

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY WEEK 2019

POWER OF TOGETHERNESS

April 8th - 12th 2019, Belgrade, Serbia

REPORT

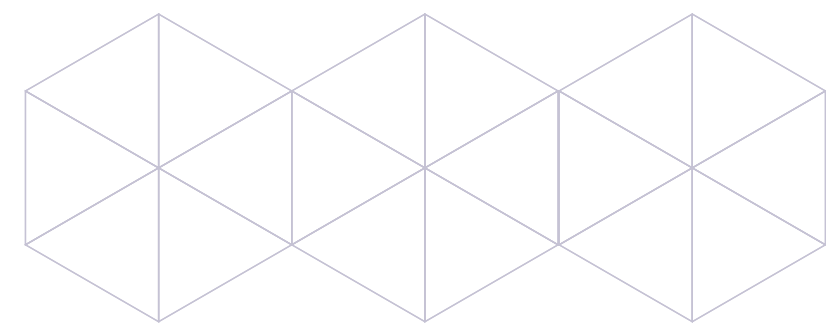


International Civil Society Week (ICSW) is a key global gathering for civil society and other stakeholders to engage constructively in finding common solutions to global challenges. In 2019, [CIVICUS](#) partnered with [Civic Initiatives](#) and [Balkan Civil Society Development Network](#) to host the event in Belgrade, Serbia.



CONTENTS

FOREWORD	2
ICSW 2019 IN NUMBERS	4
POWER OF TOGETHERNESS IN BELGRADE	
ICSW Local events	5
Youth Assembly in Novi Sad	6
Global Civil Society Summit 2019 (pre-event)	7
Opening Ceremony	8
Plenary Sessions: Bridges, Stairs, Streets	10
Concurrent events & Interactive sessions	12
Off-site actions	15
DELEGATES AND EVENT ORGANIZERS	
Who co-creates the agenda? (Event Organizers)	16
Who attends ICSW? (Delegate section)	16
Country representation	17
CONNECTING ICSW 2019 TO GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY	
Online actions	19
Media Fellowship programme	19
Media Content partnerships	20
NEXT STEPS	21





2

In a world where global transformations are reshaping how civil society functions. International Civil Society Week (ICSW) 2019 brought together over 700 international delegates from 93 countries in Belgrade, Serbia from 8-12 April to engage in dialogue and actions around working together to enable and defend spaces for civic action. This included, among other deliberations, how we ensure resilient and sustainable civil society at all levels and unlock the power of collective action to stand up for democratic freedoms.

The 5-day event was the culmination of months of preparation, a global gathering for civil society to find shared solutions to today's most pressing global challenges, not just as participants, but as co-planners and event partners. Sessions were held in partnership with 42 event organisers. Events on the ground were accompanied by a stream of media and online [commentary](#) aimed at profiling relevant issues beyond the event.

A few months later, the key question is what we have managed to achieve at this civil society-led effort to connect, debate and create shared solutions? Based on the feedback provided by delegates on the quality, scope and impact of the convening, the top takeaways from the International Civil Society Week seem to be:

“LEARNING ABOUT CIVIC SPACE CHALLENGES WITHIN THE BALKAN REGION AND DEMONSTRATING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT TO LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY IN THIS REGARD WAS ALSO REPORTED AS AN IMPORTANT OUTCOME.”

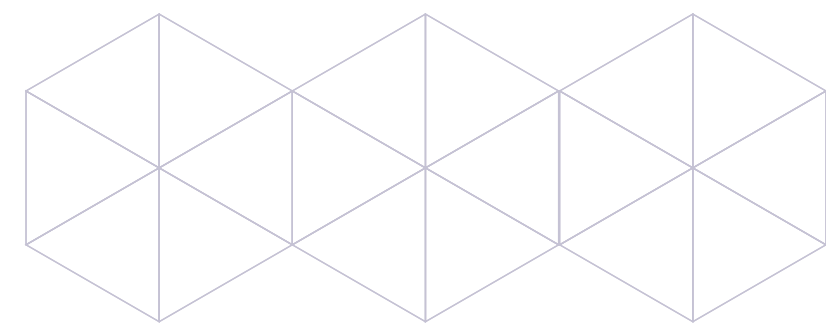
- **Harnessing Diversity:** We are pleased to note that the overall feedback from delegates has been positive, with a majority of the post-event responses pointing towards a successful event. Half of all delegates identified themselves as women, 1 of 3 were from the global south, and 1 of 5 were young people below age 30. On the downside, red flags on access to venues and public safety were raised, making it important for us to actively review all aspects of diversity and inclusion in future events.
- **Connecting Ideas & Actions:** The [program framework](#) of “Bridges, Stairs & Streets” was appreciated with comments on ICSW bringing together a “good mix of fresh knowledge, positive and hopeful content, working with real cases, action-oriented”. Opportunities to interact with public and cultural modes of activism made the conference a distinctly memorable experience. These include the [#StandTogether](#) Call to Action, the [Freedom Runner](#) campaign, the [Youth Diversity Statement](#) and the use of music as an expression of protest through local ([Girl Rock Camp](#)) and global ([Pussy Riot](#)) performances. A useful recommendation we have received is to develop after-event action packs providing 5 clear pathways that enable delegates to follow up on ICSW outcomes when they're back in their countries.
- **Extending Solidarity:** Learning about civic space challenges within the Balkan region and demonstrating international support to local civil society in this regard was also reported as an important outcome. Most participants mentioned the added value of connecting with like-minded peers on joint ideas and initiatives to carry forward. Our favourite quote however comes from a local participant who said: “We brought something to the region that has never been seen before! It's like the opening of a new era.” An interesting suggestion in this regard is for us to think about more ‘regional’ Civil Society Weeks which could generate stronger local solidarity and ownership, while improving cost and carbon related efficiencies.

