

## Joint Civil Society Accountability Efforts in the Western Balkans: Call for Participation in the Regional Accountability Community of Practice

The [Balkan Civil Society Development Network \(BCSDN\)](#) is cordially inviting you to become part of the Regional Accountability Community of Practice (RACoP) and support our Pledge for joint action and discussions in a safe space where we can commit to strengthen the accountability and transparency of our actions.

BCSDN is a network of 14 civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Balkans with a mission to empower civil society and influence policies towards a more enabling environment for civil society development in order to ensure sustainable and functioning democracies in the Balkans. Through our [Regional Civil Society Development Hub](#), we aim to strengthen the regional cooperation to promote civic space and contribute towards effective, transparent, and accountable work of CSOs in our region. By actively engaging and contributing to global actions and initiatives on accountability and development effectiveness, such as the [Global Standard for CSO Accountability](#) and the [CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness \(CPDE\)](#), we have gained valuable experience based on internationally recognized standards.

As part of these efforts, we came up with the idea of launching a **Regional Accountability Community of Practice (RACoP)** that will strive towards continuous learning, improving our work, and advancing our accountability understanding and practices. Accountability can be a **lever for change**, and with the RACoP group, we offer an opportunity for discussion and sharing of good practices on how we can respond to the negative trends in our region, particularly the shrinking of the civic space.

The idea for this community comes from BCSDN's membership in the *Dynamic Accountability Community of Practice*. This global initiative by [CIVICUS](#), [Restless Development](#), [Keystone Accountability](#), and the [Global Standard Partnership](#) is a joint space where a wide range of civil society practitioners share good practices, discover valuable resources, and mutually learn about the topic of Dynamic Accountability. This concept is explored in length by the [Global Standard](#) - a reference standard for CSOs based on [12 commitments](#) that try to capture a shared understanding of accountability from CSOs worldwide.

*Join us in our actions advancing our accountability, strengthening the civic space, and building more resilient communities in the Western Balkans!*

## How will the community function?

The RACoP will serve as a **regional forum** that will contribute to CSOs' efforts in building a more just, effective, and sustainable society in the Balkans, supporting the organizations operating in a period of shrinking civic space. Within the community and through structured activities, the members could share their perceptions and efforts towards advancing their work by applying accountable and transparent practices in their everyday activities. The framework of activities and related action plan will be devised with the RACoP members to ensure it aligns with their needs and interests.

The collaborative space would allow regional practitioners to gather diverse perspectives and explore solutions on how CSOs can use dynamic accountability to foster a more participatory and inclusive approach. Through a co-creation process, participants could analyze various issues, trends, and solutions and discuss the knowledge attained. The RACoP will strive to build a community of practitioners that will share knowledge, learn from others' experiences and best practices, discover useful sources, build solidarity, etc.

BCSDN will ensure ongoing conversations around different accountability issues of interest to the RACoP members by providing a **safe convening space** for exchange and discussions, online or in-person. In consultation with the members, **key topics of interest** will be identified (*e.g. localization of the accountability discussions, communications to improve CSO legitimacy and public trust, etc.*). To support the activities to be organized together with the RACoP members, but also the member's work on strengthening their accountability practices, BCSDN will work on developing and regularly updating a **database of resources (open library)** that will be made available to all RACoP members, as well as regularly sharing relevant information on both regional and global accountability developments. BCSDN will also ensure further regional **alignment with the global community of practice**, aiming to create synergy and enhance shared learning.

## Who can join the RACoP group?

Participants' online activity in the RACoP group will not just be limited to BCSDN members, their constituencies, and the Regional Civil Society Hub Grantees. In order to expand our joint accountability horizons, the community will be open to attract the interest of all additional members willing to enhance their legitimacy, transparency, and accountability, and contribute to the overall civil society resilience in the Western Balkans.

## How can an organization/network/ activist join the RACoP group?

All groups, or individuals interested in our joint accountability discussion while enhancing their accountable work, can join us by [signing this form](#) or reach out to us at: [executiveoffice@balkancsd.net](mailto:executiveoffice@balkancsd.net).

Intending to better shape the overall RACoP coordination and functioning, as well as to obtain better members' expectations of the RACoP group and priorities, a [short survey](#) will be disseminated among RACoP members.

***For more details about the community's background and planned activities, please read the RACoP Concept Note.***