



## E-Mail Alerts no. 319

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- **Where is the EU on the Road to 2015? – DG NEAR On Track in Latest Aid Transparency Index**

Lack of transparency by major European donors is hindering development outcomes in some of the poorest countries in the world, according to Publish What You Fund's latest report. Nine out of 16 key EU donors and institutions are still not publishing their data on time and in detail, leaving recipient countries in the dark about expected funding. PWYF Initiative calls on EU donors to meet their aid transparency commitments by publishing the data; making the data useful and making the data accessible and promoting its use. BCSDN has been involved in the past 3 years in promoting the aid transparency commitments and in the assessment of the DG Enlargement and now the DG NEAR performance. The 2015 Review finds that once again, a group of leading donors continue to lead the way in aid transparency, with Sweden, the UK and the European Commission (DGs NEAR, FPI and DEVCO) joined by Denmark and the Netherlands in the top performance categories. The findings of this Review show that on average, donors score only 49% on publishing timely and regularly the five year indicative and/or implementation plans, only Denmark, Germany and DG NEAR score the maximum points for this indicator, although the coverage of activities remains low. DG NEAR in 2015 has entered the "On track" category (60-79% - Good performance) for fulfilling its commitments. More on DG NEAR performance, as well as access the full review, is available [here](#).

[Publish What You Fund]



- **Financing for Development: EU Countries to Stick to Foreign Aid Commitments**

MEPs urged EU member countries to respect their Official Development Assistance (ODA) target of 0.7% of national income and to set timetables for reaching it by 2020 in a resolution adopted on 19th May. They also stressed the need to mobilize domestic resources efficiently in developing countries as a key source of financing. The EU should assert its political leadership throughout the process of defining the sustainable development framework and maintain its position as a major development aid donor, says Parliament in the resolution. It stresses that ODA remains a key instrument for financing development and ask member states to re-commit to their ODA target of 0.7% of gross national income (GNI), with 50% of ODA and at least 0.2% of GNI being earmarked for least-developed countries. The full press release is available [here](#).

[EU Parliament]



- **New Report: Regional State of Play of Civil Society in 2014**

According to the recently published Monitoring Matrix Regional Report for 2014, the legal environment for CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey remained relatively stable. Freedom of association, assembly, expression and information continued to be legally guaranteed in all countries of the region, with the exception of Turkey, however ensuring proper implementation and respect of the legal guarantees in practice remains to be challenging in most countries. CSOs continuously struggle to secure their financial sustainability in the whole region. State support in 2014 was too often distributed through non-transparent mechanisms, and remained insufficient. Governments continued to adopt national strategies for cooperation with CSOs and documents setting standards for the involvement of CSOs in policy and decision-making processes, but, again, the implementation of these documents in practice remains very problematic. The regional report, prepared by ECNL and BCSDN, summarizes the key findings from the eight country reports and highlights the priorities for intervention at the regional level towards creating a more enabling environment for civil society. In addition, the report provides an assessments vis-à-vis the EU Guidelines for Support to Civil Society in the Enlargement Countries for the period 2014-2020. The Report is available for download [here](#).

[BCSDN]



- **Experimenting “Bottom-up Europeanization”: EU’s Support to Civil Society Development in Enlargement Countries**

The role of CSOs has come to the forefront of the European political and normative debate, signified as a remedy to solve the democratic deficit and inefficiency of public policy making. The EU has increasingly pursued sophisticated approaches to activate participation of the civil societies of enlargement countries. Following a series of reforms, in relative terms, Turkey was able to better provide political space and enable mobilization of civil society with the reforms made in the legislation throughout the 2000s. Despite these steps, problems still exist both in the context and implementation of primary legislation and related secondary legislation. It is crucial to continue the EU support to facilitate both CSOs and state representatives to engage in local matters and to cooperate in policy formulation. The EU’s formulation of “civil society acquis” on the basis of the Civil Society Guidelines is a prerequisite to institutionalize and strengthen civil society approaches of the EU in enlargement countries. Read more on the next steps for enhancing Enabling environment for Civil Society development in Turkey [here](#).

[TUSEV]



- **Slovenian Civil Society Statistics: 92% of CSOs Rely on Volunteer Work**

CNVOS has published fresh data on employability in CSOs in 2014, analysing how many employees do CSOs in Slovenia have. According to the results, 92.5% of organizations have no employees, and thus rely on engaging volunteers, while only 20 organizations in total, amounting to 0.08% of all 25.440 CSOs, have over 50 employees. More detailed information about the level of employability can be found in the table available [here](#).

