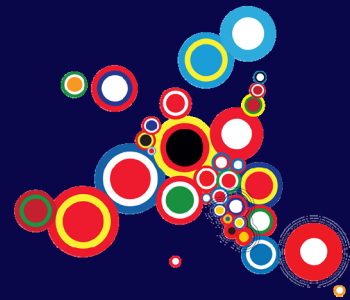




INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

Kosovo*

Civil Society Facility and
Media Programme 2018-
2019



Action summary

The action will strengthen the civil society and media sector in Kosovo in line with the *"Guidelines for EU support to civil society and for media freedom and media integrity in enlargement countries, 2014-2020"*.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

Action Identification	
Action Programme Title	Civil Society Facility and Media Programme 2018-2019
Action Title	Civil Society Facility Kosovo
Action ID	IPA 2018/040-646.05/CSF & Media/Kosovo IPA 2019/040-647.05/CSF & Media/Kosovo
Sector Information	
IPA II Sector	9. Regional and territorial cooperation
DAC Sector	15150 – Democratic participation and civil society
Budget	
Total cost	2018: EUR 825 000 2019: EUR 3 175 000
EU contribution	Total: EUR 3 700 000 IPA 2018: EUR 750 000 IPA 2019: EUR 2 950 000
Budget line(s)	22.020401 – Multi-country programmes, regional integration and territorial cooperation
Management and Implementation	
Management mode	Direct management
<i>Direct management:</i> European Commission	EU Office in Kosovo
Implementation responsibilities	N.A.
Location	
Zone benefiting from the action	Kosovo
Specific implementation area(s)	N.A.
Timeline	
Final date for concluding Financing Agreements with IPA II beneficiary	N.A.
Final date for contracting delegation agreements under indirect management	N.A.
Final date for concluding procurement and grant contracts	IPA 2018: 31 December 2019 IPA 2019: 31 December 2020
Indicative operational implementation period	72 months from the adoption of this Financing Decision

Policy objectives / Markers (DAC form)			
General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality (including Women In Development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. RATIONALE

PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The EU-Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) which entered into force in 2016, is the first contractual relationship between the European Union (EU) and Kosovo. It is composed of a comprehensive framework for closer political dialogue and economic relations and determines the necessary formal mechanisms and timeframes for the implementation of reforms, aimed at progressively aligning Kosovo with the EU in all policy fields.

During the same year the European Commission and Kosovo launched the European Reform Agenda (ERA) aimed at guiding Kosovo's efforts for the necessary reforms under the implementation of the SAA. For this purpose, short term priorities have been agreed in the areas of good governance and the rule of law, competitiveness and investment climate.

Civil Society and Media organisations are considered as partners in the EU path providing an important contribution to the reform process through their programmes and their independent oversight role.

EU support to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) aims at building stronger democracies, improving accountability systems and ultimately achieving better policy and economic and social development. It seeks to empower civil society to fulfil the following key roles:

- Creating stronger links to citizens by engaging in public policy processes, reaching out to society as a whole including marginalized groups and grass-root communities and encouraging civic activism across all areas;
- Becoming professional and reliable partners in the policy-making and reform process through evidence-based advocacy across all sectors;
- Contributing to enhancing responsible leadership in the political, economic and social spheres and provide early warning in case of societal change,
- Strengthening economic development and create better links with business by promoting entrepreneurship, social innovation and job creation.

In spite of increased demanding role in public policy making, civil society in Kosovo is still far from stimulating citizens' demand for economic and social reforms through collective and choral advocacy actions. Very few thematic coalitions and networks have been created mainly as one of the requirement to access donors' funds.

Overall the situation of the civil society in Kosovo remains uneven and has not significantly changed over the last two years. The majority of active CSOs have limited management and advocacy capacities, work at the grassroots level with short-term funding and implement mainly community-based programmes. A handful of well-established CSOs with track record of projects, long-term funding history are highly involved in policy making and dominate the civil society scene in their respective areas of competence.

As regards thematic expertise, many NGOs still remain undetermined. In general, there is an unbalanced focus on topics related to the political criteria while few organisations are able to provide technical inputs as regards economic criteria or other EU standards.

Some efforts have been made to improve internal rules and transparency within and outside the organisations and to encourage cooperation and thematic networks. However ethical standards and codes of conduct remain problematic for organisations with limited capacities and resources as well as for well-established CSOs.

Relations between CSOs and their constituencies in general are weak, formal or inexistent, as civil society agendas do not necessarily reflect the needs of society or their constituencies. This scenario is mirrored by the public perception of CSOs as not sufficiently accountable actors with lack of genuine and active involvement of citizens. Ethnical division constitutes an additional factor which further compromises the polarisation of the sector with no initiatives Kosovo wide or CSOs coalitions working effectively on reconciliation between communities.

