



The European Union's IPA Programme for Western Balkans and Turkey

**THEMATIC EVALUATION OF EU'S
SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE
WESTERN BALKANS (NAMELY ALBANIA,
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, CROATIA,
FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF
MACEDONIA, KOSOVO UNDER UNSCR
1244, MONTENEGRO AND SERBIA) AND
TURKEY**

Letter of Contract N°2010/254598

DRAFT FINAL REPORT 2

**Prepared by
Dragan CRNJANSKI
Petrus THEUNISZ
Marcus WILKE
Zehra KA• APOR-DŽIHI•
Juella SHANO**

April 2012



The project is financed by the European Union



The project is implemented by IBF International Consulting
In collaboration with BAA (Spain)

TABLE OF CONTENT

Abbreviations and acronyms	4
Executive Summary	6
INTRODUCTION	6
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS	6
RECOMMENDATIONS	8
1. Introduction	12
1.1 Evaluation Purpose and Scope	12
1.2 Implementation and Methodology	13
2. Evaluation findings	15
2.1 CS Context in the WBT	15
2.2 Key Findings	18
3. Lessons Learned	30
4. Conclusions and Key Recommendations	36
4.1 Conclusions	36
4.2 Key Recommendations	38
5. ANNEXES	42
5.1 Annex I - Evaluation Matrix	42
5.2 Annex II - Summary of Phase 1 Findings	53
5.3 Annex III - Country Specific Findings	55
5.4 Annex IV - P2P – Recapitulated Findings and Conclusions	100
5.5 Annex V - Survey of WBT CSO Regional Networks	111
5.6 Annex VI - Recapitulation of Comprehensive List of EU CS Support Projects	118
5.7 Annex VII - Overview of Recommendations Related to EU Support to the WBT CS	120
5.8 Annex VIII - List of People Met (Phase 2)	137

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Acronym	Description
AL	Albania
BCSDN	Balkan Civil Society Development Network
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CARDS	Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation
CBC	Cross-Border Cooperation
CBIB+	Cross-Border Institutional Building
CfP	Call for Proposals
CS	Civil Society
CFCU	Central Finance and Contracts Unit
CSF	Civil Society Facility
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DIS	Decentralised Implementation System
DG ELARG	Directorate General for Enlargement
EC	European Commission
ECLO	European Commission Liaison Office
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EQ	Evaluation Question
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
EUR	Euro
HR	Croatia
IBF	IBF International Consulting
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
JC	Judgment Criteria
Kosovo	Kosovo (this designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of independence)
LAG	Local Advisory Group
LOD	Reinforcement of Local Democracy
MB	Multi-Beneficiary
MBP	Multi-Beneficiary Programme
ME	Montenegro
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIPD(s)	Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document(s)
MK	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
MS	Member State
NA	Needs Assessment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NP	National Programme (IPA)
NIPAC	National IPA Coordinator
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PHARE	Poland and Hungary Assistance for Economic Restructuring
P2P	People to People
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
RDA	Regional Development Agency
RED	Regional Economic Development
ROM	Results-Oriented Monitoring

Acronym	Description
RS	Republic of Serbia
SAPD	Stabilisation-Association Process Dialogue
SEIO	Serbian European Integration Office
SECO	Sector Civil Society Organisation
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
SWAPs	Sector-Wide Approach Programmes
TA	Technical Assistance
TACSO	Technical Assistance for Civil Society
ToR	Terms of Reference
TR	Turkey
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
TAIB	Transition Assistance and Institutional Building
WBT	Western Balkans and Turkey

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The primary objectives of the thematic evaluation of the EU's support to Civil Society (CS) in the Western Balkans¹ and Turkey (WBT) have been to:

- § Provide findings and recommendations to assist DG ELARG in the programming and implementation of EU pre-accession assistance to CS in candidate and potential candidate countries with a view to improving the instruments available to best respond to policy objectives and improve the performance of financial assistance; and
- § Assess the performance of financial assistance in achieving its objectives in relation to its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The main findings and conclusions below comprise first a brief recapitulation of the findings of Phase 1 (assessment of the Intervention Logic), followed by the findings and conclusions stemming from the findings of Phase 2 (Performance Assessment).

With regard to the Intervention Logic, the strategic and programme level objectives of EU assistance to CS in the WBT are in line with the Copenhagen Criteria for Accession. The Copenhagen Criteria are appropriately reflected in these objectives. These are further supported by a significant financial assistance allocation, although budgetary allocations for WBT CS support are still below real needs.

No disruption has been observed in the transition from, or linkages between pre-IPA and IPA national programmes and instruments, although the EU's support on a regional (multi-beneficiary, MB) level has been strongly boosted and structured under IPA. Coordination and the participatory approach to policy and strategy formulation and programming have, in general, been significantly improved and reinforced under IPA. However, this is less true with regard to the support to CS.

Although the strategic and programming objectives are accurate and realistic, they sporadically lack measurability. This is a weakness caused by the as yet insufficiently developed dialogue between the EU and national authorities towards developing a more structured and better-shared partnership approach to CS support.

This weakness is also reflected in a relative lack of flexibility in adapting to the evolving needs of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in relation to:

- § their capacity building; and
- § the objective of supporting the stronger involvement of CSOs in effective national socio-economic development.

¹ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (this designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of independence), Montenegro and Serbia.

One reason for this relative lack of flexibility is that EU support to WBT CS has been contained almost exclusively within IPA Component I.² Stronger CSO participation should therefore be supported in Cross-Border Cooperation programmes (CBC) under IPA Component II, along with support for CSO involvement under IPA Components III, IV and V.

This limitation has also had a detrimental effect on the EU's capacity to better prioritise its CS support.

CSOs' participation in their needs assessment and strategy selection has been significantly improved under IPA but it is now recommended to take a decisive step, by allowing and supporting CSOs' involvement in a much wider and more diversified range of domains covered by all IPA components.

With regard to Performance, the planned administrative and organisational structures have generally been set up, but have highly variable effectiveness and importance. This uneven situation from one country to another depends on a number of factors, in particular:

- § institutional capacity and achieved maturity (or not) of the national institutional CSO support partners;
- § overall soundness of the country's governance, which in certain cases directly affects the effectiveness of the support to CSOs (absence of a more enabling institutional environment, biased position of national institutions in charge of CS, etc...).

In this overall WBT CS landscape, in which the situation differs from one country to another, the introduction of Technical Assistance for Civil Society (TACSO) and its regional and national activities has already been favourably perceived, and its role should be further reinforced.

In addition, both external and internal follow-up and monitoring of CS programmes and projects are not yet satisfactory, not only in terms of monitoring tools, structures and mechanisms, but also regarding the need to use monitoring feedback for CSOs' capacity building and for their projects' improvement and reinforcement.

Nevertheless, the EU's priority objective of supporting the development and capacity building of WBT CSOs has, to a significant extent, been achieved. In particular, the EU has played a decisive role, both in the period following the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia (post-conflict reconstruction) and during the current process of reconciliation and preparation for EU accession.

EU support for the capacity building of CSOs should be pursued and reinforced, with a particular focus on their further empowerment, as well as on enhancing their role in the enlargement strategy and beyond. This would comprise, above all, addressing certain fundamental needs:

- § Going a step further, from "reconstruction" to "reconciliation"; and
- § Developing the CSOs' capacity to fully participate in the design and implementation of national socio-economic development strategy.

A particular emphasis should therefore be placed on the CSOs' potential role as stakeholders and actors in territorial (local, regional and cross-border) and socio-economic development.

As concerns the outreach to CSOs, neither the EU nor other international donors have yet managed to reach a more appropriate balance in supporting not only large, but also weaker and smaller CSOs. Small grassroots CSOs could be more easily reached and supported through simple thematic (micro-

² Not counting EIDHR.

grant) Calls for Proposals (CfP), focussing on service delivery in certain fundamental issues of day-to-day local and regional (including cross-border) concern, such as the environment and pollution, support to refugees, vulnerable groups, or discriminated communities.

This confirms that the architecture of the EU's support (i.e. the mix of different instruments), is still insufficiently balanced in terms of its focus and formal participation conditions (rather than in terms of the type of assistance as such).

The need for over-arching regional scale support which offers an integrated combination of non-financial and financial assistance has now been met. This support is currently provided by the Civil Society Facility (CSF), which should be further reinforced by more tightly inter-connecting its constituent components.

Regarding the choice of a de-concentrated or Decentralised Implementation System (DIS), neither is more or less conducive than the other for EU support to CSOs. The real challenge is rather to further reinforce EU assistance in order to empower the CSOs, thus leading to their stronger involvement in national socio-economic development and increasingly tangible contributions to the further consolidation of good governance in WBT countries.

The future sustainability and reinforcement of current achievements will depend to a significant extent on the possibility of fine-tuning existing instruments and programmes, as well as designing new ones that would allow the CSOs to take a more significant part in socio-economic decision-making and implementation. This would allow a stronger potential impact:

- § on structural issues of local and regional development (including CBC);
- § in sector-wide strategies and programming; and
- § as an overarching driving force for the needed reconciliation throughout the Western Balkans, an issue of evident importance for the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

Finally, further impact and sounder sustainability of the EU's support to WBT CSOs are still hampered by constraints of a primarily institutional character, such as an insufficiently consensual dialogue between the EU and the national institutional stakeholders in charge of managing EU issues. Sounder sustainability and deeper effects of the EU's support to CSOs depend on several conditions:

- § reinforcement and intensification of the MB (CSF) support approach;
- § diversification of thematic programmes in order to build CSOs' capacities in reconciliation and participation in territorial and socio-economic development (including in sector programmes, if introduced under IPA); and
- § further implementation of thematic grant schemes in fields of strong local interest and facilitation of CSO access to them, by allowing for significant simplification of procedures, including the possibility to use local (national) languages instead of English.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The table below recapitulates the two key recommendations that result from the main findings, lessons learned and conclusions of this evaluation, followed by a proposal to consider wider and more diversified support to WBT CSOs in the future.

Weakness or shortcoming		Recommendation
1	The current level of (external and internal) monitoring of CS programmes and projects (including CSF components) is not yet optimal and the information generated from their internal monitoring is not sufficiently focused on results and impacts. As a consequence, CSOs' accountability to their constituencies and the general public has suffered.	<p>Strengthen external and internal monitoring of EU support to CS in the WBT, including further building up of EU, regional, national and CSO (external and internal) monitoring capacities. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Ensure appropriate mainstreaming of the CSF's overall and specific objectives in relevant external and internal monitoring, in order to set up appropriate monitoring indicators on the Results and Impact levels. (ii) Ensure inclusion of an agreed set of indicators directly related to CS issues in ROM and other IPA regional and IPA national (external and internal) monitoring activities. In particular, include indicators of the contribution of EU-supported CSOs to the achievement of the Copenhagen Political Criteria and the objectives of the Enlargement Strategy and Civil Society Strategy by accession and pre-accession countries. (iii) Strengthen both external and internal CS monitoring and ensure their more systematic application.
2	EU support to CSOs in the WBT is not sufficiently "balanced", as the outreach and support to small, rural grassroots CSOs is still insufficient.	<p>Promote the wider use of geographical / sectoral or thematic small grant schemes and introduce more flexibility in their conditions. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Ensure the inclusion of at least one small grant scheme per IPA beneficiary per year under the CSF national programmes. (ii) Promote, under such small grant schemes, less demanding eligibility criteria, simplified application procedures, minimum co-financing requirements, and usage of local languages.

Additional proposal to consider wider and more diversified support to WBT CSOs
Support stronger participation of CS in territorial and socio-economic development of the IPA Countries (IPA Component II, CBC, sector programmes if introduced under IPA, etc.), and of their role as driving forces for further regional integration, including reconciliation (e.g. thematic support to

regional CS networks, etc).

Recommendation 1

Strengthen external and internal monitoring of EU support to CS in the WBT, including further building up of EU, regional, national and CSO external and internal monitoring capacities

Monitoring of CS programmes and projects has, in general, not yet reached a satisfactory level. More particularly, internal CS monitoring consists primarily of project-based, activity-orientated monitoring, focussing more on efficiency and less on effectiveness and impact.

The first and second phase of this evaluation have found that the introduction and further roll out of the CSF has contributed to a higher degree of coherence and consistency of EU support to CS in the WBT as far as programming and implementation are concerned. This situation is not yet reflected in the EU's and other actors' monitoring efforts. Hence, the CSF's overall and specific objectives should be "mainstreamed" in relevant internal and external monitoring carried out by the EU, the beneficiary countries, and CS itself.

The evaluation has also found that, as yet, there exists no agreed set of CS indicators to measure the contribution of EU support to CS towards the achievement of the Copenhagen Political Criteria and the objectives of the Enlargement Strategy and Civil Society Strategy in the WBT. Such a set of indicators should be developed by the EU, the beneficiary countries, and CS. They should then be included in monitoring at all levels, including the level of service contracts, large and small grants, and P2P events.

Finally, the evaluation has found that monitoring of CS support programmes and projects can still be enhanced. This will help ensure that EU and beneficiary country decision-makers, programmers and all actors that are responsible for subsequent programme and project implementation receive relevant monitoring feedback.

In this context, the TACSO Project could play a more significant role. In particular, its mandate should be widened and reinforced to include capacity building initiatives in order to strengthen CSOs' internal monitoring of EU funded projects.

Recommendation 2

Promote the wider use of geographical / sectoral or thematic small grant schemes and introduce more flexibility in their conditions

EU support to WBT CSOs has not yet managed to strike an appropriate balance between larger and smaller CSOs, due to a number of factors found in all WBT beneficiaries. In particular, the donor-driven "competitive" environment has favoured project-based empowerment and the resulting stronger growth of larger CSOs and of their corresponding fundraising capacity. The main difficulties encountered by small CSOs, very often located in outlying rural areas, are difficulty in accessing information on EU grant schemes, language constraints and the need to provide co-financing in order to get access to EU funds.

However, smaller local grassroots CSOs have been more effectively reached and supported through certain thematic grant schemes which focus on service delivery for a number of fundamental issues of local concern, such as environment and pollution, support to refugees, vulnerable groups, discriminated communities, etc.

In order to reduce this gap between large and small CSOs and thereby ensure a more balanced territorial and social coverage of the EU's support, it is recommended to:

- i) Further diversify grant schemes, in particular through their division into lots (sub-granting via large CSOs may contribute to improve access to information), in order to enable small CSOs to benefit from *ad hoc* capacity building assistance throughout the application process; and, in parallel
- ii) Consider the possibility to introduce more flexibility in co-financing requirements and the possibility for applicants to submit applications and deliver project reporting in the local (national) language.

Additional Proposal

Consider wider and more diversified support to WBT CSOs

While the EU's support to CS in the WBT has contributed significantly to building its operational capacity, the effective participation of CS as a fully recognised player (by both the population and the political establishment) in national reforms and socio-economic development has not yet reached a satisfactory level.

Although formal mechanisms for consultation of CS in different IPA Components already exist, or are being set up, and although a substantial part of the CSF budget is allocated to CS Partnership Programmes, aimed at increasing CS capacity to influence policy and participate in decision making processes, CSOs still need to be further supported to take up their due share of responsibility, both in programming and implementing national socio-economic development initiatives, and in further contributing to regional integration, including reconciliation.

This wider and more diversified support to the CSOs would lead to benefits stemming from their ability to transcend national and political boundaries (in support of regional integration and reconciliation). In this context, particular attention could be devoted to the support of regional CS networks on the one hand, and the potential leverage of certain other EU regional (MB) projects and institutions such as the RCC, ReSPA and CBIB, on the other hand.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Evaluation Purpose and Scope

The **primary objective** of this thematic evaluation has been to provide findings and recommendations to assist the Directorate General for Enlargement (DG ELARG) of the European Commission (EC) in the programming and implementation of European Union (EU) pre-accession assistance to support Civil Society (CS) in candidate and potential candidate countries with a view to improving the instruments available to respond best to policy objectives and improve performance of financial assistance.

The evaluation has also comprised an appraisal of the performance of the EU's financial assistance in this field in achieving its objectives, and namely its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

Its **specific objectives** have been the following:

- § To provide an assessment of the intervention logic of EU assistance to support CS in the Western Balkans and Turkey (WBT);
- § To provide a judgement on the performance (either actual or expected) of assistance, particularly as regards its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability; and,
- § Based on relevant findings, conclusions and lessons learned as per 1) and 2) above, to provide relevant operational recommendations for: (a) programming future EU assistance and (b) outlining corrective measures, where applicable, to improve the implementation and monitoring of on-going and future actions.

It is important to underline that, in the framework of the overall guidance and follow-up of the evaluation mission, DG ELARG/E4 has strongly insisted on the need for the evaluation to focus on the overall impact of EU support to the WBT CS, beyond the – and as an ultimate synthesis of – evaluation findings, the structure of which is fully in line with the directions provided by the Terms of Reference (ToR) (evaluation structure and sequence, list of Evaluation Questions - EQs - etc.).

As concerns its scope, the ToR stipulated that the evaluation should cover a number of instruments and programmes, listed in its Annex I, but also specified that this was “*an indicative list of the programmes for each country to be covered by this evaluation*”. DG ELARG/E4 requested that, in the wider framework of Inception Report 2, (i) a full overview of all existing projects be prepared by the evaluation team (past and under implementation, within the scope defined by the ToR), and (ii) the sampling criteria be applied to this (as) extensive (as possible) overview in order to propose a sample of projects for further evaluation.

A comprehensive list of the EU-funded programmes and projects in support of CSOs in the WBT was therefore prepared in the first stage of Phase 2, including not only the projects of the Instruments CARDS 2005 and 2006, PHARE 2005 and 2006, IPA 2007, 2008 and 2009, and thematic programmes in support of CS in Turkey (TR), but also all wider available information on projects in support of CS funded in the framework of other Instruments (CARDS prior to 2005 and IPA after 2009, EIDHR, etc.).

On this basis, it was possible to propose and approve a sample of 65 projects, which was used as a reference framework in Phase 2 fieldwork. These projects have already been implemented or are being so in all WBT beneficiaries, and include several multi-beneficiary (MB) grant contracts currently

funded in the wider framework of the Civil Society Facility (CSF) (IPA 2008)³. The recapitulated information on the comprehensive list of project is presented in Annex VI “Recapitulation of Comprehensive List of EU CS Support Projects”.

1.2 Implementation and Methodology

As concerns the implementation, and in line with the approved methodology and work plan, the evaluation was implemented in two phases, each resulting in one Final Report.

- **Report 1** covered the assessment of the intervention logic followed in the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) 2007-2009 national programmes and the IPA multi-beneficiary programmes (MBP) under Component I. This included the MBPs within the CSF: TACSO, the People 2 People (P2P) programme and Partnership Actions⁴.
- The present **Report 2** covers EU pre-accession financial assistance provided to CS under IPA 2007-2009 and under the last two years (2005-2006) of pre-IPA assistance to the WBT.

Both Phases have been subject to an inception period and corresponding reporting, which has provided for more flexibility in the evaluation’s methodology and in the operational organisation.

As concerns the methodology, its main points are underlined below, in order to clarify the bases on which the findings, conclusions and recommendations were reached throughout the second Phase fieldwork.

The deskwork already undertaken during Phase 1 was continued throughout Phase 2 in order to (i) compile and complete the comprehensive list of projects and their proposed sample and (ii) study the sampled projects to the extent allowed by the available documentation. Additional documentary analysis was then performed after the fieldwork, during the preparation of the evaluation synthesis.

In spite of its relatively reduced time frame, the fieldwork allowed applying all possible and available means for evidence collection, in all visited WBT countries:

- interviews (briefing and/or debriefing) with the EC personnel in charge, both at the Headquarters and in all EU Delegations in the WBT;
- working meetings with the key national institutional stakeholders in charge of the CS dialogue and support, in all WBT countries;
- interviews with TACSO core team in BiH and with its country advisers in all the WBT countries;
- working meetings with representatives of major CSOs in all WBT countries and in particular those that have acted as key players in the current EU-WBT CS cooperation (in particular in BiH and in TR);
- where and whenever possible (in particular in Kosovo, ME, MK and RS), plenary meetings in form of focus groups;

³ A more detailed account of the sample preparation and contents is provided in the Inception Report 2, dated 7 October 2011.

⁴ Only two components of the CSF: TACSO and Partnership Actions were evaluated in depth. The evaluation focuses on the support granted under the MBPs 2008, and (partly) 2009, implemented under CSF. Although the P2P programme had been foreseen to be within the scope of the evaluation, the present report does not provide a comprehensive evaluation of the P2P programme.

- working meetings with the stakeholders of the projects listed in the retained sample, in all WBT countries, completed or replaced by, in case of their non-availability (in particular for the projects already completed), meetings with other CSOs having benefited from EU support;
- ad hoc survey of all the regional WBT CS networks that took part in the RCC-TACSO December 2012 conference in Sarajevo (see the table below), in order to obtain their viewpoints over certain key questions and issues addressed throughout the evaluation. This survey was facilitated by TACSO and RCC and the responses of the surveyed CS Networks are presented in Annex V “Survey of Regional CSO Networks”.

The combined essential outcomes of these different evaluation methods contributed to weigh, retain and formulate all major findings and conclusions of this evaluation: they were all complementary one to another and none of them could be considered as more decisive than the others.

In addition, the evaluation team took the opportunity of all WBT CS-related events, in order to widen and complete the range of evaluation fieldwork tools, as recapitulated in the table below:

WBT CSO Event	Place and Date	Purpose and feedback to evaluation
P2P Study Tour “Volunteering Policies”	Brussels, 19-22/09/11	Participation as observer in the wider frame of the CSF appraisal, with the focus on P2P.
TACSO LAGs Conference	Pristina, 24-26/10/11	Participation on TACSO invitation to present the evaluation’s Phase 1 findings and first ad hoc consultations concerning the intended findings & recommendations.
P2P Study Tour “Free Media in a World in Transition: Ownership, Funding and the Role of Civil Society”	Istanbul, 17/11/11	Participation as observer in the wider frame of the CSF appraisal, with the focus on P2P.
“Civil Society Lost in Translation? Donor Strategies & Practices in Supporting Civil Society Development in the Balkans” Balkans Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN)	Brussels, 21/11/11	Participation in order to take into consideration key findings and conclusions of the study carried out by the BCSDN and presented at this event.
RCC – TACSO Conference “Regional Civil Society Organisations’ Networks in the IPA Countries”	Sarajevo, 12-14/12/12/11	Survey (by e-mail) of all the regional CSO networks that took part in this Conference (available inputs and time schedule of evaluation did not allow for direct participation in the Conference).

It is underlined that the above-listed TACSO LAGs Conference in Pristina allowed the evaluators, not only to present the evaluation’s Phase 1 findings, but also to meet a very large of WBT CSO stakeholders and discuss with them the preliminary lines and orientations of the second Phase findings and recommendations. Moreover, this event also allowed the fieldwork in Kosovo to be organised in form of several focus groups, thanks to the availability on the spot of the targeted stakeholders.

Additional information concerning the fieldwork scope is provided in Annex III sections presenting the country-specific findings.

2. EVALUATION FINDINGS

This chapter presents the key findings of Phase 2 related to eight Evaluation Questions (EQs), as defined in the ToR⁵. However, in order to present a wider overview of the evaluation's findings:

- § **Annex II** presents the summary of Phase 1 findings, contained in the approved Report 1 (July 2011);
- § **Annex III** presents the wider country-specific findings of Phase 2.

2.1 CS Context in the WBT

Following the findings and recommendations of Report 1, which dealt primarily with the strategic, financial and administrative framework of EU assistance to CS in the WBT,⁶ this report provides an assessment of the impact of the EU's support to CS in this region.

It therefore provides answers to important questions of relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness, impact and sustainability, as well as an indication of the extent to which the assistance is balanced (i.e. in terms of a variety of instruments and outreach to different types of organisations). The report also provides inputs on ways for improving the assistance framework towards better outreach, effectiveness and impact of the assistance.

This section (2.1) outlines the context within which CS functions in the WBT, taking as a basis the comprehensive Needs Assessment (NA) carried out very recently by TACSO. In the framework of this Needs Assessment, specific country reports are accompanied with the regional report, which provides information on the CSO development context, their capacities and needs. These documents' primary purpose is to serve as input for developing strategies for Technical Assistance (TA) provided by TACSO, but they are also a valuable resource for understanding the context and challenges CS faces in the WBT today.

The box below contains an overview of the situation in the WBT regarding CS development that constitutes the background information for analysis and argumentation behind the findings of this Report.

⁵ 2.4.2.2. "Specific objective 2: Relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of financial assistance": Judgement (Required output 2.1 as per section 2.5 of the ToR).

⁶ See main findings of the Report 1 in Annex III.

Enabling environment for development of CS in the WBT

The Western Balkans region is currently undergoing significant changes in the process of democratisation and reforms towards EU accession. A range of strategic reforms have been undertaken in each of the countries of the Western Balkans, including adoption of legislation and strategies for improvement of all sectors of governance, with increasing participation of CS actors in the process of consultation in decision making processes. TR is also facing improvements in the recognition of CSOs, however slow and limited the progress is. The Department of Associations within the Ministry of Interior is increasingly improving its outreach and transparency towards its clients, although it is not yet fully supportive towards CS initiatives.

Legislative and institutional framework for CS in the WBT

All countries of the WBT region have adopted legislation that enables the exercise of freedom of association, by establishing standards and frameworks for CSO registration. The existing legislation has been in the process of improvement, and the period of 2010-2011 saw the revision and improvement of such legislation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (MK), Kosovo and the Republic of Serbia (RS). However, some countries, such as Albania (AL), still struggle to create clear frameworks for procedures, like financial reporting and taxation. TR struggles with ensuring that freedom of association and speech is respected. According to the EC 2011 Progress Report *"[c]ivil society organisations and human rights defenders often face prosecution and legal proceedings on charges of terrorist propaganda during demonstrations and protest meetings"*. The TACSO NA report also noted that, "CSOs perceived as promoting a politically oppositional discourse against state ideology report that they are discriminated against by the authorities and are unofficially blacklisted". Following the improvement of the legislation for CS, the process of registration has also improved, especially in terms of efficiency of the registration process. However, challenges to efficiency and effectiveness of the registration process are reported in Kosovo, where the procedures are still done manually, while the CSOs to be registered in TR face more restrictive legislation, especially foreign associations. This is because all foreign associations need to go through a procedure of consultation between the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which often results in the rejection of applications.

There have been measures to strengthen and institutionalise cooperation between government and CS in the WBT through different policy documents, such as Strategies and Rules and Guidelines for cooperation with CS and specific agencies for support to CS. Such specific strategic documents and institutional mechanisms have not yet been established in Kosovo or TR, while RS does have the institutional mechanism (Agency for Cooperation with CS) but has not developed the policy for cooperation with CS yet.

Nevertheless, the TACSO NA reports reiterate the need for further work on improving the capacities of governments to adequately include CS in policy processes, and particularly to improve cooperation and partnerships between the two sectors. While cooperation with, and inclusion of CS in policy-making processes is increasing, there is a strong need across the region to institutionalise this cooperation and inclusion and to harmonise the approach and extent to which CS is involved.

Financing CS activities

The governments across the region do provide funding for CS. The amounts and extent of transparency for funding, however, varies from country to country. The TACSO NA notes that the funding for CS in TR is not regular, while the state resources are granted to certain CSOs by means of project partnerships, rather than grant allocations or service contracts. In other countries, the funding is generally unregulated, *ad hoc* and, in many countries, the granting is not transparent. On a positive note, facts from some countries, such as Croatia (HR), MK and Montenegro (ME) are showing significant steps forward in the harmonisation of mechanisms for the disbursement of funds in a more transparent manner.

Capacities of CSOs

CSOs across the WBT region have received significant TA, funding and capacity building support in all areas of organisational life by a variety of international and local CSO support mechanisms, including EU-funded ones. Thanks to organisational development and programme and governance support offered by these initiatives, a large number of organisations have increased their skills, knowledge and expertise. Such interventions have thus contributed to a general increase in the quality and outreach of CS organisations, and therefore to their impact on the development of WBT societies. However, the NA documents indicate that the CSOs, especially those in rural and/or remote regions continue to struggle with organising their work following standards and generally accepted approaches to CSO work. Organisations generally struggle with recruiting and retaining experienced staff and experts, particularly in management areas, such as project/programme development, financial compliance and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). Moreover, lack of stable funding, decreasing donor support and the on-going need to fundraise and compete for funds create significant challenges for sustainability of these organisations and contribute to enlarging the gap between the large and small CSOs.

Organisations in the WBT are increasingly recognising the need to network and raise their profile and expertise in sectors in which they are active. CSOs are increasingly creating links and networks both within the countries and among the countries in the region and in the EU. Different EU programmes for dialogue between EU organisations and those from the regions have contributed to increased interest and understanding of the value of countrywide, regional and European networks.

EU Assistance to CS in WBT comprises a comprehensive set of interventions aiming at the empowerment of CS, in order for the CSOs to be actively involved in the process of political, social and economic reform in the region. In this way, the EU contributes to the strengthening of democracy and reconciliation, with special focus on fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria⁷. This EU support is placed in a complex socio-economic and political WBT context and addresses a range of partners from national governments and CSOs, whereby different instruments, such as TA, micro and macro grant schemes, P2P, etc. have been applied towards the goal of building a vibrant CS in the WBT.

This section examines the performance of EU assistance in terms of administrative and monitoring structures, its effectiveness and impact. It follows the sequence of EQs set out in the ToR for Phase 2 of this evaluation. The analytical work within each EQ is based on a set of related evaluation criteria and indicators as detailed in Annex I “Evaluation Matrix”.

⁷ The Copenhagen Criteria require that the candidate country must have achieved: stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.

2.2 Key Findings

EQ 1: Are the administrative and organisational structures in place, ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance?

Summary Answer

Administrative and organisational structures needed in order to streamline the EU support to the CSOs are generally in place in all WBT beneficiaries, but the degree of their contribution to an efficient and effective implementation of the financial assistance varies from one beneficiary to another. This depends on the observed country-specific circumstances and conditions, as briefly recapitulated below.

All WBT countries do have functional administrative and organisational structures in place. Programming and implementation of assistance modalities in Decentralised Implementation System (DIS) countries (HR, MK and TR) are decentralised and strict application of contracting and financing procedures is in place. However, in these DIS countries, the administrative procedures are often perceived as too cumbersome and delaying effective project execution.

In particular, DIS in TR presents certain problems, directly impacting the effectiveness of the EU support to CS. The Central Finance and Contract Unit (CFCU) is generally regarded as a very bureaucratic and rigid institution that imposes strict and complicated procedures and regulations. This situation creates significant problems for CSOs, since the EU cannot easily transcend DIS in order to enhance its support to the CSOs. The impact of this bureaucratic context is such that small and/or human rights advocacy CS organisations are in practice deprived of EU-funded opportunities to build their capacities. This in turn widens the gap between the organisations that do receive the grants and those which do not – favouring, if not creating, a sort of elitism of “big” CSOs. A major new national CSO support programme contracted with a Consortium of strong CSOs will now be expected to fill this gap by setting up a CSO-operated “interface” platform of support to both Turkish CSOs and the national government bodies in charge of the CS sector.

Management of IPA assistance in other Western Balkan countries remains within a centralised system for implementation of assistance (RS, Bosnia and Herzegovina - BiH, ME, AL, Kosovo) led by the EUDs in the respective countries. All these countries have established their roadmaps for DIS, and their respective National IPA Coordinator (NIPAC) offices lead the project preparation and implementation on behalf of their governments. In principle, the corresponding programming process is done in consultation with CS representatives.

In particular the SEIO / SECO process in RS, supported by TACSO, stands out as an example of an increasingly efficient and effective involvement of CS in the programming of EU-funding. The SEIO / SECO process reflects well the minimum standards for consultation of CS on EU affairs⁸. Still, CS stakeholders have varying levels of satisfaction with the extent to which strategic decisions have taken their views sufficiently into account in the programming process. Furthermore, CS representatives report that consultations have been rather formal and one-off events without a sufficient continuity to create the momentum of a real participatory process.

⁸ This was reported in Report 1.

The strategic decision by the EU to promote a sector wide approach, whereby CS representatives would also be involved through consultations in the preparation of different sectoral strategies, has been anticipated as a positive step forward towards a more constructive approach to programming and implementation of assistance to CSOs. This is especially positive as an alternative to mainly bilateral consultations, thanks to wider discussions involving all interested parties, and is therefore a step forward to a real participatory process and an opportunity for all partners to provide their more consistent input to the IPA priorities.

As concerns the creation and capacity building of the governmental bodies in charge of the dialogue with the CS in all IPA countries, their actual development and degree of effectiveness vary from one country to another. EU-funded TA projects have been implemented in BiH to build capacities of such governmental bodies, and, under the CSF, RS has requested IPA 2011 financial assistance support for, among other projects, the consolidation of the Serbian Office for Cooperation with CS.

However, these projects have had varying degrees of success in different countries. More particularly, a recent TA project in BiH has not attained its initial key objective, due above all to the increasingly neutralising impact of the institutional and political structure of the country on all structural efforts aiming at promoting good governance and pushing the development of the state forward. In TR, the EU Delegation (EUD) has invested the resources into organising two rounds of consultations with CS during the development of the CS strategy for the country. The consultations reached out to a range of organisations in different regions and have been considered an example of good practice of participatory planning.

Finally, the introduction of TACSO and its regional and national activities have already been perceived as an “upstream” reinforcement to the actual organisational frameworks on a national level. Still, this TACSO potential is not yet fully utilised.

EQ 2: To what extent are the monitoring mechanisms and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?

Summary Answer

Generally, the monitoring of CS programmes and projects has not yet reached a satisfactory level. This concerns both monitoring structures and mechanisms per se, and effective contribution of monitoring towards CSOs’ strengthened capacities and their projects’ enhancement. Due to lack of available means, internal monitoring (whether within DIS or in centralised management) necessarily has to focus on larger projects only or/and the projects that show serious deficiencies. Moreover, for basically the same reasons, external ROM monitoring (including ROM TA under DIS in TR) cannot cover very small projects. This clearly excludes smaller projects such as are frequently found in this domain. Finally, “self-monitoring” by the CSOs has been very rarely observed within the evaluation scope and coverage.

Monitoring of assistance to CS in the WBT is generally conducted on three levels:

- § monitoring by the national authorities in DIS⁹ or by the EC in centralised management and for multi-beneficiary projects;
- § in all countries except HR and MK, some ROM, depending on the available resources. The impact of Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) remains therefore marginal due to its very limited coverage of CSO projects;

⁹ This monitoring by national authorities (CFCU for administrative and financial monitoring and Ministry of European Affairs for technical monitoring) is reinforced in Turkey by an ad-hoc ROM technical assistance project.

§ in all the countries, the EUDs (the EC Liaison Office, ECLO, in the case of Kosovo) monitor the performance of programmes supporting CS through various available means, including participation in steering committees, and various events, as well as field visits. As an example of good practice observed in RS, the contractor of the Serbia-EU Civil Society Dialogue project has developed a comprehensive monitoring manual and methodology that is specific for grant monitoring. Finally, TACSO is increasingly involved in monitoring of certain CSO projects in the WBT, but this component of its activities needs to be further developed and spread.

Different forms and levels of CS projects' monitoring in the WBT do not succeed in covering a critical mass of different CSOs or of all relevant programmes. In addition, internal monitoring sporadically practised by certain CSO projects is still far from being sufficiently widespread, and it does not follow a sufficiently unified methodology. Such a methodology would allow, however, the broadest possible use of its findings and streamlined them as more tangible feedback for the design and programming of EU support in this domain.

Nevertheless, TACSO has managed to introduce some pilot monitoring interventions, particularly in support to certain EUDs (for example in BIH and AL), including some capacity building of CSOs in the area of M&E. This effort is positive, providing CSOs with needed new skills, and promoting monitoring as a tool to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the projects. TACSO should therefore be encouraged to reinforce this component of its activities on both national and regional levels.

Finally, in all its current forms of implementation, monitoring rarely follows its full cycle, with insufficient communication of its findings and recommendations to – and take-up by – the directly concerned project actors and stakeholders. This shortcoming deepens the overall weaknesses of the procedures that are currently applied.

EQ 3: To what extent has/is EC financial assistance effectively contributed/ing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities, including the development of the WBT CSOs and building their capacities, in particular with regard to their role within the enlargement strategy?

Summary Answer

The key structural and priority EU objective of supporting the development and building the capacity of the WBT CSOs has been achieved to a significant extent, thanks above all to the combined support and efforts of all international donors. In particular, in all Western Balkan countries born from the partition of former Yugoslavia, the EU support to the CSOs was fundamental in the initial post-war and reconstruction period (pre-IPA), in the absence of a more conducive and consensual cooperation dialogue between the EU and the then institutional and political stakeholders. Support has since been pursued under IPA.

This EU support to the capacity building of CSOs should, however, still be reinforced, bearing in mind the fundamental needs of (i) moving from “reconstruction” to “reconciliation” and, (ii) developing the CSOs' capacity to fully participate in the national development strategy and its implementation, including their role as actors of territorial (local, regional, cross-border) and socio-economic development (as channelled via EU IPA II, III, IV and V).

The Western Balkan countries emerged from one-party communist rule at the beginning of the '90s. This opened space for development of CS. However, the conflicts that followed the dissolution of Yugoslavia have stalled the development of CS until the end of the '90s, when this sector started to flourish with the support of the international community in general and especially of the EU. In particular, thanks to sustained EU financial assistance to CS in BiH, HR, MK, ME, Kosovo and RS, both under CARDS/PHARE and IPA, all countries have achieved relatively good progress in terms of approximating the Copenhagen Political Criteria. This includes protection and promotion of human rights, fundamental freedoms, rule of law and protection of minorities.

