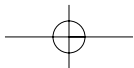
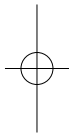
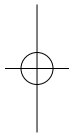


GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY 2005/6



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Marlies Glasius, Mary Kaldor, Helmut Anheier, editors-in-chief
Fiona Holland, managing editor

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MISSION STATEMENT

Global civil society is diverse, creative and chaotic. That's what makes it always interesting, often unpredictable and sometimes very powerful. Studying global civil society is a way of understanding globalisation, which is all too often seen as a predominantly economic phenomenon. The reality of globalisation is more complex. Globalisation is about individual autonomy, responsibility and participation. It embodies a growing global consciousness and emerging sphere of shared values and ideas.

We are interested in how individuals try to take control of global processes rather than being overwhelmed by them. Citizens around the world, their values and identities, communities and forms of political participation, help to shape and, in turn, are shaped by globalisation – in ways that are poorly documented and little understood.

Global Civil Society is an attempt to fill this gap in our knowledge – a gap that could become politically dangerous and socially damaging in a global era full of tensions, anxieties and uncertainties. Bringing together leading thinkers in the social sciences, as well as activists and practitioners in civil societies around the world, the Yearbook seeks to chart and analyse the nature and terrain of global civil society.

The term 'global civil society' is highly contested. Many meanings have been proposed and while some adopt the term enthusiastically, others question the validity of the concept. The ambiguity surrounding global civil society might seem problematic for a Yearbook such as this. But far from being an obstacle, we see the terminological tangle that envelops the concept as an opportunity. Debate about its meaning is part of what global civil society is all about. We offer a simple working definition of global civil society as the realm of non-coercive collective action around shared interests and values that operates beyond the boundaries of nation states.

But this is just one view. As the idea spreads around the globe, is variously manifested and continuously debated, new interpretations will continue to emerge. The Yearbook offers a platform for such debate, the background to key issues and actors, and an exploration of the building blocks of global civil society.

Each edition of *Global Civil Society* is organised as follows:

Part 1 Concepts: is dedicated to ongoing conceptual discussions about the different facets and meanings of global civil society.

Part 2 Issues: explores the role of global civil society in debating and influencing specific global issues. These case studies, built upon original research by experts in relevant fields, offer a different perspective on global issues: 'globalisation from below'.

Part 3 Infrastructure: explores both the political and practical preconditions for global civil society to operate. Political preconditions include, for example, peace and security and freedom of association. Practical considerations include funding, technology, and human resources. Some chapters in this section examine the infrastructure of particular sectors of global civil society, for example the trade union movement or peasants' movements.

Part 4 Records: offers a statistical overview, via tables, maps and diagrams, of global civil society's dimensions and contours. The chronology, gathered by individuals around the world, provides an insight into the myriad protests, conferences and campaigns that are the sinews of global civil society. Integral to this section is a methodological chapter that presents alternative social science approaches and methods of analysis. We believe that conventional nation-state-centred methodology is ill-equipped to understand global civil society and, to that end, we are laying the foundations for a social science 'without borders'.

Global Civil Society is intended for a broad audience: theorists, activists, journalists, policy-makers, students... in fact anyone interested in how groups and individuals in civil society are influencing global processes. Perhaps its most important aim is simply this: to stimulate thinking and encourage debate among a range of actors and scholars at global and local levels. In doing so, the Yearbook is part of global civil society itself.

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