



## NEWSLETTER No. 38

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This Newsletter is a publication of Balkan Civil Society Development Network. It is published on a periodic basis in English. It is prepared by the BCSDN Secretariat currently based in the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation, Macedonia. For more information on the network visit: <http://www.balkancsd.net> or contact [secretariat@balkancsd.net](mailto:secretariat@balkancsd.net).

### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the latest edition of the Newsletter published by Balkan Civil Society Development Network! The main aim of this publication is to inform partner organizations about latest news in the network and networks' website <http://www.balkancsd.net>. Each Newsletter consists of short information about the news from the website and "Announcement Board", which covers monthly reports on developments in the network. In order to view links contained in the Newsletter choose Text Select Tool in the Acrobat Reader toolbar and copy-past each link into the web browser of your choice.

### EVENTS and INITIATIVES

#### EP Elections Manifesto: Do Not Forget the Future European Citizens!



In the run-up to the elections for the European Parliament taking place between 4th and 7th June, BCSDN is calling on the new Parliament and the new Commission to not forget the future European citizens once they take office. The manifesto calls on sustaining the enlargement agenda on course and immediate visa liberalization for the region based on strict but fair criteria. The MEPs are urged to support more flexible EU funding mechanisms, holding Governments accountable in developing enabling civil society legal and financial framework and support inclusion of CSOs from the regional in the EU initiatives for open, transparent and structured dialogue between civil society and EU institutions. The full manifesto is available on the BCSDN website [www.balkancsd.net](http://www.balkancsd.net).

### ANNOUNCEMENT BOARD

#### Comments to the Planed IPA Civil Society Regional Assistance for 2009 and 2010

The European Commission is holding a regional meeting to discuss projects to be supported under the IPA regional programmes (s.c. Multi-Beneficiary) 2010. The meeting is taking place 9<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> June in Zagreb and is to bring together representatives of the EC, Governments and international organizations and donors. The Civil Society Facility project worth 12 mil EUR, which targets the support to civil society development will also be discussed. There has been an initiative by CRNVO to send our comments (it is not yet known whether participation is possible) to the EC (DG Enlargement and EC Delegations) and national Governments. The Secretariat will share a draft letter today (3<sup>rd</sup> June) addressed to the EC. More information on the activity and national level action will be shared additionally.



### **BCSDN 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Founding Assembly, 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> July, Skopje**

The annual meeting has been scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> July. The meeting will be hosted by the Secretariat and MCIC in Skopje. The aim of the event is to hold the founding assembly and elect network's bodies with the aim to finalize the process started last year in Kotor. The meeting will also discuss concrete initiatives and activities such as the EU advocacy work and joint project initiatives. Partners travel can be covered through the local OSI foundations. Please contact your OSI East East Programme Coordinators for more information. Accommodation and local transportation will be covered for one participant per organization. Other details and documents (incl. final draft Statute) will be shared after 15<sup>th</sup> June.

### **EU Enlargement Policy and the Civil Society in the Western Balkans Workshop, 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> September, Brussels**

The workshop has been first planned to take place in June, but due to delayed donor response for related national activities (which has been eventually negative), the date for the workshop has now been set for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> September. The aim of the workshop is to present the views of local CSOs and discuss the EC enlargement policy and civil society in the Western Balkans. The focus will be on the planning and implementation of civil society support under the Civil Society Facility. The target group are EU institution representatives (EC, EP, MS/the Council) and relevant EU networks. So far, the preliminary feedback on their participation has been good. The details of the workshop and the policy paper which is being developed for this occasion will be discussed at the annual meeting in July. The workshop is being organized in partnership and financial support by APRODEV. Small co-financing (visa, local transportation, etc.) from the participants is expected.

### **Possibilities for Joint Projects**

Currently, two calls for proposals relevant to priority areas (civil dialogue; Inter-cultural (incl. religious) dialogue, and civil society development (incl. NGO databases, CIVICUS CSI research and media) agreed at the Kotor Strategic Workshop are open. The EC has launched a call under IPA CSF Partnership Action on Fight Against, Corruption, Organized Crime and Human Trafficking (deadline: 03.07.) which among others envisages support to activities related to good governance issues such as public accountability and transparency. The project requires partnership by 4 organizations (3 from IPA and 1 EU MS), can be with max. duration of 24 months and with the budget 50.000-200.000 EUR (75% co-financing). Ideas for projects shared so far relate to public accountability and state budget, transparency and local government.

More information:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&nbPubliList=15&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&searchtype=RS&aofr=128286>

The second call is Regional Research Promotion Programme by SDC (deadline: 22.06.) which aims at supporting developing of research capacities in the Western Balkans with focus among others on democratisation, good governance and civil society. The Programme is focused on research capacities at educational institutions but could allow for support to national and regional activities on research related to Civicus Index or similar. The grants are 25.000 CHF for national and 100.000 for regional projects.

More information: <http://www.rpp-westernbalkans.net/calls>

**Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN)** was launched in 2003 and is an informal network of 14 civil society organizations from the Balkan region (Albania, BiH, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia). The network is committed to sustainable peace and stability, prosperity, harmony of societies in the Balkan region. The mission of the network is to strengthen civil society through developing indigenous civil society concepts, practices and empowering civil society actors. The main objectives of the network are to increase communication with civil society actors in the region as a basis for bi/multilateral co-operation; to increase mobilization of resources and support; to increase knowledge and skills as a base for higher quality of their work and to promote culture of resource-sharing as a basis for efficient/effective network.