“OUR FAVOURITE QUOTE HOWEVER COMES FROM A LOCAL PARTICIPANT WHO SAID: ‘WE BROUGHT SOMETHING TO THE REGION THAT HAS NEVER BEEN SEEN BEFORE! IT'S LIKE THE OPENING OF A NEW ERA.’”

In this report, you will find a more detailed feedback and review of what happened at ICSW 2019. At any time, feel free to reach us with feedback and ideas that could help us assess what we have achieved this year, and what should inform our thinking on future iterations of ICSW! In solidarity,

Lysa John
Secretary-General
CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

3





49%
categorised
themselves as
WOMEN



18% were
YOUTH
(30 years of age
and younger)



28%
of participants
from the
**GLOBAL
SOUTH**

57%

of all delegates
exchanged more than
**'11 HANDSHAKES,
HUGS AND
BUSINESSCARDS'**
with other delegates.

Together we spent:

3712 HOURS

on networking

4236 HOURS

on learning

8428 HOURS

on actively participating in togetherness

**NET PROMOTER
SCORE** = 33**

*Most participants would
recommend attending ICSW.

"THE IDEA WAS TO
BRING DELEGATES
TOGETHER, NOT JUST AS
PARTICIPANTS, BUT AS
CO-CREATORS AND
CO-OWNERS."

"81% OF DELEGATES
RATED THE EVENT
7 AND HIGHER OUT
OF 10. THEY LIKED
THE "SPIRIT" OF THE
EVENT, FOUND IT
"INSPIRING", SAW IT
AS A "GREAT GLOBAL
NETWORKING
OPPORTUNITY", AND
SOME EVEN FELT
THE "IMPORTANCE
OF BEING PART OF
SOMETHING BIGGER
THAN YOU".

700+

Delegates attended

42

Event partners

316

Supported delegates

37

Guest speakers

93

Countries
represented

35

Delegates involved in
stage content

74

Volunteers engaged

25

Local events on "Power
of Togetherness"

* Based on response rate of 24.73% of ICSW
participants ** Net Promoter Scores measure
the likelihood of someone recommending a
product or service to a friend or colleague on
a scale between -100 and +100.



POWER OF TOGETHERNESS IN BELGRADE

For the first time in almost a quarter century of international convening, CIVICUS hosted its flagship event in the Balkans – a region of 11 countries and 55 million people. The host city, Belgrade, is one of Europe's oldest, with a 7,000-year history representing a complex Serbian history and regional experience that provides an opportune place to explore the need for togetherness and the power of collective action.

"Throughout its history, Serbia has shifted back and forth between authoritarian regimes and democracy. During the 1990s, authoritarian regimes produced conflicts, severe human rights violations and genocide. Today, as we approach European Union membership, internal and international independent monitoring mechanisms show shrinking media freedoms, a lack of separation of power and rule of law, and deterioration of freedom of elections. This region, and particularly Serbia, demonstrates that changing laws, strategies or governments offers no guarantees – democracy does not exist if it is not built constantly. By hosting this year's event in Belgrade, we convened and sent messages rooted in local circumstances and, in the same time, fully reflecting global challenges."

– Maja Stojanovic, Executive Director, Civic Initiatives

ICSW LOCAL EVENTS

The ICSW local event series format is an innovative, decentralised approach to broaden engagement with partners in under-represented or marginalised regions, who due to financial and logistical constraints, were not be able to join ICSW 2019 in Belgrade, Serbia. ICSW local partners organised 25 ICSW pre-events in different national, regional and international locations between January and April 2019, in the lead up to ICSW 2019. Representatives from ICSW local events then travelled to Belgrade to share their diverse perspectives with the global delegation in Belgrade.

LIST OF PARTNERS WHO HOSTED ICSW LOCAL EVENTS:

RACI, Argentina	Civic Resistance, Albania
CDP Globus, Serbia	KRIK, Macedonia
CEMEFI, Mexico	Dijalog, Serbia
Interaktiv, Serbia	RAINBOW, Serbia
PartnersGlobal & PartnersLebanon	ZSDF, Zimbabwe
PROTECTA, Serbia	CRNVO, Montenegro
BUM, Serbia	Socioprenuer, Indonesia
Partners Albania, Albania	FORCA, Serbia
League of Professional Women, Ukraine	Narodni parlament, Serbia
LICEULICE, Serbia	CPCD, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Nova Stara Planina, Serbia	CETRA, Serbia

ICSW Local event in Montenegro: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wbx8QifzYPE>



YOUTH ASSEMBLY IN NOVI SAD

On 6 and 7 April 2019, 85 young CIVICUS members from 40 countries and 57 different civil society organisations and movements gathered in Novi Sad, Serbia, for the [CIVICUS Youth Assembly](#). The Youth Assembly, which celebrated its 9th edition this year, is [CIVICUS Youth's](#) flagship convening that boosts the skills and expands the networks of very dynamic and engaged young members of the alliance, taking place every 18 months.

