

**Civil Society Facility 2013, amending the programme for 2011-2012**

**(8) Country Fiche: Serbia**

**1. Basic information**

**1.1 CRIS Number:** 2011/22-965; 2012/23-324; 2013/24-081

**1.2 Title:** Civil Society Facility Serbia Programme

**1.3 ELARG Statistical code:** 35 (Civil Society)

**1.4 Location:** Serbia

**Implementing arrangements:**

**1.5 Contracting Authority:** European Commission, EU Delegation to the Republic of Serbia

**1.6 Beneficiary:** Civil society organisations in Serbia and Office for cooperation with civil society

**Financing:**

**1.7 IPA contribution:** **Total: EUR 7 500 000**  
2011: EUR 3 000 000  
2012: EUR 2 000 000  
2013: EUR 2 500 000<sup>1</sup>

**1.8 Final date for contracting:**

30 November 2012 for the 2011 budget appropriations  
30 November 2013 for the 2012 budget appropriations  
30 November 2014 for the 2013 budget appropriations

**1.9 Final date for execution of contracts:**

30 November 2015 for the 2011 budget appropriations  
30 November 2016 for the 2012 budget appropriations  
30 November 2017 for the 2013 budget appropriations

**1.10 Final date for disbursements:**

30 November 2016 for the 2011 budget appropriations  
30 November 2017 for the 2012 budget appropriations  
30 November 2018 for the 2013 budget appropriations

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<sup>1</sup> Budget appropriations for 2013 are subject to the approval of the Budget Authority of the 2013 budget

## 2. Objective and Purpose

### 2.1 Overall Civil Society Facility Objective and Programme Purpose:

The Commission Communication on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007-8<sup>2</sup> and the latest Strategy Documents (2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011<sup>3</sup>) underline the importance of civil society being able to play its role in a participatory democracy.

The 'Civil Society Facility' (CSF) was set up in 2008 to financially support the development of civil society. This programme sets out the strategy and scope of activities for the CSF for the next three years, with associated budget appropriations for 2011 and 2012 as well as for 2013 subject to availability of funds for this purpose under the 2013 budget.

In line with the original vision for the CSF, the overall **objective** for the CSF programme for the period is: *'To contribute to anchoring democratic values and structures, human rights, social inclusion and the rule of law, thereby supporting the EU integration process.'*

The **programme purpose** is to achieve: *'A more dynamic civil society actively participating in public debate on democracy, human rights, social inclusion and the rule of law and with capacity to influence policy and decision making processes.'*

For the period ahead, the CSF will focus on the achievement of **three outcomes** which have been identified on the basis of needs analyses<sup>4</sup>, internal and external reviews, and feedback from EU Delegations responsible for national programming:

- Greater benefit of civil society from national legal and financial frameworks and improved dialogue with state institutions;
- Greater commitment and capacity of civil society organisation (CSO) networks to give citizens a voice and influence public sector reform processes through analysis, monitoring and advocacy etc; and
- Increased access of grass-root organisations and civic initiatives to financial resources, in-kind contributions or expertise from established CSOs and CSO networks.

### 2.2 Country Fiche Purpose:

- Support sustainable development of civil society and partnership with the government.
- Enhance active civil society participation in Serbia's EU integration.

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<sup>2</sup> COM (2007) 663 "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007-2008"

<sup>3</sup> COM (2008) 674 "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2008-2009"

COM (2009) 533 "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2009-2010"

COM (2010) 660 "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2010-2011"

COM (2011) 666 "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2011-2012"

<sup>4</sup> TACSO (2010): "Civil society organisations' capacities in the Western Balkans and Turkey - A comparative summary of the eight country CSO needs assessments"

## 2.3 Link with recent Enlargement Strategies and Progress Reports

The Enlargement Strategy 2010-2011 outlines the following:

*"Civil society activities are essential for a mature democracy, the respect for human rights and the rule of law. Such activities enhance political accountability, stimulate and expand the space for discourse on societal choices and strengthen the consensus for a pluralistic society. By contributing to a more open, participatory and dynamic democracy, a lively and vibrant civil society is also conducive to tolerance and reconciliation. The involvement of civil society organisations in the pre-accession process contributes to the quality of and public support for accession-related reforms.*