EU financial assistance to CS has also helped the European integration process to advance. The role ME CS has played in pushing ME's accession candidacy forward is well documented, as is the role of RS CS in assisting the government in preparing the Questionnaire for the Commission's Opinion. In Kosovo CSOs drive the European integration process forward (both outside and inside the government as former CS activists have taken numerous staff positions in the Kosovo government). In addition, EU financial assistance to CS has certainly helped both the target countries to build enabling environments for a more vibrant CS and CS to build strong capacities to act as counterparts to both the EU institutions and to their own governments.

CS in AL has developed differently. Even though this country did not see any armed conflict, the legacy of the Albanian isolationist communist regime has had an enormous impact on the slow development and recognition of CS in the transition of the country to democracy. During the internal upheavals in the second half of the '90s, CS was not able to exercise its role. However, with the beginning of the EU integration process and a significant increase in international support, CS started to take on a more substantial role.

Finally, TR has undergone significant social, economic and political changes, also taking on an increasingly important role as a regional and international actor. However, CS in TR still faces serious obstacles to fulfilling its role in democratic processes.

Within this overall context and taking into account developmental challenges in the WBT, it can be concluded that EU support to CS has indeed been fundamental as regards, in particular:

- § EU financial support has assisted the governments and CS through the promotion of an enabling institutional, legal and financial framework for a more vibrant CS, and through initiatives to establish functional relations between CS and government, particularly in favour of inclusion of CS in decision-making processes. CSOs are at present increasingly able to participate in policy-making processes, and to provide their due contribution into draft legislation and policies.
- § EU financial support (both pre-IPA and IPA) has been instrumental in building the capacities of CSOs and their empowerment to take on a more proactive role in the democratisation processes in their respective countries. The EU has contributed to strengthening capacities, aptitudes, coverage, focus and operational capacities of CSOs. This has enabled them to respond more adequately to the needs of their beneficiaries. Introduction of structured project frameworks, profiling of organisations in specific sectors and overall professionalization of organisations have all positively affected the overall recognition of CSOs as important counterparts of the governments in different areas, and especially as service providers in areas of important need where the actions and means of governments have not yet reached a satisfactory level.
- § It can therefore be said that the EU support helps CS in achieving its goals in areas linked to the EU strategic objectives, and builds CS capacities in providing services, with emphasis on social services to vulnerable groups. The overall EU contribution has therefore been considered as positive.

This EU support to the capacity building of CSOs should, however, still be reinforced, with a particular focus on their empowerment and role in the enlargement strategy, and bearing in mind the fundamental needs of (i) moving from "reconstruction" to "reconciliation" and, (ii) developing the CSOs' capacity to fully participate in the national development strategy and its implementation, including their role as actors of territorial (local, regional, cross-border) and socio-economic development (as channelled via EU IPA II, III, IV and V). Moreover, EU support should focus on certain key topics for which the CSOs need determined and strong support, such as on anti-discrimination, human rights, vulnerable groups and minorities.

EQ 4: Is assistance balanced in the sense of coverage of type, size and profile of organisations supported?

Summary Answer

The EU support to WBT CSOs has not yet managed to strike a more appropriate balance between larger and smaller CSOs, due to a number of factors found in all WBT beneficiaries. In particular, the donor-driven “competitive” environment (involving also other main donors) has favoured project-based empowerment and a resulting stronger growth of larger CSOs and of their corresponding fundraising capacity. These larger CSOs are consequently more responsive to all Calls for Proposals (CfPs) and are more experienced and better equipped to submit formally eligible applications.

Smaller, local grassroots CSOs can be more effectively reached and supported only through certain thematic (micro) grant schemes which focus on service delivery for a number of fundamental issues of local concern, such as environment and pollution, support to refugees, vulnerable groups, discriminated communities, etc.

While EQ3 addressed the overall contribution of EU assistance to the development of CS, this EQ4 invites a critical assessment of the balance of this EU assistance. It is generally agreed that the EU assistance has contributed to the development of CS across the WBT region. However, the evaluation’s findings point to the fact that the EU assistance is not balanced to a satisfactory level in terms of including different types, sizes and profiles of organisations. This is mainly due to three decisive factors:

- § the formal administrative procedures and framework for the assistance are very rigid and demanding, requiring CSOs to have not only a very well developed level of knowledge and skills, but also an appropriate “organisational profile”, in order to be able to apply for EU funds. The application procedure itself remains fairly complex, requiring very good command of bureaucratic terminology and, in particular, a capacity to use the English language, which discourages smaller organisations from applying, as they do not have the capacity and human resources to respond to such demanding tasks;
- § the EU funding stipulates that, in order to be eligible, potential beneficiary organisations ensure up to 20% of total project cost. This is a significant obstacle for small organisations that do not necessarily possess these funds and are not able to utilise higher amounts of funding due to their low absorption capacity (in particular lack of administrative and human resources);
- § small grass-roots organisations often do not have timely information on available funds as they most often operate in remote rural areas, where information is scarce. Increasing use of internet and communication technologies, and EU efforts to reach out to more remote areas have achieved some results, but are still not sufficient to benefit a satisfactory share of grass-roots organisations.

These factors contribute to deepening the gap between large and small organisations, whereby small organisations are further marginalised and ultimately some of them disappear from the CS scene. In addition, this situation further favours certain stronger organisations, because they benefit from a major share of available EC funding, which in turn puts them in the position to be able to win further support. This keeps the other smaller organisations in an unfavourable condition of not being able to compete because their competencies, track record and achievements are not valued appropriately. In this way, the EU financial assistance to CS has contributed to creating and consolidating a “market” that consists of a relatively small number of highly empowered CSOs, a larger number of moderately empowered CSOs, and a very large number of small CSOs that have not been able to access EU funding at all.

Nevertheless, there is wide agreement that instruments such as EIDHR have managed to reach out more efficiently to smaller (human rights based) organisations that would probably not have otherwise received any EU support¹⁰.

There have been efforts by the EU to improve the balance of assistance through dividing CfPs into two lots aimed at enabling the smaller organisations to apply. A good example of such practice is found in ME, where CSF National Programme (NP) included micro grant schemes: through a CfP, two Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) were selected to implement IPA micro grant schemes for small and remote CSOs. The expectation is therefore that the latter will be enabled to apply through simplified procedures and in the local language, thereby removing two major obstacles to participation. A similar approach is reportedly being planned in RS.

Within a similar context, but with a much more ambitious overall strategic objective, an important EU-funded programme (grant contract) will be implemented by a consortium of larger Turkish CSOs. It will focus on building the capacities of both the government and of the CSOs in CS-related issues, and on providing grants to smaller CSOs.

This concept of interfacing larger “first-line” CSOs to implement programmes with (sub) grant schemes can be considered a potentially convenient and pragmatic orientation. However, it has two basic weaknesses: (i) risk of domination and “indoctrination” of smaller CSOs by the large CSO implementing the programme as a whole and (ii) possibly biased screening and selection of beneficiary CSOs by the government bodies in charge of programming, in particular as concerns human rights advocacy CSOs.

EQ 5: To what extent is assistance balanced in terms of instruments mix (TA, including TACSO, micro and macro grant schemes, P2P, etc)?

Summary Answer

The actual assistance mix remains satisfactory as concerns the modes of support: (i) financial versus non-financial support, (ii) gradual introduction of peer-to-peer programmes, and launching under IPA/CSF of MB projects. This mix is less satisfactory in terms of CSOs’ coverage; smaller CSOs still do not have adequate access. The need has been clearly felt for an over-arching regional scale support, which would offer a more dynamic and inter-related mix of non-financial and financial assistance. The current CSF is approaching this objective and it would therefore be very useful to further reinforce this programme, including a tighter inter-relation among its components.

The assistance instruments’ mix remains by definition within the available types of such instruments, but their relative share from one WBT country to another has varied to some extent, depending on the needs and challenges in each of them. As underlined above, the issue is less related to the mix as such, and rather concerns either a given instrument’s conditions or/and a given WBT beneficiary’s needs or constraints, as illustrated in a couple of main examples below:

- § *Diversified grant schemes*, either distinguishing between “large” and “small” CSOs, or specifically focussing only on small grass-roots ones, have shown better effectiveness and have allowed a certain extent of improvement in the outreach towards the smaller CSOs, in particular in rural areas. EIDHR, as is demonstrated by its micro grant schemes in RS, is clearly ahead of CSF in applying such diversified grant schemes.

¹⁰ EIDHR in RS, for instance, has recently introduced two lots under its 2009 and 2010 CfPs that aim at reaching out to both “big” and “small” CSOs. To ensure participation of small, remote, and rural CSOs, the RS EUD set the minimum grant size at EUR 10 000 and the minimum co-financing at 5 %. This resulted in the award of 10 micro-grants under the 2009 and another 10 under the 2010 CfPs.

- § TA has been more acutely needed in BiH, with a nevertheless relatively low level of achievement to date, due above all to the very complex institutional situation of the country. Based on this outcome (and lessons learned) to date, it is necessary to weigh and tailor any potential continuation of such national TA very carefully. Nevertheless, as reported, RS has applied for 2011 IPA funding targeting institutional support, through *inter alia* a service contract, to the Government Office for Cooperation with CSOs.
- § *Programmes supporting cooperation between CSOs and local authorities* (such as for instance the previously UNDP managed Social Innovation Fund in RS or the UNDP-operated LOD in BiH) have shown their structural relevance, and could be considered as a reference frame for new innovative approaches, targeting CS empowerment in local and regional development.
- § *The upcoming programme (grant contract with a sub-grant scheme) in TR* is already an interesting example of adapting to a rigid institutional DIS context already underlined above. Its “interface” platform is expected to deliver technical (non-financial) support to both the government bodies in charge of CS (on both central and regional/local levels) and to the CS community. It will also operate a micro grant scheme (the administrative procedures of which remain, however, within the competence of the CFCU). This could prove a good practice to replicate in another WBT beneficiary, not excluding the regional MB level.
- § *The MB dimension of the CSF, which combines non-financial (TACSO), financial (MB grant contracts) and “People to People” (P2P) components*, is seen as a very important overarching structural support. Notwithstanding its now widely recognised usefulness, it still has to develop further in order to extend and deepen its role as a needed CS support player on the supranational level, and to reinforce the complementarity and synergy among its above mentioned components.¹¹
- § Last but not least, *certain other EU programmes, which do not explicitly address CS needs, should be taken into consideration* in order to enhance the possibility of CSOs’ participation. The current Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) programmes and their implementation conditions have been designed in order to cater to the needs and eligibility criteria of local and regional authorities and bodies (e.g. regional development agencies), with less attention paid to the need to allow for a wider participation of CSOs. The same goes for certain regional economic development (RED) and municipal support programmes.

EQ 6: To what extent are the different implementation systems (DIS and de-concentrated) affecting the support to CS in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability?

Summary Answer

The current situation in the WBT does not lead to the conclusion that either a de-concentrated or DIS implementation system would be more or less advantageous for EU support to CSOs. It is clear that DIS is by definition the needed implementation system within IPA’s participatory role in the EU accession candidate countries. However, the question of whether DIS may positively or negatively affect EU support to CS depends first of all on the level of sound and good governance in the country in question.

In this respect, it is interesting to observe that different situations in TR and BiH. Whereas in BiH the absence of DIS allows the EU to maintain closer relations with the CS community, given the country’s non-conducive institutional context, in TR, DIS seems to render the relationship between the EU and the CS community more difficult.

¹¹ For a more detailed presentation of the recapitulated findings and conclusions concerning P2P, see Annex IV of this Report.

Consequently, an important conclusion may be drawn from the evaluators' discussions with relevant stakeholders across the WBT region: when it comes to CS support, centralised management is a more favoured approach, primarily thanks to the fact that the EU has a very positive image as supportive to CS, especially to human rights organisations and defenders. This is also a side effect of the generally still weak relations between CS and their governments, the fact that human rights organisations stand as watchdogs or defenders of the rights of marginalised groups, and the current low recognition of the importance of CS in the overall development of the countries.

The WBT countries are at different stages of either preparation for, or application of the DIS:

- § DIS application in HR, MK and TR;
- § DIS preparation (and thus currently centralised management) in all other countries (AL, BiH, Kosovo, ME and RS);

It is recalled that Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 for the implementation of assistance under IPA defines decentralised management of funds as a system *"where the Commission confers the management of certain actions on the beneficiary country, while retaining overall final responsibility for general budget execution in accordance with Article 53c of Regulation 1605/2002 and the relevant provisions of the EC Treaties"*¹². This system is accredited and applied in the candidate countries of HR and TR, but it faces different realities when it comes to the EU support to CS:

- § In TR, the DIS reflects a whole set of issues and problems that CS in the country faces in its relations with the government, directly impacting the effectiveness of the EU support to CS. Within the DIS, the Ministry of EU Affairs is leading the programming, while the CFCU leads the financial and administrative components of the assistance. However, as underlined above, the CFCU is generally regarded as a very bureaucratic and rigid institution that imposes very strict and complicated procedures and regulations. There is also a fairly widespread perception by the CSOs that the DIS system favours certain types of organisations – presumably considered by the government as more "politically correct" or, at least, politically "neutral", while human rights defenders and organisations advocating for politically sensitive issues are marginalised or not able to get EU funding through these DIS channels. In line with the above, interviewed CS stakeholders reportedly consider that the EU assistance to CS should rather be managed directly by the EU, in order to insure impartial and neutral access to funds, whereby human rights organisations would be able to access funds for their advocacy and service provision work. From this point of view, reasonable expectations can be placed for an improvement of the situation, through the implementation of the upcoming national EU support to CS programme, thanks to its new organisational concept.
- § In HR, the situation is significantly different thanks to the favourable overall conditions for CS. The Croatian government has established a range of institutional measures for cooperation with CS, such as the Office for Cooperation with CS, Fund for CS and a strategic framework. It is reportedly widely agreed that on-going improvements are visible as CSOs are becoming more familiar with implementation requirements and modalities as they are 'owned' by national authorities.

Furthermore, centralised management of EU assistance allows the EU to be in a somewhat closer and more direct relationship with CSOs, without the interface of national institutional stakeholders involved in DIS. This has certainly allowed the EU to benefit from better visibility of its support, and to be widely considered as a major player in that domain.

¹² Commission Regulation (EC) N° 718/2007 of 12 June 2007.

Such a situation is evident in BiH, due to the country's very complicated and non-conducive political and institutional context. The CSO sphere remains divided between few very strong and "professional" NGOs and their "networks" on one side, and a wide and heterogeneous community of smaller CSOs on the other. Minimum objectives of good governance have not yet been reached by the country's government institutions in their relations with CS, either on a central or organisational level. In such an intricate environment, CSOs are potentially a key leverage for transcending the internal divisions and the EU has managed to some extent to support this leverage. However, much remains to be done, in particular as concerns the direct support to the enhancement of the institutional framework.

In such a situation, the EU, as a recognised promoter of the values of democracy, transparency, respect for human rights and rule of law, is seen as a primary supporter of CS initiatives. That is why CSOs see the centralised management of assistance to CS as still being a more valuable and appropriate approach to support the sector.

A related issue that is in particular flagged by stakeholders in RS is that as long as lack of transparency and accountability are major issues, governments can simply not be fully entrusted with the management of EU funding. In RS, stakeholders, including such important ones as the previous NIPAC, have repeatedly pointed at the experiences of neighbouring Bulgaria and its mismanagement of EU funding under DIS. In RS, there are reportedly examples of mismanagement of public funding, including the National Investment Plan, which hamper public confidence and trust in the authorities as regards their capacities to manage EU funds under DIS. This underlines the importance of a continued EU financial support to CSOs in order to strengthen their own internal monitoring capacity.

EQ 7: What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?

Summary Answer

First of all, continuous EU support to the WBT CS has been systematically delivered over the last 20 years through the successive instruments and/or thematic programmes throughout pre-IPA and IPA. This has indeed had a fairly deep positive structural impact on the CSOs, and their development and capacity building. The impact has been stronger for large and well-known CSOs, which have been more closely exposed to EU support and have also had a higher absorption capacity. Nevertheless, it has also reached a number of smaller CSOs, in particular through the EIDHR and certain thematic programmes addressing locally felt and shared needs.

Further reinforcement of the already reached positive impacts and their future sustainability will depend to a significant extent on the capacity of adaptation of both existing and new instruments and programmes allowing the CSOs to take up a more significant role in decision-making and implementation:

- § in structural issues of local and regional development (including CBC);
- § in sector wide strategies and programming; and
- § as an overarching driving force for the needed reconciliation throughout the Western Balkans - an issue of utmost importance for the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

Measuring impact is a very complex task that entails a comprehensive methodological exercise, including assessment of a wide variety of external and internal factors that affect the extent to which the evaluated support effectively contributes to social changes in a society or a region. Within the scope of this thematic evaluation and its available means, the presented findings provide a number of views and inputs to the understanding of the changes that can be attributed to EU support, among other factors, and bearing in mind also the presence of other stakeholders (in particular other international donors, whose support has not been covered by this evaluation) active in the CS sector in the WBT.

One should therefore also admit that an impact as such can never be attributed exclusively to one actor only, and this evaluation has not been calibrated to extend into an appraisal of the contributions and related impact effects of other major international donors, whether bilateral or multilateral.

Bearing these constraints in mind, the observed impact of the EU support to the WBT CS can be recapitulated below on two levels: empowering the CS, and empowering the governments in order to allow for stronger inclusion of the CS in decision making.

Empowering CS

The assessment of different forms of EU support to CS in the WBT shows that significant changes have been achieved in the extent to which CS has been empowered (a key EU objective). All countries in the WBT region show positive signs of democratisation and inclusion of CS in societal processes, and the voice of CS is increasingly heard and taken into consideration at all levels of government in all countries. CSOs' capacity building efforts supported by the EU have increased their organisational sustainability and widened the opportunities for them to provide extended support to their final beneficiaries in a structured manner and based on values such as human rights and democracy. As a consequence of improved organisational structures, better profiling of organisations and increased networking among them (including across the region) the services provided by CSOs have also improved.

Even though it is observed that EU assistance, through its successive pre-IPA and IPA instruments and programmes, has not been sufficiently balanced in order to reach out deeper and include small and grass-roots organisations (see EQ4), significant changes have been achieved, including at local level. This concerns above all an improvement of project design skills and implementation capacities of CSOs which have, in return, contributed to enhancing models of work and development of local communities in which these CSO are placed and with which they cooperate. This has further contributed to an increased engagement of local stakeholders (population and local authorities) in different areas, particularly in environment and human rights.

Significant changes in how CSOs operate and how they deal with their target groups, but also – and more importantly – their increasing transparency and accountability have been widely acknowledged as an important impact of EU assistance. However, the sustainability of such interventions is still not satisfactory and further progress is needed, in particular as concerns wider transparency and accountability, and better capacity of internal monitoring of CSOs' activities and projects.

Another important impact of EU assistance on CS is that CSOs are now able to organise their work in a more strategic way, with clearer project focus. Moreover, the contacts established and exchanges organised between EU and WBT organisations have brought them more closely together, while increased understanding and cultural exchange have also been very useful in opening up WBT societies to the EU.

Supporting WBT governments to include CS in decision making

A fairly strong impact of EU assistance (achieved through both policy dialogue and programming) is visible in the positive legislative changes achieved: new laws and by-laws concerning CS, greater transparency by means of public consultation in policy making processes, and generally improved recognition and inclusion of CS in all areas of life, especially as service providers to marginalised and vulnerable groups. If both pre-IPA and IPA instruments and programmes have placed their focus on institutional capacity building, this tendency has been reinforced under IPA, leading to an improved institutional, legal and financial environment for CSOs.

The last decade has seen significant improvements in institutional mechanisms for cooperation with CS, another key goal of EU policy. Whereas in the period when pre-IPA support to CS was launched there were virtually no such institutional mechanisms (such as the Office for Cooperation with CS), no strategic framework and/or no structured governmental funds for CS, the situation has evolved significantly to date. Almost all WBT countries do have such a government body in charge of the CS sector, and most of the countries are in the process of creating the needed strategic frameworks and are starting to have a more structured and transparent approach to providing funding to CSOs.

EQ 8: Which are the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance? Are there any elements which are hampering or could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of assistance?

Summary Answer

The main structural constraints, which still hamper the impact and sustainability of EU support to WBT CS, are primarily of an institutional character, i.e. an insufficiently conducive dialogue between the EU and national institutional stakeholders in charge of the CS sector. Deeper impact and sounder sustainability prospects are expected to depend on:

- § reinforcement and intensification of the MB (CSF) support approach;
- § diversification of thematic axes in order to build CSOs' capacity in reconciliation and participation in territorial and socio-economic development (including in Sector-Wide Approach Programmes, SWAP); and
- § further implementation of micro-grant schemes in fields of strong local interest, through simplified procedures, including the possibility to use local (national) languages instead of English.

As already indicated under EQ7, the impact of the EU assistance to CS has been significant and has affected CSOs, the government and society at large, in all WBT beneficiary countries. The on-going assistance thus has a fairly high prospect of further impact, especially in terms of helping WBT countries achieving the Copenhagen Criteria and the eventual accession of all the WBT countries to the EU. However, the concern for the sustainability of the achieved results of the EU assistance is mentioned in all strategic documents prepared for each country and at regional level. Ensuring sustainability is thus among the general conditionalities of the national programmes, requiring that WBT countries further reinforce their commitments in terms of good governance in general and in their dialogue and cooperation with CS in particular.

The sustainability of the EU assistance to CSOs depends therefore to a significant extent on the WBT governments' real commitment and fulfilment of their responsibilities in empowering their respective CSOs and creating a more conducive environment for the CSOs to take up their due role in the socio-economic development of the countries. This also includes governmental allocation of needed financial resources, which to date is still far below a satisfactory level, making CSO projects supported by the EU frequently unable to sustain their efforts or achievements once the EU financial support is over.

Another important obstacle to sustainability of results of projects implemented by CSOs is their short duration. The average life of a project is up to two years, which is too short for a more sustainable implementation, and to allow the project to achieve longer-term impacts. This raises the question of project design, i.e. the feasibility of projects' objectives. Whereas projects frequently have clear intervention logic, their objectives are often too ambitious and entail requirements for further investment in order to achieve the targeted sustainable change.

Finally, sustainability prospects also depend to a large extent on the overall democratisation processes in the countries in the region, and the full adoption and implementation of good governance standards. Other factors include the political climate and overall recognition and image of CS in the societies in the region, which have not yet reached a satisfactory level in most of the WBT beneficiary countries.

On a more positive note, the approach taken by TACSO, with the creation and strengthening of its Local Advisory Groups (LAG), may bring significantly increased sustainability prospects. Any further development of LAGs (in the framework of TACSO's life span and potentially beyond) should be carefully planned, based on sound shared plans for their sustainable future, within the overall phasing out strategy of TACSO as a whole.

3. LESSONS LEARNED

The set of six “Lessons Learned” (EQ9 to EQ 14 below) formulated by the ToR¹³ are understood in the evaluation approach as a further step of synthesis leading from the Findings under EQ1 to EQ8 (Chapter 2) to the Conclusions and Recommendations (Chapter 4). Within this approach, and in order to remain at an adequate “altitude” regarding the WBT as a whole, the country-specific lessons learned or/and best practices are highlighted here, in addition to the examples already presented above, only if they represent a very relevant and structurally symptomatic situation or practice, of direct importance for the proposed recommendations.

EQ 9: Are there any potential actions, which would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of on-going assistance, including actions on the administrative and organisational setting?

Summary Answer

Immediate potential actions in order to improve the actual efficiency and effectiveness of the on-going assistance are proposed to be planned and devised on three different but mutually complementary and synergetic levels, i.e. (i) investing in further capacity building, particularly in terms of M&E, (ii) support to small CSOs and (iii) support to government – CS relations & partnerships. Each of these components would contribute to ensuring that a holistic approach to development of CS is taken.

Investing in further capacity building

The analysis of the achievements and impacts of the EU assistance so far shows that this assistance has succeeded in raising the capacities, profiles and aptitudes of CSOs to take a more proactive role in the democratisation processes of the WBT countries. With the EU assistance, a range of organisations with good profiles has developed and has taken up important roles in the decision making process and as service providers. At this point in time, the EU should begin to invest more in enhancing the overall accountability of organisations vis-à-vis the population, as a further step in their capacity building, in order for them to serve and be recognised as true CS actors.

The improved organisational and fundraising capacities of organisations can be further enhanced through support to reinforce the CSOs’ accountability and transparency. The TACSO Project may be encouraged to have a more significant role in the entire process. In particular, by extending or reinforcing its mandate to include capacity building for M&E of all CS projects funded by the EU, TACSO would be given more appropriate means to carry out more structured and wider-scope monitoring of significantly more projects. This would eventually enable them to organise their work in a more transparent and accountable manner, which would certainly contribute to an improvement of their image among the general public, and would also contribute towards a more structured impact of EU assistance as a whole.

Support to small organisations

It has been shown that the efficiency and effectiveness of EU assistance would be significantly improved by additional efforts to balance the assistance in order to better reach out to smaller and grass-roots organisations. This can be done by simplification of procedures for smaller grants, through enabling use of local languages, decreasing the share of co-funding, and allowing for simplified reporting procedures, whilst respecting the general rules and regulations of EU assistance.

¹³ 2.4.2.2. Specific objective 2: Relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of financial assistance: Lessons learned and recommendations (Required output 2.2 as per section 2.5 of the ToR).

The corresponding grant schemes should therefore be adjusted accordingly but also further enhanced through the provision of capacity building support to small organisations, if possible, through direct mentoring during the application process. In such a way, small organisations would learn important lessons from the process and would be more successful in winning the grants, which in turn would enhance their chances of securing further funding from not only the EU but also other sources.

As it could be observed throughout the evaluation, small grass-roots CSOs often prove their high effectiveness and impact in thematic service delivery projects (environment, local development, support to vulnerable groups and minorities, etc.), with beneficial effects not only for such projects' final users but also for the CSOs themselves. These are all tangible benefits: increasing their own capacities and visibility, and their wider partnership environment, with, in particular, local authorities.

Support to government – CS relations and partnerships

The governments in all countries of the WBT region have progressed towards a better recognition of the role, value and contribution of CS to the overall development of their countries. They are also increasingly aware of the need to include CS in decision making processes in all areas of life, in order to positively affect the lives of marginalised and excluded groups in particular. Further investment in building institutional and policy frameworks for cooperation with CS at different levels of government is valuable for enhancing the sustainability of efforts and the longer-term impact of assistance.

EQ 10: Are there any actions, which would improve prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going assistance?

Summary Answer

The improvement of the impact and of the sustainability of the on-going EU support to WBT CSOs should be focussed on the strategic target of further enhancing the role of CSOs in the overall process of EU accession. This would be achieved through more diversified empowerment of the CSOs in order for them to progressively take up their due share in all essential issues related to the accession. In particular, this would target their involvement in design, preparation and implementation of the national (and regional) territorial and socio-economic development strategies, plans and programmes.

The actions that would be beneficial in order to increase the impact and sustainability prospects of assistance should target:

- § fine-tuning of the existing instruments and programmes which are already being implemented in this domain - in particular, instruments supporting partnership between local CSOs and local authorities in local and regional development projects;
- § creation of new thematic programmes for CSOs and their capacity building in order to enable them to undertake their responsibilities in the design, preparation and implementation of (i) upcoming sector wide programmes and (ii) projects and programmes under IPA III, IV and V.

Another important action that should form an integral part of interventions is ensuring the full commitment (political and financial) of local governments to undertake the needed reforms and also provide their contribution to the interventions supported by the on-going assistance.

EQ 11: How can support to CS in the short- and medium term contribute towards counteracting problems of management capacity of CSOs?

Summary Answer

The evaluation has confirmed the reality of a widening gap between large and “professionalised” CSOs and small grass-roots ones in the WBT, without any apparent trend toward a significant emergence of medium- or small-size CSOs. CSOs’ management capacity problems are thus more acute in smaller organisations, which often have a precarious status and which have not benefited widely from more continuous donor support (EU and other).

However, capacity-building needs of larger CSOs should also be further supported by the EU, with a privileged focus on accountability, transparency and internal monitoring. The short and medium term support should therefore have a dual priority target of:

- Pursuing the thematic grant schemes with proved better outreach to smaller CSOs and facilitating access of the latter to such schemes (tackling constraints of co-financing and language barriers);
- In its support to larger CSOs, place the focus on reinforcement of transparency, accountability and internal monitoring capacity.

Contrary to the example of regional development agencies (RDAs) which have been initiated and continuously supported by the EU in most Western Balkan countries, the CSOs have never, or very rarely benefited from so-called “operational grants”, i.e. direct (budget) support to their development plans and programmes. Such operational grants are not linked to any thematic CfPs, such as those benefiting the RDAs, and having a territorial focus (e.g. EURED in BiH etc.). A significant exception is the case of the CSO STGM in TR, created and supported directly by the EU in order, indeed, to be able to benefit from an interface or platform independent from the State, in the particular context of TR DIS (discussed in EQ 6).

So far, EU assistance has contributed to building the organisational, advocacy and fundraising skills of larger CSOs. The second step is ensuring the sustainability and democratic values of all CSOs, including these larger ones, by investing in building their capacities in terms of transparency, CSO governance and accountability. In parallel, thematic (micro) grant schemes which have already proven their capacity for reaching small and local CSOs should be pursued and their number increased, while facilitating access, eligibility and utilisation by such local grassroots CSOs.

EQ 12: How can EU assistance better reach smaller grass-root organisations, including those in remote and isolated areas?

Summary Answer

The evaluation has confirmed that the main weaknesses and shortcomings in trying to reach out to smaller grass-roots organisations lie in obstacles and constraints related to certain conditions of the instruments and programmes in question (in particular the constraint of self-financing, the language barrier and difficult access of smaller CSOs to information on grant opportunities) rather than in their concepts or objectives.

The needed wider coverage of smaller CSOs is also part of the general issue of the CSOs management capacity, as underlined under EQ 11. As already recapitulated above, this wider coverage of smaller CSOs should be sought by (i) pursuing the thematic (preferably micro-grant) programmes which have already shown significant results in reaching small grassroots CSOs in rural areas and (ii) by rendering them easier to access and use. This could be achieved by allowing utilisation of the local (national) language and by softening, under certain conditions, the financial (equity) participation, whilst endeavouring to reinforce and deepen the dissemination of the related information.

An important obstacle to the development of small CSOs is their inability to compete for EU financial assistance against more “professionalised” CSOs due to their lack of knowledge, skills, trained human resources, (audit) track record for new organisations, and importantly, co-financing capacity.

The observed emerging diversification of grant schemes through their division into lots (sub-granting), as well as enabling small organisations to benefit from *ad hoc* capacity building assistance throughout the application process (or, at least when a small organisation is close to winning a grant), are considered as beneficial and should be maintained and reinforced.

Without having to consider strong modifications of the current EU support instruments and programmes to the point of deviating excessively from the general approved and mandatory frameworks (i.e. the PRAG), it would certainly be possible to foresee more flexibility for co-financing requirements and the possibility for applicants to submit applications in the local language.

Such measures would enable small organisations to enter a fairer competition for smaller grants and would, in the long term, create a “pool” of new professionalised organisations of grass-roots character and mission, which is extremely needed throughout the region.

EQ 13: How can EU assistance promote the interaction between CS and government/public authorities at local (within a country) level?

Summary Answer

The need for a stronger and more synergetic interaction between CSOs and government/public authorities at a local level is of growing interest and concern in the context of the current EU accession process. It is difficult to anticipate a more significant empowerment of the CSOs in the WBT if their interaction with government and other public authorities is not (in some countries significantly) improved through EU support.

The whole realm of this interaction is multi-faceted and EU assistance should consequently devise and deploy a multi-directional approach targeting simultaneously, and in a non-exhaustive way:

- § upstream institutional issues (support to central authorities, legal frameworks etc.);
- § empowerment of CSOs to participate in devising, programming and implementing development policies and programmes;
- § local and regional development partnerships (including cross-border); and
- § regional interaction and cooperation vectors such as in particular the structurally essential reconciliation (cultural and natural heritage as a shared wealth rather than as an issue of conflict, etc.).

The EU support on the institutional and policy level has already been introduced and should be pursued with increased pressure in the WBT beneficiaries, where the needed achievements have not yet been reached. This support should also be aimed at achieving a stronger and more systematic involvement and participation of CSOs in the preparation and implementation of sectoral development strategies (EU-funded SWAPs in preparation in the WBT in particular).

In the same, but more integrated way, and directly in line with the EU accession paths ahead, the EU support should also address the stronger CSOs’ participation in programmes and projects funded under IPA III, IV and V. In particular, a stronger CSOs’ participation in local and regional development programmes would provide leverage for tighter cooperation between CSOs and local authorities.

In this respect, the good practice of LOD programme in BiH provides a direct support to partnerships and alliances among local CSOs and local authorities. This issue takes on particular importance if one considers the reported prospect of the political parties in certain Western Balkan beneficiaries proceeding to create *ad hoc* NGOs to serve as formal leverage in fund-raising from IPA Components III, IV, and V. A stronger and more visible presence of “real” CSOs in these domains would insure better transparency and accountability.

A specific and yet insufficiently explored opportunity in this domain is the need to support an enhanced participation of CSOs in CBC programmes. It has been observed throughout the region that the conditions and criteria of CBC programmes have been designed with a privileged attention paid to the local authorities’ needs and specificities rather than those of the CSOs. This issue could also be addressed by an initiative of cooperation between TACSO and Cross-Border Institutional Building (the upcoming CBIB+). Since the scope and mandate of the upcoming CBIB+ is expected to address territorial and regional development, this could be used as leverage for enhancing stronger participation of CSOs in IPA Components devoted to these objectives.

This leads to consider the potential structural support to CSOs’ mobilisation toward reconciliation among the countries of the former Yugoslavia, in the framework of specific MB thematic programmes (for example new thematic orientations in MB CSF grant schemes, focusing on cultural heritage, joint education programmes, etc.).

In all this, the role of TACSO remains potentially important: one could consider replicating the best practices of TACSO mediation and advice in the CS policy and programming dialogue, as well as consultation between the EUD to TR and its national counterparts (the CFCU and the Ministry of European Affairs). TACSO should be encouraged to intervene as a facilitator in such upstream consultations between the EC and other WBT governments.

Last, but certainly not the least, a better interaction between the national public authorities (both central and local) and CSOs can certainly be supported by a number of important on-going regional (MB) projects or/and institutions and, more particularly, the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). ReSPA’s mandate covers training and capacity building of not only central level public administration but also regional and local authorities. Certain structural aspects in that domain are relations and cooperation between local and regional authorities and the CS. In this respect, ReSPA could integrate in its annual programmes (and use the logistical platform of its campus) certain events (conferences, workshops, seminars) gathering together representatives of CSOs and of the local and regional authorities.

On the other hand, the RCC also provides a very relevant institutional leverage and has already been mandated by certain new initiatives, such as the pilot grant scheme to support cultural heritage affected by the conflicts in the Western Balkans. It is too early at this stage to conclude on the success (or not) of this pilot cultural heritage grant scheme, which has only recently reached the award phase. However, it should be noted that the strength of the RCC’s institutional leverage and the relevance of cultural heritage for reconciliation have good potential to encourage stronger EU efforts and additional means in support of the CSOs in this particular domain.

EQ 14: What lessons learned can be drawn from assistance to CS in the course of the fifth EU enlargement and extrapolated to the WBT?

Summary Answer

The overall political, institutional and social contexts of the WBT are very specific, so that the evaluation could not capture any specific and particularly important lessons learned in this matter. However, certain problems encountered in some of the new EU Member States (MSs) in relation to corruption and misuse of EU funds points to the importance of putting even more emphasis on the reinforcement and empowerment of CSOs.

The problems mentioned above have probably been exacerbated by an insufficient presence and participation of CS in the planning and implementation of EU funds, in particular those related to regional development.

EU support should further build the capacity of CSOs so that they can effectively play their full role as “watchdogs” when it comes to policy issues and advocacy in matters such as human rights and the fight against corruption. CSOs should also be better empowered to intervene as actors and partners in sectoral (SWAPs), territorial and regional development, thereby narrowing the gap, or the “grey space” which favours and facilitates the achievement of political actors’ vested interests.

This would encourage the CSOs to fully play their role in these matters, with a particular emphasis on CS partnership in devising, programming and implementing EU funding under IPA III, IV and V.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

The main conclusions below comprise firstly a brief recapitulation of the conclusions of Phase 1¹⁴ (assessment of the Intervention Logic), and secondly a compilation of those stemming from the findings of Phase 2 (Performance Assessment), in order to present a consolidated synthesis and basis for the recommendations (Chapter 4.2).

4.1.1 Conclusions on Intervention Logic

With regard to the Intervention Logic, the strategic and programme level objectives of the EU assistance to CS in the WBT are in line with the Copenhagen Criteria for Accession, and are appropriately reflected in these objectives on different levels. These are further supported by a significant financial assistance allocation, although budgetary allocations for WBT CS support are still below real needs.

No significant disruption has been observed in the transition from or linkages between pre-IPA and IPA national programmes and instruments. However EU support on a regional (MB) level has been strongly boosted and structured under IPA. Furthermore, coordination and a participatory approach in policy and strategy formulation and programming have also generally been improved and reinforced under IPA. However, this is less true with regard to the support to CS, whether in pre-IPA or IPA.

Although these strategic and programming objectives are accurate and realistic, they sporadically lack measurability. This is a weakness also caused by the as yet insufficiently developed dialogue between the EU and the national authorities towards developing a more structured and better-shared partnership approach to CS support.

This weakness is also reflected in a relative lack of flexibility in adapting to the evolving needs of CSOs, both in terms of their capacity building *per se* and the objective of supporting the stronger involvement of CSOs in effective national socio-economic development.

One reason for this relative lack of flexibility is that EU Support to WBT CS has been basically contained within IPA Component I¹⁵ only; a stronger CSO involvement should be supported in CBC under IPA Component II, alongside supporting CSO involvement under IPA III, IV and V. This limitation also has a detrimental effect on the EU's capacity to better prioritise its CS support.

