

# Solidarity in Times of Crisis, But With Whom? The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Work of Civic Society Organizations and Other NGOs in Slovakia



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It has been a year since the COVID-19 pandemic hit the globe and completely transformed the way we think, behave, and work. It has had a great impact on our daily lives – and an even a greater one on the work that we did in the past. Various concepts and forms of remote work have been applied by both state and private sector – for example, a short-time working scheme (*Kurzarbeit*). The COVID-19 pandemic disclosed shortcomings and flaws in the states across Europe. It has also revealed vulnerable communities that were particularly affected by lockdowns and other state restriction put

in place to fight the spread of the coronavirus. With the sudden loss of financial stability, place of living, job, or even a business, the hardship of minority groups have only increased.

This article will focus on civic society organizations (CSOs), a sector that lies somewhere in the middle of the state and business. In the past, this sector created new ways of participation, engagement and impacted political culture and society with its various areas of specialization. The aim of this article is to study the position of CSOs in Slovakia, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has on their work, struggle to survive, and ability to endure without being able to meet in person. The following questions shall, therefore, be addressed:

1. What or who has the crucial impact on a life cycle of CSOs during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What is the strength of the civic organization to survive despite their negative perception of part of the society?
3. What are the limitations and opportunities for civic organization in the COVID-19 pandemic, and so-called “era of lockdown”?

### **COVID-19 AND CIVIC SOCIETY**

The global pandemic has greatly impacted not only on the performance of governments, but in a crucial sense also the role and competences of civic society actors and organizations. The impact was even greater because of their special role in the political system and society as a whole. Their strong ties within the society were visible even more than before the crisis, and their role was prominent and multi-tiered. The question here is, how the civic society has been changing during the pandemic, and how it will look afterwards. Various



THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC HAS GREATLY IMPACTED NOT ONLY ON THE PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENTS, BUT IN A CRUCIAL SENSE ALSO THE ROLE AND COMPETENCES OF CIVIC SOCIETY ACTORS AND ORGANIZATIONS

articles, commentaries, and analyses have been published recently on this issue. However, in Central Europe – and especially in Slovakia, – we still lack research that could help us re-categorize, or even redefine, the role of civil society during the COVID-19 pandemic and after it, including their potential structural changes in their performance and work.

Relying on trends in global civic society and analyses from other states<sup>1</sup>, we predict that also in Slovakia the civic society could expand on three levels in relation to the new coronavirus-related civic activism:

1. **vital coronavirus-related roles**, they change their functioning of daily activities and identities and fill the gaps where the state/government is unable to act;
2. **their role of watchdog has widened**, they create a new monitoring initiative to monitor the government performance and actions;
3. **they strengthen their roles in the policy** – design, and become the new promoters of political, social, and economic changes for the post-COVID society and state<sup>2</sup>.

All these new forms of civic activism have the potential to change not only the inner structure of the CSOs and the sector, but also, they could have an impact on their performance and their quick ability to adapt into the new normal of a post-COVID world. If these assumptions are correct, the question is whether the civic society in Slovakia has become a powerful player in the

<sup>1</sup> Youngs, R. (2020) *Global Civil Society in the Shadow of Coronavirus*, Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



IN GENERAL, ALL INTERVIEWED CSO REPRESENTATIVES STATED THAT THEY HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO PUT PLANNED ACTIVITIES ON HOLD OR SHIFT THE MAJORITY OF THEIR ACTIVITIES INTO THE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

political system after the crucial transformation in the recent decades<sup>3</sup>.

#### METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

This article relies on the interviews with CSOs in Slovakia, conducted for the purpose of this article. These interviews are a tool to explore the context in which CSOs and their organizations were working in during the COVID-19 crisis, and how they have addressed these crisis-related challenges.

<sup>3</sup> M. Vašečka, V. Žúborová, B. Strečanský, I. Borárosová, and O. Gallo (2019) *Občianska spoločnosť 2019 očami formalizovaných a neformalizovaných skupín* [in] *Analyza socioekonomického prínosu neziskového sektora a stavu a trendov rozvoja občianskej spoločnosti*, Bratislava: Úrad splnomocnenca vlády SR pre rozvoj občianskej spoločnosti, pp. 171–216.