*A culture of acceptance and appreciation of the role played by civil society need to be in place to allow civil society organisations to engage in an effective policy dialogue. Public consultation on policy initiatives and draft laws should become the general principle. The access of civil society to government support is frequently hindered by a lack of transparency and poorly developed allocation criteria.*

*The civil society facility helps civil society organisations to strengthen their capacities and professionalism, allowing them to engage in an effective dialogue with public and private actors and to monitor developments in areas such as the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights. The facility finances initiatives at local level, regional networking and short-term visits to the EU.*

*The Commission has reviewed the facility to better reach out to local community-based organisations, taking into account feed-back from civil society organisations. The Commission will better target needs in each country and provide longer-term seed-funding to NGOs. Stronger, well-established organisations could become mentors and facilitators for smaller organisations."*

For Serbia the 2010 Progress Report further specifies that *"civil society organisations continued to be active in the social, economic and political life of Serbia and remain important in promoting democratic values. However, the legislation implementing the law on citizen's associations to prevent possible abuses regarding financing from the state budget is not yet adopted. Human rights defenders continued to be subject to harassment, verbal threats and physical attacks."*

The 2011-2012 Enlargement Strategy encourages the development of civil society and also recognises the importance of a role of civil society and NGOs in the enlargement countries, particularly in enhancing reconciliation among the citizens of the region. The Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Documents (MIPDs) 2011-2013 devotes special attention to the development of civil society, allocating more funds to enhancement of the role of civil society.

Similar to reports of recent years, the 2011 Opinion on Serbia's application for membership emphasises the importance of the civil society role in the social, economic and political life of Serbia. Although it acknowledges the establishment of the Office for Cooperation with civil society organisations, it notes that "...Cooperation between state bodies and civil society organisations remains on an ad hoc basis and is unevenly developed across Serbia..."

## **2.4 Link with Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document**

In the 2011-2013 Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD), Civil Society is referred to as a cross-cutting intervention, part of all the sectors supported by IPA. Among others, one specific objective for this period will be the improvement of environment for civil society, with more effective dialogue between civil society and the government and more effective civic participation in policy processes.

## **2.5 Link with Country Strategies on Civil Society**

In general terms, although there is no sector strategy for civil society, numerous national sector strategies, such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Strategy for Development of Vocational Education, the National Employment strategy, the National Youth strategy etc., recognise the importance of civil society and its active role in achieving set objectives. The *National Programme for Integration of the Republic of Serbia into the EU*, December 2009, chapter 1.1. "Democracy and rule of law" underlines further promotion of development of CSOs. Also, the *Stabilisation and Association Agreement* in its preamble considers the commitment to contribute by all means to the political, economic and institutional stabilisation through the development of civil society and democratisation.

The Office for Cooperation with CSOs will work on developing the *National Strategy for the creation of the enabling environment for the development of CSO*, which is important for the recognition of the importance and need for active CSOs.

## **3. Description of project**

### **3.1 Background and justification:**

Effective pluralism implies the respect for human rights, the rule of law and the possibility for political change. Civil society activities – often defined as primarily non-state, non-business and non-private activities – mirror this pluralism. They encourage citizens to organise themselves and to collaborate in their common interest. A thriving civil society contributes to a more open, participatory and consequently a more dynamic democratic society. Through its advocacy activities, civil society can help ensure that accession negotiations between the candidate country institutions and the EU are not merely technical discussions. Accession will only be successful when it is supported by citizens who understand the necessary institutional, political and economic changes.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) are well developed and play an important role in social, economic and political life in Serbia. The Law on Citizens' Associations was adopted on 8 July 2009. It regulates the establishment and legal status of associations, their financing, as well as other issues significant for the functioning of associations and for the first time, regulates the status and operations of foreign associations. The law requires all existing associations to re-register in line with the new registration requirements. By 31 May 2011 11,867 associations had completed this procedure. The Government has also adopted the Law on Volunteers and Law on Endowments and Foundations.

There are several operating networks of CSOs in Serbia.

*The Federation of Nongovernmental Organizations of Serbia* (FENS) was founded in 2003 to provide better exchange of information, promote civil society values, influence decision-makers and highlight issues relevant to the civil society sector. Currently, there are over 600

FENS member organisations from more than 120 municipalities in Serbia in all fields of CSO activity.

*The Coalition Against Discrimination* was formed with the support of the Swedish Helsinki Committee for human rights in 2005 by eight organisations from different fields of human rights protection and promotion from all over Serbia.

