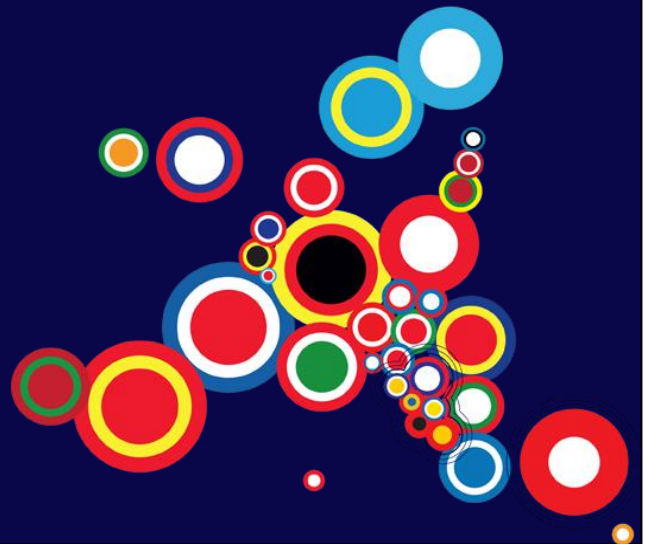




## INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

### SERBIA

#### Civil Society Facility and Media Programme 2016- 2017



#### **Action summary**

*The programme aims at supporting civil society and media sector in Serbia in line with the "Guidelines for EU support to civil society in enlargement countries, 2014-2020" and the "Guidelines for EU support to media freedom and media integrity in enlargement countries, 2014-2020".*

*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. Support in the form of long term grants, will be provided to increase the effectiveness of the Serbian CSOs.*

*Support to media will focus on enabling regulatory and policy environment for media freedom and media pluralism. Support in the form of long term grants will be provided for media productions and trainings of journalists.*



<b>Action Identification</b>	
<b>Action Programme Title</b>	Civil Society Facility and Media 2016-2017
<b>Action Title</b>	Civil Society Facility and Media Programme for Serbia
<b>Action ID</b>	IPA 2016/038-960.07/CSF & Media/Serbia IPA 2017/038-961.07/CSF & Media/Serbia
<b>Sector Information</b>	
<b>IPA II Sector</b>	Democracy and governance; sub-sector civil society Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights - sub-sectors civil society and media
<b>DAC Sector</b>	15153 Media and free flow of information
<b>Budget</b>	
<b>Total cost</b>	2016: EUR 3,2 million 2017: EUR 3,7 million
<b>EU contribution</b>	2016: EUR 3 million 2017: EUR 3,5 million
<b>Budget line(s)</b>	22.020401
<b>Management and Implementation</b>	
<b>Management mode</b>	Direct
<i>Direct management:</i> <b>EU Delegation</b>	Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia
<b>Implementation responsibilities</b>	N/A
<b>Location</b>	
<b>Zone benefiting from the action</b>	Republic of Serbia
<b>Specific implementation area(s)</b>	N/A
<b>Timeline</b>	
<b>Final date for concluding Financing Agreement(s) with IPA II beneficiary</b>	N/A
<b>Final date for concluding delegation agreements under indirect management</b>	N/A
<b>Final date for concluding procurement and grant contracts</b>	IPA 2016: 31 December 2017 IPA 2017: 31 December 2018
<b>Final date for operational implementation</b>	IPA 2016: 31 December 2021 IPA 2017: 31 December 2022

<b>Final date for implementing the Financing Agreement (date by which this programme should be de-committed and closed)</b>	N/A		
<b>Policy objectives / Markers (DAC form)</b>			
<b>General policy objective</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>
Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	×	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aid to environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	×	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality (including Women In Development)	×	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Development	×	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	×	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>
Biological diversity	×	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combat desertification	×	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change mitigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	×	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	×	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 1. RATIONALE

### PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The majority of associations, foundations and endowments in Serbia were formed after the year 2000. According to the data at the end of 2014, from the Serbian Business Registers Agency (SBRA), there are 26,042 registered national civil society organisations, out of which 25,416 associations and 626 foundations and endowments.