Other important statistics on CSOs can be found on CNVOS website under the title "[CSO sector: facts and figures](#)", where all other information are updated for 2014.

[CNVOS]



- **Initiative for Protecting Freedom of Assembly in Serbia**

Following the news that a decision on the internal order in the National Assembly prohibits the assembly of citizens in front of the Assembly’s building, the Youth Initiative for Human Rights demands that the state authorities pay due attention to freedom of assembly, as one of the basic human rights. The initiative stresses that this decision relates to the yard and parking lot of the building of the National Assembly, and that such decisions can not be grounds for banning citizens’ gatherings at the usual place in front of the National

Assembly, and that the authorities are obliged to provide an explanation to the public. The initiative expects that the new Law on Public Assembly will enable the effective right of appeal in case of prohibition of a gathering, and that the right to arbitrarily decide which area is suitable for such assemblies will be taken away from local governments. More information is available [here](#).

[CRNPS]



- **CIVICUS New Approach: The Civic Space Monitor**

CIVICUS is taking a new approach to tracking the quality of civic space in real time. They intend to do this by combining analysis of externally available data sources with their own, internally generated, real-time information from civil society on the ground. For this purpose, CIVICUS has shared this [consultative document](#) with various stakeholders and experts on civic space, asking for frank assessments of this approach. Any comments, critiques, questions and suggestions can be sent by emailing [cathal.gilbert@civicus.org](mailto:cathal.gilbert@civicus.org) by 19th June, 2015. CIVICUS has piloted this approach in a study of civic space in southern Africa, demonstrating the kind of information and analysis on civic space that CIVICUS ultimately hopes to provide through a regularly updated web portal for all countries in the world.

[CIVICUS]



- **Norms over Forms: Civil Society Development in the Enlargement Process Debated in the EP**

On 4th June, 2015, BCSDN organized a debate at the European Parliament to present the state in which civil society operates in Western Balkans and Turkey, and how the accession process can promote a more enabling environment for its development. The debate “Norms over Forms: Empowering Civil Society in the Western Balkans and Turkey” was hosted by Ms. Ulrike Lunacek, Vice-President of the European Parliament (The Greens/EFA) and co-chaired by Ms. Venera Hajrullahu BCSDN’s Board Chair both speaking about the value and importance of the civil society for the reform and accession processes in the Enlargement countries. Following the presentation of the regional state of play, as presented in the Monitoring Matrix Regional Report for 2014, representatives of BCSDN member organizations discussed the specific challenges faced in each country. The debate finished with a strong message delivered by Ms. Lunacek, who stated that governments should not see civil society as opponent, but rather as ally, whose criticism can improve their work, strengthen the democracy and support the accession process. More information is available [here](#).

[BCSDN]



- **Civil Society in the Balkans Calls for More Inclusion in the Accession Process**

At the 5th Civil Society Western Balkans Forum on 2nd and 3rd June, 2015, in Belgrade, participants acknowledged that despite some challenges, the perspective of EU accession will have significant impact on the Western Balkans. This was underlined during four thematic sessions of discussions with representatives of CSOs from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia. Social partners and CSOs are essential partners in improving transparency and inclusiveness in the EU accession process. Participants therefore called on governments and EU institutions to strengthen the dialogue with CSOs and to improve access to information. The Forum ended with the adoption of a final [declaration](#) which will be forwarded to the national authorities in the region, the European Parliament, the European Council and other institutions. More information is available [here](#).

[EESC]



- **Macedonian CSOs Send Joint Open Letter to EU and US Diplomatic Representatives**

Sixty-one CSOs from Macedonia have signed an open letter that was delivered to the EU mission in Skopje and the US Embassy on 9th of June, just before the Brussels negotiations between government representatives and the opposition, with the mediation of the EU Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn. CSOs have asked for a guarantee that the negotiations process would enable stability and democracy in Macedonia. According to them, the EU bears particular responsibility in terms of the implementation of the European values, including democracy, the rule of law and protection of human rights in Macedonia. In addition, the EU and the US bear responsibility in terms of peace, stability and the democratic process which are guarantees for the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. The organizations demand the establishment of a transitional government which would administer the 2016 elections, revise the electoral roll, liberate the public broadcasting service (Macedonian Radio Television) from government influences and elect of a new public prosecutor. More information is available [here](#).