As pointed out in a recent report of the EU financed Technical Assistance to CSOs – TACSO - the visibility and reputation of CSOs could benefit from the potential of an enhanced cooperation with the media sector which so far has not materialised into concrete initiatives.

Cooperation with the cultural and audio-visual sector is sporadic and should be sought more systematically on EU-related matters since it has proved to be a powerful tool to communicate EU values, raise citizens' interest in public life and promote free and tolerant circulation of views and ideas in the society.

As regards financial sustainability, civil society in Kosovo is heavily dependent on donors and public funding with almost no organisation financially autonomous and very few running revenue generating initiatives to support their no-profit making programmes. Social entrepreneurship and social economy represent opportunities for enabling environment in the long-run. In Kosovo, the ecosystem¹ for social economy and social entrepreneurship is still at an embryonal phase of development².

The effectiveness and quality of the dialogue between CSOs, Kosovo institutions and the EU represents a challenge for the long-term sustainability and governance of reforms needed as part of Kosovo's European perspective.

As illustrated in the Kosovo 2018 Report³, progress was made in improving cooperation between civil society and the central government. The government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society 2013-2017 (the Strategy) has pursued its priorities⁴ in line with the main objectives of the Civil Society Facility (CSF) and the "*Guidelines for EU support to civil society for enlargement countries 2014-2020*" (EU Guidelines). The EU has supported the implementation of the strategy through technical assistance (CSF 2015) to the Office for Good Governance in charge of monitoring and reporting against performance indicators.

The entry into force in 2017 of the two Regulations setting the standards for public consultation⁵ and criteria and procedures for public funding of NGOs⁶, have paved the way for a new approach in public administration toward higher level of governance and transparency on the use of public funds. The Kosovo government has publicly reported on funds disbursed to NGOs and Sport Organisations during the years

¹ The ecosystem for social economy and social enterprises entails among other components the legal framework, fiscal regime, harmonisation of public procurement rules, coordination with private sector development (in order to limit the risk to alter competition in the market and put obstacles to the private sector development), coordination with the judiciary: e.g. re-direct the use of assets confiscated from criminal organisations for social purposes.

² A study on '*Social Economy in Eastern Neighbourhood and in the Western Balkan*' was commissioned by DG NEAR to obtain a preliminary assessment of the sector. The final report is expected by the first quarter of 2018.

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20180417-kosovo-report.pdf>

⁴ The Strategy for cooperation with civil society that was adopted by the government in July 2013, and sets the following strategic objectives:

- 1) Ensure strong participation of Civil Society in drafting and implementation of policies and legislation,
- 2) Building a system to contracting public services to Civil Society organizations,
- 3) Building a system and defined criteria to support CSOs financially,
- 4) Promoting an integrated approach to volunteering development.

⁵ government Regulation Number 05/2016

⁶ government Regulation Number 04/2017

2015 and 2016, resulting in more transparency. However, several ministries and municipalities are still not ready to fulfil the obligations stemming from the new regulations and lack technical capacities to effectively execute the assigned budget in accordance with new regulation and procedures. Further assistance is envisaged to ensure continuation of structured dialogue between authorities and civil society and improve mechanisms for broadening participation to community-based CSOs. Conditionality of such assistance is introduced with the inclusion of performance indicators on the quality of public consultations to be fulfilled by Kosovo government in 2018 and 2019 under the IPA Budget Support Programme for Public Administration Reform⁷ (PAR). A second phase of government-civil society cooperation is envisaged for the period 2018-2021.

As regards media freedom, Kosovo benefits from a pluralistic and lively media environment. However, the situation for investigative and independent journalism worsened over the last two years with a number of threats and physical attacks against journalists which in general have not been dealt with by law enforcement and judiciary in timely manner. The integrity of the entire sector is at risk since there were no developments over the last years in the regulation on media ownership and transparency. The CSF 2016-2017 aimed to strengthen competence, transparency, and quality in Kosovo's media sector, investigative journalism and partnership with CSOs particularly on topics of the Chapters 23 and 24 of the *acquis*.

OUTLINE OF IPA II ASSISTANCE

The **CSF and Media Programme for Kosovo 2018/19** will have two components, one on Civil Society, and one on Media:

As regards civil society, a new phase of Civil Society-government cooperation will kick off under the strategy 2018-2022 to be adopted in 2018. This cooperation framework has proved to be a powerful mechanism to advance the legal and financial environment for sustainable long-term operation of CSOs in Kosovo. Assistance through the CSF Programme 2018-2019 will facilitate the operationalisation of the strategic priorities, building capacities of both governmental bodies and CSOs to monitor, report and program new result-based interventions. The assistance will contribute to broader participation in public consultations and public policy making. It will also seek to gradually replicate the model of government – CSO cooperation at the municipal level, with the view to increase the outreach and representativeness of CSOs in the strategy governing structure (the Council).