*The National Coalition for Decentralisation* (NCD) was created in 2006 gathering 64 CSOs from 24 municipalities in Serbia. A representative of the NCD became part of the newly formed National Council for Decentralisation, which consists of state representatives, MPs, and a number of experts, while CSOs are represented by the NCD.

There are two women's networks in Serbia, a network of SOS hotlines for women and children victims of violence, and a women's peace network "Women in Black" that has been operating since 1998.

*Trade unions* in Serbia are primarily organised through three Confederations or Trade Union Centres. These are the Confederation of Autonomous Unions of Serbia (SSSS), the Branch Union Confederation 'Independence' (UGS Nezavisnost) and the Association of Free and Independent Trade Unions (ASNS). There are also a number of company-specific unions, mainly organised in state-run enterprises, which are independent of the confederations.

*The Business Sector* in Serbia is connected through a number of geographic and professional associations. At the local level business subjects are gathered around Associations of Entrepreneurs, Associations of Producers and Associations of Vocational Workers. Associations of Entrepreneurs represent a significant segment which, however, is insufficiently developed.

*Consumer Associations* in Serbia are linked through the National Consumer Association of Serbia, which was founded in 2004 by 11 consumer associations and currently has 26 member associations at local level.

*The Network for supporting rural development* was established in 2010 with the aim of creating better living conditions in rural areas in Serbia.

*The Coalition for Oversight of Public Finances* was established in 2005 with the purpose of improving the transparency of public finances and the fight against corruption.

*The Serbian Youth Umbrella Organizations* (KOMS) was founded at a constitutional assembly held on 12 March 2011.

*The Network for Children* was established at a national conference in Sokobanja on 29 October 2010 when 43 representatives of CSOs from all over Serbia working on the protection and promotion of children's rights adopted the Platform of the Network of Civil Society Organisations for Children in Serbia.

The practice of networking and establishing partnerships among in CSOs in Serbia faces many difficulties, partly because networks are formed between organisations disparate in size and influence and partly due to the lack of resources and capacities. There is a need to promote networking concepts in Serbia based on more flexible, modern principles.

The Government has started to recognise the importance of civil society in the European integration process. There have been some good examples of various forms of consultation and cooperation between CSOs and particular state bodies: Parliament, Ministry for Public Administration and Local Self-Government, Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, Ministry for Youth and Sports, Serbian European Integration Office (SEIO) etc. The Ministry for Public Administration and Local Self-Government has suggested institutionalising the

cooperation with civil society and on 15 April 2010 the Government of Serbia adopted a decision on forming an Office for Cooperation with Civil Society.

The Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit initiated a programme entitled NGO Focal Points for the Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation, as a means of contributing to the development of communication and cooperation mechanisms between the Government and non-government sectors, thereby facilitating the definition of recommendations and opinions of a wider civil society forum and contributing to CSO participation in all related key processes.

At local level, both the mechanisms for cooperation with CSO and practice remain poor. However, in some municipalities there are units or responsible persons for cooperation with CSOs, such as Youth Councils and 114 Youth Offices, which were set up in municipalities or regions in Serbia with the support of the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

In 2009 the Sector for Programming, Management of EU Funds and Development Assistance (DACU) of the Ministry of Finance initiated consultations with civil society concerning the IPA Programming process. The first steps of this initiative contributed to the design of the IPA 2009 and 2010 civil society grants programmes. A survey was conducted to identify priority support areas, and nearly 70 CSOs responded, describing the sectors in which they felt that CSOs could have an important role to play within IPA programming and implementation. The survey was followed by a Civil Society Conference which took place on 28 May 2009 and provided a forum for direct consultation with civil society about IPA programming. Building upon the original electronic consultations, nearly 100 CSOs attended the Conference and participated in the working groups where the question of priority areas for CSO involvement was further explored. The results of the survey and the conference formed the basis for the design of the IPA 2009 and 2010 national programme on civil society.

On 18 January 2011, SEIO/DACU published an open call entitled *Programme of cooperation with civil society organisations in the area of development assistance planning, in particular programming and monitoring of the Instrument of pre-accession assistance* (the Programme) in order to establish a consultation mechanism with civil society organisations enabling their participation in the programming and monitoring of EU funds and other international development assistance. The main actor of the proposed Programme is the so-called 'Sector Civil Society Organisation' (SECO), which is a consortium of CSOs of maximum three partners where one is clearly stated in the application as a lead partner.