FOR DECADES,  
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The article will analyze the answers of thirty CSOs in Slovakia, who were selected according to their memberships in platform of CSOs under the High government representative of civil society in Slovakia (*Úrad splnomocnenca vlády SR pre rozvoj občianskej spoločnosti*). The structured interviews were designed to identify major challenges and trends in the CSOs. Overall dramaturgy of the interview questions focuses on the CSOs performance and ability to adapt to the new rules and circumstances. The set of questions was designed in such a manner so as to focus on CSOs' ability to adapt on the new conditions influenced by the COVID-19-related restrictions. Also, the interviews explore the main barriers and limitations that impacted their regular activities, which might have uncovered their potential to improvise during the unclear present and future days.

In January 2021, I interviewed thirty (30) CSOs from various types of civil society (from social service, human rights activists, culture, education, sport and volunteerism to consultation services) in Slovakia. I have chosen qualitative research rather than quantitative research, because of its ability to recognize patterns among words in order to build up a meaningful picture. So, in this article you won't find generalizing assumption or general statement towards a large population, or the whole CSO in Slovakia. Because qualitative data are beyond the numbers, and should not be used to make quantifying claims<sup>4</sup>.

#### CSOs PERFORMANCE IN PANDEMIC CONTEXT

In so-called "normal times", the performance and activities of civic society organizations would be related to the accountability of governments and other private/public institutions. But the current COVID-19 crisis poses several challenges and barriers for civic society organizations and their performance in a shrinking space of personal networks and remote workspaces. In this article, I look at the performance of CSOs in Slovakia during the COVID-19 crisis and their ability to adapt to a different environment *within new ways of civic activism*<sup>5</sup>.

All CSOs in Slovakia claim that COVID-19 has had an impact on their daily performance and their activities [See: Figure 1]. However, how seriously the COVID-19 crisis

<sup>4</sup> Mason, J. (1996) *Qualitative Researching*, London: Sage Publications; Temple, B. (1998) "A Fair Trial? Judging Quality in Qualitative Research", [in]: *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, Vol. 1(3), pp. 205-215.

<sup>5</sup> M. Vašečka, V. Žúborová, B. Strečanský, I. Borárosová, and O. Gallo (2019) *Občianska spoločnosť 2019 očami formalizovaných a neformalizovaných skupín* [in] *Analýza socioekonomického prínosu neziskového sektora a stavu a trendov rozvoja občianskej spoločnosti*, Bratislava: Úrad splnomocnenca vlády SR pre rozvoj občianskej spoločnosti, pp. 171–216.



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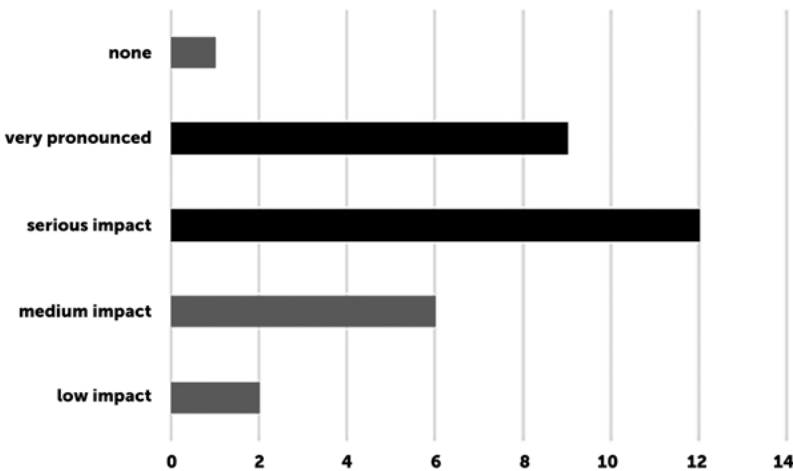
affected them vary depending on the main aim and purpose of the organization. The most affected were those that operated directly with clients or with individuals from society. The majority of CSOs declared that

COVID had a serious or very pronounced impact on their performance, whereas only one third of them declared low or even no impact on their activities and performance.