[Independent.mk]



- **Progress of Montenegro in Chapter 23 Hindered by Corruption, Weak Institutions and Lack of Respect for Human Rights**

CRNVO has organized a round-table on the progress of Montenegro in Chapter 23 of the accession negotiations between Montenegro and the EU, concluding that any progress is difficult in a system where corruption is present, and an absence of strong institutions and respect for human rights persists. According to CRNVO's Executive Director, Ana Novakovic, drafting the law and the intensive legislative agenda cannot be anymore an excuse for the poor state in the areas of the judiciary and fighting corruption, because the key regulations for these areas are largely completed. Therefore, the only issue that should be discussed now is where are the results of the law reforms and the results of the institutions' work. Novakovic stressed that in the new phase of the process citizens should be empowered to seek implementation of the reforms and accountability of the administration and elected representatives. More information is available [here](#).

[CRNVO]



- **CfP: Civil Society Facility and Media Programme 2014-2015 - Support to Regional Thematic Networks of CSOs (Deadline: 06.07.2015)**

The specific objective of this Call for Proposals contracted by the European Commission is to foster regular networking of CSOs at regional and EU level, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, skills and connections, and increasing and widening their impact in campaigning and advocacy. It aims at strengthening CSOs capacities related to advocacy, long-term strategic organisational planning and funding diversification. The overall indicative amount made available under this CfP is EUR 16.100.000, while any grant requested must fall between minimum EUR 600.000 and maximum EUR 1.200.000, and between 50% and 90% of the total eligible costs of the action. The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than 36 nor exceed 48 months. The deadline for submission of applications is 6th July, 2015. The full application package is available [here](#).

[EuropeAid]



- **CfP: START – Danube Region Project Fund (Deadline: 08.07.2015)**

START – Danube Region Project Fund is a new pilot initiative of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) and provides small grants for the development and implementation of Danube Region projects in the form of Seed Money (early pre-financing to cover project expenses). The objective of START is to “kickstart

project development in the Danube Region and to facilitate the financing of transnational projects". The START contribution to an individual project can range from EUR 10.000 to EUR 20.000, co-financing up to 90% of the total project budget. The projects duration can be 6, 7 or 8 months. The deadline for applications is 8th July, 2015. More information is available [here](#).

[EUSDR]



- **CfP: Civil Society Facility Albania – Civic Initiative and Capacity Building (Deadline: 31.07.2015)**

The global objective of this Call for Proposals is to encourage the active participation of civil society in policy-making and contributing to the fulfilment of Albania's obligations under the EU Albania Stabilisation and Association Agreement. The specific aim of the grant is to target grass-roots based organizations and therefore the applicant is requested to manage the redistribution of at least 70% of the value of the contract through financial support to third parties (sub-granting). The overall indicative amount made available under this Call for Proposals is EUR 3.400.000, and any grant requested must fall between EUR 500.000 and 1.300.000 for LOTs 1 (Promotion of good governance and fight against corruption) and 2 (Monitoring of judiciary system and access to justice), and between EUR 450.000-550.000 for LOTs 3 (Monitoring living conditions in prisons and pre-detention structures) and 4 (Re-use of assets confiscated to organized crime). Any grant awarded must fall between 50% and 90% of the total eligible costs of the action. The planned duration of an action may not be lower than 18 months nor exceed 36 months. The deadline for the submission of applications is 31th August, 2015. The full application package is available [here](#).

[EuropeAid]



- **CfP: Global Giving Open Challenge (Deadline: 24.07.2015)**

GlobalGiving is an online fundraising platform that gives social entrepreneurs and nonprofits from anywhere in the world a chance to raise the money they need to improve their communities. It offers a secure and trusted platform to receive donations; connects you with new individual and corporate donors around the world; and provides non-profits with the tools, trainings, and resources they need to upgrade their fundraising. Non-profits and Social Entrepreneurs will have to mobilize supporters to raise USD 5.000 from at least 40 unique donors during this time. Top three (3) projects that raise the most funds will also receive supplementary cash bonuses from GlobalGiving of USD 3.000, USD 2.000, and USD 1.000 respectively. The project with the greatest number of unique donors will be awarded a bonus of USD 2.000. More information is available [here](#).