Each SECO will represent one sector. The definition of a sector corresponds to the Needs Assessment Document 2011-2013 of the Government of Serbia which identifies eight sectors in the programming of international assistance as follows:

1. Rule of law (including justice and home affairs, protection of human and minority rights etc.);
2. Public administration reform (including institution building and *acquis*, public finance management, decentralisation of powers, statistics, e-government);
3. Civil society, media and cultural rights;
4. Competitiveness (SMEs, R&D, ICT, tourism, business infrastructure, industry and trade);
5. Human resources development (employment, education, social inclusion and health, including youth);
6. Agriculture and rural development;

7. Transport;
8. Environment and energy (including waste, waste water, water supplies, mining etc.).

As defined in the Programme, the main activities of selected SECOs should be directed towards the development of communication mechanisms with SEIO/DACU with the aim of ensuring the participation of CSOs in the process of programming of international assistance and harmonising priorities with those defined by the state.

It is envisaged that SECO will develop and apply different communication mechanisms which will gather interested CSOs in order for them to engage jointly in issues related to development assistance planning, in particular IPA programming and monitoring in a specific sector.

Despite the above-mentioned achievements, the relationship between the government and CSOs is still marked by fragmented cooperation and a selective approach towards individual CSOs. The newly established Government Office for Cooperation with Civil Society provides an institutional framework for more structured cooperation arrangements. The Office will perform expert, administrative and operational tasks in the domain of the Government of the Republic of Serbia relating to the creation of an environment conducive to the development of civil society and the development of partnerships between the Government and CSOs as well as coordinate the cooperation between line ministries with CSOs. The Office for Cooperation with Civil Society will be the focal point of the Government for maintaining contact and communication with CSOs on issues relevant to the civil sector.

More specifically, the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society within its regular mandate shall:

- Initiate the adoption of regulations, other general instruments and public policy documents relevant to the legal and tax-related status of CSOs and monitor and/or be responsible for the implementation of the regulations and policies thereof;
- Initiate dialogue with civil society on policy issues, in particular those in the immediate mandate of a ministry of another Government agency;
- Collect and distribute information relevant to CSOs, organise round tables, conferences, trainings, seminars, workshops and study tours, publish publications and undertake other measures and activities aiming at raising capacities and sustainability of CSOs;
- Inform the public on the process of cooperation between the Government and CSOs, promote cooperation;
- Coordinate and encourage cooperation between ministries, other Government agencies and local government bodies with CSOs;
- Conduct activities of training and professional advancement of the staff in public administration and local governments, as well as other stakeholders, within its mandate;
- Provide logistic and other support to advisory Government bodies in terms of the development of civil society;
- Conduct activities relating to cooperation and exchange of experiences with similar Government institutions in the country, region and abroad;
- Participate in programming the EU pre-accession funds supporting civil society (IPA Funds) and other, as required;
- Participate in activities regarding the monitoring and evaluation of EU projects;
- Conduct other activities within its mandate;
- Provide technical assistance for the preparation of application documents for programmes open for civil society organizations (particularly EU funds).

The Government Office for the Cooperation with Civil Society was established in January 2011. To date only the Director and three members of staff have been appointed. The recruitment of an additional 10 staff members is expected by April 2012

As of 2012 the Office will be the national authority (focal point) for the EU programme 'Europe for Citizens' which promotes the concept of active European citizenship and supports inclusion of citizens in the process of European integration. The European Commission's DG COMM is in the process of preparing the MoU which is expected to be signed and ratified in spring 2012.

Serbia faces numerous challenges with respect to the status of civil society: As of December 2010, NGOs are exempted from 2.5% of taxes on gifts and donations on condition that they are performing activities of public interest. However, NGOs are still considered as enterprises in all aspects of their work. Furthermore, sustainable funding is a huge challenge for Serbian CSOs as they primarily depend on international donor support, while funding from public sources still lacks transparency and clearly defined criteria. Local philanthropy should be supported in order to obtain citizens' support to civil society and with the aim of to raise funds from local resources.

Recent surveys indicate that public opinion regarding the civil society sector in general is improving. However, an overwhelming number of citizens still have no knowledge or confidence in the work of the civil society sector.

