

IS “GOOGLING” A TECHNIQUE? WHAT THE INTERNET CAN TELL US ABOUT THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTOR IN ARMENIA

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents and discusses a technique for assessing online visibility of Armenian NGOs. The technique was applied to map the Armenian NGO sector within the framework of a larger study about the Armenian civil society. Taking into account the development of the IT sector and increased internet coverage in Armenia, it is hypothesised that active NGOs should exhibit at least some online presence and should be identifiable through a “*Googling*” technique. A full list of registered NGOs (3552) is used to test their visibility on the internet. The selected technique is an innovative approach aimed at looking at the level of the NGOs’ online presence as a measure of their level of activeness. The paper provides a detailed discussion of the process of mapping the on-line visibility of Armenian NGOs obtained through this technique as well as providing necessary background information on the evolution and development of the civil society sector in the country. The paper concludes that the number of “online visible” NGOs obtained through “*Googling*” is a fairly close estimation of actively operating NGOs in the country, thus highlighting the potential of using this mode as a valuable research technique.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

CIVIL SOCIETY

Considering the importance of civil society for strengthening democracy¹ it is interesting to investigate the cases of developing countries, and specifically those that have passed through a transition period. After the collapse of the Soviet Union a number of countries found themselves with the task of establishing new states. The low quality of post-communist civil societies has been related to the citizens’ experiences under the Soviet rule.² Although the countries of the South Caucasus, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia share a common Soviet past, the condition of the civil societies in these countries differs.

The new political environment of thriving competition seemed to give Georgian civil society organizations more opportunities to engage in national discourse.³ According to a Chatham House briefing on the state of democracy in several post-communist countries, civil society in Georgia remains weak as citizens have little capacity to influence political developments;⁴ however the resources to create a better civil society exist in the country because of its social and political contexts.⁵ The case of Azerbaijan is different because of a strict non-tolerance toward civil society organizations introduced by the government. A Human Rights Watch report indicates some serious crackdowns on the civil society in Azerbaijan.⁶

After proclaiming its independence in 1991, Armenia experienced a gradual

development of social and political organizations in the early 1990s with the introduction of a new practice of autonomous participation. Civil society organizations in Armenia in their initial stages were created by members of the social and political elite with the financial support of western funding and charitable organizations.⁷ The most recent study on civil society and environmental activism in Armenia has examined the factors that led to the rise and better development of civil society groups in the country and their coming together for a common cause.⁸

NGOs are called Public organizations in Armenian.⁹ Establishing an NGO in Armenia requires registration with the Public Register Agency of the Legal Entities¹⁰, the adjacent body to the Ministry of Justice, and tax authorities.¹¹ NGOs are to independently decide upon their organizational structure, sector of operation, scope of activities and goals. Organizations are created on a termless basis unless otherwise stated in the organizational statutes¹².

The number of officially registered NGOs in Armenia has grown steadily over the years, with a few set-backs discussed below. The sectors of NGOs' operation are multilevel. There are NGOs advocating human rights, peacebuilding, community development, economic development, environmental concerns, education, benevolence, health issues, preservation of cultural heritage, media development as well as working on children, youth, gender related issues etc. NGOs exist and operate on the entire territory of the republic of Armenia including the capital, towns and villages of the republic¹³.

According to the Armenian National Statistical Service data, as of October 1995 the number of registered NGOs in Armenia was 900. As of January 2002 the number had increased to 2756. As of February 2013 there were 3552 registered NGOs in the republic of Armenia. The trend indicates an increase in the registered number of organizations in Armenia from 2002 to 2012,¹⁴ except for one year, 2004, after which the number decreases from 3660 to 2202. Two factors may have caused the decline in the number of registered NGOs in the country. In 2004 an addendum to the law on NGOs in Armenia was made stating that the organizations having property with a value exceeding 25 million Armenian Drams¹⁵ should provide documentation on the composition, size and sources of the property's origin to the state registration body, with the information, therefore, to be transferred to the Central Bank of Armenia. This addendum to the law has one reason for many NGOs not to declare their properties and, thus, not to be re-registered on the official list. Another possible cause for the decreasing number of NGOs in the period from 2004 to 2005 was the termination of the World Learning Program, a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded project aimed at supporting the establishment of NGOs in the republic. It ceased to exist in 2004. Funding of certain NGOs was terminated leading to their close-down.

The official number of registered NGOs can serve as a positive indicator of the rate of civil society development, particularly in a young, post-Soviet country. However, the mere existence of many NGOs cannot speak for their quality and proper operation.¹⁶ As of February 2013 there are 3552¹⁷ registered non-governmental organizations (NGO) in post-Soviet Armenia. However many of these are short-lived and non-operative, and their contribution to the development

of civil society in the country is questionable. The main technique discussed later in this paper was designed and applied for the purpose of estimating the number of actively operating NGOs in the country. In addition to being a tool for assessing an online visibility of Armenian NGO sector, *Googling* was also used as a means of obtaining contact information for conducting an organizational survey in the framework of the study on Armenian civil society¹⁸.

Table 1: Number of registered NGOs in Armenia (2002-2012)¹⁹

Month, Year	Number	Increase/decrease by %
Jan. 2002	2,756	--
Jan. 2003	3,211	+ 16.5
Jan. 2004	3,660	+ 13.9
Dec. 2005*	2,202	- 39.9
Dec. 2006	2,548	+ 15.7
Dec. 2007	2,776	+ 8.9
Dec. 2008	2,997	+ 7.9
Nov. 2009	3,196	+ 6.6
Nov. 2010	3,447	+ 7.8
Sep. 2011	3,690	+ 7.0
Mar. 2012	3,838	+ 4.0

*The year when the number of NGOs drastically decreased.

Source: *National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia, 2013*

THE INTERNET AVAILABILITY AND USAGE IN ARMENIA

Usage of internet visibility as an estimation of the level of activity of the Armenian NGO sector is based on an assumption that there is an increased internet penetration in Armenia. The internet serves to be an important communication platform that NGOs striving to keep up with modern developments would like to use. On the other hand, if NGOs are active, they are likely to be mentioned on the internet (by journalists, donors, bloggers, etc.).²⁰ The information presented in this section is aimed at supporting the assumption of increased use of the internet in Armenia.

Over the last decade the Armenian Information Technology (IT) sector has experienced a rapid growth becoming one of the most dynamic and internationally competitive sectors of the Armenian economy.²¹ According to the Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRR) Caucasus Barometer data there has been an increase in the number of households having internet access from their home computer or laptop from 2008 to 2012. As can be seen from Table 2 there has been a dramatic increase of reported internet access from just 7% of the population in 2008 to 40% in 2012. There has also been a substantial increase of personal computer ownership: from 15% of the Armenian population in 2008 to 43% in 2012. Thus, internet penetration is indeed a visible and stable trend in the Armenian society.

Table 2: Household having internet access from home computer/laptop

	Yes	Owns PC	N
2008	146 (7%)	306 (15%)	2082
2009	115 (6%)	291 (15%)	1975
2010	370 (19%)	514 (27%)	1922
2011	818 (24%)	934 (27.5%)	3395
2012	961 (40%)	1035 (43%)	2384

INTERNATIONAL DONOR COMMUNITY

The role of the international donor community is important when considering the development of civil society in Armenia. International donor organizations have been operating in the republic since the early 1990s. In 1994 the United States funded NGO Training and Resource Centre was established and had a great impact on the development of civil society culture in the republic by collecting and sharing information pertaining to the existing “Public organizations” in Armenia.²² The United States (US) Government has been the largest donor focusing on civil society development in Armenia²³ and conducted two large studies of the sector in 2001²⁴ and 2004.²⁵

The United States approach in civil society promotion was opposed to that of the European bilateral and multilateral donors, which by and large interacted with Armenian society through third actors, mainly the government but also foreign organizations and funds. The European Union (EU) interaction with Armenia has generally focused on building strong relations with the state and elite actors at the expense of engagement with non-state actors (Blue, Payton, and Kharatyan 2001). Nevertheless, when the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and Eastern Partnership (EaP) programs were launched, the multi-level contacts between the EU as an individual actor, the EU member-states and Armenian civil society was enhanced. This was promoted mostly through the civil society forum, a platform including EaP states and the EU aiming to promote contacts among civil society organizations and facilitate dialogue with public authorities.

