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## **CIVICUS CIVIL SOCIETY INDEX SLOVENIA** **Analytical Country Report 2010**

### **Towards maturity: challenges for Slovenian civil society**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) is a participatory action-research project that assesses the state of civil society in various countries. The project is headed by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, and in Slovenia it was carried out under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Administration. The main aims of the project are to promote and strengthen civil society through its assessment and to develop policy recommendations and measures.

The first stage of the project involved a quantitative survey of civil society organisations (CSOs) and external experts. The second involved qualitative methods, i.e. case studies for all the CSI dimensions. The third stage involved the presentation of results at regional focus group meetings and a national workshop in order to obtain feedback on key findings, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of civil society in Slovenia and to formulate basic guidelines to improve its position.

The Civil Society Diamond summarises the values of the quantitative indicators which represent the four basic dimensions of civil society, while the circle around it represents the fifth dimension, the external environment of civil society.

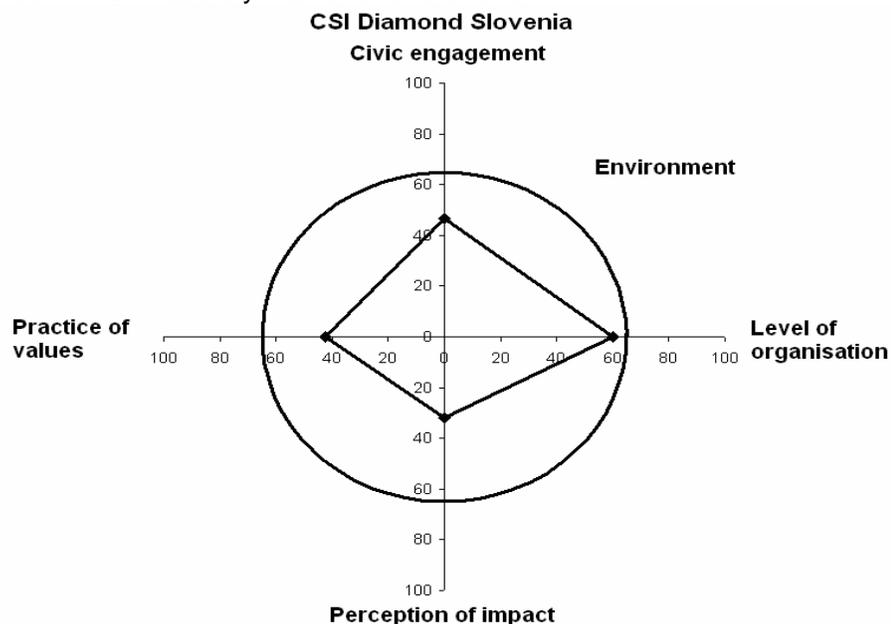
The first of the five dimensions, the Civic Engagement dimension, scores a medium value of 46.5%. The data shows that Slovenian citizens quite readily engage as members of CSOs and as volunteers. Volunteering in particular is on the rise as a result of efforts made by voluntary organisations in establishing a regulatory framework that would provide systemic support for the development and implementation of voluntary work at national and local levels. With regard to political engagement, it is quite clear that political parties wield the greatest influence; however, as a result of low trust, a very small proportion of the population is actively involved in them.

The Level of Organisation dimension is scored the highest (60.2%) among the four dimensions, although some of the elements, such as level of funding from public sources, have not changed in recent years. Although CSOs are relatively independent of the state, the lack of substantial government funding, the modest funds they acquire from other sources (mainly donations) and the constant struggle for grants awarded through public tenders greatly reduces CSO autonomy.

Based on the Practice of Values dimension, it can be concluded that CSOs generally adhere to the regulations regarding democratic decision making governance, labour regulations, codes of conduct and transparency and environmental standards, as required by law. However, they do not explicitly emphasise and promote these values and standards of their own accord.

As to the Perception of Impact dimension, there is no denying that in Slovenia there is a clear gap between civil society's activity and its impact on society in general on the government. While CSOs' activities are quite strong and wide-ranging, the government and the general public still fail to recognise their important role. Thus, CSOs still face the 'illusion of inclusion' (their inclusion is only a formality without real impact) and a rather negative public image.

FIGURE 1 Civil Society Diamond for Slovenia



The analysis of the civil society sector in Slovenia shows that it has not yet reached a high level of development. Increasing the financial strength of CSOs and, consequently, their professionalisation, are the two key steps needed to develop the sector. In order to improve the state of the civil society sector, the government should both increase public financing of the sector by introducing new measures, and also amend relevant legislation to encourage funding from non-public sources, such as private donations from individuals and companies, thereby increasing the sector's autonomy and independence. In order to facilitate the implementation of such changes, both the government and non-government sectors must reach a consensus on a clear-cut strategy for the development of the civil society sector. The absolute prerequisite for this is to strengthen civil dialogue in Slovenia.

## INTRODUCTION

The CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) is a participatory action-research project that assesses the state of civil society in various countries. The project is headed by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation. In Slovenia it was carried out by the Legal Informational Centre for NGOs Slovenia and the Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia with funding from the Ministry of Public Administration. The main aims of the project are to promote and strengthen civil society through assessment and to develop policy recommendations and measures. CSI implementation actively involves and disseminates its findings to a broad range of stakeholders, including interest groups, the government, donors, academics and the general public.

In Slovenia, the project was carried out in three stages between November 2008 and the end of May 2010. The first phase involved a quantitative survey conducted among civil society organisations (CSOs) and external experts. The second involved qualitative methods, i.e. case studies for all the basic CSI dimensions. The third phase involved the presentation of results at regional focus group meetings and a national workshop in order to obtain feedback on key findings, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of civil society in Slovenia and to formulate basic guidelines to improve its position. The project's main findings are summarised in this Analytical Country Report. The basic guidelines to improve and strengthen civil society in Slovenia are detailed in the accompanying Policy Action Brief. Both of these documents are available to the public and all interested parties.

In addition to the introductory sections, which offer a definition of civil society and outline its history in Slovenia, this report includes an assessment of civil society in Slovenia based on five core dimensions: Civic Engagement, Level of Organisation, Practice of Values, Perceived Impact, and External Environment. The conclusion summarises the key findings, gives an outline of the strengths and weaknesses of civil society in Slovenia, and offers suggestions on ways to strengthen it.

## 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, and to reflect and act on the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities also remain limited.

The Civil Society Index (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, CSOs at the country level in partnership with CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation (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 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 Slovenia 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 Prof. 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 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). In 2004-005, Slovenia was also involved in the project.

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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.

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 review and revise the CSI methodology for a second time before the start of this current phase of the project. With this new and streamlined methodology in place, CIVICUS launched a new phase of the CSI in 2008. It selected country partners, including both previous and new implementers, from all over the globe to participate in the project. Table I.1.1 below includes a list of implementing countries in the current phase of the CSI.

TABLE I.1.1 List of CSI implementing countries 2008-2010<sup>2</sup>

Albania	Ghana	Niger
Argentina	Italy	Philippines
Armenia	Japan	Russia
Bahrain	Jordan	Serbia
Belarus	Kazakhstan	Slovenia
Bulgaria	Kosovo	South Korea
Burkina Faso	Lebanon	Sudan
Chile	Liberia	Togo
Croatia	Macedonia	Turkey
Cyprus	Madagascar	Uganda
Djibouti	Mali	Ukraine
Democratic Republic of Congo	Malta	Uruguay
Georgia	Mexico	Venezuela
	Nicaragua	Zambia

## 2. PROJECT APPROACH

The current CSI project approach (2008-2010) continues to marry assessment and evidence with reflection 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>3</sup>

***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.

<sup>2</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.

<sup>3</sup> For in-depth explanations of these principles, please see Mati, Silva and Anderson (2010), *Assessing and Strengthening Civil Society Worldwide: An updated programme description of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index Phase 2008-2010*. CIVICUS, Johannesburg.

**Comparability:** The CSI aims not to rank, but to comparatively measure different aspects of civil society worldwide. 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 throughout 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 the cross-sectoral levels. Some countries in the last phase have also participated in regional conferences to discuss the CSI findings as well as cross-national civil society issues.

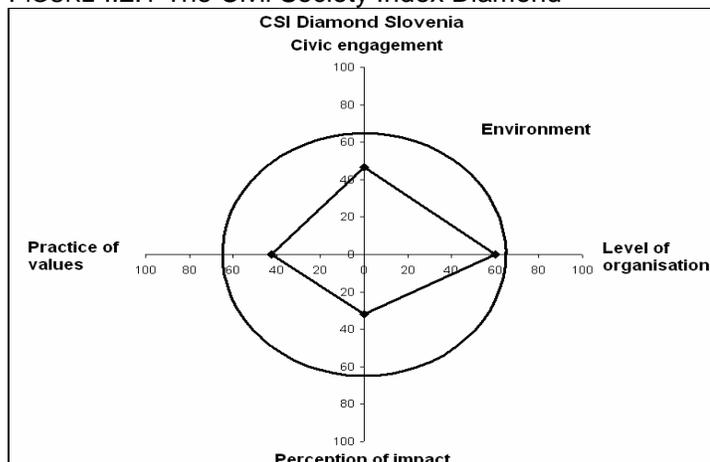
**Change:** The principal aim of the CSI is to generate information that is of practical use to civil society practitioners and other primary stakeholders. Therefore, the CSI framework seeks to identify aspects of civil society that can be changed and to generate information and knowledge relevant to 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 I.2.1 below), which is one of the most essential and best-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 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.

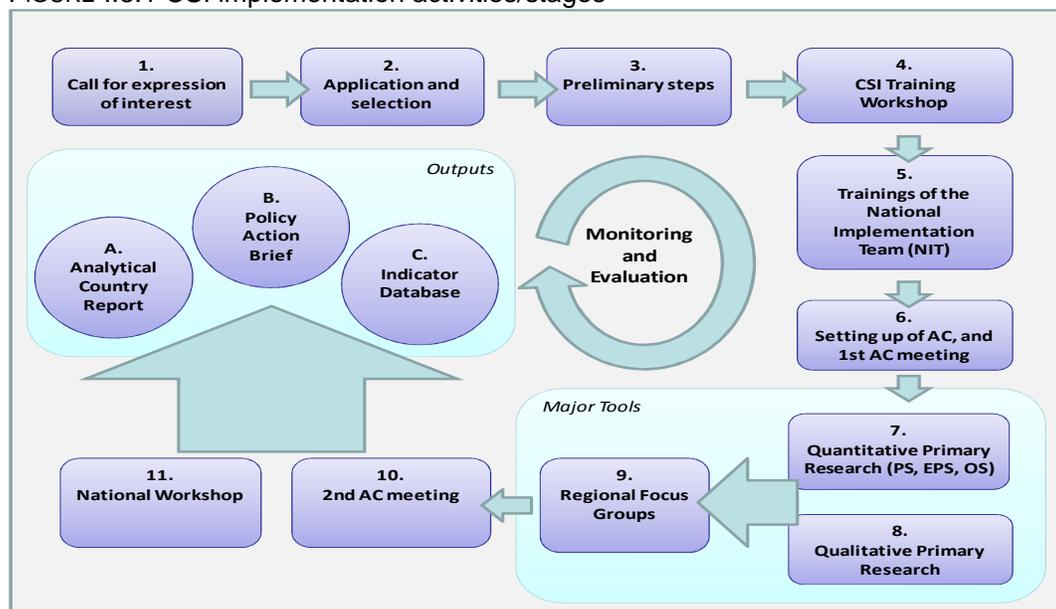
FIGURE I.2.1 The Civil Society Index Diamond



### 3. CSI IMPLEMENTATION

There are several key CSI programme implementation activities as well as several structures involved, as summarised in Figure I.3.1 below:<sup>4</sup>

FIGURE I.3.1 CSI implementation activities/stages



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

- Multiple surveys, including: (i) a **Population Survey** that gathers views of citizens on civil society and gauges their involvement in groups and associations; (ii) an **Organisational Survey** that measures the meso-level of civil society and the defining characteristics of CSOs; and (iii) an **External Perceptions Survey** aimed at measuring the perception that stakeholders, experts and policy makers in key sectors have of civil society's impact

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed discussion on each of these steps in the process, please see Mati *et al* (cited in footnote 3).

- 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 Slovenia. It presents highlights from the research conducted, including summaries of civil society's strengths and weaknesses as well as recommendations for strengthening civil society in the country.

#### **4. LIMITATIONS OF CSI STUDY**

A problem through the research phase was the absence of a will to participate. This is not specific for this project, but for all events in the sphere of CSO engagement (for instance, for conferences on major issues the average number of participants is about 30). We do not believe that this fact affected the validity of the research, since all its standards were fulfilled and the engagement of those who did participate was high, due to our efforts to motivate them. The non-participation of the government, the private sector and academia in CSO activity has also been a significant feature in Slovenia for years, and this study could not change it. This is one of characteristics of the situation for civil society in Slovenia today, and is examined in more detail in the discussion on the Perception of Impact Dimension below.

Apart from the limitations the research team encountered during the implementation of the methodology due to the state of the civil society in Slovenia, they also faced some problems because of the research's long and rather complicated methodology. Since some of the elements examined in the methodology are not well developed in Slovenia, or there is a lack of appropriate data, the report focuses more on the areas that are known and well researched. For example, we are able to place an emphasis on volunteering. Through the whole process several different stakeholders were involved, which should increase the objectivity of the report, but despite this the report inevitably contains some personal opinions of workshop participants, which cannot always be generalised as applying to the whole civil society sector.

## II. CIVIL SOCIETY IN SLOVENIA

### 1. CONCEPT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

In Slovenia, the term 'civil society' is one often used by the public, although there is little consensus on its general meaning or understanding. Civil society is mostly understood in negation: it denotes that which is neither the state nor the market. Members of the Advisory Committee (AC) and participants in the focus groups and the National Workshop adopted this negative definition. The consensus was that the concept of 'civil society' is difficult to define. Most connotations of the term concerned the characteristics of civil society, such as political engagement, volunteering, a focus on individuals, the sense of belonging and identification as part of civil society.

Participants in the AC, focus groups, and the national workshop also discussed the CIVICUS definition of civil society as "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."

Some participants commented that this definition should more precisely detail whether the *interests* are the common interests of all (the public interest) or merely the interests of those who are connected. Since the AC concluded that civil society is more than just those who are connected, they substituted the term 'arena' with the term 'space.'

There is also no uniform term or definition to cover the part of civil society that refers to CSOs. In general, this is a broad spectrum of organisations that are neither market-oriented nor state-owned, but variously labelled as non-profit, voluntary, humanitarian, independent, and civil society and non-governmental organisations. The term 'non-governmental sector' is most commonly used in Slovenia to emphasise independence from the government, although it has not yet found general acceptance. As such, it is often widely misunderstood. The reason for this and the lack of public awareness about the term 'non-governmental organisation' may lie in the general lack of media interest in CSOs. Another reason may be lack of awareness of those who work in NGOs of the fact that their organisation is an NGO. As one of the study's respondents said, "If you mention an 'association', people will generally recall their local fire fighters' association, but when you bring up the term 'NGO', everyone will associate it with the constant need to raise funds and pointless pursuits."

In government documents, the term 'non-governmental' is more widely used than the term 'civil society',<sup>5</sup> while the concept of civil society has a broader meaning and emphasises the civil culture of civic responsibility, voluntary engagement and political participation.

Slovenian legislation specifically details, defines and, through individual laws, regulates the following types of CSOs: associations, private institutes, foundations, cooperatives and religious communities/organisations. The CIVICUS definition of civil

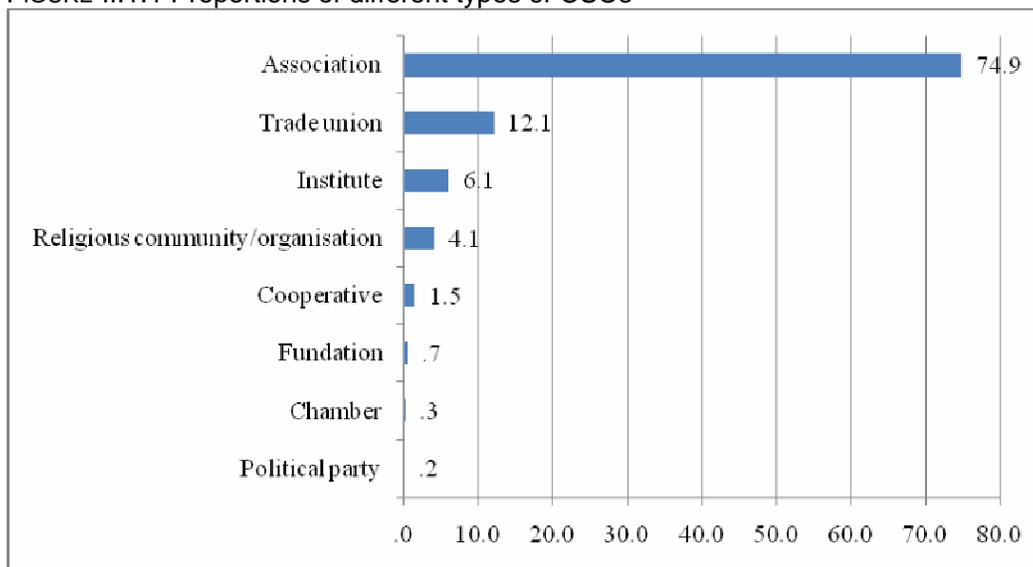
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<sup>5</sup> Given the more frequent use of the term 'non-governmental organisation', the term is used in this Report in addition to the term 'civil society organisation.' For the purposes of this Report, there are no differences in meaning between the two terms.

society, on the other hand, also includes professional chambers, trade unions and political parties, each subject to a specific set of regulations.<sup>6</sup>

In Slovenia, associations represent 75% of all CSOs, while the share of private institutes is 6%, religions organisations 4%, cooperatives 1.5% and foundations 0.7% (Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Public Legal Records and Related Services (AJPES)).