CSOs were also asked about challenges that their organization face throughout several months of lockdown and other restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than a majority of respondents are insecure about the future of their organization because of very chaotic and unpredictable moves of state authorities and the virus in general. This reflects the global trend observed by various other initiatives and scholars that government responses are disrupting civil society and CSOs globally.

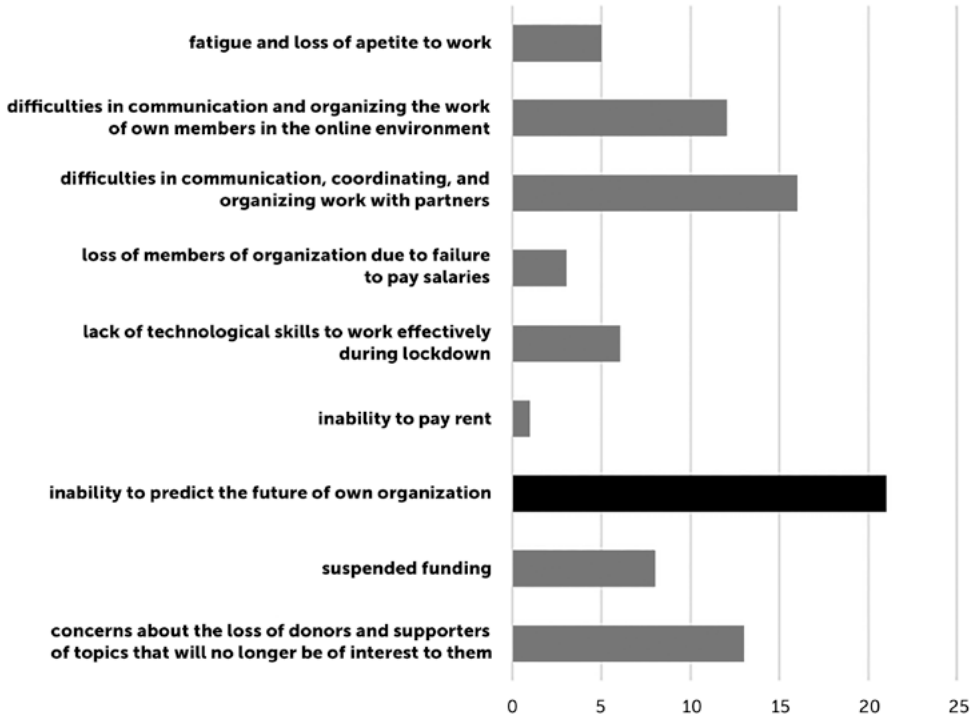
In general, all interviewed CSO representatives stated that they have been required to put planned activities on hold or shift the majority of their activities into the online environment. However, these shifts only resulted in new challenges and obstacles for them. Suddenly, they faced a new type

Figure 1: How did COVID-19 affect the management and operation of 30 CSOs in Slovakia?



Source: own elaboration

Figure 2: What are the main challenges of CSOs in Slovakia during the COVID-19 pandemic?



Source: own elaboration

of management, communication and coordination of work with their partners, members, and project/ volunteering activities.

The main challenges that were observed during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown in Slovakia [See: Figure 2] mirror the global trends in the civic society sector<sup>6</sup>. Nevertheless, some specifics should be deeply analyzed for the purpose of this article. Few of the interviewed CSO representatives declared that they feel “bad”, and lost their integral appetite in their work

and working habits. This should be seen not only as a common phenomenon, but also as a very natural reaction of all human beings to social distancing measures, working remotely, and long-term restriction being in place through unstable time like this<sup>7</sup>.

For decades, the CSO sector in Slovakia stood under attacks from various political forces because of their values, attitudes,

<sup>6</sup> Youngs, R. (2020) *Global Civil Society in the Shadow of Coronavirus*, Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Panchal, N., R. Kamal, C. Cox Follow, and R. Garfield (2021) *The Implications of COVID-19 for Mental Health and Substance Use*, KFF analysis. Available [online]: <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/view/footnotes/>



# CIVIC SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN SLOVAKIA, AS WELL AS IN OTHER COUNTRIES, PLAYED A CRITICAL ROLE SUPPORTING THE MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES THAT SUFFERED DURING THE RESTRICTIONS UNDER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

and fights for an open society<sup>8</sup>. This notion is helping us to create a general framework for the better understanding of the Central European region and its stances towards the CSOs. The COVID-19 pandemic found these civic actors unprepared, exhausted, and without willpower to strike back. Based

on “common knowledge”<sup>9</sup>, one may say that not only globally, but also regionally, civic society and CSOs are in the most vulnerable period after 1989.