Although some positive trends are visible, the relationship between the government and CSOs is still marked by fragmented cooperation and a selective approach towards individual CSOs. The Guidelines for inclusion of civil society organizations in the regulation adoption process were adopted in August 2014 by the Government of Serbia. This is a positive progress that brings more systematic mechanism for the participation of the CSOs in decision making process. This document sets general principles, standards and rules for the participation of civil society in preparation of the laws and other regulations. The purpose of the Guidelines is to direct the work of public administration in regard to inclusion of civil society organisations in the process of preparation, adoption and implementation monitoring of regulations in order to provide their efficient and effective implementation. The levels of two-way participation is defined and includes information exchange, consultancy in planning and drafting strategic documents, regulations and participation of civil society in all phases of the regulation adoption process.

The Government Office for Cooperation with Civil Society stimulates the creation of an environment conducive to the development of civil society and a stronger partnership between the Government and CSOs. The Office drafted the first national “Strategy for enabling environment for development of CSOs in Serbia 2015 – 2019”. This document is a stepping stone for creating better national legal and financial frameworks for sustainable development of civil society, and its cooperation with state institutions.

The Strategy aims at giving citizens a stronger voice in influencing public sector reform processes in the context of accession to the EU. Highly participatory process involved both CSOs and the government which have been working together on defining needs and priorities, improving the legal framework regulating the work of CSOs, developing tools and guidelines for effective work of the governmental institutions, building capacities of all actors involved.

As integral part of the Strategy the first study about the status of civil society organisations was conducted using official records and statistics. The study provides an overview of the operation and functioning of civil society organisations (CSOs) in Serbia, as well as the data on institutional and legal framework for cooperation of state administration with the civil society. The study shows that the Parliament of the Republic of Serbia passed a total of 146 laws, of which 115 (79%) in an urgent procedure in the course of 2014. There is a pronounced trend for the public hearings to be conducted for a very limited number of acts, or not to be conducted at all in absence of a legal obligation to that effect. On the average, public hearings are conducted for one in ten acts adopted or submitted to the Government (10.5% of the total number of acts)<sup>1</sup>.

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. Based on the information of 80% of respondent institutions, agencies, and self-government from the survey, a total of 120 million EUR was disbursed at all levels of the government in Serbia in 2013 from the budget

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<sup>1</sup> Baseline Study for the Development of the first National Strategy for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development in the Republic of Serbia 2015–2019

line 481 dedicated for citizens' associations (out of which 46 million from the national budget). Around 20% of the amount is disbursed to political parties and 40% to sport clubs and associations, while only 40% was actually disbursed to citizens' associations.

With regard to media 2015 Serbia Progress Report concluded that this sector in Serbia is still facing the unregulated financing political and economic influence, the threats and violence against journalists remain of concern and that the overall environment is not conducive to the full exercise of freedom of expression.<sup>2</sup>

The implementation of the Media Strategy adopted in 2011 is ongoing. The Law on Public Information and Media, Law on Electronic Media and Law on Public Media Services were adopted in August 2014, what was considered as important step in implementation of the Media Strategy, after several years of delays.

The Ministry of Culture and Information launched the first Call for Proposals for project co-financing of media to achieve public interest in the field of public information in line with Law on Public Information and Media. However at the local level a number of problems occurred in the implementation of the Law in terms of selection process for project financing and appointment of the members of the evaluation committees. The privatisation of the media was concluded on 31 October 2015, but it is yet to be seen if this process will lead to increased transparency and media pluralism.

The Ministry is in the process of the preparation of a new media strategy and related action plan which is to replace the current Strategy for the Development of the Public Information System in the Republic of Serbia expiring in the end of 2015.

The Public Broadcasting Services RTS and RTV adopted the Statutes in line with the Law on Public Media Services. According to the Law public broadcasting services receive direct state budgetary support until 1 January 2016, when the licence fee will be reintroduced. However the government announced that financing of RTS and RTV in 2016 will be based on partial direct state budgetary support and limited licence fee. The allocated budget and small licence fee will endanger the financial stability and independence of the RTS and RTV.

The Regulatory body for electronic media is in delay with the preparation of all required by-laws in line with the Law on Electronic media and the Draft Strategy for Development of Radio Media Service and Audiovisual Media Services in the Republic of Serbia is still pending.

The media content in Serbia has deteriorated in quality and there is a noticeable lack of media content of public interest. The economic crisis in Serbia has led to the reduction of the resources in particular advertising budgets for media. This further increased the pressure on professional journalism in the country, and has led to lack of important stories in particular those that relate to the rule of law.

