSOs could be sub-divided into macro areas.

First of all, the NIT and the research group identified four criteria:

1. the targets of the activities of the organisations (e.g. women, children, people with disabilities people, immigrants, students);
2. the policy fields within which the organisations are active (e.g. health care, environment, consumers, safety, justice, poverty);
3. their juridical form (e.g. social entrepreneurs, voluntary associations, informal groups, social movements);
4. the distinctive feature that characterises them within the public arena (e.g. civic activism, social and cultural infrastructure, professional associations, social partners).

After a careful reflection, the NIT decided that criterion no. 4 would guarantee the least overlapping of organisations belonging to different categories.

Therefore, the organisations belonging to the civil society macro-area have been sub-divided into:

**CIVIC ACTIVISM:** the organisations active in the policy-making system and in defending citizenship rights;

**SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE:** the organisations directed to increase social capital within the community/society;

**PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIAL PARTNERS:** Trade unions, labour organisations and all the organisations directed to defend subjects' rights as workers, professionals, employers, etc.

The 51 categories of actors that composed the civil society main-category have then been divided as follows:

- CIVIC ACTIVISM: 31 categories;
- SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 13 categories;
- PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIAL PARTNERS: 7 categories.

As far as the influence that those categories have within the macro-area of civil society is concerned we reported the following data:

- only one category of actors belonging to the 'civic activism' (i.e. the protection of rights) main category has obtained a degree of influence with a value greater than 2 (and therefore high / very high), that is the category associations of users and consumers.

The work of mapping civil society helped the NIT and the research group to:

- focus on the object of the research;
- construct the sample of organisations involved in the Organisational Survey;
- identify the sample of experts involved in the External Perception Survey.

## **ANNEX 5:**

### **Civic Engagement Dimension**

#### **Case study**

#### **CIVIC RESOURCES FOR URBAN SAFETY:**

#### **A survey on the role of active citizenship organisations**

#### **Summary**

This survey focused on the role of organised citizens in safety policies, in particular those applied at the local level. It was conducted between December 2008 and February 2009. The survey did not focus on safety policies specifically, but rather on the involvement of those organisations active in this policy area.

The information was obtained through desk reviews of previous research conducted on the topic as well as policy documents and other relevant publications.

The main objective of the study was to contribute to enriching the cultural context within which the topic of active, citizens' involvement in urban safety has been debated in Italy. Furthermore, the final analysis hoped to enlarge the overall conceptual framework used to interpret situations and experiences as well as the arguments on which the respective public policies are built and promoted.

The main sources included: research papers, syllabi for university and para-university courses, specialised training materials, empirical research reports, national and local-level governmental and administrative policy documentation, policy papers by public entities and civic organisations, documents published by public, civil or mixed programmes, various resource-centre materials, operational manuals.

A first analysis could be done on the main context-related elements regarding the role of citizens' organisations in urban safety policies.

The report is divided into four parts. The first is a summary of the main context-related elements regarding the role of citizens' organisations in urban safety policies. The second part takes into account the factors that characterise the relationship between civic and administrative initiatives. The third part depicts a tentative map of "civic resources" for urban safety. Finally, the fourth section highlights some open questions and critical aspects regarding the involvement of citizens' organisations in safety policies.

#### **Context**

In general, safety is one of the public policy areas in which the presence of active citizenship organisations is most evidently identified and conceptualised and this is most probably due to the growing relevance that urban safety has acquired throughout the world in the past two decades, especially thanks to:

- the transition from professional policing to community policing as part of community development, due to the limited effectiveness of traditional practices;

- the inclusion of so-called anti-social behaviour, e.g. behaviour that may disturb, cause alarm or concern, into the concept of safety;
- the importance of the cognitive dimension, which explains the partial gap between facts and citizens' sense of safety and highlights the need to include cognitive elements in the construction of a safety-risk system;
- the resulting need to "give a voice" to citizens and communities, rather than assuming to know their point of view or imposing an alternative one;
- the growing importance of social capital for community development and for the building of "safe communities".

Needless to say, all these elements involve active citizenship organisations.

