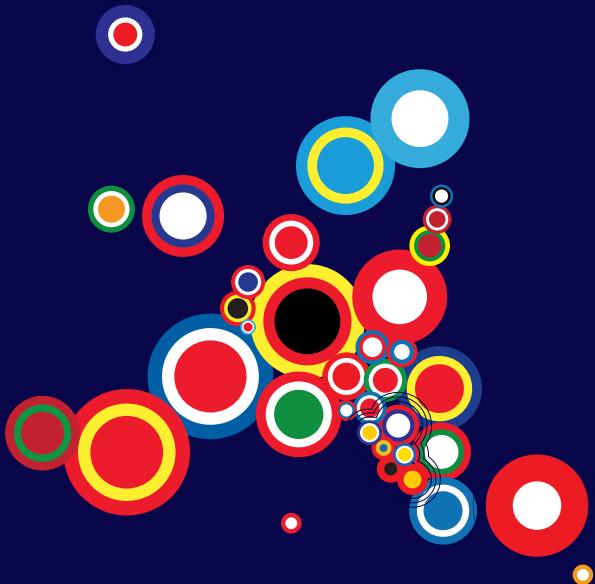




## INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

SERBIA

Civil Society Facility and Media  
Programme 2014-2015



### Action Summary

*The programme aims at supporting civil society and media sector in Serbia in line with EU guidelines to support civil society and media freedom in enlargement countries.*

*Support to civil society will focus on achieving an environment that is conducive to civil society activities, including the development of mechanism for permanent dialogue with civil society and to establish transparent state funding frameworks for civil society. Support in the form of long term grants will be provided to increase the effectiveness of the Serbian CSOs in undertaking initiatives focused on Chapters 23 and 24, regional cooperation and dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. Civil society participation in the process of negotiations in Serbia and policy monitoring, as well monitoring of EU and other donor funding will be enhanced through support to CSOs platform and networks and capacity building.*

*Media freedoms and professional journalism need to be strengthened and supported. The programme aims at enforcing the freedom of expression and investigative reporting through quality media production in the area of rule of law. An enabling regulatory and policy environment for the media freedoms and media pluralism will be enhanced, as well as strengthening the functioning and influence of the Press Council.*

<b>Action Identification</b>	
<b>Programme Title</b>	<i>Civil Society Facility and Media 2014-2015</i>
<b>Action Title</b>	<i>Civil Society Facility and Media Action for Serbia 2014-2015</i>
<b>Action Reference</b>	<i>IPA 2014/031-605.07/CSF&amp;Media/Serbia</i> <i>IPA 2015/37-653.07/ CSF&amp;Media/ Serbia</i>
<b>Sector Information</b>	
<b>ELARG Sectors</b>	<i>Good governance and democracy – sub-sector civil society</i> <i>Rule of Law and fundamental rights – sub-sector media</i>
<b>DAC Sector</b>	<i>15150 - Democratic participation and civil society</i> <i>15153 – Media and free flow of information</i>
<b>Budget</b>	
<b>Total cost (VAT excluded)<sup>1</sup></b>	<i>2014: 2.2 million EUR</i> <i>2015: 4.9 million EUR</i>
<b>EU contribution</b>	<i>2014: 2.2 million EUR</i> <i>2015: 4.5 million EUR</i>
<b>Management and Implementation</b>	
<b>Method of implementation</b>	<i>Direct</i>
<i>Direct management:</i> <b>EU Delegation in charge</b> <i>Indirect management:</i> <b>Responsible Unit or National Authority/Implementing Agency</b>	<i>Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia</i>
<b>Implementation responsibilities</b>	<i>N/A</i>
<b>Location</b>	
<b>Zone benefiting from the action</b>	<i>Republic of Serbia</i>
<b>Specific implementation area(s)</b>	<i>N/A</i>
<b>Timeline</b>	
<b>Deadline for conclusion of the Financing Agreement</b>	<i>N/A</i>
<b>Contracting deadline</b>	<i>IPA 2014: 31 December 2015;</i> <i>IPA 2015: 31 December 2016</i>
<b>End of operational implementation period</b>	<i>IPA 2014: 31 December 2019;</i> <i>IPA 2015: 31 December 2020</i>

<sup>1</sup> The total action cost should be net of VAT and/or of other taxes. Should this not be the case, clearly indicate the amount of VAT and the reasons why it is considered eligible.

## **1. RATIONALE**

DG Enlargement developed guidelines for the EU support to civil society in enlargement countries for the period 2014-2020<sup>2</sup>. The guidelines include a set of objectives, results and indicators for the EU support to civil society which will allow for the measurement of progress at country level as well across the enlargement region.

Support to civil society is reflected in two main goals: achieving an environment that is conducive to civil society activities and building the capacity of CSOs to be effective and accountable independent actors. The civil society facility (CSF) financial assistance from both multi-country and national IPA envelopes will include: aiming for longer term contracts, recognising that capacity building and advocacy work requires time and resources; support to foster partnership and coalition building; and doing more to reach out to grass-root organisations, in particular through re-granting and flexible support mechanisms to respond to their immediate needs.

With the aim to review challenges in the field of freedom of expression in the Enlargement countries and to elaborate adequate policy responses to it, the Commission organised two Speak-up! Conferences (2011 and 2013) involving stakeholders from media community, their organisations in the Western Balkans and Turkey as well as decision makers from those countries. These two events and the following conclusions have become important reference points in addressing the issues of media freedom and integrity in the context of the enlargement policy.

On the political side, it was decided to make use of the full potential of accession negotiations in order to make progress on freedom of expression related issues. Particularly Chapter 23, Chapter 10 and others as far as they touch on the subjects having an impact on the media sector) and the related action plan, should properly cover the field.

To this end, the Commission developed the Guidelines to support media freedom and media integrity in enlargement countries<sup>3</sup>, a long term (2014-2020) assistance approach which will be supported by a results` framework to back achieving the political goals in the fields of freedom of expression and integrity of media.