## WORKING TO FILL IN THE GAPS: “BUSINESS AS USUAL”

Civic society organizations in Slovakia, as well as in other countries, played a critical role supporting the most vulnerable communities that suffered during the restrictions under the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, a Slovak CSO *permanent ability of CSOs to adapt*, which provides shelters and other services for homeless people, has been actively trying to protect this community during these difficult times. However, in terms of the monitoring and advocacy activities they left their watchdog position far behind the expectations of their own. During the interviews, they were asked if they were able to proceed with their monitor and advocacy activities and all of the CSO representatives agreed that it was a serious obstacle, which they could not overcome. Some of the CSO representatives also noticed a negative trend and critique from their own “sector” in a sense that various organizations are not doing their work properly, even when the law is bounding.

*“We do not record extraordinary activities of civil society organizations in monitoring of state and government activities, or other representatives of the state administration or self-government. On the contrary, many organizations, despite obvious violations of the law, bending the law or emergency abuse does not call for action or react or create pressure”* – stated a CSO representative working in social services.

<sup>8</sup> M. Vašečka, V. Žúborová, B. Strečanský, I. Borárosová, and O. Gallo (2019) *Občianska spoločnosť 2019 očami formalizovaných a neformalizovaných skupín* [in] *Analýza socioekonomického prínosu neziskového sektora a stavu a trendov rozvoja občianskej spoločnosti*, Bratislava: Úrad splnomocnenca vlády SR pre rozvoj občianskej spoločnosti, pp. 171–216.

<sup>9</sup> Úrad splnomocnenca vlády SR pre rozvoj občianskej spoločnosti (2019) *Analýza socioekonomického prínosu neziskového sektora a stavu a trendov rozvoja občianskej spoločnosti*, Bratislava.

On the other hand, their current position – to fill the gaps left by government and state authorities – remain the same, just the intensity and permanent emergency to provide essential services, social care to the most vulnerable citizens in Slovakia has been greater. From their answers on the question ...we can assume, that they have found themselves to be in the fight in the first line to protect marginalized groups, or even to be combating fake news and conspiracy theories about COVID-19.

*"We reacted really promptly, especially in those areas where the state was incapable. We created a financial assistance instrument for the most vulnerable citizens, and communities in Slovakia. We were also more flexible and direct in social services, field works, in so-called helplines, or fast in mobilizing volunteers in all necessary areas. And nobody was solidary to us, not even the state."*

They are also aware of the fact that they are doing their job in Slovakia, which is not being overall supportive towards CSOs the last couple of years, however the pandemic shows how badly the quick, imprecise and badly-managed decisions can influence them and their work as well. Most of them were mostly cynical about their roles within the Slovak society where they feel that they are being forced to be adaptable to work under any circumstances and under any conditions. One of the CSO representatives commented:

*"Civil society actors are trained in adaptability - especially in the environment of Slovak politics and legislation."*

CSOs representatives from social services sphere (6) struggled to maintain the same level of dialogue with governments and state authorities during the COVID-19 crisis – even in times when they were in the front

line with their volunteers and social services providing assistance. One organization also pointed out that the government and state authorities saw their help as something that is taken for granted, and their professional organization has been stereotypically defined as "those volunteers".