As already mentioned, the US Government has been the main donor for the civil society development in Armenia. Funded by USAID, in 1995-96 the Armenian Assembly of America NGO training and resource center started its operation. It was an important factor in the development of the NGO culture in Armenia as it provided the public with a template on how to create an NGO and how to seek funding from donors in order to sustain the organization. Nonetheless, paying too much attention to the NGO sector has had negative outcomes as well. As Armine Ishkhanian notes, “NGOization” has led to the de-politicization and taming of the emancipatory potential of civil society. Another unhappy outcome has been the proliferation of NGOs undermining civil society development, as many NGOs, often called “capital darlings”, exist purely for the purpose of acquiring international funding.²⁶

In order to identify the actual number and quality of the operating NGOs in the country, mapping of the sector becomes of paramount importance. Notwithstanding the legal requirement to register NGOs with the State Registry, a

number of organizations have been operating without registration. On the other hand, many of the registered ones are non-operational but continue to remain on the Registry list therefore creating an illusion of an existing legal entity.

METHODOLOGY OF MAPPING ONLINE VISIBILITY

Considering the importance of IT, the main technique applied for the purpose of mapping the sector (with an aim of creating a sampling frame for an organizational survey to be conducted as part of the larger study of Armenian civil society) was *Googling*. How to estimate the real number of functioning NGOs in Armenia was a starting question in the development of this technique. Additionally, there was also a practical need to obtain organizational contact information.

Originally, it was planned to obtain an official list of registered NGOs in Armenia, which would contain all the necessary contact information, such as name of the organization, address and contact information. An official letter was sent to the State Registry to get full data of the NGOs registered in the country. However, the request was denied by the institution claiming that the law on accessing such detailed data requires a payment for each organization's information details.²⁷ Considering that more than 3000 organizations are registered in the republic, the cost was prohibitive. Nevertheless, the full list of names of registered NGOs is accessible and was provided by the Armenian Ministry of Justice free of charge. This list contains 3552 organizations and is considered to be the primary sampling frame for the study.

A Microsoft Excel database was created with the full list of names of registered NGOs. A team comprised of six students was trained and tasked to conduct an online search for the organizations on the list. More specifically the technique applied was to *Google* the Armenian name of an organization and look for the main results. In case the application did not generate any results, other techniques were applied. Examples are usage of quotation marks as adding quote marks around the query tells the Google to look for occurrences of the exact phrase as it was typed,²⁸ or *Googling* the name in English to fully check the online visibility of the organization. The *Googling* technique was applied in June 2013.

Based on the results of the search, the online visibility of each of the NGOs on the original list of 3552 organizations was coded as "NA" (not available), "NC" (no contacts) and "YES" (full information available). The "NA" code indicates organizations for which no mention whatsoever is found on the internet. The "NC" code indicates NGOs that are at least somewhat visible online: for example *Googling* shows that they are mentioned in the media or any other web source including social networks,²⁹ but no specific contacts (such as telephone, e-mail, postal address or organizational website) could be obtained. The "YES" code indicates organizations for which specific contact information (telephone number and/or e-mail address and/or postal address) was obtained through the internet search.