The CSF 2018-19 will also address the need for increased thematic knowledge, technical skills, ethical and professional standards, as well as transparency and accountability to constituencies and citizens. Activities will focus particularly on those sectors/areas which are less represented (e.g. environmental protection, consumer and health protection energy, social entrepreneurship, social policy and employment, economic, industrial and enterprise policies, transport, etc.) in the context of dialogue mechanisms with public Authorities (both central and municipal level) and vis-à-vis the EU (e.g SAA, or ERA).

As regards media, the CSF 2018/2019 will continue to strengthen the sector by targeting needs related to quality of information, content pluralism, transparency of finance as well as internal governance and accountability. This in turn will enhance audience's confidence, increase the demand for responsibility of Media outlets (owners/editors) for their production; and increase the resilience of media against external pressures.

The CSF 2018-2019 will support media outlets to report on matters linked to the European path such as fighting corruption, organised crime, electoral system reforms, public administration reform, economic

reform, and environmental issues in order to promote quality information to citizens in Kosovo. It will seek to advance the legal, regulatory framework for media and integrity and ethical (internal) standards in the media sector.

The Programme 2018-2019 builds on achievements of the previous programmes with the objectives to expand existing structures and opportunities for effective engagement in policy dialogue and advocacy at all level of governance and with the EU. The programme promotes capacities and pluralism within the sector, aiming to reduce the gap with direct inclusion of smaller, grassroots CSOs and broaden the basis for civic engagement of local communities, young people and women. It aims to establish sustainable long-term partnerships to address Kosovo priorities and focus on thematic sectors which are currently not sufficiently represented in dialogue mechanisms. Governance and transparency and synergy of funding will be pursued at both central and municipal level with the view to empower community-based services, strengthen social inclusion and social protection.

RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES

In 2012 the European Commission proposed an enhanced and more strategic approach in its engagement with local CSOs in partner beneficiaries. The communication "*The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with Civil Society in external relations*"⁸ identifies the importance of CSOs as independent actors in development and policy making and, for the first time, commits to promote a more conducive environment for their action. The Multi-country Indicative Strategy Paper for the period 2014-2020⁹ endorses the approach proposed in the Communication and considers the support to civil society and media one of the priorities to improve democracy and rule of law through horizontal support.

The CSF 2018-2019 action for Kosovo strengthens the conditions for sustainable development, and independent oversight role of CS and Media as outlined in the European Commission "*Guidelines for EU assistance to CS and Media freedom and integrity for enlargement countries 2014-2020*".

The (then) DG Enlargement "*Guidelines for EU support to civil society in enlargement countries, 2014-2020*" directly address the need for continued engagement with civil society in the EU agenda for enlargement. The guidelines specify: "Support to civil society within the enlargement policy should be focused on enabling and stimulating participatory democracy. This should be 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 parallel "*Guidelines for EU support to media freedom and media integrity in enlargement countries, 2014-2020*" underline that: 'while being a fundamental human right, freedom of expression and media is often precondition for implementation of other rights and freedoms. Deprived of a free media, citizens are denied the right to balanced, factual and reliable information, without exposure to bias and propaganda that in turn is undermining democracy and the effectiveness of institutions. The pluralistic content in the media landscape serves to reveal the multifaceted nature of society and promotes dialogue and tolerance'. The two sets of guidelines provide sector specific results frameworks with indicators to measure impact in these two complex policy areas.

⁸ [COM\(2012\) 492 final: The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with Civil Society in External Actions](#)

⁹ [C\(2014\) 4293 final: Commission Implementing Decision of 30.6.2014 adopting a Multi-country Indicative Strategy Paper for the period 2014-2020](#)

There are many international and bilateral donors and private foundations supporting civil society in Kosovo in addition to the European Commission: United States Agency for International Development, Swedish International Development Agency, International Development Association, SWISS Cooperation, Austrian Development Agency, United Nations Development Programme, Kosovo foundation for Open Society etc.. The main priorities of their assistance are generally converging toward the main objectives of the European Commission Guidelines. While this situation offers the opportunity of scaling up existing efforts, it simultaneously risks duplication and overlaps in the absence of close coordination mechanism.

Since 2012, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has provided a forum for sharing of information, experiences and practices of support to civil society among developing partners. The EU supported the initiative with targeted assistance from the CSF 2016- 2017 to develop an on-line joint donor database of projects in Kosovo which improves and synergises coordination, monitoring and reporting at the level of project planning and implementation.

The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) will complement the CSF with support to independent initiatives, activists and organisations (representing vulnerable or discriminated groups) and promoting public visibility of issues related to fundamental rights and democracy. Besides the above mentioned synergy with the EU Budget Support Programme for PAR, IPA Annual Action programmes (AAP) 2017 and 2018 are designed on the assumption that CSF programme 2018- 2019 will promote bottom up initiatives and capacity support for representative organisations in the area of Rule of Law, Education and Social Policies

LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The CSO Facility 2016/2017 focused on building stronger partnerships between civil society and public institutions, especially at the grass-roots level, for development and execution of public policies. The programme is currently under implementation and it is too early to draw lessons. Experiences from the implementation of previous programmes (CSF 2014-2015) and relevant recommendations from the mid-term evaluation of the Civil Society Facility are listed below.

