

EU ENLARGEMENT FACTSHEET

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SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE CONTEXT OF EU ENLARGEMENT

A strong civil society is essential for democracy. Civil Society Organisations (CSO) play a key role in EU integration because they can help to push reforms. Civil societies in candidate countries and potential candidates often lack influence and engagement with governments. These CSOs require training and support to strengthen their capacities and to actively participate in the accession process. Building strong civil societies in the enlargement region thus supports the EU integration process.

Civil society refers to the principal structure outside of government or public administration. Civil Society Organisations may include:

- Professional associations
- Trade unions
- Employers' associations
- Charities
- Human rights organisations
- Women's organisations
- Advocacy groups
- Other social groups

FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY

The European Commission supports civil societies in countries wishing to join. As part of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), the Civil Society Facility programme (CSF) was set up in 2008 and has received approximately 164 million EUR between 2008 and 2013. The programme comprises both national and multi-beneficiary initiatives.

The CSF aims to:

- **Strengthen democratic values** and structures, human rights, the rule of law and social inclusion
- **Develop a more dynamic civil society** that actively engages in politics and has the capacity to influence policy and decision making processes

The programme is based on three strands:

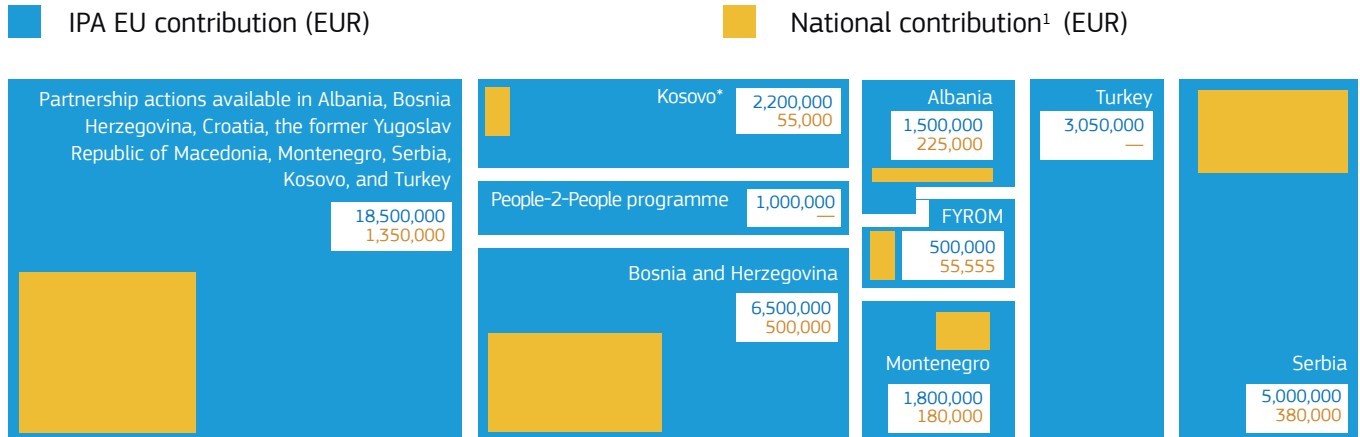
Support for local civic initiatives and capacity building

The People 2 People programme supporting visits to EU institutions and international and regional networking opportunities

Partnership Actions to develop networks between CSOs and promote transfers of knowledge and experience

In **2011** and **2012** a maximum budget of **40,050,000 EUR** was made available by

the European Union for the CSF covering an implementation period of the following three years.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO CIVIL SOCIETY

Since **2009** the EU-funded project [Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations \(TACSO\)](#) has supported

CSOs in the enlargement countries. Over **30 professionals** work in the **8 countries**.

Accomplishments in the **first 2 years** include:

Capacity building:

- **5 regional training programmes**
- **200 national trainings**
- **E-learning courses for CSO** management
- Guides for trainers
- Regional training programme manuals
- Local TACSO offices connecting **over 800 institutions and individuals**

Networking and partnerships among CSOs:

- Events attended by 1800+ civil society reps
- 3 regional level conferences

Future plans include:

- Increase dialogue and cooperation with Albanian governmental institutions
- Study visits across borders and to the EU
- Improve visibility of CSOs
- Establish and strengthen national and regional networks
- Develop CSO cooperation within countries and on cross-border level

¹ Public and private national and/or international contribution provided by national counterparts

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.