*The Italian situation: between ideological debates and neglected experiences*

Also in Italy, active citizenship organisations have become important partners in local safety policies. Yet there is very little (if any) awareness of these practices in the public debate. This is due not only to the abovementioned lack of systematic data, but also – and more importantly – to the scarce attention the media has been paying to this issue, as well as to other relevant social and institutional phenomena.

It is also important to underline that such a lack of focus is made even more problematic by alarmist tendencies and, perhaps more worryingly, the extreme political and ideological polarisation of the debate, which is often the consequence of confusing and unclear data. A key example of this situation is reflected in the debate that preceded and followed the adoption of the Decree Law on Safety of 23 February 2009, as well as the actual content of the provision, which legalised the so-called "citizen patrols" (or *ronde* in Italian). The decree in question reads

(Article 6, paragraph 3):

*The mayors, by agreement with the prefecture, can decide to collaborate with unarmed citizens' associations in order to alert or signal to the state or local police cases that can may threaten urban safety or situations of social degradation.*

It is appropriate to state that this government's decree was about "passive surveillance" but it was supported or opposed as it would be a norm on citizen patrols. It is worth adding that passive surveillance experiences have been carried out for years in several Italian municipalities, often by voluntary associations composed, for example, of senior citizens, irrespective of political allegiances of local governments authorizing or supporting them. Such confusion on definitions and roles, as well as this reduction of active citizenship to crime watch (widely recognised as a low impact measure for crime reduction), reflects an uncertainty about the role of active citizenship itself. This factor, despite the above-mentioned favourable environment, is a key weakness of the Italian situation.

**The interaction between public administration and civic organisations**

In the new context of community policing emerged in the last two decades at the international level, the relationship between local administrations and active citizen organisations in safety policy works as a double-key system: effective measures to decrease both perception and actual conditions of insecurity require the mobilisation and involvement of both actors and cannot be achieved by only one of them. In

other words, it is the combined action of administrative or other governmental entities and civic or community action that achieves the best and most sustainable results.

In this combined action there are however different ways to manage and structure the collaborative relationship:

1. Dialogue, which denotes situations in which public institutions receive input (information, claims, views, etc.) from civic organisations, which is taken into account by public administrations, and the latter provide feedback;
2. Cooperation, which refers to situations in which public institutions and active citizenship organisations have shared goals that can be reached through mutual support of programmes and activities or through coordination of efforts;
3. Partnership, whereby governments and active citizenship organisations share resources, responsibilities and risks realizing that none of the actors alone could achieve the objective that is jointly pursued.

The framework falls nevertheless within the “double key” approach, whereby the overall objective of promoting and supporting the development of community forms that enhance safety and minimise the physical and cognitive factors of insecurity can only be achieved through a combination of "public" and civic action.

#### **A civil resource map for urban safety**

What are the civic resources put into the field of safety policy? On the basis of our survey’s results, we can propose the following categorisation.

- **Participation in the design of policies, programmes and interventions.** This type of activity can have a greater or lesser institutional relevance, ranging from official forms of consultation to advocacy and lobbying, and be focused on general plans and programmes or specific situations of special concern. Typically, they regard the urban setup and deal with the delivering of certain services to the community. These activities may take place as parts of the so-called "compacts for safety", which are often signed by civic organisations, or as components of local partnerships for safety and be implemented through coordination tables, forums, etc.
- **Advocacy for the community or for at-risk people.** This can lead to awareness campaigns or public advocacy regarding situations of exclusion and social degradation that may undermine the community’s safety and can be implemented through a variety of tools.
- **Participation of communities and at-risk groups in public life.** We refer here to experiences such as the inclusion of ethnic minorities in participatory processes, as a form of empowerment for individuals and groups, but also to the promotion of associations among residents or householders to take on responsibilities for urban safety and the participation of citizens in meetings with representatives of police forces in order to foster communication and collaboration. In this category, one can also include the involvement of private enterprises in community development programmes. The experiences of participatory planning can also be included in this category.
- **Civic information.** Forms of safety audits, carried out independently or in cooperation with the authorities, fall into this category, as does any form of community profiling or risk mappings. Also monitoring and evaluating activities to measure the effectiveness and impact of public safety are based on information from organised citizens.
- **Communitarisation of personal risk.** Typically, these kind of activities are used to counter domestic violence against women and children and may imply the design of initiatives to educate men, involve influential community representatives (such as religious leaders), train

and provide advice/support to victims of violence, build shelters and protected homes for women and their children.