This strategic approach will be also pursued by financial and technical assistance through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance that will address three overarching areas: the enabling environment for free expression and media; strengthening journalists' and media professionals' organisations as the key drivers of the needed change; helping media outlets improve their internal governance, thus making them more resilient against external pressures and restoring audience's confidence in them.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/civil\\_society/doc\\_guidelines\\_cs\\_support.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/civil_society/doc_guidelines_cs_support.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/news\\_corner/key-documents/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/news_corner/key-documents/index_en.htm)

## **PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS**

Many steps were made in last several years towards establishing the legal and institutional framework for cooperation of state and public institutions with civil society organizations: the obligation of the state institutions to public work has been established as well as the right of public to access the information of public importance; general accessibility of laws and regulations has been regulated; the possibility of conducting public debates and public hearings in the process of adopting laws has been stipulated; the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society has been established as the focal institutional mechanism of cooperation with civil society organizations.

At the same time, institutional mechanisms for cooperation between the government and CSOs are not fully developed and institutionalized as there is a lack on the side of government of understanding the role of CSOs, and low awareness of benefits of cooperation with CSOs.

The Law on Associations provides legal frame for establishment, work and activities of associations in the Republic of Serbia. In compliance with the Constitution, international acts and adopted standards, this Law regulates all issues of significance of both national and foreign associations.

In the last couple of years there is considerable advancement in the treatment of CSOs in the tax and financial legislation. Until the adoption of the new Law on accounting (2013) there were no exceptions for CSOs and the possibility of exempting CSOs from business accounting and submitting the final statement. Recently adopted laws on accounting and auditing finally recognized CSOs as other legal entities. Specific characteristics are reflected in the simplified rules for civil society organizations.

Although the national and local governments have been increasingly providing funding to CSOs, this support lacks transparency and vision as shown in the latest report by the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society<sup>4</sup>. Based on the information of 60% of respondent institutions, agencies, and self-government from the survey, a total of 75.7 million EUR was disbursed at all levels of the government in Serbia in 2012. In total 6401 projects were funded in 2012.

There is no unique national body or institution with a mandate for distribution of public funds to CSOs. There are no clear procedures as well. Available public funding often is insufficient even to cover administrative costs. Co-funding was introduced by the Government Office for Cooperation with Civil Society as the contribution to IPA-funded projects, but on a very small scale as compared to sector needs.

With its policy towards the EU accession, the alignment of media legislation with the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) and other respective EU legislation remains priority in Serbia. A further transformation of the media scene with clear orientation towards protecting freedom of expression and right to information, and ensuring media pluralism is necessary in line with international legislation and standards (in particular with the European Convention on Human Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

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<sup>4</sup> <http://civilnodrustvo.gov.rs/media/2012/12/Summary-Report-ENG-FINAL-21.11.2012.-ff.doc>

The IREX Serbia Media Sustainability Index<sup>5</sup> (2013) lists the subjects with the broadcasting licenses and print media: Radio Stations: 214 (2 public service + 4 national coverage, 48 regional, 267 local); Television Stations: 111 on air, 134 licensed (2 public service, 4 are national, 30 regional, and 98 local; 39 cable stations); Print: 591 outlets. In comparison to other EU countries, these numbers by far surpass the needs of the Serbian market size.

The Ministry of Culture and Information, as an institution in charge of the media and audiovisual policy, has prepared a comprehensive Media Strategy that was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia in September 2011.

The implementation of the Media Strategy indicates to a very slow pace of progress in this field. Capacity building among public authorities, media and information society stakeholders is required to meet EU standards and properly apply new media laws in their daily work and help citizens to protect their rights to the freedom of expression and information. The media content in Serbia has deteriorated in quality and there is a noticeable lack of media content that properly tackles common democratic principles such as transparency, good governance and the rule of law. The economic crisis in Serbia has led to the reduction of the resources for established journalists and media. This further increased the pressure on professional journalism in the country, and has led to likely bypassing of important stories in particular those that relate to the rule of law.

Media freedoms and professional journalism need to be strengthened and supported. This is especially valid for internet freedoms which have been challenged (including discussions on social media platforms) over the last several years by formal and informal groups. A stronger engagement of state authorities, regulators, self-regulators and professional associations to ensure freedom of information flows and secure a democratic environment should be one of the points of support through this project/programme.

## **RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES**

The Indicative Strategy Paper sets out the priorities for EU financial assistance for the period 2014-2020 to support Serbia on its path to accession. In the section related to Democracy and Governance it is stated that regarding the rule of law, corruption, organised crime, the economic situation and social cohesion, the civil society organisations can make a substantial contribution to addressing many of the challenges through their lobbying, advocacy and oversight activities at national, regional and local level. The involvement of civil society in the pre-accession process can contribute to citizens' understanding of the reforms to qualify for EU membership. This can help ensure EU accession is not just a government exercise and stimulate a balanced public debate, which is crucial to achieving a well-informed decision on EU membership at the end of the accession process.

Under section on Rule of law and fundamental rights the Country Strategy emphasize the need for addressing the freedom of expression in Serbia, since there has been very little progress with implementation of the Media Strategy over the last two years. The priorities for the financial

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<sup>5</sup>[http://www.irex.org/sites/default/files/u105/EE\\_MSI\\_2013\\_Serbia.pdf](http://www.irex.org/sites/default/files/u105/EE_MSI_2013_Serbia.pdf)

assistance are further implementation of the media strategy, strengthening the freedom and professionalisation of media, investigative journalism and quality of journalism.

