



## E-Mail Alerts no. 328

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- **How Donors Can Help Civil Society Become More Effective**

In this post, written with DFID in mind, but also relevant to other donors, the author - Phil Vernon, expert in international development and peace-building – argues that donor support for civil society has two distinct, but related strategic components: support to civil society in providing services which help meet the donor's goals; and support to the emergence of a permissive environment for sustained civil society action. Both are important, and can be mutually sustaining – though not automatically. All of a given donor's sectoral and geographically-defined strategies can and should integrate both components, while recognising they are not the same. Finally, Vernon examines four funding instruments in terms of their appropriateness. More information is available [here](#).

[Phil Vernon]



- **Can Development Goals Help Development Finance? If So, How?**

Last month, the "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs) were launched at the UN in New York. This is the outcome of two years of consultations, lobbying, and debate about what the "post-2015" agenda should look like. This agenda is likely to have far-reaching implications both for development finance and for the promotion of social and economic rights. However, why adopt goals at all? Any systematic effort to answer this seemingly elementary conceptual question has been disturbingly absent. What's more, not only has this basic question not been answered, what is most striking is that it has hardly been asked. More information is available [here](#).

[Global Policy Watch]



- **Ensuring More Effective Budgetary Policies on Local Level in Serbia**

On 23rd October in Pirot, Serbia, the Centre for Development of Non-Profit Sector and the Centre for Public Policy Research organized a round table titled "Towards more effective budgetary policies at the local level - budget line 481". The round table was based on their research on the use of public funds in Serbia, supported by BCSDN through the Balkan Public Policy Fund. According to the research, only small part of the money actually goes to CSOs, contrary to popular belief. From the budget line 481 - Grants for NGOs, only 39% on national level is allocated to civil society, while 30% go to sports club, 18% to political parties, and 12% to religious associations, with the numbers similar on the local level too. The discussion by the interested citizens, representatives of civil society, the media and local governments focused on how to ensure that that the funds from the budget line 481 are allocated to the real needs of the citizens, and if the solution is in budget programming, establishing clear mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, training of local administrative staff in charge of the line 481 etc. More information is available [here](#).

[CRNPS]



- **Missing Rights and Resources for Civil Society**

Civil society groups and organisations are facing an unprecedented crackdown in a number of authoritarian and democratic countries. From Myanmar to Mexico, a viral wave of repressive policies and administrative controls is

making it harder for civil society to work on today's most pressing social, economic and environmental problems. In the State of Civil Society 2015 Report, CIVICUS identifies a number of disturbing trends. Of primary concern is the growing rate of government harassment of civil society and a funding environment that is limiting the ability of civil society organisations (CSOs) to deliver. More information is available [here](#).

[CIVICUS]



- **UN Expert: Promote Civil Society By Elevating Its Treatment To The Same Level As Business**

Civil society's contributions to a nation's wellbeing are just as important as those made by businesses, UN expert Maina Kiai told the UN General Assembly which took place on the 27th October in New York. He called on States to give the same level of respect and create enabling environments for civil society groups, just as they do for companies. Speaking during the presentation of his latest report, which compares the operating environments for commercial and civil society sectors worldwide, Kiai said that it was clear that businesses generally operate in better environments than non-profit entities – largely because States go to great lengths to create such facilitating environments. Unfortunately, governments make comparatively little effort to improve conditions for civil society, resulting in its marginalization. More information is available [here](#).

[Freeassembly.net]



- **OGP Summit 2015: Advancing Open Governments but Shrinking Civic Space**

Between 27th and 29th October, around 2000 representatives of governments, CSO, business and academia gathered in Mexico City to mark 4 years since the launch of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) initiative and reflected on the successes and remaining challenges in pushing forward open governments for citizens. One of the key challenges identified at the **OGP Summit** was the gap between commitment made to advancing government openness, accountability and transparency and the fact that in OGP countries, as well as globally, basic civic space for citizens and civil society is shrinking. On this occasion, Tanja Hafner Ademi, Executive Director of BCSDN spoke on the panel devoted to the new CIVICUS Civic Space Monitor to share experience from the monitoring and advancing enabling environment for civil society in the EU Accession Countries, all except of Kosovo are also members of the OGP initiative. More information is available [here](#).