CSOs' participation in IPA Component I strategy and programming has been improved, but it is recommended now to take a decisive turn, by allowing and supporting CSOs' participation in a much wider and more diversified range of domains, covered, in particular, by other IPA Components, as underlined above.

4.1.2 Conclusions on Performance

With regard to Performance, the planned administrative and organisational structures have generally been set up, but have very variable importance, efficiency and effectiveness. This uneven situation from one country to another depends on a number of factors, in particular:

¹⁴ ToR chapter 2.4.2.1. "Specific objective 1: Intervention logic – Assessment & Lessons Learned".

¹⁵ Not counting EIDHR etc.

- § overall soundness of the country's governance, which in certain cases directly affects the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the support to CSOs (absence of a more enabling institutional environment, biased position of national institutions in charge of CS, etc.);
- § institutional capacity and achieved maturity (or not) of the national institutional CSO support partners.

In this overall WBT CS landscape, in which country situations differ from one another, the introduction of TACSO and its regional and national activities have already been favourably perceived. Its positive role should therefore be further reinforced.

In addition, both external and internal follow up and monitoring of CS programmes and projects is not yet satisfactory and this not only in terms of monitoring tools, structures and mechanisms but also regarding the need to use monitoring feedback for CSOs' capacity building and for their projects' improvement and reinforcement.

Nevertheless, it can be considered that the EU's priority objective of supporting the development and building the capacity of WBT CSOs has, to a significant extent, been achieved. The EU in particular has played a decisive role and this not only in the period following the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia (post-conflict reconstruction), but also in the current process of preparation for accession to the EU, but also reconciliation. This calls for the support to capacity building of the CSOs to be pursued and reinforced, with a particular focus on their empowerment and the enhancement of their role in the enlargement strategy and beyond. This would entail, above all, addressing certain fundamental needs:

- (i) Going a step further, from "reconstruction" to "reconciliation"; and
- (ii) Developing the CSOs' capacity to fully participate in national socio-economic development strategy formulation, programming, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

A particular emphasis should therefore be placed on the CSOs' potential role as stakeholders and actors in territorial (local, regional and cross-border) and socio-economic development.

As concerns the outreach to CSOs, neither the EU nor other international donors have yet managed to reach a more appropriate balance in supporting not only large, but also weaker and smaller CSOs. A clear lesson learned from this evaluation is that such small grassroots CSOs have been more efficiently supported through simple thematic calls of (predominantly micro-grant) proposals, focussing on certain fundamental issues of local and regional (including cross-border) day-to-day concern, such as environment and pollution, support to refugees, vulnerable groups, discriminated communities, etc.

As concerns the architecture of the EU support, i.e. the mix of different instruments, this remains insufficiently balanced overall, more in terms of its focus and formal participation conditions than in terms of the type of assistance itself. The observed situation confirms, however, that the need has been felt, and now met, for an over-arching regional scale support which would offer a more dynamic and inter-related mix of non-financial and financial assistance. This objective is currently pursued by the CSF.

As concerns the relevance of either a de-concentrated or DIS implementation system, the observed situation does not allow concluding than either of them is more or less conducive than the other as a mode of EU support to CSOs. In particular, DIS has not brought any decisive advantage (and would not bring any in the short term, once set up in other WBT beneficiaries). On the contrary, as in the case of TR, it seems to only hamper the relationship between the EU and the CS community. The real challenge on this level would rather be to reinforce the EU assistance to the CSOs in support of their stronger involvement in development design, programming and implementation, by using as leverage other IPA Components, than to expect or rely on DIS to bring in decisive qualitative changes.

Generally speaking, the continuous EU support to the WBT CS, systematically delivered over the last 20 years and through the successive instruments and/or thematic programmes, has had a positive structural impact on the CSOs, more particularly on their development and capacity building. Although this impact has certainly been stronger for large and well-known CSOs, it has also reached certain smaller CSOs, albeit insufficiently, addressing locally felt and shared issues such as: environment, pollution, support to vulnerable groups and communities, etc.

Further reinforcement of the positive impacts already reached and their future sustainability will depend to a significant extent on the capacity on the possibility of fine-tuning both existing and new instruments and programmes in a way that would allow the CSOs to take a more significant part (i) in decision-making and implementation in structural issues of local and regional development (including by definition CBC), (ii) in sector wide strategies and programming and, last but certainly not least, (iii) as an overarching driving force for the needed reconciliation throughout the Western Balkans, an issue of utmost importance for the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

Indeed, deeper impact and sounder sustainability prospects are expected to depend on a (non-exhaustive) array of inter-related initiatives such as: (i) reinforcement and intensification of the MB (CSF) support approach, (ii) diversification of thematic axes in order to build CSOs' capacity in reconciliation and in participation in territorial and socio-economic development (including sector programmes, if introduced under IPA), and (iii) further implementation of grant schemes in fields of strong local interest and (iv) significant simplification of procedures, including the possibility to use local (national) languages instead of English.

Finally, all further impacts and a sounder sustainability of EU support to WBT CSOs are already hampered by constraints primarily of an institutional character, and in particular by an insufficiently tight and consensual dialogue between the EU and the national institutional stakeholders in charge of managing EU issues.

4.2 Key Recommendations

In line with the general guidance provided by the DG ELARG/A3, only two key recommendations are proposed, considered as operational in the actual frame of CSF. To these two operational recommendations is added one global and much wider proposal to look at the future deeper and more diversified support to the WBT CSOs, in view of their stronger involvement in the overall socio-economic and territorial development of their countries.

The table below recapitulates the two key recommendations that result from the main findings, the most significant lessons learned and from the conclusions of this evaluation, followed by the proposal to consider deeper and more diversified support to WBT CSOs.

Recapitulated Overview of Recommendations

Weakness or shortcoming		Recommendation
1	The current level of (external and internal) monitoring of CS programmes and projects (including CSF components) is not yet optimal and the information generated from their internal monitoring is not sufficiently focused on results and impact. As a consequence, CSOs accountability to their constituencies and the general public,	Strengthen external and internal monitoring of EU support to CS in the WBT, including further building up of EU, regional, national and CSO (external and internal) monitoring capacities. In particular: (i) Ensure appropriate mainstreaming of the CSF's overall and specific objectives in relevant external and

Weakness or shortcoming		Recommendation
	has suffered.	<p>internal monitoring, in order to set up appropriate monitoring indicators on the Results and Impact levels.</p> <p>(ii) Ensure inclusion of an agreed set of indicators directly related to CS issues in ROM and other IPA regional and IPA national (external and internal) monitoring activities. In particular, include indicators of the contribution of EU-supported CSOs to the achievement of the Copenhagen Political Criteria and the objectives of the Enlargement Strategy and Civil Society Strategy by accession and pre-accession countries.</p> <p>(iii) Strengthen both external and internal CS monitoring and ensure its more systematic application;</p>
2	EU support to CSOs in the WBT is not sufficiently “balanced”, as the outreach and support to small, rural grassroots CSOs is still insufficient.	<p>Promote the wider use of geographical / sectoral or thematic small grant schemes and introduce more flexibility in their conditions. In particular:</p> <p>(i) Ensure the inclusion of at least one small grant scheme per IPA beneficiary per year under the CSF national programmes.</p> <p>(ii) Promote, under such small grant schemes, less demanding eligibility criteria, simplified application procedures, minimum co-financing requirements, and usage of local languages.</p>

Additional proposal to consider wider and more diversified support to WBT CSOs	
Support stronger participation of CS in territorial and socio-economic development of the IPA Countries (IPA Component II, CBC, sector programmes if introduced under IPA, etc.), and of their role as driving forces for further regional integration, including reconciliation (e.g. thematic support to regional CS networks, etc).	

Recommendation 1	Strengthen external and internal monitoring of EU support to CS in the WBT, including further building up of EU, regional, national and CSO external and internal monitoring capacities
-------------------------	--

Monitoring of CS programmes and projects has in general not yet reached a satisfactory level. More particularly, internal CS monitoring consists primarily of project-based activity-oriented monitoring focussing more on efficiency and less on effectiveness and impact.

The first and second phase of this evaluation have found that the introduction and further roll out of the CSF has contributed to a higher degree of coherence and consistency of EU support to CS in the WBT as far as programming and implementation are concerned. This situation is not yet reflected in the EU's and other actors' monitoring efforts. Hence, the CSF's overall and specific objectives should be "mainstreamed" of in relevant internal and external monitoring carried out by the EU, the beneficiary countries, and CS itself.

The evaluation has also found that, as yet, there exists no agreed set of CS indicators to measure the contribution of EU support to CS towards the achievement of the Copenhagen Political Criteria and the objectives of the Enlargement Strategy and Civil Society Strategy in the WBT. Such a set of indicators should then be included in monitoring at all levels, including the level of service contracts, large and small grants, and P2P events.

Finally, the evaluation has found that monitoring of CS support programmes and projects can still be enhanced. This will help ensure that EU and beneficiary country decision-makers, programmers and all actors that are responsible for subsequent programme and project implementation receive relevant monitoring feedback.

In this context, the TACSO Project could play a more significant role. In particular, its mandate should be widened and reinforced to include capacity building initiatives in order to strengthen CSOs' internal monitoring of EU funded projects.

Recommendation 2	Promote the wider use of geographical / sectoral or thematic small grant schemes and introduce more flexibility in their conditions
-------------------------	--

EU support to WBT CSOs has not yet managed to strike a more appropriate balance between larger and smaller CSOs, due to a number of factors found in all WBT beneficiaries. In particular, the donor-driven "competitive" environment has favoured project-based empowerment and the resulting stronger growth of larger CSOs and of their corresponding fundraising capacity. The main difficulties encountered by small CSOs, very often located in outlying rural areas, are difficulty in accessing information on EU grant schemes, language constraints and the need to provide co-financing in order to get access to EU funds.

However, smaller local grassroots CSOs have been more effectively reached and supported through certain thematic grant schemes which focus on service delivery for a number of fundamental issues of local concern, such as environment and pollution, support to refugees, vulnerable groups, discriminated communities, etc.

In order to reduce this gap between large and small CSOs and thereby ensure a more balanced territorial and social coverage of the EU's support, it is recommended to:

- iii) Further diversify grant schemes, in particular through their division into lots (sub-granting via large CSOs may contribute to improve access to information), in order to enable small CSOs to benefit from *ad hoc* capacity building assistance throughout the application process; and, in parallel

- iv) Consider the possibility to introduce more flexibility in co-financing requirements and the possibility for applicants to submit applications and deliver project reporting in the local (national) language.

Additional Proposal

Consider wider and more diversified support to WBT CSOs

While the EU's support to CS in the WBT has contributed significantly to build CS's operational capacity, the effective participation of CS as a fully recognised player (by both the population and the political establishment) in national reforms and socio-economic development has not yet reached a satisfactory level.

Although formal mechanisms for consultation of CS in different IPA Components already exist or are being set up, and although a substantial part of the CSF budget is allocated to CS Partnership Programmes, aimed at increasing CS capacity to influence policy and participate in decision making processes, CSOs still need to be further supported to take up their due share of responsibility, both in programming and implementing national socio-economic development initiatives, and in further contributing to regional integration, including reconciliation.

This wider and more diversified support to the CSOs leads to benefits stemming from their ability to transcend national and political boundaries (in support of regional integration and reconciliation). In this context, particular attention could be devoted to the support of regional CS networks, on the one hand, and the potential leverage of certain other EU regional (MB) projects and institutions such as the RCC, ReSPA and CBIB, on the other hand.

5. ANNEXES

5.1 Annex I - Evaluation Matrix¹⁶

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQ)	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA (JC)	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SOI)	EQ SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY
EQ1: Are the administrative and organisational structures in place ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance.	JC 1.1. The administrative and organisational structures are in place ensuring the efficient implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT	<p>1.1.1. Amount of time used by EU, EUD and national authorities for programming of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT vis-à-vis amount of time planned</p> <p>1.1.2 Amount of time used by EU, EUD and national authorities for implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT vis-à-vis amount of time planned</p> <p>1.1.4 Amount of financial, human and other resources used by EU, EUD and national authorities for implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT vis-à-vis amount of resources planned</p> <p>1.1.5 Status of implementation of IPA assistance where implementation is not completed or not at an advanced stage, in particular in terms of project preparation, procurement, and contracting</p>	<p>IPA regulation; IPA framework agreements; IPA national programming guides, IPA multi-beneficiary programming guide</p> <p>Commission Decisions, Financing Proposals, Project Fiches</p> <p>Administrative data from DG ELARG, EUDs and national authorities (if available)</p> <p>Enlargement Progress Reports, Cards and IPA Progress, Monitoring and Evaluation Reports</p> <p>Structured interviews with DG ELARG, EUDs, national authorities, programming and implementing actors, and beneficiaries of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT</p> <p>ROM Monitoring Reports and Background Conclusion Sheets</p>	<p>Mapping of administrative structures;</p> <p>Mapping of organisational structures</p> <p>Review of administrative and organisational structures vis-à-vis “benchmarks” as per IPA regulation and framework agreements</p> <p>Desk Study on duration of programming vis-à-vis planning</p> <p>Desk Study on duration of implementation vis-à-vis planning for pre-IPA and IPA assistance that is completed or at an advanced stage</p> <p>Desk Study on Status of Tenders, Calls for Proposals, and contracting vis-à-vis planning, for IPA assistance that is not completed or not at an advanced stage</p> <p>Comparative analysis at two levels: e.g. MBPs versus NPs and NPs versus NPs</p>

¹⁶ Source: Inception Report Phase 2 (approved on 10 October 2011)

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQ)	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA (JC)	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SOI)	EQ SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY
	JC 1.2. The administrative and organisational structures are in place ensuring the effective implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT	<p>1.2.1 Performance by administrative and organisational structures vis-à-vis agreed targets</p> <p>1.2.2 Flexibility of administrative and organisational structures in adapting to changing external conditions</p> <p>1.2.3 Contribution by administrative and organisational structures to ensuring visibility of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT</p>	<p>Cards and IPA regulations, framework agreements and other binding acts including administrative and organisational targets</p> <p>Enlargement Progress Reports; Cards and IPA Progress and Monitoring Reports; ROM Monitoring Reports and Background Conclusion Sheets, and progress and monitoring reporting by national authorities, CS and the media.</p> <p>Structured interviews with DG ELARG, EUDs, national authorities, programming and implementing actors, and beneficiaries of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT</p>	<p>Programme Level:</p> <p>Mapping of administrative and organisational targets as per regulations, framework agreements and financing agreements</p> <p>Mapping of administrative and organisational achievements vis-à-vis targets</p> <p>Comparative analysis of achievements versus targets at two levels: e.g. MBPs versus NPs and NPs versus NPs</p> <p>Project Level:</p> <p>Field missions including structured interviews and focus groups</p>
EQ 2: To what extent are the monitoring mechanisms and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?	JC 2.1. . The formal and operational monitoring system is in place ensuring the efficient monitoring of assistance. The monitoring system is characterised by clear and formal assignment and division of monitoring responsibilities, staffing and budgeting arrangements, and systematic monitoring data collection and analysis mechanisms	<p>2.1.1. Monitoring structures in place through formal appointments of staff to fill IPA monitoring posts and adoption of monitoring procedures</p> <p>2.1.2. Performance by administrative and organisational structures vis-à-vis agreed monitoring targets as per IPA regulation, framework agreements and financing agreements</p> <p>2.1.3. Amount of financial, human and other resources used by EUD and national authorities for monitoring of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT</p>	<p>IPA regulation; IPA framework agreements; IPA national programming guides, IPA multi-beneficiary programming guide</p> <p>Administrative data from EUD and national authorities on monitoring, particularly on national procedures for monitoring, staffing arrangements and structures</p> <p>EU Progress Reports</p>	<p>Mapping of administrative structures</p> <p>Mapping of organisational structures</p> <p>Mapping of data collection and analysis mechanisms</p> <p>Review of administrative and organisational structures vis-à-vis “benchmarks” as per IPA regulation and framework agreements</p> <p>Field missions including semi - structured interviews with relevant EUD and national authorities</p>

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQ)	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA (JC)	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SOI)	EQ SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY
		2.1.4. Quality data collection, analysis and disbursement mechanisms in place		
	JC 2.2. Existence of a formal system for use of monitoring reports for analysis and follow up by EUD, DIS and project counterparts	<p>2.2.1. Number of CSO projects monitored</p> <p>2.2.2. ROM data demonstrates a satisfactory level (e.g. ROM rating A or B) of the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of CS projects</p> <p>2.2.3. ROM and any other existing monitoring procedures' recommendations are effectively disseminated and used</p> <p>2.2.4. Existence of internal project monitoring of CS projects (mid-term and final project evaluations)</p>	<p>Cards and IPA Progress and Monitoring Reports</p> <p>ROM Monitoring Reports</p> <p>Project Fiches</p>	<p>Mapping and analysis of ROM findings</p> <p>Mapping and analysis of internal project monitoring systems</p> <p>Field missions including semi - structured interviews</p>
	J.C. 2.3. National monitoring systems are established for the implementation of CSO related strategies and mechanisms (e.g. Offices, Sectors for cooperation with CS) for CSO-government cooperation	<p>2.3.1. Number of national strategy monitoring systems established</p> <p>2.3.2. Recommendations from monitoring systems effectively used</p>	<p>National strategies for cooperation with CS</p> <p>Administrative and management data on national mechanisms for cooperation between government and CS</p> <p>EU Progress Reports and other relevant studies and documents</p> <p>Interviews with relevant government and CS representatives</p>	<p>Mapping of existing National strategies with particular focus on envisaged monitoring systems</p> <p>Mapping of existing national mechanisms administrative and management structures</p> <p>Field missions including interviews and focus groups</p>
	JC 2.4. SMART indicators are used to facilitate measurement of performance and design of CS support	2.4.1 Incidence of SMART indicators in programming documents (phase 1-findings are to feed in)		Mapping the use of SMART indicators is to provide the basis for the formulation of SMART indicators and recommendations regarding their use

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQ)	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA (JC)	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SOI)	EQ SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY
		2.4.2. Incidence of use of SMART indicators for measurement of the performance of CS support (based on project sample, relevant findings from EQs 1 and 3-8 are to provide observations)		
EQ3: To what extent financial assistance has/is effectively contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities, including the development of Western Balkan and Turkish CSOs and building their capacities with particular regard to their role within the enlargement strategy?	JC 3.1. Financial assistance to CS has effectively contributed to achieving stabilization of democracy, rule of law, human rights and protection of minorities in the WBT	<p>I 3.1.1. Examples of effects of EU support to CSOs on national governments' policies that are relevant for stabilization of democracy, rule of law, human rights and protection of minorities</p> <p>I 3.1.2: Evidence of consistency between relevant strategic objectives, country priorities, CSO project objectives and the amount of support for each project</p> <p>I 3.1.3. Ratio of objectives of EU supported projects that are linked with (the Copenhagen criteria)</p> <p>I 3.1.4. Ratio of EU supported projects with achieved result indicators that are linked with (the Copenhagen criteria)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •EC Progress Reports for the beneficiary countries •Interviews and focus group meetings •Evaluations and studies •National Programmes under the TAIB component for the beneficiary countries •EC Progress Reports for the beneficiary countries •Project Fiches •Monitoring Reports <p>Project Fiches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •EC Progress Reports for the beneficiary countries •Monitoring Reports 	<p>During the desk phase, document study will attempt to identify examples of a CS-related effect on the materialization of the Copenhagen criteria as well as examples of CSO capacity building that is related to EU support, while the EU attribution question will be kept in mind. Questionnaires, coordinated with the interview guides, will be sent to the stakeholders to be met, who will be requested to provide documentation that may not otherwise be available.</p> <p>In the field phase, the interviews will serve to verify or falsify the preliminary findings from the desk phase and additional documentation may be provided during the meetings with the stakeholders. The observations from this EQ will provide inputs for the impact-related EQs 7 and 8.</p>
	JC 3.2. Financial assistance has effectively contributed to developing and building the capacities of the Western Balkan and Turkish CSOs	I 3.2.1: Evidence of increased number of employees / volunteers / members in beneficiary CSOs	<p>Interviews and focus group meetings</p> <p>Questionnaires to CSOs</p> <p>Studies and evaluations, incl. TACSO</p> <p>CSO sector overviews, incl. from government</p>	

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQ)	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA (JC)	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SOI)	EQ SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY
		<p>I 3.2.2: Evidence of increased beneficiary CSO activity incl. increased use of Internet communication (website)</p> <p>I 3.2.3: Evidence of increased participation of beneficiary CSO in CSO-networking /coordination /cooperation</p> <p>I 3.2.4: Evidence of increased beneficiary CSO revenues, other than from external donors</p> <p>I 3.2.5. Examples of beneficial CSO consultations with public authorities</p> <p>I 3.2.6. Examples of beneficial CSO cooperation projects with local authorities</p> <p>I 3.2.7. Ratio of EU supported projects that are assessed "acceptable" in monitoring reports</p> <p>I 3.2.8. National CSO sectors expanded in target countries</p>	<p>sources</p> <p>Internet sources</p> <p>EC Progress Reports for the beneficiary countries</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>Monitoring Reports</p> <p>Government and CS sources</p> <p>Studies and evaluations</p>	
EQ4 Is assistance balanced in the sense of coverage of the type, size and profile of organisations supported?	JC 4.1.The assistance is balanced regarding its coverage of the different types of CSOs	I 4.1.1. Ratio of projects approved / applications from small/medium/large CSO/NGO	<p>Baseline information on CS</p> <p>Studies and evaluations, incl. TACSO reports</p> <p>EUD and NIPAC reporting, incl. Annual Reports on the Implementation of the Instrument for Pre Accession Assistance</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Project selection conclusions</p>	During the desk phase, baseline information and EC documents will be studied. Questionnaires, coordinated with the interview guides, will be sent to the stakeholders to be met, who will also be requested to provide documentation that may not otherwise be available.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQ)	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA (JC)	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SOI)	EQ SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY
		<p>I 4.1.2. Ratio of allocation of financial assistance between NGOs (professional, with paid staff) and CSOs</p> <p>I 4.1.3. Ratio of allocation of financial assistance between CSOs in different sectors</p> <p>I 4.1.4. Ratio of allocation of financial assistance between CSOs with national vs. local coverage</p> <p>I 4.1.5. Ratio of allocation of financial assistance between NGOs working with advocacy of a political nature and within service provision</p> <p>I 4.1.6. Ratio of allocation of financial assistance between large, medium and small NGOs/CSOs</p>	<p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p>	<p>In the field phase, the interviews will serve to verify or falsify the preliminary findings from the desk phase and additional documentation may be provided during the meetings with the stakeholders. In the interviews with the different stakeholders, their assessment of the coverage will be sought. While the individual assessments may be biased in various ways, their triangulation may reveal a pattern of interest to the overall assessment of the evaluators.</p> <p>A possible limitation may be access to project selection conclusions. It may be resolved by the use of a questionnaire where EUD staff may fill in the information needed</p>
EQ5: To what extent is assistance balanced in terms of instrument mix (TA – including TACSO, micro and macro grant schemes, P2Ps, etc.)?	J.C 5.1 EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT provides a mix of financial instruments that address CS needs and constraints as identified and formulated in EU and national strategies, policies and programmes targeting CS in the WBT	<p>5.1.1. Pre-IPA and IPA EU support to CS in the WBT provides a mix of financial instruments</p> <p>5.1.2 Pre-IPA and IPA financial instruments supporting CS in the WBT address agreed CS priority in terms of financial instruments</p>	<p>Pre-IPA and IPA programming documents</p> <p>Structured interviews with DG ELARG, EUDs, national authorities, programming and implementing actors, and beneficiaries of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT</p>	<p>Mapping of pre-IPA and IPA financial instruments</p> <p>Mapping of pre-IPA and IPA identified and formulated CS needs and constraints in terms of financial instruments</p> <p>Matching between needs and constraints and existing financial instruments and identification of gaps and weaknesses</p>

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQ)	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA (JC)	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SOI)	EQ SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY
	JC 5.2 EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT provides for a mix of financial instruments that all respond equally well to the needs and constraints of CS in the WBT, e.g. they have similar supply and demand ratios	5.2.1. Demand for (different instruments of) EU financial support to CS in the WBT 5.2.2 Supply of EU financial support to CS in the WBT 5.2.3 Ratio demand / supply	Pre-IPA and IPA programme and project preparation documents Pre-IPA and IPA programming documents, Commission Decisions, Financial Decisions, Project Fiches CRIS data	Mapping of demand of EU financial support to CS in the WBT according to type of instrument Mapping of supply of EU financial support to CS in the WBT according to type of instrument Calculation and comparative analysis of supply and demand ratios
	JC 5.3 EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT provides for a mix of financial instruments that are complementary	5.3.1. Extent of duplication and overlap between EU financial instruments to support CS in the WBT 5.3.2 Level of synergy between EU financial instruments to support CS in the WBT	Pre-IPA and IPA programming documents, Commission Decisions, Financial Decisions, Project Fiches Structured interviews with DG ELARG, EUDs, national authorities, programming and implementing actors, and beneficiaries of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT	Mapping of objectives of EU financial instruments Analysis of duplication / overlap among financial instruments Analysis of synergies between financial instruments
EQ 6: To what extent are the different implementation systems (centralised, DIS and De-concentrated) affecting the support to CS in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability?	JC 6.1 Different implementation systems ensure a distribution of support among the CSOs that is in line with CS contributions to the EU accession strategic objectives	6.1.1. Different implementation systems provide for diverse mechanisms for inclusion of CS in programming and implementation of assistance 6.1.2. Evidence of planned concerted action in relation to CS contribution to EU accession strategic objectives of programming documents 6.1.3. % of projects selected that support CS directly or indirectly	Programming documents Administrative data from DG ELARG, EUDs and national authorities EU Progress Reports Pre-IPA and IPA programming and financial data Structured interviews with DG ELARG, EUDs, national authorities, programming and implementing actors, and beneficiaries	Mapping of administrative and organisational structures in WBT Desk study of internal and external information sources Field missions including interviews and focus groups Mapping of mechanisms for CS inclusion and level of participation in programming Mapping of CS projects Comparative analysis of financial instruments for CS under different implementation systems, e.g. Financial instruments under DIS or centralised management

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQ)	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA (JC)	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SOI)	EQ SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY
	JC 6.2. The different implementation systems contribute to the overall cost and time efficiency of the implementation of EU support to CSOs	<p>6.2.1. Targeted and comprehensive CSO needs assessment is used in the preparation of project fiches in view of sectoral policies, financial and time constraints</p> <p>6.2.2. Implementation/disbursement rate (%) in CS of related projects implemented under different implementation systems</p> <p>6.2.3. % of CS projects which are assessed in Monitoring Reports as acceptable (e.g. ROM rating A or B) in terms of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness under different implementation systems</p> <p>6.2.4. % of projects judged likely to achieve results & immediate impacts</p>	<p>MIPD documents</p> <p>National programmes and financial agreements</p> <p>Project Fiches</p> <p>Administrative and financial data from EUDs and national authorities</p> <p>Cards and IPA Progress and Monitoring Reports</p> <p>Structured interviews with EUDs, national authorities, programming and implementing actors, and beneficiaries of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT</p> <p>ROM Monitoring Reports</p>	<p>Desk study of internal and external information sources</p> <p>Field missions including structured interviews and focus groups</p> <p>Comparative analysis of % of 2007, 2008, 2009 CS projects contracted and disbursed under different implementation systems</p> <p>Comparative analysis of projects assessed as acceptable by ROM under different management systems</p>
	JC 6.3. The different implementation systems have had a visible impact in terms of strengthening mechanisms for CSO – government's cooperation	<p>6.3.1. Number, type and success of CS related strategies developed and implemented to respond to EU CS inclusion standards with support from IPA assistance</p> <p>6.3.2. % of projects focusing on support to government-CS dialogue judged likely to achieve results & immediate impacts</p>	<p>National strategies and mechanisms for cooperation with CSOs</p> <p>EU Progress Reports</p> <p>Project Fiches</p> <p>ROM Monitoring Reports</p> <p>Other relevant reports and studies</p>	<p>Mapping of existing national strategies and mechanisms for cooperation between government and CS</p> <p>Comparative analysis ROM Reports' findings on projects focusing on support to government-CS dialogue</p> <p>Comparative analysis of achievements versus targets of national strategies and mechanisms for cooperation with CS</p>

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQ)	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA (JC)	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SOI)	EQ SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY
What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?	JC 7.1: EU support to CSOs has had an identifiable impact on the fulfilment of the Copenhagen political criteria	<p>7.1.1 Documented results of CSO support acknowledge democratic strengthening</p> <p>7.1.2 Results of CSO support benefit the rule of law</p> <p>7.1.3 Results of CSO support benefit human rights and respect for and protection of minorities</p> <p>7.1.4 Results of CSO support are acknowledged by and benefit the society at large</p>	<p>Basic project documentation</p> <p>Project Progress Reports</p> <p>Interviews with direct and non-direct project stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews with CS and governmental stakeholders</p> <p>Independent ROM and Evaluation Reports</p>	The sustainability of impacts will be based on the Evaluation Team's validation of impact. The investigation of this will focus on a limited number of sampled projects, in accordance with the evaluation methodology, and interviews with direct and non-direct stakeholders
	JC 7.2: EU support to CSOs has had an identifiable impact on their target sectors	<p>7.2.1 CSO support has facilitated concrete benefits to their target sectors</p> <p>7.2.2 Demonstrable benefits to the target sectors are considered sustainable</p> <p>7.2.3 Benefits to the target sectors are acknowledged/recognised by direct and non-direct stakeholders</p>	<p>Basic project documentation</p> <p>Project Progress Reports</p> <p>Interviews with direct and non-direct project stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews with CS and governmental stakeholders</p> <p>Independent ROM and evaluation reports</p>	Same as above
	JC 7.3 EU support to CSOs has had an impact on their viability, outreach and advocacy potential	<p>7.3.1 CSOs receiving EU support define achievement benchmarks</p> <p>7.3.2 CSO recipients of EU support have produced mandates for future activities</p> <p>7.3.3 CSO recipients of EU support undertake networking and dissemination</p>	<p>Basic project documentation</p> <p>Project Progress Reports</p> <p>Interviews with direct and non-direct project stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews with CS and governmental stakeholders</p> <p>Independent ROM and Evaluation Reports</p>	Same as above

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQ)	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA (JC)	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SOI)	EQ SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY
		7.3.4 CSO recipients of EU support have established on-going and effective working relations with public authorities		
EQ 8 Which are the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance? Are there any elements which are/could hamper the impact and/or sustainability	JC 8.1 There is reason to believe that EU support to CSOs will contribute to the achievement of programming objectives	<p>8.1.1 Projects define benchmarks on expected results relevant to projected impact and sustainability</p> <p>8.1.2 An effective dialogue between CSOs and government is operational</p> <p>8.1.3 National reform measures include CSO consultation modalities</p> <p>8.1.4 CSOs are associated with democratic and institutional stabilisation</p>	<p>Project Progress Reports</p> <p>Interviews with direct and non-direct project stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews with CS and governmental stakeholders</p> <p>Independent ROM and Evaluation Reports</p>	The hampering of impact and sustainability prospects will focus on the degree of materialisation of risks at programming and project levels and the existence of unrealistic assumptions, insofar as these have been pre-defined. EQ3 will provide details for JC8.3, which looks at the CS capacity from the angle of probability of future impact and sustainability. Duplication of work will be avoided.
	JC 8.2 There is reason to believe that EU targets the development of sustainable support instruments	<p>8.2.1 Expected results defined by CSOs comprise clear and realistic indicators of projected sustainability</p> <p>8.2.2 CSOs benefitting from EU support are embedded in decision-making and public consultation structures</p> <p>8.2.3 Project results are disseminated to and used by the society at large</p>	<p>Project Progress Reports</p> <p>Interviews with direct and non-direct project stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews with CS and governmental stakeholders</p> <p>Independent ROM and Evaluation Reports</p>	Same as above

EVALUATION QUESTIONS (EQ)	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA (JC)	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF INFORMATION (SOI)	EQ SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY
	JC 8.3 Potential impact and sustainability of EU support to CSOs is not hampered by external risks and unrealistic assumptions.	<p>8.3.1 Risks and assumptions are systematically defined and updated</p> <p>8.3.2 Risks and assumptions reflect the actual situation on the ground</p> <p>8.3.3 Project implementation is responsive to risks and assumptions</p>	<p>Project Progress Reports</p> <p>Interviews with direct and non-direct project stakeholders</p> <p>Interviews with CS and governmental stakeholders</p> <p>Independent ROM and Evaluation Reports</p>	Same as above

5.2 Annex II - Summary of Phase 1 Findings

EQ1	To what extent are objectives at different levels (strategic, MIPDs and programmes) relevant as regards the Copenhagen political criteria for accession?	The objectives of the MIPDs 2007-09 & 2008-10, at the strategic, and programme level, reflect the Copenhagen political criteria in terms of support to the institutionalisation of democracy, rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities. Furthermore, there is consistency between the reflections of these criteria in the objectives at different levels
EQ2	To what extent has the allocation and use of financial assistance to civil society in the Western Balkans and Turkey been consistent with the objectives of Commission strategy for civil society, as stated in the 2007 Enlargement Strategy and with the overall enlargement strategy?	Financial assistance allocation to CS in the WBT has been relevant to and has reflected the Commission objectives for CS set out in the “Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007-2008” and in the overall enlargement strategy- to the extent allowed for by the perceived CS absorption capacity. However, financial allocations in the WBT are modest in relation to the comprehensive tasks of CS as defined in the assistance's objectives. Regarding the use of such allocations, support procedures that require good English language skills and project cycle management have not always been conducive to the enlargement objectives, as they restrict potential CSO participation.
EQ3	To what extent does programming provide for linkages between IPA and pre-IPA national programmes and assistance under other instruments, e.g. the multi-beneficiary scheme?	Programming does provide for linkages between IPA and pre-IPA national programmes as well as for linkages between IPA related support for CS and support under other instruments.
EQ4	To what extent does programming take into consideration and interconnect with already existing national authorities' policies and strategies on support to civil society?	The EC programming considers national authorities' existing policies and strategies on support to CS mainly through EU support for the elaboration of national policies and strategies. The EU also influences national CS policies at higher levels than programming, such as opinions and reports in the EU acquis approximation process. Interconnection is limited by the main focus of national strategies on legislation, institutional structures and procedures regarding the relationship between government and CS.
EQ5	To what extent are objectives at different levels (strategic, MIPDs and programmes) clear, measurable and realistic?	The strategic and programming objectives relevant to support of CS in the WBT are accurate, largely realistic but lacking measurability. The EU integration process has given a political agenda to governments of the WBT, and a certain degree of programming and strategic coherence is being achieved, as this agenda is trickling down to the level of CSOs. However, measurement of progress is challenged by the general and ambitious character of strategic objectives and by the absence of specific indicators at the level of programming
EQ6	To what extent do programming and monitoring mechanisms include SMART indicators to measure progress towards achievement of objectives?	SMART indicators are not systematically or regularly used in either initial programming or monitoring (as confirmed by the desk analysis and the interviews). Instead, measuring progress towards achieving objectives by Commission staff is most commonly based on monitoring findings and formal and informal discussions of lessons learned.
EQ7	To what extent does planning and programming provide adequate assessment of needs (both financial and time)?	The planning and programming of CS support relies on established dialogue and consultation procedures between the EU and national authorities. These procedures are more structured and formal in accord with accession status - notably due to the negotiation of enlargement policy chapters in the case of Turkey and Croatia – thus allowing for direct integration of needs and requirements in the planning and programming cycles. Projects indicate that budgets are based on analysis of needs and costs of actions.

EQ8	To what extent are annual IPA Component I allocations adequate in relation to the strategic objectives of the MIPDs?	The IPA allocations that include CS in Component I are based on socio-economic parameters and perceived national absorption capacities. They are generally supportive of MIPDs strategic objectives. However, the larger context is negatively influenced by disbursement pressures and the EUDs general staff constraints across all sectors, which have reportedly affected the size of overall allocations to institution building and CS.
EQ9	To what extent does programming provide adequate prioritisation and sequencing of assistance?	Programming of assistance to CS in the WBT involves a good degree of prioritisation, which is subject to agreement with the national and CS stakeholders. At the same time, sequencing is ensured less regularly and its practice depends largely on national sector priorities and the project context.
EQ10	To what extent is the project selection mechanism adequate in the sense of selecting the most relevant, efficient and effective projects to achieve the strategic objectives?	The adequateness of the project selection mechanism at programme level in selecting the most relevant, efficient and effective projects, is moderately satisfactory. The adequateness of the project selection mechanism at project level, notably through Calls for Proposals (CfPs), is not satisfactory.
EQ11	To what extent has a range of CSOs and other key stakeholders been involved in the needs assessment, strategy selection and other relevant aspects of the intervention logic?	The extent to which a range of CSOs and other key stakeholders have been involved in needs assessment, strategy selection and other relevant aspects of the intervention logic is moderately satisfactory. Compared to CARDS, IPA promotes participation of CS and other stakeholders better throughout the programming cycle. Nevertheless, the IPA programming process could still benefit from adoption, implementation and enforcement of a set of Minimum Standards on CS participation in IPA programming by all stakeholders.
EQ12	To what extent does programming take adequate and relevant account of other interventions promoted by key donors, where applicable, and how those interventions help meeting accession requirements?	Programming takes into account other interventions promoted by key donors. However, this is not always adequately performed and programming does not sufficiently consider how other donor interventions help meeting accession requirements.
EQ13	To which extent are the concepts of “CS Facility”, “CS Development”, and “CS Dialogue” clearly defined and well understood by all stakeholders?	There are no commonly accepted definitions of the terms “CS”, “CS Dialogue”, “CS Development” or “CS Facility”. The understanding of these concepts ranges from high to very low by different stakeholders.