## **SECTOR APPROACH ASSESSMENT**

The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society recognized the need to enhance strategic and legal framework for operation of civil society organizations in Serbia, and CSOs participation in decision-making processes. Accordingly, and based on the 2014 Government plan, the Strategy for an Enabling Environment for Development of Civil Society Development 2014-2018 shall be formulated throughout this year, with the support of IPA 2011-2013 programme, and the project "EU Assistance to the Government Office for Cooperation with Civil Society". The Strategy is expected to increase responsibility of all parties, public administration at national, regional and local levels and civil society organizations, with a special ambition to enhance the dialogue between the citizens and different government entities. The goal is to enable citizens and CSOs to exercise their rights and interests effectively and efficiently, and help achieve transparent and efficient government on all levels. Last but not least, the Strategy aims to enhance the role of CSOs in various policy areas, which are considered important to development of society.

The formulation of the Strategy began on the 20-21 February 2014 with the Conference "Get Involved - Define the Civil Society You Want". More than 300 representatives of the Serbian civil society proposed 15 priority topics that, in their view, shall be included in the national strategy. Throughout March, the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society organized these 15 topics around four preliminary areas of the National Strategy, such as:

1. The institutional and legal framework for civil society organizations in Serbia. In this part of the Strategy legal and institutional improvements are proposed at national, regional and local levels to enhance operations of CSOs across Serbia. This section also includes plan for enhancing participation of civil society in policy making processes through the changes of the bulk of legislation relevant for public administration, and local self-government.
2. Tax regime and financial support and sustainability of CSOs. This section proposes changes in the tax regime in Serbia to reduce burden on CSOs on one side, and stimulate their activities on the other. This part also covers national and local government's rules for funding of CSOs and proposes improvements in this area.
3. The role of NGOs in the socio- economic development of the society. In this part of the Strategy the role of CSOs in provision of social and health services is singled out, and niches for stimulating their participation in non-formal education and social economy are identified. This section also proposes changes to the legal framework for volunteering.
4. CSOs in the context of EU integration. This section looks into the potential role of CSOs in the context of EU integration, and identifies niches for higher participation of CSOs in this process.

The Media Strategy adopted in September 2011, in the Action Plan sets out an ambitious plan of a complete overhaul of media legislation currently in existence. The aim is to address the conflicts

between various laws and the new developments in the media and related markets, which are currently insufficiently regulated or unregulated altogether (e.g. new media, internet, digital switchover, cable operators, transparency of media ownership, competition principles and concentration, etc.).

The aim of the Strategy is to define most important development directions for the public information system in Serbia and for parts of this system, so that the development of media freedom and media market may contribute to further strengthening of the democratic relations in the society. Enhancement of the public information system also implies the harmonization of the legal framework and practice with international and European regulatory framework and experience, the state's obligation to respect and apply them, as well as the strengthening of capacities of all participants in the public information process to work in the public interest, for the welfare of citizens and all social groups.

The Serbian European Integration Office prepared 'National Priorities for International Assistance in the Republic of Serbia 2014-17<sup>6</sup> (NAD), with projections until 2020'. NAD is strategic programming document which provides a means for increasing the alignment of international assistance with national priorities so that targeted donor interventions will support mainstream public spending on policy reforms from the national budget. In addition, the NAD makes it possible to eliminate the duplication of donor activities and to rationalize these activities so that they are as cost-effective as possible.

In NAD the civil society is identified as cross-cutting theme for all nine sectors, but also as a separate area with the focus on three main issues: CSO enabling environment, referring to the set of precondition providing for dynamic, pluralistic and competent civil society; establishment of permanent dialogue and partnership with public authorities; and CSOs' capacity to perform their roles as independent development actors more effectively. As far as media sector is concerned the following themes are concerned: public interest, media policy including the role of the state in the media, role of public media , public broadcasting services, media literacy, media pluralism, digital broadcasting.

In order to enable more inclusive and transparent dialog, consultation and communication with all relevant stakeholders in the field of planning and programming of EU funds and international development assistance, SEIO established in 2011 a consultation mechanism with the civil society organisations (CSOs) - SECO mechanism. This mechanism is based on the consultative process with Sectorial Civil Society Organisations (SECOs) and serves as a platform that enables exchange of information and contribution of CSOs in relation to planning development assistance, particularly planning and programming of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), preparation of strategic documents such as NAD for period 2014-201, Country Strategy Paper for the period 2014-2020 and Multi-country strategy paper for the period 2014-2020.

Members of SECO are participating at the Sector Working Group (SWG) meetings based on the needs and requirements of each SWG meeting and they take part in consultation processes for analysing sector priority goals, measures and operations for financing from EU funds and international assistance.

## **LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

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<sup>6</sup>[http://www.evropa.gov.rs/Documents/Home/DACU/12/74/NAD%202014-2017%20with%20projections%20until%202020%20\(english\).pdf](http://www.evropa.gov.rs/Documents/Home/DACU/12/74/NAD%202014-2017%20with%20projections%20until%202020%20(english).pdf)

The evaluation of the Official Development Assistance (ODA)<sup>7</sup> within the Sector of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) reports that the financial assistance (at the level of programmes, call for proposals, projects) has mostly successfully translated the stated priorities of assistance and needs. There are several sub-areas that, however, need further support (cultural activities, raising awareness, scrutinizing of government policies and implementation). At the policy level, positive results in areas such as social exclusion and vulnerable groups, anti-discrimination have been found.

On the level of raising awareness and direct support to beneficiaries (in providing/developing services) financial assistance has been channelled to develop new services (e.g. SOS line, women victims of violence support) or offer existing services to new vulnerable groups (e.g. Roma street children, men victims of work exploitation), while on the level of capacity-building, several IPA projects have demonstrated concrete impact for the strengthening of the organization or specific target group.

The report emphasizes the importance of even development of the civil society sector. There are several CSOs with track-record of activities and results in (semi-)urban centres. The issue to be addressed is about to reach out to grass-root, civic initiatives through re-granting and address lack of civic activism in rural areas.