[FundsForNGOs]



- **CfA: Civil Society Day 2015 – 16 June, Brussels**

The annual Civil Society Day is a major EESC initiative, organised in partnership with its Liaison Group with European civil society networks. It brings together key players from European and national CSOs, business leaders and entrepreneurs, academics, EU policy- and decision-makers and interested media and provides a forum for dialogue on issues that matter to civil society stakeholders at European level. This year's event aims at laying down principles and guidelines for a permanent and structured civil dialogue at European level in order to contribute to better legislation which better serves the general interest. The event will take place on 16th June, in the EESC More information is available [here](#).

[EESC]



- **CfA: CREATE | REACT Trainings for Civil Society Activists**

CREATE | REACT brings together citizens, civil society activists, members of movements, organisations and networks from across Europe in a transnational activist training programme for the defence and extension of fundamental and citizenship rights, being carried out across six cities in Europe from summer 2015 to spring 2016. Activists, artists, tech-developers and citizen groups have worked cooperatively to build innovative tools and practices to further the protection of the rights of all people living in the European space, and a program has been built to share the experiences of these successes, and to build a stronger transnational voice for rights protection. Sessions will be held in six cities – Berlin (19-21 June), Lisbon (10-12 July), Venice, Budapest, Warsaw and Brussels – with a mixture of participants from across Europe, each of whom will attend at least two sessions. The focus of each session will be on innovative and developing practices and creative ways to use commonly used tools. More information is available [here](#).

[EFC]



- **CfA: BIRN Macedonia Call for Investigative Reports (16.06.2015)**

The call is part of the 'Project for Investigative Journalism and Cooperation Between Media and Civil Society', part of a USAID programme for strengthening independent media in Macedonia. In this call at least five journalists (from Macedonia only) will be awarded a grant to cover their expenses while doing the investigation and writing the story. Journalists will have about three months to dig deeper and research their ideas, but also will have the opportunity to work with experienced editors as their mentors to guide them through the process of writing to BIRN standards. Topics for investigations include: health; cultural policy; education and youth; human rights; EU integration; good governance; inter-ethnic relations; environment issues; marginalized groups; quality of life. The deadline for applications is 16th June, 2015. More information is available [here](#).

[BIRN]



- **CfA: TGEU's UN Human Rights Training Opportunity in Geneva (Deadline: 21.06.2015)**

TGEU (Transgender Europe) in partnership with ARC International is organizing a 3-day UN training in Geneva from 14 September to 2 October 2015. The training will bring together activists from the Global South and East and activists from (Eastern) Europe to learn how UN human rights mechanisms work in practice and how activists can use them to advance the rights of trans and gender diverse people in their national and regional contexts. During the training, participants will have the opportunity to observe and participate in the Universal Periodic process of the UN Human Rights Council, to participate in a side event at the UN on the human rights of trans people, to meet with diplomatic representatives of their own countries and to network and exchange knowledge with other activists and NGOs. The aim of the training is to increase the capacity of participants' organisations to engage in effective trans advocacy at the UN. The deadline for applications is 21st June, 2015.

More information is available [here](#).

[FundsForNGOs]



- **UN Expert Launches Robust Defense of Online Anonymity and Encryption**

David Kaye, the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression published a major report on encryption and anonymity in the digital age. This report is a major step forward for the protection of the rights to free expression and privacy online, for encryption and anonymity are vital enablers of freedom of opinion and expression. The UN report makes it clear that attempts by governments to gain backdoor access to people's communications or to intentionally weaken encryption standards violate international law. It is vital that States review their relevant laws, policies and practices on anonymity and encryption, and bring them in line with the Special Rapporteur's

recommendations to ensure that they protect people's rights to free expression and privacy online. The report is available for download [here](#).

[ARTICLE 19]



- **PrEUgovor – Report on Progress of Serbia in Chapters 23 and 24**

The Serbian government needs to work harder on efforts to insure that principle of the rule of law is respected in the Western Balkans country, according to a monitoring report published by a coalition of CSOs led by the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP). According to the report, the reported period witnessed significant backsliding in relation to democratic values, the division of powers between the Government's branches, as well as functioning of independent state institutions. The report was released by the prEUgovor coalition of CSOs established in 2013 in order to monitor the implementation of policies related to the accession negotiations between Serbia and the EU, with an emphasis on Chapters 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights) and 24 (Justice, Freedom and Security). The report is available for download [here](#).

[PASOS]



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