Although civil society in Serbia is supporting the EU integration process, it is very important to improve CSOs' knowledge and skills concerning the European integration process in Serbia primarily through the exchange of knowledge, information and best practices with EU counterparts. This is particularly important at local level where further capacity-building, information dissemination and technical assistance is necessary. There is a need to work more on promoting the knowledge and understanding of the general public on what CSOs are, what they do and what their achievements are.

### **3.2 Activities:**

In order to address the above-mentioned issues, support to civil society will be provided using one or more of the methods of implementation mentioned under 4.1 of the main text of the Financing Proposal. The mechanism for selection on a regular basis of the type and method of implementation is also explained in there, as further developed under point 3.4 below.

The following activities have already been identified for support:

#### ***Measure 1: Creating an enabling environment for the sustainable development of civil society and a partnership with the Government***

The aim of this activity is to support the work of the newly established Office for the Cooperation with Civil Society on the improvement of the legal, strategic, financial and institutional framework for the development of civil society in Serbia. It will contribute to the enhancement and institutionalisation of a permanent dialogue, partnership and cooperation between the Government and civil society based on transparent and structured communication and a regular exchange of experience, information and opinions. In addition, it will strengthen the capacities of the public administration to create standards and procedures for cooperation with CSOs.



Furthermore, it will enable the development of instruments to secure financial sustainability of the civil society sector through transparent and effective support from the state budget and an efficient mechanism for the participation of citizens and CSOs in the process of drafting laws and other public policy instruments.

This programme component will be implemented through a service contract.

***Measure 2: Further strengthening CSOs capacities to participate in decision-making processes, and to monitor and evaluate the implementation of policies, strategies and laws.***

The aim is to strengthen the capacities of CSOs to participate actively in decision-making processes by developing their professionalism and improving cooperation, coordination and exchange of knowledge at national and local levels. Also, it will focus on increasing the ability of CSOs to advocate and lobby for creating an enabling environment for the development of civil society, especially with a view to initiating advocacy in policy and decision-making. Regular annual surveys of the Serbian NGO sector should be carried out in order to provide data for a comparative analysis (between Serbia and other countries) and to monitor the progress of Serbia's NGO sector in general.

Furthermore, this activity will support the development of CSOs' capacity to implement and monitor different EU policies and standards in Serbia. This capacity will be strengthened through the exchange of good practices and information between, on the one hand, CSOs in pre-accession countries and EU Member States and, on the other hand, counterparts and networks of CSOs in Serbia.

Specific thematic priorities of the Call for Proposals will be identified through consultation with CSOs, in cooperation with the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, as well as with the IPA programming unit of the Serbian European Integration Office and the newly established SECO mechanism for the programming of IPA.

***Measure 3: Support to civic and capacity-building initiatives to enforce the role of civil society at a local level***

To address the lack of capacity at local level, this activity will support community-based organisations with action grants, operating grants for newly established organisations, training grants for building specific capacities of the organisations, as well as events and communication grants.

A Call for Proposals will be launched to support well-established national CSOs which, within their respective area of competence, aim to strengthen the development of Serbian civil society development by reaching out to grass-root organisations.

**3.3 Expected results and measurable indicators:**

**Result 1:** Dialogue between the government and civil society is enhanced by strengthening the capacities of public administration at national and local level to cooperate with civil society through the Office for cooperation with CSOs

**Measurable indicators:**

- A mechanism for permanent dialogue, partnership and cooperation between the government and civil society adopted and implemented;

- A National Strategy for the creation of an enabling environment for the development and sustainability of civil society organisations adopted;
- Instruments for financing of the civil society sector developed;
- A number of draft laws and by-laws enabling sustainable development of civil society drafted;
- Criteria and procedures adopted for cooperation of public authorities both on national and local level with CSOs;
- A training programme to strengthen CSOs' capacities to participate in decision-making processes established.

**Result 2:** CSOs actively involved in developing, implementing and monitoring policies and actions based on best EU policies and practices.

**Measurable indicators:**

- At least 10 projects approved that support the active participation of CSOs in the development, implementation and/or monitoring of public policies and EU standards at national and local level;
- Effective dialogue established between civil society and the government and more effective civic participation in policy processes instituted;
- Annual surveys of NGO sector performed to monitor progress of NGO sector in Serbia.

**Result 3:** Enhanced capacities of community-based organisations to advocate and actively participate in community development

**Measurable indicators:**

- Minimum of 2 well-established CSOs selected to provide capacity-building of the grass root organisations and to support activities at the local level;
- Specific capacities of grass-root organisations strengthened for civic action at the local level;
- The number of grass-root organisations in rural and undeveloped areas in Serbia increased.