Future thematic support to civil society should be coherent with strategic EU policy reform objectives, while future support to the development of the civil society sector should focus on key elements for sustainability: transparent and accountable of state funding, enabling tax regime and human resources/capacities in the sector.

Regarding media sector it was reported there is still lack of transparency in media ownership and state media funding and significant delays in adoption of key media laws along with the lack of integrity of media industry and media profession. All this presents a threat to freedom of expression, media freedom and pluralism in Serbia, hampering the efforts of the international donor community which in financial terms amounted EUR 20 million.

The support for the production of media on the topics related to the EU values, European integration, and rule of law was assessed as the positive outcome of the past donor assistance.

Further support to media should cover direct financial support to the media sector, supporting the core assistance to media organisations, improving the economic position and labour rights of journalists' status and standard of living of journalists, support the process of digital broadcasting switchover and support training of media decision makers on the importance of responsible and inclusive journalism in tune with the international standards and on market-oriented management and planning

## Civil Society Facility 2011-2013

For the period 2011-2013 the CSF was designed as a single programme that includes national and multi-beneficiary initiatives programme.

### National programme - Total budget: EUR 7,5 million

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www.evropa.gov.rs/Documents/Home/DACU/12/193/CSMC\\_Evaluation%20Report\\_final\\_050713.pdf](http://www.evropa.gov.rs/Documents/Home/DACU/12/193/CSMC_Evaluation%20Report_final_050713.pdf)

## **CSF 2011 Call for Proposals**

CSF 2011 Call for Proposals focused on strengthening the rule of law through targeted support for projects focusing on fight against corruption and efficiency of judiciary, support for specific measures targeting vulnerable groups and regional cooperation, civic and capacity building initiatives at the rural and remote area in Serbia. The total budget of the Call was EUR 1.8 million.

Out of 17 grants, 8 projects are dealing with issues of fight against corruption, strengthening the rule of law and judicial reform, 6 projects are building capacities of organisations at the local level including networking, regional cooperation, sustainable development and public participation in decision-making process and 3 projects are contributing to improvement of the provision of social services and active participation of organisations in policy making within social welfare sector.

In addition for the first time, re-granting was introduced as a mechanism of building capacities of smaller, community based organizations operating in remote and rural areas in Serbia. 3 organisations are implementing activities of sub-granting in the area of community development, social welfare, culture and civic actions. It is expected these projects will provide additional 36 small grants to community based organisations.

## **CSF 2012 Call for Proposals**

Under the CSF 2012 twenty-three projects are funded in total value of the 2 million of EUR. Supported projects will contribute to public administration reform in Serbia (6 projects), promote cultural diversity (8 projects) and build capacities of the civil society organisations at the local level (9 projects). In addition, through implementation of three projects, small grants will be distributed to local initiatives working on the public administration reform at the local level, improving capacities for provision of social services and empowering women initiatives at the local level.

Besides impact those projects will have at the national level in Serbia and Western Balkan region, significant contribution will be provided to over 60 local communities all over the country among majority are based in the South Serbia.

## **CSF 2013 Call for Proposals**

CSF 2013 Call for Proposals has available budget of EUR 2, 5 million. It aims to increase the effectiveness of the Serbian CSOs in undertaking initiatives focused on fight against corruption, greater transparency, openness and accountability of public administration. Also, the Call will strengthen support provided by Serbian CSOs to people and groups that are more exposed to discrimination and discriminatory practices such as asylum seekers, readmitted people, LGBTI persons and children. In order to strengthen cooperation between Serbia and Kosovo\*, the Call will support cultural initiatives promoting intercultural dialogue, foster cooperation between local communities and professional groups to stimulate initiatives of common socio-economic interests.

## **IPA Support to Government Office for cooperation with Civil Society (EUR 1, 2 million)**

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\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

By supporting the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society to fulfil its mandate and strengthen the dialogue between the Serbian government and civil society organizations, the Project aims to ensure greater space for active role of civil society in Serbia in the process of building democratic institutions and society as a whole.

To this end, the project shall: 1) Support to the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society in the creation and development of enabling environment for civil society, 2) Capacitate the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society to successfully fulfil its mandate; and strengthen the dialogue between the government of Serbia and CSOs.

The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society is running several initiatives aimed at enhancing legal, financial and institutional framework for the development of civil society in Serbia. On one side these initiatives aim at revising and streamlining of core laws that are recognized as key legislation for CSOs development and engagement in Serbia, such as the Law on Associations, Law on Endowments and Foundations, Law on Social Protection, Law on Lottery, Law on Volunteering, Law on political parties, etc. The Office also focuses on tax and administrative burdens that impede the operations of civil society organizations such tax reporting, VAT exemption, etc.

The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society has created a tool to track and evaluate mechanisms and procedures for earmarked CSO funding in the national budget. Survey of budgetary allocations to CSOs from the national budget has been created and first exercise was carried out in 2012 for the 2011 budget.

The 2013 survey reviews budgetary allocations from regional and local governments. The survey also includes questions on donor funds to CSOs, although Serbian budget classification does not allow for detailed analysis of donor funds to civil society organizations. These analyses provide recommendations and enable the development of instruments to secure financial sustainability of the civil society sector through transparent and effective support from the state and local budgets, including diversification of the Line 481 (line in the budget dedicated for the Government's support to civil society organisations).

The project runs until December 2015 and the challenges of the sector related to the legal and tax framework, as well as transparency of government funding to civil society will be in the focus of this project.

## **EIDHR**

Out of DEVCO's programmes, the EU Delegation in Serbia is managing European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) Country Based Support Scheme (CBSS). European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) is the successor programme to the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights. The specific aim of European Union assistance under the EIDHR, created by the European Parliament in 1994, has been to assist in meeting differentiated human rights and democracy objectives at international and national level.