FIGURE II.1.1 Proportions of different types of CSOs



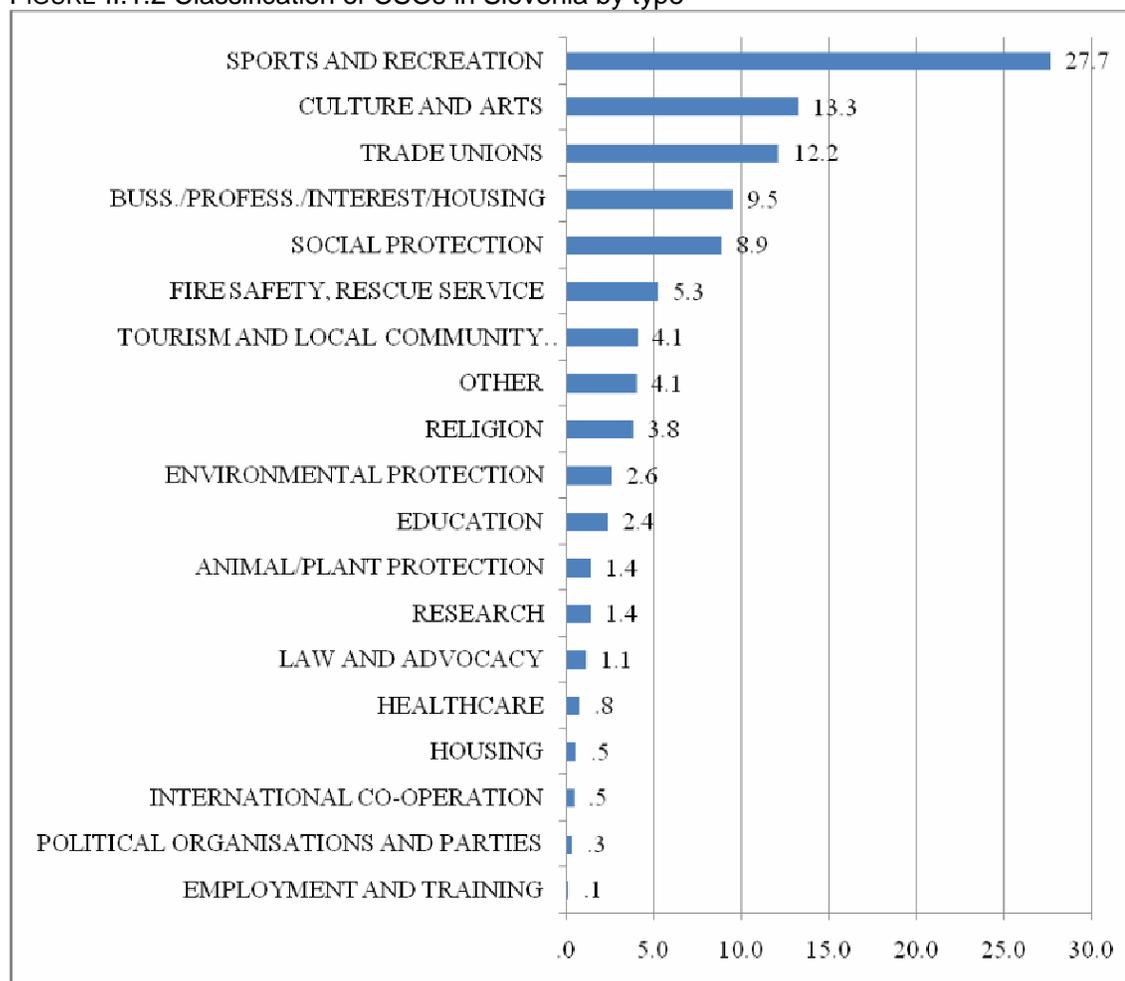
Source: AJPES (2004)

While the share of associations has been falling gradually (in 1996, associations accounted for nearly 95% of all CSOs), they still largely determine the character of the civil society sector. By their character, associations are expressive organisations in which individuals seek membership in order to pursue their interests. Associations are thus organisations that primarily work for the shared benefit of their members and less for the common good. On the one hand, this is a holdover from the socialist past when associations were the only legal and legitimate forms of self-organisation. But on the other hand, the number of associations, including those with public benefit status, is still growing rapidly, although there have been no formal obstacles to establishing other types of CSOs for almost twenty years.

The Slovenian civil society sector has largely retained the distribution it had during the socialist period, with sports and recreation, culture and arts, and professional and expert organisations still significantly outnumbering organisations providing services in social protection, education, research and healthcare. Figure II.1.2 presents the classification of CSOs by type.

<sup>6</sup> All of these types of CSO are regulated under separate acts for individual types of organisations such as Act on Associations, Act on Institutes, Act on Foundations, Act on Cooperatives, Act on political parties, Act on Representativeness of Trade Unions, Act on Commercial Chambers and for religious communities Act on Religious Freedom, etc.

FIGURE II.1.2 Classification of CSOs in Slovenia by type



Source: AJPES (2004)

The present structure of the civil society sector (organisational type and area of work) reflects Slovenia's welfare system<sup>7</sup> (Kolarič et al., 2002; 2006; Črnak-Meglič and Rakar, 2009).

Given the structure of the civil society sector and recommendations by the Advisory Committee, the CIVICUS typology of CSOs was adapted to better suit the situation in

<sup>7</sup> The welfare system is an open and universal concept that embraces not only the institutions, programmes and measures with which the state provides social protection and social well-being to its citizens, but also those evolving and functioning according to the logic of the market, and those operating within the domain of civil society and the community. The deriving thesis is that, during the historical development of individual societies, and depending on specific economic, cultural and political conditions, different spheres (market, state, civil society and community) emerged from which individuals obtain resources for ensuring their social protection and well-being. The different historically formed hierarchies of spheres represent different types of the welfare system (Kolarič et al. 2002). In the past Slovenia belonged to the group of countries in which elements of the state-socialist type of welfare system prevailed. The state played the most important role in the provision of goods and services as well as regards the insurance dimension (systems for providing social security) and the supply dimension (programmes for supplying citizens with social services) (Kolarič et al. 2002; Črnak-Meglič and Rakar 2009).

Slovenia. Sports associations, senior citizens organisations, fire-fighters associations and animal and plant welfare organisations were added to the list of CSOs. The AC discussed the issue of whether or not political parties can be considered part of civil society; the compromise was to include among CSOs only non-parliamentary parties. Appendix C contains the list of all CSO types included in the research.

## 2. HISTORY OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Historical analysis shows that Slovenia has a long and extensive tradition of people's interest associations and self-organisation (see for example Kolarič et al., 2002). In the period up to the end of the Second World War, CSOs were present within the informal sector as well as in the provision of public goods and services. By 1938, there were approximately 8,000 CSOs in Slovenia, 6,014 associations and 1,677 co-operatives (Kolarič et al., 2002).

Following the Second World War, we can identify four major phases in the development of civil society in Slovenia:

1. The period of state socialism (1945 – 1970) – the socialist revolution put a stop to the tradition of many CSOs' activities. In the period of state socialism the public sector took over practically all functions in society, interrupting development in the civil society sector. Only a small section of CSOs continued to be operational. Even then, it was on a new basis, which only allowed one type of CSOs (associations) to flourish. As such, the number of CSOs decreased. In 1965 there were 6,919 associations and in 1975 just 6,761 (Kolarič et al., 2002).

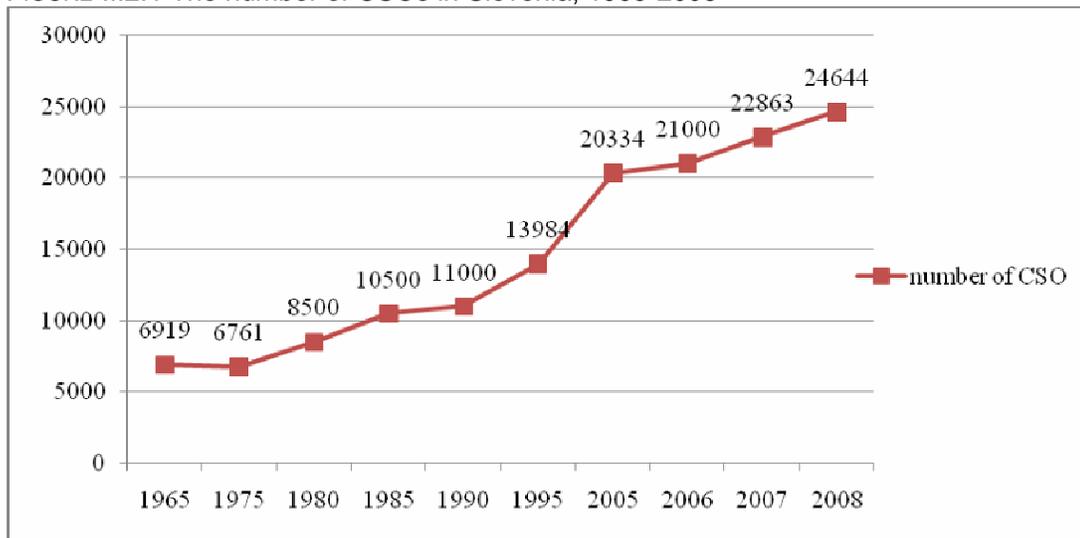
2. The period of self-governing socialism (1970s) – decentralisation (the delegation of responsibilities for providing and financing public goods and services to municipalities) and the weakening of state control over associations' activities, which was brought about by the Associations Act of 1974, resulted in the establishment of new organisations. The Act provided a space for the bottom-up founding of CSOs as true citizens' initiatives. Consequently, CSOs (especially the newly established ones) became more autonomous with only limited communication with the state. Further, the state did not involve them in the production of public goods and services, nor in the process of enforcing interests.

3. The period of new social movements (1980s) – the 1980s were, in Slovenia, a period of development of CSOs. New social movements (peace, ecological, feminist, spiritual, subculture movements) began to spread. In addition to their political activities, these movements also began to create an alternative network for the production of goods and services. They operated in the form of working groups within different organisations (for example, of a youth political organisation). In this period civil society was established as an alternative to the official political structure. However, by the end of the 1980s the autonomous activity of new social movements had become limited to political activities. In the 1990s a significant number of activists from the new social movements consolidated into political parties, later winning political power. Only small remnants of the new social movements stayed in the framework of civil society as it is understood in Slovenia. Those who remained organised themselves in associations and other organisational forms in fields such as social work and psychiatry, different activities of psychosocial help for population groups in need, and alternative cultural production. The figures show that between 1975 and 1985, the number of associations rose by almost 50% (Kolarič et al., 2002).

4. The period of transition (after 1990) – the process of deregulation that began in the 1970s was only finished in the mid-1990s, when new laws were adopted that

regulated the basis for activities of all types of CSOs (foundations, private institutes, etc.). The same legislation also abolished the state monopoly over the production of social and other services. The Foundations Act (1994) re-enabled the forming of foundations. The Institutes Act (1991) enabled the establishment of private institutes and the political changes supported the renewed establishment of church organisations, which had until then been active only illegally. The number of organisations in this period almost doubled.

FIGURE II.2.1 The number of CSOs in Slovenia, 1965-2008



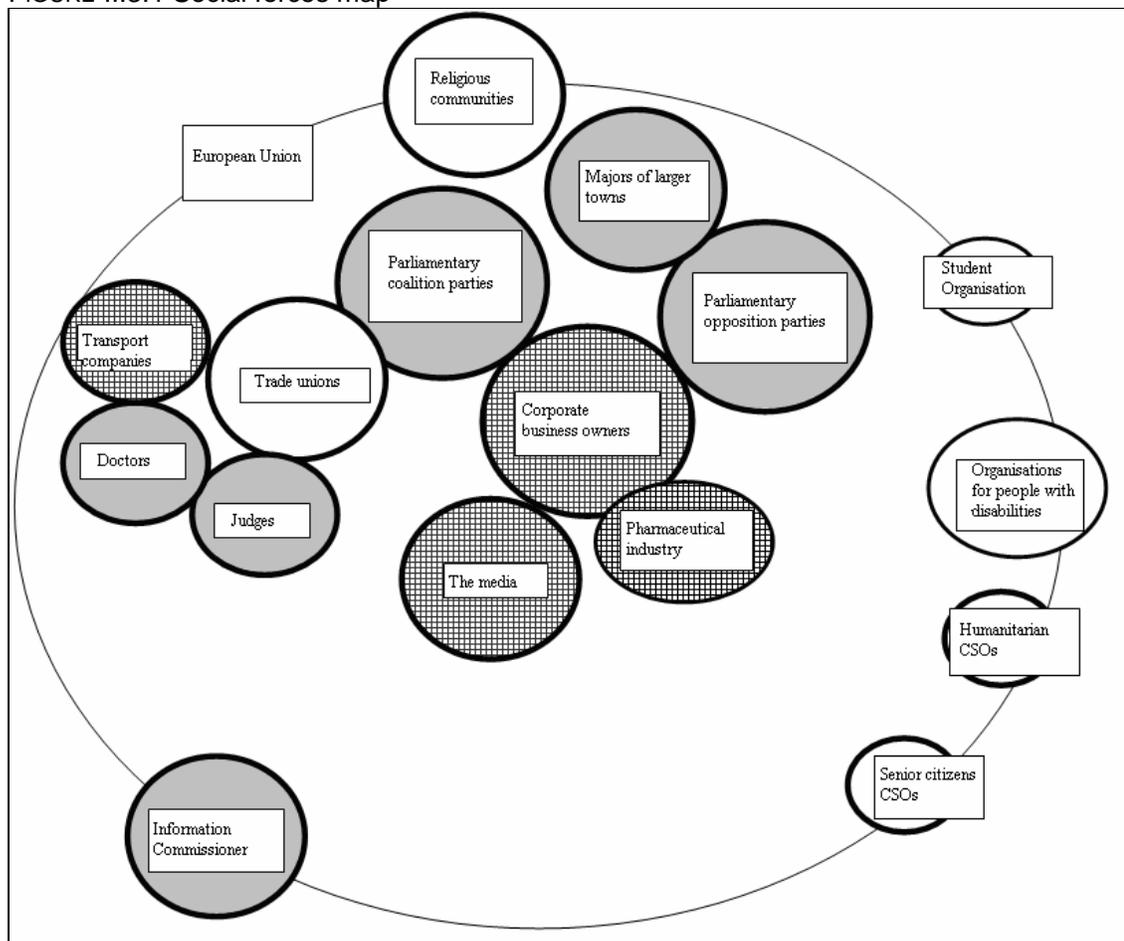
Sources: 1965–2005 (Kolarič et al. 2002, 2006); 2006–2008 (AJ PES)

Today (2010) there are over 24,000 CSOs in Slovenia. Apart from associations, there are also foundations, private institutes, religious organisations and co-operatives. Adding 95 chambers, 60 political parties and 3,479 trade unions, in accordance with the CIVICUS methodology, we can see that in 2008/2009 there were altogether 28,647 CSOs active in Slovenia. When comparing the number of CSOs with the number of inhabitants, Slovenia ranks among those countries with the highest share of CSOs (Kolarič et al. 2002).

### 3. MAPPING CIVIL SOCIETY

To ascertain the composition of civil society in Slovenia, the National Implementation Team (NIT) conducted an impact analysis of individual actors, which included identifying key actors and their impact on society (Figure II.3.1), and identifying major actors within civil society (Figure II.3.2). The analysis was assessed and amended by the AC. The NIT and the AC identified key social actors and ranked them in terms of their social impact. The largest circle(s) represents the force(s) with the greatest social impact, while the smallest represent those with the least social impact. The actors were then classified according to sector (grey: government officials; hashed: private sector; white: civil society). Thus indicated, the actors were distributed on the field to reflect the relationships between them, and so the proximity or overlap of circles indicates the influence of one group on another or the inter-relationships between them. Conversely, distance represents weak or even antagonistic relationships.

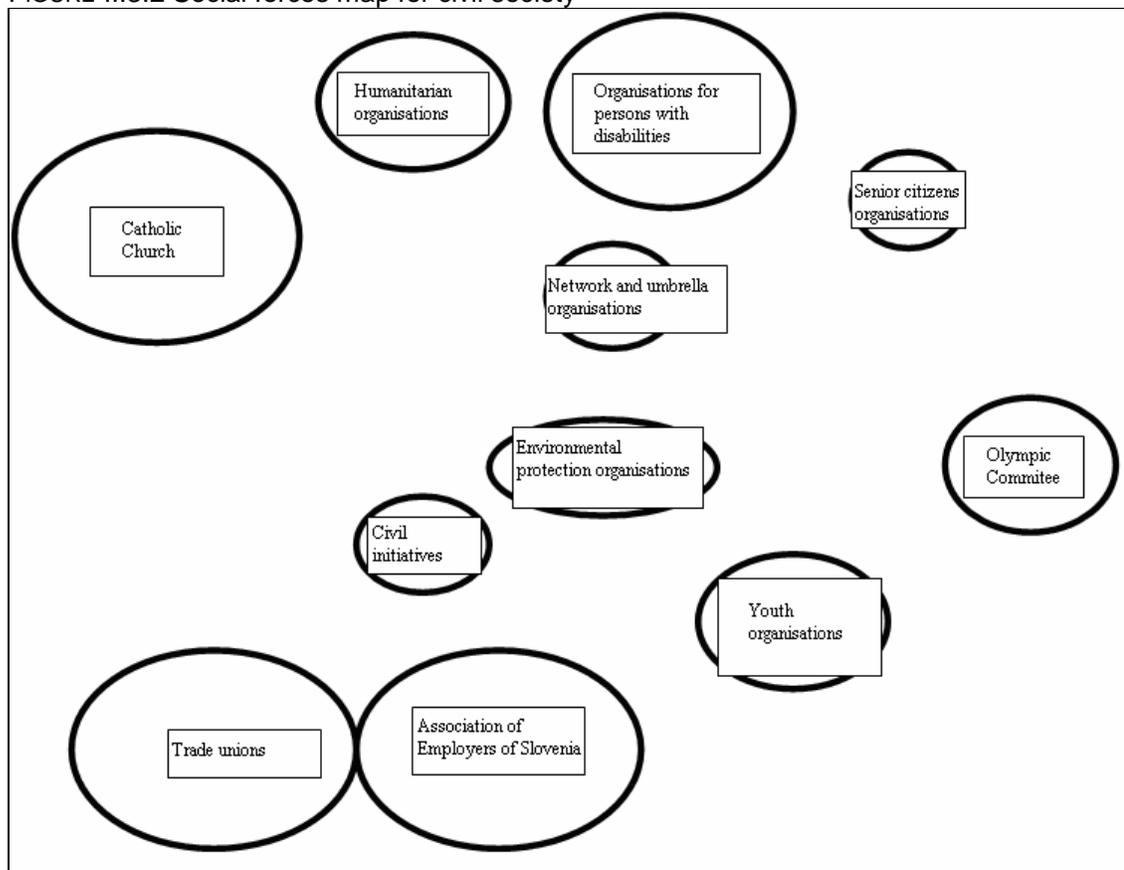
FIGURE II.3.1 Social forces map



From the figure above, it is evident that the parliamentary coalition and opposition political parties, which shape Slovenian politics as decision-makers, stand out as the most influential actors in Slovenia. Their influence is matched only by that of the business community, which has the power to lobby for its interests and to shape public opinion through the media. CSOs occupy far less space in this figure. The most influential among them are religious communities (e.g., the Roman Catholic Church) and trade unions. Organisations around the edge of the figure (of which the largest are those for persons with disabilities, followed by humanitarian organisations and the Student Organisation of Slovenia) have little or no impact on policy-making.