- Operating grants have proved to be a useful tool to strengthen and consolidate capacities of CSOs working in sectors/areas of strategic importance. Evidence has shown that such support requires a long term approach in order to achieve impact and results. In line with this, the new Programme will award beneficiaries' long term strategies by establishing framework partnerships (FPAs). FPAs will serve as basis for awarding the selected organisations with operating and/or action grants to support their programmes in line with organisations' missions, long term strategies and objectives.
- Financial support to third parties (commonly referred to as sub-granting) is an efficient model for reaching out to local grass-root organisations, where continuous guidance and presence in the field of the main grantee is essential in order to ensure proper implementation of the grants, and where English is not required to be the main contractual language. The last two CSF Programmes had an emphasis on such schemes, where bigger size grants are awarded for the redistribution through small grants. The big number of small-size actions that the programmes have generated requires additional monitoring efforts from the implementing partner but also from the Contracting Authority. The CSF evaluation highlights the importance to obtain an efficient mix of implementing modalities based on real needs, absorption capacity of the CSOs and management resources.
- Besides the functioning of effective consultation mechanisms, it is necessary to continue working on effective CSOs' capacities to feed into policy making in terms of sectorial knowledge and technical skills to feed into decision making. The result of the first year of public consultations organised by the

government bodies (through an online platform¹⁰) shows that only a small percentage of public online consultations have actually been commented on by CSOs or citizens. Each CSF and Media action should have a strong communication and information component aiming to activate citizens' demand for open governance.

- Synergies between civil society and media initiatives should be fostered more systematically to ensure higher visibility, better communication and long term impact of the assistance. The introduction of cultural and creative elements in programme operations should be sought as vector for civic engagement, promotion of EU values, socio-economic development and inter-cultural dialogue, especially between young citizens.
- The duration of operations up to 24 months proved to be insufficient in most of cases, especially with regard to management of grant schemes (support to third parties/sub-granting) and other initiatives aiming at developing capacities which require longer implementation period to achieve impact and sustainable results.

Other evidence indicates that for best effect, civil society should not be supported in isolation, but as an integral part of every policy area. Civil society should therefore be regarded as cross-cutting issue and not as separate sector. In Kosovo, the EU is applying this approach by engaging more regularly with CSOs within several dialogue frameworks including for the programming and monitoring of the EU assistance (e.g. the IPA sectorial working groups).

¹⁰ <http://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/>

2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
<p>To strengthen participatory democracy and progress on the European path 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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assessment of existing legislation and policy framework • Quality of structures and mechanisms in place for cooperation between CSOs/media and public Institutions 	<p>Independent assessments by International Organisation (I.O) and CSOs European Commission Kosovo report</p>	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An enabling (legal, policy and financial) environment which supports sustainability of CSOs and Media as capable, transparent and independent actors who are accountable to citizens and, their members/constituencies/beneficiaries. • Increased resilience of media against external pressures. Growing audience's confidence in them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress with the implementation of the government Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society and other strategies in the areas good governance, public administration reforms and social inclusion. • Content pluralism in media environment in independent and accountable manner. • Media outlets adhere to principles of transparency and in line with professional codes of ethics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent assessments by I.O and CSOs • European Commission Kosovo report • Independent Media observatory monitoring reports • Technical assistance monitoring reports • European Commission Kosovo report on Chapters 10, 23 and 24 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political stability and progress on the European path; • Commitment of public institutions and civil society to enhancing cooperation is maintained.
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<p>Result 1: Government institutions and civil society cooperating for the effective implementation of the 'enabling environment' for CSOs.</p>	<p>Result 1</p> <p>1.1 Percentage of laws/bylaws, strategies and policy reforms effectively consulted with CSOs (3.1.a).</p> <p>1.2 Performance of indicators for the Budget support Programme on PAR</p> <p>1.3 .3 Percentage of approved government</p>	<p>Result 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Reports published by line Ministries (public consultations, financial support to CSOs, PAR) • CSOs assessments of performance indicators 	<p>Commitment of public institutions and civil society to engage in dialogue and cooperation is maintained and further enhanced.</p> <p>The government, Media and Civil society have a genuine interest to engage in enhanced</p>