[BCSDN]



- **Reinvigorating the Enlargement Process and Strengthening the EU's Integration Capacity: Insights from MAXCAP**

The 'big-bang enlargement' of the EU has nurtured vivid debates among academics, practitioners and EU citizens about the consequences of 'an ever larger Union' for the EU's integration capacity. Over the past two years MAXCAP has examined whether the Eastern enlargement of 2004 and 2007 has limited the EU's internal capacity to enlarge further and its external capacity to support the political and economic integration of non-members. These questions have not lost relevance, quite to the contrary. Current internal and external challenges for the EU range from solving the refugee crisis to growing public contestation about EU politics, cumbersome accession negotiations with Western Balkan countries and Turkey as well as an unstable neighbourhood. MAXCAP's first Policy Brief presented recommendations for the EU policy towards the Eastern neighbourhood countries. The second Policy Brief puts emphasis on the policy implications of our interim research findings for the EU's approach to support political and economic change in current and potential candidate countries so as to avoid disintegrative tendencies in the post-accession period. The second brief is available for download [here](#).

[MAXCAP]



- **Save the Date: International Civil Society Week 2016 – 25-28, April, Bogota**

CIVICUS and CCONG, the Colombian national platform of NGOs, will co-host International Civil Society Week 2016 in Bogotá, Colombia from 25-28 April. Under the theme of “Active Citizens, Accountable Actions”, ICSW 2016 will feature dozens of events organised by leading civil society organisations. Delegates can also look forward to volunteer opportunities, documentary screenings, arts exhibitions, and local Colombian project visits. The week will culminate in the CIVICUS World Assembly and Nelson-Mandela-Graça Machel Innovation Awards ceremony. More information is available [here](#).

[CIVICUS]



- **CfP: IPA - Implementation of Trainings and Employment Projects for Persons with Disabilities and RE population – Montenegro (Deadline: 27.11.2015)**

Under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), the Ministry of Finance of Montenegro published a Call for Proposals with the specific objective to support integration of persons with disabilities and members of Roma and Egyptian population into the labour market through improving their skills and developing and implementing tailor-made employment programmes. The total amount of funds made available under this grant is EUR 800.000,00. Any grant requested under this Call must fall between the minimum EUR 60.000 and maximum EUR 80.000, and between 70% and 90% of the total eligible costs of the action. The duration of the action should be no less than 6 months, and no more than 14 months. The deadline for the submission of concept notes is 27th November 2015. More information is available [here](#).

[EuropeAid]



- **CfP: Interreg-IPA CBC Bulgaria - Macedonia Programme (Deadline: 25.01.2016)**

The First Call for project proposals under the Interreg-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Bulgaria - Macedonia Programme aims to intensify cross-border cooperation between the people and institutions of the region in order to jointly address common challenges and exploit untapped potentials for development of the border region through effective use of resources. The total amount allocated to the First Call for proposals is EUR 7.240.469,00. Project proposals would have to target one of the following Priority Axes under the Programme: Environment, Tourism and Competitiveness. The key objective of the Programme is to raise the capacity of the local and regional authorities in the development and implementation of joint projects in the eligible cross-border region. More information is available [here](#).

[CBIB]



- **CfP: Programme Erasmus+ 2016 (Deadline: various)**

Application for proposals from the Erasmus + Programme is now open, and includes the following activities: (KA1) Learning mobility of individuals; (KA2) Cooperation for innovation and exchange of good practice; and (KA3) Support for policy reform; as well as the Jean Monnet and Sport activities. Public and private bodies operating in the field of education, training, youth and sport can apply for funding, but also groups of young people who are active in youth work, but not necessarily within youth organizations. The total budget allocated to this call for proposals amounts to 1.871,1 million EUR, and individually by section: Education and Training: 1.645,6 million; Youth: EUR 186,7 million; Jean Monnet: 11,4 million EUR and Sports: 27,4 million EUR. More information is available [here](#).

[Program JAKO]



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- **CfA: Training on Organizational Development and Management of CSOs (Deadline: 10.11.2015)**

To support the development of civil society in Albania, TACSO Albania Office will organize a three-day training on “Organizational Development and Management of CSOs”. The purpose of this activity is to increase the capacity of the staff and board members of CSOs in organizational development, strategic planning, development of internal operational systems, board and staff development, fundraising, public and media relations with CSOs, etc. CSOs from all regions of Albania are invited to apply, however priority will be given to small, newly established organizations and those operating in rural areas of Albania. The training will be held in the region of Gjirokastra, during 25th-27th November 2015. All expenses of the selected participants in this training will be covered by TACSO Project. More information is available [here](#).

[TACSO]



- **CfA: Yale World Fellows Program 2016: A Leadership Development Program (Deadline: 02.12.2015)**

Yale World Fellows brings 16 accomplished, mid-career, global leaders to Yale’s flagship leadership development program for a four-month immersive transformational journey. The Program provides the opportunity for World Fellows to contribute to Yale’s intellectual life, participate in events, collaborate with peers, audit classes, mentor students, and lead round-table discussions. Applications to the Yale World Fellows program are accepted from across sectors and around the world. The 2016 Program will run from mid-August to mid-December. Fellows are expected to be in residence at Yale for the duration of the Program. The mission of Yale World Fellows is to cultivate and empower a network of globally engaged leaders committed to making the world a better place. More information is available [here](#).

[FundsForNGOs]



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- **Measuring the Impact of the Third Sector: From Concept to Metrics**

This working paper clarifies the meanings of the concepts of civil society, public sphere and third sector in the light of TSI’s work on a conceptualization of the third sector in Europe. First, the paper surveys the genealogy and different meanings of the concept of civil society and introduces the idea of a differentiated “civil sphere”, that is autonomous but inter-related with other social spheres (family, market, state, and religion). This allows conceptualizing civil society, public sphere, and third sector as analytical concepts emphasizing different dimensions of the civil sphere: Value pluralism, associative life and values and norms maintenance for the concept of civil society; Communicative action and values contention for the concept of public sphere; Value-oriented economic and social action for the concept of the third sector. From the functions identified in the conceptual analysis, the essay turns, secondly, to infer the domains of impact and the social and causal mechanisms, linking dimensions and functions of the third sector to its expected impacts. The paper is available for download [here](#).

[TSI]



- **Juncker’s Enlargement Standstill Threatens the EU’s Credibility**

Pandering to public opinion’s enlargement fatigue by ruling out any more EU newcomers before 2019 has sent confused political signals to Balkan candidate countries. Frank Schimmelfennig, Professor of European Politics

at ETH Zurich, partner in the joint MAXCAP project, analyses the outcomes in an opinion published in the **Europe's World** journal autumn 2015 issue. According to him, the biggest effort of all still has to come from a candidate country itself, and the EU needs to regain its consistency in the ways it encourages their progress. The opinion is available for download [here](#).

[MAXCAP]



- **Open Government Data: Key to a Transparent, Accountable, and Participatory Society**

Kosovo needs to amend its public-information law to increase the amount of government data available to its citizens online, according to this Riinvest Institute policy brief. The brief also calls for: 1) Improved access to existing documents located on official websites of public institutions by using global best practices for developing and maintaining the websites; 2) Creation of a central government website for access to public data, like those created in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Albania; and 3) More open-data training for employees of public bodies, especially employees charged with managing data, information and web content. The brief is available for download [here](#).

[PASOS]



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BCSDN E-mail alerts is a regular service of the Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN) with the aim to provide timely, effective and useful information on funding, training, education and other opportunities to its members and other interested CSOs in the region. E-mail alerts are managed by the BCSDN Executive Office. They are distributed bi-weekly, 1st and 15th of every month.

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