The focus of this year's Youth Assembly was to explore the conditions and mechanisms that strengthen the power of young people to effectively contribute towards a more peaceful, just and sustainable world. Participants shared ideas on [youth civil society resourcing](#), discussed how to [improve access to resources](#) as young activists and drafted [key messages to send out to traditional non-youth-led civil society organisations](#) who are eager to open the space for young people to contribute and participate in a meaningful way.

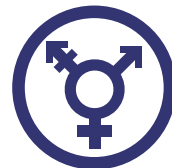


85 DELEGATES



40 countries

NET PROMOTER
SCORE = 74



57 women
26 men
2 other



"I CAN SEE THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF BRINGING YOUTHS TOGETHER AT THIS SUMMIT AS DECISION-MAKERS. THIS IS NO LONGER LIP-SERVICE. THIS IS ABOUT GIVING YOUNGSTERS THE POWER TO ENABLE CHANGE."

Vandita Morarka

Youth leadership, participation, inclusivity, peer learning and creativity were the principles of the Youth Assembly, and they constituted the basis of the debates and learnings. This successful Youth Assembly would not have been possible without the support of [KOMs – the Serbian National Youth Council](#), the facilitation methodologies inspired by [RECREAR International](#), the leadership of the [CIVICUS Youth Action Team](#) and CIVICUS Youth members and the financial support of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation.

To learn more about the follow-up plans of CIVICUS youth join as a member now: www.civicus.org/join or write to youth@civicus.org

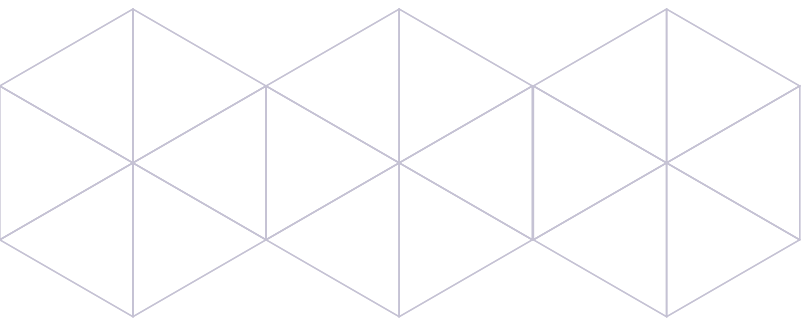
GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY SUMMIT 2019 (PRE-EVENT)

As a pre-event to the 2019 International Civil Society Week, the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness co-organised a Global Civil Society Summit, which gathered 120 leaders of civil society organisations, activists, and campaigners from all over the world. Foremost in the agenda was the adoption of the [Belgrade Call to Action](#), a Civil Society Call to Stand Together to Defend People's Voices for a Just and Sustainable World.



Excerpt from [Belgrade Call to Action](#), 8 April 2019 We call on all Member States, meeting in September 2019:

1. **To take concrete steps to protect and enable space for civil society**, including enabling laws and regulations, democratic accountability based on human rights norms and human rights standards, and the full protection of civil society under attack – such as social leaders, human rights defenders and gender equality activists.
2. **To embed inclusion and meaningful accountability to people** in development practices.
3. **To implement and respect democratic country ownership** of national development plans and implement transparency and accountability for inclusive SDG delivery.
4. **To lead by example with concerted action** to challenge major human rights violations, including deteriorating conditions facing peoples' organizations, trade unions, women's rights organizations, indigenous peoples, and community-based environmentalists, among many others.
5. **To recognise the importance of the inter-connected themes in achieving Agenda 2030** – civil society voice, eradicating poverty, women's empowerment, fighting inequality, decent work, climate action and environmental justice.





OPENING CEREMONY

The Opening Ceremony of ICSW 2019 took place in the largest central hall of Belgrade, (Kombank Dvorana), where 1200 participants joined a meaningful celebration of civil society, human rights and togetherness. The main stage hosted the welcome words from Lysa John, Secretary General of CIVICUS, and Maja Stojanovic, Executive Director of Civic Initiatives; followed by the personal stories shared by Yetnebersh Nigussie, lawyer and disability rights activist from Ethiopia, and Marija Lukic, #MeToo movement activist from Serbia. A political satire show “24mins with Kesic” specially designed for ICSW 2019, and a [Girls Rock Camp](#) performance engaged the audience in an entertaining and empowering exploration of the meaning of togetherness.



The opening ceremony hosted a myriad of influential public figures and civil society activists including the Head of the Delegation to the EU, Sem Fabrizi, the US Ambassador to Serbia, Kyle Scott, the Council of Europe (CoE) representative in Serbia Tobias Flessenkemper, the head of the OSCE mission in Serbia, Andrea Orizio, the Swiss ambassador to Serbia, Philippe Guex, the Dutch Ambassador to Serbia, Henk van den Dool, member of the Russian music band Pussy Riot, Masha Alyokhina, Dragan Popović from the Centre for Practical Policies, Nenad Milosavljević from Njuznet and others.

“THE OPENING CEREMONY HOSTED A MYRIAD OF INFLUENTIAL PUBLIC FIGURES AND CIVIL SOCIETY ACTIVISTS.”



“WE NEED TO DEMOCRATISE DEMOCRACY, LIBERALISE LIBERTY, AND FREE FREEDOM.”

Yetnebersh Nigussie, keynote at ICSW 2019



“WHAT IS FASHION FOR PARIS, THAT’S HUMAN RIGHTS FOR THE BALKANS... EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT IT BUT ONLY THE RICH ONES CAN AFFORD IT.”