<p>Result 2: Strengthened capacities of civil society, promoting the role of competent, transparent, effective and accountable actors.</p> <p>Result 3: Media is advancing towards a modern level of internal governance, transparency and resilience against external pressure.</p>	<p>budget for NGOs which was actually disbursed to CSOs.</p> <p>Result 2</p> <p>2.1 CSOs actively participating and contributing to consultation mechanisms for laws/bylaws, strategies and policy reforms.</p> <p>2.2 Share of CSOs which have developed code of conduct, strategic plans and evaluate the results and impact of their work</p> <p>2.3 Percentage of CSOs making their (audited) financial accounts and annual reports publicly available (4.3.a)</p> <p>2.4 & 3.1 Public perception of importance and impact of CSOs activities and Media</p> <p>Result 3</p> <p>3.1 Sustainability and autonomy of Public Service Broadcasts (PBS) financing mechanism; degree of autonomy of PBS financial sources (share of annual budget)</p> <p>3.2 Media attention paid to the relevant issue/topic (=amount of coverage)</p> <p>3.4 Share of media outlets that provide open access to key data about corporate governance and finances (e.g. ownership structure, income received from the Kosovo government, financing sources, balance sheets, market share, etc.</p>	<p>of budget support Programme for PAR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance monitoring reports • European Commission Kosovo report <p>Result 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Reports published by line Ministries (public consultations, financial support to CSOs, PAR) • Technical assessments, surveys and monitoring (TACSO) reports • CSOs assessments of regional thematic Networks <p>Results 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent I.O. and/or Media observatory monitoring reports • Technical assistance monitoring reports • European Commission Kosovo report on Chapters 10, 23 and 24 	<p>cooperation and partnership.</p> <p>Civil Society and media are responsive to the programme opportunities</p> <p>Kosovo government makes available relevant financial and human resources to develop and improve enabling environment for media freedom and integrity as well as for the effective operation and long term sustainability of civil society organisations.</p>
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DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

The activities foreseen under this action include:

Activities to reach Result 1: Government institutions and civil society cooperating for the effective implementation of the ‘enabling environment’ for CSOs.

Activity 1: Technical assistance to advance the government - civil society Cooperation Strategy

Technical assistance will be provided to the bodies responsible for the CS-government cooperation: Kosovo government Office for Good Governance (OGG) and the Joint Advisory Council for Cooperation with Civil Society. A new phase of CS-government cooperation will kick off under the Strategy 2018-2022 to be adopted early in 2018. Assistance through the CSF Programme 2018-2019 will facilitate the operationalisation of the strategic priorities, building capacities of both governmental bodies and CSOs to monitor, report and program new result-based interventions. The assistance will broaden participation in public consultations and public policy making; decentralise the model of work with the view to broaden participation to community based CSOs and increase the reach-out and representativeness of CSOs in the strategy governing structure. The assistance will support monitoring, evaluation and reporting functions which are crucial for the long-term governance of the cooperation process. In Kosovo the situation has recently improved as regards structured participation of civil society in policy discussions and legislative framing but also in relation to transparency of public funding to NGOs. The impact of such achievements will materialize in the coming years (relevant regulations were approved in 2017). This new phase of the assistance will focus on broadening participation to community-based NGOs and move forward the agenda for the sustainability of the CSOs.

Activities to reach Result 2: Strengthened capacities of civil society, promoting the role of competent, transparent, effective actors that are accountable.

Activity 2: Support to the 2nd phase of CSO Resource Centre

In order to continue enhancing technical capacities, thematic knowledge, transparency, accountability and effectiveness, notably of community based CSOs, the activities of a Resource Centre (RC) for civil society organisations will be supported for duration of at least three years starting mid-2020. A first action supporting RC in Kosovo was awarded through a call for proposals in 2017 and runs its operations/work-plan until Q3 2020. The RC will provide support services at central and local level including the provision of relevant information concerning funding opportunities, awareness raising initiatives, trainings for local and central CSO and support to advocacy campaigns and structured policy dialogue with donors or government on issues of shared interest. The Resource Centre will operate in close synergy with the regional TACSO programme

Activity 3: Support to strategic Framework Partnerships

Support will be provided to CSOs demonstrating long term strategies and related work-plans in advancing sectors of importance for the European path and/or not enough represented in policy dialogue and consultations (e.g. environmental protection, gender equality, consumer protection, health promotion, anticorruption, energy, social entrepreneurship, social policy and employment, etc.). The activity will contribute to advance the role of competent, transparent, effective civil society actors that are accountable to citizens, their members/constituencies/beneficiaries.

A two-step approach will be applied: First, a call for proposals will be launched to establish Framework partnerships with relevant organisations. Thereafter, framework partners may be awarded operating and/or action grants on the basis of their annual action programme which shall be in line with partnership objectives and jointly agreed by the parties. Signature of the Framework Agreement shall not give rise to any obligation of the European Commission to award specific grants.

Activity 4: Support to sustainability and innovation projects

A call for proposals will identify actions complementing long term assistance with innovative and more sustainable approaches to address most pressing or emerging needs of the sector. A series of grants will address priorities of strategic importance in view of the European path and/or enhance inclusion of those groups of citizens, minorities, communities, grassroots CSOs which are not enough represented in policy dialogue and consultation mechanisms. Thematic sectors and priorities will be preliminarily identified from the Kosovo reports (2018 and 2019) and further discussed through extensive consultations with CSOs, Donors and other relevant stakeholders.