The CSOs also reported a positive trend towards their perception for the society. People often changed their minds and attitudes towards the civil society sector when they saw their engagement in practice, as one of the CSO representatives stated:

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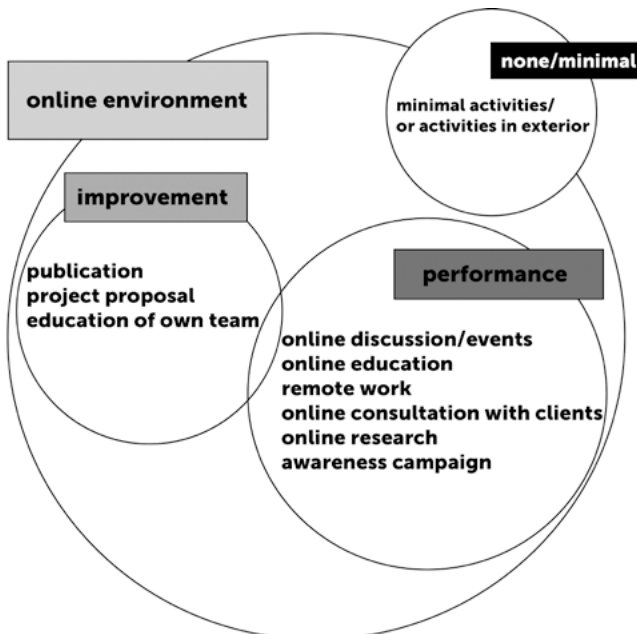
DESPITE THE DAILY STRUGGLES THAT HAVE BEEN REPORTED AMONG CSOS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES, THEY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MOVE THEIR ACTIVITIES TO THE ONLINE WORLD

*“Yes, our reputation was changed in the eyes of the public because they saw us. But the perception of politicians and government remained on the same level, and even in some periods it got worst. We felt again just a declaratively support from their side, and their non-willingness to re-evaluate their cooperation towards us was breath-taking.”*

### FREE TIME AS ADDED VALUE

The COVID-19 pandemic has sped up many changes and trends that were expected to be put into practice in a distant future – such as new office culture, remote work, new sharing practices of their offices, new ways of communication, and coordination of activities [See: Figure 3]. Everyone with a flexible way of working was able to shift into the new era of business and public relations. Based on the data gathered during the interviews, one can say that CSOs were

Figure 3: Performance of CSOs during the restriction and lockdowns



one of those actors that were able to do it – of course, with some loss towards their earnings, inability to postpone some regular activities, or even to proceed with the project coordination.

Despite the daily struggles that have been reported among CSOs and their representatives, they have been able to move their activities to the online world. Some of them even widened their scope, which emerged during the lockdowns and restriction related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Accord-

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ing to the answers by CSOs, their (organizational) activities may be divided into two main categories:

1. the improvement of CSOs own organization and doing the work that was left behind in “normal times” before the pandemic, improvement of performance in the online environment and activities, which were shifted into the online sphere.

CSOs were aware of all limitations and barriers that have been present ever since the beginning of the pandemic crisis. Nevertheless, they were mostly able to adjust their activities to the options available within the online space [See: Figure 3]. Some of them even discovered new ways of promoting themselves and designing new awareness campaigns that educate on the protection against COVID-19, new health habits, or devoted to combating misinformation and fake news. But what they all have in common is the willingness to be more flexible than ever and stay in touch with real life and are up-to-date with the ongoing changes to the rules and restriction, which were put in place to minimize the spread of the coronavirus. As one of the CSO representatives stated,

*“Many activities went to the online environment, there were also some new ones, but in our case, there was no activity that would be without restriction. Since we work with volunteers everything was a challenge for us. We had to constantly monitor and change accordingly to the latest news from the political authorities and their new recommendations.”*

What was really interesting, and maybe even obvious, was the fact that these organizations – despite their limitations in carrying out their activities – found time for their improvement. Overall, few of the

CSOs reported that they started to educate their own members through various webinars and online educational events. These representatives were predominantly from the human rights or advocacy sphere. As indicated by one of the CSO representatives:

*"We were able to take part in a larger number of trainings and educational events that would otherwise have taken place in the capital city, far from us. We could also attend more festivals in comparison to previous years because they were held online, without limited participation and without financial expenses."*

One CSO even had time to go through their old files and reorganize them. Three of them, reported that their work on publication doubled in comparison to the pre-COVID-19 period.

### **THE ONLINE WORLD: A NEW LOVE-AND-HATE STORY OF REMOTE WORK**

It was impossible to realize the majority of activities due to the restrictions and lockdowns at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, as was already mentioned above, CSOs found their place in the online world. The main change that was visible and needed to be adopted very quickly was the communication and coordination activities of their members and volunteers. In some cases, the CSOs shifted activities to the online world, but some events were not possible to be held online and, therefore, have had to be either rescheduled or even canceled.