- **Social mediation and conflict management.** These activities, inspired by figures such as community mediators or ‘street walkers’, may relate to the relationship between residents and young people and students or between indigenous communities and migrants. They are designed to bring together and combine different points of view in order to prevent or resolve conflict.
- **Harm reduction.** Under this label, one may find those activities aimed at supporting the victims of crimes, both in terms of psychological support and material assistance, in order to avoid secondary victimisation.
- **Preventive activities and control of the territory.** These activities include the abovementioned cases of “neighbourhood watch”, but also the less obvious and more controversial activities of patrolling. These types of activity may also relate to specific aspects such as road safety (especially involving the youth), but also community actions against violence on television and on the Internet.
- **Revitalisation and management of public spaces.** This can result in “taking charge” of places such as squares or public buildings, but also the mobilisation of resources to “give back” abandoned or decayed public goods for community use.
- **Proximity actions.** These activities include all those actions aimed at reaching targets that would otherwise not be able to communicate with local institutions. It is the case of programmes targeting marginalised individuals, such as prostitutes, in particular the so called ‘survival street workers’, with whom a personal contact is necessary not only to educate them on sexually transmitted diseases, but also to gather evidence and eventually identify women’s abusers and serial killers.
- **Information and advice.** This type of activity can range from information regarding dangerous places, no go areas and more risky times for people to walk around urban centres, to legal advice for better protection of one’s rights and forms of compensation for any personal damage. These activities can be operationalised through toll-free numbers, hot lines and other public information services.
- **Public awareness and education.** This can be developed, for example, through social marketing campaigns, which advertise data and publish information to affect personal behaviours in order to make the community safer through a greater degree of attention and involvement of citizens.
- **Education and training.** These activities may refer to citizenship as a whole and regard, for example, the prevention of in safety and specific training on what to do in cases of emergency. At the same time, these activities may refer to specific at-risk groups, such as young pupils in relation to sexual violence. Education and training activities may also target individuals whose action or lack thereof might make a serious difference, such as police officers or the so-called ‘peer leaders’, who enjoy a significant reputation among at risk subjects.
- **Creation and management of services.** These may include, for example, protected homes and shelters for women who have suffered domestic violence, communal centres for at risk youth or meeting places for representatives of different generations. Of particular importance and value is the fact that these services are managed by peers, that is, people who have been subjected to the same risks and abuses (for example, women who experienced domestic violence or youngsters who lead services to prevent violence among young people or ethnic leaders committed to the empowerment of aboriginal communities).

In spite of its limitations, this map offers a very broad selection of activities, strategies and resources that are usually believed to constitute examples of how civic organisations can contribute to the policies of urban safety. The adoption of such a broad understanding is an indispensable requirement to make ‘good use’ of organised citizens in this field.

## Emerging problems

Obviously, our sources also highlight a number of considerations regarding the problems raised by the involvement of active citizen organisations in urban safety policies. Thus, it is necessary to identify the main issues. They can be divided into two groups:

### 1. *Impact, sustainability, results*

Needless to say, it is extremely difficult to assess the indirect effects and structural impacts that these activities may have beyond their specific outcomes. As a matter of fact, this remark can also be made with regard to certain public administrations' policies. In the case of civic organisations, it describes a general problem, which is however more relevant in this case since, by common admission, safety in communities is the result of a variety of structural, cultural, economic and social factors.

Another critical element concerns sustainability. Empirical evidence suggests that a satisfactory degree of safety is the result of systematic, long-term and ongoing action: results can quickly vanish after interventions come to an end. The very nature of active citizenship organisations (which are characterised by a high turnover of staff) and the reliance of their actions on the availability of adequate financial resources jeopardize the sustainability of their interventions in the long run.