Similarly, a map of civil society was made, first by identifying the most influential actors in civil society and then distributing them according to their influence (a bigger circle meaning greater influence). Actors thus marked were distributed on the field to reflect relations between them, so that the proximity or overlapping of circles designates the impact of one group on another, or the connection between them, while distance represents weak or even antagonistic relations.

FIGURE II.3.2 Social forces map for civil society



The figure shows that the most influential actors in civil society are the Roman Catholic Church, trade unions and organisations for people with disabilities. While the nature of the latter may differ considerably from the first two, their power rests in the financing they receive from the Foundation for Financing Organisations for People with Disabilities and Humanitarian Organisations (FIHO). Trade unions, on the other hand, are influential because of their status as the Government's social partners, while the power of the Roman Catholic Church stems from both its historical dominance over other religions in this region and its political engagement. Although humanitarian organisations are eligible for FIHO funds, they wield much less influence, since this type of financing was made available to them only in 2003 with the passage of the Humanitarian Organisations Act. Next to the trade unions on the map is the Association of Employers of Slovenia, a very influential actor owing to the capital it indirectly represents. Next are youth organisations and the Olympic Committee, whose influence is relatively significant as a result of reliable sources of financing (youth organisations are financed through student work, while the Olympic Committee is financed by the Foundation for Financing Sport Organisations). The organisations with a relatively limited influence are environmental protection organisations, which find it the most difficult to secure sufficient funding, followed by senior citizens' organisations, which are numerous and cater to a number of social needs of seniors, but lack broader social influence. The least influential organisations, although their influence has been growing lately, are network and umbrella bodies, and civil initiatives. The growing influence of network organisations is seen through new ways of liaising with other CSOs – horizontally and vertically – and especially through establishing regional ties with a view to strengthening civil society and increasing its impact on promoting its interests. Such networking

structures have been largely facilitated by EU policies and the financing provided by EU structural funds. More and more people have been joining civil initiatives, most notably for environmental protection, which constitute an efficient vehicle for achieving civil dialogue regarding the placement of built objects in local environments.

### III. ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN SLOVENIA

This section presents the key findings of the project. Data used in this analysis is drawn from both quantitative and qualitative research following the CIVICUS CSI methodology. Quantitative data flows from an analysis of two primary surveys carried during this project: an Organisational Survey (with 94 CSOs) and an External Perceptions Survey (with 30 experts). Additional quantitative data comes from a range of international research databases, including the World Values Survey (2000 and 2005) and Freedom House (2008). Qualitative data comes from five case studies, AC discussions, regional focus group meetings, and a national workshop, all held as part of the CSI project in Slovenia from 2008 to 2010. Additional information was acquired through a review of the literature on civil society, legislation and documents, and interviews with key actors.

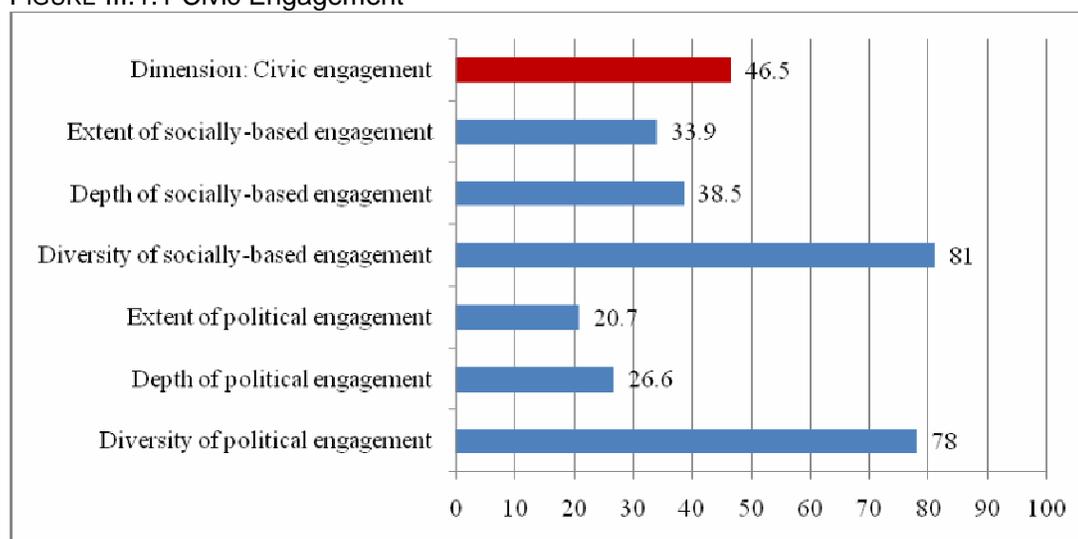
The analysis of civil society in this report comprises five sections, each corresponding to the five dimensions of the Civil Society Diamond: Civic Engagement, Level of Organisation, Practice of Values, Perceived Impact and External Environment. Each dimension is then further divided into sub-dimensions and individual indicators. Each indicator score is reported on a scale of 0 to 100. Collections of similar indicators are aggregated into sub-dimensions.

#### 1. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

This section presents the key findings on the Civic Engagement dimension reflecting the extent, depth, and diversity of the social and political engagement of citizens in civil society. The questions that we attempt to answer are: how socially and politically active are citizens; and how meaningful and diverse are their engagements both socially and politically?

Figure III.1.1 presents the values for the dimension and each sub-dimension. In addition, a case study, examining the role and position of volunteering in Slovenia, not only in terms of its actual contribution to welfare, but also in terms of its social valuation (Vrbica, Matoz 2010), was conducted.

FIGURE III.1.1 Civic Engagement



Note: the values presented are averages of different indicator scores

## 1.1 Extent of socially-based engagement

This sub-dimension reports on aggregated data from three variables/indicators: the extent of citizen membership in social organisations, the extent of social volunteering by citizens, and the level of community engagement in social activities. Data for this analysis is drawn from the World Values Survey (WVS) 2005. This data showed that 33% of Slovenian citizens are active members of social organisations, such as churches or other religious organisations, sports and recreation clubs, arts, music and educational organisations. Sports and recreation organisations have the largest membership (18.2%), followed by religious and church organisations (12.4%). This is higher than membership in politically oriented organisations such as trade unions (8.9%), humanitarian organisations and charities (7.7%), professional associations (6.4%), environmental organisations (2.7%), political parties (2.1%), and consumer organisations (1.1%) (WVS, 2005).

A slightly older European Value Survey (1999), which includes data on volunteering, shows that 20.1% of citizens performed voluntary and unpaid work in at least one religious organisation, senior citizens organisation, educational, music, culture, sport and recreation, healthcare or youth organisation. The EVS 1999 data also showed that 48.7% of the population takes part in social activities of sports clubs or voluntary organisations several times a year. Given that this information was gathered ten years before the other primary data for the CSI, the AC, being responsible in part for quality assurance, raised concerns over the extent of its applicability. However, information about the extent of volunteering in Slovenia is hard to obtain, as no effort has been made to collect such information systematically. As such, for the purposes of this study, the 1999 EVS remains the most reliable source.

A case study on volunteering and social welfare in Slovenia, carried out as part of the CSI project, revealed a lack of evaluation of voluntary work, which results in an absence of data in this area. Ultimately, the lack of comprehensive records of volunteering in Slovenia means that it is yet to be suitably evaluated. A study published several years ago (Kolarič et al. 2006) includes a sum of volunteers' hours invested, but since these data were gathered on the basis of the questionnaires, the total numbers are an estimation and comprehensive data are yet to be gathered. Since employment in CSOs is very low (see sub-section III.2.4 of this report), volunteers are critical gap fillers who do most of the work in CSOs. The case study showed that volunteering is on the rise, mainly as a result of intensive and systematic promotion and development efforts that have recently been supported by government grants, such as a grant for the promotion of voluntary work given by the Ministry of Public Administration in 2009.

The systematic cataloguing and valuation of voluntary work is one of the goals of the statutory regulation of volunteering that is currently underway in Slovenia. However, existing information may give an indication of the extent of volunteering in Slovenia:

1. The CSI Organisational Survey (OS) showed that as many as 86% of all organisations include volunteers in their work. The average per organisation is 189 volunteers, but this varies considerably from one organisation to another, from a minimum of two volunteers to a maximum of 5,000. Half of all organisations had 25 or fewer volunteers, while the most common number of volunteers was 20.
2. According to Kolaric *et al.*, (2006), volunteers put in 64,693 hours of work in surveyed CSOs in 2004. If this data were generalised to all CSOs, the amount of work invested by volunteers in 2004 would have been 1,239,756 hours. Using the average hourly wage for student work, the work of volunteers equals the work of 7,125 full-time employees.

3. As part of the CSI case study, a survey on volunteer engagement was conducted by Slovene Philanthropy (a central voluntary organisation in Slovenia) in 2008. Although the Slovenian volunteer network includes some 560 voluntary organisations, only 54 CSOs responded to the survey. In 2008, these enlisted the help of 183,025 volunteers, who put in 14,694,588 hours of work. However, few CSOs keep a detailed record of volunteers and their work, which makes more precise estimations difficult.

But the CSI OS confirms that voluntary engagement in Slovenia is growing. The majority of organisations (60.7%) stated that the number of their volunteers had increased in the last five years. This may be a result of a more systematic approach by organisations to encouraging voluntary work. The majority of organisations (73%) still acquire new volunteers by word of mouth, while 38.2% do so through their website and 27% organise promotional events. However, on several occasions, regional focus groups conducted for the CSI project stressed that low standards of living, which threaten their social security, can prevent people from becoming more actively involved in volunteering. At the same time, financially weaker CSOs without good access to funding cannot develop volunteering policies because of a lack of organisational strength and the resources to implement them.

## 1.2 Depth of socially-based engagement

This sub-dimension reports on aggregated data from three variables/indicators: depth of citizens' membership in social organisations, the depth of social volunteering by citizens, and the depth of community engagement in social activities. Here, 'depth' entails the level of involvement in multiple forms of activity. The World Values Survey (2005) showed that 21.3% of the Slovenian population are engaged in more than one social organisation, 28.7% volunteer in more than one organisation, and 65.4% of the population takes part at least once a month in the social activities of sports clubs or voluntary organisations (EVS, 1999). The frequency and depth of engagement show the significance of people's engagement with organisations, including in their roles as volunteers. The AC, however, had doubts about this information. Additional information and insight was therefore sought through other means.

The OS polled organisations on the intensity of monthly volunteer engagement. The most frequent answer was that their volunteers do 10 hours of work per month. The data shows that in half of all organisations surveyed, all volunteers combined contribute 95 or fewer hours per month, and more than 95 in the other half of organisations. If we consider the Slovene Philanthropy data from 2008 cited above, the average monthly engagement of a volunteer would amount to 6.7 hours.

The case study on volunteering showed that Slovenian society sees volunteers as an integral part of civil society who can address a variety of social needs and challenges, sometimes more quickly and with greater efficiency than the government. However, the contribution of volunteers is not as highly valued as it should be. Given the lack of systemic support to assess and evaluate voluntary work, voluntary organisations have the additional administrative burden of keeping records and producing reports of volunteer work. There is an evident shortage of fundamental systemic regulation that would recognise free labour as volunteering, and as something deserving of social protection and acknowledgement. Consequently, voluntary organisations are experiencing a number of problems, for which some possible solutions are presented in the recommendations and conclusion sections at the end of this report. Participants at the CSI National Workshop also discussed the strengths and weaknesses of socially-based engagement. Compared to companies, CSOs are at a disadvantage when it comes to their public image, with the general

perception of not-for-profit organisations being that all work must be voluntary, reflecting the fact that work in the civil society sector is undervalued.

### 1.3 Diversity of socially-based engagement

This sub-dimension measures the level of diversity of community members who engage in social activities, noting gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, regional distribution and the rural / urban divide. The WVS (2005) data reveals that as many as 81% of members of organisations belong to distinct social groups of the Slovene population, such as women, ethnic minorities or the rural population. This high percentage leads to the conclusion that a relatively high proportion of the population from different social groups actively participate in civil society.

According to Kolarič et al., (2006), the majority of volunteers (58.7%) are men. The share of men as volunteers is largest in associations (60.2%) and foundations (57.3%), while women volunteers lead in religious organisations (74.3%). In institutes, both genders are relatively equally represented. The predominance of men among volunteers can be explained by the structure of the civil society sector, in which sports and recreation and fire-fighting organisations have the largest share. Women, on the other hand, are more engaged in social protection and education (for example, 85% of Caritas Slovenia volunteers are women, and the Social Gerontology and Gerontogogics Association of Slovenia estimates that their share of women volunteers is 80%). Although no other statistical data on members of organisations or volunteers from specific social groups is available, the situation can be deduced from target groups of individual organisations and through the geographical and content-related structure of CSOs. The CSI National Workshop drew attention to the stigmatisation of people engaged in organisations working with marginalised groups (for example, people with addiction problems or Roma).

### 1.4 Extent of political engagement

The indicators for this sub-dimension provide an assessment of the level of involvement of citizens, individually or via organised forms, in politically oriented activities. Specifically, the sub-dimension looks at the extent of citizens' engagement as members or volunteers in political organisations and individual activism.

The WVS (2005) data showed that 21.1% of the Slovenian population are active members of political organisations, such as trade unions (8.9%), political parties (2.1%), environmental organisations and professional associations or consumer organisations (8.7%). Some 12.2% of the population works voluntarily in at least one political organisation, such as trade unions, political parties, local political initiatives, organisations for the protection of human rights, the environment and wildlife, ecological organisations, professional associations, women's groups and peace movements (EVS, 1999).<sup>8</sup> Further, 28.9% of the population engaged in various forms of political activism, such as signing petitions or participating in boycotts or peaceful demonstrations within the last five years (WVS, 2005).

This type of engagement will also depend on people's expectations about whether or not the desired results will be achieved, which reflects their level of trust in individual institutions. Here it is worth noting that people are most distrustful of political parties (WVS, 2005). The Slovenian Public Opinion Survey 2000 also showed that while only

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<sup>8</sup> Political organisations as defined according to CIVICUS methodology.

3.7% of all respondents were members of political parties, 26.3% were members of trade unions (Toš et al., 2004).

## 1.5 Depth of political engagement

The depth of political engagement sub-dimension captures the portion of the population that is “politically active” in more than one political organisation or engaged in several political activities.

The World Values Survey (2005) showed that 26.5% of the Slovenian population is active in more than one politically-oriented organisation (WVS, 2005); 29.3% of the population performed voluntary work in more than one political organisation (trade unions, political parties, local political initiatives, organisations for the protection of human rights, the environment and wildlife, ecological organisations, professional associations, women’s groups and peace movements) (WVS, 2000); while 24% take part in political activism (WVS, 2005). In the last five years, 24.8% of respondents have signed a petition, 4.5% have participated in a boycott, and 8.4% have attended peaceful demonstrations (WVS, 2005).

The scores for this sub-dimension are similar to the scores of the sub-dimension on depth of socially-based engagement, showing that about a quarter of the active population is active in more than one organisation.

## 1.6 Diversity of political engagement

The final sub-dimension of the Civic Engagement dimension explores the level of diversity of the population that actively practices various forms of political engagement – i.e. the percentage of members of organisations belonging to social groups such as women, people from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, those from rural areas, older people, and young people.

The World Values Survey (2005) showed that 78% of the population are members of various social groups, such as women, ethnic minorities, the elderly or rural people (WVS, 2005).

## Conclusion

The Civic Engagement dimension scores a medium value of 46.5%. The data shows that Slovenian citizens quite readily engage as members of CSOs and as volunteers. The rise of volunteering seem to be the result of efforts invested by voluntary organisations toward establishing a regulatory framework to provide systemic support for the development and implementation of voluntary work at national and local levels. A law on volunteering, which was to address the rights of volunteers and provide systemic support for volunteering, and which was co-drafted by CSOs in 2004, was submitted to the legislative procedure at the end of 2010 and was passed by Parliament in February 2011. It stipulates the formal rights of volunteers, the obligations of CSOs and the systematic means of volunteerism support from public sources.

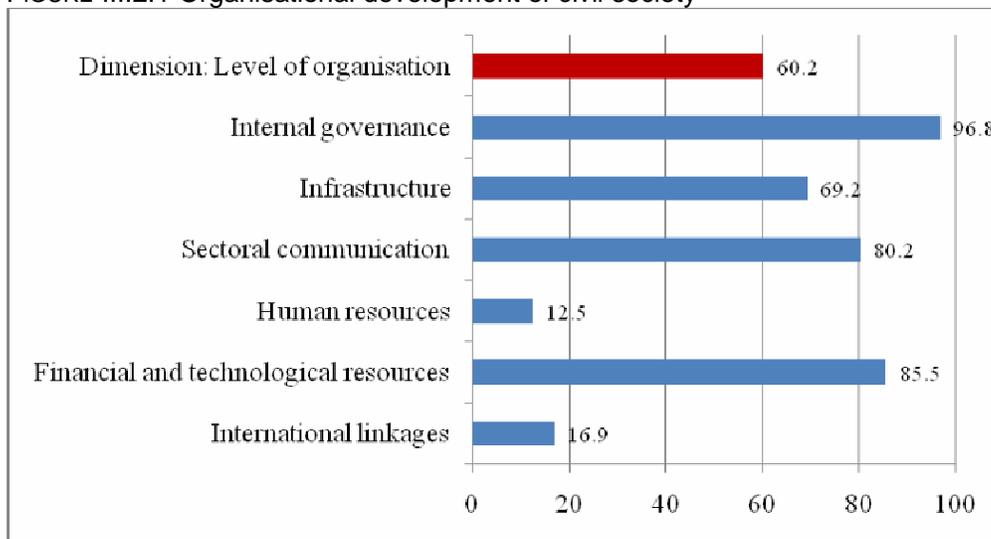
In addition to the lack of systemic support, members of the CSI Slovenia Advisory Committee suggested that the increasing poverty of the population could be another reason for what they perceived as lower levels of energy and motivation for civic engagement. While the contribution of volunteering to social welfare through fast and efficient responses to social needs is readily recognised, voluntary work still lacks the social support it deserves as the main safety net for addressing growing social needs.