5.3 Annex III - Country Specific Findings

5.3.1 ANNEX 3.1. – WIDER FINDINGS FOR ALBANIA

The fieldwork in Albania comprised a wide array of stakeholders, directly and indirectly related to dialogue with and support to the national CSOs: EUD, TACSO, Council of Europe, international NGOs and foundations, OSCE, National Agency for Support to CS, and national and international think tanks. Consequently, both the evaluation's country-specific findings and the country-specific weighing of all cross-cutting findings and conclusions could be carried out on this solid and wide basis.

EQ 1: Are the administrative and organisational structures in place, ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance?

At present, Albania's organisational network is triangular, with three main stakeholders participating in the programming and implementation of EU support to CS, namely the recently established national Civil Society Support Agency (CSSA, 2009), the EUD and the TACSO country office. The EUD and TACSO collaborate closely. CSO donor dependency is significantly stronger in Albania than in neighbouring countries, yet donor withdrawal is becoming evident, due to Albania being upgraded to a transition country. The EU remains the largest donor to CS, followed by SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), the US, Switzerland and Austria.

CS context and support structures have not yet been consolidated. Albanian CSOs are often linked to political parties and, consequently, CS has not acquired a stable profile. Operating modalities of the EU funding frameworks – for CS in Albania, this comprises the CSF, CBC and EIDHR – have been more extensively disseminated than in the past and CSOs are better aware of operational guidelines. The CBC pillar (i.e. IPA component II, relevant to CS) is now partially decentralised. The initial steps of decentralised programme management suffered delays, which led to the factual loss of a share of 2007 funding.

Thus, overall, the country's enabling environment for CS is still being defined – a recent Charter, which has the backing of all political parties, regulates the relationship between CSOs and government – but this process has suffered setbacks. A Working Group under the Ministry of Finance launched to amend the fiscal regime for CSO activities had stalled but is now resuscitated with high hopes. However, this comes with the daunting realisation that the Ministry of Finance is unwilling to reverse course and provide derogations on the 20% VAT applicable to income generating and service providing CSOs.

Despite these challenges, it is fair to say that Albanian CS has proliferated and gained some visibility, with EU support, but the means and ends of a dialogue between government and CS are still generally absent. It was hoped that the agency would take on this role but its mandate is limited to project preparation. This hinders the prospect for policy dialogue and participatory and inclusive decision-making. It should be noted that time should be granted for the new context to evolve.

EQ 2: To what extent are the monitoring mechanism and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?

EUID staff carries out monitoring visits on a regular basis. It is the EUD's intention to expand external monitoring practices, e.g. contracting out monitoring activities. In the CBC framework, monitoring visits are regularly carried out in cooperation with the CBC Joint Management

Structures (i.e. Operating Structures, Joint Technical Secretariat). In addition, TACSO has occasionally performed project visits on behalf of the EUD. ROM only applies to CS projects whose funding exceeds EUR 500 000: acknowledging the lesser value of grant contracts, this monitoring instrument has not been used.

EQ 3: To what extent the EC financial assistance has/is effectively contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities, including the development of the WBT CSOs and building their capacities, in particular with regard to their role within the enlargement strategy?

EC financial assistance to Albania's CS has been irregular, a result of the lack in demand by the government for IPA funding. Only 2009 saw an allocation of EUR 1.5 million to CS: neither 2007, nor 2008, nor 2010 programming earmarked funds for CS. This situation is changing with the CSF 2011 -2013, providing a three-year perspective by means of an annual allocation of EUR 1.5 million to CS in Albania. Activities have largely focused on anti-corruption, environment and human trafficking.

The consultation and participation of CSOs in law-making are significantly limited, with the possible exception of human rights. It is also recognised that support activities need to focus more on local community-based organisations, in order to boost grassroots leverage. Overall, CS lacks cooperation and capacities. These current limitations affect the proliferation of CSOs. Advocacy CSOs are regressing, due to fiscal reasons and the highly politicised context.

Based on a review of a sample selection of CARDS and IPA projects, financial assistance to CSOs in Albania has been able to give a limited impetus to political objectives of enlargement and – in the observed cases - there has been difficulty in ensuring an entry point at the policy-making level, or ensuring practical follow up. EU support to CSOs focusing on human trafficking has given way to enhanced and visible networking and dissemination of regional data but this stopped short of establishing an interface with local and regional authorities and national policy-making in Albania.

Similarly, support to enhance transparency of court decisions and proceedings has allowed the adoption of a regulation, with the support of the Ministry of Justice. In order to enforce the practical provisions of this regulation, however, the allocation of budgetary and human resources requires a central decision (not a court decision) and this action is pending. Selected courts in Tirana and Durres are implementing provisions of the regulation but this is voluntary.

Activities to support increased gender participation in primary and secondary schools, principally in the North-eastern regions of Albania, have been successful in contributing to adherence to the fundamental right of education. The Ministry of Education is increasingly aware of the urgent priority needed to tackle the high dropout rate. Given the highly traditional and conservative social contexts of Albanian local communities the dropout rate affects girls in particular.

EU support of the implementation of sustainable development provisions at the local level (under the umbrella of UN Agenda 21) has allowed a number of local communities to formally commit to the introduction of green agendas, with the appointment of a staff member as focal point. This is expanding the democratic outreach of local communities.

A degree of democratic strengthening through citizen engagement has also been achieved through EU support of forestry anti-corruption. This allowed for increased awareness of and participation in concrete issues by means of fostering collaboration between CS, local and

regional authorities. The scope and depth of corruption in forestry has reached the national policy level, reflecting a potential for strengthened democratic practices in this contentious area. Community watchdog groups were created and continue to hold public officials accountable.

EQ 4: Is assistance balanced in the sense of coverage of type, size and profile of organisations supported?

Different types of CSOs have received EU support but, at present, EU financing modalities favour larger organisations, as is the case elsewhere in the region. Albanian CSOs are principally classified as associations, foundations and centres.

Grassroots and remote CSOs do not have the financial capacity or skills to proliferate and compete. Needs of the local community-based organisations are often overlooked, as larger CSOs dominate the landscape and grass root insights are lacking. There are positive indications that the situation is about to improve. Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) Component II should allow expanding the funding outreach in bordering areas beyond Tirana, with greater involvement and responsibility of the MEI. The number of CSO applications in the last two cycles of EIDHR CfP has doubled, from approximately 60 to more than 100. This emphasises the results of the expanded dissemination and presence of EU funding possibilities. CS networking has increased but not in all subsectors. CSO coalitions on gender, for instance, have flourished, particularly at the level of local communities, but other areas, such as the rule of law and democratic strengthening, have not experienced similar growth.

Albania's current fiscal provisions governing CS are unclear and significantly hamper the proliferation and operations of smaller CSOs. The legal framework for CSO registration is relatively straightforward and in accordance with international standards. However, there remains confusion surrounding the distinction between not-for-profit and economic activity of CSOs, and the potential capacity of tax funding grants. Furthermore, a single consolidated law does not yet define provisions of the public benefit status granted to a CSO, rather, this is laid out in Ministerial bylaws. This further obfuscates scenarios for potential participation of smaller CSOs.

EQ 5: To what extent is assistance balanced in terms of instruments mix (TA, including TACSO, micro and macro grant schemes, P2P, etc)?

CS is still developing in Albania and CSOs needs and constraints are considerable. These constraints are being addressed by the mix of instruments available. CSOs express a preference for smaller scale support, believed to enhance practical and political leverage and overall operational efficiency.

The presence of TACSO has had a positive effect on CSOs, which are increasingly aware of available EU funding modalities. Watchdog CSOs are not sufficiently targeted by EU funding. Decreasing donor presence in Albania gives greater prominence to the EU presence.

EQ 6: To what extent are the different implementation systems (DIS and de-concentrated) affecting the support to CS in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability?

Albania is being introduced to a partial decentralisation of EU support to CS, as the MEI progressively takes on responsibilities for the implementation of the CBC component and sees its operating capacities being strengthened.

At present, three staff members at the EUD are responsible for CS activities within the framework of CSF, CBC and EIDHR programmes. IPA funding to CS has been intermittent while backlogs have persisted across the board, affecting all programmes. However, in 2010 the Albanian government declined IPA I funds for CS, reportedly due to the establishment of the CSSA.

CSOs are gradually more aware of EU programming and funding possibilities and their involvement has increased. However, this does not sufficiently apply to remote and grassroots organisations. Provided the new EU programmes are becoming more inclusive with regard to the latter, implementation can become more effective and capitalise on the largely untapped know how and resources that exist at the local and regional levels. CSO service providers have expanded at the municipal level in Albania but change can reach momentum only when operations are effectively accompanied by regulatory reform, a trend that was largely lacking a few years ago.

Projects supporting CS in Albania accomplish a degree of progress in terms of efficiency and effectiveness as intended objectives are achieved but results and impacts are sometimes not measured or given follow up.

EQ 7: What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?

EU support to CS in Albania, and the subject of this evaluation, is predominantly focused on pilot, networking, training and dissemination activities, which address basic and justified needs but do not lead to concrete or visible impacts. Furthermore, projects are rarely in a position to follow up on reviewing whether – and where – results, rather than outputs, have been achieved, and how effects can be sustained. This typifies CS support in the region. Albania's enabling context is particularly challenging and new. For instance, a CSO supporting and promoting Roma integration and inclusion at the local and regional levels launched an initiative to petition the Albanian Prime Minister on the condition and grievances of Roma populations in Albania. Yet the action itself lacked the articulation of a wanted outcome, or did not envisage a process whereby it could increase and sustain awareness of Roma grievances.

In general, the results of CSO support are not well disseminated and therefore largely unknown by the public, unless the CS activity took place at the local level and involved communities and citizen groups. This local approach allows the effects of project to reach a higher degree of impact and sustainability as local communities begin to perceive the real benefits from involvement and participation in a project related to a commonly perceived priority issue such as the environment. EU support for a community development centre in Skodra involved 200 families in local waste collection and recycling. Municipal authorities contributed to financing waste management, while local families and children became involved in dissemination. These activities saw civic empowerment of local citizens while municipal authorities became aware that waste management was a significant democratic and economic opportunity worth pursuing.

CS projects sometimes foster a greater change in the community, such as a change in work practices, which may subsequently change attitudes. However, activities are not structured or equipped to maximise chances for a sustainable impact. The EU support of court transparency in Albania successfully promoted a participatory approach to the conceptualisation of enhancing courts' public responsiveness and provision of information. The project led to the adoption of a regulation on court transparency. However, successful implementation requires staff and resources, an issue that was not addressed by the project. Outside of the remit of courts, the Ministries of Justice and Finance hold a centralised power over financial and human resource matters. Therefore, at present, impact depends on the voluntary adoption and enforcement of regulatory provisions, which has been effectively observed in district courts in Tirana and Durres.

EQ 8: Which are the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance? Are there any elements which are hampering or could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of assistance?

CSOs active today in Albania have come a long way. Until a few years ago, CS was barely evolving, due to a lack of funding, a restricted level of activity, and an increasingly weak profiling of CSOs outside Tirana. Today, progress is undeniable. CSOs have demonstrated that they can play a small but active role in achieving democratic objectives. The legal and regulatory context is evolving, even if most remains to be done to launch an adequate fiscal regime for CSOs in the country. These are noticeable changes from a few years ago. It is fair to say that CSOs are or have been better off with EU support, than without. Yet, as elsewhere in the region, a persistent discrepancy remains between well-organised and strongly profiled CSOs and those with barely enough leverage to survive. Idem, projects often lack concrete outputs and visible achievements are not evident.

In a fragile and politicised context, lower-scale interventions are preferred by a large number of CSOs, to maximise efficiency and independence. The Albanian government is coming to terms with the existence of CS, witnessed by recent institutional and legal initiatives, but has not consented to a structured dialogue. The latter is not a panacea but would help CSOs to target institutional and policy entry points, currently lacking in Albania. This would be particularly valuable in the case of CSOs focusing at the level of local communities, where small-scale and low-cost civil and municipal engagement can effectively make a difference.

5.3.2 ANNEX 3.2. – WIDER FINDINGS FOR BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The fieldwork in BiH covered meetings with a large number of organizations directly and indirectly involved in CS sphere, with in particular: key CSOs, several CS networks, EUD, TACSO core and national staff, State department in charge of CS, and several smaller CSOs from both Entities. These consultations formed a representative sample for the purposes of the evaluation, and an appropriate basis for both the formulation of country specific findings and identification of key lessons learned for the purpose of the overall WBT-level synthesis.

EQ 1: Are the administrative and organisational structures in place, ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance?

An EC project (service contract for the “Cidi” Project) has recently been implemented in order to support the BiH governmental authorities (on all levels with a priority to the top State level) setting up an appropriate governmental body in charge of the dialogue with CS. This project has not achieved its key objective, due to a number of conditions, including, the increasingly neutralising impact of the institutional structure of BiH on all structural efforts aimed at pushing the development of the BiH State forward.

This is a stark example of an acutely detrimental institutional context within which the EC support to national CS should try to transcend constraints by placing priority on pragmatic thematic programmes such as: cross-entity cooperation (“CEC”) focussed on structural topics related to the environment, gender empowerment, inter-faith dialogue, shared cultural and natural heritage safeguard and valorisation, support to minorities, etc. Frequently these projects not only combine several of these topics (e.g. environmental protection & gender empowerment & cross-entity cooperation) and significantly facilitate reaching out to smaller, locally and thematically focussed grassroots CSOs. This approach would also be conducive to the introduction of sector wide approach programmes (SWAPs), in which a clearly defined role of CS is an evident strategic need.

The EU assistance in BiH is still under the centralised implementation system, and the programming and implementation of assistance is done primarily at the level of the DEU (EU Delegation) or in Brussels. The EUD team implements strong “hands on” coordination of the assistance for CS in the country. Brussels also coordinates some assistance. It should then be recognised that the administrative and organisational structures are in place and do ensure efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance.

What is more, the initiative to introduce the sectoral approach to programming of assistance has shown some progress in profiling and networking of CSOs. Nevertheless, this approach should be introduced step by step, in order to allow smaller but profiled organisations to find their place and role in the greater system.

EQ 2: To what extent are the monitoring mechanism and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?

Internal EUD monitoring of CS projects is primarily done by the TM dealing with specific instruments. As for the (external) ROM monitoring, as in all WBT countries, only a few CSO projects are covered due to the above mentioned budgetary and methodological constraints. TACSO BiH has recently been tasked to provide technical assistance, “Guidance/Monitoring” to 12 IPA 2008 funded projects. This is the first such activity of TACSO in the country.

EQ 3: To what extent the EC financial assistance has/is effectively contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities, including the development of the WBT CSOs and building their capacities, in particular with regard to their role within the enlargement strategy?

As in other WBT countries, born from the partition of former Yugoslavia, EC support to CS had been fundamental, starting with the initial post-war reconstruction period (pre-IPA) to date (IPA). In BiH, this has particular importance due to political and institutional constraints which also affect CS.

As in all other WBT countries, the support from the EU in BiH was primarily instrumental in building capacities of the CSOs to embrace the notion and process of Project Cycle Management (PCM) and strategic planning, which enhanced the aptitudes, coverage, focus, and responded to the needs of the beneficiary organisations. In addition, EU pressure on the government to adopt a range of measures more conducive to development and CS work in the country, has improved the overall context in which CS operates today. Finally, provision of grants to CSOs has significantly contributed to outreach to vulnerable and excluded groups, enhancing awareness and advocacy of human rights, EU values and integration processes.

In conclusion, one of the main challenges for EU assistance to CS in BiH is the introduction of a sustainable process of empowerment of the CSOs in the sector wide approach programmes, while reinforcing the role of the CSOs in the territorial cooperation and implementation of the ERDF. The latter can usefully build on the results and impacts achieved by UNDP-operated LODs which have supported direct cooperation between local CSOs and local authorities. This concept could be adapted and replicated in order to encompass the regional development agencies in the country.

EQ 4: Is assistance balanced in the sense of coverage of type, size and profile of organisations supported?

As in other WBT countries, and notwithstanding the peculiar institutional architecture of BiH, EU assistance to CSOs in the country has not yet managed to significantly improve this balance for a fairer coverage of smaller NGOs. The current situation in BiH is clearly marked by a dichotomy between two “systems” or “spheres”.

One system is dominated by a very small number of large and “professional” CSOs whose ambition is not only to directly intervene in policy dialogue but also, and increasingly, to compete strongly among them in order to regain or preserve their respective fundraising grounds and privileged donor relations.

The other, still insufficiently covered by EU support, is characterised by more pragmatic and lower profile local development projects, operated by smaller CSOs, whether or not in partnership with traditional EU NGOs specializing in support to development.

Another decisive factor that hinders adequate balance of assistance is more bureaucratic in nature. While all agree that the EU standards and requirements should be in place and should be the same for all, it is also understood that “small” organisations, especially those in rural areas, have difficulties in accessing EU (and other) funds due to a lack of capacity to prepare demanding applications as per EU standards.

In particular, these smaller CSOs often struggle to fulfil all criteria for accessing the grants. To tackle this problem, some EU instruments (e.g. EIDHR) have introduced two lots – aimed at reaching out to both “big” and “small” organisations. This is an example of a good practice that could be replicated.

Somewhere between these spheres there is an interesting opportunity of allying local authorities and local CSOs. The UNDP LOD programmes offer an appropriate response to the need of supporting such alliances and their beneficial cross-fertilization effects. This produces a direct impact of capacity building by local actors (whether CS or local/regional authorities) to meet the upcoming challenge of territorial cooperation and ERDF.

EQ 5: To what extent is assistance balanced in terms of instruments mix (TA, including TACSO, micro and macro grant schemes, P2P, etc)?

The mix of the EU assistance reflects the overall situation briefly recapitulated under EQ4. However, there has been stronger EC support to the government (reportedly being pursued by a new TA service contract). This project has not managed to achieve its primary targets, due to the overwhelming weight of the specific institutional and political context of the country. It will therefore be very important to carefully address the lessons learned from this first project in order to make sure that the upcoming one will have a better chance achieving the required impact.

It should also be noted that the above mentioned LOD programme, operated by the UNDP, supporting partnerships between local CSOs and local authorities in projects of shared local interest and relevance, is a good practice that could be replicated.

EQ 6: To what extent are the different implementation systems (DIS and de-concentrated) affecting the support to CS in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability?

BiH is still under the centralised system of EU assistance implementation. In one sense, this is positive for CSOs in BiH as they can address the EU as a neutral (or positive) player in the country's development, especially in light of the country's very complex and difficult political and socio-economic context.

CS has repeatedly asked for support from the EU (through shadow reports, reactions and inputs to the EU Progress Report, etc.) in different areas of policy-making. Some grants by the EU have contributed to the development of strong advocacy work by organisations to change/adopt some legislation that was crucial for the protection of rights (e.g. the Antidiscrimination Law). There are different opinions on many topics and issues within CS, but there is an agreement that – for the time being – the centralised system is more conducive for civil society development and the impact of the assistance.

EQ 7: What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?

The impacts of the EU assistance have been significant in the country. This impact should be looked at from two levels:

- § Policy/state level: Due to divergences and an internal power struggle between large/policy-oriented organisations, the impact of EU assistance sometimes is not apparent. Nevertheless, the EU support to advocacy organisations and service providers have brought significant changes in the way CSOs operate, how they deal with target groups, and – importantly – increasing their transparency and accountability.
- § Local level: The highest impact EU assistance can be found at the local level. Projects supported have brought significant changes and new models of work and development to local communities. However, the sustainability of such interventions is often in question due to a lack of capacities, financial mechanisms, and “buy in” from local governments to institutionalise and adopt best practices.

In general, sustainability of assistance is in question. The BiH government, in most cases, does not adopt best practices and models. Also, CSOs are often project/donor oriented, and they tend to change their focus with the funds. This means the achievements of the projects lack proper followed up.

EQ 8: Which are the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance? Are there any elements which are hampering or could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of assistance?

As with all WBT beneficiaries, the elements that are hampering the impact and sustainability of EC support to CS in BiH are institutional and political in nature. The principal risk for BiH civil society is dividing along the fault-line of political divisions between the three main institutional political players. The over-arching role of CS is to transcend these rivalries to fuel the CS dialogue in the country and region.

5.3.3 ANNEX 3.3. – WIDER FINDINGS FOR CROATIA

The fieldwork in Croatia covered a representative sample of national and international CSOs, and CS-related stakeholders, including the government office in charge of CS, selected national media, the UNDP, etc. This facilitated the consultation and synthesis on the country level.

EQ 1: Are the administrative and organisational structures in place, ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance?

Croatia fully implements DIS and programming and implementation are entirely decentralised with the exception of CS specific instruments handled by the EUD, such as EU information grants and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), which is not part of this evaluation. The DIS repartition of workload between Croatian stakeholders and EUD is considered adequate and programming and implementation structures are highly elaborate. Yet DIS is a learning process and it is observed that governmental capacities and experience are still required to make financial support to CS more strategic, i.e. how to efficiently use projects to facilitate the implementation and strengthening of the policy framework.

The Central Office for Development Strategy and Coordination of EU Funds (CODEF) comprises a programming department and the Central Finance and Contract Authority (CFCA) is in charge of budgeting, contracting, payment and accounting. Furthermore, three entities are contributing actively to the development of CS. The independent Council for Civil Society Development (2002), made up of elected CSO representatives, is a consultative body to government; the executive Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs (GO, 1998) is increasingly the leading funding agency and is awaiting full accreditation; and the National Foundation for CS Development (2003) provides expert and financial input to CS programmes and is the largest national donor of institutional (operational) grants to CSOs. Monthly meetings are held between the GO, CFCA and EUD on on-going decentralised CS projects. Public funding of CSOs has been increasingly monitored by the GO since 2007. With the decentralisation of financial assistance, supervision of support to CS was handled by the GO. Its role in pre-accession project implementation can be judged positively insofar as it has allowed a strengthening and retention of skills and capacities.

In light of its advancing accession status, Croatia was submitted to a tight screening of CS priority issues such as democracy and human rights and, over the years, this has provided a stimulus to establishing an accommodating operational context for CS. The accession framework gave a positive impetus to the quality of CSO proposals and it allowed fostering a participatory approach in programming and implementation.

EQ 2: To what extent are the monitoring mechanism and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?

Integrated monitoring structures (also known as Integrated Monitoring System, IMS) are sourced by in-house capacity at the GO. CS single grants are not directly monitored by the CFCA but a detailed overview of project progress is ensured, however. The latter does verify financial expenditure, which has given useful insights to CS managerial capacities. At present, twice-yearly monitoring committees and an annual IPA general committee are held that cover CS under the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) component.

CSO grant schemes are subject to GO internal monitoring procedures. Detailed reporting describes the state of play and results and sustainability are reviewed. The operating context for CS is also assessed in light of the intervention and legislative and political changes, which provides a good potential basis for impact judgment. SMART indicators are not systematically used in either programming or monitoring. With financial support from IPA component I, CODEF can launch more in depth, sector-wide strategic evaluations but internal capacities are limited overseeing such activities.

EQ 3: To what extent the EC financial assistance has/is effectively contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities, including the development of the WBT CSOs and building their capacities, in particular with regard to their role within the enlargement strategy?

Prospective accession to the EU has given Croatia a good impetus to support CS. Yet CS has not been able to carve a profile in the country's democratisation process as CSOs remain largely excluded from policy-making processes. CSOs' access to public documentation is still problematic. Occasionally, financial assistance to CSOs is able to disseminate or transpose outcomes and results directly or indirectly in line with the political objectives of enlargement, notably in the areas of human and fundamental rights and protection of minorities, comprising gender, ethnic social inclusion and environmental protection.

In the EU support to gender equality and integration in local government policies of Split, local authorities were introduced to the results of gender mainstreaming analysis and this has increased awareness.

Other support targeting the training of Roma teaching assistants in public schools and the development of non-formal training for Roma households aimed to enhance parental skills and motivation for education in various cities and counties across the country, including Zagreb, Rijeka, Istria and Osijek. Project activities directly fed into European human rights priorities, as the European Court of Human Rights ruled last year that segregation of Roma in primary school was discriminatory. Activities allowed the emergence of a platform for discussion at local levels and highlighted the positive role of education in overcoming ethnic segregation. Furthermore, the importance of visibility and perceptions of Roma communities have been enhanced at the sensitive cultural crossroads represented by education. Croatia now reports on these matters to the Council of Europe (COE).

In the area of environmental protection, EU support has fostered regional networking and collaboration between CSOs which resulted in a collective push to ensure that public consultation procedures will be respected in Croatia and BiH with regard to the planned construction of a power plant in Krsko (Slovenia), in line with the Espoo convention on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in a Transboundary Context (1997).

Even if CSOs do not expand or sustain staff during and after project completion, EU funding is often providing a temporary phase of financial stability. Furthermore, projects are able to foster and maintain contacts with local and national authorities and like-minded CS partners. Regional networking and contacts have proven essential in enhancing common approaches and broadening and sharing knowledge and skills of CSOs. With a proliferation of activities financed by EU support, CSOs are often able to attract significant numbers of volunteers; this also forces CSOs into taking on a more targeted strategic approach and to articulate priorities.

EQ 4: Is assistance balanced in the sense of coverage of type, size and profile of organisations supported?

As elsewhere in the region, CS in Croatia is dominated by a small number of CSOs. These are able to carry out monitoring and reporting of justice and fundamental rights, in contrast to the large share of grassroots and remote CSOs, which do not have the financial and skills capacity to perform watchdog tasks. Similarly, larger CSOs remain most successful in ensuring access to EU funding and receive the largest share of media attention during pre-elections. It is expected that EU membership will polarise the discrepancy between larger and smaller CSOs and this is exacerbated by larger CSOs' unwillingness to match up with smaller peer counterparts. This greatly affects the proliferation of CSOs in more remote areas such as Dalmatia and Slavonia. Croatia's funding parameters are also influenced by the importance of certain specific target groups such as war veterans, not yet part of the public CS, and gender, traditionally a politicised sub-sector.

The realisation that smaller CSOs need to be addressed is becoming more prominent in governmental circles. Officially registered CSOs in Croatia have increased from 37,000 in 2009 to 43,000 in 2010, for all issue areas, but an overall picture of who-does-what-and-where is still missing. Furthermore, locally-operating CSOs often benefit from direct support without referral to public procurement rules.

EQ 5: To what extent is assistance balanced in terms of instruments mix (TA, including TACSO, micro and macro grant schemes, P2P, etc)?

Croatian CSOs have greatly benefitted from the EU grant schemes however the instruments at their disposal may not always directly juxtapose with common horizontal concerns, such as public funding transparency, grassroots strengthening and fundraising, access to public information, and contracting CSOs for social services. The EU has remained the principal donor to Croatian CS and application procedures are lengthy, demanding and labour-intensive, factors which eliminate smaller and voluntary CSOs from potential participation. CSOs generally consider smaller grants more effective and accessible. This has resonated with the GO which is keen to focus on smaller CSOs.

CSOs have proclaimed the need for more involvement, consultation and participation, both as implementing partners of EU funding and stakeholders of democratic progress. CSOs are keen to enhance their profile at the local and regional levels but this proactive approach often clashes with the vested interests of municipal authorities.

EU support addresses a big spectrum of CSOs but this does not directly comprise youth, sport associations or cultural heritage, not to mention the various organisations engaged in post-war issues from very different angles (such as 'truth and reconciliation' and 'homeland war', the latter, operating in defence of widows, missing persons and war veterans with very significant memberships). Many of these are not immediately operating "on the radar" and are often considered anti-EU.

EQ 6: To what extent are the different implementation systems (DIS and de-concentrated) affecting the support to CS in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability?

Since 2006, Croatia's launch of DIS suffered from start-up problems, notably with regard to procurement and contracting backlogs and implementation delays, but these have been overcome with the creation of the CFCA, replacing the CFCU in the Ministry of Finance. Staffing levels were increased and overall programme and project management visibly improved.

A gradual increase of CSO participation to EU programming has been achieved but its efficiency and scope are being questioned by different stakeholders. Meetings with CS are too often 'one-off' and do not allow for a structured dialogue and are therefore insufficiently participatory. Croatian CS emerged after the war, and its late institutionalisation provides a context of appreciation that despite progress, more decisive steps are needed.

The transition to more autonomy and decentralisation in implementation modalities can present a challenging institutional context for EU projects and these are often combined with reorganisations in line-ministries, accompanied by additional staff changes.

Shared history and similar patterns of CS development can be found throughout the region. For example, projects supporting CS in Croatia accomplish a degree of progress in terms of efficiency and effectiveness as intended objectives are achieved but results and impact are rarely measured and given follow up. Also, Croatian public authorities, as others in the region, can further accommodate an expanded role of CS in decision-making, despite strategic posturing on and institutional responses to CS issues, and funding allocation and disbursement rates and volumes remain, to a certain degree, non-transparent.

EQ 7: What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?

Achieved outcomes of EU supported CS activities are often of a pilot nature, and this, by definition and unless given a concrete follow up on behalf of the project beneficiary, diminishes the prospect of impact. Too often, legal and institutional initiatives and novelties are not followed through with practical enforcement and change. For example, a Council for National Minorities has been established at the national and municipal levels, holding elected bodies, but these are frequently excluded from the national decision-making process.

At the same time, it should be underlined that CSOs can effectively exert a degree of political influence and that CS has been able to build a bridge between the political establishment and realities on the ground. Laws are being scrutinised and CSOs have actively participated in monitoring of anti-corruption measures, the judiciary and human rights. This has created a more transparent context which has positively impacted on the reputation of CS.

Occasionally, concrete project outcomes are able to potentially foster longer-term impact but this can be offset by a lack of project presence and/or follow up and a still evolving and often unresponsive legal and political context. EU support to the Roma social inclusion through education facilitated the integration of Roma criteria in the proceedings of the National Centre for Educational Quality Assurance. This is contributing to a tighter review of and a more pro-active approach to the treatment of Roma children in pre-school and primary education.

Furthermore, the project was able to give a platform for stakeholder discussion on e.g. the training and integration of Roma teacher assistants, a ground-breaking achievement which previously had no legal or operational reference. These progress indicators have been achieved despite the difficulty of engaging Roma CSOs and representatives in a dialogue. Furthermore, impact at the local levels and within line-ministries (education, welfare, etc.) has been observed as local authorities are more aware of pre-school and primary challenges to the Roma communities and are able to act more pro-actively. Education is increasingly recognised as the leading of four essential sectors for successful Roma integration (trailed by employment, health and housing).

Support to gender mainstreaming at the municipal level has led to gender policy analysis and local authorities are being held accountable on relevant matters as the project ensures a follow up e.g. by screening gender-unfriendly language on municipal websites. Yet again, gender – or sexual discrimination, domestic violence and minorities - does not benefit from a holistic approach at the political and legal levels, and potential impact is not sustained.

EQ 8: Which are the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance? Are there any elements which are hampering or could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of assistance?

With a general focus on CSO institutional and capacity building, a general direction that has set the EU apart from some of the other donors in the region such as the UNDP, enhanced management skills have become evident and, in combination with greater outreach and networking due to EU support, this has led CSOs to increase their chances of becoming sustainable and meaningful organisations. There remains a large discrepancy between well-organised and strongly profiled CSOs and those with barely enough leverage to subsist. Many CSOs fear that Croatia's EU membership will diminish funding availability. This puts the pressure on the leading national stakeholders such as the GO and the Foundation for CS Development to ensure that effective mechanism for fund disbursement will be put in place.

At the same time, projects often lack concrete outputs and it is therefore difficult to understand what has been factually achieved. Also, very few project interventions fully adhere to PCM and often impact and results are not given attention. If any results have been achieved, these are not well disseminated or given follow up. An element that does add to potential sustainability is the capacity of EU support to strengthen outreach and networking capacities to CSOs, which gives increased chances of partnerships, knowledge sharing and prospective funding.

At a national level, financial viability of CSOs is negatively affected by the financial crisis, as local and national authorities reduce their support to CS.

5.3.4 ANNEX 3.4. – WIDER FINDINGS FOR KOSOVO

The fieldwork in Kosovo was scheduled in order to coincide with the TACSO LAGs conference (24-26/10/11), and this provided a privileged opportunity not only to encounter a large number of national CSOs and CS-related stakeholders but also approach a wider range of other WBT participants to this conference. Moreover, their simultaneous presence and availability also facilitated the organisation of several focus groups for the purpose of appraisal of all relevant country-specific issues.

EQ 1: Are the administrative and organisational structures in place, ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance?

In Kosovo, various administrative and organisational structures are in place for the programming and implementation of EU support to CS but they do not always act in the most efficient or effective way. ECLO is well resourced but its human and other resources are to a large extent consumed by the administration of EU financial assistance to CS in Kosovo. This situation exists at the expense of the efficient and effective - results oriented – implementation of this assistance. In addition, ECLO has not embedded the functions of programming and implementing this assistance within sectors that are responsible for the Copenhagen political criteria, European integration *per se*, or CS *per se*. They are embedded in the social sector. According to some stakeholders, including ECLO, this situation does not necessarily have an adverse influence on the efficiency or effectiveness of the EU's financial support package to CS in Kosovo. According to these stakeholders, the existing interaction between EU decision makers and CS in Kosovo ensures that available EU support is allocated to the “right” objectives and provided in the “right” way.

Other stakeholders, CSOs in particular, tend to disagree. According to these stakeholders this situation may explain why there is a bias in EU financial assistance to CS in financing CS actions in the social sector. ECLO does not perform strategic planning for CS sector as a whole as it does for the sectors for agriculture or the environment. Nevertheless, evidence collected suggests that ECLO does promote the dialogue between the EU, the government and CS. In particular, ECLO promotes the so-called “*shadow*” Stabilisation and Association Process Dialogue with CS. ECLO also does not sufficiently engage CS in the programming and implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in Kosovo. According to a leading NGO, ECLO does not consult CS during the preparatory phase of IPA Project Fiches. ECLO is, however, in the process of developing new ways of cooperation to address this situation.

On behalf of the government, NIPAC promotes the dialogue between the EU, the government and CS but it does not consult CS on issues of programming EU financial assistance to CS in Kosovo. NIPAC has left the initiative for the programming of EU financial assistance to CS in

Kosovo entirely to ECLO. NIPAC also does not engage CS in issues of implementation of EU financial assistance to CS. NIPAC has left the responsibility for the implementation of EU financial assistance entirely to ECLO.

Kosovo does not yet have a Governmental Office for Cooperation with Civil Society such as is found in neighbouring countries Albania, Croatia, MK and RS. Stakeholders in the government and CS closely follow developments in the region and many stakeholders are in fact in favour of establishing such an office, as such an office may *inter alia* increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the EU financial support package to CS in Kosovo in a broad sense – e.g. including EU financial support to governmental institutions such as an office of that type.

There are a number of other organisational structures in Kosovo that –in theory - have the potential to enhance participation by both the government and CS in programming or implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in the WBT. Such participation is likely to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of this assistance. In practice, the mandate of the Office for Good Governance (OGC) within the Office of the Prime Minister - that is responsible for ensuring participation of CS in the work of the government - is too ambitious and too broad. OGC is responsible for reviewing all Kosovo strategies, policies, programmes, legislation, procedures and practices on good governance, human rights, equal opportunities, and gender, and check these for compliance with applicable international and EU standards. OGC then provides recommendations to the prime minister.

This is an ambitious task and the OGC has not been provided sufficient resources to implement this mandate. At the same time, OGC's mandate is broadly formulated. For instance, OGC is mandated to develop consultative bodies as needed in each of the aforementioned areas. But the mandate is not specific about what specific consultative bodies the OGC should develop. OGC is also mandated to consult with community representatives but the mandate does not specify through which mechanisms and procedures it should act.

An additional observation is that, at present, OGC does not play a major role in matters of programming or implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in Kosovo. In practice, the Department of Registration and Liaison with NGOs (NGO Department) within the Ministry of Public Administration - that is responsible for the liaison with the EU, the government and CS - is biased towards registration and deregistration of NGOs. At present, the department is virtually absent from the entire process of programming and implementing the EU CS support programme.

In Kosovo, there are some good practices of cooperation between ministries and CS, including cooperation in the area of implementation of EU financial assistance to CS. These include the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of the Environment. According to the TACSO Kosovo Office report "*Beyond Zero*" these examples do not reflect the overall situation of cooperation between the public administration and CS but they "*nevertheless*" indicate that improvements are possible. There are also examples of good practices of cooperation between municipalities and CS, including cooperation in the area of implementation of EU financial assistance to CS. These include the Municipality of Peja/Pe•. The idea of appointing so-called Municipal Civil Society Liaison Officers throughout Kosovo is gaining momentum.

Kosovo CS realises that in order to enhance its influence on the programming and implementation of EU support to CS in Kosovo the CS sector must strengthen its own organisation. An initial development is the revitalisation of the CIVIKOS platform and further developing this platform into the voice of CS vis-à-vis the government, the parliament, ministries, agencies and other stakeholders, including the EU. A second development is the establishment and strengthening of sectoral permanent networks and ad hoc coalitions that can function as the voice of CS vis-à-vis third parties in such sectors. A third development is the promotion by CS of good governance principles within the CS sector such as through adopting and implementing a Code of Ethics. A fourth development is strengthening individual NGOs to become “specialist” in their own fields. A fifth development is strengthening collaboration between large and small CSOs, between CSOs and local authorities, and between NGOs and other CS actors such as trade unions, professional associations and universities. The CS sector has also started collaborating with the for-profit sector, as both sectors are keen to explore the possibilities offered by the spread of corporate social responsibility in Kosovo.

In the meantime, CS in Kosovo has significant capacity that the EU can use to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of its financial support to CS in the country. In particular, foundations that are active throughout the region, or locally lead NGOs such as KCSF with experience in grant scheme management, have significant capacity to develop and manage EU funded grant schemes according to PRAG.

EQ 2: To what extent are the monitoring mechanism and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?

In Kosovo EU financial assistance to CS is monitored at the level of the EU, the government and CS itself. Nevertheless, monitoring mechanisms and structures are not always appropriate or do not always function correctly. The following examples demonstrate this situation.

