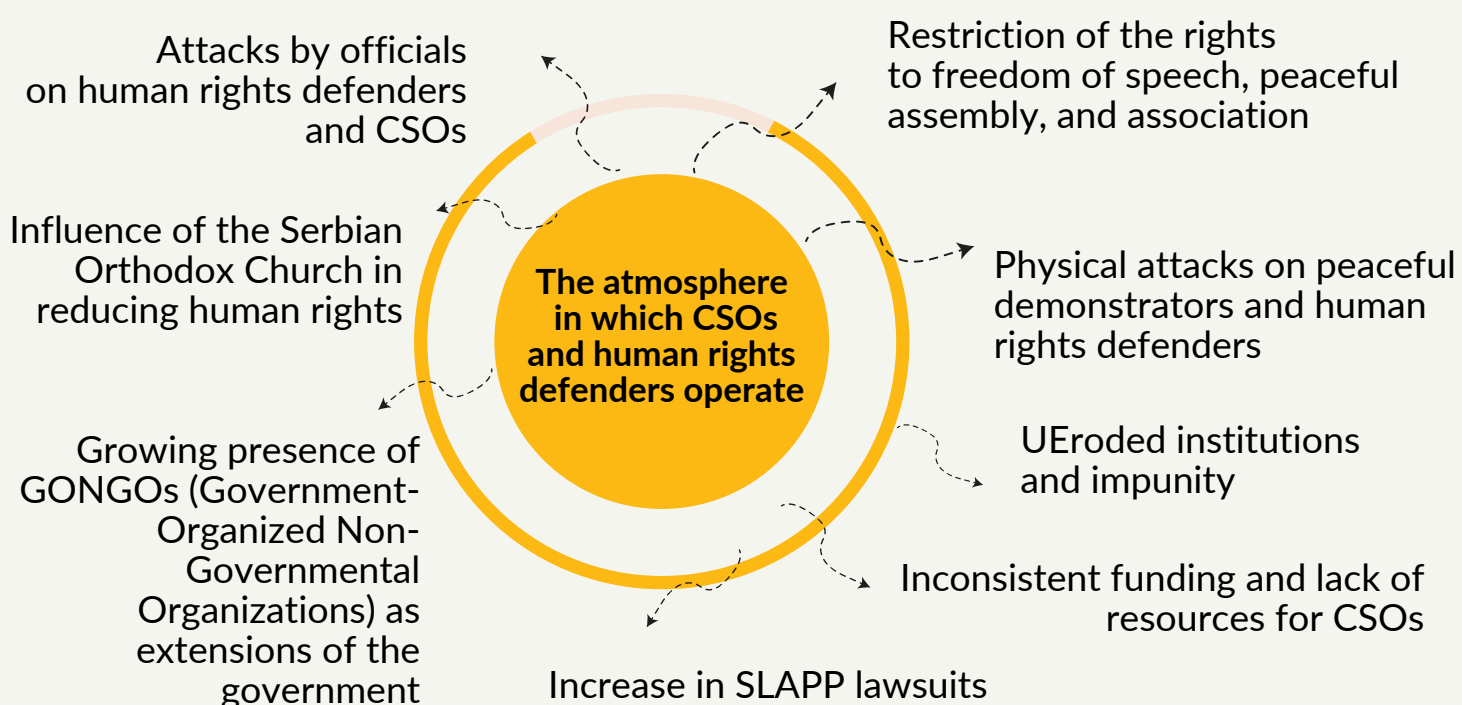


# HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN SERBIA

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are drivers of numerous initiatives, unwavering watchdogs of government power, the driving force of civil society



## Legal restrictions and extralegal barriers

Even though the Constitution and laws guarantee human rights and freedoms, legal acts are often not enforced.

The space for unhindered work of civil society and media is jeopardized by the government, institutions, right-wing political parties and their sympathizers, state companies and privileged private companies, hooligans and violent groups and individuals, as well as the Serbian Orthodox Church.

## Civil society organizations are catalysts for many gatherings or actively involved in protests organized spontaneously by citizens



### Confronting the Past

Organizations and defenders deconstructing the nationalist and distorted narrative of the wars in the 1990s are constantly targeted by the government and other actors.



### Serbia Against Violence

Spontaneous gatherings in 2023 drew attention to everyday and various types of violence suffered by citizens. The reasons for the protests were two mass murders that shocked the public.



### Environmental Uprising

Citizens' protests for environmental protection are remembered for a large number of arrests of protesters and filed misdemeanor charges, but even more so for brutality and physical attacks.



### Pride Parade

Government representatives, the Serbian Orthodox Church, right-wing organizations, and influential public figures consistently use hate speech against members of the LGBT+ community and anyone who supports them, with journalists reporting on the Pride Parade also being targeted.

The government fuels ethnic tensions in Serbia and the region through the use of nationalist narratives, insults, threats, and incendiary statements. Those involved in peacebuilding and regional cooperation are targeted as "enemies of Serbia," "mouthpieces of foreign secret services and states," "traitors to their own people," etc., and are easy targets for politicians in power, pro-government media, and extreme right-wing groups.

## Fight for human rights and equality of citizens