With regard to political engagement, it is quite clear – as shown in the mapping of the social forces in society – that political parties wield the greatest influence; however, as a result of low trust, a very small proportion of the population is actively involved in them.

## 2. LEVEL OF ORGANISATION

This section presents key findings concerning the organisational development of civil society and its functioning from the point of view of internal governance, support infrastructure, sectoral communication, human, financial and technological resources, and international linkages. The section seeks to address key questions about the state of civil society's organisation in Slovenia: how well organised is civil society, and what kind of infrastructure exists for CSOs. Figure III.2.1 below presents the values for the Level of Organisation and the sub-dimensions scores under this dimension.

FIGURE III.2.1 Organisational development of civil society



Note: the values presented are in averages of different indicator scores

### 2.1. Internal governance

This sub-dimension focuses on the management of CSOs.

Of the surveyed CSOs, 96.8% indicated they have a governance body, such as a management board. This is not unexpected considering that in Slovenia there are legal requirements stipulating the different bodies that should exist for different types of organisations.

### 2.2. Support infrastructure

The CSI study also seeks to assess the support infrastructure available to CSOs in the form of unions, associations, umbrella bodies and support networks. The CSI OS data reveals that a majority of polled organisations (69.2%) are formally members of such structures. Recently, there has been growing support for horizontal and vertical networks, financed in part through EU structural funds. This has created network organisations and regional hubs as support structures.

A problem alleged by interviewees who participated in the case studies was that such networks and support structures cater first to their needs, and only then to the needs of the sector. The respondents also pointed out the lack of consensus within CSOs about who is a legitimate representative of a sector. This is in part a result of poor communication channels and insufficiently clear relations between associations, network organisations and grassroots organisations. Some see the solution to

improving connections within the civil society sector in regional hubs that are closest to stakeholders in the local environment, while other organisations endorse the establishment of a government office for NGOs that is expected to set aside individual interests and address the needs of the whole sector.

### **2.3. Sectoral communication**

Establishing effective connections and communication channels between CSOs is vital to the strength of civil society. The CSI therefore seeks to explore the extent to which CSOs relate to and communicate with each other. The OS data reveals that a majority of organisations surveyed (83%), had met with other organisations working in a related field in the preceding three months; 77.4% of surveyed organisations reported they had exchanged information (documents, reports, data) with similar organisations in the same period. Those who had either held a meeting or exchanged information with another organisation were asked to provide the number of organisations they had contacted. On average, in a three-month period, each organisation had shared information with 11 another organisations and held meetings with 10.

Connections and linkages among CSOs were analysed in greater detail in a representative sample in a 2005 survey (Kolarič et al., 2006). The main finding was that CSOs mainly liaised in unions, associations and communities. The main reasons for CSOs coming together include pursuing common interests and exchanging information. However, a major deterrence to establishing closer ties is that CSOs working in related fields often compete for similar funds.

Interviewees in a CSI case study (see appendix D) on the relationship between the state and CSOs (Rakar, Črnak-Meglič, 2010) cited internal differences and a lack of ties within the civil society sector as one of the reasons for limited civil dialogue. This problem was also raised in the focus groups held as part of the Slovenia CSI project.

### **2.4. Human resources**

This sub-dimension focuses on the sustainability of CSO human resources.

A characteristic feature of the Slovenian civil society sector is that it relies heavily on the work of volunteers, while the number of employees is very small. The OS reveals that only 12.5% of all organisations have a permanent and remunerated workforce.

This information can be coupled with data on the professionalisation of Slovenian CSOs collected in a 1996 survey from a representative sample of CSOs. This data shows that the professionalisation rate was 0.73%, meaning that CSO employees are only 0.73% of the total workforce in Slovenia. Internationally, this is one of the lowest rates of professionalisation in the sector (Kolarič et al., 2002). The rate of professionalisation for Slovenian associations, private institutes and foundations was 0.66% by 2008 (Črnak-Meglič, 2009). While the data for 2008 is not wholly comparable with that from 1996, it lends itself to the conclusion that, given the fact that the three types of CSOs mentioned above account for almost 82% of all CSOs, the rate of professionalisation in Slovenian CSOs has remained largely the same over a decade.

Poor full-time employment figures and a shortage of human resources were also raised at the regional focus group meetings and the National Workshop. Participants stated that some of the main reasons for employees leaving the civil society sector included the poor financial situation, unstable financing, unfair competition among sectors, and being unfamiliar with the career opportunities offered by CSOs.

## 2.5. Financial and technological resources

This sub-dimension measures the percentage of organisations with a stable financial resource base and the percentage of organisations that have regular access to communications technologies, such as computers, telephones, fax and email.

Financial and technological resources are vital to the functioning of CSOs. From the CSI OS data, a detailed analysis of the amount and structure of CSOs' funds enables us to learn more about the structure of CSOs' income, and to determine whether the balance of income and expenditure had changed over the previous year.

The CSI OS shows that approximately 80% of surveyed CSOs in Slovenia have a stable financial base, calculated on the basis of the income/expenditure figures they reported. Expenditure in these organisations remained the same (24.3%) or fell (14.9%), while income either grew (63.5%) or stayed the same (24.3%) in comparison to the previous year.

However, other information on the financial strength of the sector and its growth does not paint a favourable financial situation for CSOs in Slovenia. Between 1996 and 2008, the number of CSOs in Slovenia multiplied by 2.3, while their income (expressed as a share in GDP) grew from 1.92% in 1996 to only 1.99% in 2008 (Kolarič et al., 2002; Črnak-Meglič, 2009). This may seem as quite a significant growth, but if we take into account the increase of new organisations, the growth is actually quite marginal. This minute growth, of course, does little to increase the strength of these organisations in society or provide a solid basis for their professionalisation.

One reason is that the fundraising structure of CSOs has not changed significantly in this period. Data for 1996 (Kolarič et al., 2002) shows that membership fees were the chief source of income, followed by revenues from municipalities, and sponsorship funds donated by companies. When grouped together with other sources, in accordance with the methodology designed and used in an international survey by the Johns Hopkins University (Salamon et al., 1999; 2003; 2004), the income generated by the sale of services or products (commercial revenues) accounted for 44% of all income, while public revenues (municipalities, government) accounted for 27%, and donations by individuals, businesses and foundations for 29% (Kolarič et al., 2002:124). Re-examining this data in 2005 and 2009 showed that the structure of income remained unchanged (Kolarič et al., 2006; Črnak-Meglič, 2009), despite a smaller share of public revenues. Table III.2.1 shows the income of CSOs over time.

TABLE III.2.1 Structure of income in Slovenian CSOs

Income Source	1996	2004	2007	2008
Market sources	44%	30 %	47%	47%
Public sources	27%	36%	24%	24%
Private donations	29%	21%	20%	19%
Other		13%	10%	10%

Source: 1996 and 2004 (Kolarič et al., 2002, 2006); 2007 and 2008 (Črnak-Meglič, 2008, 2009).

The poor financial standing of CSOs is also reflected in the analysis of income of associations and foundations from 2004 onwards. Črnak-Meglič shows (2009) that between 2007 and 2008, CSO revenues increased by 9%, while between 2004 and 2008 the increase was 19%. Considering the inflation rate of 13%, (Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia) the real value of total revenues in both types of

organisations fell by 21%. Lower revenues in the civil society sector are also evident when expressed as a proportion of GDP, which fell by 0.24% between 2004 and 2008. Likewise, real growth in income per organisation fell by as much as 22% from 2007 to 2008 (Črnak-Meglič, 2009).

The financial position of CSOs was examined in greater detail through additional questions in the OS. The most notable questions were whether the number of projects of organisations has increased in the last five years, and whether their funds expanded to meet this. Almost all the organisations polled (93.6%) feel that their workload has increased, while a high majority of organisations (83%) state that the scope of their work has also broadened (meaning, for example, that they have introduced new programmes or activities). Despite this, the amount of public funds increased in only 40.7% of all organisations. More (43.2%) said that the share of public funds had remained the same, while in 16% of organisations it had decreased. The majority of organisations polled (62.5%) believe that the increase in public funds is disproportionate to the increase in the scope and content of their work, while 37.5% of organisations say that the increase in public funds is proportionate.

Given the income structure, the 1990s could be characterised as witnessing the beginnings of the commercialisation of Slovenian civil society, with CSOs shifting their attention to the sale of services and products in new markets. But this portrayal, of course, does not necessarily paint an accurate picture; indeed, membership fees account for almost half of all commercial revenue. The conclusion that can be drawn from the presented – and unchanged – structure of income for the sector is that neither the process of commercialisation nor the etatisation<sup>9</sup> of Slovenian CSOs has increased substantially. Such an increase would constitute the foundation for the professionalisation and development of CSOs and also determine their social role.

Unstable financing, constant adaptation to public tender criteria, discouraging tax legislation and a generally poor financial position in the sector were also highlighted as the key weaknesses at focus group meetings and the National Workshop. Another problem is that funds which are made available are earmarked for activity rather than infrastructure. Current financing policies thus inhibit the development of the civil society sector.

As far as the technological capacity of CSOs is concerned, the OS revealed that 91.4% of CSOs surveyed have access to at least one of the four modern technologies: internet, computer, fax machine, telephone. This also affects the organisation of the work, meaning that more work can be done outside of the office, while communication between organisations is mostly electronic.

## 2.6 International linkages

This sub-dimension measures a ratio of international NGOs present in the country compared to all known international NGOs.

According to the Union of International Associations (2009), 16.9% of international organisations are present in Slovenia.<sup>10</sup> Since EU members increasingly connect with one another, the OS asked CSOs if they too are establishing ties within associations, umbrella bodies and similar organisations at the EU level. Just under

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<sup>9</sup> Etatisation is a process by which, to a certain extent, organisations become producers of services for the government (Kolarič et al., 2002, 2003).

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

half of surveyed organisations (45.5%) answered that they are members of such international organisations.

Information from a survey conducted in 2005 on a representative sample of CSOs shows that just over a quarter of Slovenian CSOs (26%) establish connections with their foreign counterparts (Kolarič et al., 2006).

A CSI case study of youth organisations showed that the influence of international linkages is surprisingly insignificant. International cooperation is only important to youth organisations that are themselves contractors to acquire funds through tenders. Members of focus group meetings stressed that this analysis could perhaps be generalised more widely and applied to the whole sector.

Based on the presented data we can conclude that international linkages among CSOs increased with the Slovenia's entry into EU, but remain rather weak.

## **Conclusion**

Given the findings described above, it can be concluded that there have been no significant shifts in the financing of the civil society sector. This may be largely due to the inadequacy of government incentives and grants. International surveys detect the same problem, and indeed Slovenia now ranks as one of the countries with the most limited funding from public sources (Salamon et al. 2003; Črnak-Meglič and Rakar 2009). Although CSOs are relatively independent of the state due to the lack of substantial government funding, the modest funds they acquire from other sources (mainly donations), the constant struggle for grants awarded through public tenders, and the corresponding need to meet all of the eligibility criteria, greatly reduces their autonomy. To improve the situation of CSOs, the government should not only provide better funding possibilities for CSOs, but also introduce new measures and amend legislation to encourage financing from other non-public sources, for example, further private donations by individuals and companies. Reducing dependence on limited public funds would increase the autonomy of CSOs.

The analysis points to the conclusion that the growth of Slovenian CSOs has not yet reached the point where they begin to mature. Increasing the financial strength and sustainability of CSOs and, consequently, their professionalisation, are the two criteria that define the point at which the growth of the sector gives way to maturity. This has not yet happened in Slovenia.

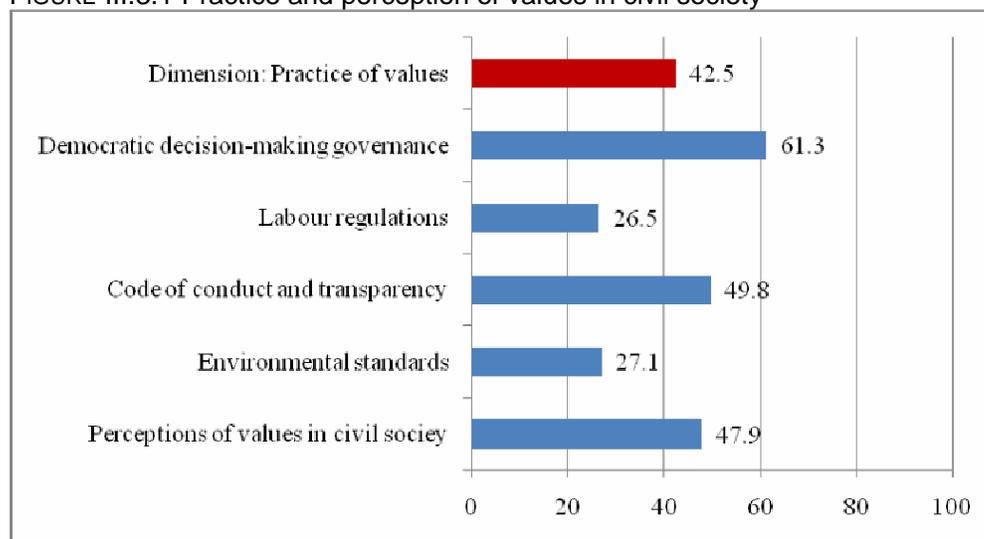
### 3. PRACTICE OF VALUES

This section presents the key findings on the dimension measuring the values practiced and promoted by CSOs, and seeks to answer a number of key questions: how decisions are made within CSOs; the existence of employees' rights; codes of conduct and transparency in organisations; the extent to which CSOs adhere to environmental protection standards; how CSOs perceive and promote values in civil society as a whole.

Since the majority of Slovenian CSOs are membership organisations, democratic decision making is very highly valued. Due to the low number of employees in CSOs and the flexibility of the work, awareness on labour rights is quite limited. On the other hand, awareness of the transparent and accountable behaviour is quite high, among which environment protection standards represent an important set of values.

Figure III.3.1 below presents the values for the dimension and sub-dimensions. A case study on the carbon footprint of Slovenian CSOs was also conducted to discover how familiar Slovenian CSOs are with the notion of the carbon footprint and measures for its reduction, and whether these measures are reflected in CSOs programme activities.

FIGURE III.3.1 Practice and perception of values in civil society



Note: the values presented are averages of different indicator scores.

#### 3.1. Democratic decision-making governance

The sub-dimension shows the extent of democratic decision making practices within civil society in terms of who makes decisions in organisations – members, staff, appointed or elected leaders, or appointed or elected boards.

The CSI OS data revealed that in Slovenia, 83.6% of the organisations surveyed are membership organisations. To obtain information on the state of democratic decision making and governance in CSOs', the CSI OS asked organisations whether they had a governance body (e.g. a management board or a council of an institute). Almost all CSOs in Slovenia (96.8%) have such a body. CSOs were then asked who makes key decisions in the organisation with respondents required to select a single answer. Key decisions are made by an elected board/council in 44.1% of organisations, 23.7% stated that they are made by an appointed board/council; 15.1% by an

appointed head; 7.5% by an elected head; and 7.5%, the members themselves. Only 2.2% of all organisations said that key decisions were made by the staff.

Thus, 61.3% of surveyed organisations can be said to have relatively democratic internal governance, as key decisions are made by an elected head, elected board/council, and staff or members. Despite this, participants at the regional focus group meetings cautioned that organisations often behave irresponsibly in this respect, with instances of cronyism involving local authorities and nepotism. Furthermore, focus group participants pointed to a problem concerning membership organisations (associations), for which the law requires that an assembly of members (composed of all the members) reach decisions on vital matters. As a result of civil society's passivity, members of associations rarely participate in democratic decision-making, meaning that associations often face difficulties establishing a decision making quorum. Given the shortage of new professionals, organisations are often dominated by a small circle of ambitious individuals. To a large extent, therefore, this study found that while CSOs in Slovenia do usually have established systems of democratic decision-making governance, the exercise of democratic practices in decision-making does not always meet these criteria in reality.

### **3.2. Labour regulations**

This sub-dimension reports on aggregated data from four indicators: the percentage of organisations that have written policies in place regarding equal opportunities and/or equal pay for equal work for women, the percentage of paid staff within organisations that are members of labour unions, the percentage of organisations that conduct specific training on labour rights for new staff members and the percentage of organisations that have a publicly available policy for labour standards.

The CSI OS data reveals that 60.9% of surveyed CSOs have no established written codes of conduct or policies regarding equal opportunities and/or equal pay for women. It should be noted that gender equality has a firm legislative basis in the Employment Relations Act (2003) and the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act (2004), which is probably why CSOs feel little or no need to specifically address this issue.

The CSI OS also asked CSOs about the proportion of paid employees that are members of trade unions. Only a fifth of CSOs (22%) report that their staff are members of trade union. On average, trade union members account for 15.9% of paid employees.

The CSI OS asked whether CSOs organise special training for newly recruited staff on labour rights. Only 16.9% of organisations hold such training. When asked about publicly available policies/regulations on labour standards, only 34.1% of CSOs stated having these in place. Employment relations, of course, are subject to publicly available laws and collective agreements, and CSOs with one or two employees therefore often decide not to implement additional internal rules regarding employment relations. The low percentage in this category could therefore be a result of modest employment figures on the one hand, and the clear and precise regulatory framework for employment and labour rights on the other.

Participants at the national workshop cautioned that labour rights training in CSOs could be comparatively lower than reported because it is often the result of an agreement between employer and employee. The main reasons for this are financial instabilities and the ensuing low employment figures in this sector, which makes it more difficult for employers to adhere to all legal obligations regarding employees. In

2008, an NGO trade union was established (Trade Union for NGO) to address the need to improve labour rights within the civil society sector, but this has made only limited progress to date.

### **3.3. Code of conduct and transparency**

This sub-dimension analyses how many CSOs have developed publicly available codes of conduct and transparent financial reporting systems. The CSI OS data show that 38.2% of surveyed CSOs have publicly accessible rules/code of conduct, while 61.3% of CSOs have made their financial reports publicly accessible. Given that CSOs are required under law to submit their annual reports to the AJPES, which then makes this information publicly accessible, CSOs that had stated that they made their financial reports public were asked where these can be accessed. The most common answer was that financial information was available at AJPES. A fifth of CSOs make such information available on their websites. Few CSOs thus provide access to their financial information other than as required by law. Indeed, the assumption is that even those CSOs that stated that they do not keep public annual financial reports nevertheless submit these as required by law to AJPES, which immediately makes all reports public. Since submission of annual reports is required by law and a fine imposed for failure to comply, the percentage of submissions comes close to 100%.