At the EU level there are the IPA and ROM monitoring mechanisms. CS does not consider the IPA monitoring process representative, however, as CS in Kosovo does not participate in work of the IPA Monitoring Committee. CS in Kosovo is not involved in the formal EU progress reporting process. It is, however involved in shadow EU progress reporting. ECLO supports this process. ROM has monitored TACSO, including its Kosovo component, in October and November 2010. ROM does not cover all EU support to CS in Kosovo, since it targets EU funded contracts of over EUR 1 million and thus excludes smaller EU service contracts and smaller EU action grants. The remaining monitoring consists of ad hoc monitoring performed by DG ELARG, ECLO, the government, CS or contractors of technical assistance projects like TACSO or TA projects implementing grant schemes on behalf of the EU. These monitoring processes are neither systematic nor do they use agreed upon or uniform indicators, activities, outputs and results. The outcomes of these monitoring processes are often not accessible to contractors, grant beneficiaries, target groups or other stakeholders.

According to BIRN, actors monitoring EU financial support to CS in Kosovo could learn from foundations that are active in Kosovo how they monitor their CS portfolios. BIRN suggests these foundations are much more efficient and effective in monitoring their portfolios. The Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS), for instance, supports the implementation of most of its grants with additional capacity building in monitoring, evaluation, and reporting. This process results in better quality Progress Reports, which, in turn, lead to more efficient and effective monitoring by KFOS that is *inter alia* based on these reports.

Following the outcomes of the recent Civil Society Index process in Kosovo, the CS sector in the country is contemplating introducing Quality Assurance Systems that promote good CS practice and include the establishment and operation of external monitoring and evaluation of CS performance. The latter would include CS performance on EU funded interventions aimed at support CS in the country, and the introduction of QAS may indeed enhance monitoring and evaluation across the board. An example of a QAS system is the Excellence Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). EFQM is a global non-profit membership-based foundation. With over 500 members across Europe, including in the WB, EFQM provides a unique platform for CSOs to learn from each other and improve their performance. The Excellence Model is a business model that promotes so-called “Sustainable Excellence”. EFQM offers specific Excellence Models for CSOs that may inspire the introduction of QAS in CS in Kosovo and beyond, in the region.

EQ 3: To what extent the EC financial assistance has/is effectively contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities, including the development of the WBT CSOs and building their capacities, in particular with regard to their role within the enlargement strategy?

In Kosovo, EU financial assistance to CS contributes to a significant extent achieving the strategic objectives as per the Copenhagen political criteria, the Enlargement Strategy and the Civil Society Strategy as based on the Commission Communication from 2005.

As to the Copenhagen political criteria, there has been moderate progress in terms of advancement in Kosovo in areas such as democracy and the rule of law, human rights and the protection of minorities and civil and political rights. A Kosovo success story is the establishment of the Stabilisation-Association Process Dialogue (SAPD) process and the role Kosovo CS plays therein. This progress would have been unthinkable without EU support to CS in Kosovo. Despite such support, however, the involvement and participation of CS in policy making, notably in its interaction with the government and the parliament, is still not satisfactory. The institutional, legal and financial frameworks supporting CS in Kosovo have somewhat improved but a lot more needs to be done to ensure mainstreaming of the voice of CS in the affairs of the state. Another matter of concern for the EU is CS transparency and accountability.

As to European integration, there is ample evidence of CS contributions to the advancement of the European integration process in Kosovo including in areas such as internal market, competition, state aid, consumer protection, free movement of goods, employment and social policies, and sectoral policies such as the environment, justice, freedom and security. EU support to CS in Kosovo has contributed to the achievements of CS in these sectors, however, better focus and concentration of resources on this second CSF pillar – in particular through promoting CS participation in service contracts and through grant schemes - would have ensured better deepening and widening of this contribution.

As to the CS sector *per se*, in particular CS capacities to contribute to Kosovo's transition, the EU has followed up on its promises made in the 2009 Commission Communication titled “Kosovo – Fulfilling its European Perspective” and has supported CS capacity building in various ways. Thanks to EU support, CS capacities in Kosovo were strengthened. In particular, CSOs demonstrated greater awareness and understanding of the Copenhagen political criteria, European affairs, and issues concerning CS *per se*. CS has also become more involved and

performed well in the SAPD process, although, according to the EU, it could and should enhance its SAPD performance. CS has also started pushing for key reforms focussed on establishing state institutions such as the *Office for Cooperation with Civil Society* in Serbia.

CS has also started pushing for additional reforms targeting CS, including enhancing the institutional, legal and financial frameworks at both the central and local level. In addition, CS has started organising the sector again, in particular through revitalising the CIVIKOS platform, which is a platform representing CS in Kosovo, which could be further developed into a legitimate voice of CS in Kosovo. CS has also produced a number of general and specific “leaders”, such as KCSF (Kosovo Civil Society Foundation) and KEC (Kosovo Education Centre), which are able to lead permanent networks or ad hoc coalitions representing entire sectors. Such NGOs are also able today to lead EU funded action grants under both the NP and the MBPs. CS has also consolidated and gained recognition for its role in providing social and other services, in particular at the local level and in particular focussed at minorities and other vulnerable groups.

Evidence demonstrates that the CS sector is in much better shape and is much stronger than it was a few years ago. CS in Kosovo has gained momentum. To a large extent EU support to CS in Kosovo, both under Cards and IPA, has supported this process, for instance through helping CS in building a better institutional, legal and financial environment, awareness raising on the role of CSOs in society, or capacity building. Nevertheless, various concerns remain. While EU MS and other donor financial support decreases, keeping the CS momentum is a real challenge. CS must enhance its practice of good governance and it must ensure mainstreaming of crosscutting issues such as gender and minorities. In particular, non-profit media, with emphasis on local radio and TV, are beset by problems. They need urgent assistance in order to fulfil their mission of providing independent and objective information to their audiences.

EQ 4: Is assistance balanced in the sense of coverage of type, size and profile of organisations supported?

EU financial assistance to CS in Kosovo is not sufficiently balanced. In particular it does not sufficiently reach small and remote CSOs, including CSOs that operate in single communities (Community Based Organisations, CBOs), informal groups and individual CS actors.

EU financial assistance to CS in Kosovo has helped create and consolidate a CS sector that consists of a small number of highly empowered NGOs, a larger number of moderately empowered CSOs, and a very large number of CBOs the overall majority of which has not been able to get involved or participate in relevant EU funded or supported processes. The main obstacles to participation in the NPs and MBPs, including P2P are: i) the poor provision or usage by the EU of financial instruments that are specific to small CSOs, ii) the complexity of existing instruments, in particular the Calls for Proposals, iii) the use of English as the “lingua franca”, and iv) the Pristina-centred provision of technical assistance and other forms of support to CSOs.

The findings indicate that DG ELARG, ECLO, the government and CS actors in Kosovo are committed to promoting and using all instruments at their disposal to address this situation. In particular, all these actors support the recommendations provided by the Structured Dialogue between the EU and development partners held in 2010 and 2011 that emphasise a much stronger role for CS as a channel for EU support to beneficiary countries. The actors also support the opening up of the CSF to small and remote CSOs, and are committed to follow examples of efficient and effective instruments of financial support found elsewhere (US, Norway, Switzerland, EU MS, regional and national funds and foundations).

EQ 5: To what extent is assistance balanced in terms of instruments mix (technical assistance – TA, including TACSO, micro and macro grant schemes, P2P, etc)?

In Kosovo, EU financial assistance to CS exhibits moderately balanced instrument mix. DG ELARG and ECLO use all the financial instruments the EU has at its disposal to support CS in Kosovo including NP and MBP service contracts (TACSO, other), action grants (Partnership Actions, Civil Society Dialogue), P2P, etc.

Following the outcomes of the Structured Dialogue targeting, specifically, the changing role of CS from EU implementing partners to that of EU development partners sharing development responsibilities with the EU and beneficiary governments, the Commission has started promoting new forms of financial assistance to CS. These forms include pool funding (with other donors), programme funding (or core funding), and block grants or micro grant schemes that may help reach small and remote CS actors. The latest Commission Decision on the CSF demonstrates that DG ELARG, the EUDs, and ECLO are introducing some of these new instruments, in particular programme funding and block grants.

EQ 6: To what extent are the different implementation systems (DIS and de-concentrated) affecting the support to civil society in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability?

In Kosovo, deconcentration positively affects the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of EU support to CS.

The parts of the CSF that are still centrally managed by HQ (MBPs, P2P) have introduced elements of deconcentration through promoting the role of ECLO in IPA programming and implementation and also, through using TACSO as a bridge between HQ, the regional level, and the national level. This “deconcentration” has enhanced the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of EU financial assistance to CS in Kosovo. It is also likely to enhance the impact and sustainability of this assistance.

Deconcentration of the other parts of the CSF to ECLO and NIPAC (notably the NPs) has enhanced decision-making and management of EU financial assistance to CS on the spot. This has enhanced the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of EU financial assistance to CS in Kosovo.

Nevertheless, there is ample scope for further improvement. In particular, BIRN observes that HQ makes insufficient use of its “eyes and ears” in Kosovo – e.g. ECLO -, leading NGOs observe that the performance of the government, in particular the NIPAC, in IPA programming and implementation of interventions benefiting CS leaves much to be desired, and most CSOs observe that CS in Kosovo is not sufficiently involved and does, therefore, not sufficiently participate in IPA programming and implementation.

EQ 7: What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?

In Kosovo, EU financial assistance to CS has had a profound impact on society at large and the role of CS therein. In particular, EU financial assistance to CS has helped: i) mainstream Kosovo CS into wider European, regional and cross-border integration processes, ii) include Kosovo CS in European, regional and cross-border cooperation with other CS and non-CS actors, iii) link Kosovo CS representatives to their peers and other stakeholders in the EU and WBT, iv) shape an increasingly enabling institutional, legal and financial environment, v) mobilise CS towards achieving the Copenhagen political criteria and the objectives of the Enlargement Strategy and Civil Society Strategy, and vi) build CS capacities to play their roles in terms of advocacy and service provision.

In assessing and judging these achievements, it must be stated, that one cannot compare Kosovo one-to-one with the other countries in the region. Firstly, Kosovo gained independence from RS a few years ago but today RS, five EU MS, as well as the majority of UN MS, have not recognised it as an independent state. Secondly, regardless of Kosovo's status, the country has no experience in state building whatsoever. Thirdly, due to a sheer lack of education, Kosovo's human resources are in a deplorable state. Against this background, Kosovo's achievements in promoting CS and the impact of its CS on wider Kosovo society, thereto supported by the EU, are remarkable indeed.

There are various factors affecting this impact. These include: i) the government, the parliament and other decision-makers, ii) coherence between EU and Kosovo's objectives, instruments, and interventions; iii) consistency of EU support to CS in Kosovo, in particular promoting processes as compared to projects or activities; iv) complementarity of EU support to CS in Kosovo to support provided by others; v) synergy between EU support to CS in Kosovo with developments in the EU, the region, or in Kosovo itself. As a general rule, the higher the levels of ownership, coherence, consistency, complementarity and synergy, the more impactful the EU's support package to CS in Kosovo will be.

Evidence points to a number of institutional constraints. In particular, CS reports that the EU is often not interested in impact. In fact, the EU is often not even interested in results. According to CS in Kosovo, EU support to CS in Kosovo has not yet managed to make the transition from outputs to results, let alone towards impact and sustainability. CS follows this practice focusing their interventions on activities and outputs instead of on results, impact and sustainability.

A second issue is that of transparency and accountability of the EU, notably DG ELARG and ECLO, and in particular the process and outcomes of assessments of Calls for Proposals. The lack of transparency and accountability of the EU does not motivate CS to share its core competences with the EU, leading other donors (US, Member States) to fund high impact projects while the EU funds lower impact projects.

A third issue is that of flexibility in the implementation of EU support to CS. A vibrant and vigilant CS requires flexibility and not an ever-growing bureaucracy.

EQ 8: Which are the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance? Are there any elements which are hampering or could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of assistance?

In Kosovo, the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance to CS are good. General factors affecting the prospects of impact and sustainability include: i) the measure of application by the EU, government and the CS sector of good governance, with emphasis on transparency and accountability; ii) the measure of prioritisation of impact and sustainability in

IPA programming and implementation; iii) the measure of acknowledgement and recognition by the EU of the achievement of impact and sustainability as key performance indicators; iv) quality of the institutional, legal and financial framework pertaining to CS in Kosovo; v) measure of organisation by the CS sector, in particular the strength of the CIVIKOS platform, NGO networks, lead NGOs and collaborations between large and small NGOs in pushing for further reforms; vi) engagement by the EU and the government of CS in a variety of roles in transition processes, programmes and projects, including a stronger role in the structured dialogue on the CSF pillars, technical assistance, and the programming and implementation of future EU financial support to CS in Kosovo; vii) follow up by the EU and government on CS general and specific (sectoral / thematic) policy recommendations, papers and other outputs; viii) quality of monitoring, evaluation and reporting; ix) promotion by the EU, the government and others of financial instruments supporting CS in developing and implementing long term programmes; and finally, x) the quality and performance of CS's own advocacy and service provision. All these factors are well established "enabling" factors – the more present an enabling factor is, the higher the impact of EU financial assistance may be on CS in Kosovo.

The lack of recognition by the EU, as an institution, by 5 EU Member States, and by BiH and RS of Kosovo's statehood leading these parties to treat Kosovo differently than they treat those from other IPA beneficiary countries affects the impact and sustainability of assistance.

5.3.5 ANNEX 3.5. – WIDER FINDINGS FOR MK

The fieldwork in this country comprised a fairly large array of CSOs, both large and small (devoted to service delivery in particular), and, in addition to the EUD and TACSO national staff, other main donors active in CS support, including EU Member States. Given the size of the country and the degree of complexity of the CS issues, these stakeholders formed a representative basis for country synthesis and its extrapolation towards WBT-level conclusions and recommendations.

EQ 1: Are the administrative and organisational structures in place, ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance?

Structures for the implementation of financial assistance allow the involvement of CSOs and an adequate time-sharing between the operational stakeholders, most notably the Secretariat for European Affairs (SEA) and the EUD. The government is aware of the need to involve CSOs during the steps of the programming cycle. However, interest groups and civil society stakeholders often question the fair representation of CSOs in this process while governmental decision-making remains heavily centralised. At the same time, the EUD systematically involves CSOs in programming modalities by means of a fruitful dialogue. Their consultation has been ensured at the level of project concept formulation, which has added to the impact of interventions, such as media freedom. From the perspective of CSOs, however, it is often felt that programming and implementation modalities are not uniformly applied.

The above trends are recent and it should be pointed out that during this evaluation, it was reported that in 2008, the SEA did not consult CSOs in the programming cycle of the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIPD); however they were able to submit comments to the EUD. For IPA 2009, the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs in the General Secretariat (GS) enabled the first programming consultation round with CS.

This development is significant and underlines the efforts that have been made on behalf of the national stakeholders to strengthen and expand the programming and implementation structures, by means of the establishment of the GS's Unit for Cooperation with NGOs – among the potential successors of tasks held currently by the EUD - and the launch of a five-year Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with Civil Society, which is currently being revised. Cooperation modalities with CSOs are regularly reviewed through ministerial dialogue and consultation meetings with CSOs, which report back to the GS. An estimated annual envelope of EUR 4 to 7 million of governmental funds is being provided to CS, but this amount is disputed by various stakeholders and therefore cannot be confirmed.

The degree of effectiveness of these governmental measures on programming and implementation is difficult to determine because transparency and accountability are persistently questioned by CSOs. Government dialogue with CS is in an early phase. Both CS and government are conscious that mutual participation and dialogue are essential however these still require solid modalities and structures. CS in general is critical with regards to legislative consultation procedures, claiming too tight deadlines for CSOs and interest groups to be effectively engaged and informed. Consolidated statistics on the financial scope of government support to CS do not exist. Meanwhile, the lack of an effective and responsive institutionalisation, which has had a knock-on effect on IPA programming and implementation matters, is underpinned by a significant centralising tendency of the public administration.

CS is highly – and increasingly - politicised and this presents an obstacle to optimal country programming and implementation. Such is the level of politicisation that often one stream of CSOs protests against another stream of CSOs demonstrating on a specific policy issue. In this context, the direct collaboration of the EUD with CSOs can be seen as a neutralising factor within the country's context, whose programming and implementation structures will be changing with the imminent introduction of the Decentralised Implementation System (DIS), expected to bring support closer to CS and to enhance transparency.

TACSO has facilitated a smoother programming and implementation practice for CSOs, as they are involved in project application procedures and the dissemination of lessons learned.

EQ 2: To what extent are the monitoring mechanism and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?

Key stakeholders consider ROM useful but it does not directly cover CSO grants, as monitoring eligibility criteria are defined by project size and duration. Project visits by EUD staff are common and represent useful but unofficial monitoring inputs. CSO grant narrative reports normally provide good insights to the project implementation cycle and this is reviewed and formally endorsed by the EUD staff member responsible for CS; financial reporting is also assessed. With the implementation of DIS, these tasks will be handed over to the GS. At the same time, it is the intention that, under DIS, CS will be an active partner in the monitoring of EU support. At present, one GS staff member is specifically in charge of monitoring and evaluation.

At a project level, CSOs have decent knowledge of monitoring tools such as SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) and Log Frames (LFs) but there is not sufficient good practice and, overall, monitoring modalities are not yet sufficiently and integrally part of the project implementation cycle.

Final project evaluations can provide concrete and useful insights to implementation but are carried out on an ad hoc basis. Standardised narrative reports, on the other hand, provide an up

to date status of project implementation and completion and whilst it intends to report on results achieved, it often describes outputs. At the same time, it should be noted that this does serve as a tool for self- assessment of project implementation.

The use of SMART indicators is lagging and their application is not systematic, but this is expected to change with the introduction of a more articulated sector approach for support to CS and CSOs in 2012, provided an agreement can be sought between all institutional stakeholders on the integral use of SMART indicators from project concept to project completion.

As a whole, the country is gradually being introduced to the use and application of monitoring mechanisms of different policy sectors relevant to CS, such as Roma inclusion and media and audio-visual policy but significant gaps remain. At the same time, CS achievements are not well known and disseminated, either among specialised stakeholders or in the public at large. Some progress is undeniable but is often isolated rather than general. Since 2008, the Ministries of Environment and of Labour and Social Policy have gradually opened up to CSOs by involving them in monitoring processes of IPA funding.

EQ 3: To what extent the EC financial assistance has/is effectively contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities, including the development of the WBT CSOs and building their capacities, in particular with regard to their role within the enlargement strategy?

Support to CS is allowing CSOs to work towards the achievement of political enlargement objectives. Financial assistance for CSOs does not by definition require a direct or explicit link with these objectives. CSO contributions to realising the Copenhagen criteria through enhanced capacities exist but their scope and existence cannot be tracked uniquely to EU support, nor can they be attributed a measurable degree of impact yet. Sampled projects have demonstrated evidence that outputs and outcomes can momentarily play a low key and small-scale role in their contribution to moving towards the Copenhagen criteria. However, the scope and nature of this contribution is too limited and predominantly produces awareness raising, networking and familiarisation, while, concrete, sustainable outcomes are visibly lacking.

The support to regional CSOs against the trafficking of human beings, led by a MK partner, allowed at a national level the introduction of human rights monitoring modalities to national stakeholders. At the same time, a measurable impact at the national level is missing as no *ex-post* follow up had been foreseen to verify effective and concrete progress, i.e. the effective use of the modality by national authorities. Similarly, EU support to the regional establishment of indicator-based monitoring of anti-corruption allowed CSOs to exchange and consolidate methodologies to monitor anti-corruption in the judiciary, public administration and legislature. In MK, the work has been able to establish a useful baseline for the relevant EU policy chapters.

Rather than EU support facilitating sustainable, expanded in-house capacity, MK CSOs are often able to boost their outreach and networking capacity as a result of financial assistance. In the current country context of CS development, however, CSOs are, in general, not able to raise or increase revenues and membership fees; if collected, they are predominantly nominal in nature.

EQ 4: Is assistance balanced in the sense of coverage of type, size and profile of organisations supported?

The development of CS in MK is still in a transition phase, demonstrating a contrast between older associations and CSOs that emerged with the - currently diminishing - wave of financial support. Additionally, there is a strong tendency of politicisation that has fragmented and

polarised the country's CS. There are approximately 11,000 CSOs in MK but this number cannot be confirmed due to the current "re-registration" process; the procedures for granting status of public interest to CSOs are flawed and incomplete.

Larger CSOs have been able to respond better to the application and implementation requirements of EU funding. This has created a sizeable gap between CSOs that successfully access funding mechanisms and smaller CSOs that do not have the technical, managerial or linguistic capacity to compete. To illustrate, 85% of CSOs in MK have an annual budget of less than EUR 2 500 and the vast majority of CSOs are registered in Skopje (a similar pattern has emerged in other countries in the region). The majority of CSOs in MK are not able to access grant schemes and this is further exacerbated by the absence of micro grants, which would be smaller and more manageable. Yet with a reduction of bilateral aid and the need to intensify local financial funding to boost smaller and remote CSOs, the EU is momentarily bringing a degree of balance to the CS funding landscape in MK.

EU Calls for Proposals in CS are not based on representational fairness. Potential impact on society is what counts and this may not directly respond to the diversity of CSOs in MK. There is TACSO support to faith-based CSOs and trade unions, but English language skills are often paramount to the process of qualifying and without them a large number of CSOs are prevented from competing for funding access. EU funding has predominantly focused on institutional strengthening of CSOs which do not necessarily have insights or capacities to address grassroots priorities such as community development or local governance. This has had a significant impact on the typology of CS in MK and the region as the EU remains its largest donor.

EQ 5: To what extent is assistance balanced in terms of instruments mix (TA, including TACSO, micro and macro grant schemes, P2P, etc)?

EU support addresses a wide spectrum of CSOs but this is not necessarily balanced and representative, see observations above. The crucial obstacle to ensuring a more comprehensive upswing of CS in MK remains the opening up of EU application procedures and requirements which at present eliminate or disable uninitiated, smaller and remote CSOs which have potential value in community development and local governance.

The issue of differently targeting CSOs, aiming at greater inclusiveness, is to be addressed by TACSO's second operational phase.

EQ 6: To what extent are the different implementation systems (DIS and de-concentrated) affecting the support to CS in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability?

IPA management was decentralised by country authorities in 2011 and preparations are underway to introduce DIS to MK with IPA 2009. Technical assistance to the GS Unit for Cooperation with NGOs is providing support to smoothen the transition by, for instance, reviewing the existing Strategy for Cooperation of the government with Civil Society (January 2007). The final outcome of this process, subject of a wider participatory approach with CSOs, remains unclear.

Some achievements are visible, most notably the participatory manner in which the law on volunteering and bylaws were defined with CSOs. The current strategy has not given a fundamental push allowing CSOs to participate in policy making, state funding modalities remain opaque and remote and rural CSOs are not targeted. Despite EU support to the Unit for

Cooperation with NGOs, the latter lacked capacities and funding to take on a more pro-active role in providing concrete follow up to strategy provisions.

Evolving decentralisation modalities are affecting the overall performance of implementation in MK, yet are not alone in doing so. During the time of evaluation, the presence of the EUD has been able to facilitate an opening of CSO participation in programming that would have been unachievable by governmental authorities alone. As such, CSOs have been involved in the elaboration of Project Fiches (PFs), which then allowed CS stakeholders to express needs. This has undeniably boosted the relevance of support to CS, which is expected to produce further benefits with the announced introduction of a more articulated sector approach in the MIPD 2011-2013. At the same time, overall EUD contracting rates between 2007 and 2011 have been approximately 25% higher than disbursement rates. This discrepancy diminishes relevance due to the further accumulation of delays between conceptualisation and implementation.

In most cases, projects supporting CS in MK accomplish a degree of progress in terms of efficiency and effectiveness as intended objectives are achieved but results and impact are rarely measured and given follow up.

EQ 7: What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?

The operating context for CSOs in MK is particularly challenging for any financial support to make a visible and lasting difference. Despite progress, there is as of yet a lack of institutional and legal preparedness that would allow CS to proliferate in a decisive and unambiguous manner. A framework for a structured dialogue between CS and government is not yet in place. Political polarisation has fragmented the landscape and renders effective and potential CSO collaboration and networking difficult. Overall, CSO achievements are not sufficiently acknowledged and disseminated.

Many CSOs in MK are barely surviving. They do not possess permanent offices and many rely on the generosity of local and public authorities, including access to administration and communication, hence the on-going need for institutional support. The latter is accidentally instrumental because it enables the provision of alternative funding to CSOs that is more critical to the government. In this challenging context, the paradigm of impact and sustainability is fundamentally different. Yet directly or indirectly, and despite these difficulties, CSO projects can often track and document their relevance to political objectives and the Copenhagen criteria.

As such, EU support to strengthening environmental CSOs in legislation, policy, monitoring and implementation allowed for the launch of a successful participatory social and environmental impact assessment with regard to the planned construction of a hydro power plant in Mavrovo. Fundamental issues such as timely public consultation, the recognition of land ownership and the prevention of the planned intervention of the environmental protection status, underline the project's democratic value.

Other EU support often leads to an effective dissemination and enhanced awareness of topical issues, such as the launching of regional monitoring of anti-corruption progress, yet practical *ex-post* steps are absent to verify real impact. Findings and results were disseminated and discussed in national and international policy circles, but the project's ambition to increase stakeholder engagement in anti-corruption practices was not given a practical follow up. At the same time, local CSOs are expected to use the monitoring modalities with regard to the judiciary, legislative and executive branches.

In the case of support to CSO anti-human trafficking networks, project activities allowed representatives from Kosovo, Serbia and Greece to sit at one table and engage in discussions on monitoring and knowledge sharing. Even if no specific progress can be detected at the societal level as a result, it can be safely assumed that the situation could be worse had this first breakthrough consultation not occurred.

CS support that targets entry points at the local government level can be valuable. EU support fostering collaboration between CS and local government to enhance the provision of social services has allowed support for the decentralisation process by enhancing a grassroots democratic dialogue between CSOs and governmental services in the area of children's rights and the elderly. Rural municipalities in the Prilep region are now better aware of the need to address the launch of kindergartens, post-class tutoring, peer-to-peer education and after-school activities.

Ensuring effective advocacy on behalf of an interest group is rare but can be achieved if the cause benefits a highly visible status, such as disability. A national advocacy group initiated the collection of 20,000 signatures to launch a Law on the Dignity and Rights of Disabled People, and in the process, overcame coercion from high political office, whilst government divisions threatened to derail the process.

EQ 8: Which are the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance? Are there any elements which are hampering or could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of assistance?

Projects do not systematically define detailed and 'PCM proof' benchmarks for achieving impact and sustainability and LFs are sporadically used. In exceptional cases it was observed that reference to an LF was helpful in tracking the project's progress and planned impact and sustainability. Here, on-going EU support to strengthening environmental CSOs in legislation, policy, monitoring and implementation clearly defined achievable results which heavily focused on the project's capacity to encourage and sustain a degree of CSO and civil representative participation in environmental policy making and legislation. But this example is the exception rather than the rule. The majority of CSOs in MK are not well acquainted with the practice of articulating and monitoring results benchmarks. Furthermore, timing and scope of support are often too limited to allow an intervention from delivering more than basic outputs, much needed at this stage of CS development in MK, such as dissemination, awareness, training and networking. CSOs have been created in the past in response to specific, but passing, donor priorities and this has negatively affected impact and sustainability.

If project activities are able to produce any sustainable and meaningful outcomes, the operating and legislative context for EU support to CS in MK, despite progress, does not allow these to flourish optimally. The government has shown commitment to make law-making processes more transparent but the regular use of external consultation and timely publishing of draft laws, to enable CS to react, has not been observed. At the same time, CSOs are rarely in a qualified position to fulfil a participatory role, and this renders the dialogue between government and CS ineffective. As a result, CS in MK is not yet perceived as a democratic or stabilising agent.

Potential sustainability and impact of support to CS in MK also depends on the extent to which public authorities are able and willing to seize the vast and growing technical expertise that is

being held by the various CSOs, in areas such as chapters 23 and 24 of the JHA *Acquis*, environment, social rights, special needs and disabilities. Government is increasingly intolerant of critical CSOs and this has confirmed a decline in advocacy. At the same time, CS suffers from poor media and press coverage.

5.3.6 ANNEX 3.6. – WIDER FINDINGS FOR MONTENEGRO

Like in the case of Macedonia, the organisation of the fieldwork was facilitated by the country's size and facility to organise working meetings, including focus groups: the meetings covered not only the EUD, TACSO national staff and LAGs and the government office in charge of the CS, but also a number of CSOs, and, in particular, the organisation of three focus groups. It is therefore estimated that the fieldwork basis for the country synthesis has been solid and wide enough.

EQ 1: Are the administrative and organisational structures in place, ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance?

In Montenegro the administrative structures are in place at the level of the EU, the government and CS, but these do not always ensure the efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance.

The EUD has a small though experienced CS team that *inter alia* manages EU financial assistance to CS linked to the Copenhagen political criteria, European integration *per se*, and civil society *per se*. This concentration of resources on the “right” sectors / themes to be covered by EU financial support to CS in Montenegro is, as yet, not sufficiently reflected in the topics of projects that are supported by this assistance. In particular, there is a bias in EU support to CS in Montenegro, away from the watchdog function of CS, towards service provision in the social sector.

The EUD CS team is sufficiently resourced but resources are disproportionately consumed by the administration of financial assistance. In particular, the EUD CS team deals with the entire project cycle, from programming, identification / formulation, to contracting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of EU support to CS in Montenegro. This mixing of functions, that are better separated, exists at the expense of the efficient and effective - results oriented - implementation of such assistance. CS in Serbia and in Montenegro have made known the administrative practices applied by the EUDs in these countries are not similar. CS in Montenegro has indicated that within the EUD, different task managers apply different administrative procedures. CS has stated that this practice reduces efficiency and effectiveness. In particular, CS must apply different administrative practices depending on what TM it deals with, and, the administrative practices in question, such as monthly reporting, only serve to satisfy the bureaucratic needs of the EUD and serve no purpose other than to the beneficiaries.

NIPAC and linked governmental administrative structures have not taken the lead in programming and implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in Montenegro. Their attitude is reactive and not proactive. This is reflected in the practice of the EUD, and not NIPAC, taking the initiative for Project Fiches in the CS sector. The EUD CS team has stated that, regardless of the status of the introduction of DIS in Montenegro, the EUD is doing a lot of work the NIPAC is supposed to do.

In Montenegro, there are a number of organisational structures that have the potential to enhance participation by both the government and CS in programming or implementation of EU financial

assistance to CS in the country. Such participation is likely to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of assistance.

The Montenegrin Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, within the General Secretariat of the government, is not very visible; however, it is working hard behind the scenes on enhancing Montenegro's institutional, legal and financial framework for supporting CS. The office does not consider it a problem that it has not yet been provided with the status, mandate and resources to coordinate governmental and CS inputs in the programming and implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in Montenegro. CS considers this situation a problem, however, as the office, situated as it is, remains a political office and, as such, remains dependent on the politics of the day.

The National Civil Society Council, chaired by the Secretary General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, is also getting on track. It functions increasingly as a multi-stakeholder forum focussed on enhancing cooperation between the EU, government and CS in the spirit of the Ljubljana Declaration. In Montenegro, the national council has real impact. One reason is that the Chair is the Secretary General who sits in the government and participates in various intra-governmental and inter-institutional bodies. Another reason is the high impact work the national council performs, including the action plan to implement the Montenegrin Civil Society Strategy, draft law on NGOs, two by-laws on public consultation and participation of CS in public bodies, etc.

Montenegro has a strong national CS coalition called "*Saradnjom za Cilja*" that has been influential in pushing for key democratic reforms in the country and is instrumental in assisting Montenegro in meeting the EU requirements for the start of the accession negotiations. The emphasis is on EU key priority number 7, as reported in the Commission's Opinion, namely "*strengthen cooperation with civil society*". Montenegro also features various sectoral / thematic permanent networks or ad hoc coalitions that have become increasingly influential in advancing EU-compatible sectoral and thematic agendas. The country's NGO portfolio includes a number of lead NGOs that are embedded in EU or regional networks and function as partners with the EU and the government.

In Montenegro, CS has a significant capacity that the EU can use to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of its support to CS in the country. In particular, the EU could make better use of foundations as aid delivery channels. Some foundations, active throughout the region, like BCIF, are also active in Montenegro. Montenegro has a few local NGOs that have the capacity to develop and manage EU funded grants and small grant schemes. Montenegro is piloting the involvement of these NGOs, in this case CRNVO (Centre for the Development of the Non Profit Sector) and FAKT (the Fund for Active Citizenship, a spin-off of BCIF), in managing small grant schemes according to PRAG.

EQ 2: To what extent are the monitoring mechanism and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?

In Montenegro, EU financial assistance to CS is monitored at various levels. The respective monitoring mechanisms are not always appropriate and are not always correctly functioning but in general the situation in Montenegro is much better than, for instance, Kosovo.

Only at IPA and ROM levels do "monitoring mechanisms" exist- meaning an agreed monitoring process producing standard monitoring indicators, activities, outputs and results. CS does not directly participate in the work of the IPA Monitoring Committee. CS participates well in the work

of the Council for European Integration that monitors the European integration process in Montenegro. Within the context of the EU MATRIX project, a number lead NGOs, including European Movement Montenegro and CEMI, monitor Montenegro's progress vis-à-vis the National European Integration Plan. CS is also involved in the process of EU progress reporting that, now Montenegro is an Accession Country, has become much more demanding. EU Progress Reports are structured differently for pre-accession and accession countries. In particular, the new EU Progress Reports feature chapters on each "chapter issue" and require much more detail of the achievements of, in this case, Montenegro per chapter issue. The accuracy of such EU progress reporting requires involvement of CS.

ROM has monitored TACSO, and its Montenegrin component, in October and November 2010. ROM does not cover all EU support to CS in Montenegro, however, it targets EU funded contracts of over EUR 1 million and thus excludes smaller EU service contracts and smaller EU action grants. A problem with ROM is that its outputs are not widely disseminated and therefore do not reach target groups, final beneficiaries, and other stakeholders. Another problem is that the ROM templates cannot be used for grant monitoring.

The remaining monitoring consists of ad hoc monitoring performed by DG ELARG and EUD, the government, CS or contractors of technical assistance projects like TACSO or TA projects implementing grant schemes. DG ELARG performs field visits. The EUD sits in Steering Committees, participates in CS events, and performs field visits. The EUD CS team has indicated that it has insufficient time to do fulfil these commitments. TACSO has been monitoring 14 NGOs in Montenegro benefitting from IPA MBP and NP and EIDHR action grants. Nevertheless, these monitoring processes are neither systematic nor do they use agreed or uniform indicators, activities, outputs and results. The outcomes of these monitoring processes are also often not accessible to grant beneficiaries, target groups and other stakeholders.

EQ 3: To what extent the EC financial assistance has/is effectively contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities, including the development of the WBT CSOs and building their capacities, in particular with regard to their role within the enlargement strategy?

In Montenegro, EU financial assistance to CS contributes to achieving the strategic objectives as per Copenhagen political criteria, the Enlargement Strategy and the Civil Society Strategy as based on the Commission Communication from 2005.

The European Council granted Montenegro candidate status in 2010. The European Council decision followed the Commission Opinion of the same year that concluded that Montenegro would be in a position to take on the obligations of membership in the medium term in most of the field covered by the *acquis communautaire*. The Commission recommended that the EU should open accession negotiations with Montenegro once the country has achieved the "*necessary degree*" of compliance with the membership criteria. In particular meeting with the Copenhagen political criteria, and that, in this regard, Montenegro needed in particular to meet 7 key priorities, according to the Commission, one of which was "*strengthen cooperation with CS*". This is a major achievement and evidence indicates that Montenegro would not have reached candidate status without the contribution by CS to key reforms in the country while CS would not have been able to contribute to these reforms to this extent without sustained financial (and non-financial) support from the EU (and other donors).

As to the Copenhagen political criteria, there has been good progress in terms of the advancement of Montenegro in areas such as democracy and rule of law, human rights and protection of minorities and civil and political rights. Montenegrin success stories, that the EU has helped support through Cards and IPA, include overall strengthening of the institutional, legal and financial framework supporting CS, including the establishment of the national council and the government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, the network of focal points in ministries and agencies, elaboration of the Strategy for Cooperation between the government and NGOs, work in ensuring CS participation and government and parliament consultation of CSOs, etc. EU financial support to CS in Montenegro supported these processes.

There are also areas of concern, however, and more work needs to be done to protect and promote the rights of ethnic minorities, such as Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, and other vulnerable groups, with emphasis on women, youth, and LGBTI. Montenegro must also work on its law on volunteering.

As to European integration, there is ample evidence of CS contributions to the advancement of the European integration process in Montenegro across the board. Montenegrin success stories under this chapter include the involvement of CS in the elaboration of respective European integration strategies, policies and programmes, participation in the European Integration Council and various sectoral / thematic bodies, and the concrete contribution of CS to the advancement in various *acquis* areas other than those linked to the Copenhagen political criteria, such as Chapter 19 – Social Policy and Employment and Chapter 27 – Environment. EU Progress Reports before 2011 list CS contributions in sectors including internal market / free movement of goods where CS has contributed to programming and action planning in areas such as consumer protection. EU financial support to CS in Montenegro made much of this possible. A matter of concern regarding EU funded grant schemes suggests that they may not sufficiently contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the European integration process. The guidelines of such grant schemes insufficiently promote European integration *per se* or, when they do, the outcomes of the assessment of the respective CfPs provide a mismatch with the guidelines and, as a result, the ensuing grant projects insufficiently promote European integration *per se*.

As to the CS sector *per se*, in particular CS capacities to contribute to Montenegro's transition, EU financial support to CS in Montenegro has contributed to strengthening CS capacities in many ways. In CS there is much greater awareness and understanding today of the key pillars of the CSF: e.g. Copenhagen political criteria, European affairs, and issues concerning CS *per se*. CS has become involved in public affairs at both the central and local level.