There were cases where this shift was very natural. One part of CSOs even spent less money on organizing educational projects and consultations. The other part of CSOs, whose majority of work lies on their ability to meet in person, the pandemic was more than a struggle. They needed to be creative

and come up with new channels – or even new activities – to survive, – as exemplified by sport associations. The same situation was observed in the social service sector, where all planned activities in person had to be canceled and one representative of CSO confirmed that their organization hibernated for more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  year.

The majority of the interviewed CSOs reported that they were able to shift to the online world, only a few of them have had a crucial problem to continue with their activities. Moreover, they managed to find a way to challenge the new culture of remote work until the moment when some of



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them (twelve participants) started noticing coordination and management issues on a regular basis. They envision being able to meet regularly and have “ordinary executive and project meetings”, not just online discussions. CSO’s perception towards the online environment is that the COVID-19 pandemic has not transformed their work automatically and fully, while it has opened them up to another world that was coming anyway.

### FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CRISIS?

Many CSOs in Slovakia are dependent on various types of financial support of fundraising networks, and foundations<sup>10</sup>. Their fundraising activities are also related to in-person contacts. The COVID-19 crisis hit the financing sustainability from various angles, as regular donations and grants from the state were shifted away to fund activities related to the pandemic, as various donors and foundations also became influenced by the crisis and oftentimes also lacked funds to survive.

Majority of the interviewed Slovak CSOs reported concerns and fear about their financial ability to organize future activities or even to pay their members and professional staff. Financial sustainability was the most paralyzing question during the interviews that was raised towards CSOs, because they also saw the latest data about future potential income from the taxes, which is a crucial channel of their incomes. The decline of GDP in Slovakia for more than 10% in 2020 indicates a negative impact on sources of funding for civil society organization (whether 2% tax or donations).

<sup>10</sup> Brozmanová Gregorová, A. and M. Murray Svidroňová (2020) “Analýza socio-ekonomického prínosu neziskového sektora pre spoločnosť” [in]: *Analýza socio-ekonomického prínosu neziskového sektora a stavu a trendov rozvoja občianskej spoločnosti*, Bratislava: Úrad splnomocnenca vlády SR pre rozvoj občianskej spoločnosti.



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Nevertheless, on a more positive note, it is worth mentioning that 4 of interviewed CSOs from the human rights and advocacy sphere were able to save some earnings and project-related funds, because they were able to shift the majority of their activities as well as launch new ones into the online environment. The advantage of such a solution is that they do not need to pay rent, catering, and even transportation for speakers and trainers.

### WHAT IS NEXT?

The COVID-19 pandemic crisis affected various areas of human life in all sectors – and civil society organizations are no

exception. We still do not know how extensive the damage is (nor will be). Researchers lack data and on going monitoring to follow actual trends and challenges of CSOs in Slovakia. Still, what has already been discovered from the conducted interviews may help us recognize and understand the context in which civil society organizations are addressing the challenges brought by the COVID-19 crisis.

What the interviews revealed is the *permanent ability of CSOs to adapt* to any circumstances, externalities, potential restrictions, and limitations. From their own perception, the representatives state that Slovak CSOs are extremely flexible, even in the current crisis-driven conditions. According to the latest surveys<sup>11</sup> and focus group<sup>12</sup> conducted among approximately 340 members of CSOs, cynicism was visible even before the COVID-19 pandemic, and has almost doubled in the time of crisis, because CSOs are being left on their own. However, they fight against it so it does not influence them in their work. On the contrary, CSOs are pre-prepared for any scenario – but this preparedness will not last forever as the funds and perseverance may eventually run out, should the situation persist.

*Insecurity* was the most quoted term in all interviews. Four of the interviewed CSOs reported, that the insecurity feeds their mental well being, like loss of enthusiasm to work. Despite the barriers such as lack of financial support, travel or other official restrictions, and various personal challenges, CSOs created new tools that help them in

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Vašečka, M., V. Žúborová, B. Strečanský, I. Borárossová, and O. Gallo (2019) "Občianska spoločnosť 2019 očami formalizovaných a neformalizovaných skupín" [in]: *Analýza socioekonomického prínosu neziskového sektora a stavu a trendov rozvoja občianskej spoločnosti*, Bratislava: Úrad splnomocnenca vlády SR pre rozvoj občianskej spoločnosti, pp. 171–216.