### 2. *Relations with institutions, representativeness and the NIMBY Syndrome*

Even in the case of safety policies, the relationship of civic organisations with public institutions remains problematic. As mentioned above this is a critical factor in general. This becomes however a much more serious problem within a system defined as "double key". Public authorities tend to regard the organised citizens simultaneously as a resource and as a threat, and so their relationship can be particularly difficult. On the other hand, not always active citizenship organisations succeed in relating with the government on a continuum between critique and collaboration. As a consequence of both parties' actions, this partnership often results in dynamics of subordination or a "discharge of responsibilities".

Furthermore, in the relationship between active citizenship organisations and public institutions, but also with the community as a whole, apparent problems of representativeness exist. This issue is always present in the relationships between civic organisations in relation to their stakeholders, whether they are the community, public or private entities. In the case of safety policies, this is a serious risk that can have a major impact: for example, extreme voices are often presented as speaking on behalf of the community.

In some way connected to the issue of representativeness, there is the risk that organised citizens on urban safety policies end up acting according to what could be called NIMBY Syndrome (Not in My Backyard), applied in this case not to waste, but to marginal, vulnerable or excluded populations. This attitude can reach far beyond the perimeter of what was defined initially as "active citizenship", practicing a presumed representation of the community interpreted as a closed and homogeneous universe. Paradoxically in such a case they can become a problem rather than an asset for the promotion of urban safety.

## Annex 6

### Practice of Values Dimension

#### Case study

#### THE CIVIC INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS

#### Immigrants and Italian CSOs:

#### presence, role, impact

#### Summary

#### Introduction

This case study is one of a series of five and is part of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) project in Italy, a project that aims at assessing the state of civil society. This case study will explore the CSI dimension Practice of Values and within this look at how well immigrants are integrated into the fabric of civil society in Italy. This focus is inspired by mainly two findings of the project as a whole.

Firstly, during the first Advisory Committee (AC) meeting held for the CSI project and after the construction of the perception diamond,<sup>13</sup> a discussion was opened, enabling the participants to reflect together on the result of the process. It was noticed that the dimensions Practice of Values and Civic Engagement scored the lowest values. When looking into the motivations behind this evaluation, the experts agreed in the observation that very often the behaviour of CSOs regarding the role of immigrants and women within them is not different from the behaviour of companies or and public organisations. The process activated during the AC meeting allowed us to highlight one important preconception regarding CSOs: In the public's eye, CSOs should be different from other organisations or even better, and in fact serve as an example of equal opportunities and integration, because they are not seeking profits and are less connected to politics. In Italy today, however, it is still rare to find CSOs that are led by women or immigrants, particularly if the organisation is not focussing on specific themes as gender or integration.

In addition, and this is the second finding that inspired this case study, there is a lack of information about the capacity of Italian CSOs as a place of integration for the "minority" in our society; an aspect that is extremely connected with the values that are shared inside the organisations and with the decisions that are taken.

This case study about the integration of immigrants within Italian CSOs will thus explore this topic as one aspect of the practice of values of CSOs in Italy.

#### Research question, hypothesis and terminology

The main question this case study will attempt to answer is: are Italian CSOs seeking to integrate immigrants of first and second generation?

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<sup>13</sup> As part of the CSI methodology, one of the initial steps of the project is to construct a 'perception diamond' that reflects how the Advisory Committee (AC) members perceive the state of civil society. In the final stage of the project, this is compared to the actual data diamond.

According to our hypothesis, the answer to the research question should be positive: Italian CSOs are promoting and seeking to integrate Italian immigrants. However, determining whether CSOs are more effective in integrating immigrants into their organisational fabric than other kinds of organisations (companies and public organisations) is beyond the scope of this study. This study will look at the difference between CSOs that specialise in immigrant needs and those that do not have a specific immigrant platform to see which has a larger presence. It is hypothesised that: the presence of immigrants in a “specific” CSO focussing on immigration issues will be stronger than those without this focus. Furthermore, this case study seeks to highlight the phenomenon of the presence of immigrants and their role within CSOs which can serve as a basis of information for other future research on this topic also in other types of organisations.