**3.4 Selection mechanism:**

Activities relating to Result 1 will be implemented through a service contract. In addition, the same service contract will be used for the implementation of the activities envisaged under Results 2 and 3. The responsibilities of the Technical Assistance team will be the following:

- Technical Assistance to the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society to achieve the result for measure 1;

- Assistance to the EU Delegation in designing the thematic focus of the grants scheme through the consultations with civil society and needs assessment;
- Assistance to the EU Delegation in preparing and publicising the Call for Proposals through a wide information campaign;
- Assistance to the EU Delegation in assessing the project proposals received following the call for Proposal and ongoing support to grant beneficiaries and monitoring of projects

Activities 2 and 3 will be implemented through Calls for Proposals that will be organised once per year and managed directly by the EU Delegation.

### **3.5 Conditionality and sequencing**

The commitment of the government is necessary to implement measure 1 of the project. Prior to the tender launch, the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society will have needed to recruit a minimum of three staff. Adequate resources in staff and funding should be provided for the smooth operation of the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society in the next three years.

Building on past experience in the programming of IPA 2009 and 2010 National Programmes, the thematic priorities of the Call for Proposals will be identified through consultation with civil society organisations. Civic Initiatives carried out a comprehensive baseline NGO survey in June 2011 that provides data on the status of the NGO sector in Serbia. The survey uses Serbian Business Registry Agency (SBRA) data. It is estimated that there will be over 12,000 registered NGOs in the SBRA. Findings may be used as a starting point for all future NGO capacity building initiatives.

### **3.6 Linked activities**

#### **3.6.1 Other donors**

USAID is funding the Civil Society Advocacy Initiative (CSAI). The Initiative is being carried out by the ISC (Institute for Sustainable Communities) in cooperation with the local organizations Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF), Civic Initiatives, the European Center for Non-Profit Law (ENCL), and the SMART Collective.

The World Bank has been running a Small Grants / Civil Society Fund Program for Serbian CSOs since 2004. The programme provides grants to CSOs to promote dialogue and disseminate information about development.

The Regional Environmental Sector for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) has initiated the SECTOR Framework Programme (Supporting Environmental Civil Society Organisations in South Eastern Europe) in cooperation with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The Programme started in 2007 and is still active.

Bilateral donors in Serbia are still very active in their support to CSOs to promote the development of democracy and support CSOs through various individual projects.

#### **3.6.2 IPA national programme**

##### **IPA 2007/2008 Strengthening Serbia- EU Civil Society Dialogue: EU funding EUR 4 000 000**

The project aims at strengthening the capacity of CSOs and raising awareness of the role of civil society in political processes, facilitating networking and partnership-building between CSOs and increasing knowledge about EU integration, its policies and institutions.

##### **Priority IPA 2007 (EUR 2 000 000)**

Support cooperation between professional organisations in Serbia and the EU in strengthening contacts and a mutual exchange of experience between the business community, professional organisations and social partners

##### **Priorities IPA 2008 (EUR 2 000 000)**

- Improve the capacity of CSOs in formulating public policy, policy analysis and advocacy

- Increase new partnerships and networks between CSOs in Serbia and EU member states

Grants awarded under these programmes are between EUR 50 000 and EUR 150 000 with a maximum duration of 12 months. 32 contracts were signed in June 2010.

**IPA 2009 and 2010- Support to Civil Society**  
**(EUR 4 000 000)**

Programme priorities IPA 2009:

- Anti-discrimination and tolerance.
- Cultural diversity and pluralism.

Programme priorities IPA 2010:

- Local socio-economic development.
- Public polices and EU standards at local level.

The size of grants awarded under these programmes is between EUR 50 000 and EUR 150 000 with a maximum duration of 12 months. 43 grants contracts were signed on 28 June 2011.

### **3.6.3 EIDHR**

**EIDHR 2005/2006** - Call for Proposals under the campaign "Fostering a Culture of Human Rights and Advancing Equality, Tolerance and Peace". Budget available: EUR 1.28 million. 21 micro-projects were contracted and successfully implemented.