The EIDHR Strategy Paper 2011-2013 sets out the five objectives Serbia is one of the countries qualified for the Objective 2: Strengthening the role of civil society in promoting human rights and democratic reform, in supporting the peaceful conciliation of group interests and consolidating political participation and representation;

For the period 2007-2013 the EIDHR annual allocation for Serbia is around €1.2 million.

EIDHR 2007/2008 - Under the 2007-08 EIDHR Call, which is implemented through the EIDHR 2013 Call for Proposals with available budget of EUR 1.2 million has been launched in May 2013 and the evaluation is now on-going.

## **EU PROGRES' support to civil society projects in Sandžak**

### Citizens' Involvement Fund

A significant part of EU assistance to civil society organizations (CSOs) in Sandžak has been provided through the European Partnership with Municipalities - EU PROGRES Programme and its Citizens' Involvement Fund (CIF), designed to fund small, short-term projects, which address community needs. Those projects have resulted from partnerships of the civil society organisations and local governments. EU PROGRES has organised two public calls for proposals within CIF in 25 municipalities in the South and South West Serbia. Through these two calls, the EU, with contribution from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), supported 66 projects in the amount of EUR 546,800. The EU remains committed to support the area, including civil society sector. Preparations for EU PROGRES successor programme are advanced: EU will provide additional EUR 19.6 million from 2014 to 2017 to support 34 underdeveloped municipalities. Activities will include organisation of two public calls to support proposals coming from CSOs from the targeted area. Partnerships with CSOs from the area will be explored in interventions contributing to social inclusion, gender equality, inter-ethnic cooperation, gender, free legal aid etc.

## **IPA 2012 Strengthening Media Freedom**

### Grants to media

Under the 2012 Strengthening Media Freedom Grant Scheme nineteen projects are funded in total value of the 1, 8 million of EUR. Size of grants is between 50,000.00 – 150,000.00 EUR for projects that will be implemented in Serbia and Western Balkan region within period of 12 – 24 months. The Strengthening Media Freedom Call for Proposals was launched to strengthen the freedom of expression and to improve professionalism of the media. The aim was to enhance investigative reporting through support of quality media production in the area of rule of law, i.e. good governance, human rights and minority protection, freedom of expression and regional reconciliation. The media outputs should raise awareness on the topics such as efficiency in administration of justice and work of the judiciary, law enforcement and fight against all forms of crime, support for refugees, IDPs and asylum seekers, fight against corruption, abuse of position and office, protection of media freedoms, regional cooperation and war crimes investigations and trials.

## **TA Implementation of the Media Strategy**

The project aims at enforcing the freedom of expression, democratisation of media and application of EU standards in the media field. It will support implementation of the “Strategy for Public Information

System Development in the Republic of Serbia by 2016” (The Media Strategy). The project will concentrate on aligning national media legislation with EU Directives and standards. At the moment project supports the Ministry in drafting the following media legislation: Public Information Law, Law on Electronic Media and Law on Public Service Media.

In addition the technical assistance will support the Ministry in the implementation of the newly harmonized legal framework through tailored trainings of key stakeholders (line ministries, regulatory and self-regulatory bodies, media industry and associations’ representatives, journalists etc.) and monitoring of different stages of implementation of the Media Strategy Action Plan. Once the Public information Law is adopted the project will provide capacity building to the Ministry to establish transparent criteria for the financing of the media through project based support.

The project will also work with the Republican Broadcasting Agency in the preparation of the new broadcasting strategy, in particular related to the market analysis which is the starting point for the new strategy.

Two pilot projects in media literacy are planned for 2015.

## 2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

### LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
To strengthen participatory democracies and the EU integration process in the Western Balkans and Turkey by empowering civil society to actively take part in decision making and by stimulating an enabling legal and financial environment for civil society and pluralistic media.	Quality assessment of existing legislation and policy framework Quality of structures and mechanisms in place for cooperation between CSOs/media and public Institutions	Independent assessments by I.O. and CSOs Progress reports	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
• To improve legal and financial environment which supports sustainability of CSOs • To improve legal, regulatory and policy environment for free expression and media	State funding frameworks for civil society support regulated Mechanism for permanent dialogue with civil society developed and operational Media legislation harmonised in line with EU standards and AVMS Directive	TO BE FILLED IN	Political stability and EU accession process continued; Accession negotiations on Chapter 23, 24 and 10 continued
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<b>Results to Objective 1:</b>  1.1 Government support to CSOs is available and provided in a transparent, accountable, fair and non-discriminatory way 1.2 CSOs' are able to communicate the results of their activities 1.3 Public institutions recognise the importance of CSOs in improving good governance through CSOs' inclusion in decision making and reform processes  <b>Result to Objective 2:</b> 2.1 Improved conditions for quality investigative journalism including modern/innovative approaches to increase quality and credibility of investigative journalism.  2.2 Independent and professional regulators preserve media pluralism and prevent unfair competition in media market.  2.3 Stimulate public's demand of quality journalism. Increase in media literacy and understanding of role of professional and ethical journalism in off-line and online media.	<b>Result 1</b> 1.1. Quality of state funding frameworks for civil society organizations (focusing on procedural document) 1.2 Public perception of importance and impact of CSOs activities 1.3 .Number of CSOs which take part in monitoring policies, EU and other donor funding and negotiation process  <b>Result 2</b> 2.1.Media attention paid to the relevant issue/topic (=amount of coverage) 2.2 The legislation provided for independent and professional operation of regulatory authorities without interference 2.3 Presence of self-regulatory bodies with relevant representation of the media community	<b>Result 1</b> TACSO monitoring Government Office for Civil Society annual report on budget allocations to CSOs  <b>Result 2</b> Media observatory monitoring reports EC Progress reports on Chapters 23 and 10 Media guidelines monitoring D3	Government is committed to implement National Strategy for development of civil society sector is Serbia Resources allocated in government budget to support implementation of national strategy Resources allocated in government budget to support CSOs Government remains committed to develop and improve legal and strategic framework for development of the media in line with Media Strategy Civil Society and media are responsive to the programme opportunities
ACTIVITIES	MEANS	OVERALL COST	ASSUMPTIONS

