

Civil Society in today's world

On the 22nd of October our class of first year of Global Governance students had the opportunity to discuss with Mrs Clara Bosco about “Civil society and the protection of democracy”.



Civicus is an international non-profit organization that dedicates itself to strengthen citizen actions and Civil Society. The aim of this organization is to protect and grow civic space where people can express and organize themselves.

Mrs Bosco, who currently works for Civicus in Amsterdam, tried to explain us what is civil society and what is its function in the real society of today, given from her point of view. Civil Society is the “arena” outside family, state and market, created by individual and collectivity actions, organizations and institutions, strictly connected to individual and social activism. How does Civil society look today? Civil society looks messy and incoherent, but despite these problems, is becoming a trend as governments are scared by the power of people.

Only in the last years Civil Society has been recognized for its power from the political entities. For instance different political figures, first of all Barak Obama, in their speeches express the relevant importance of the role of Civil Society and they support and help this to spread out. In fact, it has often been subject of international agreements, such as the Bussan agreement in 2011 or the Human Rights Council, where C.SOs have been recognized by many countries.

As a consequence, today we can also talk about Global Civil Society, which means a citizen's action against the concentration of power in the small entities. Practically, the elements that make sure than everyone can participate are generally the enabling environment (C.S. come together and work), legitimacy, transparency and accountability, solidarity and cooperation (which means that there is no competition), political environment (state and CS should work together), political attitudes, communication and resources. By following this path, Civil Society can finally reach its patterns, that are principally four: C.S. being in the front line responding to the emergencies and to the humanitarian crises. Usually it is the first responder but sometimes is overwhelmed by the scale of the crises too. Secondly we have mobilization, that can be for instance social media activism (ex. viral hashtags) and Global online companies. Thirdly, C.S. under pressure, that usually happens in case of verbal or physical attacks, and in conclusion C.S. at global levels.

To conclude, today Civil society has been adopted by the movement Action of 2015. However, is still continuing her development. Which are its future social goals and what will be its role? Use and curate data and hold governments account and develop common policy.

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