The *Googling* technique has generated the following results: out of 3,552 registered NGOs there are 1,812 in the NA category (meaning that they have no online presence), 973 are in the NC category (meaning that they have some online visibility) and 767 are in the YES category. The contact information classification of the 767 NGOs available online is the following: 445 emails, 702 phone numbers

(including mobile and landline) and 248 postal addresses. Thus, *Googling* as a technique has revealed the following online visibility of the Armenian NGO sector: 51% of organizations do not exist on the internet, 27% have partial visibility and 21% have their contact information available through the internet. Thus, only about one-fifth of the Armenian NGOs currently take advantage of internet as a means of making themselves known to potentially interested partners or beneficiaries. See Table 3.

Table 3: Results generated by the *Googling* technique

	Categories	Number of NGOs	%
NA	No online visibility	1812	51
NC	Limited online visibility	973	27.4
YES	Visibility online	767	21.6
Total		3552	100

GAINING FURTHER INSIGHT THROUGH COMPARISON AND SURVEY IMPLEMENTATION

While mapping online visibility of the Armenian NGO sector was a valuable way of assessing its level of development, it was not an end goal in itself, but rather a step in a larger study. Its practical goal was to generate a realistic sampling frame for an organizational survey, which is another element of a study currently underway at the Turpanjian Center for Policy Analysis (TCPA). The study, entitled “Armenian Civil Society after 20 Years of Transition: Still Post-Communist?” is funded by the Academic Swiss Caucasus Net (ASCN) and is aimed at examining the current state of Armenian civil society in terms of membership, participation, levels of trust towards NGOs and their connectedness to the Armenian public. The online organizational survey contains 28 questions covering subjects from leadership, trust, membership and availability of volunteers to organizations’ scope, cooperation, activities as well as usage of communication tools and funding.

After completing the *Googling* of the 3552 organisations officially registered in Armenia, the team has compared the results with the outcome of another mapping of Armenian civil society. A similar study was conducted in Armenia earlier by Civilitas Foundation³⁰ (CF), with the aim of developing a guide to civil society activity in Armenia. In 2009 CF accessed the database of names of registered NGOs in Armenia containing phone numbers. Each organization was contacted by phone. A database of operating NGOs containing 456 entries was created based on this effort. The list includes both local and international organizations operating in Armenia³¹.

Each NGO in the CF database was compared to the *Googling* outcomes in terms of name and contact information. A total of 26 NGOs that were not originally identified through *Googling* were identified in the CF database. The comparison has shown that the application of different primary techniques, namely online mapping through *Googling* by TCPA and phone call mapping by CF, has generated roughly corresponding results.

As the survey for the larger study about the development of Armenian civil society started, it allowed gaining additional insights and the improvement of the estimations of online NGO visibility obtained through *Googling*. The first phase of the organizational survey included contacting organizations through contacts available after *Googling*. The NGOs Questionnaire was sent out to the 445 emails available. The mail delivery system returned 100 email addresses. Thus, 22% of the email addresses of NGOs found online is non-existent and/or incorrect.

Phone numbers were obtained through *Googling* for a substantial number of NGOs but no e-mails (or, as has been found out, wrong e-mails). Also e-mails yielded very low response rates (number of NGOs that completed the survey after first and second e-mail wave is 52). Therefore, the next step in the study was to make phone calls to all those NGOs which couldn't be reached through e-mails. Three team members were assigned the task of making phone calls, which involved a quick elaboration on the purpose of the study conducted, namely a verification of the e-mail obtained from the internet, or a request to provide a correct/working e-mail, followed by a request to an authorized person at the organization to fill in the questionnaire. The calls were conducted during the week days; two or three follow-up calls were made to non-responsive phone numbers, varying the time of the day to ensure maximum coverage. The results of the calls were coded according to the following options: "wrong number", "no answer", "NGO closed" (the person who picked up the phone informed the researcher that the NGO has stopped functioning), "no email" (the organization exists, and is operating however they do not possess any email account), "sent" (the phone call was successful, an email was obtained and the survey questionnaire sent for their attention), and "refusal" (the NGO exists but refuses to participate in the study). Out of 705 available phone numbers the results were as follows: Wrong number 16%; No answer 30%; NGO closed 4%; No email 7%; Sent 31%; Refusal 12%.