### **The methodology**

In order to answer the research question posed in the introduction above, and taking the lack of data into account, it was decided to carry out primary research at the national and local level gathering both quantitative and qualitative information.

#### **The investigation was articulated in 7 steps:**

- 1) Analysis of previous research about the integration of first and second generation immigrants in Italian CSOs;
- 2) Two questions about the integration of immigrants were added to the Organisational Survey questionnaire from the CSI project;
- 3) Dissemination of the questionnaire to a sample of 300 Italian CSOs;
- 4) Drafting a scheme for interviewing a sample of 50 Italian CSOs that implement their activities in an ‘immigrant sensitive’ way;
- 5) Administration of the interviews;
- 6) Planning and participation in 4 focus groups about the integration of immigrants within Italian society through their involvement in voluntary organisations;
- 7) Analysis of the results.

It was decided to use two different samples (step 3 and 4) in order to compare the presence and the integration of immigrants in a group of “generic” (not focused on the theme of immigration) CSOs with a group of “specific” (focused on the theme of immigration) CSOs.

The idea is that the presence of and integration of immigrants in those two samples have different meanings:

- a) On the one hand, the presence of immigrants in a “specific” CSO focussing on immigration issues, is based on the rationale that the organisation can better meet the needs and the interests of their target group (immigrants); it’s, in a way, indispensable for the implementation of their mission;
- b) On the contrary, the presence of immigrants in more “generic” organisations that do not focus on immigration, serves more as a signal of integration and inclusion. The fact that a worker or a volunteer is an immigrant, however, is not of major relevance for the implementation of the CSOs mission.

The comparison between the two samples, in our opinion, allowed a better focus on the general integration of immigrants within Italian CSOs. In addition, in order to obtain direct opinions of immigrants on integration and to have a more comprehensive description of the phenomenon, it was decided to

participate in 4 focus groups organised by Strategie S.R.L. (see in the text below) about the integration of immigrants within Italian civil society through their involvement in voluntary organisations.

Research was carried out at both the national and local levels, gathering both quantitative and qualitative information.

## **Conclusion**

Our hypothesis assumed that Italian CSOs are organisations that promote integration of both first and second-generation immigrants. Firstly, the results of this research will be commented in accordance with the meaning that we gave to the term integration, in order to verify if our hypothesis is confirmed or not.

- *The presence of immigrants in civil society organizations as employees or volunteers;*

Immigrants are present in 8% of our sample of “generic” organisations and in the 90% of our sample of “specific” organisations. An interesting observation is that in three organisations in the sample of “specific” organisations, there were no immigrants involved neither as volunteers nor employees.

The fact that immigrants are more present in “specific” organisations than in more generic CSOs is a predictable result. It is interesting however, that, even if in a small percentage of the sample, they are present also in CSOs that do not focus specifically on immigration.

The research also showed that, according to the opinions expressed by the immigrants that participated in the four focus groups, the organisations in which immigrants are mostly active are unions and ethnic organisations. The motivation to participate in these particular organisations varied between a wish to exercise their democratic rights to the wish to familiarise themselves with CSO work.

- *The roles of immigrants within CSOs;*

The research revealed that immigrants play an important role in the understanding of the needs of the target groups of “specific” organisations and are perceived to be very professional. However, immigrants very rarely hold leadership positions.

Immigrants, if present, have, in the half of our “specific” sample, job positions connected to their cultural and ethnic background. This evidence could be interpreted as a signal of an integration process that is only exploitable for the implementation of the mission of the organisations. For example, during one of the focus groups, an immigrant complained about the fact that he was active as a cultural mediator only on the basis of his origin and not primarily for his skills.

On the other hand, it should also be mentioned that in the other half of the sample, “specific” organisations do in fact employ immigrants in many of their structural positions such as in administration, secretarial roles etc. This reveals that immigrants are not only employed on the basis of their ethnical origin but also for their skills.

Further, it is true that the activities of “specific” organisations do in fact rely heavily on employees and volunteers having a good knowledge of issues related to immigration and know well the needs that immigrants have. As a consequence, the fact that many immigrants also hold positions in the organisations’ operational structure, could be an indicator of the value they add to the organisations.