The introduction of a quality assurance standard designed specifically for CSOs in 2008 has greatly improved transparency in the sector. Participants at regional focus group meetings acknowledged its importance. However, implementation has been slow due to the relatively high costs involved. Participants at the National Workshop agreed that the quality assurance system should continue to be implemented, with public availability of the financial reports of CSOs one of its key components.

### **3.4. Environmental standards**

This sub-dimension focuses on the percentage of organisations that have a publicly available policy for environmental standards.

Environmental protection standards represent an important set of values in the contemporary world. As part of our efforts to highlight the environmental aspect of civil society work in Slovenia, a case study was conducted to determine the extent to which CSOs adhere to these standards. The CSI OS shows that 27.1% of CSOs stated having a publicly available policy or set of regulations for environmental standards that are followed. Nonetheless, the Advisory Committee rated this information as not very reliable. Since the question in the survey related to the public accessibility of environmental standards, it is likely that respondents answered affirmatively because environmental standards laid down in regulations can be considered as publicly available.

Through a CSI case study, Carbon Footprint of Slovenian CSOs (Šifkovič Vrbica, Matoz Ravnik, 2010, see Appendix. D), we explored the degree to which CSOs are aware of their own organisational carbon footprint and implement activities to reduce it; the extent to which they encourage their employees to reduce their personal carbon footprints at work and at home; and how they promote carbon footprint awareness in the public arena. A carbon footprint is a measure of how much one's activities affect the environment and contribute towards climate change, depending on the amount of greenhouse gases one generates daily through dependence on fossil fuels. As part of the case study, three major Slovenian CSOs were interviewed, one working with human rights, one with environmental issues, and one with broader societal issues. None of the CSOs had previously calculated its carbon footprint, as

this is a relatively new concept introduced in Slovenia only in 2008-2009 through awareness campaigns by Umanotera – The Slovenian Foundation for Sustainable Development (one of Slovenia's leading CSOs in the field of sustainability).

The case study results showed that all three interviewed CSOs try to implement measures that reduce the organisational carbon footprint (including, for example, saving water and paper, using energy-saving light bulbs and recycling) and, at least indirectly, encourage their employees to implement these measures at work (for example by providing a company bicycle). Concerning travel abroad, the key criteria are still price and time efficiency, so flying is the preferred method of transport. However, the use of online communication tools, such as teleconferences is increasing. While none of the three CSOs has a set of formalised rules, the environmental CSO stated that in their view there was no need for this, as they adhere strictly to and implement every value they promote. None of the organisations had a chapter dedicated to internal environmental standards in their respective annual reports.

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

This sub-dimension looks at the perception of the values of non-violence, tolerance, democracy, transparency and trustworthiness within civil society.

The CSI OS asked CSO representatives whether there were any forces or groups within civil society that use violence (aggression, hostility, brutality or fighting) to express their interests. Of the surveyed CSOs representatives, 51.6% believe that such forces exist. Those who answered affirmatively were asked to describe such forces/groups. Nearly a half (46.9%) stated that there are only isolated groups that occasionally resort to violence, while 28.6% stated that such use of violence by groups within civil society is extremely rare, and only 4.1% believe that these are significant, groups.

Participating CSO representatives were further asked to assess civil society's role in promoting democratic decision making in their organisations and groups. Of these, 47.2% responded that the role of civil society is limited; 29.2% that it is moderate; 19.1% that it is significant (hence, together 48.3 % believe that it is either moderate or significant, which provides the indicator score). Only 4.5% of respondents believe that civil society's role in promoting democratic decision-making in their organisations and groups is insignificant.

CSOs opinions on the existence of corruption differed considerably, with 39.2% of CSOs stating that instances are occasional, 34.2% stating that they are frequent, and 24.1% that they are very rare. Only 2.5% held that they are very frequent.

Knowledge of multiple examples of explicitly racist, discriminatory or intolerant forces within civil society is reported by 41.2% of the respondents; 28.2% know none, and 18.8% know one or two examples, hence the perceived intolerance indicator is 47.1 % (the percentage of those who answered none or one or two).

CSO representatives were also asked about the relation of these intolerant forces/groups to civil society at large. According to 37.8% of the respondents, such negative forces are only a marginal actor within civil society, while 29.7% believe that such forces are significant and almost a third (32.4%) that such negative forces are completely isolated and strongly denounced by civil society at large. None of the respondents reported such forces as dominating civil society.

CSO representatives were further asked to assess civil society's current role in promoting non-violence and peace in Slovenia, with 36.7% believing that this role is significant, and somewhat fewer that the role is moderate (32.2%). Together 68.9 % see civil society's role as moderate or significant, which gives the indicator score. Of the remaining responses, 26.7% reported that the role of civil society in promoting non-violence and peace is limited, and only 4.4% see the role as insignificant.

## **Conclusion**

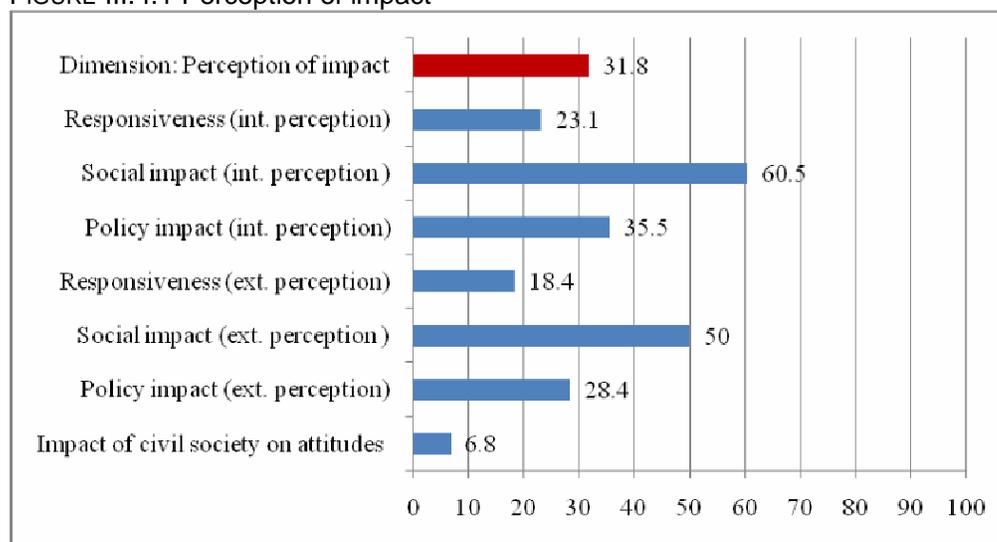
As far as the dimension Practice of Values is concerned, it can be concluded that CSOs generally adhere to the regulations regarding democratic decision-making governance, labour regulations, codes of conduct and transparency and environmental standards as required by law. However, they do not explicitly emphasise or promote these values and standards of their own accord. Moreover, although certain values and regulations do exist in a written form, they are often neglected in practice. A reason for this is the general shortage of labour and finance in the sector, which can be seen as the source of both violations of democratic decision making and breaches of employees' rights, sometimes even by mutual consent. The participants in the focus group meetings and the National Workshop cautioned that CSOs' poor financial situation often compels them to breach certain values. The National Workshop thus proposed that CSOs include values in their strategic planning and their annual reports.

## 4. PERCEPTION OF IMPACT

This dimension describes and analyses the extent to which civil society is active and successful in fulfilling several essential functions. Overall, this dimension received the lowest score of the dimensions in the CSI Diamond. With a score of 31.8%, the score is half that of the Level of Organisation and External Environment dimensions. Further, the scores of the sub-dimensions are also worrying. While the 'social impact' sub-dimension achieved a relatively high score (50%), 'responsiveness' (18.4%) and 'change in attitudes' (6.8%), on the other hand, are a cause for concern. The score reflects the general passiveness of CSOs, which are not influential and visible enough. While the results are worrying, they are somewhat expected, taking into account the organisational and financial capacity of CSOs.

The measurement for the overall score is derived from seven sub-dimensions which are based on the internal perception of CSOs of the impact of civil society through the CSI OS, and the CSI External Perceptions Survey (EPS), where we interviewed experts not considered part of civil society. The EPS results are combined with the findings of the World Values Survey (WVS 2005), a case study conducted among youth organisations (Perception of Impact: The Influence of Civil Society on Youth Policies, Appendix D), and feedback received from focus groups and the national workshop.

FIGURE III.4.1 Perception of impact



Note: the values presented are averages of different indicator scores.

### 4.1 Responsiveness (internal perception)

The first sub-dimension addresses the responsiveness of civil society to some of the most important social concerns within the country. This of course begs the question, one with a value and methodological connotation, of how to identify the most burning issues. In accordance with CIVICUS' guidelines, the World Values Survey (WVS 2005) was used to identify these issues, showing that the issues of most concern in Slovenia are economic stability, growth, fighting crime, and maintaining order. CSO representatives were asked to assess the impact of civil society on two selected

social issues on a four-point scale.<sup>11</sup> The CSI OS score representing the internally perceived responsiveness of civil society is only 23.1%. The perception of responsiveness is better in the case of fighting crime (25.6%) than in the case of the most commonly cited issue, a stable economy (20.5%). Respondents of EPS confirm this, as almost a third (30.1%) believe that civil society has no impact on the stability of the economy, while only 11% believe that this is the case with fighting crime. Slightly more respondents (25.7%) maintain that civil society has a moderate or considerable impact on fighting crime, while 20.5% of EPS respondents believe that this is the case with economic stability. No respondents, however, argue that civil society exerts a great impact on economic stability.

The relatively low responsiveness of civil society to the two selected issues of concern was confirmed also by the Advisory Committee, which assessed the information regarding the internal perception of responsiveness as predominantly reliable and useful. However, here emerges the problem of selecting two of the most burning issues. Case studies and focus groups indicated that the fields of economic stability and fighting crime are issues of no great concern to CSOs. This applies all the more in Slovenia, where there are more CSOs that are sports and recreation organisations (27.7%) than any other kind (Kolarič et. al., 2006). On the other hand, CSO involvement in delinquency (other than juvenile or drug-related) prevention is still very limited. This is even more the case with civil society and the economy, as social entrepreneurship is still at the very initial development stage,<sup>12</sup> while trade unions occupy a special place (often differing from the conventional perspective of a CSO) in the social, political and economic development of Slovenian society. The frequent positive opinions voiced in focus groups about civil society's potential in environmental protection (e.g. the *Let's Clean Slovenia in a Day* campaign) or sports/recreation for youth (e.g. the *Believe in Your Basket* campaign<sup>13</sup>) support this claim. Thus, while civil society's responsiveness depends heavily on the issue followed, it could generally be said that it should be higher, regardless of the specific issue concerned.

## 4.2 Social impact (internal perception)

This sub-dimension measures the impact of civil society on society in general and takes a wider look at the effectiveness of CSOs in their respective fields of interest. The CSOs surveyed through the CSI OS were asked to choose two of the following categories on which they felt their organisation had exerted most impact: supporting the poor and marginalised communities, education, housing, health, social development, humanitarian relief, food, employment and other. Some 27.3% of the CSOs felt education was where they had exerted the most impact, followed by supporting the poor and marginalised communities (15.6%) and social development (14.3%). The CSOs surveyed perceive a comparatively greater impact on the selected categories than indicated in the responsiveness sub-dimension, reflected in the high internal perception score of 56.1%. The majority of CSOs see the impact of civil society as a whole in the two identified fields as being limited or tangible, with none reporting the absence of perceived impact on the two main social issues. The

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<sup>11</sup> On a scale where 0 = no impact, 1 = limited impact, 2 = some tangible impact, 3 = high level of impact.

<sup>12</sup> However, in the recent years there have been many steps taken towards developed social entrepreneurship (public tenders for the establishment of social enterprises, drafting of the law on social enterprises, etc.).

<sup>13</sup> *Believe in your basket* is a sports humanitarian action in the scope of which many basketball courts were renovated since 2005. The action is promoted by two journalists and many other ambassadors.

aggregate average impact scores for civil society as a whole for all fields are 1.7 on the 0-3 scale, which is the same as the average for education, while the average for supporting the poor and marginalised communities is 1.5. The highest impact was attributed to humanitarian relief (2.3), which matches other evidence about the varying impact levels of CSOs. This was also confirmed by the Advisory Committee, which deemed the data valid and reliable. The score is somewhat higher (64.8%) with regard to the internal perception of their own social impact by polled CSOs. This could be interpreted as a self-defence and justification of a CSO's mission. Two other notable features regarding perceived social impact are the somewhat moderate impact of CSOs on supporting the poor and marginalised communities, and a higher score on perceived impact on education, which could be linked to the state's strong presence in the education sector. As a result of relatively high indicator values, the total score for the sub-dimension is 60.5%.

### **4.3 Policy impact (internal perception)**

This sub-dimension concerns the general impact of civil society on public policies and activities. OS results show a clear discrepancy between, on the one hand, the perception of civil society's impact on policies and the effectiveness of CSOs and, on the other, the efforts that CSOs invest in pursuing their objectives. The score of the internal perceptions of policy impact in general is only 24.2%, which suggests that CSOs do not believe civil society has a very tangible impact on public policies. As many as 69.2% of surveyed CSOs believe that civil society's impact is limited, while 6.6% claim that there is no impact. Results are similar when it comes to CSOs' perceptions of their success in pushing selected policies, with the score measuring the success of CSOs in contributing towards policy change standing at just 19.1%. Respondents were required to give their opinion on the outcome of these activities<sup>14</sup> for one of three selected policy areas. Only a fifth (19.6%) reported that at least one policy had been adopted.

However, civil society cannot be blamed for the lack of success. A case study on youth policies (*Perception of Impact: The Influence of Civil Society on Youth Policies*, see Appendix D) shows that CSOs are well aware of their limitations (lack of staff and connections, strong localisation, lack of expertise). The case study also shows that the government is engaged in an ostensible dialogue which includes civil society in policy-making and implementation only formally, while establishing arms-length privileged ties with some CSOs on certain issues, including, for example, youth or disability policies. Thus, the overall score of the sub-dimension (35.5%) is lower, and reflects the actual impact civil society has on policies, with its role often nothing more than part of a ritual of ostensible legitimisation.

### **4.4 Responsiveness (external perception)**

This sub-dimension assesses the impact of civil society on economic stability and fighting crime – the two selected social issues mentioned above - as perceived by external experts. The survey conducted among them to a large extent confirmed the self-assessed low impact scores. This is particularly true with perceptions of responsiveness to the issue of economic stability, where external experts saw civil society as having little or no impact (10%). The score is somewhat higher when it comes to crime fighting (26.7%), with experts ascribing to civil society a more palpable role.

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<sup>14</sup> There were four possible answers: (0) politicians did not even listen; (1) policy rejected; (2) policy under discussion; (3) policy approved.

On the whole, experts are more reserved in terms of assessing civil society's impact, so the score for the sub-dimension is 18.4%, which is clearly lower than the internal perception score (23.1%). External experts see civil society as having more impact on fighting crime than on ensuring a stable economy. Some 26.7% of respondents believe that civil society has no impact whatsoever on economic stability, while only 13.3% of them believe this to be the case in fighting crime. Almost a third of all experts polled maintain that civil society has a very limited impact on fighting crime (60%) and economic stability (63.3%).

#### **4.5 Social impact (external perception)**

With regard to the external perception of the social impact of civil society, experts identified humanitarian relief (40.4%) and supporting the poor and marginalised communities (33.3%) as the two categories in which civil society exerts the greatest impact. While results are similar to CSOs' perceptions of the greatest impact in individual categories, they vary from the two primary impact categories selected by CSOs (education and supporting the poor and marginalised communities). In the fields selected by external experts, the perception of impact is very high (76.7%), which does not contradict internal perception results, since experts would probably have perceived less impact had they examined the education category. On the other hand, however, there is the alarming fact that experts perceive the impact of civil society as a whole to be very weak. As many as 76.7% of them believe that civil society's impact is limited (tangible: 20%, high: 3.3%), which distorts the previous picture and shows how neglected civil society is in the wider social context. The latter is apparently determined by features in which civil society plays no discernible role. As a result, the total score for the sub-dimension is somewhat low (50%).

#### **4.6 Policy impact (external perception)**

The perception of civil society's impact on policy by external experts highlights the influence of CSO activism on selected policy issues. The scores for external perceptions are similar to the internal perceptions, but within a lower range. External experts estimate that the impact of civil society in general on policy-making and implementation is negligible, with only 13.8% perceiving some tangible impact. As a result, the score for the sub-dimension is very low. On the other hand, the score associated with the perception of the results of civil society's activity in specific policy-related fields (external experts pointed out environmental, social and cultural policies as being the biggest areas) is higher. Of the experts surveyed, 42.9 stated that civil society's activity had been successful in at least one field. The overall value for the external perception dimension on policy impact (28.4) is low. Here, too, the chief responsibility for such perception lies with the government, which has been effectively ignoring the efforts of civil society.

#### **4.7 Impact of civil society on attitudes**

The final sub-dimension of perceived impact refers to the promotion of certain universal social and political norms by civil society and how this promotion is reflected in society. Identifying civil society's contribution to more ethical behaviour in society as a whole is crucial, as civil society is expected to be a role model in this respect. Unfortunately, the World Values Survey (WVS 2005) shows that the positive impact of civil society on society as a whole is almost imperceptible, and the sub-dimension has by far the lowest score, only 6.8%. A negligible difference between members and non-members of CSOs is shown with regard to interpersonal trust, with CSO members being only slightly more trustful of others (3.3%) than non-members. The same applies to tolerance (4.0%) and public spiritedness, where there are no differences between members and non-members. This leads to the surprising

conclusion that Slovenian civil society neither generates nor promotes generally accepted civic values, which could be connected to the frequent criticism of civil society on grounds of corruption, nepotism and cronyism, as suggested by several focus groups. Public trust in civil society at 20.0% is the highest indicator within this sub-dimension

## Conclusion

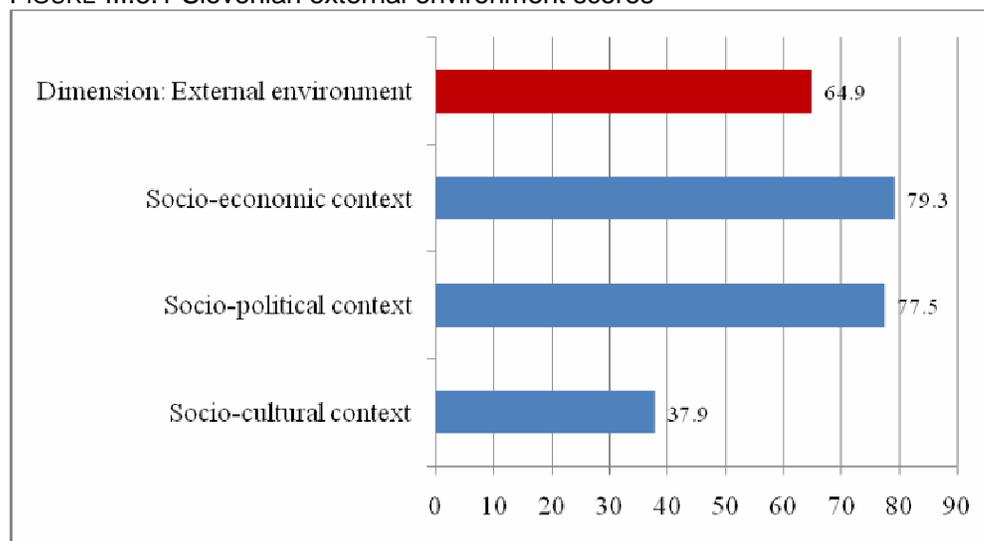
The low value for the Perception of Impact dimension is a perfectly legitimate result, since it is supported by other research sources. The results for the dimension and all sub-dimensions respectively were also confirmed by the AC, which considered them representative. With regard to the methodology, the validity of respondents selecting two out of several social concerns according to the World Values Survey (WVS 2005) could be questioned, as the list is not exhaustive and changes with time. In 2005, the most burning social concerns were economic stability and crime, which inevitably reduced the responsiveness index of Slovenian civil society, which, like any other, has its specifically national features. Thus the overall score for the dimension is lower than expected.