Zoran Kesic, political satire show at ICSW 2019



“I AM NOT SURE ANYMORE IF IT’S BRAVERY OR MADNESS THAT I SPOKE OUT BECAUSE NO INSTITUTION RESPONDED AS IT SHOULD HAVE.”

Marija Lukic, keynote at ICSW 2019





PLENARY SESSIONS: BRIDGES, STAIRS, STREETS

On the theme of the Power of Togetherness, International Civil Society Week 2019 designed a five day experience packed with hard-hitting, thought-provoking and lively presentations, discussions and workshops by civil society leaders and activists.

The event was designed in three core event tracks:



- 1 Bridges, focused on **connecting participants and building alliances**, solidarity and collective action across diverse issues and locations
- 2 Stairs, focused on **sharing frameworks, tools, resources and skills** that enable and strengthen people's participation around the world
- 3 Streets, focused on **building constituencies** and deepening the skill sets needed for successful civic action.

Each event track consisted of a morning plenary session including a panel discussion, an inspiring spark talk and few energizers, followed by 6 parallel concurrent events (workshops), 5-7 interactive sessions and evening activities.

1 BRIDGES, MORNING PLENARY

Moderated by CIVICUS Board Chair, Anabel Cruz, the Bridges morning plenary explored the state of civic space in respective countries and regions and what we can do to build bridges/sustainable collaborations.



On the Panel:

Farayi Murambwa, Activist
Anja Bosilkova-Antovska, BCSDN
Jesper Elias Lauridsen, Helvetas, Switzerland
Mario Mazic, European Grassroots Antiracist Movement, Croatia
Anna Gielewska, Fundacja Reporterow, Poland
Rilli Lappalainen, Bridge 47, Finland

Spark talk: A big idea shared through a five-minute presentation on how to protect and promote civic space in Southern Africa – Delivered by Mac Pherson Mdalla, IM Swedish Development Partner, Malawi

2 STAIRS, MORNING PLENARY

Moderated by CIVICUS Board Member, Patricia Lerner, the Stairs morning plenary looked at the practical ways and mechanisms we can use to build solidarity and sustainable collaborations.



On the Panel:

Darko Brkan, UG Zasto ne, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Gabriel dos Santos, Children's education activist, Brazil
Harpinder Collacott, Development Initiatives, United Kingdom
Renata Avila, Smart Citizen Foundation, Guatemala
Michel Forst, UN Special Rapporteur on the Status of Human Rights Defenders

Spark talk: A big idea shared through a five-minute presentation on "Indigenous approach to SDGs" – Delivered by Anaru Fraser, Hui E! Community Aotearoa, New Zealand

3 STREETS, MORNING PLENARY

Moderated by Maja Stojanovic, Executive Director of Civic Initiatives Streets morning plenary looked at the strengths of civic movements around the world and dive deep into the skills that civil society organisations need to engage with citizens for advocacy, community building, and philanthropy.

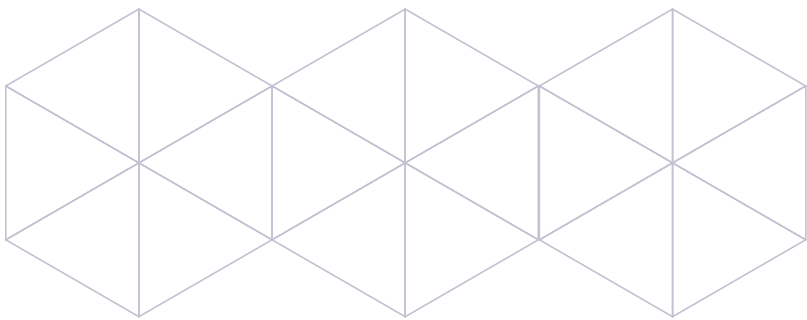


On the Panel:

Abraham M. Keita, Give Hope to Children Foundation, Liberia
Ana Babovic, Leading Change Network, Serbia
Besa Luci, Kosovo 2.0, Kosovo
Srdja Popovic, Center for Applied Nonviolent Action and Strategies, Serbia
Wiem Chamsi, Activist, Tunisia
Poyu (Fi), Activist, Taiwan

Milan Antonijevic, Open Society Foundation, Serbia

Spark talk: A big idea shared through a five-minute presentation on democratising global governance, delivered by [Caroline Vernailen](#), [Democracy International](#), [Germany](#)





CONCURRENT EVENTS & INTERACTIVE SESSIONS

Concurrent events were hosted every day, in 2-hour time slots focused on sharing experiences and knowledge by different organisations from across the globe. In total, 18 concurrent events took place during ICSW 2019, facilitated by a diverse group of civil society organisations and actors, and covering a range of topics, as outlined below.

BRIDGES

01 Protecting Civic Freedoms - Our Stories of Resilience, delivered by Balkan Civil Society Development Network FOND Romania (Black Sea NGO Forum) European Civic Forum Balkan Trust for Democracy, German Marshall Fund

02 Civil Society, Peacebuilding & Inclusion, delivered by Inclusive Peace & Transition Initiative (IPTI) and Peace Direct

03 Transforming CSO accountability: a stakeholder-driven approach for increased trust and impact, delivered by Accountable Now

04 Unpacking Civic Space: Challenges and opportunities, delivered by Civic Space Initiative

05 Global Citizenship Education: Reclaiming Power, delivered by Bridge 47

06 Shrinking media freedoms=shrinking democracy, delivered by Independent Association of Journalists in Serbia and Civic Initiatives



STAIRS

01 Organizational Resilience in Times of Closing Civic Space, Partners Global

02 Improving our Coalitions for Civic Participation, International Civil Society Centre

03 Civic Activism and the Armenian Velvet Revolution: the power of Youth, Women and Diaspora as agents for change, Armenian General Benevolent Union

04 Hope-Based Communications: Finding a New Narrative for Civil Society, VUKA! Coalition for Civic Action



05 Philanthropy for Active Citizenship, SIGN (South-East European Indigenous Grantmakers Network)

06 Digital Security and Rapid Response Funding Clinic for Civil Society Actors in Need, Lifeline Consortium

STREETS

01 Civil movements as correctors of society, Don't let Belgrade d(r)own

02 Collective Action to End Child Marriage, Girls not Brides

03 Local resource mobilization – a passing concept or an emerging shift in funding patterns?, CISU, West Africa Civil Society Institute, Kenya Community Development Foundation

04 Trust-based Support for CSOs, Kosovar Civil Society Foundation

05 Reaching out and Engaging Citizens, Alan Clayton and Associates, Civic Initiatives

06 Diversity and Inclusion at the center of organizational work? Let's get practical!, CIVICUS Diversity and Inclusion Group

ICSW 2019 hosted a variety of **interactive sessions** within the Bridges and Stairs track, including innovative formats like: ICSW Buzz, Fishbowl discussions, Peer networking etc.

ICSW Buzz: a 40-minute session where participants formed mini-groups of 2-3 and discussed different topics including:

- [La redevabilité des preneurs de décision au service de la démocratie et de l'Etat de droit au Bénin](#) hosted by PJUD - Promotion Jeunesse Unie pour le Développement, Benin
- [Theater for youth active citizenship](#), hosted by Yes Theater, Palestine
- [Strengthening Membership Platforms for CSO Effectiveness](#), hosted by Cooperation Committee for Cambodia
- [Transforming the United Nations in the 21st Century](#), UN2020, Together First and Asia Development Alliance





OFF-SITE ACTIONS

RIOT DAYS PERFORMANCE BY PUSSY RIOT

As part of the evening offsite sessions of ICSW 2019, Pussy Riot collective performed their world-renowned theatre performance based on the Alyokhina's book "Riot Days". The project is produced by Alexander Cheparukhin and directed by Yury Muravitsky – one of the leading Russian theatre directors, winner of "Golden Mask" annual Russian theatre award. The performance was a mix of music, documentary footage and scathing political commentary. Slogans like "anyone can be Pussy Riot" and "revolution requires a big screen" flashed in bold letters as the band played jazz-punk music.

"THE PERFORMANCE WAS A MIX OF MUSIC, DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE AND SCATHING POLITICAL COMMENTARY."



FREEDOM RUNNER

More than 200 civil society leaders and human rights activists were seen running through the streets of Belgrade as part of the closing action of ICSW 2019. The [Freedom Runner](#) action, kicked off a global campaign calling on people around the world to run in the name of human rights defenders who are currently jailed, being persecuted, or at risk for their work.



The Freedom Runner campaign was launched together with the Belgrade Marathon, a major annual event on the city's calendar, on Sunday, April 14. "We are dedicating the first run within this global movement to the Marija Lukic, a Serbian survivor of sexual violence, who is still fighting her struggle for her rights on behalf of all of us," said Maja Stojanovic, Executive Director of ICSW co-host [Civic Initiatives](#).

"WE ARE DEDICATING THE FIRST RUN WITHIN THIS GLOBAL MOVEMENT TO THE MARIJA LUKIC, A SERBIAN SURVIVOR OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE, WHO IS STILL FIGHTING HER STRUGGLE FOR HER RIGHTS ON BEHALF OF ALL OF US."

THREE FREEDOMS

"[The Three Freedoms Platform to Protect the Civic Space in the Republic of Serbia](#)" is a declaration of Serbian civil society organizations that has been signed by 20 well-established CSOs during ICSW2019. ICSW was a great opportunity to initiate a single front that would, as a watch dog mechanism, timely alert the shrinking civic space tendencies. Such a mechanism has proved necessary after the numerous obstructions that civil society has suffered in recent years through media and political pressures. The signatories will be working as common front against shrinking civic space.

"SUCH A MECHANISM HAS PROVED NECESSARY AFTER THE NUMEROUS OBSTRUCTIONS THAT CIVIL SOCIETY HAS SUFFERED IN RECENT YEARS THROUGH MEDIA AND POLITICAL PRESSURES."



DELEGATES AND EVENT ORGANIZERS

WHO CO-CREATES THE AGENDA? (EVENT ORGANIZERS)

ICSW 2019 agenda was designed in a highly inclusive co-creation process that involved:

- a survey that resulted with **122 RESPONSES** on what the agenda of ICSW 2019 should cover
- an open call for event organizers, with **203 EVENT APPLICATIONS**
- **51 PRE-SELECTED EVENT ORGANIZERS**, interviewed for different formats incl. ICSW Local, Youth Assembly, Buzz, Spark, Concurrent events, Interactive sessions
- **42 EVENT ORGANIZERS** engaged at ICSW 2019.