Activities to reach Result 3: Advancing media to a modern level of internal governance, transparency and resilience against external pressure.

Activity 5: Support to Media resilience, audience confidence and quality of media production

Media outlets will be supported to report fairly, freely and in a professional and ethical manner on matters linked to the European path such as fighting corruption, organised crime, public health, education, elections, economic reform, and environmental issues, education, etc. in order to promote quality information to citizens. This project will equally contribute to advance the legal, regulatory framework for media and integrity/ ethical (internal) standards in the media sector.

Activity 6: Support measures

An allocation for support measures to cover programme needs emerging during implementation (such as external monitoring, joint donor's database maintenance, assessors for calls for proposals, information sessions, visibility, etc.) is foreseen.

RISKS

A low level of risk is linked to quick changes in the political environment in which civil society activists and representatives may take a prominent role by stepping directly into the political scene. This scenario may hamper the image and role of civil society as an independent interlocutor in policy dialogue. In such case the impact and effectiveness of the programme might be under pressure. This risk can be mitigated by close monitoring of partners' internal rules and ethical standards during implementation.

Operating grants and framework partnership agreements are relatively new modalities in the EU Grant programmes and should be carefully monitored to ensure that proper implementation and understanding of grantees of the applicable rules. The EU office in Kosovo will actively engage with civil society to understand how this implementation is experienced from the beneficiary perspective, a specific assessment on this issue could be considered for funding under the Support Measures

CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Conditions for implementation include that the political and policy environment continues to enable civil society engagement in policy making and further development of the civil society sector, including at municipal level. This will be monitored by the European Union in close collaboration with civil society.

3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The main institutional stakeholders involved in the management and implementation process of this action are as follows:

Civil Society and Media Organisations

CSOs will be the main beneficiaries of the financial assistance provided through this action. In addition to financial assistance, the EU Office in Kosovo maintains regular contact with CSOs throughout the year through (1) their contribution to the Progress Reports and the sectoral Stabilisation and Association Process Dialogue meetings; and (2) in cooperation with the RC through their participation in an advisory body to be established in 2018 that will replace and continue the role of the Local Advisory Group under TACSO. Moreover, regular information sessions on open Calls for Proposals are organised, and close monitoring of the projects ensures the regular link to grant beneficiary organisations is maintained throughout Kosovo and their needs are known.

The Kosovo media sector, comprised of commercial media outlets, public media broadcasts, regulatory bodies as well as CSOs, will be beneficiary of the action and key partner in advancing integrity, transparency and ethical standards of the sector. The financial assistance will enhance media organisations' resilience from political pressure and contribute to advance quality, sustainability and independence of the sector. Participation of Media organisations in structured dialogue mechanisms and in relevant advisory body (Local Advisory Group) will be ensured throughout the action.

Resources Centres and TACSO

A new phase of the Technical Assistance to Civil Society Organisations in the Western Balkans and Turkey (TACSO) will be implemented as of third quarter of 2018 with the general objective to strengthen the overall capacity and accountability of CSOs within IPA beneficiaries and to provide services for a sustainable role of CSOs in the democratic process. The new phase of TACSO will take focus mostly on the regional/horizontal component of the project while coordination with the IPA beneficiary specific activities will be ensured by the "National Resource Centre" managed by consortia of CSOs identified through calls for proposals. In Kosovo the Resource Centre will coordinate its work programme with the future TACSO project. The CSO Resource Centre supports development of the sector in Kosovo and enhances cooperation between civil society organisations, donor community, Kosovo institutions and other relevant stakeholders.

Local Advisory Group/Advisory body

TACSO (and the Resource Centre) provides the secretariat for the Local Advisory Group (LAG or future advisory body), which provides a basic platform for general discussions on and consultation of the EU support to civil society, IPA Programming and the definition of priorities for civil society. The future

advisory body in Kosovo will be composed of a mixed structure composed of representatives of different type of civil society organisations, representatives of media, private sector, government and donor agencies.

Office of Good Governance/Prime Minister's Office

The Kosovo government has implemented its first Strategy for Cooperation with Civil Society 2013-2017. The evaluation of the impact of the strategy at the time of writing is ongoing and will constitute the basis for a new phase of CS –government cooperation (strategy 2018-2021). The main government body responsible for implementation of this strategy is the Office for Good Governance (OGG), within the Office of Prime Minister. Technical assistance for the implementation of the strategy has been included under the CSF AP 2014- 2015 and will continue under the CSF AAP 2018-2019.

EU Office in Kosovo

All contracts awarded under this action will be managed by the EU Office in Kosovo as Contracting Authority.

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

All activities under this action document will be implemented by direct management.