THE DECLINE OF GDP IN SLOVAKIA FOR MORE THAN 10% IN 2020 INDICATES A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION (WHETHER 2% TAX OR DONATIONS)

their daily activities. This especially holds for CSOs that perform essential services and offer psychological support to the general population and minority communities all around Slovakia.

Furthermore, CSOs in Slovakia also reported that they were unable to help in those areas where in-person contact was absent. As is the case of violence towards women and children, but they tried it with online consultations and helplines, even when they were skeptical.

Even in times of crisis when the level of *solidarity* is not only declarative, but also real, the relation between CSOs and the Slovak government did not change. On the

contrary, CSOs in Slovakia are even more critical towards the chaotic leadership and ever-changing rules. They do not see the government as a partner relevant for co-operation. When they do, they mean local leaders and communities rather than the government representatives on the national level. This trend of regionalization was even reported by scholars and analysts in other European countries, because of their direct support and a greater potential to target the risk immediately and provide security<sup>13</sup>.

*“Civil society organizations have responded much more flexibly than public administrations to the change’s conditions. They were more prepared to work in an online environment and they also learned very quickly to work with modern technologies and tools in this environment. A large number of NGOs, including ours, have actively responded to the pandemic with their own instruments (we in particular, developed a crisis grant scheme aimed at financing primary education for children from the most vulnerable region in Slovakia, namely from Roma communities and children without internet connection).”*

Moreover, CSOs are not an exception to experiencing distress in these uncertain times. However, they have found potential resources and new alternatives of their functioning. For some of them, this will mean to start again and change their attitudes and expectations towards a new normal. Some of them might not survive if they are unable to adapt.

<sup>13</sup> CIVICUS (2021) *Solidarity in the Time of COVID-19. Civil Society Responses to the Pandemic*. Available [online]: [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/solidarity-in-the-time-of-covid-19\\_en.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/solidarity-in-the-time-of-covid-19_en.pdf); Greer, S., S. Rozenblum, M. Wismar, and H. Jarman (2020) *What Is the Value of Civil Society in the COVID-19 Crisis?*. Available [online]: <https://analysis.covid-19healthsystem.org/index.php/2020/06/05/what-is-the-value-of-civil-society-in-the-covid-19-crisis/>

Some of them even revealed the dark side of CSOs. Not all CSOs are positive. Those that are not became stronger during the COVID-19 pandemic by working on the spread of conspiracy theories, fake news and misinformation.

## FINAL REMARKS

CSOs in Slovakia suffered during the COVID-19 crisis greatly, as in other countries around the world and in times of crisis – as many other private and public sectors within the state. The pandemic hit the activities of the CSOs immensely. Not all of them were able to shift to the online world, especially those that are so-called “first-liners” in the fight against coronavirus. Those CSOs organized volunteers, supported lonely souls in their apartments or social houses. They also provided psychological support for doctors and nurses, and they even took care of children that have not had the chance to stay in touch with their classmates and teachers via online platforms because of poor Internet connection.



THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CRISIS AFFECTED VARIOUS AREAS OF HUMAN LIFE IN ALL SECTORS – AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS ARE NO EXCEPTION



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CSOs have been crucial in the fight against the COVID-19 virus. Many took this sector for granted and saw these organizations as a group of volunteers assisting in the field. For some, they are unnecessary and redundant at the negotiating table.

The conducted interviews show that CSOs are enormously adaptable, creative, and innovative. Their flexibility helps them to survive, save finance, or even invent new ways of interaction with their members and clients.

How the CSOs will look like after the COVID-19 remains unclear. Although they will undoubtedly have to face several challenges regarding the culture of new labor and remote work, these organizations will still be perceived as leaders in the field of creativity and innovation. What we may see, however, is that civil society organizations

will be the front runners in those areas where others might lack flexibility and creativity – such as in social services, supporting the most vulnerable communities and individual members of the society.



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