CS has also been instrumental in pushing for the establishment of the National Council and the government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, appointment of focal points in ministries and agencies, adoption of various laws and regulations (by-laws) enhancing the role of CS in society, the Civil Society Strategy, etc. CS also leads the advocacy campaign demanding greater transparency and accountability in government spending on CS. CS has consolidated leadership of a number of NGOs that are well respected by the EU, the government and other stakeholders. CS has also produced a number of new sectoral and thematic leaders. These leaders participate in European and regional networks, lead permanent networks at home, or lead ad hoc coalitions representing entire sectors. CS also plays a major role in social and other service provision, in particular at the local level, to ethnic minorities and other vulnerable groups.

At present the main areas of concern for the EU and CS - but not for the government - is the political status of the government Office for Cooperation with NGOs as well as its limited mandate and resources. An additional concern is that for almost 20 years, Montenegro has not seen a

peaceful transition of political power from the leading coalition to the opposition. There is the tendency of some governmental factions to establish their own NGOs. Montenegro's poor inclusion of minorities and their organisations, with an emphasis on ethnic minorities and LGBTI, and their mainstreaming in public affairs, and, in general, the need to further assist Montenegro in moving from a rather traditional "closed" society to a modern "open" society require enhanced EU assistance to CS.

EQ 4: Is assistance balanced in the sense of coverage of type, size and profile of organisations supported?

EU financial assistance to CS in Montenegro is not sufficiently balanced; in particular it does not sufficiently reach small and remote CSOs, CBOs, informal groups and individual CS actors.

EU financial assistance to CS in Montenegro has helped consolidate a CS sector that consists of a small number of highly empowered NGOs, a larger number of moderately empowered CSOs, and a very large number of CBOs the overall majority of which have not been able to get involved or participate in relevant EU funded or supported processes. The main obstacles to participation in EU funded MBPs, including P2P, and NPs are: i) the poor provision or usage by the EU of financial instruments that are specific to small and remote CSOs, ii) the complexity of existing instruments, in particular the Calls for Proposals, iii) the ineligibility of small and remote CSOs in the EU Calls for Proposals, iv) the use of English as the "lingua franca", and v) the disproportionate concentration of EU support, including technical assistance, to CSOs located in the Podgorica area.

The findings indicate that DG ELARG, EUD, the government and CS actors in Montenegro are committed to promoting and using all instruments at their disposal to address this situation, thereby following the recommendations provided by the Structured Dialogue, the opening up of the CSF to small and remote CSOs, and other such examples. This year (2011) has seen the first examples in Montenegro of the launch, under the CSF NP, of micro grant schemes. Through a Call for Proposals, Montenegro has selected two NGOs – CNRVO ("Centar za Razvoj Nevladinih Organizacija") and FAKT ("Fond za Aktivno Građanstvo") – that will implement IPA micro grant schemes for small and remote CS. The latter will be able to apply through simplified procedures and in local languages, thereby removing two major obstacles to participation of small and remote CSOs in EU funded interventions.

EQ 5: To what extent is assistance balanced in terms of instruments mix (technical assistance – TA, including TACSO, micro and macro grant schemes, P2P, etc)?

The instruments mix of EU financial assistance to CS in Montenegro is moderately balanced.

DG ELARG and the EUD use most of the financial instruments the EU has at its disposal to support CS in Montenegro including MBP and NP service contracts (TACSO, other), operational grants, action grants, P2P, etc. There is less use of operational grants and direct agreements in Montenegro than in neighbouring countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia or Serbia. Stakeholders note various problems with the grant schemes. Firstly, the MBP grant schemes, with emphasis on EU / WBT partnerships, are viewed to be "*channelling money back to the EU*". The partnerships such grant schemes promote are often artificial and are therefore not sustainable.

Local partnerships, in contrast, are considered relevant and have proven more sustainable. Secondly, EU management of the grant schemes, in particular the NP grant schemes, is considered inefficient and ineffective. Grant scheme decision making, in particular pertaining to the process and outcomes of assessments of Calls for Proposals, is considered not transparent and not accountable. The EU provides poor feedback on these matters. Thirdly, some NGOs, most CSOs and practically all CBOs in Montenegro cannot match the EU requirement of 15 % co-financing.

Following the outcomes of the *Structure Dialogue*, the Commission has started promoting new forms of financial assistance to CS such as pool funding (with other donors), programme funding (or core funding), and block grants or micro grant schemes that may help reach small and remote CS actors. The latest Commission Decision on the CSF demonstrates that DG ELARG, the EUDs, and ECLO are introducing some of these new instruments, in particular programme funding and block grants.

EQ 6: To what extent are the different implementation systems (DIS and de-concentrated) affecting the support to civil society in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability?

In Montenegro, deconcentration positively affects the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of EU support to CS. Montenegro is in the process of introducing DIS, however, CS does not trust that Montenegro is ready to assume full responsibility for the programming and implementation of EU funding.

In Montenegro, deconcentration of CSF NPs and elements of the CSF MBPs, P2P and even TACSO, through the TACSO LAGs, have enhanced relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of EU financial assistance to CS. It is also likely to enhance the impact and sustainability of such assistance.

Deconcentration may also have reduced efficiency at times as the EUD has had the tendency to be more bureaucratic than headquarters. While the procedures for all EUDs in the region are the same, the EUD in Montenegro has introduced working practices that apply to Montenegro alone. One example is the requirement of grant beneficiaries to submit monthly reports. While the EUD enjoys the benefits of this monthly reporting – accurate and timely reporting on a monthly basis - CSOs perceive it as cumbersome and a measure for increasing bureaucracy instead of decreasing it.

Deconcentration may, at times, have reduced effectiveness, as local Montenegrin priorities - for instance for CS actions in areas such as social service delivery to vulnerable groups such as the elderly - may have diverted EU financial assistance from its key strategy objectives to local objectives.

EQ 7: What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?

In Montenegro, the EU financial support package to CS covered by this evaluation has had a profound impact on society at large.

In assessing this judgement it must be clarified that Montenegro is a small country and this is both an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage is that development in Montenegro can progress quickly. CS in Montenegro, for instance, does not have a very long CS tradition.

Nevertheless, within just a few years CS in Montenegro has developed into a key sector in society. Another issue is Montenegro's recent re-emergence as an independent state. Independence, and assuming full responsibility of its own affairs, has given Montenegro an enormous drive forward, towards and even beyond European integration. Another issue has been the decision by the European Council to accept Montenegro as an Accession Country. This decision, as noted, has given most Montenegrin stakeholders motivation to advance in all areas concerning the EU, including prioritising the development of a vibrant CS in the country.

EU financial assistance to CS in Montenegro has helped: i) connect Montenegrin CS with its counterparts in Europe, the EU, the wider region and in neighbouring countries; ii) include Montenegrin CS in pan-European, EU, regional, cross border and national coalitions, partnerships and networks; iii) link Montenegrin CS representatives to their peers and other stakeholders in Europe, the EU and the region, iv) shape an enabling institutional, legal and financial CS environment; v) mobilise CS towards achieving the Copenhagen political criteria, the objectives of the Enlargement Strategy, including all so-called “chapter issues”, and Civil Society Strategy, and vi) build CS capacities to fulfil their role at all levels.

Various factors affect this impact. In the latest Montenegro Needs Assessment, TACSO Montenegro Office made an excellent inventory of issues Montenegro needs to address in the short and intermediate term to safeguard and increase the impact of previous EU funded interventions. To this end, TACSO recommends a number of measures Montenegro needs to take, including measures pertaining to: i) the cooperation between the EU and CS in Montenegro, ii) the further enhancement of the institutional, legal and financial framework for CS in the country, including revision of the law on volunteering; iii) the move towards implementation and enforcement of the existing framework; iv) further support to coalitions, networks and partnerships, v) the inclusion of trade unions, media and businesses; vi) further awareness raising and capacity building on European affairs; vii) enhanced capacity building across the board; viii) enhancing monitoring, evaluation and reporting; ix) reaching out to small and remote CSOs; and x) enhancing cooperation with local authorities, etc.

Evidence also suggests a number of other constraints. In particular, DG ELARG and the EUD must move away from outputs and towards results, this should enhance their own transparency and accountability, in particular in regard to the CfP assessment process and its outcomes. They should be more flexible in managing EU financial assistance to CS in Montenegro and the region.

EQ 8: Which are the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance? Are there any elements, which are hampering or could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of assistance?

In Montenegro, the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance to CS are good.

General factors that are likely to reduce impact and sustainability in Montenegro are: i) the extent to which the EU, government and the CS sector apply good governance principles and practices, with emphasis on transparency and accountability; ii) the measure of prioritisation of impact and sustainability in IPA programming and implementation; iii) the measure of acknowledgement and recognition by the EU of the achievement of impact and sustainability as key performance indicator; iv) the quality of the institutional, legal and financial framework pertaining to CS in Montenegro; v) the measure of organisation by the CS sector, in particular the strength of the “Saradnjom do Cilja” platform, NGO networks, lead NGOs and collaborations between big and small NGOs in pushing for further reforms; vi) the engagement by the EU and the government of CS in a variety of roles in transition processes, programmes and projects, including a stronger

role in the structured dialogue on the CSF pillars, technical assistance, and the programming and implementation of future EU financial support to CS in Montenegro; vii) follow up by the EU and government on CS general and specific (sectoral / thematic) policy recommendations, papers and other outputs; viii) the quality of monitoring, evaluation and reporting; ix) the promotion by the EU, the government and others of financial instruments supporting CS in developing and implementing long term programmes rather than short term projects; and x) the quality and performance of CS's own work and service provision.

A specific factor that is likely to increase impact and sustainability is the upgrading of Montenegro to a Candidate Country. This has placed CS front and centre of the European integration process, a position CS, supported by the EU, is committed to defend and expand. A specific factor that is likely to reduce impact and sustainability is that Montenegro remains a small and relatively weak state. State institutions in Montenegro, and some NGOs and CSOs, are often politicised. There is a major influence of organised crime on society. Corruption is rampant. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, with particular emphasis on those of LGBTI, leaves much to be desired.

5.3.7 ANNEX 3.7. – WIDER FINDINGS FOR SERBIA

The fieldwork in Serbia could embrace a large number of CSOs, mostly grouped in four thematic or sectoral focus groups, the EUD, the TACSO, and the Government office in charge of the CS, other main donors etc. This has allowed for a smooth preparation of the country specific findings and their weighing towards the WBT-level synthesis and recommendations.

EQ 1: Are the administrative and organisational structures in place, ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance?

In RS administrative structures are in place at the level of the EU, the government and CS and these increasingly ensure the efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance.

The EUD is well resourced but they are to a large extent consumed by the administration of financial assistance. The CS programme in RS is the largest of its kind in the WB. The EAR and later the EUD have efficiently and effectively implemented this programme over the years. Nevertheless, the EUD remains a bureaucratic organisation. The expectation is that through further streamlining administrative and financial procedures, and in particular reducing the involvement of senior staff in minor administrative and financial operations, it can enhance its performance significantly.

The EUD has a strong, experienced, CS team that manages EU financial assistance to CS linked to the Copenhagen political criteria, European integration *per se*, and civil society *per se*. This concentration of resources on the “right” sectors/themes to be covered by EU financial support to CS in the WBT in RS is sufficiently reflected in the topics of the interventions that are supported by this assistance.

The EUD promotes the dialogue between the EU, the government and the CS in various ways. The EU also promotes strategic planning for CS sector as a whole. The EU promotes a sector approach to CS, looking at the whole picture provided by the centrally managed thematic programmes such as EIDHR, via the IPA MBPs such as TACSO, Partnership Actions and P2P, to EIDHR CBSS, the IPA NP projects on civil society, culture, media, refugees and IDPs, etc.

NIPAC and linked government administrative and organisational structures have taken the lead in programming and implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in RS. Their attitude is more

proactive than reactive and this is reflected by NIPAC taking the initiative, following recommendations from the sector, for Project Fiches in the CS area.

In RS, there are a number of organisational structures that have started promoting the participation by the government and CS in programming or implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in RS as well as in the wider region through influencing IPA MB programming. Such participation is likely to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of EU financial assistance to CS.

The Serbian Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, within the Office of the Prime Minister, is now on track. The office has a solid status, a strong mandate, and it has assumed various responsibilities in coordinating governmental and CS inputs in programming and implementation of EU financial assistance to CS in RS. Notably, the office has focal points in relevant line ministries and agencies. The office is currently being staffed. The EU and the government are currently considering its request for IPA 2011 technical assistance.

The Serbian European Integration Office (SEIO) ensures participation of CS in all matters of European integration, including programming and implementation of EU financial assistance. SEIO runs SECO, which is a donor-funded sector based mechanisms to ensure CS consultation based on principles that reflect the minimum standards for EU consultation with CS that were described during Phase 1.

In RS, the CS sector is relatively well organised. The Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations of RS (FeNS) provides internal coordination of CS. FeNS is a national network of CSOs from all over RS. FeNS covers all fields of CS activity. The government recognises FeNS as the most important contact with CS. So far, FeNS has had moderate success influencing government policy-making. According to some lead NGOs, e.g. "Gra•anska Inicijativa" (Citizens' Initiative), it needs to be revitalised.

CSOs in RS have significant capacity that the EU could use to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of its financial support to CS in RS. In the recent past the EAR and later the EUD have used the capacities of RS CSOs such as CRNPS and the European Movement for the management of EU funded grant schemes. History shows that such mission driven CSOs in RS were – in the long term - not able to ensure efficient and effective grant scheme management. Today, foundations like BCIF, exists and are active throughout the region. In Serbia there are local funds or foundations that have experience in grant scheme management. It is worthwhile assessing the institutional capacities of these CSO and engaging them in future EU grant scheme management.

EQ 2: To what extent are the monitoring mechanism and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?

In RS EU financial assistance to CS is monitored at all levels but the respective monitoring mechanisms are not always appropriate and are not always functioning correctly.

"Monitoring mechanisms" exist only at IPA and ROM levels - meaning an agreed monitoring process producing standard monitoring indicators, activities, outputs and results. CS does not directly participate in the work of the IPA Monitoring Committee. It is involved in the process of EU progress reporting and it has been collaborating well with the government in providing

answers to the Commission's questionnaire that was sent in preparation of the Commission's Opinion on RS's application for EU membership.

In February 2010 and July 2011 ROM monitored two EIDHR projects (e.g. CRIS 148304 and CRIS 25347). However, these projects are not covered by this thematic evaluation. ROM has monitored TACSO, including its Serbian component, in October and November 2010. ROM does not cover all EU support to CS in RS, as it targets EU funded contracts of greater value than EUR 1 million and thus excludes smaller EU service contracts - such as the Cards and IPA EU-funded Civil Society Dialogue projects - and smaller EU action grants. A problem with ROM is that its outputs are not widely disseminated and therefore do not reach target groups, final beneficiaries, and other stakeholders. Another problem is ROM templates cannot be used for grant monitoring.

The remaining monitoring of EU financial assistance to CS in Serbia - excluding EIDHR - consists of monitoring performed by DG ELARG or the EUD, the government, CS itself, contractors of MB projects such as TACSO or of NP TA projects implementing grant schemes such as Serbia-EU Strengthening Civil Society Dialogue. The EUD sits in steering committees, participates in grant events, and performs field visits. Following DG DEVCO's monitoring and evaluation guidelines, EIDHR sets a good example by visiting each grant at least twice during the contract duration and producing Activity Monitoring Reports and Office Visit Reports in the process. Under the IPA 2008-2009 TA project "Strengthening Serbia – EU Civil Society Dialogue" the contractor has prepared a comprehensive monitoring manual and a monitoring methodology on the basis of which this project has conducted regular monitoring visits to all actions. The IPA 2009-2010 TA project, with the same title, has started using this monitoring methodology as well. The EUD ensures accessibility of the outcomes of these monitoring processes to grant beneficiaries, target groups and other stakeholders through their wide dissemination, for instance through dedicated websites.

According to recent analyses¹⁷, a priority in RS for the EU, the government and CS should be ensuring adequate involvement of CS in monitoring and evaluation. As the country does not have a notable monitoring and evaluation culture, RS should encourage the development of local, independent, monitoring and evaluation expertise found in the CS sector. A good example is the encouragement by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, that was established in July 2009, in promoting collaboration between the government, CS and other actors, including donors, in areas such as monitoring and evaluation of the Serbian social inclusion process in line with EU standards.

EQ 3: To what extent the EC financial assistance has/is effectively contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities, including the development of the WBT CSOs and building their capacities, in particular with regard to their role within the enlargement strategy?

In RS, EU financial assistance to CS contributes to achieving the strategic objectives as per Copenhagen political criteria, the Enlargement Strategy and the Civil Society Strategy as based on the Commission Communication from 2005.

As to the Copenhagen political criteria, there has been good progress in terms of the advancement of RS in areas such as democracy and the rule of law, human rights and protection of minorities and civil and political rights. Serbian success stories include the establishment of the

¹⁷ Absorption Capacity for Serbia of Use of EU Funds: Practical Lessons from Slovakia, authored by Ivan Knezević, and published by the Pontis Foundation and the Center for Democracy Foundation, pages 11 and 12. This report is financed by SlovakAid.

Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, the adoption and implementation of the new law on associations, the collaboration between the government, ministries and agencies with CS in various Copenhagen areas, and progress made in Copenhagen areas at the local level. RS owes much of this progress to *inter alia* EU support to CS in RS enabling CS to push for respective reforms.

There are also areas of concern, however, including the dialogue between Belgrade and Prishtina, the fundamental freedom of assembly, the fundamental freedom of expression, continuous HR violations against minorities, including and notably LGBTI, the functioning of the judiciary, corruption, the Belgrade-centric aspect of cooperation between the state and CS, limited transparency and accountability in public funding of CS, and so on. Despite significant EU financial (and non-financial) support to CS in these areas, progress in these areas has been poor.

There is ample evidence of CS contributions to the advancement of the European integration process in RS across the board. A Serbian success story is the SEIO / SECO process - promoting the participation of CS in the programming and monitoring of EU funding –currently supported by the EU through TACSO. However, SEIO and CS have signalled that SEIO / SECO is merely a project, and true success requires continued support for SEIO / SECO to make it a true process.

Other Serbian success stories include the involvement of CS in the elaboration of the National European Integration Programme (2009), the updated Needs Assessment for International Assistance (2011), and various sectoral/thematic strategies, policies and programmes, notably in so-called “soft” sectors such as culture, education, health, labour and social affairs. Interestingly, EU financial support to CS in RS played a minor role in these processes as many were initiated or financed by other actors than the EU such as bilateral donors, the government or by CS itself. A matter of concern is that EU funded grant schemes, like Civil Society Dialogue, may not sufficiently contribute to the achievement of objectives for the European integration process. The guidelines of such grant schemes insufficiently promote European integration as such or, when they do, the outcomes of the assessment of the respective CfPs provide a mismatch with the guidelines and, as a result, the ensuing grant projects insufficiently promote European integration *as such*.

As to the CS sector, CS capacity to contribute to RS's political, economic, and social reform processes, in line with the SAA, EU financial support to CS in RS has contributed to strengthening CS capacities in many ways. In CS there is greater awareness and understanding today of the key pillars of the CSF: e.g. Copenhagen political criteria, European affairs, and issues concerning CS *per se*. CS has become involved in public affairs at both the central and local level. CS has also been instrumental in pushing for the establishment of the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, appointment of focal points in ministries and agencies, adoption of various laws enhancing the role of CS in society, the initiation of work on the Civil Society Strategy, etc.

CS leads the advocacy campaign demanding greater transparency and accountability in government spending on CS. CS has consolidated leadership of a number of “old” NGOs that led to the toppling of the Milošević regime and has produced, with the assistance of the EU, a number of “new” sectoral and thematic leaders. These leaders participate in European and regional networks, lead permanent networks at home, or lead ad hoc coalitions representing entire sectors. CS also plays a major role in social and other service provision, in particular at the local level, to ethnic minorities and other vulnerable groups such as women, youth, children,

persons with disabilities, LGBTI, and others. At present the main areas of concern are the limited capacity of the Office for Cooperation with CS to push the CS agenda forward, the limited “power” of SEIO in the public arena and the continuation of the SECO process after its project funding expires, the Belgrade-centric nature of the cooperation between the first and third sector, the limited involvement of CS in managing EU-funded grant schemes, and the limited involvement of trade unions and professional associations in EU-funded interventions.

EQ 4: Is assistance balanced in the sense of coverage of type, size and profile of organisations supported?

EU financial assistance to CS in RS is not sufficiently balanced. In particular, it does not sufficiently reach small and remote CSOs, CBOs, informal groups and individual CS actors.

EU financial assistance to CS in RS has helped consolidate a CS sector that consists of a small number of highly empowered NGOs, a larger number of moderately empowered CSOs, and a very large number of CBOs the majority of which have not been able to get involved or participate in relevant EU funded or supported processes.

The main obstacles to participation in EU funded MBPs, including P2P, and the NPs are very similar to those observed in Kosovo and Montenegro. These include: i) the poor provision or usage by the EU of financial instruments that are specific for small and remote CSOs (except by EIDHR), ii) the complexity of existing instruments, in particular the CfPs, and iii) the ineligibility of small and remote CSOs in the EU's own CfPs (except under EIDHR) iv) the use of English, and v) the Belgrade-centred provision of technical assistance and other forms of support to CSOs. The latter point may be illustrated by data provided by the EUD that shows during the period 2007-2010 no less than 50,5 % of the IPA grants and 57 % of EIDHR grants went to Belgrade-based organisations.

Stakeholders have indicated that this situation is not typical for EU support to CS in RS. In fact, some consider EU support to CS in RS more balanced than the government's support to CS in RS. While EU support is at least “open” to all types of CSOs, government support is given to a small number of lead NGOs, often connected to political parties, and to various organisations like churches, religious communities and political parties that are not NGOs at all.

The findings indicate that DG ELARG, EUD, the government and CS actors in RS are committed to promoting and using all instruments at their disposal to address this situation, thereby following the recommendations provided by the Structured Dialogue, the opening up of the CSF to small and remote CSOs, and examples found elsewhere. EIDHR in Serbia has introduced two lots in its 2009 CfPs that aim at reaching out to both “big” and “small” CSOs. In order to address the issue of deep discrepancy in CS development between large towns and rural, remote, areas, the EUD has set the minimum grant size at EUR 10 000 and requested only 5 % co-financing. This action certainly brought the grants within reach of small CSOs of which 10 benefited from the 2009 grants and 10 from the 2010 grants. Based on the Serbian example, the BiH EUD has started introducing similar grant schemes. In the meantime, the Serbian EUD is in the process of following the Montenegrin example for non EIDHR-funding and is planning to launch a micro grant scheme that local CSOs will manage.

EQ 5: To what extent is assistance balanced in terms of instruments mix (technical assistance – TA, including TACSO, micro and macro grant schemes, P2P, etc)?

EU financial assistance to CS in RS is moderately balanced In terms of the instruments' mix.

DG ELARG and the EUD use all the financial instruments the EU has at its disposal to support CS in RS including MBP and NP service contracts (TACSO, other), direct agreements (such as with UNPD), operational grants (such as with SCTM / SKGO), action grants (Partnership Actions, Civil Society Dialogue), P2P, etc. CS has noted that service contracts tend to channel EU funding meant for RS back to the EU and it has noted that CS has problems accessing service contracts directly while many service contracts benefiting CS – including TACSO and GOPA 1 and GOPA - indirectly rely on regional and local CS capacity. However, this is not always the case, for example, when local service providers are selected, through restricted tender procedures, to implement EU-funded grant schemes. If the EUD pursues its plan to launch a micro grant scheme, managed by local NGOs, as in Montenegro, the situation will change. Stakeholders consider the grant schemes inefficient and ineffective, and failed where small and remote CSOs are concerned.

Following the outcomes of the *Structured Dialogue*, the Commission has started promoting new forms of financial assistance to CS such as pool funding (with other donors), programme funding (or core funding), and block grants or micro grant schemes that may help reach small and remote CS actors. The latest Commission Decision on the CSF demonstrates that DG ELARG, the EUDs, and ECLO are introducing some of these new instruments, in particular programme funding and block grants.

The Government Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, would like to use twinning but has indicated that it may be difficult to select an appropriate EU MS counterpart.

EQ 6: To what extent are the different implementation systems (DIS and de-concentrated) affecting the support to civil society in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability?

Overall deconcentration in RS has positively affected the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of EU support to CS. RS is in the process of implementing the DIS Road Map, however, stakeholders fear that RS is not ready for DIS and the introduction of DIS, without the appropriate checks and balances (read: corruption), will reduce the efficiency and effectiveness of EU support to CS in RS.

In RS, deconcentration of CSF NPs and elements of the CSF MBPs, P2P and even TACSO, through the TACSO LAGs, to RS has enhanced relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of EU financial assistance to CS. It has also enhanced the impact and sustainability of such assistance. RS is a good example of how firm local commitment to promoting CS in a matter consistent with the EU's strategic objectives, first by the EAR, and later by the EUD, has resulted in a comparatively high impact, multi annual, EU support programme to CS. Deconcentration of the EUD may also have reduced efficiency and effectiveness of EU support to CS in RS to some extent. CS considers the EUD even more bureaucratic, and thus more inefficient and ineffective, than HQ.

Fears of stakeholders across the public and non-profit sector, accompanying the introduction of DIS, refer to bad practices due to the decentralised management of EU funding experienced by Bulgaria as well as bad practices within RS's own management of national funds. According to various sources, including research reports from the Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN), the EU decentralised the management of EU funding too early in the case of Bulgaria.

RS's management of the National Investment Plan as well as of national funds, such as for the environment, support the idea that the RS's leadership and the current generation of public sector managers is not prepared for the responsibility of managing EU funding. The recent SEIO initiative requesting more IPA funding now, in exchange for less structural funding in future, to allow RS to better prepare for its accession to the EU including the decentralised management of EU funding, serves as a strong reminder that RS is not be ready for decentralisation.

EQ 7: What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?

In RS. EU financial assistance to CS has had a profound impact on society at large and the role of CS therein.

In assessing this judgement it must be clarified that prior to the launch of EU financial assistance to its CS, RS already had a strong and vibrant CS that was to a large extent instrumental in toppling the Milošević regime. EU financial support to CS in RS has helped consolidate and strengthen CS. Stakeholders have indicated that RS's CS is quite "politicised" and political parties are often incubators of NGOs. These NGOs continue to be within the sphere of influence of the political parties. This may also help explain the profound impact CS, and by extension, EU financial support to *inter alia* this "political" CS has had (and still has) on Serbian society. At present the links between specific political parties and specific NGOs are unclear. Recently CS in Serbia – led by the CRNPS - has been focusing on these links in the context of their research into the use of public funding to support a selected number of NGOs without any transparency and accountability.

EU financial assistance to CS has helped: i) to reconnect or introduce Serbian CS with its counterparts in Europe, the EU, the region and its neighbouring countries; ii) include Serbian CS in pan-European, EU, regional, cross border and national coalitions, partnerships and networks; iii) link Serbian CS representatives to their peers and other stakeholders in Europe, the EU and the region, iv) shape an enabling institutional, legal and financial CS environment; v) mobilise CS towards achieving the Copenhagen political criteria and the objectives of the Enlargement Strategy and Civil Society Strategy, and vi) build CS capacities to fulfil their role at all levels.

Various factors negatively affect the impact of EU financial assistance. According to a recent survey of CS performed by "Građanska Inicijativa" and endorsed by the government office for Cooperation with Civil Society, the top 10 factors are: i) the lack of support by the state; ii) undeveloped donorship in the business sector; iii) withdrawal of international donors, iv) insufficient cooperation with local authorities; v) unstimulating legal framework; vi) undeveloped donorship by individuals; vii) underdevelopment of the CS sector itself; viii) insufficient and undeveloped cooperation between CSOs; ix) poor cooperation with the media; and x) the negative attitude of citizens. Evidence also points to a number of other constraints. These "enabling" factors are very similar to those found in Kosovo. A description of the exact workings of each factor goes beyond the scope of this report. What is clear, however, is that the more these factors are present – e.g. state support, private sector donorship, presence of an international donor like the EU - the higher the potential impact of EU financial assistance on CS in Serbia.

DG ELARG and the EUD must move away from outputs and towards results. This should enhance the transparency and accountability of the EU. They should be more flexible in

managing EU financial assistance to CS in RS and the region. The openness of government to CS leaves much to be desired. CS is too focussed on the government and neglects the parliament. CS should also refrain from entering artificial partnerships with no impact and are, by nature, not sustainable.

EQ 8: Which are the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance? Are there any elements which are hampering or could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of assistance?

In RS, the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance to CS are good.

General factors that are likely to reduce impact and sustainability in RS are: i) the degree of application by the EU, government and the CS sector of good governance, with emphasis on transparency and accountability; ii) the degree of prioritisation of impact and sustainability in IPA programming and implementation; iii) the degree of acknowledgement and recognition by the EU of the achievement of impact and sustainability as key performance indicator; iv) the quality of the institutional, legal and financial framework pertaining to CS in RS; v) the measure of organisation by the CS sector, in particular the strength of the FeNS platform, NGO networks, lead NGOs and collaborations between large and small NGOs in pushing for further reforms; vi) engagement by the EU and the government of CS in a variety of roles in transition processes, programmes and projects, including a stronger role in the structured dialogue on the CSF pillars, technical assistance, and the programming and implementation of future EU financial support to CS in RS; vii) follow up by the EU and the government on CS general and specific (sectoral/thematic) policy recommendations, papers and other outputs; viii) the quality of monitoring, evaluation and reporting; ix) promotion by the EU, government and others of financial instruments supporting CS in developing and implementing long term programmes rather than short term projects; and x) the quality and performance of CS's work and service provision.

Specific factors that are likely to reduce impact and sustainability include the political climate, in particular now that RS is preparing for the general elections planned for 2012. History shows that pre-election periods in RS are characterised by a lack of progress on relevant issues. The elections, in addition, may result in a new coalition government that may be less pro-European than the current coalition.

5.3.8 ANNEX 3.8. – WIDER FINDINGS FOR TURKEY

As highlighted in the intermediate discussions with the EC, the fieldwork in Turkey would have benefited from more inputs, in order to cope better with the country's size and the complexity of its CS issues. In order to apply the most pragmatic methodological approach possible within these constraints, the country's fieldwork covered simultaneously Ankara and Istanbul, as two main "hubs" of the national CS community. This allowed covering "a minima" a satisfactory range of stakeholders, including, in particular, both TACSO country offices and LAGs, the main CSOs which also play the role of interface in certain programmes of the EU's support to the CS, the government officials in charge of CS, etc. In addition, the fieldwork in Istanbul allowed to cover the P2P Media event, as mentioned above (see Chapter 1.2 Implementation and Methodology).

EQ 1: Are the administrative and organisational structures in place, ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance?

The DIS in Turkey reflects certain problems, directly impacting the effectiveness of EU support to CS. The Ministry for European Affairs and the government bodies in charge of CS have their say and decision-making roles in planning and targeting the EU CS support, in line with the spirit and the regulations of DIS.

This is further exacerbated by the deteriorated status of EU – Turkey relations, regarding the prospect of TR's accession to the EU. Given the complexity and scope of CS issues and challenges in the country, this creates a barrier the Commission cannot easily transcend in order to enhance its support to CS, beyond the formal and rigid attitudes of the CFCU.

The new national programme contracted with the STGM Consortium aims to bridge this gap by setting up an "autonomous" platform for implementation of a complex and ambitious programme, combining non-financial and financial support to CSOs, and further development and improvement of the dialogue between the government (on all levels) and the CS.

The situation is reportedly particularly difficult in spheres related to CS advocacy and militant activity in favour of human rights and discriminated groups, where the biased government's position is negatively and strongly felt.

EQ 2: To what extent are the monitoring mechanisms and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?

The EU assistance in Turkey is monitored on four different levels, with varying focus and methodology:

- § Monitoring by beneficiary (EU Ministry) – conducted by experts, where TA experts and the DEU attend (the latter as observers);
- § CFCU monitoring – audit, financial reports, procedures, etc.
- § DEU monitoring – TMs visit the projects and consult about implementation, challenges in implementation, etc. This is a good opportunity for DEU to hear opinions, but also for CSOs to voice their concerns.
- § ROM TA project monitors a few CS support projects, but this ROM programming is subjected to direct CFCU ex-ante approval;

The external ROM TA project has been introduced in TR in order to remedy the most acute shortcomings and weaknesses of the national monitoring procedures and tools as established by DIS. This helps improve the quality of technical monitoring, but the CFCU is a weak link, by virtue

of its administrative and financial (accounting) monitoring and decision making on whether or not any CS support projects should be subject to ROM.

EQ 3: To what extent the EC financial assistance has/is effectively contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities, including the development of the WBT CSOs and building their capacities, in particular with regard to their role within the enlargement strategy?

All CS interlocutors in Turkey unanimously agree that the impact of the EC financial assistance in this domain has been significant and positive for the development of CS in Turkey. EU assistance is an important source of funding support especially for human rights advocacy organisations, and those that deal with politically sensitive issues in the country, including the care for and protection of discriminated communities.

However, a need is felt for EU assistance to be better balanced in order to reach out to small grassroots organisations, particularly those active in isolated areas and working with excluded groups in the country.

Although some achievements in this regard have been made, the size of the country and the extremely high number of small NGOs represent a challenge that cannot be met by a sole donor, whatever the EU's political determination and financial means.

The need for more consensual coordination between the EU and the government in this domain is a key condition, on which it is possible to outreach to small and remote NGOs, by using the government's provincial authorities and their departments in charge of the local CSOs.

EQ 4: Is assistance balanced in the sense of coverage of type, size and profile of organisations supported?

As in other WBT beneficiaries, EU assistance to Turkish CS struggles with balancing its assistance to small and grassroots organisations, particularly in isolated areas of the country. An impending factor for organisations to compete for grants is the cumbersome bureaucratic application procedure and the rigid and complicated contracting, reporting and monitoring process. Significant efforts have been made to increase outreach to smaller and more remote CSOs, for example, the introduction of different Lots with the option for small organisations to apply and submit their application in a local language.

Another positive change is the implemented approach of interfacing larger "first-line" CSOs to implement programmes with (sub) grant schemes. This is a pragmatic approach with two basic weaknesses:

- § The risk of domination or/and "indoctrination" of smaller CSOs by the large CSO implementing the programme as a whole and,
- § The inevitable passage through national authorities, empowered within DIS to take part in decision making and programming of the EU CS support targets.

EQ 5: To what extent is assistance balanced in terms of instruments mix (TA, including TACSO, micro and macro grant schemes, P2P, etc)?

There are no immediate indications that the current assistance mix in TR is inadequate, and the upcoming SGTm programme will introduce a new type of intervention. It will be important to

monitor this innovation, in order to make sure it will confirm its relevance and its structural impact on the mix of instruments as a whole.

Note that, while the instruments are relatively balanced, the remaining problem, present in all WBT countries, is EU support benefits primarily “big” organisations, while small organisations are neglected, for the reasons already underlined WBT-wide (outreach distance excessive, dissuasive participation conditions, language and co-financing requirement barriers, etc.). This widens the gap between the two groups of CS.

EQ 6: To what extent are the different implementation systems (DIS and de-concentrated) affecting the support to CS in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability?

There are two crucial factors to take into account in discussing the effectiveness and efficiency of the DIS in Turkey. Firstly, within the DIS, the Ministry of EU Affairs leads the programming of assistance, while the CFCU leads the financial and administrative components of the assistance. However, the CFCU is a very bureaucratic and a rigid institution that imposes very strict and complicated procedures and regulations. Such a situation creates significant problems for CSOs, as they expend more resources and energy on fulfilling the procedural requirements than the programmatic components.

In order to implement projects, organisations need to have strong capacities and knowledge of procedures, which immediately excludes small CSOs, as they cannot respond to such needs. The outcome of such a bureaucratic system is that small organisations are deprived of the opportunity to build their capacities, which widens the gap between the organisations that do receive the grants and those who do not – creating an elitism of “big” CSOs.

Secondly, there is widespread concern that channelling funds for civil society through a decentralised system, i.e. giving the control for disbursement of funds to the government, threatens unequal, non-transparent distribution of funds to preferred CSOs or those close to the governing regime, thus marginalising or excluding human rights organisations advocating for rights of excluded or threatened groups in the country.

The CSOs interviewed agreed that EU assistance to CS should be centralised, decided upon and distributed either by the DEU or HQ in Brussels. This would enable transparency and the fair disbursement of funds. The new national programme contracted with the STGM Consortium aims to fill this gap by setting up an “autonomous” platform for implementation of a complex and ambitious programme, combining non-financial and financial support to CSOs, and further development and improvement of the dialogue between the government (on all levels) and CS.

In terms of the structural conditions needed in order to enhance EU support to CS, a sound institutional basis with solid and convergent cooperation between the country and the EU are indispensable for DIS to deliver added value in this domain.

EQ 7: What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?

The diversity and (financial) weight of already implemented and on-going programmes and projects have had positive impacts in TR. However, this has been, to an extent, neutralised by the

rigid and sometimes biased interface of the national DIS stakeholders and decision makers, particularly with the CSOs active in human rights militancy and advocacy.

The primary impact of EU assistance to Turkish associations is they are now able to organise in a strategic manner with clear projects and strategic focus. Also, the contacts established with EU and WB organisations have brought these regions more closely together, while cultural exchanges have opened Turkish culture to the West.

The upcoming STGM Consortium programme will have to prove its relevance as a pragmatic “modus operandi”, bridging gaps in dialogues between EU/government and government/CSOs. However, even if this “pilot” programme reaches its goals, it does not constitute a formula for a permanent institutional solution to the problem of better TR governance of the CS sector. Additional efforts are needed in order to help the TR government evolve towards a significantly more conducive environment for relations with the national CS community.