32%
of all event organizers
came from the Balkans or
broader CEE region.

WHO ATTENDS ICSW? (DELEGATE SECTION)



1 OF 5 were young
people below 30



1 OF 3 delegates were
from the Global South



102 organisations
engaged

TOP 5 TYPES OF DELEGATES REPRESENTED:



Non-
Governmental
Organisation
(NGO)/
Civil Society
Organisation
(CSO)



Civil Society
Network,
Alliance and
Platform/
Membership-
Based
Organisation



International Non-
Governmental
Organisation
(INGO)



Intergovernmental
Organisation



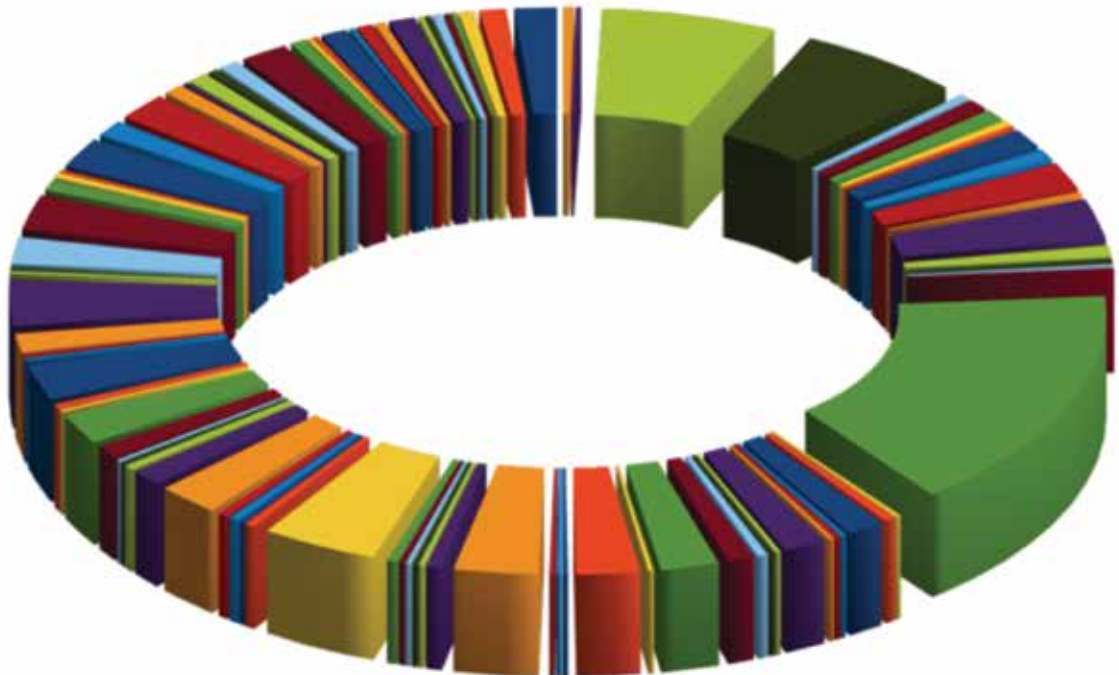
Philanthropic/
Funding
Organisation

COUNTRY REPRESENTATION

Albania	Argentina	Armenia
Australia	Austria	Azerbaijan
Bahrain	Barbados	Belgium
Benin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Botswana
Brazil	Bulgaria	Burundi
Cameroon	Canada	Chile
China	Colombia	Cook Islands
Croatia	Cyprus	Czech Republic
Denmark	Egypt	Ethiopia
Fiji	Finland	France
Gabon	Georgia	Germany
Ghana	Guatemala	Hungary
India	Indonesia	Iraq
Ireland	Italy	Japan
Jordan	Kazakhstan	Kenya
Kosovo	Kyrgyzstan	Lebanon
Liberia	Luxembourg	Macedonia, Republic of
Malawi	Malaysia	Mali
Mauritius	Mexico	Moldova
Montenegro	Morocco	Mozambique
Nepal	Netherlands	New Zealand
Nigeria	Norway	Pakistan
Palestine, State of	Paraguay	Philippines
Poland	Portugal	Qatar
Romania	Russian Federation	Senegal
Serbia	Sierra Leone	Singapore
Slovakia	Slovenia	South Africa
South Sudan	Spain	Sweden
Switzerland	Taiwan	Thailand
Turkey	Uganda	Ukraine
United Kingdom	United States	Zambia
Zimbabwe		

“CONDENSING FIVE
FULL DAYS INTO A MAIN
TAKEAWAY IS TOUGH,
BUT AFTER A FEW
WEEKS OF REFLECTION
ON ALL THOSE RICH
AND PASSIONATE
CONVERSATIONS, IT
WOULD BE THUS: TO
BUILD AN EQUITABLE,
PEACEFUL AND
SUSTAINABLE WORLD,
WE IN THE SOCIAL
CHANGE SECTOR
ARE GOING TO NEED
COURAGE — AND
NOT ONLY IN THE WAY
YOU’RE THINKING.”

Lauren L. Finch, Storytelling
Lead at MobLab





“LISTENING AND LEARNING FROM A MAGNITUDE OF OVER 1000 CSO’S MADE ME REALISE THAT IT’S ONLY POSSIBLE TO EXERCISE OUR CIVIC SPACE THROUGH BEING ORGANISED, COORDINATION AND TOGETHERNESS AS ONE UTMOST WAY CSO’S CAN ENJOY THEIR CIVIC SPACE.”