<p><b>Activities to achieve Result 1:</b></p> <p>1.1 Support provided to establish transparent mechanisms for financing of the civil society sector from the government budgets.</p> <p>1.2 Call for Proposals designed and launched in selected thematic areas covering Chapters 23 and 24, regional cooperation, support Dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, civil society participation in the process of negotiations in Serbia, as well as monitoring of the policies and EU and other donor funding.</p> <p><b>Activities to achieve Result 2:</b></p> <p>2.1 Call for Proposals designed and launched to support investigative journalism in the area of Rule of Law</p> <p>2.2 Support implementation of the Media Strategy - support two Public Broadcasters (RTS and RTV), independent and professional regulators, support the process of privatisation of 70 state owned media in terms of training/education for managers/owners/staff.</p> <p>2.3 Enhance ethical and professional standards in the media and support Press Council to improve their functioning and influence.</p>	<p><b>Result 1</b></p> <p>1.1, Technical assistance 1.2 Call for Proposals</p> <p>Result 2</p> <p>2.1 Call for Proposals 2.2 Technical Assistance 2.3 Direct grant</p>	<p><b>Result 1</b></p> <p>1.1- EUR 0.2 million (2015) 1.2- EUR 3.8 million (2015)</p> <p><b>Result 2</b></p> <p>2.1 - EUR 1.8 million (2014) 2.2 - EUR 0.5 million (2015) 2.3- EUR 0.2 million (2014)</p> <p><b>TOTAL</b> EUR : 6.5 million (2014-2015)</p>	<p>Effective participation of all stakeholders (the Office for Cooperation with civil society and the line ministries , the Ministry for Culture and Information, regulatory bodies, civil society and media sector</p>

## **ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION**

The programme aims at supporting civil society and media sector in Serbia in line with EU enlargement guidelines to support civil society and media freedom in Serbia.

Activities to achieve Result 1:

Activities 1.1- Technical assistance will be provided to establish transparent mechanisms for financing the civil society sector from the government budgets.

Activity 1.2 Call for Proposals including small grants, with the duration of 12-48 months. Grants will be between 300.000-500.000 in selected thematic areas covering Chapters 23 and 24, regional cooperation and support to the Dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, as well as to support civil society participation in the process of negotiations in Serbia. . In addition civil society participation in the process of negotiations in Serbia and policy monitoring, as well monitoring of EU and other donor funding will be enhanced through support for CSOs platform and networks and capacity building.

Activities to achieve Result 2:

Activity 2.1 - Call for Proposals to enhance investigative reporting through support of quality media production in the area of rule of law, i.e. good governance, human rights and minority protection, freedom of expression and regional reconciliation. Grant will be between 50.000- 150.000 and with duration of 12 to 24 months.

Activity 2.2 – In the form of Technical assistance support will be provided for two Public Broadcasters (RTS and RTV), independent and professional regulators, and support the process of privatisation of 70 state owned media in terms of training/education for managers/owners/staff.

Activity 2.3 - Provide direct support in the form of action grant to self-regulatory body Press Council for the period of 2 years that would also include regular informative press sessions on Council's activities and monitoring, research and analysis of media content; media campaign aimed to inform public of the role and importance of media self-regulation, and the role of the Council in enforcing it; public events on national and local level aimed at explaining the benefits of self-regulation to all target groups, including the public; consultation sessions for judiciary and newsrooms; seminars/lectures for journalism students.

## **3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The project will be implemented under Direct Management mode.

### **IMPLEMENTATION METHOD(S) AND TYPE(S) OF FINANCING**

The Contracting Authority shall be the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia for all activities planned under this programme.

Activity 1.1 Service tender;

Activity 1.2 - Call for proposal to CSOs, from 5 to 10 contracts;

Activity 2.1 - Call for proposal to Media, from 10 to 15 contracts;

Activity 2.2 - Service tender;

Activity 2.3 – Direct grant to the Press Council.

#### **4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

##### **METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)**

The implementation of the action will be monitored through different mechanisms:

Guidelines for EU Support to Civil Society in the Enlargement Countries and the Guidelines for EU support to media freedom and media integrity envisage monitoring and evaluation systems at different levels:

- CSOs and media will be involved for the yearly monitoring of indicators and results set in the Guidelines with the support of TACSO, the EU funded technical assistance programme for CSOs in the enlargement region, Framework partnership agreements related to media sector, as well as international organisations. Annual national and regional meetings will analyse the development of the sectors in all countries and the advancement towards the targets. The annual measurement of all indicators of the EU guidelines should provide the monitoring of specific objectives and results.
- A mid-term evaluation of the Enlargement support to CSOs in the enlargement countries should be carried out mid-way through the period (2017) to assess progress towards objectives and results as well as the continued viability of the strategy.
- A final evaluation should be commissioned at the end of the period (2020) to provide the necessary inputs for further support after the end of the current financial framework.

Monitoring framework of the grant scheme for civil society and media will be developed as a part of the larger framework mentioned above but also reflecting specifics of grants schemes that are limited in scope and time. Monitoring will be based on a set of indicators developed for grant scheme and embedded in the very call for proposals. The guidelines for applicants for each Call for proposals will include the indicators for the monitoring of the impact of the projects in the specific thematic area to be awarded. The applicants will be required to propose indicators that will measure the outcomes of their proposed activities and the impact of their activities on the target groups and beneficiaries. The aggregate impact of all actions undertaken by grantees will be measured after the end of the programme.

## INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Description	Baseline (2013 year)	Last (year)	Milestone 2017	Target 2020	Source of information
<i>CSP indicator(s) – if applicable</i>	N/A					
Action outcome indicator1 (Specific objective 1)	<i>State funding frameworks for civil society support regulated</i>	<i>Public funds for CSOs are not clearly planned within the state budget; State support is not transparent enough</i>	N/A	<i>50% of state financing to CSOs follows identified primary policy goals. 50% of the state funding is disbursed through Open Call procedure</i>	<i>70% of state financing to CSOs follows primary policy goals 70% of the state funding is disbursed through Open Call procedure</i>	<i>Government of Serbia, Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, annual report on budget spending TACSO monitoring; CSOs reports</i>
Action outcome indicator2 (Specific objective 1 )	<i>Mechanism for permanent dialogue with civil society developed and operational</i>	<i>28% of CSOs were consulted during the drafting specific laws, 30% of national strategies,</i>		<i>More than 40% of strategic, legal and normative acts and IPA funding consulted with CSOs</i>	<i>More than 50% of strategic, legal and normative acts and IPA funding</i>	<i>Government of Serbia, Office for Cooperation with Civil Society TACSO; CSOs reports</i>

Indicator	Description	Baseline (2013 year)	Last (year)	Milestone 2017	Target 2020	Source of information
		<i>21% of national action plans, 11% on IPA funding</i>			<i>consulted with CSOs</i>	
Action outcome indicator 3 (Specific objective 2 )	<i>Media legislation harmonised in line with EU standards and AVMS Directive</i>	<i>Law on Public information , Law on Electronic Media and Public Media Services drafted; Media strategy implementation delayed since 2011</i>	N/A	<i>Laws adopted and implemented; 50 % of the Media Strategy Action plan implemented</i>	<i>70 % of the Media Strategy Action plan implemented</i>	<i>Media observatory monitoring reports Technical assistance monitoring reports EC Progress reports on Chapters 23 and 10</i>
Action outcome indicator 1 (Result 1)	<i>Quality of state funding frameworks for civil society organizations (focusing on procedural document)</i>	<i>Public calls as a procedure of allocation of funds come only third with 18.8% of the total</i>	N/A	<i>50% of the funds are disbursed through Call for Proposals</i>	<i>70% of the funds are disbursed through Call for Proposals</i>	<i>Annual report of the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society on budget spending</i>

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Baseline (2013 year)</b>	<b>Last (year)</b>	<b>Milestone 2017</b>	<b>Target 2020</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
		<i>funds disbursed.</i>				
<i>Action outcome indicator 2 (Result 1)</i>	<i>Public perception of importance and impact of CSOs activities</i>	<i>34.5% of the general population believes that NGOs support is dealing with problems in their country</i>	N/A	<i>40 % of the general population believes that NGOs support is dealing with problems in their country</i>	<i>45% of the general population believes that NGOs support dealing with problems in their country</i>	<i>TACSO monitoring of the baseline , Government of Serbia, Office for Cooperation with Civil Society</i>
<i>Action outcome indicator 3 (Result 1 )</i>	<i>Number of CSOs which take part in monitoring policies, EU and other donor funds and negotiation process</i>	<i>8% of CSOs were consulted in the process of preparation of policy documents, 11% on IPA funding Platforms/networks established for monitoring the process of negotiation</i>	N/A	<i>30% CSOs were consulted in the process of preparation of policy documents and on IPA funding Platforms/networks included in the process of negotiations</i>	<i>50% CSOs were consulted in the process of preparation of policy documents and on IPA funding</i>	<i>The national strategy should set targets related to enabling legal and financial environment for CSOs, and inclusion of civil society in policy making processes by 2014.</i>

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Baseline (2013 year)</b>	<b>Last (year)</b>	<b>Milestone 2017</b>	<b>Target 2020</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
		<i>s</i>				
Action outcome indicator 1 (Result 2)	<i>Media attention paid to the relevant issue/topic (=amount of coverage)</i>	N/A		<i>To be defined at the contract signature</i>		<i>Monitoring will be based on a set of indicators developed for grant scheme and embedded in the very call for proposals. The guidelines for applicants for each Call for proposals will include the indicators for the monitoring of the impact of the projects in the specific thematic area to be awarded</i>
Action outcome indicator 2 (Result 2)	<i>The legislation provided for independent and professional operation of regulatory authorities, public service and media without interference</i>	<i>Law on Public information , Law on Electronic Media and Public Media Services drafted</i>	N/A	<i>Law on Public information, Law on Electronic Media and Public Media Services adopted, as well as necessary by-laws</i>	<i>Fully implemented</i>	<i>Media observatory monitoring reports Technical assistance monitoring reports EC Progress reports on Chapters 23 and 10</i>
Action outcome indicator 3 (Result 2)	<i>Presence of self-regulatory bodies with relevant representation of the media community</i>	<i>Unsustainable mixed media system Score 1,93</i>		<i>Near sustainability media system 2,30</i>	<i>Sustainable media system 3,01</i>	<i>IREX Media Sustainability Index</i>

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Baseline (2013 year)</b>	<b>Last (year)</b>	<b>Milestone 2017</b>	<b>Target 2020</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
Action output indicator 1 <i>Result 1</i>	<i>Transparent mechanism for development of civil society adopted</i>	<i>No strategy, to be adopted in early 2015</i>			<i>Strategy implemented</i>	<i>Government of Serbia, Office for Cooperation with Civil Society annual reports</i>
Action output indicator 2 <i>Result 1</i>	<i>Increased the effectiveness of the Serbian CSOs in undertaking initiatives focused on Chapters 23 and 24, regional cooperation and dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, CSOs participation in the process of negotiations, policy and EU and other donors funds monitoring</i>	N/A			N/A	<i>Indicators to be developed for grant scheme and embedded in the very call for proposals. Monitoring reports</i>
Action output indicator 1 <i>Result 2</i>	<i>Investigative reporting in the area of Rule of Law enhanced</i>	N/A			N/A	<i>Indicators to be developed for grant scheme and embedded in the very call for proposals. Monitoring reports</i>
Action output indicator 2 <i>Result 2</i>	<i>Public service media, regulators, self-regulators and professional associations strengthened to ensure freedom of information flows.</i>	<i>Media strategy action plan is delayed since 2011</i>		<i>50 % of the Media Strategy action plan implemented</i>	<i>70 % of the Media Strategy action plan implemented</i>	<i>Ministry of Culture and Information annual reports EC progress report on Chapters 23 and 10</i>
Action output indicator 1 <i>Result 2</i>	<i>Improved functioning and influence of Press Council</i>	N/A		N/A	N/A	<i>Indicators to be developed at the contracting phase. Press Council annual reports</i>