**EIDHR 2007/2008** - Under the 2007-08 EIDHR Call, which is implemented through the mechanism Country-based support scheme (CBSS), the available budget was EUR 1 500 000. 22 projects were successfully contracted and signed publicly at a ceremony on 10 December 2008 marking the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The projects tackle a wide variety of issues critical for the country's democratisation including: human rights education, human trafficking, readmission, torture, protection of human rights, promotion of economic, social and cultural rights, religious tolerance, children rights, inter-ethnic and inter-cultural tolerance, etc.

**EIDHR 2009** This Call for Proposals provided another opportunity for Serbian organisations, with increased funds now amounting to EUR 1 200 000. The general objective of the Call is to strengthen the role of civil society in promoting human rights and democratic reforms, in supporting conflict prevention and in consolidating political participation and representation. 19 projects were successfully contracted on 14 December 2009. The Call covers micro-projects (individual grants from EUR 10 000-100 000) and co-financing of 95% and thus allows for smaller organisations to also benefit.

**EIDHR 2010** Call for Proposals with the same priorities and budget was launched at the end of April 2010. Grants awarded under these programmes are between EUR 10 000 and EUR 100 000 with a maximum duration of 24 months. 19 contracts were signed in December 2010.

Regional projects The EU Delegation contracted three regional projects targeting Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, aiming at torture prevention or rehabilitation. The projects are managed by the local non-governmental organisations: International Aid Network and Belgrade Center for Human Rights.

**EIDHR 2011** Call for Proposals with the same priorities and budget will be launched in the course of this year.

### **3.6.4 IPA multi-beneficiary programme**

#### **IPA 2008 Multi-beneficiary “Civil Society Facility” (EUR 16 500 000)**

##### Technical Assistance (EUR 6 700 000)

The objective of the Technical Assistance (TA) is to support CSOs of the beneficiary countries and territories by increasing their capacity, improving their democratic role and promoting networks of CSOs across regional borders.

The project covers the following activities: establishment of assistance desks in each of the countries, training of CSOs, organisation and implementation of information and partnership events, mapping, assessing and facilitating the legal and financial framework for civil society in the countries, creation and management a CSO web-portal, monitoring and guidance of projects and provision of ad-hoc advise and recommendations to CSOs, governments and donors.

Local Advisory Groups (LAGs) have been established under the TACSO project in all countries. LAGs consist of representatives from EU Delegations, governments, civil society, other donors, etc. The purpose of the LAGs is to discuss needs, to coordinate interventions and to discuss strategic issues for civil society, serving as consultative mechanism.

From 2011 TACSO has been facilitating access to information regarding People 2 People programmes, carrying out transparent pre-selection procedures, and multiplying the effects of the P2P study tours through planned national follow-up activities.

##### “People 2 People” Programme (EUR 4 000 000)

The purpose of the programme is to stimulate civic participation in the region by offering individuals and CSOs the possibility of participating in short-term visits to EU institutions and organisations, becoming familiar with a number of key EU policies and legislation and creating the opportunity for CSOs to interact, network and significantly influence public policy.

##### Partnership Actions (EUR 5 400 000)

These actions complement the activities already launched under the national civil society dialogue programmes and aim at establishing partnerships between one or more organisations locally and organisations in the EU. The activities covered under the partnership actions focus particularly on the following sector priorities:

##### Environmental Forum (Service Contract, EUR 300 000)

The objective is to strengthen NGO/EC platform/system of information and discussion.

##### Environment, Energy Efficiency, Health and Safety at Work (Grant contracts: EUR 3 780 000)

The objective is to develop networks and partnerships in the region and at the EU, to encourage intervention and transparency of public administrations; and to foster public awareness on good practices and legal measures.

Fight Against Corruption, Organised Crime and Trafficking (Grant contracts: EUR 1 620 000)

The objective is to enhance transparency and public access to self-information, strengthen citizens' awareness and participation, promote the rule of law, campaign for a greater accountability of public administrations, create structure for constant monitoring of the implementation of reforms, and develop CSOs networks.

**IPA 2009 Multi-Beneficiary “Civil Society Facility”: Partnership Actions (EUR 10 000 000)**

Activities to be covered under the partnership actions focus on the following sector priorities:

Socio-economic partners (Grant contracts: EUR 5 000 000)

The objective is to develop strong regional partnerships between CSOs concerned with socio-economic issues from the region itself and with their EU counterparts and public authorities as well as to enhance the transparency and the accountability of CSOs.