Thus, as this research shows, the role of immigrants within CSOs and its meaning in terms of integration is a very complex issue, and should be researched further and more in-depth. The only certain evidence is that the process of integration within “specific” Italian CSOs has started, but because this is a relatively recent phenomenon in Italian society, it also brings with it many contradictions and varying point of views.

- *The impact of the inclusion of immigrants in the organisation.*

The research shows very clearly that the integration of immigrants in “specific” CSOs increases the organisational competencies as well as their knowledge of immigrants and their needs. This results in a positive change in terms of professionalism and pro-activity. Further, the fact that the integration process seems to be good or excellent signals that integration is desirable, and should therefore also be feasible in other kind of organisations.

In table 2 below, the results from the research on this topic are summarised. The table attempts to answer the research question in a simple illustration.

We distinguished the obtained results during the three steps of our research, reporting a white smile for a positive result and a black smile for a negative/uncertain result on respect of the three aspects of integration that we tried to investigate.

Table 2: Synthesis of the results

Immigrants and Italian CSOs	Sample of generic CSOs	Sample of specific CSOs	Focus groups
Presence	☹	☺	☺
Position	☺	☺	☹
Impact		☺	☺

According to Table 2, it can be confirmed that the CSOs most positive towards integration of immigrants, are the specific CSOs. The presence of immigrants in civil society in general, however, if we take into consideration all CSOs in Italy, remains limited.

As this research has shown, immigrants rarely hold leadership positions in Italian CSOs. However, immigrants have begun to be increasingly involved not only in activities based on their origin, but also in tasks that are essential for the operations of their organisations.

This research has revealed that the integration process particularly in specific CSOs and in the unions seems to be quite advanced and shows good results.

Further, it can be argued that Italian CSOs have embarked well on the path of integration of immigrants but there remains much work before we can speak of full integration of both first and second-generation immigrants in Italian CSOs.

#### **Recommendations:**

Taking into account the findings of this research, we recommend Italian CSOs to be more open towards the involvement of immigrants in order to:

- enhance and speed-up the process of integration of these citizens in the society in general;
- enrich the workings of their organisations with new ways of working and a new take on things;
- enforce the “practice of values” of their organisations through implementing the values of openness, democracy and equal opportunities that are stated in the majority of the missions of Italian CSOs.

## ANNEX 7

### IMPACT DIMENSION

#### Case study

#### CIVIC ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR REQUESTS OF TRANSPARENCY TO ITALIAN INSTITUTIONS

The analysis of the impact of four campaigns

#### Summary

This case study focused on the impact of CSOs on the transparency of public administration. In particular, we wanted to examine the application and the impact of a common method employed by organisations to influence government: launching an information or a compliant campaign, as a strategy for creating and disseminating useful tools to control and inform the public on the government's activities. Actually, this research project began from the necessity to fill a knowledge gap in Italian public opinion on the impact of the actions of the organised activism of citizens on the transparency of public administration offices and, as a consequence, on the link that connects transparency to accountability and democracy.

The main hypothesis for this case study was that CSOs' impact on transparency of public administration is higher when their actions aim to propose innovative and simple instruments that attract the attention of the media, the interest of public opinion, and make government policies on transparency easier. Actually, it is really believable that the initiative of organised citizens in a delicate field as transparency can only be successful through an action that does not conflict directly with the institutions but gives them the possibility of using useful tools.

The study focused its analysis on four campaigns that have promoted transparency measures in different areas:

- Transparency of parliamentary proceedings conducted by the organisation *Openpolis (2009)*;
- Transparency of the waiting lists of hospitals implemented by *Cittadinanzattiva (2005)*;
- Transparency on tendering conducted by the Italian section of *Transparency International (2008)*;
- Transparency on the activity of the Mayors conducted by *Civicum Foundation (2006)*.