EQ 8: Which are the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance? Are there any elements which are hampering or could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of assistance?

The prospects depend first of all on an improvement of the EU – Turkey dialogue and allowing optimising and “softening” of the current rigid and heavy government position concerning certain key CS issues (anti-corruption, anti-discrimination, protection of minorities, and HR in general). The new EU programme, to be implemented by a coalition of major national CSOs, is expected to be a major test of EC effectiveness in efforts to transcend the above gap and, sometimes, confrontation.

In terms of sustainability, two examples point to the need to devise more comprehensive strategies for the sustainability of assistance achievements:

- § Support to the establishment and functioning of the CSO support association (STGM), which had four regional offices, was a good step towards supporting the further development of CS in the country. However, as soon as EU funds expired, the STGM died out and their regional offices closed. This created additional problems for grassroots organisations that shared the offices of the STGM regional offices, as they had to vacate as well. That the EU needed to create a new project with a “rescue grant” (so called by the majority of respondents) to STGM demonstrates that such support is in no way sustainable;
- § On a more positive note, the approach taken by TACSO –strengthening the LAGs may bring significantly increased sustainability prospects. However, the work with LAGs should be carefully planned and contain elaborated future strategy and plans.

5.4 Annex IV - P2P – Recapitulated Findings and Conclusions

Evaluation Question	Findings	Conclusions, lessons learned and issues to be further considered
EQ1 Are the administrative and organizational structures in place, ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P2P well cooperates with DG ELARG, the EUDs and TACSO for its programming, planning, selection of P2P participants and organization of P2P events. Nevertheless, the organization of EUDs can be improved as some EUDs have different contact persons for CS in general and for P2P in particular. • P2P well cooperates with external stakeholders, for instance the EESC. P2P always consults EESC on planned P2P events covering topics of interest to the EESC. • P2P provides a practical tool for DG ELARG staff to meet and exchange with WBT CS representatives that come to Brussels as participants in the P2P multi country visits. • P2P also promotes the participation of EESC experts in P2P events, providing them with an opportunity to transfer know how on the EESC's role, responsibilities and proceedings and to exchange with WBT CS representatives. • EUD staff in charge of CS in general of specific topics / themes in particular have signaled that they are themselves in need of capacity building. Their participation in P2P multi-country and single country events may help bridge existing knowledge gaps. • CS has signaled issues of accountability and transparency in the selection of P2P participants. In particular, EUDs and TACSO are seen, as not always representative of the interests of CS. CS demand a greater role of legitimate CS actors in the selection of P2P participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the level of the EUDs, integrate the functions for CS and P2P within one desk and preferably within one person. • Continue promotion of participation of DG ELARG, other line DGs, EUDs, ECLO, EESC, and other stakeholders in P2P events. • Assess the feasibility of the participation of EUD staff in P2P multi-country and single country events as participants. This could be an efficient / effective form of EUD capacity building, while ensuring socialization, exchange of experience, transfer of know-how, between EUD, CS and other stakeholders. Promote greater role of legitimate and representative CS actors in the selection of P2P participants.

Evaluation Question	Findings	Conclusions, lessons learned and issues to be further considered
EQ2 To what extent are the monitoring mechanism and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P2P does not systematically monitor against the CSF overall objectives and specific objectives, or to P2P's own overall objectives and specific objectives. P2P performs, to a large extent, activity monitoring and output monitoring that is based, for instance, on so-called speaker reports or participant reports. P2P performs only to a small extent results monitoring or impact monitoring. Nevertheless, the trend is in the right direction. For instance, P2P has been working hard in further developing TAIEX feedback mechanisms such as the so-called TMS that permits appropriate encoding of P2P events and, on that basis, enables the automatic generation of reports and statistics. P2P would like to build on this experience and further develop feedback mechanisms that provide feedback on the impact and sustainability of P2P events. • In Montenegro P2P participants in P2P multi-country events are required, upon their return to Montenegro, to provide a presentation on their lessons learned to non-participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance P2P results and impact monitoring. In particular: 1) agree on appropriate P2P indicators measuring the contribution of the P2P programme – as distinct from specific, individual, P2P events – to the approximation by the beneficiary countries of the Copenhagen Criteria, Enlargement Strategy, and Civil Society Strategy; 2) ensure appropriate monitoring of progress of the P2P programme in its achievement of these indicators, which can be done participatory, with the involvement of national authorities, EUDs, ECLO, TACSO, and CS.; 3) integrates the respective processes in the existing TAIEX TMS.
EQ3 To what extent the EC financial assistance has/is effectively contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities, including the development of the WBT CSOs and building their capacities, in particular with regard to their role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P2P covers sectors and themes that provide an excellent match with the required EU principles and objectives embedded in the Copenhagen Criteria, Enlargement Strategy, and Civil Society Strategy. The P2P events well contribute to capacity building of WBT CS with diverse outcomes at the level of participating CS or CS actors depending on their pre-event know-how, the match between their problems, needs and priorities and respective P2P product / services, the quality of P2P organization, the quality of P2P CS participant participation, and so on. The P2P speaker reports and P2P participant reports provide good insights into if and to what level P2P managed to enhance participants' capacities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As observed above and below, P2P outcomes can still be enhanced in various ways. • Ensure appropriate P2P presence in Kosovo.

Evaluation Question	Findings	Conclusions, lessons learned and issues to be further considered
within the enlargement strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P2P stakeholders have observed that so far there has been only one P2P event in Kosovo. 	
J.C. 4.1. The assistance is balanced regarding its coverage of the different types of CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P2P is an excellent mechanism to promote participation by small and remote CSOs, but there is much that can be improved. A paradox is that whereas P2P is meant to contribute to reducing disparities between large and small NGOs, it in fact strengthens these disparities as the selection of P2P participants promotes the selection of CS actors that speak English, and which are more likely to be found among empowered NGOs than among small and remote CSOs. In particular, CSOs representing WBT minority groups or other vulnerably groups are not very likely to master English. Whereas the EU complains that it always “sees the same CS faces” in fact, its own instruments promote the participation of these “CS faces” as these are the most empowered to participate in EU events, such as P2P. They have the right connections (EUD, TACSO) to be selected, are fluent in English, and so on. P2P events may have contributed to awareness rising among EU staff and other Brussels’ or national stakeholders that real grassroots may not have paid staff, or have staff that is proficient in English, but that they have the right access to volunteers who have excellent knowledge of local problems and the right technical skills to deal with them. P2P should realize that small and remote CSOs often work with volunteers. These volunteers often have other jobs or obligations; they are not “free” to participate like paid NGO staff is. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess feasibility of ensuring appropriate participation by P2P target groups that do not master English. Ensure participation of specialist local CSOs instead of generalist empowered NGOs. Prioritise P2P participation by CS and other actors that have not participated in previous P2P events or even other EU funded events (conferences, seminars, trainings). Assess how participation of volunteers in P2P events, in particular those taking place outside the home country, can be promoted. Follow up on recommendations of this assessment.

Evaluation Question	Findings	Conclusions, lessons learned and issues to be further considered
EQ5 To what extent is assistance balanced in terms of instruments mix (technical assistance – TA, including TACSO, micro and macro grant schemes, P2P, etc)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P2P is an instrument that is very different from the other, more traditional, CSF instruments such as the service contracts; grant schemes, and direct agreements. • P2P well coordinates with all other instruments. The arrival of the CSF has made this much easier, and appropriate coordination is now in place with other DG ELARG MB and regional desk, country desks, the EUDs, ECLO and TACSO. • Both CSF component 1 (national) and component 3 (regional) are satisfied with P2P as P2P can support CS in an ad hoc, flexible, fashion which these other components cannot. In this sense P2P has inspired the new Commission Decision that promotes more flexibility in EU assistance to CS in the WBT (and Iceland). • It is also critical to note that P2P, compared with large-scale programmes such as the national and regional service contracts and CfPs, is not much driven by the need to spend money. This helps keeping the focus on the objectives (and thus relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability) vis-à-vis matters of efficiency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider expansion of the P2P programme, as a complement to the other CSF instruments
EQ6 To what extent are the different implementation systems (DIS and de-concentrated) affecting the support to civil society in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders sometimes consider the centralization of P2P a problem. There are complaints about the accountability by P2P as to the selection of P2P sectors, themes, speakers and participants. In particular the selection process of participants is regarded as not transparent, and sometimes even as not fair. Some stakeholders expect that under DIS, the selection of P2P participants will be fairer, in particular when such selection is done by the National Offices for Cooperation with Civil Society in collaboration with National Councils, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate oversight on DG ELARG, EUD and TACSO P2P participant selection processes. • Assess feasibility of greater role of National Offices for Cooperation with CS in selection of P2P sectors, themes, speakers and participants.

Evaluation Question	Findings	Conclusions, lessons learned and issues to be further considered
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TACSO has brought an element of decentralization to the WBT. In particular, TACSO publishes a P2P annual list of events, allows CS to notify it on the sectors / themes CS would like P2P to address, advertises open calls for P2P participation, shortlists P2P candidates, carries out telephone interviews with P2P candidates, and so on. 	
EQ7 What have been the impacts so far? To what extent are these impacts sustainable and what further improvements are needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EU Treaty, the Commission Regulation 718/2007 (12 June 2007) [e.g. the "IPA regulation"], the Commission Decision, the MIPD 2008-2010, and other programming documents provide the legal basis for the P2P programme. These key documents very well reflect the Copenhagen Political Criteria, the objectives of the Enlargement Strategy and the planned contribution of P2P to the approximation of the <i>acquis communautaire</i> in all 35 so-called "chapters". Within the overall EU assistance package to the WBT, the P2P programme stands out as a "cheap" programme whose events may nevertheless have a high impact and sustainability in a way like TAIEX has very well contributed in achieving approximation of the <i>acquis communautaire</i> among TAIEX beneficiaries by promoting transfer of knowhow, exchange of experience as well as linkages, networks and partnerships among institutions in the EU, MS and new MS. CS in the WBT has often little understanding of the European integration process, is not acquainted with EU policies, institutions, stakeholders, et cetera. P2P addresses this challenge through providing "multi-country study tours" for CS representatives from WBT to Brussels and "single country events" for CS representatives from a single WBT country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In TAIEX activity report, enhance reporting on P2P events ensuring appropriate P2P documenting, reporting, and visibility. Collect, document, and report in an attractive format, certainly online, P2P testimonies demonstrating P2P's contribution to the Copenhagen Criteria, objectives of the Enlargement Strategy, and Civil Society Strategy. In particular, provide testimonies of P2P's "soft power" as such insights may stimulate access and utilisation of the P2P instrument, and guide and inspire future P2P programming.

Evaluation Question	Findings	Conclusions, lessons learned and issues to be further considered
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TAIEX Activity Report presents the achievements of P2P during the year 2010. In the general statistics section titled “<i>TAIEX in 2010</i>”, data on P2P are included in the presentation of the overall number of TAIEX events per year, number of study visits to Member States, number of events per beneficiary country, number of experts per year and country of origin of these experts, and number of participants per year. In the presentation of the number of TAIEX events per sector, the report does not include a sector titled “<i>Civil Society</i>” but it includes a total of 33 P2P study tours. It is not clear from this figure if these P2P study tours were study tours to Brussels, events in the WBT countries, or both. In the presentation of the study visits to Member States the report does not present P2P study tours separately. The report presents study visits to Belgium but it does not present P2P study tours to Brussels separately. The report presents events per beneficiary country but it does not present P2P single country events separately. The report presents number of participants per beneficiary country but it does not present the number of participants to P2P study tours and events per beneficiary country. Source: TAIEX Activity Report 2010, page 10 - 11, 36-39. • The TAEIX Activity Report includes a chapter titled “<i>People 2 People Programme (P2P)</i>”. This chapter provides the objectives of P2P and general statistics on the number of P2P multi-beneficiary study tours (17), P2P single beneficiary events (9) and P2P visa liberalisation events (2). The section highlights that in 2010 497 CSO representatives participated in the P2P multi-beneficiary study tours. It does not provide detailed statistics on the experts involved or the origins of these participants. The section does also not provide any detailed statistics on the P2P single beneficiary events or the P2P visa 	

Evaluation Question	Findings	Conclusions, lessons learned and issues to be further considered
	<p>liberalisation events. Source: TAIEX Activity Report 2010, page 33.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The key contribution of P2P is that it projects the EU's so-called "soft power" by exposing CS individuals to EU principles, institutions, mechanisms, et cetera. The impact of this "soft power" cannot be underestimated. An example of this "soft power" is the visit by Commissioner Füle to Mitrovica in Kosovo and the follow up visit to Mr Füle – organised by P2P – by CS representatives from Mitrovica to Brussels. This visit had a strong impact on opinions in Kosovo on the EU, which is critical in promoting the concept that the EU (including its other missions in Kosovo, like EULEX) is <i>not</i> the successor of the unpopular UNMIK. • There are various other testimonies by P2P participants and other stakeholders of P2P perceived impact. For instance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Montenegro P2P event on the role of CSOs in European Integration helped raising awareness and understanding among the participants on the importance of their role in the European integration process and how it could be improved. P2P sent the conclusions of this meeting around for comments, which was a way to motivate CS further involvement in the process. The visibility of the event was also good and the conclusions were published in Montenegro's daily newspapers. ○ One outcome of the participant's participation in the 2011 P2P event on Waste Management was that she became a member of a pan-European network dealing with electronic waste. 	

Evaluation Question	Findings	Conclusions, lessons learned and issues to be further considered
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thanks to one participant's participation in a P2P multi-country event in Brussels, this NGO found a partner from Kosovo for one of its future IPA projects. ○ A benefit of the P2P 2011 event on Science was the cooperation with the other participants, but not with people from Brussels. 	

Evaluation Question	Findings	Conclusions, lessons learned and issues to be further considered
<p>EQ8 Which are the prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going IPA assistance? Are there any elements, which are hampering or could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of assistance?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the trend set by DG DEVCO promoting collaboration between National Authorities, Local Authorities, Civil Society as well as the Business Sector, that is delivering, according to DG DEVCO, positive results, the impact of P2P events could be enhanced if they were to promote multi-stakeholder participation. • P2P programming does not include annual P2P regional or annual P2P national action plans. P2P could benefit from annual P2P regional and national action planning processes that are driven by local CS actors and based on processes of CS self-assessment of their problems, needs and priorities. • P2P organization can be enhanced. In particular, P2P should support the higher principles the EU stands for. For instance, as to the environment or promotion of the alternative economy, it is incomprehensible that P2P hosts participant in large hotels instead of in local, small scale, eco-friendly, hotels, pensions and B&Bs. Other P2P participants highlighted the fact that P2P organisers did not participate in P2P social events, while “networking” is one of the key P2P principles. • Location is a factor that may increase / decrease the impact of P2P events. In particular, P2P participants have signaled the relevance of organizing P2P events in other locations than Brussels, for instance in cities that are the seat of EU Agencies of Decentralised Bodies that are in charge of the respective P2P theme. In addition, the impact of P2P could be enhanced through including in its service package regional exchange visits between CSOs from the WBT to CSOs in the EU or in other WBT so that CS from the WBT can learn from their peers in the EU and in other WBT. P2P could learn from TACSO, in this regard, as TACSO has experience in organising visits from CS in the WBT to EU countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote multi-stakeholder P2P events. • Promote even better synchronization between key EU evolutions and the respective P2P theme / topic. • Consider organizing P2P multi country events in other locations than Brussels, for instance in the seats of major EU Agencies or Decentralised Bodies. This could also promote the “buy in” of such bodies to both the Enlargement Strategy and the shared EU and WBT objectives pertaining to promoting CS in the WBT. • Consider organizing more P2P regional events taking place in the WBT, thereby benefiting from the experience TACSO has acquired. • Assess the feasibility of P2P regional and national action planning. • Ensure principled P2P programming, planning, and organization, for instance in areas such as local sustainable development. • Promote better P2P needs assessment and follow up through better P2P production and service provision. • Promote better P2P organization, including increased role of empowered Brussels or local NGOs in organizing P2P events, better coordination and communication between P2P, service providers and participants. • Promote increased participation of line DG representatives in P2P events. • Ensure appropriate preparation of specialists for their participation, as contributors, in P2P events. The contributors need to have a good insight in the pre-event problems, needs and priorities of the participants and of their pre-event levels of awareness and understanding of the respective

Evaluation Question	Findings	Conclusions, lessons learned and issues to be further considered
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing is a factor that may increase / decrease the impact of P2P events. In particular, P2P events are likely to have a greater impact when they are organised in parallel with key EU evolutions that proved (additional) relevance and context to the P2P event. The timing of the P2P 2011 study tour on volunteering was excellent, for instance, as the Commission had just published, on 20 September 2011, its final Communication on <i>EU Policies and Volunteering: Recognising and Promoting Cross-Border Voluntary Activities in the EU</i>. • The organisation of P2P events can be enhanced. CS has issued a number of complaints as to the quality of the service provision. Some CS have recommended a greater role for empowered, local, Brussels, or national (EU or WBT) CSOs in organising P2P events, better coordination between DG ELARG and the organisers, better communication between P2P, service providers, and participants. • P2P must ensure the selection of the right participants. Participants in the P2P event on Religion claimed that no legitimate Serbian CS actors participated, representing religious communities such as the Serbian Christian Orthodox, the Muslims, or the Jews. • P2P events sometimes to not provide the participants with relevant and sufficient information. P2P participants are often very diverse. Some are well empowered on their own topic / theme but others are not. An appropriate understanding of P2P participant's the problems, needs and priorities will help fine-tuning P2P production and service provision. This is likely to significantly enhance P2P effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. • P2P participants appreciate the involvement of DG ELARG colleagues in P2P events. Nevertheless, they often find participation of colleagues from line DGs that 	<p>P2P topic. Often, participants do not require knowledge but they always require know-how.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate selection of P2P participants, with emphasis on their legitimacy, representativeness, and their actual or potential role as multiplier upon return to the WBT. • Promote the format of the knowledge café but ensure the provision of sufficient time for it

Evaluation Question	Findings	Conclusions, lessons learned and issues to be further considered
	<p>are in charge of respective P2P sectors / themes more beneficial, as these colleagues are not generalists like DG ELARG colleagues but they are specialists, and thus much more empowered to exchange with specialised WBT CS actors and transfer the latest sectoral / thematic know how.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P2P participants appreciate the involvement of other specialists in P2P events. Nevertheless, the contributions made by otherwise excellent specialists were often too general and not specific enough to enhance current levels of awareness and understanding of the WBT CS participants. CSOs observe that specialists hired by P2P are often not aware of the latest developments in the WBT in their own sector and, consequently, their contributions were often not (sufficiently) useful. • P2P participants demand more time for dialogues and discussions and less time for visits to EU institutions such as a tour of the European Parliament. • P2P participants appreciate the format of the knowledge café. Nevertheless, the knowledge café requires sufficient time; it cannot be “rushed through” as has happened during some P2P events. 	

5.5 Annex V - Survey of WBT CSO Regional Networks

This annex presents the recapitulated responses to the questionnaire (7 questions) on “EU Support to the CSOs in Your Country”, distributed to 25 regional CSO networks that took part in the RCC/TACSO Conference in December 2011. The responses provided below are taken directly from the Questionnaires filled by representatives of regional networks of CSOs. The names of networks and their basic information, which was provided in the first part of the Questionnaire, have been taken out.

1. In your opinion, what is the extent to which the EC financial assistance has contributed to achievement of EU, national and CS objectives and priorities as regards CS in your country (and wider)?

1. EU funds accelerated the growth of civil society while also increasing the visibility of CSOs. Especially right-based NGOs who were not able to access funds in national level had a chance to function effectively.
2. Financial assistance does not respond adequately to issues related to development of CSO sector nor are the programmes designed in proper approach manner to address issues of CSOs.
3. Employment, influence of CS to decision makers, to public life of citizens against corruption
4. It's a process. TA of EU should be more balanced in the region
5. National priorities are not the same with CS priorities
6. 50% - project focused activities do not allow development of programmes/priorities CSOs
7. N/A
8. EU assistance is needed and in some cases crucial for associations as they are not financially supported (most of the time) by any other organisations except embassies. And membership fees are not enough to go.
9. In general terms, EU provided crucial support to CS in BIH and region
10. To a significant extent EU assistance has contributed but not as much as it should
11. EX has had substantive effect. However, the EU funds are not accessible enough to smaller organisations and do not do enough for the capacity building of CSOs.
12. EC contributed very much through support of different programmes, as well as through monitoring of the rule of law and issuing reports on Serbia's progress, every year in consultation with CSOs.
13. It has contributed significantly.
14. The EU has been a main contributing factor to the development of NGO in Albania (Name mentioned through its CARDS, EIDHR and IPA programmes. It is particularly important in developing human rights and basic services for children, families, communities and services.
15. Still not enough. There is a need of capacity building of NGOs in MK in relation to find other ways of sustainability.
16. I think that it helped and it helps to a great extent.
17. It empowered the CS. Strengthened its capacities, stirred up democratic changes and involvement of CS in decision making processes
18. Although there were and are extended financial contributions of EU in BIH, effects of such activities are not so visible and public perception of local partners implementing projects is quite bad.
19. Especially for organisations that cannot possibly get grants from the governments and depend on abroad funds, EU funds play most critical role in Turkey for NGOs. It keeps the civil work moving.
20. EU culture and standards should be promoted more in ME, especially regarding CS. CSOs are still accepted with reserve by many institutions and by the general citizenship.
21. At some level, EU assistance supported priorities, but visibility of results in Serbia is not sufficient. Most of common people do not understand how much and in what areas EU supported development of Serbia.
22. So far, the situation is OK, but we lack good national systems, and lack the political will for CSO support. Certain CSOs have excellent capacities and skills to provide sufficient quality in many areas.

- 23. To some extent, the IPA process needs to be improved.
- 24. Not much, quite limited impact: lack of sustainability of projects supported; some of the structures overlap with local support structure
- 25. Significantly

2. What are the contributions of the EC to strengthening the role of the CS in the overall enlargement process?

- 1. The legislation is improved in line with EU accession process; more space for engaging ... was created. But still, I believe that mainly business organisations that have their own financial resources are active in Turkey.
- 2. As mentioned – very limited
- 3. Participatory democracy, citizens' rights and freedoms, building capacities and move closer to EU to citizens
- 4. High by introducing instruments, code of With better impact on CSOs.
- 5. Support to the involvement of CSOs in sector policy dialogues
- 6. No direct knowledge considering the broad scope of the subject
- 7. To help strengthening the capacity of CS
- 8. It is important that we have EC together with us throughout our activities
- 9. N/A
- 10. EC support to including CSOs in network, enlargement + monitoring is very important
- 11. EC contribution is not only through funds its huge contribution is in insisting that the voice and insight of CSOs is heard and taken into account.
- 12. Support in lobbying, advocacy, finances and consultation process.
- 13. It has played an important role but it could do more to foster long-term sustainability of the sector.
- 14. This has gradually begun in Albania through support of TACSO
- 15. To some extent enough but still are need that need to be met.
- 16. Besides funding – having the experience of conducting the EU funded projects enables CSOs to know more on the policy cycles and become better experts in the field of their work and therefore more important actors
- 17. Through its financial instruments the EC encourages promotion of EU standards, norms and good practice as well as the exchange of knowledge and expertise
- 18. A lot has been done, but biggest contribution has been visible in the field of capacity building of CSOs what is precondition for other steps.
- 19. N/A
- 20. The EC contribution is large, still the culture of CS should be developed more, and CSO-EC partnership should be essential in this process.
- 21. EU has very big influence on strengthening the role of CS in Serbia
- 22. N/A
- 23. Raising awareness and providing platforms to exchange experience and knowledge, providing funds
- 24. Glad to hear that plans for increasing strategic support
- 25. Significant political and financial support, EU actors should continue to use their leverage as political actors to support CS.

3. What are the concrete impacts of EU support to CS (in terms of the environment for CS, the dialogue between the EU, the government and CS, and capacities of CS? Please, elaborate.

1. EU support and EU accession process pushed for new legislation. But still there are problems with the implementation. CSOs are more visible now to the govt, but there is still no framework for cooperation and there is no evidence of effective dialogue.
2. Not big as there is limited effort on government side to raise awareness of CSO importance in decision-making
3. To make link between government and CS, connection with some part of society (marginalised groups), disabled workers
4. N/A
5. Support to CSOs through regional and country projects
6. No direct knowledge considering...
7. EU strengthen the only organisations that have already capacities
8. N/A
9. N/A
10. Improved opportunities for CS to dialogue with EY and government
11. Impact is that the EC is willing to take insight of the CSOs into account and that is strengthening the importance of CSOs.
12. Raising capacities of CSOs to undertake more effective advocacy and lobbying.
13. It is work in progress. The EU is promoting these components.
14. Funding CSOs do little essential services and provisions for individuals and vulnerable groups. There has been insufficient dialogue btw CSOs and government this needs to be improved.
15. Capacities are still not enough developed. The dialogue between government and CS increased and strengthened.
16. Since EC recognises CSOs as a potential and important actor, our national governments must do the same, or at least pretend that it is so.
17. Even though the capacities of the CS have strengthened the active citizenship still have not been achieved to its full capacity. Also communication between governments and CS still needs to be improved. However, the EU puts immense amount of effort in strengthening the CSOs in SEE
18. Dialogue btw. CS and EU has been improved through many initiatives of EU; tension btw, EU agenda and this side has been decreased; cooperation btw. Different organisations and networks have been successfully promoted, sharing of expertise and capacity building, etc.
19. Not only dialogue between the EY, but also the dialogue between NGOs themselves is encouraged and supported, in partnership, NGOS working on interlinked fields see the need and usage in partnership and acting together for bigger impact.
20. There are lot of trainings provided by EC programmes aiming to raise the capacity of CSOs, governments and institutions. Also, EU influences (by advocating and lobbying the governments to accept CSOs as their partners.
21. Thanks to influence of EU dialogue btw. NGOs and government in Serbia is opened.
22. N/A
23. Promoting dialogue, channels for fundraising mechanisms but still needs to be improved.
24. N/A
25. Recognition of CSOs in national contexts (through formal very often from governments)

4. Does the EU succeed in balancing the assistance to cover organisations of different type, size, type, profile, or geographical location? Specifically – does EU financial support assisted in including grass root organisations? If yes, please explain how EU financial support helped reaching grass-roots. If no, please explain why EU financial support did not help reaching grass-roots

1. I think allocated to grassroots is still limited due to the capacity and human resources of local CSOs who don't have any bilingual staff and financial technical capacity to apply for EU funds. Micro grants programme and the amount allocated to grassroots should be increased.
2. Only partly. Funds are overly limited. See below
3. Financing and sustainability in long term
4. Not exactly. Cross cutting sector financing.
5. Different countries, different orgs, different priorities. No.
6. Administrative and technical requirements of application very often made space for grass-roots as beneficiaries
7. No, EU only helps organisations which have built capacities
8. Gras roots organisations can have problems/difficulties to apply for EU financial assistance as it is lots of procedures or let's say its own language
9. EU funds are mainly absorbed by big NGOs in bigger towns and funds don't reach small towns and NGOs. Issue of capacities. But also lack of EU willingness to adopt criteria to fit to smaller NGOs.
10. No grass-roots are still largely excluded due to administrative requirements of funding
11. Smaller and local organisations usually have a hard time in getting support from EC It should focus more on capacity building, not just on the project support, this causes donor-driven agenda for CS.
12. I think that in the future, we all have to ensure that grass-roots CSOs are addressed by EU and EC more effectively
13. The EU support rarely reaches the grass root. Re granting schemes and seed funding are necessary to achieve this.
14. We are grass-roots CSO and have received regular financial grants. The EU has supported many diverse NGOs.
15. EU support is strictly focused on big and already developed organisations because the requirements need to be meet in application and capacities to have are only available among the very developed and already sustainable organisations.
16. Coming from mostly think-tank CSO network, I have scarce knowledge of this. However, through network projects, grassroots are also being included. To the best of my knowledge, this is especially so in the field of environment
17. Although grass-roots organisations have the ability to identify burning issues of citizens and are closer to them, they often do not have the capacity to access EU funds not to manage them. So the ... for funds to larger, urban and more developed organisations which on other hand lost its linkage with citizens
18. N/A
19. Often some umbrella or mainstream Human rights organisations are not legitimate for governments, whereas less legitimate due to the field that is covered by organisations – find it so hard to get together with the state. Maybe it is better to make funds available for “less legitimate” organisations, instead of letting umbrella organisations play the bridge. That bridge does not always help make a change.
20. Gras roots organisations from remote areas in ME should be more involved. These CSOs require bigger support in their capacity building and funding, as they do not have such support from their local governments, which are poor.
21. It is difficult for grass-roots organisations to find funds for co-financing and to manage EU project. Special finances needed.
22. N/A
23. More challenges exist for inclusion of grassroots NGOs
24. Unfortunately, not much. Grassroots are supported.
25. Grass roots groups often have no access to the assistance, due to lack of capacities or resources

5. Are you satisfied with the level of inclusion of CS in the process of programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of EU assistance?

1. N/A
2. It's little or none of it. Inclusion has to be provided at grass-root level, not at national level
3. No, lack of information, technical assistance methodology
4. Somehow yes, we are on a good track
5. No, I don't
6. With reference to the region there is a lot to do in the case of BIH is quite clear with ad hoc & spot against to continuous and structured...
7. I think CSOs are not in any way involved in this process, EU bureaucracy cumbersome, unclear to many
8. More and more inclusion would be better
9. Absolutely not. EU does not cooperate at all with S in programming and support to CS.
10. I am not informed enough about the level of inclusion to make a judgement
11. CS has a role in this process, but there is a room for improvement
12. A very good work on this has already been done, but this process should be continued and improved.
13. Yes.
14. Partially – dialogue has improved but the overarching theme of children is largely neglected.
15. No, there is more need on involvement into the process of programming of national level.
16. This is our first experience of this sort. We would suggest more monitoring of the existing networks/actions in terms of creating the database of what was done by CSOs and what is being done.
17. Yes, I think that the EU through various methods and at various levels receives a feedback from the CS on the efficiency and effectiveness of its assistance.
18. This process is not transparent enough and on some level is quite complex, although there have been attempts to more inclusion as simple as possible.
19. N/A
20. EU delegation is including CSOs in these issues/processes. However, there is always room for more involvement of CSOs in the work of EU bodies.
21. I am not satisfied with level of inclusion of CS in the process of programming and implementing EU assistance. Sometime, Bureaucracy is stronger than reality
22. N/A
23. They should be more involved
24. Fair enough
25. Can be improved, CSO influence on IPA programme priorities and implementation

6. What are the areas of improvement of the level of inclusion of CS in the process of programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the EU assistance?

1. N/A
2. Projects to support piloting in areas of social inclusion
3. Lack of information, TA, supporting some NGOs without capacities
4. N/A
5. Maybe only in process of implementation
6. Identify priorities/programming topics
7. N/A
8. N/A
9. It would be good if EU would finally start working with CS on all of mentioned areas. That is not the case now.
10. In general I support as much improvement in inclusion of CS in these processes
11. For example, pre-accession monitoring in CRO, CSOs should be more involved (this has even been adopted as a part of chapter 35)

12. N/A
13. Have regular consultations.
14. To look at longer projects with more realistic funding to achieve sustainability and produce better outcomes. Partnership programme is OK as long as it does not negatively impact on other smaller NGOs with a good record.
15. More Consultative sessions with NGOs on national level together with government official and EU representatives
16. Pls. see no. 9
17. Including more grass-roots and local organisations in the consultation process.
18. Partnership promotion of this process especially in the programming and monitoring areas. It seems like these puts one "reserved" for some sides.
19. Maybe funds less and less focus on "capacity building", but rather focus on very individual needs of the organisations. Organisation service should be the new approach, rather than package programmes for all cities, scales, and sizes...
20. TACSO office in ME is very good means to provide links for cooperation among CSOs and EU. Therefore, its services should be further supported and even broadened.
21. Consultancy process with NGOs in the process of EU Programme preparation for Serbia.
22. N/A
23. From CSO point of view they want to be involved in programming.
24. N/A (it is OK)
25. More effective consultation process (e.g. Online consultation phase, that can be widely accessed and approachable; tracking mechanism for change of priorities and why)

7. Do you have any further comments?

1. N/A
2. N/A
3. Why not trade unions? Cooperation between Trade unions and NGOs so important. Both on the same route – civil society.
4. N/A
5. N/A
6. I think it is key to have meeting such as this one where there are no "taboo" issues and critics
7. I wanted to change current practice to introduce qualitative and quantitative indicators and write indicators of CS. Also to introduce the same indicators for that the EU funded field
8. Thank you
9. N/A
10. This TACSO conference was very useful. Perhaps more CSO actors could participate in the future.
11. N/A
12. N/A
13. N/A
14. Review of the need for 20% contribution from NGOs to a grant and more pressure to get Albania government to exclude the VAT payment for non-profit organisations
15. N/A
16. Apologies for horrible handwriting we can also send the questionnaire by email.
17. N/A
18. N/A
19. On sensitive issues like gay and lesbian rights it is not always easy to sit down Ministry representatives and talk about niches and cooperation. We do understand the intention of you including them in the participation, but you should also consider the fact that we and government representatives often work wit/for different values, different methods, and we sit on different platforms. Maybe you/we can find different platforms/reasons/ways of interacting and I hope this comment is taken into account. Sometimes some issues are too sensitive for states and they do not always make NGO representatives so comfortable
20. N/A

- | |
|--|
| <p>21. I am grateful to EU for inviting me to this conference and for support to Serbia society development</p> <p>22. N/A</p> <p>23. N/A</p> <p>24. Thank you for giving me opportunity to fill out this questionnaire</p> <p>25. N/A</p> |
|--|

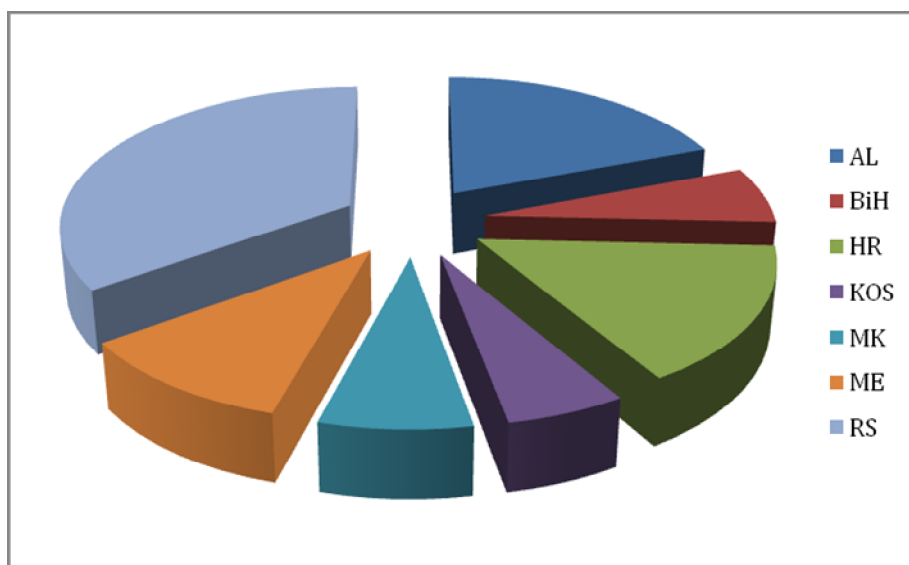
5.6 Annex VI - Recapitulation of Comprehensive List of EU CS Support Projects

The comprehensive (but not exhaustive) list of EU projects in support of the WBT CS, prepared by the evaluation team in the inception stage of Phase 2¹⁸, comprises a total of 525 projects in the WB countries (including a significant share – 30% - of EIDHR projects), 45 projects and/or programmes in Turkey¹⁹, and 65 MB projects, out of which 56 funded under IPA (see the recapitulation table overleaf).

It is observed that in WB the average EC budget per project has increased between pre-IPA (EUR 128 912) and IPA (EUR 175 299), whereas this average EC budget reaches EUR 267 692 for MB projects under IPA.

The proposed and approved sample of projects, applied as a reference frame for the fieldwork investigations, comprises 65 projects and programmes, all situated within the strict scope of the evaluation (i.e. excluding for instance EIDHR projects).

Share of EU CS Support Projects by Western Balkan Beneficiary



¹⁸ This comprehensive table (excel file) is submitted to the EC as a « side deliverable », together with this Report of Phase 2.

¹⁹ The list for Turkey also comprises a number of thematic programmes, which contain calls for proposals funding very large number of individual projects.