Activity 1: Technical assistance to advance the government - Civil Society Cooperation Strategy. Service contract.

Activity 2: Support to the 2nd phase of CSO Resource Centre. Grant following a call for proposals.

Activity 3: Support to strategic Framework Partnerships. Grants following a call for proposals. One call for proposals to conclude indicatively up to 10 Framework Partnership Agreements with CSOs demonstrating long term strategies and work-plans in areas of strategic importance for the European path and/or which are not enough represented in policy dialogue and consultations. Selected Framework Partners may be awarded annual operating and/or action grants on the basis of their annual programme which shall be in line with partnership objectives and jointly agreed by the parties. Signature of the Framework Agreement shall not give rise to any obligation of the European Commission to award specific grants.

Activity 4: Support to sustainability and innovation projects. Grants following a call for proposals. One call for proposals will promote innovative and sustainable approaches to address priority areas of strategic importance to the European path and/or enhance inclusion of those groups of citizens, minorities, communities, grassroots CSOs which are not enough represented in policy dialogue and consultation mechanisms. Indicatively up to 6 grants will address sectors/areas preliminarily identified from the Progress reports (2018 and 2019) and further discussed through extensive consultations with CSOs, Donors and other relevant stakeholders.

Activity 5: Support to Media resilience, audience confidence and quality of media production. Grants following a call for proposals. One call for proposals will be launched to empower and stimulate an enabling professional and financial environment for pluralistic media. This will support indicatively up to 5 projects addressing media resilience against external pressures, audience confidence and media productions by making available to citizens quality and unbiased information on matters linked to the European path.

Activity 6: Support measures. Services. The envisaged assistance is deemed to follow the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

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.

In line with the DG Enlargement "*Guidelines for EU support to civil society in enlargement countries, 2014-2020*", the European Commission has developed objectives, results and indicators for EU support to civil society which allow for the measurement of progress at beneficiary level as well as across the Western Balkans, including also from a gender perspective to monitor inter alia the involvement of both women and men. The monitoring and evaluation system includes a yearly regional meeting with the involvement of CSOs to analyse the state of play and advancement towards targets.

The implementation of support to civil society should include monitoring and evaluation systems at different levels:

Activity level: The EU Office in Kosovo will be responsible for monitoring and evaluation throughout the implementation phase. Projects under all three objectives will be monitored by respective task managers. TACSO may assist these efforts with guidance and capacity building. Additionally, external contractors will be mobilised as necessary.

Kosovo IPA Programme level: CSOs will be involved for the yearly monitoring of indicators and results with the support of TACSO. Yearly meetings will analyse the development of the CSOs in all beneficiaries and the advancement towards the targets.

INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Baseline in 2017	Target 2018	Final Target 2020	Source of information
MCSP indicator (impact/outcome)....(1)				
<p>Result 1</p> <p>1.1 Percentage of laws/bylaws, strategies and policy reforms effectively consulted with CSOs</p> <p>1.2 Performance of indicators for the Budget support Programme on PAR</p> <p>1.3 Percentage of approved budget for NGOs which was actually disbursed through IPA beneficiary funding to CSOs.</p> <p>Result 2</p> <p>2.1 CSOs actively participating and contributing to consultation mechanisms for laws/bylaws, strategies and policy reforms.</p> <p>2.2 Share of CSOs which have developed code of conduct, strategic plans and evaluate the results and impact of their work</p>	<p>1.1: in 2017 49.32 % of draft sector strategies/policies, concept documents and primary laws subject to public consultation in line with the Minimum Standards for Public Consultation.</p> <p>1.2: (not applicable for 2017) % of draft sector strategies/policies, concept documents and primary laws adopted by the government have been subject to public consultation in line with the Minimum Standards for Public Consultation adopted by the government</p> <p>1.3: (not applicable for 2017) percentage of approved budget for NGOs which was actually disbursed through government funding to CSOs in accordance with Kosovo regulation on public funding for NGOs.</p> <p>2.1 in 2017, 15% of draft legislative acts subject to public consultation (online platform) in line with the Minimum Standards for Public Consultation are commented by CSOs.</p>	<p>1.1: in 2018 70% of draft sector strategies/policies, concept documents and primary laws subject to public consultation in line with the Minimum Standards for Public Consultation</p> <p>1.2: 50 % of draft sector strategies/policies, concept documents and primary laws adopted by the government have been subject to public consultation in line with the Minimum Standards for Public Consultation adopted by the government</p> <p>1.3: in 2018, 20% of approved budget for NGOs which was actually disbursed through government funding to CSOs in accordance with Kosovo regulation on public funding for NGOs</p> <p>2.1 in 2018, 30% of draft legislative acts subject to public consultation (online platform) in line with the Minimum Standards for Public Consultation are commented by</p>	<p>1.1: in 2020, 100% of draft sector strategies/policies, concept documents and primary laws subject to public consultation in line with the Minimum Standards for Public Consultation</p> <p>1.2: in 2020, 100 % of draft sector strategies/policies, concept documents and primary laws adopted by the government have been subject to public consultation in line with the Minimum Standards for Public Consultation adopted by the government</p> <p>1.3 in 2020, 60% of approved budget for NGOs which was actually disbursed annually through government funding to CSOs in accordance with Kosovo regulation on public funding for NGOs.</p> <p>2.1 in 2020, 70% of draft legislative acts subject to public consultation (online platform) in line with the Minimum Standards for Public</p>	<p>Result 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Reports published by line Ministries (public consultations, financial support to CSOs, PAR) • CSOs assessments of performance indicators of budget support Programme for PAR • Technical assistance monitoring reports • European Commission Kosovo report <p>Result 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Reports published by line Ministries (public consultations, financial support to CSOs, PAR) • Technical assessments, surveys and monitoring (TACSO) reports • CSOs assessments of regional thematic Networks <p>Results 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent I.O. and/or Media observatory monitoring reports • Technical assistance monitoring reports • European Commission Kosovo report on Chapters 10, 23 and 24