## **OUTLINE OF IPA II ASSISTANCE**

The programme aims at supporting civil society and media sector in Serbia in line with the DG Enlargement "Guidelines for EU support to civil society in enlargement countries, 2014-2020"<sup>3</sup> and the "Guidelines for EU support to media freedom and media integrity in enlargement countries, 2014-2020"<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2015/20151110\\_report\\_serbia.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2015/20151110_report_serbia.pdf)

<sup>3</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>4</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/press\\_corner/elarg-guidelines-for-media-freedom-and-integrity\\_210214.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/press_corner/elarg-guidelines-for-media-freedom-and-integrity_210214.pdf)

In line with the EU Guidelines support to civil society in Serbia will focus on enabling environment that is conducive to civil society activities and on development of mechanism for permanent dialogue with civil society. Support in the form of long term grants, including re-granting, will be provided to increase the effectiveness of the Serbian CSOs in the area of rule of law, with special emphasis on environmental protection, youth education, culture, etc. The thematic area of this intervention has been defined in the consultations with CSOs. In addition support for the functioning of the local Resource Centre to replace TACSO after 2017 is envisaged to strengthen the overall capacity and accountability of CSOs in Serbia and to guarantee the quality of services of CSOs and a sustainable role of CSOs in the democratic process. The project Capacity Building of Civil Society Organisations in the Western Balkans and Turkey (TACSO) commenced operations in August 2009 and will reach the end of its implementation in 2017.

In line with the EU Guidelines to support media freedom and media integrity, the programme aims at strengthening the freedom of expression and investigative reporting. Support in the form of long term grants, including re-granting, will be provided to media for media productions and trainings of journalists in the area of rule of law, with special emphasis on environmental protection, youth education, culture, etc. Technical assistance for enabling regulatory and policy environment for media freedom and media pluralism will focus on increase of media literacy and strengthening the role of public broadcasting services.

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

The Country 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 assistance are further implementation of the media strategy, strengthening the freedom of media and investigative journalism.

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

The process of drafting of the Strategy and the Study was entirely supported through technical support to the Office for Cooperation with the Civil Society within the framework of EU Civil Society Facility IPA 2011–2013. The process showed the weakness of the position of the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society within the system. The Office as an advisory body is placed within the General Secretariat of the Government. Although meant to carry out policy and strategic function, the Secretariat mainly serves as a technical support to the government. This has left the Office without a proponent which can ensure that the work of the Office fulfils the desired objective. Half-way solution was found with regards to the Strategy for CSOs development, which was finalized under the shield of the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government. This Ministry is mandated to officially propose the Strategy to the Government as the

Office's mandate is of limited advisory role. In some future government reconstructions, the place of the Office shall be carefully revised and better placing ensured for the Office to achieve higher impact.

The impact assessment was launched in the framework of the IPA 2012 Strengthening media freedom programme to assess the support through the Media Fund investigative reporting efforts. The assessment shows that there is a strong need for donor support to analytical and investigative journalism of public interest. According to many media practitioners, donor assistance is the only factor that enables them to strengthen freedom of expression and to serve the audience needs for a quality contents. It is the only assistance form that directly influences the increase of content production and contributes to credibility of media.

Evidence points to notable achievements of the 2012 Media Fund intervention in extending freedom of expression through supply of information on issues related to rule of law and audience participation in the debate, bringing increased understanding and awareness of citizens, as well as in increasing grant-beneficiaries' capacity for investigative journalism.



## 2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

### LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	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 (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil society and public institutions work in partnership through dialogue and cooperation based on trust and mutual acknowledgment of common interests</li> <li>• Improve legal, regulatory and policy environment for freedom of expression and media</li> </ul>	Mechanism for permanent dialogue with civil society developed and operational Media legislation harmonised in line with EU standards and AVMS Directive	Independent assessments by I.O. and CSOs Progress reports Media observatory monitoring reports Technical assistance monitoring reports EC Progress reports on Chapters 23 and 10	Political stability and EU accession process continued;
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<p><b>Result 1:</b> Results to Objective 1: 1.1 Public institutions recognise the importance of CSOs in improving good governance through CSO inclusion in decision-making processes 1.2 Increased capacities of the Serbian CSOs to address reform processes</p> <p>Result to Objective 2: 2.1 Improved conditions for quality investigative journalism including modern/innovative approaches to increase quality and credibility of investigative journalism. 2.2 Increase in media literacy and understanding of role of public broadcasting services, professional and ethical journalism</p>	<p>Result 1 1.1. Participation of CSOs in policy dialogue is ensured through adopted government mechanism 1.2 Public perception of importance and impact of CSOs activities</p> <p>Result 2 2.1. Media attention paid to the relevant issue/topic (=amount of coverage) 2.2 Public programmes to promote media literacy and public interest content are in place.</p>	<p>Result 1 Independent assessments by I.O. and CSOs Progress reports The Office annual study on status of civil society</p> <p>Result 2 Media observatory monitoring reports Technical assistance monitoring reports EC Progress reports on Chapters 23 and 10</p>	<p>National CSOs Strategy is adopted Resources allocated in government budget to support implementation of national strategy 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</p>