RECAPITULATION OF COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF CS SUPPORT PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS (amounts in Euros)							
BENEFICIARY		PRE-IPA	IPA	EIDHR	OTHER	GRAND TOTAL	
						Number	% budget
Albania	Number of projects	54	9	15	23	101	
	Total EC Budget	4 181 466	1 285 917	1 677 190	1 070 677	8 215 250	12
	Average per Project	77 435	142 880	111 813		81 339	
	Percent of projects	53	9	15	23	100	
BiH	Number of projects	10	24	0	0	34	
	Total EC Budget	768 610	7 190 618	0	0	7 959 228	12
	Average per Project	76 861	299 609	0	0	234 095	
	Percent of projects	29	71	0	0	100	
Croatia	Number of projects	40	13	29	0	82	
	Total EC Budget	2 995 906	672 729	2 989 829	0	6 658 464	10
	Average per Project	74 898	51 748	103 098	0	81 201	
	Percentage share	49	16	35	0	100	
Kosovo	Number of projects	21	9	0	0	30	
	Total EC Budget	1 094 706	8 509 572	0	0	9 604 278	14
	Average per Project	52 129	945 508	0	0	320 143	
	Percentage share	70	30	0	0	100	
MK	Number of projects	1	17	20	0	38	
	Total EC Budget	17 301	1 772 271	1 150 751	0	2 940 324	4
	Average per Project	17 301	104 251	57 538	0	77 377	
	Percentage share	3	45	53	0	100	
Montenegro	Number of projects	8	36	13	0	57	
	Total EC Budget	2 307 700	3 950 511	526 776	0	6 784 987	10
	Average per Project	288 462	109 736	40 521	0	119 035	
	Percentage share	14	63	23	0	100	
Serbia	Number of projects	17	85	81	0	183	
	Total EC Budget	8 100 000	10 451 050	5 705 071	0	24 256 121	37
	Average per Project	476 471	122 954	70 433	0	132 547	
	Percentage share	9	46	44	0	100	
Sub-total West Balkans	Number of projects	151	193	158	23	525	
	Total EC Budget	19 465 690	33 832 669	12 049 617	1 070 677	66 418 652	100
	Average per Project	128 912	175 299	76 263	46 551	126 512	
	Percentage share	29	37	30	4	100	
Turkey	Number of projects(1)	18	5	0	22	45	
	Total EC Budget	867 111	280 847	0	32 300 000	33 447 958	
	Average per Project	48 173	56 169	0	1 468 182	743 288	
	Percentage share	40	11	0	49	100	
MB Projects	Number of projects	9	56	0	0	65	
	Total EC Budget	1 758 298	14 990 740	0	0	16 749 038	
	Average per project	195 366	267 692	0	0	257 678	
	Percentage share	14	86	0	0	100	

(1) For Turkey the list comprises also large thematic programmes and not the full list of grant contracts funded under these programmes

5.7 Annex VII - Overview of Recommendations Related to EU Support to the WBT CS

It is considered as interesting to show in this Annex the result of the mapping carried out of all recommendations related to the EU support to CS, which have been encountered throughout, in particular, Phase 1 deskwork, but also including some very recent documents such as the one published and circulated by the BCSDN. These mapped recommendations are presented in three consecutive tables overleaf:

A - Highest level recommendations, focusing on aid effectiveness, and the concepts of civil society, civil society environment, civil society dialogue and civil society development;

B - Intermediate level, focusing on programming, implementation, monitoring & evaluation and reporting, and

C - Lowest level, focusing on CSF Programme Intervention Logic, i.e. strategic objectives, European Integration and capacity building

The sources of these recommendations are listed at the end of the Table C.

A - Highest level recommendations, focusing on aid effectiveness, and the concepts of CS, CS environment, CS dialogue and CS development

Nature or Level of Intervention	Aid Effectiveness	Civil Society	Civil Society Environment	Civil Society Dialogue	Civil Society Development
General	<p>§ The guiding principles of EU interventions in civil dialogue in the WB need to be policy and assistance coherence, effectiveness, ownership and sustainability (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ IPA support should be coherent and strategically directed to the fulfilment of benchmarks i.e. agreed priorities in the area of civil dialogue, with emphasis on i) synergies for exchange</p>	<p>§ DG ELARG agree with CS and national authorities on clear and shared definitions of CS and CSF, and ensure a consistent application of such definitions throughout EC strategies, policies and programmes supporting CS in the WBT, with emphasis on IPA programming, information and communication. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 2.4)</p>	<p>§ Governments and local CSOs, especially platforms / networks, should have the main ownership over the development and implementation of respective frameworks or mechanisms (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ National governments should demonstrate open, equal and honest partnership towards CS (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ Local CSOs should strengthen cross-</p>	<p>§ DG ELARG Project selection criteria should propose that CS project activities comprise an interface with or involvement of public authorities where relevant, e.g. by means of training, dissemination and promotion of common dialogue. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 1.4)</p> <p>§ TACSO should update and furnish field intelligence on the state of play regarding CSO</p>	<p>§ One should not weigh and value the contribution of CS to policy- and decision-making processes in terms of representativeness and membership, but in terms of the arguments and solution CS brings to the policy- and decision-making process (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ The role of CSOs is not in their representativeness, but in correcting and</p>

Nature or Level of Intervention	Aid Effectiveness	Civil Society	Civil Society Environment	Civil Society Dialogue	Civil Society Development
	of information and good practices among and between EU and accession countries ; ii) measures aimed at developing and implementing State framework mechanisms and documents (legal acts); iii) awareness raising and capacity building of coordination mechanisms and administration of State frameworks and documents (legal acts), iv) capacity building of CSOs and their ability to initiate advocacy in policy- and decision-making (BCSDN, 2010)	<p>§ TACSO Map “official” definitions of CS, if any, and unofficial commonly used “definitions” in the WBT in order to inform the IPA dialogue (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 2.1)</p> <p>§ TACSO Map local “definitions” of CS Facility, if any, in the WBT in order to advice the IPA dialogue on how to present it. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 2.1)</p>	<p>sector cooperation (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ Local CSOs should coordinate sectoral initiatives on joint issues of concern, especially in matters of civil dialogue (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ In securing equal partnerships of CS in policy and decision-making, governments should consider the development of the sustainability of CS actors through developing an enabling environment for corporate and individual giving and through effective and sustainable provision of state budget support (BCSDN, 2010).</p>	<p>collaboration with public authorities. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 1.5)</p> <p>§ Civil dialogue should be understood as a horizontal policy measure directly related to the rule of law, anti-corruption and public administration reform in all key areas of the <i>acquis communautaire</i> (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ If the Commission means “business”, it needs to prioritise the civil dialogue like other key areas of the <i>acquis</i> or even turn it into <i>acquis</i> area itself (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ Civil dialogue should be understood in a much broader sense than government performance, in particular, it should include the performance of parliament in terms of its initiating new CS legislation and cooperation with CSOs (BCSDN, 2010).</p>	adding value through expertise and providing access of marginalised voices in society to mainstream policy-and decision-making processes (BCSDN, 2010)

Nature or Level of Intervention	Aid Effectiveness	Civil Society	Civil Society Environment	Civil Society Dialogue	Civil Society Development
Regional			<p>§ Local CSOs should strengthen regional cooperation (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ Governments should identify regional synergies in development and implementation of civil dialogue (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ Governments should link synergies to regional intergovernmental cooperation forums to share lessons learned and enable institutional peer learning (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ TACSO should arrange regional workshops on Public Benefit Status, with contributions from countries beyond the IPA region, and with participation of policy- and decision-makers and CSOs (TACSO, CS Environment, 2010)</p> <p>§ TACSO could organise a series of regional cross government / CS learning events, with participation of experts from other countries, on government funding for CS and fiscal measures</p>		

Nature or Level of Intervention	Aid Effectiveness	Civil Society	Civil Society Environment	Civil Society Dialogue	Civil Society Development
			to encourage private support to CS (TACSO, CS Environment, 2010) § TACSO should organise a series of regional events on philanthropy (TACSO, CS Environment, 2010)		
All IPA countries collectively or individually				§ TACSO should continue supporting efforts towards establishing institutional arrangements, rules and procedures for a meaningful civil dialogue between the government and CS (TACSO, CS Environment, 2010) § TACSO should mediate contacts between parliament and CS with a view to improving cooperation between the parliament and CSOs , strengthening the work of existing parliamentary bodies in which CSOs participate, and to establishing parliamentary mechanisms , such as standing committees or coordination offices, through which CS	

Nature or Level of Intervention	Aid Effectiveness	Civil Society	Civil Society Environment	Civil Society Dialogue	Civil Society Development
				<p>may enjoy enhanced access to parliament and lobby on behalf of the interests of its constituencies (TACSO, CS Environment 2010).</p> <p>§ TACSO should establish a partnership with government departments and national CS funding agencies allocating public funds to CS and facilitate CS efforts to persuade governments to adopt transparent, equitable and properly specified procedures for awarding CS funds (TACSO, CS Environment, 2010).</p> <p>§ TACSO should establish partnership with relevant public authorities at the local level in cooperation with local CSOs, to promote and provide support for the establishment of local-level civil dialogue and cooperation between the public and CS sector (TACSO CS Environment, 2010)</p>	

B - Intermediate level, focusing on programming, implementation, monitoring & evaluation and reporting

Nature or Level of Intervention	Programming	Implementation	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
General	<p>§ DG ELARG ensure accurate and timely integration of the latest insights on CS in the WBT in programming, including those from the recommended review. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 1.1.)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG ensures sufficient time for collection, analysis and integration of evidence on the status of CS in the WBT in IPA multi beneficiary programming of CS support. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 8.1)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG ensure reflection of the latest knowledge on the status of CS in the WBT in IPA multi beneficiary programming documents, including guidelines for CfPs. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 8.2)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG sustains cooperation in programming with proven and valuable CSO platforms, which have a proven track record in sustainability and advocacy. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 3.3)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG and EUDs in order to provide better insights to ground realities and requirements of CSOs in the WBT, a couple specific needs assessments related to different categories of CSOs (initiated by either DG ELARG or EUDs) should be added to programming calendars (decided by DG ELARG). (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 5.1)</p>	§	<p>§ DG ELARG hold internal debate on the use of indicators to establish a methodology for regularising them in a consistent way, from the (general) programming to the (SMART) project level. The "Quality Frame" presented in the EU PCM guidelines (version March 2004) could be used as a guideline. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 3.3)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG enhance reporting on CS and other stakeholder participation in IPA multi beneficiary programming through specific sections in all templates for IPA multi beneficiary programming documents and inclusion of references to CS and other stakeholder participation in final IPA multi beneficiary programming documents. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.4)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG enhance reporting on other donor funded interventions, including non key donors such as funds and foundations, through: i) specific sections on other donor funded interventions in all templates for IPA programming documents (Commission Decision, Financing Agreement, Project Fiche); ii) inclusion of references to other donor funded interventions in final IPA programming documents. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 9.1)</p>

Nature or Level of Intervention	Programming	Implementation	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
	<p>§ DG ELARG adopts and implements Minimum Standards for the consultation of CS on IPA multi beneficiary programming. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.1)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG elaborates a Practical Guide on participation of CS and other stakeholders in IPA multi beneficiary programming. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.2)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG enable participation of CS, including grassroots, and other stakeholders in IPA multi beneficiary programming through technical assistance and financial support at central level through technical assistance and financial support. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.3)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG enhance reporting on CS and other stakeholder participation in IPA multi beneficiary programming through specific sections in all templates for IPA multi beneficiary programming documents and inclusion of references to CS and other stakeholder participation in final IPA multi beneficiary programming documents. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.4)</p>		<p>§ DG ELARG enhance reporting on issues of complementarity and synergy between EU and non-EU interventions, in particular on how other donor interventions assist pre-accession and accession countries in meeting the Copenhagen political criteria, Enlargement objectives, and the objectives of EU support to CS in the WBT. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 9.2)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG launches a thematic evaluation on the profile, general significance, role and performance of advocacy-driven CSOs in the democratisation and stabilisation process in WBT. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 3.2)</p> <p>§ EUDs launch data gathering on traditional (non-NGO) CS, including faith-based organisations, in the WBT and integrate findings in IPA programming. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 1.2)</p> <p>§ EUDs launch data gathering on the participation of social partners, including trade unions, at regional and national levels in needs assessment and strategy selection. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 1.3)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG launch an external evaluations of TACSO to verify stakeholder satisfaction with their interventions. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 6.2)</p>

Nature or Level of Intervention	Programming	Implementation	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
			<p>§ DG ELARG launch an external evaluations of People 2 People Programme (P2P) to verify stakeholder satisfaction with their interventions. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 6.2)</p> <p>§ CSOs and other stakeholders ensure accurate and timely monitoring and evaluation on the collection, analysis and inclusion of evidence by HQ, EUDs, ECLO and NIPACs in IPA multi beneficiary and national programming documents relevant to EU support to CS in the WBT, including guidelines for CfPs.</p> <p>§ Progress monitoring should focus simultaneously on the development and implementation of state frameworks in terms of openness and government engagement in the process (BCSDN, 2010)</p> <p>§ Progress monitoring should specifically follow the adoption and full implementation of specific legal acts (bylaws) for access to information and minimum standards for consultation as the key tests to government commitments to open, equal and honest partnership with CS (BCSDN, 2010).</p>
Regional		<p>§ DG ELARG overhaul inefficient and ineffective Calls for Proposals and simplify procedures for applications for EU funding. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 4.2)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG elaborate clear and definite procedures governing the participation of CS and other stakeholders in IPA project selection mechanism for the MBPs, with emphasis on drafting guidelines, assessments of Calls for</p>	§

Nature or Level of Intervention	Programming	Implementation	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
		<p>Proposals (concept notes, full applications), and evaluation committees. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 6.1)</p> <p>§ DG ELARG in order to decrease disbursement pressure and EC management requirements, explore financing and contracting procedures for CSOs to include possible derogations on extensions and allow autonomous, but fully accountable, use of funds, (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 4.1)</p>	
<p>All IPA countries collectively or individually</p>	<p>§ CSOs and other stakeholders establish and operate European, regional, national, sectoral or thematic partnerships to pool resources for CS and other stakeholders' participation in IPA multi beneficiary and national programming at country level. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.13)</p> <p>§ EUDs, ECLO and NIPAC motivate CSOs and other stakeholders to participate in IPA multi beneficiary and national programming at country level. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.9)</p> <p>§ EUDs, ECLO and NIPAC provide resources to enable participation of CSOs, including grassroots CSOs, for participation in IPA multi beneficiary and national programming at country level through TA (TACSO, CSD projects, other) and financial support. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.10)</p> <p>§ EUDs, ECLO and NIPAC adopt and implement Minimum Standards for the</p>	<p>§ TACSO should work in close cooperation with the EUDs, ECLO and NIPACs to establish systems for improved and regular consultation with CSOs on EU programming (TACSO, CS Environment, 2010)</p> <p>§ EUDs and ECLO under centralised management elaborate clear and specific procedures governing the participation of CS and other stakeholders to IPA project selection mechanisms for the NPs, with emphasis on drafting guidelines, assessments of Calls for Proposals (concept notes, full applications), and evaluation committees. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 6.3)</p> <p>§ NIPAC elaborate clear and specific procedures governing the participation of CS and other stakeholders in IPA project selection mechanism for both MBPs and NPs, with emphasis on drafting guidelines, assessments of Calls for Proposals (concept notes, full applications), and evaluation committees. (Thematic Evaluation, Final</p>	<p>§ CSOs and other stakeholders ensure accurate and timely provision of information to HQ, EUDs, ECLO and NIPACs on the latest status of CS in the WBT. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 8.7)</p> <p>§ NIPAC ensure sufficient time for collection, analysis and integration of evidence on the situation of CS in the WBT in IPA multinational and national programming (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 8.5)</p> <p>§ EUDs and ECLO ensures sufficient time for collection, analysis and integration of evidence on the status of CS in the WBT in IPA national programming of CS support. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 8.3)</p> <p>§ EUDs and ECLO under centralised management: carry out specific country based evaluations on TACSO to verify stakeholder satisfaction with these interventions. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 6.5)</p> <p>§ EUDs and ECLO under centralised management: carry out specific country</p>

Nature or Level of Intervention	Programming	Implementation	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
	<p>consultation of CS on IPA national programming. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.5)</p> <p>§ EUDs, ECLO and NIPAC elaborate a Practical Guide on participation of CS and other stakeholders in IPA national programming. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.5)</p> <p>§ EUDs, ECLO and NIPAC enhance reporting on CS and other stakeholder participation in IPA national programming through specific sections in all templates for IPA national programming documents and inclusion of references to CS and other stakeholder participation in final IPA national documents. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.5)</p>	<p>Report 1, Recommendation 6.6)</p> <p>§</p>	<p>based evaluations on the People 2 People programme to verify stakeholder satisfaction with these interventions. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 6.5)</p>

C - Lowest level, focusing on CSF Programme Intervention Logic, i.e. strategic objectives, European Integration and capacity building

Nature or Level of Intervention	Strategic Objectives	European Integration	Capacity Building	Balanced
General		<p>§ TACSO compile and disseminate a joint glossary of commonly used EU-terms related to CS, in English and local languages, building on existing glossaries (if any). Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 2.3)</p>		<p>§ EUDs launch data gathering on traditional (non-NGO) CS, including faith-based organisations, in the WBT and integrate findings in IPA programming. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 1.2)</p> <p>§ EUDs launch data gathering on the participation of social partners, including trade unions, at regional and</p>

Nature or Level of Intervention	Strategic Objectives	European Integration	Capacity Building	Balanced
				national levels in needs assessment and strategy selection. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 1.3)
Regional	<p>§ CSOs should open up to their constituencies by promoting greater community involvement in their work and by establishing better internal democracy based on wider stakeholder inclusion (TACSO, CS Capacities, 2010)</p> <p>§ In order to expand CS role in policy dialogue and assist it to maximise its potential, CS should encourage the formulation of further CSO coalitions and networks and the strengthening of existing ones. (TACSO, CS Capacities, 2010).</p> <p>§ TACSO should increase its efforts to promote national-level, sector-based, networks and initiatives that bring wider groups of CSOs into dialogue with the government and aim to give public prominence to specific policy issues (TACSO, CS Capacities, 2010).</p>	<p>§ CSOs need to understand the wider context of development, European integration and enlargement and - within that context be provided with more information on the instruments and modalities of EC funding for CS (TACSO, CS Capacities, 2010).</p> <p>§ TACSO should increase the information available to CSOs on the EU and the accession process (TACSO, CS Environment, 2010)</p> <p>§ TACSO should facilitate exchange of experience and transfer of knowhow on best practices through organising regional events with CSOs and other stakeholders of countries that participated in the European integration process and the others (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§</p>	<p>§ CSOs need to adopt more creative, flexible and longer-term strategies in order to tap into the potential offered by voluntarism. One option, so far neglected throughout the region, is the forging of partnerships with businesses through which CSO staff and volunteers might work as “interns” in return for experience in management and administration and skills training. Source: TACSO CS Capacities 2010.</p> <p>§ TACSO support the work and provide capacity building for existing regional networks for CSO development (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO bring together leading professional CSOs and CSO leaders from all IPA countries for dialogue, facilitation, training and practical activities to build their capacities for policy development and research</p>	<p>§ TACSO ensure adequate and timely training on IPA project selection mechanism for CS and other stakeholders engaged in project selection mechanism, with emphasis on small and remote CSOs and CS focussed on cross cutting issues (environment, human rights, fundamental freedoms (including freedom of opinion and expression, children, women). (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 6.8)</p>

Nature or Level of Intervention	Strategic Objectives	European Integration	Capacity Building	Balanced
	<p>§ CS as a sector and CSOs individually need to raise their efforts to publicise their values, objectives, activities and achievements and to communicate directly with the community. (TACSO, CS Capacities, 2010)</p> <p>§ TACSO could facilitate this and help CS intensifying its collaboration with the media throughout the region. (TACSO, CS Capacities, 2010)</p> <p>§ TACSO could encourage this by providing information on good practice from EU CSOs. (TACSO, CS Capacities, 2010).</p> <p>§ TACSO should facilitate networking and partnership building with regional CSOs (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO should support regional and bilateral CSO dialogue on themes of common interest and experience (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p>		<p>(TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO provide TA to CSOs and other stakeholders for their participation in IPA multi beneficiary and national programming. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.12)</p> <p>§ TACSO should continue its focus on CSO management, PCM, and the facilitation of CSO access to EC information and grants (TACSO, CS Capacities, 2010)</p> <p>§ TACSO could assist in enhancing CSO analytical capacity, including skills for policy research, stakeholder analysis and participatory needs assessment, by facilitating exchanges between CSOs from the IPA region and similar organisations from the EU, particularly those from the 12 newer EU Member States, where society has developed under comparable conditions of democratic and economic transition (TACSO, CS Capacities 2010)</p> <p>§ TACSO and others should increase their efforts to</p>	

Nature or Level of Intervention	Strategic Objectives	European Integration	Capacity Building	Balanced
			<p>assist CSOs to enhance fundraising performance (strategies, planning, diversification of funding sources, fundraising skills) according to the specific local context. (TACSO CS Capacities, 2010).</p> <p>§ TACSO ensure adequate and timely training on IPA project selection mechanisms for CS and other stakeholders engaged in project selection mechanism, with emphasis on small and remote CSOs and CS focussed on cross cutting issues (environment, human rights, fundamental freedoms (including freedom of opinion and expression, children, women). (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 6.8)</p>	
All IPA countries collectively or individually	<p>§ EUDs prepare for mobilization of resources to promote shared visions and concepts of CS and CSF (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 2.5)</p> <p>§ EUDs at the country level, specific provisions should require that selected CSOs (which are considered fit to play a</p>	<p>§ TACSO should work in close cooperation with national agencies for European integration to promote a triangle of EU / government / CS relations and facilitate greater and institutionalised dialogue between such agencies and CS on national strategies relating to the</p>	<p>§ EUDs and ECLO ensure adequate and timely training on IPA project selection mechanisms for EUD / ECLO staff, CS and other stakeholders engaged in project selection mechanisms. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 6.4)</p>	§

Nature or Level of Intervention	Strategic Objectives	European Integration	Capacity Building	Balanced
	strategic role in the democratic transformation) are potential key players in the democratic transformation, partnering with public authorities. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 3.1)	European integration process (TACSO, CS Environment, 2010)	§ People 2 People Programme (P2P) organise multi country study tours and single country events on the topic of EU consultation , with emphasis on the practical application by EU institutions in Brussels and in-country of the Minimum Standards. (Thematic Evaluation, Final Report 1, Recommendation 7.11)	
Albania				
Bosnia and Herzegovina				
Croatia				
Kosovo	§ TACSO support the government to strengthen its cooperation with CSOs (TACSO Kosovo Needs Assessment, 2011) § TACSO support the process of drafting the Governmental Strategy for Co-operation with Civil Society (TACSO Kosovo Needs Assessment, 2011) § TACSO support the process of implementation of the Government Strategy for Co-operation with Civil Society (TACSO Kosovo Needs Assessment, 2011) § TACSO assist the government in adjusting the mandate of the	§ TACSO promote Europeanization and regionalisation of Kosovo CSOs (TACSO Kosovo Needs Assessment, 2011)	§ TACSO assist CSOs in establishing mechanisms for ensuring good governance and accountability towards their constituencies, for instance through adopting a Code of Ethics and building platforms and networks that will monitor compliance (TACSO Kosovo Needs Assessment, 2011) § TACSO provide information to CSOs on issues pertaining to CS including good governance, transparency and accountability (TACSO Kosovo Needs Assessment, 2011)	

Nature or Level of Intervention	Strategic Objectives	European Integration	Capacity Building	Balanced
	<p>government institutions that are responsible for co-operation with CS (TACSO Kosovo Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO assist the government in advancing the legal framework on Public Benefit Organisations which would allow NGOs with the PBO status to enjoy public benefits at central and local level (TACSO Kosovo Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO assist the government in creating the legal framework and mechanisms for encouraging volunteering in CS (TACSO Kosovo Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO assist the government in developing financial arrangement supporting civil initiatives (TACSO Kosovo Needs Assessment, 2011)</p>			
MK				
Montenegro				
Serbia	<p>§ TACSO should facilitate cooperation between the government and CS (TACSO, CS Environment, 2010)</p> <p>§ TACSO support further changes to the CSO legal framework (TACSO Serbia</p>		<p>§ TACSO provide capacity building to CSOs focussed on their role in the European integration process, including application EU funding (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p>	

Nature or Level of Intervention	Strategic Objectives	European Integration	Capacity Building	Balanced
	<p>Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO should support CS in introducing new modern laws on foundations (TACSO, CS Environment, 2010)</p> <p>§ TACSO support development of a transparent framework for government funding of CSOs (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO support development of a transparent framework for non-profit accounting (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO should support CS efforts to finalise texts (TACSO, CS Environment, 2010)</p> <p>§ TACSO support the Office for Cooperation with CS including a) positioning of the Office, b) assist the office in elaborating the National Strategy for CSO development; c) assist the office in promoting a system for matching funds for EU-funded projects; and in d) developing a comprehensive framework for government cooperation and consultations with CSOs (TACSO Needs</p>		<p>§ TACSO provide direct support to networks and coalitions, including for monitoring (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO provide capacity building channelled through larger CSOs to local CSOs based on needs assessments and delivered through “packages” with clearly defined organisational and programmatic objectives (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO provide guidance and training to strengthen CSO capacities to engage in policy dialogues and to build institutional mechanisms for citizens’ participation at the local level (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO assist CSOs to improve their relations with the media and to undertake PR campaigns (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO provide capacity building to strengthen CSO capacities for watchdog and monitoring activities (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)</p> <p>§ TACSO provide training</p>	

Nature or Level of Intervention	Strategic Objectives	European Integration	Capacity Building	Balanced
	Assessment, Serbia 2011)		and mentoring to CSOs in fundraising (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011) § TACSO facilitate CSOs to enhance their communication with their membership and constituencies, responsiveness to community needs, and facilitation of membership / constituency participation in the CSO planning and activities. (TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011)	
Turkey				

Sources

BCSDN

- § The Missing Link? Development and Functioning of Civil Dialogue in the Western Balkans, editor Tanja Hafner-Ademi, Balkan Civil Society Development Network 2010 (BCSDN, 2010)

IBF

- § Final Report 1. Thematic Evaluation of EU support to civil society in the Western Balkans and Turkey 2011 (Thematic Evaluation, 2011).

TACSO

- § TACSO Kosovo Needs Assessment, 2011
- § TACSO Montenegro Needs Assessment, 2011
- § TACSO Serbia Needs Assessment, 2011
- § Civil Society Organisations' Capacities in the Western Balkans and Turkey. A comparative summary of the eight country CSO needs assessments, authors Bill Sterland and Galina Rizova, October 2010 (TACSO CS Capacity, 2010) The Civil Society Environment in the Western Balkans and Turkey Report. Progress made by governments in IPA countries towards establishing an enabling environment for civil society, authors Bill Sterland and Galina Rizova, August 2010 (TACSO CS Environment, 2010)

5.8 Annex VIII - List of People Met (Phase 2)

Person	Institution
ALBANIA	
Stefano Calabretta	Delegation of the European Union to Albania
Luigi Brusa	Delegation of the European Union to Albania
Genci Pasko	TACSO
Alda Duraj-Dekovi	TACSO
Mihallaq Qirjo	Regional Environmental Centre
Olsi Dekovi,	Council of Europe
Aleksander Cipa	Albanian Journalist Association
Eleni Jajcari	"Me the Woman"
Entela Lako	United Nation Development Programme UNDP
Juliana Hoxha	Partners-Albania Centre for Change and Conflict Management
Elvana Lula	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)
Elton Lelo	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)
Rezarta Katuci	Embassy of Sweden
Adriatik Hasantari	Roma Active Albania
Dritan Shutina	CO - PLAN
Andi Dobrushshi	SOROS Foundation Albania
Florida Kalemi	Albanian Disability Rights Foundation
Zamir Muca	Red Cross Albania
Zhaneta Kala	Red Cross Albania
Rudi Bobrati	Agency for the Support of Civil Society
Denisa Murati	Albanian centre for Human Rights (ACHR)
Alketa Leskaj	Woman Centre "Light Steps"
Ana Milaj	Woman Centre "Light Steps"
Ermelinda Mahmutaj	EDEN Environmental Centre for Development Education and Networking
Ingrid Jones	Partner per Femijet
Ardian Dhima	Institute for Policy and Legal Studies
Stavri Pllaha	SNV Korce
CROATIA	
Erol Akdag	European Union Delegation to Croatia
Marina Buza-Vidas	Government Office for Cooperation with NGO-s
Matea Spudic	CFCA
Marija Cakaric Bjelobrk	CFCA
Katarina Coha	Office for National Minorities
Mirjana Kucer	Dominoes
Sasa Segrt	Transparency International Croatia

Person	Institution
Zorislav Antun Petrovic	Transparency International Croatia
Andreja Rosandic	NEST
Jadranka Apostolovski	Network for Safety and Health at Work
Aida Bagic	TACSO
Sandra Pernar	GONG
Domagoj Novokmet	HRT National Television
Mario Bajkusa	Forum for Freedom in Education
Aleksa Dokic	Office for National Minorities Department for Development Projects and Projects for National Minorities
Maja Sukelj	Office for National Minorities Department for Development Projects and Projects for National Minorities
Toni Vida	Zelena Akcija
Bernard Ivicic	Zelena Akcija
Vlatka Valc Galesic	Central Office for Development Strategy and Coordination of EU Funds
Tomislav Belovari	Central Office for Development Strategy and Coordination of EU Funds
Sladana Novota	SMART
Jasmina Papa	United Nation Development Programme (UNDP)
BiH	
Palle Westergaard	TACSO Regional Office, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Jasenka Perovic	TACSO Regional Office, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Zelah Senior	TACSO Regional Office, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Slavica Draskovic	TACSO Bosnia and Herzegovina
Lidija Skaro	TACSO Bosnia and Herzegovina
Aida Daguda	Centre for Promotion of Civil Society, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Milan Mrdja	Centre for Promotion of Civil Society, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Silvana Grispino	Oxfam Italy – Contractor for Environmental project, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Darko Vujovic	Oxfam Italy – Contractor for Environmental project, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Normela Hodzic-Zijadic	EUD, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Vladimir Pandurevic	EUD, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Maja Dosenovic	EUD, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Dzemal Hodzic	EUD, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Sadeta Skaljc	Ministry of Justice – Sector for cooperation with Civil Society; Sector for strategic planning and aid coordination, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Dzenana Aladjuz	NGO Council, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Goran Bubalo	NGO Council, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Sanja Stanic	Viktorija Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ranka Ninkovic-Papic	Social Inclusion Fund, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Vehid Sehic	Forum gradjana Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Person	Institution
Predrag Raskovic	TIDA, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Dragana Zivkovic	Association of Women Bratunac, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Entoni Seperi•	Federation BiH Ministry of Justice, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Niko Grubesic	Ministry of Justice –Sector for strategic planning and aid coordination, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Toni Santic	Ministry of Justice –Sector for strategic planning and aid coordination, Bosnia and Herzegovina
TURKEY	
Basak Ersen	Third Sector Foundation of Turkey
Laden Yurttaguler	Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey
Muhtar Cokar	Human Resource Development Foundation, Turkey
Ulrike Dufner	Heinrich Boll Stiftung, Turkey
Bukent Ozcan	Secretariat for EU Affairs, Turkey
Zeynep Meydanoglu	Kader, Turkey
Simon Forrester	Turkey and EU Civil Society Dialogue Project II
Ayca Bestepe	TACSO Turkey
Ayca Haykir	TACSO Turkey
Neslihan Ozgunes	TACSO Turkey
Ayca Unsal	TACSO Turkey
Mehru Aygul	TACSO Turkey
Teresa Reeves	EUD Turkey
Eser Canalioglu	EUD Turkey
Domenica Bumma	EUD Turkey
Frederika Cruce	EUD Turkey
Nalan Ozdemir	EUD Turkey
Erden Seda	EUD Turkey
Erwan Marteil	EUD Turkey
Seçin Tüncel	Kos, Turkey
Tolga Duygun	Turkish PM administration for Disabled People
• aban Acar	General Directorate of the Department of Associations
Yasemin Elibol	Turkish Grand National Assembly
Alexander Frentz	TURKEY ROM TA Contract
KOSOVO	
Aferdita Metaj-Dika, Shqipe Svecla	TACSO Kosovo Office
Edis Agani, Gabi Hagmüller	European Commission Liaison Office (ECLO)
Saša Milosavljevi•	Kosovo Assembly

Person	Institution
Valdet Hajdi, Jeff Fox, Edona Lekaj, Feride Rushiti	Multi Beneficiary Programmes – Focus Group
Robert Nelson, Henk visser, Erik Illes (BXL), Luisa De Amicis (EU), Tanja Hafner Ademi (REG), Venera Hajrullahu (Kosovo), Danka Latkovi•, Aleksandra Gligorovi• (MON), Milica Ruži•• Novkovi•, Dubravka Velat (SRB), Palle Westergaard, Zelah Senior, Jasenka Perovi•, (TACSO REG), Ardita Metaj-Dika, Shqipe Svecila (TACSO Kosovo), Goran Djurovi• (TACSO MON), Zorica Raskovi• (TACSO SRB) Åke Sahlin, Karin Schultz (SIPU)	TACSO Regional Conference
Ilir Deda, Advisor to the Prime Minister	TACSO Regional Conference / Kosovo government
Jehona Xhaferi, Petrit Tahiri (KEC), Vlora Shabani, Veton Sylhasi (KAHCR), Fitore Gorani-Rexhepi, Sali Maliqi (SBASHK)	Kosovo Education Centre (KEC) - Focus Group
Dukagjin Pupovci, Davor Glavaš, Kelmend Hapçiu and Doruntina Basha	Kosovo Media Institute (KMI) – Focus Group

Person	Institution
(KMI)	
CONFIDENTIAL	Ministry of European Integration
Venera Hajrullahu, Fatmir Curri, Fidan Hallaqi, Suzana Arni (KCSF), Dren Puka (CIVIKOS), Petrit Tahiri (Kosovo Education Center), Firdeze Bekteshi, Naim Arifaj (Regional Environmental Centre)	Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) – Focus Group
Jeta Xharra	Balkan Investigative Research Network (BIRN)
Several persons	TACSO Kosovo Office / Information Session on EIDHR
MONTENEGRO	
Jadranka Milić, Eva-Maria Herms (EEAS)	European Union Delegation to Montenegro
Danka Latković	Montenegrin government Office for Cooperation with NGOs
Goran Djurović, Stevo Muk, Marija Ivančević	TACSO Montenegro Office
Zlatko Vujović, Adjela Radonović, Boško Nenezić, Jadranka Kaluderović	CEMI – Focus Group
Mikan Medenica (NGO Natura)	TACSO LAG Montenegro
Ana Novaković, Zorana Marković, Lidija Knežević	CRNVO – Focus Group
Mirsad Bivović (State Secretary, Chair), Ana Novaković (CRNVO, Deputy Chair)	Government National Council for Cooperation with NGOs
Zdravko Cimbalević	LGBT Forum Progress
Rade Milošević (FORS), Marina Vujačić (UMHNC), Aleksandar Janićić (Humanitarac)	Social Service Providers – Focus Group
Serena D'Agostino, Milka Stojanović, Dragica Luković,	COSV – Focus Group

Person	Institution
Zorica Blagojevi•, Radmila Malenovi•, Milodarka Popovi•	
Marijana Davidovi• (SEE Heritage), Marina Roganovi•, Nada Matkovic (Ante Portes), Jovana Marovi• (Institute Alternative), Žana Bukili•, Igor Miloševi• (Association for Democratic Prosperity)	People 2 People programme – Focus Group
SERBIA	
Ivana • irkovi•	Government Office for Cooperation with Civil Society (GOCSC) / Kancelarija za Saradnju sa Civilnim Društvom
Ivana • irkovi• (GOCSC), Mirjana Lazovi•, Bosiljka Josimovi• (SEIO), Branislav Lazin, Budimir Babi• (AVALON), Igor Stadi• (Edukacioni Centar), Tatjana Lazor Obzanovi• (Novi Sad)	TACSO LAG Serbia – Focus Group
Selena Tasi• (GOCCS), Igor Kostić (Initiatives), Vera Radovanovi•, Mara Erdelj (BOFOS),	Multi Beneficiary Programmes – Focus Group
Tanja Bjecanovi• (BCIF), Davor Salom (FOSDI), Tijana Eror (MMP), Radmila Gošovi• (MOST), Vladimir Radomirovi• (Pištaljka), Sr• an Verbi• (PSC), Sr• an Stankovi• (Supernatural),	People 2 People programme – Focus Group

Person	Institution
Marina Ilić (SZO)	
Svetlana Djukić, Snežana Djukić (EUD, EEAS)	European Union Delegation to Serbia
Jasna Filipović (CNRPS)	CRNPS
Milorad Bjelečić, Vladimir Pavlović, Nevena Jovanović (BOŠ), Aleksandra Balac (Serbian Assembly), Nataša Savić (SEIO), Ivana Račić (Fredrich Ebert Foundation), Bojan Milovanović (CSO GM Optimist), Vladimir Martinović (CSO Protect Zvezdara Forest).	Belgrade Open School – Beogradksa Otvorena Škola
Sanja Popović Pantić, Aleksandra Andjelković, Tijana Sekulić, Ljubica Marković, Anastasia Jelasić	Serbian Association for Working Women – Udruženja Poslovnih Žena Srbija – Focus Group
Milica Ružić Novković, Tanja Ranić, Jelena Sokref (Center for Upright Living), Jovana Krivokuća-Milovanović, Željko Ilić (FMI), Marijana Marić, Biljana Janjić (Initiative for Inclusion VelikiMali)	Social Service Providers – Focus Group
Dubravka Velat, Dejana Mitev	CIDEC – Civic Initiatives
MACEDONIA	
Suncica Szadzovska	TACSO Country Office
Marina Gjorgjioska Kitanoska	Centre for Civic Initiative
Goce Todoroski	Centre for Civic Initiative
Zoran Stojkovski	Centre for Institutional Development
Irena Ivanova	European Union Delegation

Person	Institution
Lidija Dimova	Macedonian Centre for European Training
Daniela Stojanova	Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation
Iskra Stojkovska	Front 21/42
Nenad Zivanovski	Coalition 'All For Fair Trials'
Boris Sarkovski	Local Community Development Foundation
Elena Kocoska	Polio Plus Movement Against Disability
Zvonko Shavreski	Polio Plus Movement Against Disability
Kristina Kolozova	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Ibrahim Mehmet	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Orhideja Kaljosevska	Secretariat for European Affairs
Evgenija Serafimovska Kirkovski	Secretariat for European Affairs
Daniel Serban	TA to the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs in the General Secretariat
Metody Zajkov	Transparency International Macedonia
Zoran Milkov	General Secretariat
Ilija Ristovski	General Secretariat
Jovan Petreski	General Secretariat
Zoran Brnjarcovski	General Secretariat
Goce Selovski	Trade Union of Finances
Vladimir Misev	Institute for Democracy
Marija Risteka	Centre for Research and Policy Making
Fani Karanfilova Panovska	Open Society Foundation
Filip Stojanovski	Metamorphosis