Nevertheless, there is no denying that in Slovenia there is a clear discrepancy between civil society's activity (which is weak across policy fields as a whole, although with strengths in some areas) and its impact on society in general as well as on the government. Part of the reason for this would seem to be that, given the minor impact on the wider social context, the government fails to, or is not willing to, recognise civil society as a relevant actor and partner. There are examples of the government establishing working groups, in which it invites CSOs from the respective field (e.g. case of illicit drugs policy (Deželan, 2009) and the case of youth organisations (see case study summary in Appendix D)). There are several reasons for this, including merely formal inclusion, which is mainly justified as meeting the criteria for the legitimisation of policies and contrasts civil society's lack of useful contribution (given structural weaknesses and underdevelopment of civil society) with the strong role of the state and the hierarchic and legalistic state bureaucracy. The government's distorted motivation (with arms-length evidence and creation of invited spaces), the passive population (with low levels of civic engagement after the transition to liberal democratic regime) and questionable practices on the part of civil society (with a relatively low image of CSOs in public opinion surveys) often result in the sector's neutralisation, notwithstanding a few positive exceptions. The solution should be based primarily on eliminating bad examples on the part of civil society (by establishing higher standards code of conduct, taking a lead in carbon footprint reduction, and modelling higher moral values), and on fostering expertise and establishing more effective communication channels (given that as they exist now, the majority of them are only *pro forma*). Only in this way will the government be compelled to take notice of civil society, and to interact with it, and only a civil society of this sort has the potential to activate the otherwise rather passive population.

## 5. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

This dimension assesses the key characteristics of the external environment within which civil society operates. Whether the environment is conducive or open is central to the development and functioning of a vibrant civil society. This section presents the main conclusions regarding the economic, political, and cultural environments in which civil society operates. Figure III.5.1 below presents the values for the dimension and its sub-dimensions.

FIGURE III.5.1 Slovenian external environment scores



Note: the values presented are averages of different indicator scores.

### 5.1 Socio-economic context

This sub-dimension analyses the socio-economic context in Slovenia and its impact on civil society. Table III.5.1 below presents the values of the key indicators that refer to civil society's social and economic context, and which are available in international databases.<sup>15</sup>

The Social Watch Basic Capabilities Index represents the average of three criteria covering health and basic educational provision. BCI compares and classifies countries according to their progress in social development by evaluating their situation in terms of minimum basic capabilities, structural dimensions that represent the indispensable starting conditions to guarantee an adequate quality of life. Its values range from 0 to 100, with higher values reflecting higher capabilities. The index gives basic information to understand the basic capabilities of each country.

The Transparency International Corruption Perception Index measures the amount of corruption in the public sector. Inequality is measured with the Gini coefficient (lower values reflect a more even distribution of income in a given country, but in the CSI scoring system this is inverted, to make a high score a positive), and Slovenia, in

<sup>15</sup> Source: Social Watch (2008). *Basic Capabilities Index*. Available online at [http://www.socialwatch.org/en/indicadoresDesarrollo/flash\\_content/index.html?lan=en&ind=T3](http://www.socialwatch.org/en/indicadoresDesarrollo/flash_content/index.html?lan=en&ind=T3); Transparency International Corruption Perception Index available on line at [http://www.transparency.org/policy\\_research/surveys\\_indices/cpi](http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi), World Bank, World Development Indicators 2008. Available online at <http://www.worldbank.org/>.

comparison to other European countries, has achieved good results here. The World Bank Development Indicator, which gives the ratio of external debt to GNP, is not available for Slovenia. From this and other data, the socio-economic context in Slovenia seems to be relatively conducive to the development and functioning of civil society. It should be kept in mind, however, that a more thorough analysis of the socioeconomic context would most likely point to the less favourable situation in which civil society has found itself in the wake of the current financial and economic downturn.

TABLE III.5.1 Civil society's socio-economic context

Dimension/sub-dimension	Value %
Basic capabilities index	99.2
Corruption	67.0
Inequality	71.6

## 5.2. Socio-political context

This sub-dimension analyses the socio-political context in which civil society exists, looking at political rights and freedoms, civil liberties, associational and organisational rights, the legal framework and state effectiveness. In addition, a separate analysis of the relationship between the state and civil society was conducted.

Slovenia is a free country that does not restrict the political rights of its citizens. According to the Freedom House (FH) Political Freedom (2008)<sup>16</sup> survey, Slovenia's score for political rights is 1 (on a scale from 1 to 7), which indicates free and fair elections and elected authorities. Slovenian citizens have a high level of autonomy; minorities are represented in the national legislative body and are included in the decision-making processes. Slovenia also scored 1 in the civic rights category, which refers to freedom of expression, association, assembly, and religion. The country is governed by the rule of law, and there are no major cases of negligence or corruption. The market is free, with equal opportunities for all. Based on all this, Slovenia was labelled as a free country.

The Freedom House civil liberties index (85.4%) which covers the rule of law and personal freedoms in Slovenia comprises three indicators: rule of law, personal autonomy and individual rights, and freedom of expression and belief. The score of the indicator 'associational and organisational rights' is 100, indicating individual's ability to participate freely in the political process, vote freely in legitimate elections, have representatives that are accountable to them, exercise freedoms of expression and belief, be able to freely assemble and associate, have access to an established and equitable system of rule of law, have social and economic freedoms, including equal access to economic opportunities and the right to hold private property.

The value of the indicator 'state effectiveness', which refers to the extent to which the state is able to fulfil its defined functions, is 71.6%.<sup>17</sup>

We also asked CSOs about their subjective experience with the legal framework. The highest number (46.9%) of respondents believe that the legal environment of civil society is moderately enabling; just under a third (30.9%) that it is quite limiting;

<sup>16</sup> Freedom House (2008). *Freedom in the World. The Annual Survey of Political Rights and Civil Liberties*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. For a breakdown of scores see also <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=276>.

<sup>17</sup> World Bank, World Development Indicators 2008. <http://www.worldbank.org/>.

18.5% that it is highly restrictive; and only 3.7% maintain that it is fully enabling. We also sought to know whether a particular CSO had ever faced any illegitimate restriction or attack by local or central government. The majority of CSOs (72.4%) reported that this had never been the case, while 27.6% answered affirmatively.

CSO representatives and external experts were also asked to evaluate in general the relationship between the state and civil society. The differences were notable, depending on whether we addressed CSO representatives or external experts, of whom a third were representatives of national or local authorities. A large number of respondents (47.9%) from CSOs believe that the state exerts a great influence on civil society, while a fifth (20.2%) even claim that the government controls civil society. Only 3% of them see civil society as having complete autonomy. On the other hand, more than a half of external experts (55.2%) say that the government has little effect on civil society, and just over 40% see this influence as strong. Only 10% of them stated that the government controls civil society, while the others (31.0%) settled for a tangible impact.

A case study of the relationship between the state and CSOs<sup>18</sup> attempted to classify this in terms of a predominant relationship model based on theoretical guidelines. The characteristic type of relationship in Slovenia is one of 'separate autonomy' which is defined by modest government financing and moderate autonomy of CSOs, as well as modest communication and contacts between CSOs and government (see Appendix D).

Generally speaking, since 2005, when the first CIVICUS report was published on the state of civil society in Slovenia, cooperation between CSOs and the government has not progressed. At the time, two documents were being drafted in collaboration between the government and CSOs, namely the Strategy of the Systemic Development of NGOs in Slovenia in 2003–2008 and the Cooperation Agreement between NGOs and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia 2005–2008. Although cooperation efforts date back eight years, little has been achieved other than compiling the agreement. After CSOs had drawn up a draft version, the Government was expected to put forward its position. An inter-departmental working group drafted the official position, but the Government adopted a position only on civil dialogue, which effectively put the initiative on hold. While there have been no major efforts since 2005 to establish a systemic framework that would facilitate the development of the civil society sector, the Ministry of Public Administration did provide for the funding of CSO networks from EU structural funds. Dialogue between the government and CSOs was re-launched after the 2008 general election, when CSOs appealed to the Prime Minister (PM) and the new coalition to include provisions regarding the development of CSOs in the coalition agreement, which they did. In February 2009, following a request by the PM, CSOs submitted a memorandum detailing their potential role in overcoming the economic crisis and expressing their expectations regarding the development of the civil society sector. The memorandum is thus a new joint document of CSOs based on open discussions and containing arguments for the development of the civil society sector in the near future. The government also appointed an inter-departmental working group responsible for coordinating responses by government departments to the CSO memorandum, designing a government strategy for collaboration with CSOs between

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18 Rakar, Tatjana, Črnak-Meglič, Andreja: The Relationship Between CSOs and the Government, See Appendix D: Case Study Summaries. Full text is accessible in Slovene at: [http://www.mju.gov.si/si/za\\_nevladne\\_organizacije/priprava\\_sistemskih\\_resitev\\_za\\_razvoj\\_nv\\_o/](http://www.mju.gov.si/si/za_nevladne_organizacije/priprava_sistemskih_resitev_za_razvoj_nv_o/)

2009 and 2012, and monitoring and coordinating its implementation. The working group first convened in February 2010; its first task is to prepare the government's response to the CSO memorandum.

### **5.3. Socio-cultural context**

The socio-cultural context sub-dimension looks at the levels of interpersonal trust, tolerance and public spiritedness among citizens. The analysis of the socio-cultural context reveals the extent to which socio-cultural norms and attitudes (including interpersonal trust, tolerance and public spiritedness) are conducive or detrimental to civil society. This information is contained in the World Values Survey (WVS 2005). The score for this sub-dimension is 37.9%, which makes it considerably lower than all other sub-dimensions regarding civil society's external environment.

In general, people in Slovenia are highly distrustful of others. Only 18.1% of respondents (WVS 2005) believe that people can mostly be trusted, while the remainder prefer utmost caution. With regard to tolerance, almost a quarter of respondents said they did not wish to live next to people of other races, people of different ethnic backgrounds or religions, people who are HIV-positive, homosexuals, foreign workers or immigrants. Respondents were the least tolerant of the Roma (39% of respondents would not want to have them for neighbours), homosexuals (35%) and people who are HIV-positive (31%).

The sense of public spiritedness was assessed by asking respondents whether claiming illegitimate government benefits, avoiding a fare on public transport, cheating on taxes, or accepting a bribe in the course of one's duties could ever be justified. On average, approximately 18% of respondents gave affirmative answers. This shows a relatively high level of public-spiritedness, which is also typical of other European countries; however, in comparison to Scandinavian and other West European countries, former socialist countries, including Slovenia, are considerably lower on the scale of public spiritedness (WVS 2005; Deželan, 2008).

Participants at focus group meetings and the National Workshop identified the culture of silence and the Slovenian 'herd instinct' as a weakness and typical cultural feature of Slovenians, which they considered to be factors impeding the improvement of the state of civil society.

## **Conclusion**

Slovenia as a 20 year old democracy has the basic parameters of socio-economic development; citizens' basic needs, such as health and education, are met, and the level of corruption in the public sector is comparable with the other Central Europe Countries, for example. The socio-political environment in which civil society operates is also quite favourable. Human rights and fundamental freedoms are guaranteed by the Constitution, and the regulatory framework for CSOs is clear and not too demanding. There is a big discrepancy, however, between the answers of CSOs and external experts regarding the state's influence on the civil society.

Compared to the other two sub-dimensions, social-cultural context is scored rather low. According to the WVS 2005, Slovenian people are distrustful and quite intolerant, but on the other hand they have a relatively high level of public-spiritedness.

Mostly due to difficulty in grasping the concept, the External Environment dimension proved to be the most problematic of all five when discussed in focus groups and at the National Workshop. The majority of participants emphasised the culture of

silence and the 'herd instinct'<sup>19</sup> as two features that prevent the improvement of civil society's situation. In general, however, the evidence uncovered during the CSI project in Slovenia does suggest that the external environment is moderately conducive to the functioning and development of civil society. The main challenges for civil society are discouraging government policies and the poor network of connections in the civil society sector itself.

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<sup>19</sup> Herd behaviour describes how individuals in a group can act together without planned direction. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche was the first to critique what he referred to as "herd morality" and the "herd instinct" in human society. Modern psychological and economic research has identified herd behaviour in humans to explain the phenomena of large numbers of people acting in the same way at the same time. In "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903), early sociologist George Simmel referred to the "impulse to sociability in man", and sought to describe "the forms of association by which a mere sum of separate individuals are made into a 'society'".

## IV. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN SLOVENIA

A primary objective of the CSI project was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of Slovenian civil society. To accomplish this, meetings of regional focus groups and the national workshop were organised to discuss the state of civil society in Slovenia. After presenting the outline and findings from the various surveys (OS, EPS, PS), the ensuing Civil Society Diamond, and case studies, participants identified the strengths and weaknesses of civil society as they appeared in each dimension, and proposed measures to improve the situation. These are detailed in the Policy Action Brief, which is a separate output of this project. In this chapter, the strengths and weaknesses identified by participants at the national workshop are listed.

The main **strengths** regarding **civic engagement** included:

- a relatively active civic life in Slovenia, whence emanates numerous associations active locally;
- social capital and inclusion are increasing as a result of civil society's activities.

The main **weaknesses** regarding **civic engagement** included:

- a low standard of living prevents people from engaging more in civil society's activities;
- young people are not educated for democracy;
- a general citizen tendency to conform to the status quo;
- fear of potential consequences of critical engagement, based on previous negative experience;
- a negative association of CSOs' not-for-profit character with volunteerism, with working in the sector is highly devalued;
- CSOs are not familiar with the concept of civil dialogue;
- organising voluntary work costs money and time;
- some CSO leaders connect with local authorities in ways that lead to allegations of cronyism;
- some CSOs carry the stigma of their beneficiaries (e.g. marginalised groups such as the Roma and people suffering from addictions).

The main **strengths** regarding the **level of organisation** included:

- civil society is generally well organised and motivated;
- civil society structures in the regions are well organised (regional CSO hubs are well accepted);
- procedures for registration are simple and inexpensive;
- people are employed on the basis of values and CSOs tend to have good working atmospheres;
- CSOs know their areas of work very well;
- CSOs practice participatory and deliberative democracy;
- civil society responds quickly to violations of human rights and in situations of natural disasters.

The main **weaknesses** regarding the **level of organisation** included:

- there are no uniform legislative criteria for the granting of public benefit status to CSOs;
- current financing schemes do not facilitate further development;
- donations to CSOs are rare in Slovenia;
- CSOs are forced to adapt projects to donor requirements and funding opportunities;

- CSOs have little autonomy because finance providers - often local communities - direct their work;
- grants allocated through calls for funding are provided to cover the work of CSOs, but not to maintain or upgrade their infrastructure;
- various sectors engage in unfair competition when applying for funding (often entities from other sectors are free to apply to such public calls for proposals, which puts CSOs at a disadvantage);
- increasing amounts of 'red tape' (disproportionate relationship between the funds allocated through a public contract and the amount of bureaucracy for application and implementation of a project);
- unstable financing causes expert staff turnover and prevents long-term employee stability;
- nepotism;
- too few international connections (youth organisations being a notable exception).
- a lack of integration among CSOs.

The main **strengths** regarding the **practice of values** included:

- promoting positive values is intrinsic to and engrained in the civil society sector;
- social welfare is a matter of daily engagement of civil society;
- civil society finds it naturally easy to exercise its values;
- employees are motivated to uphold and remain aware of CSO values;
- a quality assurance system, where it is present in CSOs, is a prudent measure.

The main **weaknesses** regarding the **practice of values** included:

- financial survival often demands that values be sacrificed;
- members of associations rarely participate in democratic governance;
- the structures of some CSOs are too rigid;
- a lack of employees results in the dominance of a narrow circle of individuals;
- lower standard of civil society employee rights (often with their agreement);
- lack of interest in advocating for alternative energy sources;
- lack of self-criticism;
- a lack of social responsibility (where the main reason for establishing a CSO is easy access to grants and other funds).

The main **strengths** regarding the **perception of impact** included:

- CSOs are familiar with social needs and are in close contact with the local environment;
- CSOs wish to participate in civil dialogue and have the necessary expertise to advance policies.

The main **weaknesses** regarding the **perception of impact** included:

- because CSOs are fighting for survival, they cannot engage on a wider scale;
- the government is unresponsive to initiatives and proposals from civil society – although civil society is actively engaged in putting forward proposals and initiatives, there is no real effect since the government is not required by law to adopt them;
- the dependence on limited sources of financing weakens CSOs' involvement for fear of consequences if the financing were reduced or stopped altogether;
- lack of trust in the government;
- apprehensiveness toward EU directives;
- inability to present proposals effectively or engage in successful marketing and lobbying;
- conflicting needs (CSOs recognise the needs of individuals, but the government does not follow);

- too few public functions are the core domain of CSOs;
- CSOs fall victim to indiscriminate accumulation of funds and being at the mercy of funding opportunities.

With regard to the **external environment**, participants at regional focus groups and the national workshop found it difficult to identify potential strengths and weaknesses, which could be attributed to the fact that they live in this environment and that they therefore found it difficult to compare it with the others. Furthermore, as the data regarding socio-economic and socio-political context showed, human rights and political freedoms are protected in Slovenia. The culture of silence as a consequence of the Slovenian mentality was singled out ('herd instinct'). Additionally, participants stressed that EU mechanisms can render the situation in institutions, among civil servants and in civil society, even less transparent. Further, it was felt that CSOs' image cannot compete with that of companies, and the status of CSOs is not as highly regarded.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the above mentioned strengths and weaknesses of civil society, a number of recommendations were identified at the National Workshop that would serve to improve the state of civil society in Slovenia. These are also captured in greater detail in the CSI Policy Action Brief for Slovenia.

The following recommendations were made regarding **civic engagement** (recommendations 1–5 were identified as priorities):

1. To expand the concept of democracy in practice (not only parliamentary, but also participatory and deliberative democracy).
2. To overcome the political deficit (political parties represent a comparatively small share among CSOs) - CSOs need better organisation here.
3. To empower CSOs – increasing their competitiveness by attracting experts and promoting links with academia.
4. To improve CSOs' image in the media.
5. To design a plan for the long-term development of civil society.
6. To increase education for civic responsibility and rights.
7. To strengthen links between CSOs.
8. To strengthen CSOs' support structures, such as agencies or an NGO fund.
9. To facilitate the organisation and development of volunteering (determining the formal status of a volunteer).
10. To ensure that CSOs continuously respond to their environment and take part in policy and decision making processes.
11. To encourage critical thinking and expression at the level of individuals.

The following recommendations were made regarding the **level of organisation** (recommendations 1–7 were identified as priorities):

1. To establish uniform criteria for the work of CSOs in the public interest.
2. To establish an NGO fund that will ensure co-financing in cases when additional funds need to be raised for the implementation of projects.
3. To increase donations by amending the Foundations Act and tax legislation.
4. To replace the short-term financing of CSOs with long-term programme-based financing.
5. To increase the number of socially responsible partnerships between CSOs and companies.
6. To amend the Institutes Act and separate institutes from public institutes.
7. To introduce measures for fostering employment in CSOs.
8. To strengthen transparency and accountability within civil society.

The following recommendations were made regarding the **practice of values** (recommendations 1–2 were identified as priorities):

1. To include values in CSOs' strategic plans (strategic planning training).
2. To continue the implementation of the quality assurance standard in CSOs.
3. To improve ethics in civil society (highlighting examples of good practice).
4. To raise awareness among CSOs about the importance of promoting values through their own examples.
5. To respond promptly to current issues.

The following recommendations were made regarding the **perception of impact** (recommendations 1–5 were identified as priorities):

1. To win political will for civil society and train civil servants for civil dialogue.
2. To increase the influence of civil society in pre-election periods (to attract better candidates).
3. To improve communication methods with a view to attaining objectives (lobbying).
4. To vigorously push for civil dialogue (NGO strike, civil disobedience).
5. To demand that the government establish appropriate mechanisms for civil dialogue in concrete cases.
6. To improve the promotion of, and acquire public approval for, the civil society sector (promoting the advantages of civil society and supporting the case with examples of good practice from abroad).
7. To resort to legal remedies under EU law in cases of specific violations.
8. To educate citizens for civil dialogue (in school and at home).
9. To ensure stable sources of financing that enable the independence of CSOs.
10. To strengthen the network of CSOs.
11. To broaden expertise and improve know-how.
12. To boost the confidence of individuals and CSOs in their belief that they can make a change.
13. To increase employment in CSOs.
14. To encourage activism.
15. To increase the number of well-conceived long-term campaigns.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

This Civil Society Index research project has analysed the state of civil society in Slovenia. Based on the findings presented in this report, it is possible to say that in Slovenia the basic environment for civil society is well developed while organisations are still struggling to build their public image and achieve recognition by the government and financial stability.

Regarding the Civic Engagement dimension the research has shown that people quite readily engage as members of CSOs and volunteers. While the contribution of volunteering to social welfare through fast and efficient responses to social needs is readily recognised, voluntary work still lacks the social affirmation that would result from systemic government support. Harnessing the energy of volunteers entails good organisation, protection of volunteers, and expert guidance. The basic framework work for this is now regulated in the Law on volunteers that was passed in February 2011.

When it comes to popular political engagement, there is no doubt that the most influential force in society is political parties, despite the fact that a comparatively low share of the population is actively engaged in their work (caused in part by low trust).

Within the Level of Organisation dimension, there have been no significant positive shifts in terms of financing and employment in the civil society sector. While the number of CSOs increased in the last decade (growing 2.3-fold between 1996 and 2008), their total income expressed in terms of GDP increased only from 1.92% to 1.99%. At the same time, the number of employees in the sector relative to the total number of employees in the country remained practically unchanged (0.7%). Given the lack of substantial government funding, the modest funds CSOs acquire from other sources (mainly donations) coupled with the constant struggle for grants awarded at public tenders, and the need to meet all the eligibility criteria greatly reduce their autonomy, as well as their status as a popular employer.

As far as the dimension Practice of Values is concerned, CSOs generally adhere to the regulations regarding democratic decision-making governance, labour regulations, codes of conduct and transparency and environmental standards as required by law. However, they do not explicitly emphasise or promote these values and standards of their own accord. Practice has seen violations of these rules, and often of labour regulations, sometimes even with employees' consent. The reason for this is the general shortage of labour and finance in the sector. Financial survival often demands that CSOs sacrifice their values.

The lowest score in the dimension Perception of Impact is the most telling sign of the state of civil society in Slovenia. There is clear discrepancy between the activity of civil society and its impact on society and on the government. The government fails to (or is not willing to) recognise civil society as a relevant actor and partner. There are many reasons for this, from traditionally administrative roles being applied to civil society to merely formal inclusion, which is used to meet the criteria for the legitimisation of policies and justified in the light of civil society's past lack of useful contributions. The government's distorted motivation, the apathetic population and questionable practices on the part of civil society often result in civil society's neutralisation, although there are a few positive exceptions. The apathy of civil society, rooted in low confidence that its representatives can really make a change, was reflected in the relatively low interest in participating in regional focus groups and the national workshop. This is also the reason the same participants found it so

challenging to comment on the External Environment dimension, although they agreed that the culture of silence and 'herd instinct' distinctly marked Slovenia's civil society.

As far as Perception of Impact, the lowest scoring dimension, is concerned, procedures are underway to improve the government's role in civil dialogue. In November 2009, the National Assembly passed a Resolution on Legislative Regulation that lays down guidelines for improved regulations and minimum standards of public participation in drafting legislation. Although by 31 March 2010, the Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs (CNVOS) had identified 104 violations of the resolution, the situation is expected to improve once adequate online support – currently under construction – is established by the authorities to facilitate participation. The government rules of procedure have also been amended to aid public participation. At the European level, good practices of public participation in the legislative process are contained in the Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process, which was adopted at a conference of INGOs on 1 October 2009 and officially published by the Council of Europe on 21 October 2009. The Code is a reference document for the participation of civil society in decision-making processes. It contains a list of European principles and guidelines for the participation of CSOs and strengthening of public participation in public matters that will be implemented in Council of Europe members at local and national levels.

In conclusion, the evidence uncovered suggests that the civil society sector has not yet reached the point at which it would begin to mature. Increasing the financial strength of the sector and its ensuing professionalisation are the main issues to be addressed here, but given the data collected in this research, these have not been addressed.

The persistently limited scope of the civil society sector and its marginal role are largely the results of the limited space in which it operates. The restrictions stem from the fact that the vast public sector caters to the majority of needs for public goods and services. The role of the civil society sector is thus restricted to supplementing what the public sector has to offer, particularly in instances where the latter fails to provide adequate services in terms of quality or quantity. With regard to providing these services, the relationship model between CSOs and the government remains the same – the government is clearly the dominant partner.

The research also shows that other major obstacles in the way of civil society's development include the fragmented and poorly interconnected nature of the civil society sector, the lack of political mechanisms and channels for the direct involvement of CSO representatives, and the articulation of interests of the civil society sector.

Participants at focus group meetings and the National Workshop see these results as largely expected, and concurred that they accurately present the state of civil society in Slovenia. They believe that the main contribution of the project lies in the fact that their warnings about the poor state of civil society – along with their efforts to improve it – are, on the whole, supported by international research. Participants expressed the hope that by strengthening the endeavours of the civil society sector, the CIVICUS project may now begin to help to improve the state of civil society.

In order to improve the state of the civil society sector, the government should not only increase public financing of the sector through introducing new measures, but also amend the relevant legislation to encourage funding from other non-public

sources, mainly private donations from individuals and companies. This would increase civil society's autonomy and independence. In order to facilitate the implementation of such changes, both the government and non-government sides require clear-cut strategies detailing the development of the civil society sector on which they reach consensus. The absolute prerequisite for this, however, is the strengthening of civil dialogue in Slovenia.

The latter was strongly emphasised already in the previous 2004-2006 CSI study with the recommendation that special attention should be paid to strengthening civil society's impact on public policy. In general, comparing the two reports, it can be concluded that the state of civil society has not changed significantly in the period between 2004-2006 and 2008-2010. Civil society still lacks operational funding and still struggles with financial and human resources, and its impact remains rather low. On the other hand, the legal environment is slowly improving, the government is introducing some supportive measures for the development of volunteering (and therefore CSOs), and tolerance and trust seem not to have decreased despite unfavourable global trends, including the onset of the economic crisis.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: CSI Data Indicator Matrix

<i>Sub-dimension</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>1) Dimension: Civic Engagement</b>			<b>46.5</b>
1.1		Extent of socially-based engagement	33.9
	1.1.1	Social membership 1	33.0
	1.1.2	Social volunteering 1	20.1
	1.1.3	Community engagement 1	48.7
1.2		Depth of socially-based engagement	38.5
	1.2.1	Social membership 2	21.3
	1.2.2	Social volunteering 2	28.7
	1.2.3	Community engagement 2	65.4
1.3		Diversity of socially-based engagement	81.0
	1.3.1	Diversity of socially-based engagement	81.0
1.4		Extent of political engagement	20.7
	1.4.1	Political membership 1	21.1
	1.4.2	Political volunteering 1	12.2
	1.4.3	Individual activism 1	28.9
1.5		Depth of political engagement	26.6
	1.5.1	Political membership 2	26.5
	1.5.2	Political volunteering 2	29.3
	1.5.3	Individual activism 2	24.0
1.6		Diversity of political engagement	78.0
	1.6.1	Diversity of political engagement	78.0
<b>2) Dimension: Level of Organisation</b>			<b>60.2</b>
2.1		Internal governance	96.8
	2.1.1	Management	96.8
2.2		Infrastructure	69.2
	2.2.1	Support organisations	69.2
2.3		Sectoral communication	80.2
	2.3.1	Peer-to-peer communication 1	83.0
	2.3.2	Peer-to-peer communication 2	77.4
2.4		Human resources	12.5
	2.4.1	Sustainability of HR	12.5
2.5		Financial and technological resources	85.5
	2.5.1	Financial sustainability	79.6
	2.5.2	Technological resources	91.4
2.6		International linkages	16.9
	2.6.1	International linkages	16.9
<b>3) Dimension: Practice of Values</b>			<b>42.5</b>
3.1		Democratic decision-making governance	61.3
	3.1.1	Decision-making	61.3
3.2		Labour regulations	26.5
	3.2.1	Equal opportunities	39.1
	3.2.2	Members of labour unions	15.9
	3.2.3	Labour rights trainings	16.9
	3.2.4	Publicly available policy for labour standards	34.1
3.3		Code of conduct and transparency	49.8

	3.3.1	Publicly available code of conduct	38.2
	3.3.2	Transparency	61.3
3.4		Environmental standards	27.1
	3.4.1	Environmental standards	27.1
3.5		Perception of values in civil society as a whole	47.9
	3.5.1	Perceived non-violence	28.6
	3.5.2	Perceived internal democracy	48.3
	3.5.3	Perceived levels of corruption	24.1
	3.5.4	Perceived intolerance	47.1
	3.5.5	Perceived weight of intolerant groups	70.3
	3.5.6	Perceived promotion on non-violence and peace	68.9
<b>4) Dimension: Perception of Impact</b>			<b>31.8</b>
4.1		Responsiveness (internal perception)	23.1
	4.1.1	Impact on social concern 1	20.5
	4.1.2	Impact on social concern 2	25.6
4.2		Social impact (internal perception)	60.5
	4.2.1	General social impact	56.1
	4.2.2	Social impact of own organisation	64.8
4.3		Policy impact (internal perception)	35.5
	4.3.1	General policy impact	24.2
	4.3.2	Policy activity of own organisation	63.3
	4.3.3	Policy impact of own organisation	19.1
4.4		Responsiveness (external perception)	18.4
	4.4.1	Impact on social concern 1	10.0
	4.4.2	Impact on social concern 2	26.7
4.5		Social impact (external perception)	50.0
	4.5.1	Social impact selected concerns	76.7
	4.5.2	Social impact general	23.3
4.6		Policy impact (external perception)	28.4
	4.6.1	Policy impact specific fields 1-3	42.9
	4.6.2	Policy impact general	13.8
4.7		Impact of civil society on attitudes	6.8
	4.7.1	Difference in trust between civil society members and non-members	3.3
	4.7.2	Difference in tolerance levels between civil society members and non-members	4.0
	4.7.3	Difference in public spiritedness between civil society members and non-members	0.0
	4.7.4	Trust in civil society	20.0
<b>5) Dimension: External Environment</b>			<b>64.9</b>
5.1		Socio-economic context	79.3
	5.1.1	Basic Capabilities Index	99.2
	5.1.2	Corruption	67.0
	5.1.3	Inequality	71.6
5.2		Socio-political context	77.5
	5.2.1	Political rights and freedoms	95.0
	5.2.2	Rule of law and personal freedoms	85.4
	5.2.3	Associational and organisational rights	100.0
	5.2.4	Experience of legal framework	35.6
	5.2.5	State effectiveness	71.6
5.3		Socio-cultural context	37.9
	5.3.1	Trust	18.1

	5.3.2	Tolerance	77.8
	5.3.3	Public spiritedness	17.9

## APPENDIX B: List of Participants

### NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION GROUP (NIC)

#### National Coordinator:

Ana Matoz Ravnik, since August 2009, Senka Vrbica. Both, Legal and Information Centre for NGOs (LIC), Ljubljana

#### Civil society experts:

Ana Matoz Ravnik, Senka Vrbica, Ana Noč, with the support of Matej Verbajs and Tina Divjak, Legal and Information Centre for NGOs (LIC), Ljubljana; Asst. Prof. Dr Tatjana Rakar and Mateja Nagode, Social Protection Institute of the RS; Prof. Dr Zinka Kolarič and Asst. Prof. Dr Tomaž Deželan, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, and Asst. Prof. Dr Andreja Črnak Meglič.

#### Research Team:

Ana Matoz Ravnik, Senka Vrbica, Ana Noč, Legal and Information Centre for NGOs (LIC), Ljubljana; Asst. Prof. Dr Tatjana Rakar and Mateja Nagode, Social Protection Institute of the RS; Prof. Dr Zinka Kolarič and Asst. Prof. Dr Tomaž Deželan, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, and Asst. Prof. Dr Andreja Črnak Meglič.

#### Advisory Committee (AC):

- Trade union representative: Peter Virant, Pergam Trade Union
- Women's organisation representative: Mojca Dobnikar, Vita Activa – Association for the Promotion of Equality and Plurality
- Development organisation representative: Marjan Huč, SLOGA, the Slovenian NGDO Platform for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid
- Representative of a CSO involved in education, teaching and research: Neža Kogovšek, The Peace Institute
- Representative of a non-profit media company: Matej Delakorda, Studio 12
- Representative of an organisation advocating the rights of socially and economically marginalised groups: Luna Jurančič-Šribar, Kralji ulice, Homeless Assistance and Self-Help Society
- Representative of a social protection and healthcare organisation: Tanja Velkov Levstik, OZARA SLOVENIJA, Life Quality National Association
- Representative of a community foundation: Boris Kante, BIT Planota Community Foundation
- Representative of a local community group/association: Marinka Dolinar Šafranič, Gardening Society
- Representative of a networking and support CSO: Tina Michieli, CNVOS – Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs
- Representative of an environmental organisation: Maja Bahor, Ecology Institute
- Representative of a cultural, arts, recreation and social organisation: Alenka Pirman, SCCA – Ljubljana, Centre for Contemporary Arts
- Government representative: Polonca Šega, Ministry of Public Administration

#### Participants at Regional Focus Groups

No.	Name	Organisation
	<b>Meeting in Martjanci</b>	
1.	Matejka Horvat	Pomurje Local Development Foundation
2.	Štefan Žohar	Pomurje Local Energy Agency

3.	Jasmin Kukec	Martjanci Smart House
4.	Janja Balažič	Žitek Society
5.	Barbara Ropoša	Pomurje Local Development Foundation
6.	Mihaela Kofjač	Pomurje Local Development Foundation
7.	Tatjana Vukovič	Foto klub Cultural Society, Murska Sobota
8.	Bojan Vogrinčič	Pomurje Local Development Foundation
9.	Mateja Kohek	Pomurje Local Energy Agency
10.	Mateja Orban	Martjanci Smart House
11.	Milena Šadl	Pomurje Local Energy Agency
12.	Tatjana Sukič	Gračka pomlad, youth cultural and sports society
13.	Jožica Toplak	Pomurje Tourism Association
14.	Larica Lovrenčec	Sinergija Development Agency
15.	Nataša Cucek	Sinergija Development Agency
	<b>Meeting in Brežice</b>	
16.	Sabina Žibert	Žlapovec Sports Society
17.	Aleš Urek	Posavje Local Development Foundation
18.	Vida Ban	Krško Youth Association
19.	Maruša Mavsar	Neviodunim Institute
20.	Andreja Pavlin	Posavje Local Development Foundation
21.	Mojca Metelko	K.N.O.F Society
22.	Tea Zakšek	K.N.O.F Society
	<b>Meeting in Litija - Slivna</b>	
23.	Bališ Vida	Medvode Tourism Association
24.	Verbass Magda	Litija Intermunicipal Society of People with Disabilities
25.	Cirar Tina	Litija Intermunicipal Society of People with Disabilities
26.	Mojca Borko	Zapotok Society – Healthy Living Section
27.	Usenik Ana	Zapotok Society – Healthy Living Section
28.	Mlakar Alenka	Zapotok Society – Healthy Living Section
29.	Kosta Mladenovič	ŠOK – Institute for fostering cultural, sport and other engagement among the youth of Zasavje
30.	Vesna Dernovšek	Geoss Society, Geometric Centre of Slovenia
31.	Sašo Nožič Serini	ŠOK – Institute for fostering cultural, sport and other engagement among the youth of Zasavje
32.	Vida Knific	Risi Institute
33.	Ibrahim Nouhoum	Risi Institute
34.	Carmen Hladnik Prosenc	Risi Institute
35.	Mirko Prosenc	Risi Institute
36.	Elvis Beganovič	ŠOK – Institute for fostering cultural, sport and other engagement among the youth of Zasavje
37.	Dario Nožič Serini	ŠOK – Institute for fostering cultural, sport and other engagement among the youth of Zasavje
38.	Adam Mulalič	ŠOK – Institute for fostering cultural, sport and other engagement among the youth of Zasavje