Peace Namayanja, Program Officer at Joy for Children Uganda

“ICSW 2019 WAS A TURNING POINT FOR ME, AS IT GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE EXPERIENCES AND IDEAS WITH BRILLIANT CIVIL SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE WORLD. THE EVENT BUILT MY SKILLS AND GAVE ME ACCESS TO TOOLS AND RESOURCES THAT WILL EFFECTIVELY STEER MY FUTURE WORK.”

Augustine Macarthy, Sierra Leone

“WITH THIS EVENT, WE BROUGHT SOMETHING NEW TO THE REGION, SOMETHING WE HAVE NEVER SEEN BEFORE! IT’S LIKE THE OPENING OF A ‘NEW ERA’.”

representative from CSO in Serbia

“WE NEED TO MOBILISE BASED ON OPTIMISM, AND OUR CAPACITY TO CHANGE, RATHER THAN FEEDING NEGATIVE EMOTIONS THAT GENERATE SHORT-TERM ACTION.”

Stephen McCloskey, Centre for Global Education

“THERE WAS A WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS TO LISTEN INTO THROUGHOUT THE WEEK, RANGING FROM STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY’S OWN ACCOUNTABILITY AND ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING, TO TALK OF HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY WHILST MANAGING GROWING DATA PRIVACY CHALLENGES, TO MORE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNITIES UNDER THREAT. AND, WHEN THE PARTICIPANTS OF ICSW WERE ALL DONE WITH THE TALKING, IT WAS OVER TO THE SERIOUS BUSINESS OF MUSIC AND ART TO INSPIRE US.”

Suzanne Keatinge, CEO of Dóchas Education

“OVERALL, I CAME AWAY WITH A RENEWED SENSE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF ASKING CRITICAL QUESTIONS, WHICH INSPIRE US TOWARDS GETTING BEYOND THE SUPERFICIAL ‘KNOWING’ OF WHAT’S WRONG IN THE WORLD, AND INTO DEEPER UNDERSTANDING AND MEANINGFUL ACTION FOR GLOBAL JUSTICE AND EQUALITY.”

Eilish Dillon, head of Maynooth University’s new Department of International Development



CONNECTING ICSW 2019 TO GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY

OUR AUDIENCE

**124 331
PEOPLE
REACHED**

between streaming date
and 30 April 2019

52,410
page views

There was more than **100** pieces of content related to ICSW published in print and online platforms globally and some **60** pieces of content published in print, online and broadcast platforms in Serbia and the Balkans



ONLINE ACTIONS

Social media helped to connect ICSW 2019 delegates to civil society around the world - April 5 - 30, we tracked 5872 tweets using the hashtag #ICSW2019, resulting in 31 832 810 impressions.

The [ICSW online page](#) acted as a hub linking delegates with global civil society. The focus here was on creating lively, engaging, content, and housing interactive features. This included:

- Live Blog
- Virtual Press Centre (see below media section)
- Member created content
- Profiles of key personalities
- Programme + logistical information

MEDIA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

Launched at ICSW 2016, the third iteration of the ICSW Media Fellowship Programme in 2019 resulted in significant media engagement, with five journalists from around the world benefiting from exposure and networking with global civil society leaders and issues, and producing 20 reports published in a variety of global, regional and national media outlets.

MEDIA FELLOWS

Alejandra Agudo, Journalist with El Pais newspaper’s global development section, Planeta Futuro. Alejandra primarily covers issues related to climate change and sustainable development. Based in Madrid.

Vishal Manve, freelance journalist serving also South Asia correspondent for global news agency, AFP. Contributes to Global Voices, The Diplomat and various other outlets. Based in Mumbai.





Mythili Sampathkumar, freelance journalist contributing to The UK Independent, NBC News, UN Dispatches and various US and global outlets. Based in New York.

Alecia McKenzie, freelance journalist filing for global news agency, IPS, fellowship participation as part of ICSW content partnership.

Hana Srebotnjak, emerging journalist working with democraciaAbierta/openDemocracy, fellowship participation as part of ICSW content partnership.

Mumbai-based freelance journalist Vishal Manve, who also attended and reported on the ICSW Youth Assembly, described his fellowship as “an amazing experience”, in particular the opportunity to engage activists from around the world. His interview with celebrated Russian activist feminist band, Pussy Riot, generated three articles with different publications. Emerging Slovenian journalist Hana Srebotnjak, currently working with Barcelona-based content partner, democraciaAbierta, said her fellowship experience was a hugely rewarding one, affording her the opportunity to share perspectives on the social and civic space dynamics of her home region.

MEDIA CONTENT PARTNERSHIPS

For a second ICSW convening, CIVICUS entered into content partnerships with global news agency, Inter Press Service(IPS) and global independent media platform, openDemocracy/ democraciaAbierta, for the production and distribution of content related to ICSW.

A total of 24 reports and op-eds written by IPS reporters, independent writers, including delegates to ICSW and CIVICUS staff were published on the IPS website and distributed to more than 5,000 subscribing media outlets in 138 countries. In total, articles on a wide range of topics relating to ICSW thematic issues were published in 1,900 publications through IPS’ subscription channel.

An ICSW special edition of IPS’ [newsletter](#), containing all published content, was disseminated to all 60,000 subscribers, plus selected stories were distributed to other newsletters totaling more than 100,000 email subscribers, and through our social media channels.