One of the concerns of the study is that there could be functional NGOs in Armenia that are not included on the official list of registered organizations. In an attempt to find out about such organizations, the questionnaire sent to the NGOs included a snowballing question³² asking the respondent to name three other NGOs working in their field. The answers obtained were compared to the original sampling frame. A total of 15 new names of NGOs were obtained through the snowballing technique.

Thus, although *Googling* was a primary technique for obtaining NGO contact information, it was combined with a number of additional approaches in an attempt to reach out to as many NGOs as possible. In addition to sending the link to the online survey to those e-mail addresses that were found on the internet, phone-calls, snowballing and even attempts at contacting NGOs through their Facebook pages were made. While phone-calls helped to increase the response rate, it has to be noted that snowballing and use of Facebook yielded marginal results.

CONCLUSION

As a young post-Soviet country Armenia has a huge number of registered NGOs. First NGOs were created in the early 1990s, after Armenia proclaimed independence. Since then there has been a proliferation and rise of NGOs, a

process that became even faster during the second decade of the existence of the young state. As of February 2013 there were 3,552 officially registered NGOs in Armenia. However, since registration procedures are fairly easy, no requirement for re-registration exists and no checks are made to verify whether or not an NGO that registered some time ago still exists, this number should be considered with caution. Estimates of how many NGOs are operational in the country vary between 300 and 800 according to different sources. Based on a need to better estimate the size of the Armenian NGO sector, a practical task was carried out to obtain contact details and assess internet usage by NGOs. To this end mapping of online visibility of Armenian NGOs through *Googling* was conducted within the framework of a larger study on Armenian civil society after 20 years of independence and transition from Soviet legacy into 21st century.

The *Googling* technique applied for the purpose of mapping the online visibility of registered NGOs in Armenia has provided the following results. Out of the total number of registered 3552 NGOs 51% (1812) were not visible online. Some 21% (767) of NGOs are fully available online and can be considered to be active and reaching out to their potential population through internet and social networks. Another 27% (973) of registered NGOs in Armenia can be found online, but only partially: the names of the organizations are visible in the media, but no contact information can be found online. The results of *Googling* were compared to another online NGO database and showed similar outcomes. The results were further fine-tuned by taking into consideration invalid e-mails, verifications through phone calls, snowballing and analysis of NGOs' Facebook pages.

Using contact information obtained, an organizational survey was conducted online and by phone in July-November 2013. As of December 2013 the organizational survey contains 188 responses. This is 5% of the total number of registered NGOs in the country (N=3552); and 24.5% of those with contact information available online (N=767). The survey was conceived as a cross-sectional study. Currently there are no specific follow-up plans but the design lends itself to an easy replication. The results of the online mapping and survey may be heuristically used for further studies. The study included several outreach techniques that balanced each other by providing a richer pool of information regarding NGOs.

