**Monitoring of national, provincial and local election financing in Serbia – 2012**

On May 6th 2012 Serbia will have local, parliamentary, presidential and provincial elections. New Law on financing of political activities was adopted in June 2011.

It is therefore crucial both to ensure full application of the law and liability for those violating the rules, which was missing link in the period of implementation of previous legislative act (Law on financing of political parties, 2003). That is the precondition, not only to have in place rule of law, but also to improve confidence of citizens in political parties and democratic institutions.

Civil society may help that process in various ways. Besides promoting in public idea of free and fair elections and surprising political corruption and advocacy for full implementation of new law, CSO may directly or indirectly support activities of independent government bodies, such as Anti-corruption Agency and Supreme Audit Institution. This support may go from advocacy for other institution to provide necessary resources to the control bodies till providing of concrete information about implementation of the law to the independent body (e.g. reporting of suspicion that concrete party violated the law). However, that is not the limit of CSO activism in party funding area. Even when the process of election campaign funding has to be controlled by independent state bodies, it is necessary to ensure these bodies are performing their duties in effective and comprehensive manner. Having that in mind, it is crucial for CSO to work independently, not only from political parties participating on elections, but also from all public authorities in charge for control. In that way, CSO may and should provide public with independently collected and analyzed information about behavior of all acters in the process – political parties, donors and service providers that should respect the set rules, but also institutions in charge to ensure compliance with legislation (Anti-corruption Agency, Supreme Audit Institution, Republic Electoral Commission, Serbian Broadcasting Agency, Ministry of Finance, Misdemeanor Courts etc.).

 