### Participants in the National Workshop

No.	Name	Organisation
1.	Alenka Blazinšek	Youth Guild
2.	Andreja Pavlin	Posavje Local Development Foundation
3.	Igor Ranc	ŠKIS Association of Student Clubs of Slovenia
4.	Jože Gornik	Centre for Information Service, Co-operation

		and Development of NGOs (CNVOS)
5.	Julija Škarabot Plesničar	NGO Network for Healthy Living
6.	Karmen Potokar	PRIMSS Koper – Education, Training and Counselling Centre of Primorska
7.	Katja Kralj	Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs (CNVOS)
8.	Metka Naglič	Amnesty International Slovenia
9.	Miroslav Nedeljčević	PRIMSS Koper – Education, Training and Counselling Centre of Primorska
10.	Mitja Gregorič	Velenje Youth Centre
11.	Nina Bakovnik	National Youth Council of Slovenia
12.	Sadhvi Savitri Puri	Association of Slovenian Yoga Societies
13.	Polonca Šega	Ministry of Public Administration
14.	Mag. Renata Zatler	Ministry of Public Administration
15.	Sara Draškovič	National Youth Council of Slovenia
16.	Simon Delakorda	Institute for Electronic Participation
17.	Marina Lukač	Institute of Modern Education
18.	Tereza Novak	Slovene Philanthropy
19.	Tina Divjak	Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs (CNVOS)
20.	Tina Michieli	Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs (CNVOS)
21.	Vida Vozlič	VIR Institute, Celje
22.	Andreja Črnak Meglič	National Assembly Deputy, Social Protection Institute of the RS
23.	Ana Matoz Ravnik	Legal and Information Centre for NGOs (LIC)
24.	Mirko Vaupotič	Association of Associations of Slovenia
25.	Magda Šmon	
26.	Vida Bališ	Medvode Tourism Association
27.	Dobrila Perez Tomaž	Ministry of Culture
28.	Goran Forbici	Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs (CNVOS)
29.	Urbanc Jože	CINI Institute

### Key informants in case studies

#### Volunteering: Does Volunteering Contribute to Social Welfare in Slovenia?

- Janez Match, Olympic Committee of Slovenia
- Tereza Novak, Slovene Philanthropy
- Helena Zevnik, Caritas Slovenia
- Tanja Hočevnar, Federation of Disabled Workers of Slovenia
- Marjan Pungartnik, Union of Cultural Societies of Slovenia
- Matjaž Klarič, Firefighters Association of Slovenia
- Majda Horvat, Social Gerontology and Gerontogogics Association of Slovenia
- Marjeta Istenič, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs
- Irma Mežnarič, Ministry of Public Administration

#### The Carbon Footprint of Slovenian CSOs

- Lev Kreft, The Peace Institute
- Tereza Novak, Slovene Philanthropy
- Lidija Živčič, Focus Association for Sustainable Development
- Vida Ogorelec Wagner, Umanotera – The Slovenian Foundation for Sustainable Development

**The Influence of Civil Society on Youth Policies**

- Uroš Skrinar, Youth Network MaMa
- Kamal Izidor Shaker, National Youth Council of Slovenia
- Nina Arnuš, European Voluntary Service
- Nina Stankovič, Zares Aktivni Club
- Lenart Hudoklin, Zares Aktivni Club
- Borut Cink, Young Liberal Democracy
- Other anonymous informants: Office of Youth, MVA – Youth in Action, Young Forum of Social Democrats, Young Slovenia, ŠKIS Association of Student Clubs of Slovenia, ŠOU – The Student Organisation of the University of Ljubljana

**The Relationship between CSOs and the Government**

- Irma Mežnarič, Ministry of Public Administration
- Nada Kirn Špolar, SEZAM Association of Parents and Children
- Dr Pavel Gantar, President of the National Assembly
- Goran Forbici, Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs (CNVOS)

## APPENDIX C: List of types of participating CSOs

- Faith-based organisations
- Trade unions
- Women's organisations
- Student or youth organisations
- Sport and recreational organisations
- Fire brigades associations
- Senior citizens organisations
- Organisations for the protection of animal and plants (e.g. hunting associations, fisherman associations, mushroom pickers associations, beekeeping associations)
- Developmental CSOs (e.g. NGOs working on literacy, health, social services)
- Advocacy CSOs (e.g. civic action, social justice, human rights, consumers' groups)
- CSOs active in research, information dissemination, education and training (e.g. think tanks, resource centres, non-profit schools)
- Non-profit media groups
- Associations of socio-economically marginalised groups (e.g. poor people, homeless, landless, immigrants, refugees)
- Social service and health associations (e.g. charities raising funds for health research and services, mental health associations, associations of people with physical disabilities)
- Other fund-raising bodies and organisations
- Professional and business organisations (e.g. chambers of commerce, professional associations)
- Community-level groups or associations (e.g. burial societies, self-help groups, parents' associations, village associations, neighbourhood committees)
- Economic interest CSOs (e.g. cooperatives, credit unions, mutual saving associations)
- Ethnic and traditional associations or organisations
- Environmental CSOs
- Culture and arts CSOs
- CSO networks, federations, support organisations
- Political groups, movements and parties
- Others

## APPENDIX D: Case Study Summaries

### CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

#### ***Volunteering: Does Volunteering Contribute to Social Welfare in Slovenia?*** **Senka Š Vrbica, Ana Matoz Ravnik**

The case study includes an analysis of volunteering in Slovenia in terms of its scope, contribution and evaluation, as well as related issues. The first part presents a systemic framework for volunteering – with the relevant legislation on volunteering either as a necessary condition for different types of organisation (e.g. humanitarian) or as a special privilege (e.g. voluntary fire-fighters) – to highlight the lack of basic systemic support for volunteering. It also presents the informal framework that has developed out of necessity, comprised of the network of voluntary organisations, a volunteer congress, and a code of voluntary work. The first part concludes with an outline of the years of effort to provide systemic support for volunteering (CSOs put forward a draft law on volunteering as early as 2004). The second part provides an analysis of the voluntary contribution, highlighting the issue of its evaluation, based on information supplied by representatives of eight major voluntary organisations and the Ministries of Public Administration and Labour, Family and Social Affairs as two major supporters of volunteering.

It is difficult to assess the scope of volunteering in Slovenia, since no comprehensive records are available. Collecting information is another problem, as response rates from CSOs are comparatively low. In 2008, the Slovene Philanthropy, which is central to the network of voluntary organisations in Slovenia, carried out a survey among network members (some 570), but received responses from only 54 CSOs (and 39 public institutes). The data thus collected show that in 2008, 182,128 volunteers were enlisted in the public sector, and they worked for 14,651,588 hours (in public institutes, 897 volunteers worked for 43,208). Judging from the information provided by interviewees, the monthly average of work hours per volunteer varies from 2 to 16, while the average calculated on the basis of the Slovene Philanthropy's survey was 6.7 hours per month. Although the type of work done by volunteers (organisational/operational vs. expert) varies from one organisation to another (administration generally takes up 20% to 50% of all work), associations rely on volunteers to perform the better part of the work.

The actual contribution of volunteers to welfare is vast, and organisations that employ volunteers respond faster and more effectively than the government. However, the value of volunteer contribution is impossible to estimate in financial terms due to the lack of records and evaluation methods (although this is done internally by some volunteer organisations). Organisations have generally seen a positive trend with regard to acquiring volunteers, mainly as a result of systematic recruitment efforts and promotion. Volunteering is also on the rise because it provides work experience, which can be reflected in a CV.

While the growing trend in volunteering is supported by the government, this is mainly rhetorical. Public calls for financing volunteering projects are only administered by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Public Administration. Voluntary organisations also face problems because they are unable to present voluntary work as a material contribution to their organisation.

The case study thus showed that while Slovenian society readily recognises the contribution of volunteering to social welfare, it neither values nor appreciates it.

Harnessing the energy of volunteers and developing volunteering entails good organisation, the protection of volunteers, and expert guidance; none of which yet enjoys the support of the government.

## **LEVEL OF ORGANISATION**

### ***The Scope, Structure and Role/Function of Slovenian CSOs***

**Zinka Kolarič, Tatjana Rakar**

The case study includes an analysis of the scope, structure, and role of Slovenian CSOs. The first part presents the scope of the civil society sector and the regional distribution of various types of CSOs by using a formal classification and secondary information. The second part presents the structure of the civil society sector on the basis of the International Classification of Nonprofit Organisations (ICNPO) and the authors' own classification. The conclusion provides the key findings and identifies the main development trends of Slovenian CSOs in the last 15 years, outlining any new social roles the CSOs might have since acquired.

Given the information about the number, types, and regional distribution of CSOs, as well as the findings of the analysis, we can draw the following conclusions: between 1996 and 2008, the number of CSOs increased 2.3-fold; the number of CSOs is growing faster in prominent urban regional centres than in rural areas; although the share of associations among CSOs is declining, associations still comprise two thirds of all CSOs; and new types of CSOs – those that work in the public interest, i.e. those that provide services to external users – are emerging much faster in developed regions, particularly in urban areas. The analysis also confirms that the typical inherited structural pattern of the Slovenian civil society sector – in which sports, recreation, art, cultural, and professional organisations dominate over social protection organisations (particularly those working in education, research and healthcare) – is changing very slowly. On the other hand, the information illustrates the past development of the civil society sector in Slovenia by showing that CSOs (mainly associations) were being established in all regions and registered to operate in a variety of fields. This reflects the character of Slovenia's welfare system.

The analysis thus lends itself to the conclusion that the growth of the civil society sector has not yet reached the point where it would begin to mature. Furthermore, while the number of CSOs increased 2.3-fold, their total income increased from 1.92% of GDP in 1996 to 1.99% of GDP in 2008. Likewise, in over ten years, the professionalisation rate of Slovenian CSOs (i.e. the share of employees in the civil society sector in relation to all employees) has remained almost unchanged.

## **PRACTICE OF VALUES**

### ***The Carbon Footprint of Slovenian CSOs***

**Senka Š Vrbica, Ana Matoz Ravnik**

This case study sought to find out how familiar Slovenian CSOs are with the notion of the carbon footprint and measures for its reduction, and whether they implement the measures. The study aimed to warn about the current lack of familiarity with the carbon footprint and find ways to raise awareness about and reduce the carbon footprint among Slovenian CSOs. The first part shows how informed people in Slovenia are about the carbon footprint.

Carbon footprint (the measure of how much our activities affect the environment and climate change with regard to the amount of greenhouse gases we generate daily

through our dependence on fossil fuels) is a relatively new concept in Slovenia. Given the information provided by the Environmental Agency of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenia's carbon footprint in 2005 was below the EU average; most of it was accounted for by CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Raising awareness about the carbon footprint and how it can be reduced is thus the main factor in sustainable development in Slovenia. In 2008 and 2009, the greatest contribution to raising awareness came from Umanotera, The Slovenian Foundation for Sustainable Development, which systematically approached the issue, produced several expert publications, defined the concept of the carbon footprint for Slovenia, adapted other terminology and drafted a strategic document for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by setting nation-wide climate objectives. Umanotera also produced an online carbon footprint calculator.

The second part of the study presents the level of awareness of the carbon footprint in three major Slovenian CSOs (environmental protection, human rights and a generic organisation). While familiar with the concept, these CSOs have not yet calculated their carbon footprint, though they do implement environment protection measures. As far as business trips are concerned – which account for most greenhouse gas emissions – the chief criteria are still price and journey time, making flying the preferred method of transport. However, there is increasing use of online communication tools, such as teleconferences. All three organisations implement environment protection measures, such as using energy-saving lights, saving water and paper, controlled heating (if possible), and encouraging employees to use environmentally friendly means of transport when commuting to work and on short business trips (such as bicycles and public transport). None of the three CSOs has a set of formalised rules on these measures that effectively reduce the carbon footprint; so it rests on individuals to promote them. Moreover, none of the organisations has a chapter dedicated to internal environmental standards in their annual reports. The CSOs polled also exert little or no influence on the wider public to reduce their carbon footprint (the exception being the environmental organisation), but they do try to set an example when organising or appearing at presentations and other events.

## PERCEPTION OF IMPACT

### *The Influence of Civil Society on Youth Policies*

**Tomaž Deželan**

While Slovenian youth organisations are quite active in youth politics, their involvement is subject to a number of factors. First and foremost, the scope and type of their activities depend on the type of youth organisation, i.e. whether they are 'those that implement' or 'those that represent'. There are, of course, fundamental differences between representing the interests of the youth civil society sector and young people in general, and implementing programmes for youth. The latter is strongly connected with financing, since sufficient funding is a prerequisite for the functioning of a youth organisation as such. Ample government funding entails a sense of responsibility on the part of the youth organisation. Stable funding guarantees a stable programme, which is vital for establishing youth organisations as partners in dialogue on an equal footing with the government. At present, however, this is not the case, as even umbrella youth organisations are currently experiencing a lack of continuous and competent expert support.

The most influential current actors in the field of youth policies are those with a high budget (student organisations) and those with privileged access to public authorities (i.e. the Youth Council as an umbrella organisation or youth wings of political parties). Although the impact of youth organisations is very difficult to measure, we can safely

say that it is quite negligible as the government skilfully disenfranchises youth organisations by changing existing and establishing new arenas for consultations with youth organisations, and by deftly adapting and controlling the content of various legal instruments (narrow laws and broad national programmes). Youth organisations, particularly student organisations, exert their most obvious influence by raising public awareness and threatening mobilisation. We cannot ignore the influence of the National Youth Council of Slovenia and youth wings of political parties on decision-making processes. This, however, is a cause of apprehension that such involvement could pose a threat to establishing new patterns of inclusion and exclusion.

We can also indirectly identify the attributes of youth organisations that have a major impact on their power to represent the interests of young people. Firstly, there is 'critical mass', which – coupled with potential mobilisation – can ensure that its arguments are heard and seriously considered. Then there is 'access to power', which has enabled mainly youth wings of political parties to push youth issues into the political limelight. Thirdly, there is financial capability, which is linked to the professionalisation of the sector and strong, yet traditional and rigid, expertise. We can thus confirm the often voiced concern about the privileged position of the youth wings of political parties, which is manifested through direct communication channels with the highest political authorities and which frequently inhibits their full potential. On the other hand, the influence of international connections is surprisingly small. When advancing an agenda, youth organisations do not imply their international engagement, and the authorities readily dismiss international connections as only marginally relevant.

## EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

### *The Relationship between CSOs and the Government*

**Tatjana Rakar, Andreja Črak-Meglič**

The case study analyses the relationship between civil society and the government both at national and local levels, and on the basis of the established criteria in the field. Civil dialogue is analysed through data obtained in quantitative research, while the findings are further elaborated upon in interviews with the main actors as part of a timeline of major events that mark the development of civil dialogue in Slovenia. The analysis has shown that in Slovenia, the relationship between CSOs and the government is one of 'separate autonomy', which is defined by:

#### 1. Modest government financing and the moderate autonomy of CSOs.

Based on the analysis of the two key dimensions of government financing and CSO autonomy, we find that CSOs are generally relatively independent of the government in terms of financing and control. This is partly due to the specific civil society sector in Slovenia, where the majority of CSOs have an expressive role, while only a limited number provide services; this is a result of the established welfare system. The majority of CSOs are registered as associations, particularly those working in the fields of sport and recreation. Such organisations are generally less dependent on the government in terms of financing and subject to less control than service providers.

It should be stressed that the amount of control does not depend on the amount of financing. While modest government financing implies considerable autonomy for CSOs, the latter is relatively moderate. This may be the case because the generally

poor financial position and lack of alternative funding (e.g. donations) mean that CSOs are still forced to compete constantly for government funds.

## 2. Modest communication and contacts between CSOs and government.

Based on the analysis of communication and contacts between CSOs and the government, we find that there is little civil dialogue. While there were efforts to improve civil dialogue in the period covered by the case study, they mainly remained only on paper. In general, there is a considerable gap between CSOs and the government, which shows that the latter does not count on CSOs and does not treat them as serious partners or service providers.

The conclusion outlines the major findings, makes recommendations for improving the relationship between the government and civil society in Slovenia, and looks at the role of CSOs in the Slovenian welfare system.

## **APPENDIX E: Summaries of Focus Groups' Conclusions**

In all three focus groups there was a consensus among contributors on the opinion that the concept of civil society is difficult to define. The predominant associations of participants were bound mainly to four main concepts or characteristics: apolitical, volunteering, focusing on the individual and a sense of belonging within the meaning of 'we are civil society'.

The following strengths were most frequently pointed out in regard to the CSI and its five dimensions: good knowledge of the local environment and circumstances, and a certain level of human sensibility for the common good. Participants also included values, willingness to cooperate, and good organisation, which is becoming increasingly more important. In organisational terms, establishing and developing the network structures between CSOs and cooperation with representatives at all levels of authority (local and national government) is especially important. An emphasis on constant communication is also important.

As a key weakness in the context of these dimensions, most participants emphasised the problem of excessive bureaucratisation of the national administrative apparatus and the complexity of its operations. This is followed by nepotism (especially at the local level), clientelism, the lack of synergistic effect and problems with the transfer of funds for CSO projects. As a most important weaknesses participants pointed out the unstable financial position of CSOs, which includes dependence on public funders, because of short term financing (one year mostly). This is also the main reason for unstable staff policies and a lack of influence on decision-making processes, whereby the opinions and suggestions of CSOs are not taken into account.

There were a lot of suggestions for improving the situation. Participants underlined the importance of CSOs being more visible through increased cooperation among CSOs as well as through further institutionalisation and networks that would in turn strengthen the dialogue between the state and civil society. Education, information and self-initiative are also elements that were considered as important in most of the CSI dimensions. It would be necessary to set, by government in cooperation with CSOs, clear criteria for the status of CSOs that are working in the public interest as well as for the project evaluation and general efficiency of CSO activities. In the participants' opinion, all these elements would contribute to a greater efficiency and transparency in the functioning of CSOs as well as the state.

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