The content partnership with openDemocracy and its Spanish language division, [democraciaAbierta](#) (dA) saw the creation of a special [website](#) dedicated to ICSW-related content. More than 10 pieces written in Spanish and English by a variety of authors including ICSW delegates, CIVICUS staff and oD/dA staff, have been posted to the site, with several more still in progress. The content on dA’s dedicated ICSW online platform received more than 15,000 visits and reach both dA’s and openDemocracy’s more than 180,000 social media followers and more than 60,000 newsletter subscribers. The openDemocracy/dA platform attracts some eight million visits annually.

“THE CONTENT ON DA’S DEDICATED ICSW ONLINE PLATFORM RECEIVED MORE THAN 15,000 VISITS AND REACH BOTH DA’S AND OPENDEMOCRACY’S MORE THAN 180,000 SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS AND MORE THAN 60,000 NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS.”

NEXT STEPS

ICSW 2019 represented an exquisite experience of co-creation, learning and togetherness. The journey continues and based on a survey conducted among ICSW delegates, organisers and partners, several valuable recommendations serve as important guidelines for our next edition of ICSW. In order to make ICSW model as useful, diverse and meaningful as possible, we are keen to connect and receive any additional feedback or ideas on your experiences with previous ICSWs or other conferences you have attended so far. Feel free to drop us a line at: feedback@civicus.org


If you want to support some of the initiatives launched at ICSW 2019:

- Support the [Belgrade Call for Action](#) signed by 150 leaders and representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs)
- Sign up [here](#) to become a [#FreedomRunner](#)

Not a CIVICUS member yet? Make sure you join the alliance by [signing-up here](#). It would be invaluable to have you add your voice and action to shape CIVICUS strategic direction and agenda by counting you as a voting member, particularly. Please do have a look at our “[Become a member](#)” page for more details on what CIVICUS membership is all about and check the “[Members-in-Action](#)” page to have a sense of what it means in practice. If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the membership team: membership@civicus.org

To learn more about the follow-up plans of CIVICUS youth join as a member now: www.civicus.org/join or write to youth@civicus.org

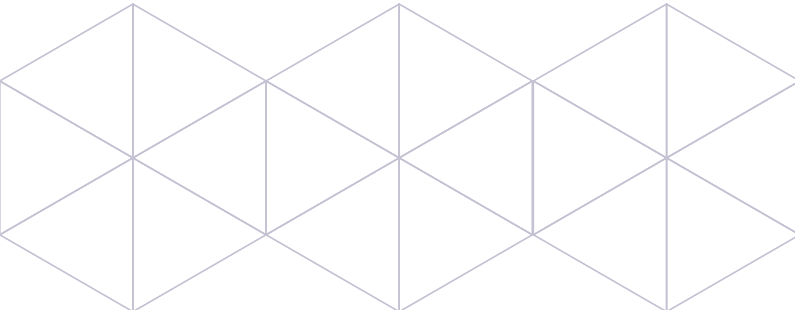
For more information on the agenda, media coverage and partners of ICSW 2019, please check [the official website](#).

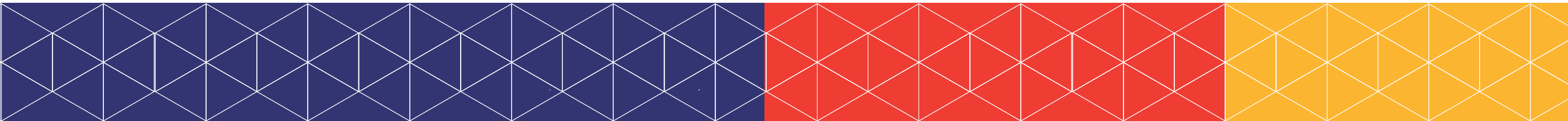


RECOMMENDATIONS

Essential / For action

- Becoming even more diverse and inclusive – while being specific about the ‘right’ people in the room
- Strengthening the ‘relationship building’ element during ICSW and in between ICSWs
- Providing better preparation for delegates ahead of ICSW
- Ensuring high quality of programme content
- Threading CIVICUS narrative through the event
- Better time keeping
- Providing appropriate spaces for workshop sessions
- Choosing ICSW locations with fewer visa (or transit-visa) restrictions
- Planning for re-engagement through the design of ICSW itself







ICSW 2019 HOST PARTNERS



CIVICUS is a global network of more than 6,500 civil society organisations and activists in 175 countries, dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society to build a more just, inclusive and sustainable world. We were established in 1993 and since 2002 have been proudly headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa, with additional hubs across the globe.



Civic Initiatives (CI) was founded in May 1996 by a group of prominent NGO activists that were involved in the anti-war movement and non-nationalist democratic opposition since 1990. Since then, Civic Initiatives respond to the need for creating a civic base that sustains democratic values by supporting citizens' activism and advocating for a better legal framework for civic participation.



Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN) is a network of 14 civil society organizations from 10 countries and territories in South East Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Romania, Montenegro, Slovenia, Serbia and Turkey).

ICSW 2019 EVENT PARTNERS



ICSW 2019 EVENT SUPPORTERS



WHAT ARE YOU TAKING BACK HOME WITH YOU?

“PRACTICING THE POWER OF TOGETHERNESS IN MY DAILY WORK – JUST LIKE IT WAS EMBEDDED IN EVERY SESSION AT ICSW. AND HOPE, A LOT OF HOPE!”