## **DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES**

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 support the implementation of the Strategy covering participation of CSOs in policy dialogue, increasing financial sustainability, role and contribution of CSOs to the EU integration process. In addition TA will be used for the monitoring of the grants to CSOs. Total budget is EUR 0, 7 million.

Activity 1.2 Call for Proposals to support CSOs in selected thematic areas covering rule law, with special emphasis on environmental protection, youth education and culture, etc. Grants will be between EUR 150,000 and EUR 300,000 with duration of 24 to 48 months and will include re-granting. Total budget is EUR 2, 2 million.

Activity 1.3 Open call for proposals to select an organisation or a consortium to take on the role of Resource Centre. The Resource Centre will replace TACSO at national and local level and continue providing capacity building and trainings for local and national CSOs. Total budget is EUR 0, 5 million

The activities to achieve the Result 1 will be financed through CSF 2017 budget allocation.

### Activities to achieve Result 2:

Activity 2.1 – Call for Proposals to enhance investigative reporting in selected thematic areas covering rule law, with special emphasis on environmental protection, youth education and culture, etc. Grants will be between EUR 150,000 and EUR 300,000 with duration of 24 to 48 months and will include re-granting. Total budget is EUR 2, 2 million.

Activity 2.2 – In the form of Technical assistance support will be provided for two Public Broadcasters (RTS and RTV) for creation of public interest content, to increase media literacy and understanding of role of professional and ethical journalism. In addition TA will be used for the monitoring of the grants to media. Total budget is EUR 0,7 million.

The activities to achieve the Result 2 will be financed through CSF 2016 budget allocation.

### Support measures activities

Support measures activities will be necessary for the assessment of proposals received under the Civil Society and Media Call for Proposals.

Support measure 1: Service for assessment of the applications for the Media Fund. Total budget is EUR 0.1 million.

Support measure 2: Service for assessment of the applications for the CSOs. Total budget is EUR 0.1 million.

Support measure 1 will be financed through CSF 2016 budget allocation and Support measure 2 will be financed through CSF 2017 budget allocation.

## **RISKS**

There are no major risks for the implementation of the Action. Continued government commitment to EU accession should remain unchanged, as well as political will to strengthen the cooperation mechanisms with civil society. Key stakeholders need to develop and improve the legal strategic and financial framework for the development of civil society. The adoption of the new set of media laws, the elaboration of related bylaws and the implementation of the first round of calls for co-financing of media projects by the Ministry of Culture and Information have proven the ministries' commitment to media reform. Some risks could be related to the lack of capacities among the CSOs and media to report / perform activities in the fields selected for support, such as environmental protection etc. The current situation related to the state aid for RTV/RTS, and their capacities for future functioning and absorption of the TA outputs are a risk to the sustainability and impact of that project as well. Backlash against independent reporting has occurred in the past with EU grants and could be an additional risk in implementation of the Media programme.

## **CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The condition for the implementation of the activities related to Result 1.1 will be the adoption of the Strategy for enabling environment for development of CSOs in Serbia 2015 – 2019. At the moment, the creation of the Strategy and its supporting documents has reached the final stage. The public debates finalised and the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-government (MDULS) launched inter-ministerial consultations. The adoption of the Strategy by the Government is expected by the end of 2015.

The condition for the implementation of the activities related to Result 2.2 will be the adoption of the new Media Strategy and related action plan which is to replace the current Strategy for the Development of the Public Information System in the Republic of Serbia expiring in the end of 2015. A methodology for design of the strategy was developed by the IPA 2012 Strengthening Media Freedom project. The media literacy strategy has already been drafted.