The lack of online visibility of NGOs in Armenia leads to the conclusion that at least half of the registered NGOs in the country are non-operational. Recognizing the adequacy of the technique applied to search and map the actively operating NGOs in Armenia, the study recognizes *Googling* as a useful research technique that can help scholars to arrive at a more realistic assessment of the NGO sector, as well as provide insights regarding the use of technology by NGOs for outreach purposes. Based on this experience, a number of limitations of using *Googling* for such estimations can be pointed out as well. Some contact information found on the internet is wrong (22% wrong email addresses out of emails found online; 16% wrong phone numbers out of 705 numbers found online). Also many NGOs seem to opt out of maintaining online visibility for a variety of reasons and would remain "off the radar" for researchers who relied on the internet for mapping or contacting them.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999; Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000; Robert D. Putnam, Robert Leonardi, and Raffaella Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1994; Theda Skocpol, "How Americans Became Civic," *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*, Theda Skocpol & Morris P. Fiorina (eds.), Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999, pp. 27-81.
- ² Marc Morjé Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- ³ Georgia - 2012 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index, available at: <http://www.usaid.gov/europe-eurasia-civil-society/cso-sustainability-2012/georgia> accessed September 15, 2013.
- ⁴ Orysia Lutsevych, *How to Finish a Revolution: Civil Society and Democracy in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine*, Chatham House, January 2013, available at: <http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/papers/view/188407> accessed September 02, 2013.
- ⁵ Nana Sumbadze, *Civic Participation in a Transforming Society: Motivational Forces, Social Capital and Trust*, Academic Swiss Caucasus Net (ASCN), available at: <http://ascn.ch/en/research/Completed-Projects/> accessed September 17, 2013.
- ⁶ Azerbaijan: Crackdown on Civil Society. *Human Rights Watch*, available at: <http://www.hrw.org/node/118403> accessed September 4, 2013.
- ⁷ Nora Dudwick, *The Mirage of Democracy: A Study of Post-Communist Transitions in Armenia* (Project on Democratization and Political Participation in Post-Communist Societies), United States Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, 1995.
- ⁸ Armine Ishkanian, Evelina Gyulkhandanyan, Sona Manusyan, and Arpy Manusyan, *Civil Society, Development and Environmental Activism in Armenia*, The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), available at: <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/54755/> accessed November 27, 2013.
- ⁹ "Non-Governmental Organization" in Armenian—«Հասարակական կազմակերպություն» (Public organization)
- ¹⁰ Ministry of Justice, The Public Register Agency of the Legal Entities of Armenia, website available at: <https://www.e-register.am/en/> accessed May 23, 2014.
- ¹¹ The law of the republic of Armenia on NGOs does not however require consecutive re-registration or notification in case of termination of activities. It does not require NGOs to maintain an online presence either. These nuances are important for the overall context of the study (National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia. 1998. *Civil Code of the Republic of Armenia*, <http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=1556&lang=eng> accessed May 23, 2014).
- ¹² The law of the republic of Armenia on NGOs, 2001, available at: <http://parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=1295> accessed May 23, 2014.
- ¹³ The research comprises NGOs of the republic of Armenia. NGOs of the republic of Nagorno Karabagh are not included in the research.
- ¹⁴ National Statistical Service of Armenia, 2013.
- ¹⁵ App. 71,000 USD (according to the currency rate of the time).
- ¹⁶ Richard N. Blue, David E. Payton, and Lusine Z. Kharatyan, *Armenia NGO Sector Assessment*, NGO Strengthening Program, Yerevan, Armenia: World Learning, Armenia, 2001.
- ¹⁷ Data was requested from the Ministry of Justice, Republic of Armenia, 2013.

