

MONITORING MATRIX ON ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT

Brief description of the Matrix and main findings for Kosovo in 2014

It has been a while since civil society development became part of numerous discussions and actions from CSOs, governments, donor organizations and other actors in the Western Balkans and Turkey. Furthermore, being part of the EU Integration Process, creating an enabling environment for civil society development has become part of the political criteria for the countries aspiring EU membership. This criterion has been continuously assessed by the European Commission through its different Stabilisation-Association process, including the yearly EC Progress Report.

Being in different stages of development and due to specific contexts of each of the countries in the region, the external environment which enables or hinders civil society's development has not been defined, discussed or assessed at a standardized manner. Different countries have set different levels of aimed development, while the European Commission and different international and intergovernmental organizations could not harmonize a common approach for all countries of the region.

However, recent studies have demonstrated that despite differences, most of the problems and challenges that influence civil society development are similar in almost all countries in the region. In addition, specific models and approaches developed in some of the countries of the region have been easily transferred to neighbouring countries.

During 2012, Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN),¹ through its experts from member and partner organizations, has developed a comprehensive document which aims to identify the main principles and standards that influence the environment for civil society development, as well as a means to contribute to a consistent approach in advancing this environment. This document is based on the level of development of civil society in the Western Balkans and Turkey, fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by international documents, as well as best practices of European countries.

“Monitoring Matrix on Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development” is a monitoring mechanism developed and applied by civil society from the Western Balkans and Turkey, which provides a comprehensive set of optimum standards on the development of civil society. Numerous indicators assess the legislation in place and its implementation in particular. Initially, this Matrix aims to provide a tool for continuous pressure as well as support to Governments aiming to achieve the optimum standards for the development of the sector. Lately, the Matrix has been recognized as one of the basic documents which the European Commission will use to assess the state of this sector on an annual basis.

KCSF, as a member organization of BCSDN, has been part of the expert group which drafted the standards and indicators, while it is in charge of monitoring the current state of affairs in Kosovo on a yearly basis. The complete report on monitoring the enabling environment for civil society development in Kosovo for 2014 will be presented and discussed with relevant organizations and institutions on the 22nd of April 2015. Below is a brief summary of the main findings of this report.

¹ <http://www.balkancsd.net/>



This project is funded by the European Union

EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)
Civil Society Facility (CSF)

Co-funded by:

B | T | D The Balkan Trust
for Democracy
A PROJECT OF THE GERMAN MARSHALL FUND

- **The basic legal framework** for the establishment, registration and operation of NGOs has remained unchanged, while its implementation is still partial. An administrative instruction adopted during 2014 introduced provisions on suspension of NGOs, thus breaching the primary legislation. Based on these provisions, 14 NGOs have been suspended by the NGO Department during 2014.
- CSOs are free to **seek and secure funds** from various domestic and foreign sources, although the limitations from the Law on prevention of money laundering and financing of terrorism are burdensome and restrictive for NGOs.
- **Freedom of assembly** is guaranteed by law and CSOs continue to exercise this right freely, although only few CSOs have been involved in organizing peaceful assemblies during 2014.
- Kosovar CSOs have a partial **financial viability**, with high dependence on international funds.
- **Tax incentives** for private donors continue to be part of the legal framework, but their limited scope and ambiguous provisions do not produce any incentive for private donors to support CSO activities.
- Despite commitments from high level politicians on regulating the **public funds for CSOs**, no concrete steps have been made during 2014 to establish standard procedures and criteria on their programming, selection, monitoring and evaluation.
- Civil society is still not involved in any **employment policy**, while there are very limited and isolated activities to promote **volunteering**.
- The institutional bodies tasked with the implementation of the **Government Strategy for cooperation with civil society 2013-2017** have been established at the end of 2014, while the concrete implementation of the strategic activities has not started yet.
- The legal framework for **consulting CSOs in drafting laws and public policies** has not changed – the existing requirements at the government level are not respected to their fullest, although CSOs continue to be involved in drafting of laws and policies in many cases.
- **Participation of CSOs in cross-sector bodies** remains partial and no standard selection criteria currently exist - cases of open and transparent selection have taken place, same as cases of non-transparent and highly criticized selection processes.
- Some initiatives on licensing of social services and service providers continued during 2014, however **service provision by CSOs** continues without proper funding, procedures and standards.



This project is funded by the European Union

EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)
 Civil Society Facility (CSF)

Co-funded by: