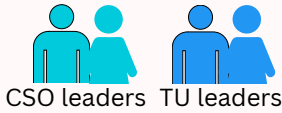


# 8 Year Trend 2016-2023:

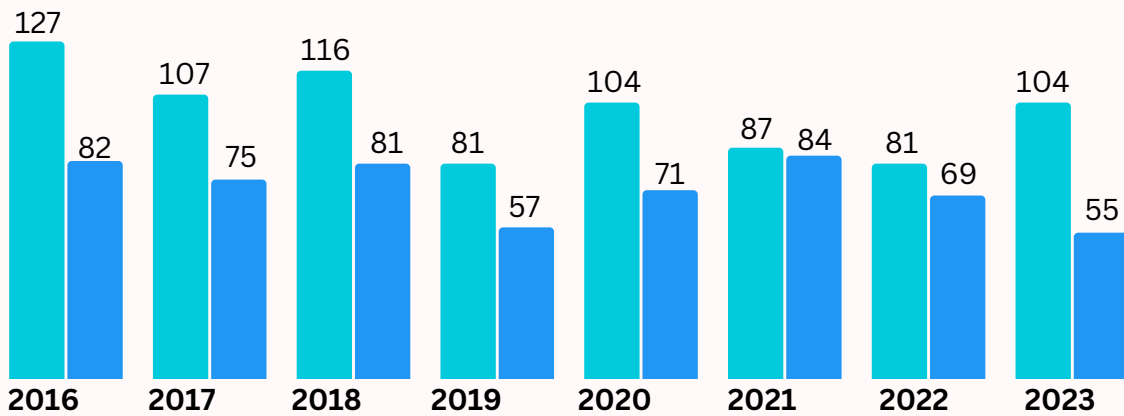


## Civic Leaders' perception of fundamental freedoms in Cambodia

The Fundamental Freedoms Monitoring Project (FFMP) is a multi-year project that monitors the civil society space in Cambodia, specifically individuals' ability to exercise the freedoms of association, expression and assembly (fundamental freedoms). Annually, the FFMP conducts a survey of leaders of civil society organizations (CSOs) and trade unions (TUs). The survey gauges the extent to which CSOs and TUs are able to exercise fundamental freedoms.

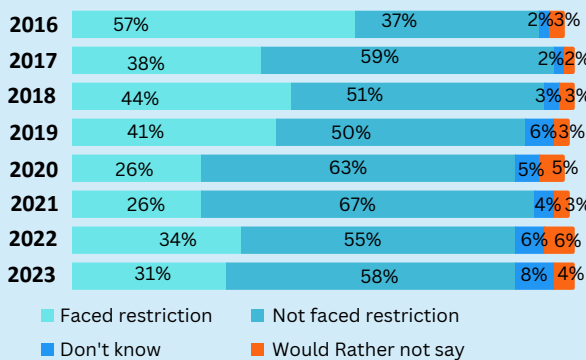


The number of CSO/TU leaders who participated the CSO and TU leaders survey from 2016 to 2023



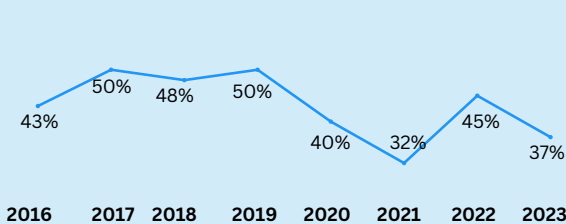
In 2023, FFMP surveyed 159 leaders representing CSOs and TUs who implement activities in Cambodia, (104 CSOs, 55 TUs).

Number of CSO/TUs which faced restrictions in forming networks, coalitions, federations, or other types of unions.



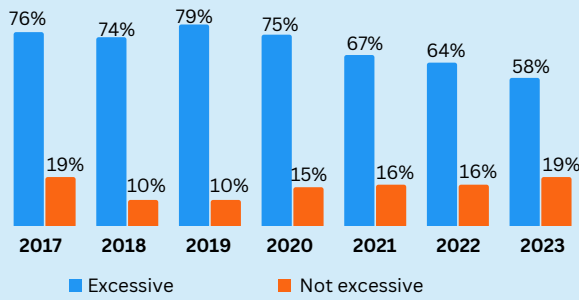
The data gathered in 2023 demonstrated a 3% decrease in the restrictions faced by CSOs/TUs when forming networks, coalitions, federations, or other unions. It is very important to maintain an environment where CSOs or TUs can freely network and form coalitions, because this falls under the right to freedom of association enshrined in both domestic and international law.

Percentage of CSO/TUs who reported RGC monitoring or surveillance during their activities



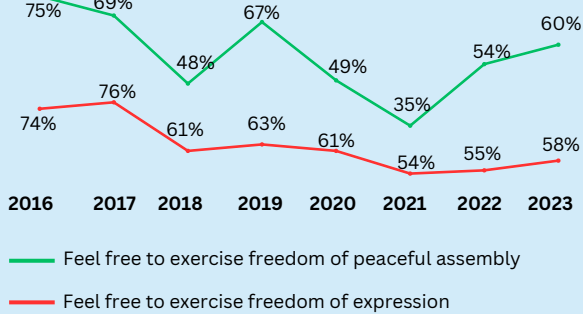
Encouragingly, the proportion of CSO/TU leaders who responded “Yes” to a question asking if they had faced government monitoring or surveillance decreased eight percentage points, from 45% in 2022 to 37% in 2023.