The research used different tools for collecting and analysing information and is divided into four stages:

1. FIRST STAGE: Desk research collecting written documentation, and information from the internet on the 4 campaigns under examination.
2. SECOND STAGE: Determining the research tools, such as:
  - a number of indicators related to the aims of the research;
  - a checklist for the analysis of collected data;
  - an interview outline.
3. THIRD STAGE: Analysis of the primary data obtained from interviews with key persons dealing with the campaigns, in order to bring out:
  - What had been done, and how;
  - What had been achieved in terms of transparency and what had not;
  - What were the obstacles and who/what caused them.

#### 4. FOURTH STAGE. Information and analysis of the information gathered.

At the end of the analysis, is it possible to say that CSOs and their campaigns of information, denounce and/or control generally have a tangible impact in relation to public institutions and that three of the four campaigns have constituted an incentive for accessible information on the activities performed by the public administrations.

Looking at the feedbacks received, there seems to be a lack of cooperation between the different organised sectors of civil society on the proposed issues of the campaigns. Rarely have the interventions of support from organisations differed from the ones that actively participated in the campaigns, and often the interventions were limited to demonstrations of interest that did not bring in any case to a possible opening of collaboration. It's not possible to define in a general way the feedback of the mass media to the four campaigns (because there were specific reactions to them) but, in general, it is evident that when the campaigns promoted specific instruments useful for the media to explain what is the concern and which are the solutions proposed, their exposition and advertising is facilitated.

Generally speaking, the civil society organizations rarely encountered obstacles to their requests and the institutions involved in the themes of the four campaigns never activated in a direct way (only in one case) specific contrasting actions to their campaigns to sabotage the proposals of transparency launched. Nevertheless, there is to say, some action against the campaigns. It was however started up especially through indirect ways in the sense of having activated few "little" deeds to sabotage the complete success of the campaign or showing an incomplete cooperative behaviour with the spirit of the campaigns. By the way, despite of the fact that initially it seemed as if there was an attitude of rejection towards the actions promoted by the campaigns of the institutions involved, their response on the issues proposed was however positive. The initial mistrust was often replaced by a spirit of collaboration with the organisations, especially by the central administrations that were involved in the initiatives. This feeling it could be read in two ways:

1. The initiative proposed by the civil society organisations were judged as good and, into the limits of what a public administration office could do by its own, deserving to be received;
2. The campaigns did not ask for changes too difficult to be received by the institution; therefore, it was convenient to be cooperative with the organisation rather than risk campaigns' success in a field that is as delicate as maintaining the accountability of public administration in respect for citizens.

It is not possible for us to define exactly the behaviour that conditioned the approaches of those public administrations involved in the campaigns, because we have not conducted any previous studies in that area. What is interesting for us, however, are the results of those decisions in terms of reaction to the civil organisations' actions, that generally, in three of the four campaigns analysed, were positive.

In conclusion, respondents mentioned several times that, in the early stages of the campaigns, the attitude shown by public administration offices was marked by a sort of mistrust of civil society organisations promoting the measures aimed at transparency. Often, at this stage, openings of collaboration have taken effect, either wanted or imposed, leaving the possibility of building a relationship of mutual trust and the emergence of cooperation for the improvement of policies of transparency. However, in other cases, the feedback of the institutions was maintained by a characteristic attitude of

indifference towards the organisations that launched the initiative, or else expressing hostility which undermined its success.

From the results obtained from the analysis of the four cases, it seems plausible to say that the campaigns that worked well and got a good part of the expected results, were the ones that dealt with issues involving stakeholders relevant to the Italian society (business, public opinion) or where civil society has generally a greater role (health care). Another element of success of the campaigns is the proposal by the citizen organisations for tools that can facilitate accountability records for the public administrations (*Open Parlamento e Patti d'integrità*). From the cases analysed, we can also see some obscure points on the campaigns of transparency especially from the analysis on the campaign on the activity of the Mayoral candidates of Milan, from which emerge with particular relevance the poor cooperation by other organisations of the civil society and a lack of consideration by public opinion on the importance of transparency as a policy problem. Therefore, it seems plausible to affirm that, even in this case, an atmosphere of lack of interest from public opinion to the issues connected to transparency plays an important role in the choice of the organisations, of the media and often of the institutions themselves that should be involved by the initiative. Again, a possible confirmation that in Italy transparency is not well considered as a necessary element for developing the accountability of the system and of democracy.