## **3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Main institutional stakeholders for the activities related to Results 1 will be:

- 1.1. Technical assistance: The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society
- 1.2. Grants scheme: Civil society sector in Serbia
- 1.3. Action grant: Resource centre

Main institutional stakeholders for the activities related to Results 2 will be:

- 2.1. Grants scheme: Media and journalists associations
- 2.2. Technical assistance: Ministry of Culture and Information, Ministry of Education and public broadcasting services RTS and RTV

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

The project will be implemented under Direct Management mode.

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;

Activity 1.3 – Open call for proposals to select the Resource Centre

Activity 2.1 – Call for proposal to Media

Activity 2.2 - Service tender Call for proposal to Media

Support measure 1: Service FWC

Support measure 2: Service FWC

## **4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

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

The European Commission may carry out a mid-term, a final or an ex-post evaluation for this Action or its components via independent consultants, through a joint mission or via an implementing partner. In case a mid-term or final evaluation is not foreseen, the European Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner. The evaluations will be carried out as prescribed by the DG NEAR guidelines for evaluations. In addition, the Action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures set in the Financing Agreement.

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

The "Guidelines for EU Support to Civil Society in enlargement countries, 2014-2020" and the "Guidelines for EU support to media freedom and media integrity in enlargement countries, 2014-2020" 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 IPA II beneficiaries 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 Civil Society Facility as the enlargement support to CSOs 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 indicators developed for grant scheme and embedded in the very call for proposals. The aggregate impact of all actions undertaken by grantees will be measured after the end of the programme.

## INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Baseline 2015	Target 2017	Final Target 2020	Source of information
CSP indicator (impact/outcome)...(1)				
<b>Specific Objectives</b>				
Action outcome indicator for Specific objective 1: Civil society and public institutions work in partnership through dialogue and cooperation based on trust and mutual acknowledgment of common interests -Mechanism for permanent dialogue with civil society developed and operational	28% of CSOs were consulted during the drafting specific laws, 30% of national strategies, 21% of national action plans, 11% on IPA funding	100% of strategic, legal and normative acts and IPA funding consulted with CSO	100% of strategic, legal and normative acts and IPA funding consulted with CSO	Independent assessments by I.O. and CSOs Progress reports The Office annual study on status of civil society
Action outcome indicator Specific objective 2 : Improve legal, regulatory and policy environment for free expression and media -Media legislation harmonised in line with EU standards and AVMS Directive	Laws adopted and implemented; New Media Strategy drafted.	70 % of the new Media Strategy Action plan implemented	100 % of the new Media Strategy Action plan implemented	Media observatory monitoring reports Technical assistance monitoring reports EC Progress reports on Chapters 23 and 10
<b>Results</b>				
Action outcome indicator for Result 1.1 Government policies encourage the development of civil society organisations - Participation of CSOs in policy dialogue is ensured through adopted government mechanism	On the average, public debates are conducted for one in ten acts adopted or submitted to the Government (10.5% of the total number of acts).  CSOs Strategy adopted	CSOs strategy 70% implemented	CSOs Strategy 100% implemented	Independent assessments by I.O. and CSOs Progress reports The Office annual study on status of civil society
Action outcome indicator for Result 1.2 Increased capacities of the Serbian CSOs in	34.5% of the general population believes that NGOs support is	45% of the general population believes that NGOs support	50% of the general population believes that NGOs support	Government of Serbia, Office for Cooperation with Civil Society annual

reform processes -Public perception of importance and impact of CSOs activities	dealing with problems in their country	dealing with problems in their country	dealing with problems in their country	reports TACSO monitoring reports
Action outcome indicator for Result 2.1 Improved conditions for quality investigative journalism including modern/innovative approaches to increase quality and credibility of investigative journalism - Media attention paid to the relevant issue/topic (=amount of coverage)	N/A Indicators will be developed by the each grant contract	N/A	N/A	Technical assistance monitoring reports
Action outcome indicator for Result 2.2 Increase in media literacy and understanding of role of public broadcasting services, professional and ethical journalism - Public programmes to promote media literacy and public interest content are in place.	New strategy for media literacy adopted and Law on public media services implemented	New strategy for media literacy 50 % implemented. PBS editorial independence ensured to fulfil public interest mission.	New strategy for media literacy 100 % implemented. PBS editorial independence ensured to fulfil public interest mission.	Media observatory monitoring reports Technical assistance monitoring reports EC Progress reports on Chapters 23 and 10

## **5. SECTOR APPROACH ASSESSMENT**

The work on the first national “Strategy for enabling environment for development of CSOs in Serbia 2015 – 2018” was marked with highly participatory consultation process involved both CSOs and the government which took place all over the country. More than 500 CSOs participated in the Strategy formulation from its beginning in February 2014. Most of them showed strong interest in having a better structured involvement in the provision of social services and social economy, and commitment to making Serbia a society of solidarity and equal opportunities.