Minorities and vulnerable group organisations (Grant contracts: EUR 2 500 000)

The objective is to improve cooperation between CSOs and public authorities with special emphasis on the implementation of compatible measures for the better integration of minorities and vulnerable groups.

Cultural organisations (Grant contracts: EUR 2 500 000)

The objective is to improve public access to all types of culture and to enhance European identity on the basis of common values

### **3.7 Lessons learned**

The examples of good practice show that civil society can play an important role in the policy-making process in Serbia. The development both of the National Youth Strategy and of the Youth Law has been carried out by the Ministry of Youth and Sports in partnership with CSOs. In the same way, the drafting of the development strategy of the Ministry of the Interior was based on findings and opinions of relevant CSO. The Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning has signed a memorandum of cooperation with 120 CSOs.

In the field of HIV prevention and reproductive health, the Ministry of Health is implementing activities in close cooperation with CSOs. The Ministry of Justice has included representatives of CSOs in the working group established for drafting the Law on Financing of Political Parties. The Ministry of Social Policy and Labour consulted a considerable number of CSOs when drafting the Law on the Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities. The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights involved CSOs in drafting the interim report on implementation of international agreements in the area of human rights and implementation of Roma advancement strategy.

Serbian society still needs to build an effective consensus on EU accession. In view of the recent drop in support for the Serbia's EU membership among its citizens, it is important to

try to improve knowledge in Serbia about the opportunities and challenges of future EU enlargement and increase Serbian citizens' understanding of the European Union, including the values on which it is founded. In the same way there is a need to increase the knowledge of CSOs to allow them to better understand EU policies. The exchange of knowledge between EU and Serbian civil society is crucial in this process.

There is a strong need for continued provision of capacity building in the form of both trainings and direct mentoring support, particularly for smaller and rural CSOs. Bearing in mind the results of the previous calls for proposals for National IPA programmes, the capacities of professional associations, trade unions, cultural associations and institutions should be strengthened in the coming period.

For all advanced training in civil society management, fund-raising, project proposal writing, citizens' participation in decision-making processes and advocacy and lobbying, CSOs' interest has been exceptionally high. The TACSO office now receives on average 150 different requests for TA support per month. The full impact of the TACSO training, TA field sessions, and direct TA will be assessed in the following period.

In the area of creating a favourable environment for civil society and strengthening their democratic role, TACSO has recognised that the most effective way of providing meaningful support is through the principle of building on existing national initiatives.

#### 4. Indicative Budget (in EUR)

	<b>EU - IPA assistance 2011-2013 (indicative for budget appropriations 2013) All Institution Building</b>				<b>Total Co-financing of Project 2011-2013 (indicative)</b>	<b>Total IPA + Co-financing 2011 -2013</b>
	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total 2011-2013</b>		
<b>Measure 1 (service contract)</b>	1 200 000	-		1 200 000	-	1 200 000
<b>Measure 2 (call for proposals)</b>	900 000	1 000 000	1 500 000	3 400 000	340 000	3 740 000
<b>Measure 3 (call for proposals)</b>	900 000	1 000 000	1 000 000	2 900 000	290 000	3 190 000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3 000 000</b>	<b>2 000 000</b>	<b>2 500 000</b>	<b>7 500 000</b>	<b>630 000</b>	<b>8 130 000</b>



## **5 INDICATIVE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE (PERIODS BROKEN DOWN PER QUARTER)**

Contracts	Start of Tendering	Signature of contract	Project Completion
Service contract (IPA 2011)	Q4 2011	Q2 2012	Q4 2015
Call for Proposals (IPA 2011)	Q1 2012	Q3 2012	Q4 2015
Call for Proposals (IPA 2012)	Q4 2012	Q4 2013	Q4 2016
Call for Proposals (IPA 2013)	Q4 2013	Q4 2014	Q4 2017

## **6. Cross-cutting issues**

### **6.1 Equal Opportunity**

The project is encouraging the equal opportunity dimension in all activities covered.

### **6.2 Environment**

Although no direct impact on environmental protection is envisaged, the implementation of the project will support the strengthening of the ability of CSOs to formulate action plans and to enforce existing and future environmental legislation both at national and local level.

### **6.3 Minorities**

The project will support actions that will assist further development of CSOs dealing with minority issues. The project should focus on capacity-building activities of these organisations at local level. On the other hand the grants should help to build knowledge about minority cultures in Serbia.