### **Recommendations**

A successful campaign for the transparency of public administration should:

- Be focused on a specific issue correlated to transparency and not in a general way;
- Create a fit context for the collaboration with other civic organisations;
- Project useful and simple tools for transparency to propose to public administration and to attract the attention of media and public opinion.

## ANNEX 8

### EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT DIMENSION

#### Case study

#### EUROPEAN UNION AND CIVIC ORGANISATIONS OPERATING AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: SOME EVIDENCES FROM THE ITALIAN CASE

##### Summary

This case study focuses on the relationship between the European Union and the civic organisations that operate at the local level in Italy. This relationship has been explored by delimiting the research field to the information processes and the participative policies realised at the European level, as they constitute the main factor for the involvement of the CSOs in the Community, making, at the same time, the European Union a concrete presence in the overall environment in which these organisations operate.

The survey, carried out in 2010, aimed at gathering information about the level of knowledge and involvement and, in general, the orientation of Italian local-based organisations towards two main aspects: the information processes and the participation policies promoted and realised by the European Union.

The research was conducted on a sample of 50 local-based organisations, some autonomous or connected to umbrella organisations or to large national associations of European relevance, that were part of the sample used in the research on the EU communication processes, realised by FONDACA<sup>14</sup> in 2006. Specifically, the survey involved 14 autonomous organisations, 18 affiliated to umbrella organisations and 18 belonging to national associations, operating in 38% of cases in Northern Italy, in 36% in the central regions and in 26% in the south.

The results emerged from the survey highlighted the intrinsic distance of local organisations from the participation and information channels delivered by the EU: local civic organisations find difficulties in perceiving themselves as relevant subjects for the European “mission” and, in general, in being considered as a specific “audience” of the Union which, in turn, succeeds in effectively reaching only a small minority of them. What just mentioned is testified, on one hand, by the low number of organisations that resulted informed by the EU on topics of European relevance as well as by the low percentage of those which took part in the initiatives promoted by the Representation of the European Commission in Italy and, on the other hand, by the need of targeted policies and initiatives devoted to local organisations both in the information and in the participation fields, expressed by most respondents.

Moreover, it appeared clear from the survey that the connection point between local organisations and EU seems to lie particularly in the economic opportunities that the former may derive from the latter. In fact, a “pragmatic” approach is apparent which links local organisations to the EU: it can be found in the considerable relevance that the sample ascribed to likely support initiatives by the representation for the finding of resources.

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<sup>14</sup>*Il ruolo delle organizzazioni civiche nei processi di comunicazione della Unione europea*, research report, FONDACA, 2006.

It is important to underline that, in light of the general results of the research, this pragmatic attitude is not to be confused with an utilitarian approach to the EU: the study, in fact, showed a significant interest on the part of the interviewed organisations in being involved in the EU dynamics: this is testified by the high percentage of units that declared to be willing to take and support the European citizens' initiative and that assessed their involvement in training and "civil dialogue" initiatives, and in relevant events at the European level as of utmost importance. The same proneness is found regarding the improvement of the EU informative processes, as the surveyed organisations declared to be willing to collaborate with other organisations to identify relevant topics on which the EU should deliver information, to use the Europe web site more accurately and to have more direct contacts with the Representation of the EC in Italy.

According to the recommendations presented in the report, European Union institutions should recognise local organisations as being a well defined audience and addressing specific policies and initiatives to them, involving them in European life through adequate tools and strategies. To this end the Union should simplify the language used by the EU and enhance more direct channels of information, strengthening, also, the local organisations' potential in improving the effectiveness of EU informative processes.

At the same time, as a broad participation in the call for financing projects emerged from the survey, it seems appropriate that the Union reflect on the nature and function of these instruments, providing the opportunity to evaluate the results achieved and incorporating contents related to topics of EU relevance into them, and considering, in any case, the promotion of projects as a legitimate form of civic participation in EU policies.

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