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Baseline (2013 year)</b>	<b>Last (year)</b>	<b>Milestone 2017</b>	<b>Target 2020</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
<i>Process indicator 1 Result 1</i>	<i>Service contract signed</i>	N/A			N/A	<i>EU Delegation monitoring reports</i>
<i>Process indicator 2 Result 1</i>	<i>Number of grants awarded to CSOs and projects monitored.</i>	N/A			N/A	<i>EU Delegation monitoring reports</i>
<i>Process indicator 1 Result 2</i>	<i>Number of grants awarded to media and projects monitored</i>	N/A			N/A	<i>EU Delegation monitoring reports</i>
<i>Process indicator 2 Result</i>	<i>Service contract signed</i>	N/A	N/A		N/A	<i>EU Delegation monitoring reports</i>
<i>Process indicator 2</i>	<i>Direct agreement signed</i>	N/A	N/A		N/A	<i>EU Delegation monitoring reports</i>

## **5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

### **ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)**

Although no direct impact on environmental protection is envisaged, the action will support strengthening of the civil society organisations to formulate action plans and to participate in the accession negotiations on relevant EU aquis .

### **ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY (AND IF RELEVANT OTHER NON-STATE STAKEHOLDERS)**

The civil society sector in Serbia was actively involved in the process of consultations regarding the guidelines to define the framework in line with specific needs of civil society sector in Serbia. In May 2013 the national consultations were organised with the purpose to identify which results and indicators from the Guidelines should be applied to the respective country. Draft Guidelines to support civil society have been consulted through TACSO mailing list that includes over 3,000 e-mail. In addition consultation workshop was organised with the participation of civil society organisations and representatives of the Serbian European Integration Office, the Government Office for Cooperation with Civil Society and Social Inclusion Poverty Reduction Unit and established SECO mechanism for Programming of IPA.

The media were also actively involved in the consultation process regarding media guidelines to identify specific country needs. TACSO organised consultation workshop with the Ministry of Culture and Information and the representatives of the media associations.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

Based on the fundamental principles of promoting equality and combating discrimination, participation in the project will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

### **MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS**

In all activities during this project steps will be taken to ensure that the rights of minorities are taken into account. The general tendency is to work simultaneously on minimising the consequences of energy poverty and promoting activities aimed at its prevention with an ultimate goal of ensuring energy sustainability in the long run.

## **6. SUSTAINABILITY**

Civil society organizations showed resilience in the times of recent economic crisis and their number significantly increased in the last 5 years, from 17,000 to almost 23000 in February 2014. Favourable legal framework and The Law on Associations adopted in 2009 contributed to this change. As noted earlier, most of the legal framework for effective operations of CSOs has been put in place, but challenges remain in several fields, and they still hamper the development of the sector in Serbia, in particular transparent financing of the sector from the state budget . Streamlining of the legislation that fosters institutionalized participation of civil society organizations in public administration reform, EU negotiation and other policy making processes (strategies, legislation and by-laws, as well as monitoring of EU and other donor funds) is also a target of this action. This horizontal change of the legislative framework (Law on Public Administration, Law on Local Self-Government, Rulebook of the Government of Serbia, etc.) in Serbia shall place CSOs in the center of policy making in Serbia and ensure enduring change.

The issue of financial support to CSOs will be at the heart of the action, first as the centrepiece in the implementation of the national Strategy for Enabling Environment for Civil Society development 2011-2018. Through the conceptualization of strategized, organized and transparent financial support

by national and local governments, and through philanthropy, this action shall stimulate operations of both urban and rural, big and small CSOs throughout Serbia. Secondly, the targeted grant scheme of new EU Call for Proposals will also contribute to independent and effective CSOs covering topics from the Aqui Chapters 23 and 24, fostering regional cooperation and support to the Dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, and ensuring civil society participation in the process of negotiations in Serbia and monitoring of the EU and other donor funds.

The economic crisis in Serbia has led to the reduction of the resources for established journalists and media. This further increased the pressure on professional journalism in the country, and has led to likely bypassing of important stories in particular those that relate to the rule of law. The issue of financial support to media as well as economic independence will be targeted by this action.

## **7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY**

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the Action.

The implementation of the communication activities shall be the responsibility of the beneficiary, and shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the Action.

The project visibility activities will be organised to promote the exchange of experiences, constraints and best practices achieved on the project.

The main aims of the publicity / visibility requirements are to increase the public awareness and transparency over the project activities and to inform potential beneficiaries about the project results. Publicity must be ensured in accordance with the applicable rules on the visibility of external actions laid down and published in the “Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions” available on: [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm).

The standard formats will be used in briefings, newsletters, press conferences, presentations, invitations, and signs, to highlight EU participation. The key tools of information and communication are:

- Media – press releases, press events, interviews, background papers, project visits
- Events – forums, information days, workshops, professional debates, seminars, conferences, project presentations, other regional events
- Publications – newsletters, brochures, leaflets, project information sheets, reports, studies, programme presentation summaries
- Publications Internet pages.

The actions shall aim at highlighting to the relevant target audiences the added value and impact of the EU's interventions.

It is the responsibility of the beneficiary to keep the EU Delegation fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.

The beneficiary shall report on its visibility and communication actions in the report submitted to the IPA monitoring committee and the sectoral monitoring committees.