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- ¹⁸ “*Armenian Civil Society after 20 years of Transition: Still Post-Communist?*” study conducted by the Turpanjian Center for Policy Analysis at the American University of Armenia. The study funded by the Academic Swiss Caucasus Net (ASCN) 2012-2014.
- ¹⁹ The table includes all the NGOs registered on the territory of Armenia including the capital, towns and villages of the republic. The scope of organizational activities widely differs: from health issues to ethnic concerns and economic development. The NGOs are both single and multiple-issued organizations covering several areas of operation at once. For example an NGO that deals with childcare issues may also be involved in working with issues related to humanitarian aid and contributing to community development.
- ²⁰ One of the slogans of the 21st century is “if it is not online, it does not exist.” Our usage of *Googling* as an assessment technique has been to some extent inspired by this slogan.
- ²¹ Enterprise Incubator Foundation, and Economy and Values Research Center, 2007. *Armenian Information Technology Sector Industry Growth Model*, available at: <http://www.eif.am/eng/resources/archive/armenian-it-industry-growth-model/> accessed August 14, 2013.
- ²² Armine Ishkanian, *Democracy Building and Civil Society in Post-Soviet Armenia*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008.
- ²³ “2011 CSO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia”. United States Agency for International Development, available at: http://transition.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/dem_gov/ngoindex/reports/2011/2011CSOSI_Index_complete.pdf accessed October 04, 2012.
- ²⁴ Richard N. Blue, David E. Payton, and Lusine Z. Kharatyan, *Armenia NGO Sector Assessment*, NGO Strengthening Program, Yerevan, Armenia: World Learning, Armenia, 2001.
- ²⁵ Richard N. Blue and Yulia Ghazaryan, *Armenia NGO Sector Assessment: A Comparative Study*, NGO Strengthening Program, Yerevan, Armenia: World Learning, Armenia, 2004.
- ²⁶ Armine Ishkanian, *Democracy Building and Civil Society in Post-Soviet Armenia*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008.
- ²⁷ The Law of the Republic of Armenia on State Fees, available at: <http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=1370&lang=arm&enc=armscii> (in Armenian) accessed May 23, 2014.
- ²⁸ David A. Vise and Mark Malseed, *The Google Story: For Google’s 10th Birthday*, Delacorte Press, 2008.
- ²⁹ For example 18 NGOs were found to have Facebook pages.
- ³⁰ The Civilitas Foundation, website available at: <http://www.civilitasfoundation.org/cf/> accessed April 11, 2014.
- ³¹ The Civilitas Foundation’s list of organizations can be accessed here: http://civil.am/index.php?option=com_comprofiler&task=userslist&listid=5&Itemid=61
- ³² The exact wording of the snowballing question is “*Could you please indicate the names of three NGOs in Armenia that you have collaborated with and/or are aware of.*”

ԱՐԴԵՕ՞Ք «GOOGLING»Ը ՏԵԽՆԻԿԱ Է. Ի՞ՆՉ ԿԱՐՈՂ Է ԲԱՅԱՅԱՅՏԵԼ
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(ԱՍՓՈՓՈՒՄ)

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Հետազոտությունը ներկայացնում է Հայաստանի Հանրապետության (ՀՀ) հասարակական կազմակերպությունների (ՀԿ) առ-ցանց տեսանելիության գնահատման տեխնիկան: ՀՀում գրանցուած ՀԿերի ամբողջական անուանացանկը հանդիսանում է ուսումնասիրության հիմնական ընտրանքի շրջանակը:

Այս տեխնիկան կիրառուել է հայաստանեան ՀԿ կալուածի աւելի լայն՝ հայ քաղաքացիական հասարակութեան առնչուող ուսումնասիրութեան շրջանակում:

Հաշուի առնելով տեղեկատուական տեխնոլոգիաների ոլորտի զարգացումը, ինչպէս նաեւ համացանցի լայն առկայութիւնը, աշխատանքը վարկած է առաջ քաշում, որ գործող ՀԿերը պէտք է առնուազն որոշ չափով տեսանելի լինեն առ-ցանց եւ ճանաչողական Googlingի կիրառման միջոցով: ՀՀում գրանցուած 3,552 ՀԿերի անուանացանկը ենթարկուել է համացանցում կազմակերպութիւնների տեսանելիութեան փորձարկման: Ընտրուած տեխնիկան հանդիսանում է նորարարական մօտեցում, որի նպատակն է բացայայտել ՀԿերի առ-ցանց ներկայութիւնը որպէս կազմակերպութիւնների գործունութեան չափման միջոց: Սոյն ուսումնասիրութիւնը ներկայացնում է նշուած տեխնիկայի կիրառման մանրամասն քննարկումը, ինչպէս նաեւ անհրաժեշտ տեղեկութիւններ է տրամադրում հայաստանեան ՀԿ կալուածի եղաշրջումի եւ երկրում քաղաքացիական հասարակութեան զարգացման մասին: Ուսումնասիրութիւնը եզրակացնում է, որ «առ-ցանց տեսանելի» ՀԿերի քանակը գրեթէ համապատասխանում է ՀՀում եռանդուն գործող ՀԿերի քանակին, դրանով իսկ կարեւորելով այս տեխնիկայի կիրառման ներուժը՝ որպէս արժէքաւոր հետազօտական միջոց:

