



## E-Mail Alerts no. 313

### Table of Contents

#### Donor Strategies

- **EU-13 NGOs Want to Raise Awareness, but Struggle with Brussels Financing**
- **Redefining Aid: Is it Good, Bad or Ugly?**

#### Enabling Environment

- **The State of the Enabling Environment for CSDev in Enlargement Countries: Country Monitoring Reports 2014 Made Available**
- **Consultations Organized on Albania Roadmap on Enabling Environment for CSDev**
- **New Guide for Associations in Croatia**
- **Croatia: Increase in Transparency – Even More Citizen Engagement?**

#### News

- **EP Calls on the Governments of Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia to Improve Cooperation with Civil Society**
- **New Regulation Adopted on Financing and Contracting CSO Projects of Public Interest in Croatia**
- **Albania Becomes Part of the Europe for Citizens Program**
- **NGO Forum Riga 2015 - Civil Society Involvement Equals Support for Democracy**

#### Funding

- **CfP: Institutional Grants for CSOs in Kosovo (Deadline: 30.03.2015)**
- **CfP: Sub-granting Advocacy NGOs Networks for Sustainable Use of Energy and Natural Resources in the Western Balkans and Turkey – ETNAR (Deadline: 30.04.2015)**
- **CfP: Civil Society Dialogue between EU and Turkey IV (Deadline: 25.05.2015)**
- **CfP: VOC - TEST CENTERS – II, Turkey (Deadline: 08.05.2015)**

#### Training and Education

- **CfA: Free Massive Open Online Course on Citizen Engagement – Starting 15th March**

- **CfA: Nuffic Fellowship for The Hague Academy for Local Governance Training Courses (Deadline: 18.03.2015)**
- **CfA: European Citizens' Initiative Day – 13th April, Brussels**
- **CfA: Transparency International School on Integrity – 6-12 July, Vilnius (Deadline: 01.05.2015)**

## Publications

- **The Third Sector in Europe: Towards a Consensus Conceptualization**
- **Western Balkans: Measuring Progress Towards European Integration**
- **Series of Social Media Video Tutorials for CSOs Available Online**

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- **EU-13 NGOs Want to Raise Awareness, but Struggle with Brussels Financing**

Development organizations in the EU's newest member states know they have some catching up to do with their counterparts in "old" Europe — a fact that's made more difficult by the cumbersome procedures to gain access to awareness-raising funds from the European Commission. Further, such procedures make these CSOs feel they are somehow being penalized. In a letter to the European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven Mimica, development NGO platforms from all 28 EU member states have complained about the "indirectly discriminating principles" that affect funding for organizations in the newest 13 member states — the so-called EU-13 — that acceded to the bloc in 2004, 2007 and 2013. The message was delivered by the European development NGO confederation Concord and Trialog, a network of development NGOs from the new member states. More information is available [here](#).

[Devex]



- **Redefining Aid: Is it Good, Bad or Ugly?**

The concept of Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSD) is being promoted as an alternative to the current Official Development Assistance (ODA). Is this going to put more money on the table or just "creative accounting" to meet the commitments made by developed countries without paying? There is an active debate about the role of ODA in light of the universal and transformational nature of the Sustainable Development Goals and of the current debate within the OECD/DAC. Whatever its future definition and scope will be, aid will continue to play a critical role in development — particularly for low-income countries and when delivered based on national ownership. More information is available [here](#).

[Global Policy Watch]



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- **The State of the Enabling Environment for CSDev in Enlargement Countries: Country Monitoring Reports 2014 Made Available**

Country Reports on Enabling Environment (EE) for Civil Society Development (CSDev) 2014 for 6 countries are made available for the first time. After publishing baseline reports in 2013, the 2014 reports are focused on 12 (out of 24) core and a number of selected standards for each country as defined in the [Monitoring Matrix](#)

**for EE for CSDev.** The focus on 12+ core standards enables an in-depth analysis of situation under the standards with the intention to enable analysis and concrete recommendation for this to be addressed. The reports allow both for in-country and between country comparison. For more information on all reports, their in-country presentations and the state of the EE in Enlargement countries visit [www.monitoringmatirx.net](http://www.monitoringmatirx.net).  
[BCSDN]



- **Consultations Organized on Albania Roadmap on Enabling Environment for CSDev**

In pursue of strengthening the collaboration between government institutions and CSOs, during the period June-July 2014 a Roadmap was drafted for Albanian government policy towards more enabling environment for civil society development. The overall objective of the document was to enable Albanian Government to undertake an efficient decision-making with respect to establishing new or improving existing mechanisms for cooperation with civil society in order to contribute to the promotion of participatory governance, inclusive policy making and stronger democracy in Albania. The Road Map sets out a targeted programme of priority areas of action that Albanian Government is committed to undertake in order to improve the environment for cooperation with civil society. In the beginning of March, four consultations with CSOs from the main regions of Albania were organized by the Ministry of Integration aiming to gather CSO contributions before the document is finally approved and put into action. More information is available [here](#).

[TACSO]



- **New Guide for Associations in Croatia**

The National Foundation for Civil Society Development, partner CSOs in the program of regional development of civil society and local communities and the Office for Cooperation with NGOs of the Croatian Government have prepared and published a guide for establishment of associations, which in a clear and simple manner gives instructions for all steps to be taken in the process of establishing an association in Croatia. The reason for the release of this Guide is the new Law on Associations which was adopted on 6th June, 2014 and entered into force on 1st October, 2014. The new Law on Associations has brought a number of innovations in the establishment and work of associations, and the publishers have decided to prepare this Guide in order to help new as well as already registered associations harmonize their statutes with the new Law. The Guide is available [here](#).

[National Foundation for Civil Society Development - Croatia]



- **Croatia: Increase in Transparency – Even More Citizen Engagement?**

The Croatian government adopted a report prepared in accordance with the commitments under the Action Plan for implementation of the Open Government Partnership in the Republic of Croatia for the period 2014-2016 as well as measures of the National Strategy for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2012-2016. According to the Deputy Minister of Social Policy and Youth May Sporiš, the report data are one of the best indicators of progress in the openness and transparency of the government. The total of 48 public consultations on draft laws and other regulations and acts conducted in 2011, vis-à-vis the 544 consultations conducted in 2014, shows an increase of more than a thousand percent. Also, in 2014 there were more than 11,500 thousand comments by the interested public, more than half of which were fully or partially accepted, while 334 reports were published with clear explanations of the reasons why certain objections have not been accepted. More information is available [here](#).

[GONG]



- **EP Calls on the Governments of Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia to Improve Cooperation with Civil Society**

On 11th March 2015, the European Parliament has adopted Resolutions on the European Commission's Progress reports on Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia for 2014, calling governments to improve cooperation with civil society and greater involvement of the civil society in the law and policy-making process. The EP Resolutions, similarly to the Commission's latest 2014-2015 Enlargement strategy and Progress Reports, puts the biggest focus on the need for improved CSO-government dialogue and greater involvement of civil society in the reform processes of the countries. In addition, some key issues related to the enabling environment on civil society noted in our own monitoring reports have been particularly addressed, as in the case with the Montenegro Resolution. The Resolutions will be taken into consideration by the Council at the next Council meeting in June 2015. Read the summaries of how the EP treats the issue of civil society in the EU integration process of each of the four countries [here](#).

[BCSDN]



- **New Regulation Adopted on Financing and Contracting CSO Projects of Public Interest in Croatia**

At the session of the Croatian Government held on 3rd March, a new Regulation was adopted on the criteria, standards and procedures of financing and contracting of CSOs programs and projects which are of public interest, in line with the new Law on Associations, which entered into force on 1st October 2014. The Regulation lays down the basic requirements and standards of conduct for associations when implementing programs and projects financed from public sources. The conduct of public institutions is precisely regulated at all stages - from planning and preparation of priorities for funding, publication and implementation of tenders, evaluation of projects, contents of the funding agreement, monitoring and evaluation of project results, as well as possible termination of the contract - in accordance with the existing best practices, and procedures used in contracting and implementation of projects financed from EU funds. More information is available [here](#).

[Office for Cooperation with NGOs - Croatia]



- **Albania Becomes Part of the Europe for Citizens Program**

On 26th February, Albania signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the European Commission for the financial period 2014-2020 for the program Europe for Citizens. With the MoU, Albania formally became a participant in the Program for the period 2014-2020, and all Albanian (potential) users have become equal partners in the implementation of projects. So far, from the countries in the region, an MoU has been signed by Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania, and the signing of Bosnia and Herzegovina is also expected soon. More information on the Europe for Citizens Program is available [here](#).

[Program JAKO]



- **NGO Forum Riga 2015 - Civil Society Involvement Equals Support for Democracy**

How can civil society involvement in EU decision-making be strengthened? – This was one of the central questions at the NGO Forum in Riga. The forum was organized by European Movement Latvia and the Society Integration Foundation under the motto, "Create Europe. Our opinion has power." Over two days, participants debated the implementation of Article 11 TEU. They asked which mechanisms and instruments can support the participation of civil society organisations in national and European decision-making processes on EU topics. The distinction between direct participation mechanisms and the role of CSOs within representative democracies was also discussed. On the one hand, some defended the need to reinforce direct participation mechanisms and the role of CSOs in this process, and, on the other hand, some participants were interested in determining how to enhance CSO participation in the decision-making process. More information is available [here](#).

[European Movement International]



- **CfP: Institutional Grants for CSOs in Kosovo (Deadline: 30.03.2015)**

The Swiss Office for Cooperation in Kosovo, and the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) have opened a call for institutional grants aiming to support the development of a democratic society in Kosovo. The financial support for institutional development is intended to support organizations that are or have the potential to become agents of change in the field of civil participation, good governance, transparency, inter-ethnic relations and equality. Institutional grants also allow the partners to build internal organizational and thematic capacities. Organizations can be financed for a period of 2-3 years, while there are no restrictions on minimum and maximum amounts for support. The deadline for applications is 30th March, 2015. The full application package is available at this [link](#).

[KCSF]



- **CfP: Sub-granting Advocacy NGOs Networks for Sustainable Use of Energy and Natural Resources in the Western Balkans and Turkey – ETNAR (Deadline: 30.04.2015)**

ETNAR published a call for proposals for organizations Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Turkey, Albania and Montenegro doing environmental public advocacy work in their home country. The focus of the project has to be related to the natural resources and energy, climate, transport or other environmental issues and has to include media-work elements, mobilization of citizens, visibility and individual fundraising strategy to provide sustainability after the project funding ends. Maximum duration of the project is 15 months, and the grants are size EUR 5,000 – 8,000, with minimum of 10% and maximum of 50% matching funds expected. The deadline for applications is 30th April, 2015. More information is available [here](#).

[ETNAR]



- **CfP: Civil Society Dialogue between EU and Turkey IV (Deadline: 25.05.2015)**

The Central Finance and Contracts Unit on behalf of the Republic of Turkey is seeking proposals to be implemented in Turkey with financial assistance from the European Communities Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) 2011 programming for Turkey. The Call for Proposals aims to establish strong links and a high level cooperation between civil society in Turkey and the EU Member States through civil society dialogue in the areas of environment, consumer and health protection and energy where civil society dialogue is particularly valuable for Turkey's successful accession to the EU. The deadline for submission of proposals is 25th May, 2015. The full Guidelines for Grant Applicants are available for consultation at the following [link](#).

[EuropeAid]



- **CfP: VOC - TEST CENTERS – II, Turkey (Deadline: 08.05.2015)**

Ministry of Labour and Social Security in Turkey announced a grant scheme for promoting the development and implementation of lifelong learning strategies. The global objective is developing qualified and certified labour force, ensuring an efficient formal and non-formal vocational education and training system by strengthening the link between education and employment, promoting recognition of prior learning, supporting lifelong learning process, and facilitating the harmonization of the National Qualifications Framework with European Qualifications Framework. The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 4,500,000. Any grant requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between EUR 150,000 and 250,000, and 80-90% of the total eligible costs of the action. The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than 12 months nor

exceed 18 months. The full application package is available at this [link](#).

[EuropeAid]



- **CfA: Free Massive Open Online Course on Citizen Engagement – Starting 15th March**

This free 4-week course has been developed to explore what is meant by citizen engagement and how it can be used to enhance development impact. It brings together a diverse range of experts to provide students with a comprehensive overview of citizen engagement. It begins by synthesizing the theories and concepts that underlie citizen engagement, and goes on to explore how citizens can be engaged in both policymaking and public service delivery. Finally, it investigates how recent innovations are shaking up the field, through detailing both successes and failures of these new approaches. Participants will also have the opportunity to collaborate with one another and design their own citizen engagement initiatives, thereby putting theories learned in the course into practice. The course starts on 15th March and comprises 4 weeks of online learning, with approximately 2-4 hours per week. More information is available [here](#).

[CIVICUS]



- **CfA: Nuffic Fellowship for The Hague Academy for Local Governance Training Courses (Deadline: 18.03.2015)**

The Netherlands organisation for international cooperation in higher education (NUFFIC) offers fellowships for training courses, as part of the Netherlands Fellowship Programme (NFP) for short courses. The aim is to promote capacity building within organisations in eligible via practice oriented training and education for professionals from developing and transitional countries. This is initiated and fully funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the budget for development cooperation. The Program/Courses and Duration offered under fellowship programmes are: Local Economic Development (7 – 18 September); Fiscal Decentralisation and Local Finance (28 September – 9 October); Multilevel Water Governance (26 October – 6 November); Security, Governance and Rule of Law in fragile states (2 November – 11 December). The application deadline is 18th March, 2015. More information is available [here](#).

[The Hague Academy for Local Governance]



- **CfA: European Citizens' Initiative Day – 13th April, Brussels**

Introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) is the most important instrument for direct democracy at European level. Three years after its launch, the time has come for an assessment and potential reset of the ECI legal framework. This year's ECI Day will focus on the EC an assessment report on the first three years of ECI practice and the European Ombudsman's report on how effectively the ECI procedure was working. The ECI Day serves as a meeting place and platform for registered and future ECI organisers to meet and exchange information and experiences, and present their ECI to the media. The ECI campaigners and stakeholders will invite participants to their stands outside the conference rooms where they will be presenting their initiatives and activities. The ECI Day will take place on 13th April from 9 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. at the EESC building in Brussels. More information is available [here](#).

[EESC]



- **CfA: Transparency International School on Integrity – 6-12 July, Vilnius (Deadline: 01.05.2015)**

Transparency International School on Integrity (TISI) is an annual state-of-the-art anti-corruption and

accountability training for future leaders. This year TISI 2015 will take place during 6th – 12th July, 2015 in Vilnius, Lithuania. TISI exposes its participants to the latest developments in the field of anti-corruption and accountability and offers real opportunities to try and implement their ideas in practice. Welcome are senior students, graduates and young professionals under the age of 35 from public, private, non-governmental and academic sectors, from all academic backgrounds. Selected participants will spend 7 highly intensive days learning from leading anti-corruption and accountability professionals in a peer-to-peer learning and integrity-building environment that links theory with practice and helps young leaders to acquire better skills in bringing the anti-corruption message across. A limited number of scholarships will be available for students from certain countries. More information is available [here](#).

[Transparency International]



- **The Third Sector in Europe: Towards a Consensus Conceptualization**

Third Sector Impact published the second TSI Working Paper “The Third Sector in Europe: Towards a Consensus Conceptualization”. A common conceptualization is an important milestone towards measuring the third sector in Europe as “there remains a kind of conceptual ambiguity” about the “manifold types of entities that co-exist in the third sector”. The achievement of conceptual clarification is a key objective of the project. This working paper reports on the progress that TSI has made toward this objective. It presents a consensus definition of the third sector that builds upon a bottom-up investigation of European experiences with various third sector concepts and a vigorous set of discussions among project partners and outside stakeholders. The resulting conceptualization takes account of a number of critical European particularities and covers both institutional and individual manifestations of the third sector concept while still providing a basis for systematic comparisons among European countries and between them and countries in different regions. The publication is available for download [here](#).

[TSI]



- **Western Balkans: Measuring Progress Towards European Integration**

The latest infocharts for economic and social data on current and potential candidate countries from the region show that Western Balkan countries hoping to join the EU in the medium term still have a number of obstacles to overcome, such as the economic crisis, corruption and the need to guarantee media freedom. The figures show that high unemployment is a common concern in the region as is corruption and the lack of media freedom. However, Macedonia and Montenegro get relatively good scores in terms of favourable business environment. The data on population, gross domestic product, unemployment and exports to and imports from the EU come from Eurostat; corruption perceptions is an index developed by Transparency International; the Reporters Without Borders organisation provides the index on press freedom, and the World Bank ranks countries in terms of how business friendly they are. The infocharts are available at this [link](#).

[European Parliament]



- **Series of Social Media Video Tutorials for CSOs Available Online**

Based on feedback from CSOs in the region, TACSO created a series of videos with the goal to familiarize and explain social media channels to these organisations. In addition to the first video in the series on Facebook, TACSO developed five more short video tutorials on: Twitter, Google +, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. The viewer will not only be able to learn how to open a CSO adequate social media page; how to post content; and how to post pictures and videos, but they will also learn how to follow statistics and measurements of their activities among the other useful information. Using social media channels, CSOs will be able to engage and

interact with their target audiences and also meet and network with other organisations that work in similar fields.

The tutorials are available for at the following [link](#).

[TACSO]



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Sunday, 15 March 2015

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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