Percentage of CSO/TUs leaders who felt RGC monitoring was excessive



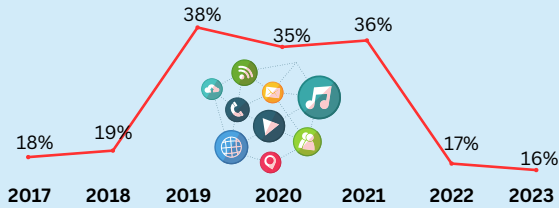
CSO/TU leaders feeling that RGC monitoring was excessive dropped by six percentage points, from 64% in 2022 to 58% in 2023. It is positive that 2023 levels are the lowest since recording started, but this should not take away from the fact that over half of CSO/TU leaders feel RGC monitoring on their activities is overly imposing.

Percentage of CSO/TUs which reported feeling free to exercise freedom of assembly and freedom of expression



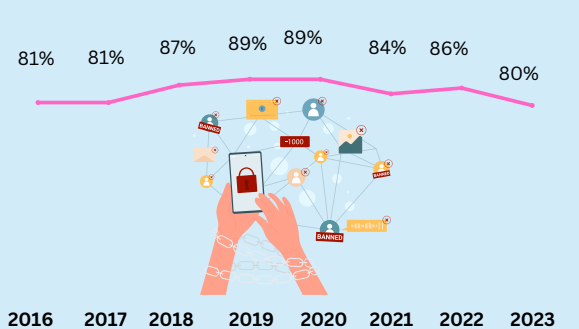
In 2023, the percentage of CSO/TUs who reported feeling free to conduct peaceful assemblies grew by six percentage points, from 54% in 2022 to 60% in 2023. A 3% increase in leaders reporting feeling free to voice their opinions was noted, reaching 58% in 2023. Despite this slight increase, the proportion of CSO/TU leaders who reported feeling free to express their attitudes has been steadily declining since 2017, perhaps due to crackdowns on independent media and the increasing number of individuals facing legal harassment for exercising their freedom of expression.

Percentage of CSO/TUs leaders who reported feeling unsafe to express views on social media



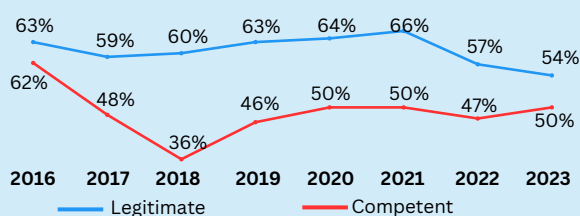
The percentage of CSO/TUs who reported feeling unsafe to express views on social media decreased marginally to 16% in 2023. Impressively, this is the lowest percentage recorded since monitoring began.

Percentage of CSO/TUs which reported self-censoring due to fear of reprisals



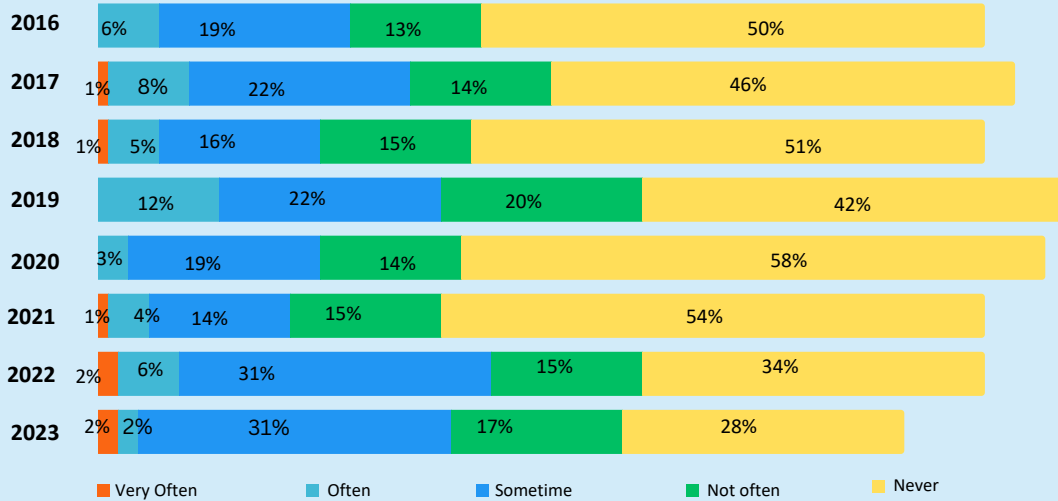
The percentage of CSO/TUs who reported 'always' or 'regularly' or 'sometimes' self-censoring due to fear of reprisals decreased by 6% in 2023, standing at 80%. While figures in 2023 have decreased, it is concerning that such a large proportion of CSO/TU leader reported self-censorship. Civil society organisations are crucial to democratic societies because they represent the viewpoints of a collective group of people who they advocate for in decision making processes.

Percentage of CSO/TUs which reported to feeling recognized as legitimate and competent development partners by RGC



In 2023, 54% of CSO/TUs surveyed felt they were recognized as a legitimate partner by the RGC, declining by 3% from 2022. Conversely, the percentage of those who reported that they felt recognised as competent development partners by the RGC increased by 3% in 2023, reaching 50%.

Percentage of CSO/TU leaders who reported being involved in the decision and law-making process with RGC



The data demonstrated a decrease in CSO/TU leaders who reported they were either ‘Very often’ or ‘Often’ involved in the decision and law-making process, falling from 8% in 2022 to 4% in 2023. More positively, 28% reported ‘Never’ being involved with decision and law making, compared to 34% in 2022 and 58% In 2020. While civil society have been involved in dialogue during some law making processes, for example the development of the draft access to information law, they remain side-lined from making key decisions, as demonstrated when the amended election law was adopted in July 2023 with no consultation from CSOs.



March 2024