Based on these consultations, the Strategy is organized in 4 sections and addresses the following key themes:

1. Institutional and legal set up: the chapter addresses current and needed capacities of national and local governments for engagement of CSOs in policy dialogue and policy-making; it also focuses on necessary changes in the legal framework to ensure more transparent and efficient communication between the two sectors.
2. The chapter on financial sustainability deals with financial and fiscal regulations that stimulate the development of CSOs, including also their operations. Furthermore, the chapter covers the issue of philanthropy (organizational and individual) to CSOs.
3. The chapter on the role and contribution of CSOs to socio-economic development of the country is based on the CSOs engagement in voluntarism, provision of social and health services, informal education and social economy.
4. Final section addresses the challenges and potential roles of CSO in the EU integration process.

The Media Strategy adopted in September 2011 is in process of implementation. The Ministry started the preparation of a new media strategy and related action plan which is to replace the current Strategy for the Development of the Public Information System in the Republic of Serbia expiring in the end of 2015.

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.



## **6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

### **GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

The promotion of gender equality is at the heart of European social and economic policies. Despite progress made over the past years, inequalities between women and men still remain in a number of domains.

The Action, being focused on bringing closer European values, represents the tool that will mainstream and provide an effective guide to all actors, to better implement gender mainstreaming and thereby better serve the needs of citizens, both women and men.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Equal participation will be secured through appropriate information and publicity material, in the design of projects and accessibility to the opportunities they offer. Enforcement of those principles is likewise ensured through specific administrative procedures applied in accordance with the Law on non-discrimination. All further research and analyses will be conducted using gender-sensitive methodology. 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. The calls for proposals will specify that CSOs which protect and promote the rights of these vulnerable groups will be in particular encouraged to apply. On the media front, the ethics trainings for journalists will include these aspects in particular.

### **MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS**

Equally, having in mind the demands of enlargement, and that the EU has increasingly articulated its aspiration to represent not only stability and prosperity, but also democratic values, articulated in Copenhagen political criteria for membership, the Action, through its visibility and communication activities, shall spread the message that compliance with basic democratic standards is more than a condition for entry; it is a condition of membership. Involvement of minorities through the participation in the activities will be encouraged. In all activities during this project steps will be taken to ensure that the rights of minorities are taken into account.

### **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 addition, a 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 established SECO mechanism for identification of the IPA II support for the period 2016 to 2017.

The media were also actively involved in the consultation process regarding IPA II support for the period 2016 to 2017 in the framework of "Strengthening media freedom" IPA project.

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

Direct impact on environmental protection and climate change is envisaged, through grant scheme to support policy dialogue between the government and civil society. The action will support strengthening of the civil society organisations to formulate action plans and to participate in the accession negotiations on relevant EU acquis.

## **7. SUSTAINABILITY**

Civil society organizations showed resilience in the times of recent economic crisis and their number significantly increased. Favourable legal framework and The Law on Associations adopted in 2009 contributed to this change. 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 and institutionalised mechanism for participation of CSOs in policy dialogue. Streamlining of the legislation that fosters institutionalized participation of civil society organizations in public administration reform, EU negotiation and other policy making processes is also a target of this action. The horizontal change of the legislative framework in Serbia shall place CSOs in the centre 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. Through the conceptualization of strategized, organized and transparent financial support by national and local governments, and through philanthropy, this action shall stimulate operations of 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 Aquis.

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 and EU acquis related issues. The issue of financial support to media as well as economic independence of public broadcasting media will be targeted by this action.

## **8. 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 funded from the amounts allocated to the Action.

All necessary measures will be taken to publicise the fact that the Action has received funding from the EU in line with the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions. Additional Visibility Guidelines developed by the European Commission (DG NEAR) will have to be followed.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the accession process. Actions shall be aimed at strengthening general public awareness and support of interventions financed and the objectives pursued. The actions shall aim at highlighting to the relevant target audiences the added value and impact of the EU's interventions and will promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

The action will be implemented in close cooperation with EU Information centre in Serbia. 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
- 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