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

The design of projects will also take account of the Kosovo Gender Profile which was published in May 2014. The design and implementation of the action will ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed in the design of projects to be undertaken, i.e. in Guidelines for Calls for proposals and in terms of reference for tender procedures (services). Besides ensuring mainstreaming of gender issues throughout the programme, at least one project will directly target the inclusion of a gender perspective in policy making, consultations and dialogue with the Kosovo institutions and vis à vis the EU.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Equal presence and participation of women and men in the consultative processes and in decision making will be ensured. In this regard, equal participation of women and men will be reflected in the composition of the Advisory body that will replace and continue the role of the Local Advisory Group under TACSO. The different needs of women, men, girls and boys will be considered and a reasonable distribution of resources will be sought accordingly.

MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

The constitutional framework provides for protection of linguistic rights and the action will, wherever necessary, make use of different community languages. Specific attention will be given to project proposals that target the most disadvantaged groups, including women, children, elderly people, persons with mental and/or physical disabilities, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI), Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and minorities. Tailored measures/positive actions will be considered to counteract the high level of discrimination these communities are exposed to.

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

The design of the action has been consulted in several meetings with CSOs organised by TACSO and was shared with the wider civil society and with relevant stakeholders such as representatives of civil society, government, media and donor community. Further consultations will take place during the implementation of the different components.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)

The programme envisages actions to increase the awareness of the general population on the environment protection, waste management, recycling, environmental pollution and effects on public health and other environmental issues particularly relevant in the context of Kosovo; increase civil society participation in decision making related to environmental issues. All action activities will be environmental friendly and sensitive to specific challenges that communities face in terms of environment protection. The programme does not foresee a specific budget allocation for climate change action.

Environment and climate action relevant budget allocation: EUR 0 million
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ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY (AND IF RELEVANT OTHER NON-STATE STAKEHOLDERS)

The design of the action has been consulted through the Local Advisory Group of TACSO, which is composed of relevant stakeholders such as representatives of civil society, government, media and donor community, as well as with the wider civil society. Further consultations will take place during the implementation of the different components.

MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

The constitutional framework provides for protection of linguistic rights and the action will, wherever necessary, make use of different community languages. Specific attention will be given to project proposals that target the most disadvantaged groups, including women, children, elderly people, persons with mental and/or physical disabilities, LGBTI, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and minorities. Tailored measures/positive actions will be considered to counteract the high level of discrimination these communities are exposed to.

6. SUSTAINABILITY

In order to achieve sustainability beyond the implementation period, the design of the action will take account of the following:

- Financial assistance will be delivered in an appropriate mix of funding instruments to respond to different types of CSOs and needs in a flexible, transparent, cost-effective and results focused manner which also considers the administration burden for the EU Office in Kosovo. This will include: aiming for longer term contracts, recognising that capacity building and advocacy work requires time and resources; moving away from action-based support to a more flexible approach that fosters 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.
- Design corresponding to needs/demands shared amongst the key beneficiaries, i.e. key stakeholders such as civil society and public institutions are consulted in the design process through Advisory board, consultation meetings ahead launch of Calls for Proposals as well as through public consultation of key policy documents;
- Activities/outputs are maintained, i.e. existing and newly established mechanisms for cooperation between public institutions and civil society are used;
- Promoting high visibility of actions able to reach out to local communities and encouraging projects' efforts in translating technical jargon into clear information which are relevant for and understandable by the general public.

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 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 EU Communication and Visibility Manual requirements in force. All stakeholders and implementing partners shall ensure the visibility of EU financial assistance provided through IPA II throughout all phases of the programme cycle.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the beneficiary's European path, as well as the benefits of the action for the general public. 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.

Visibility and communication aspects shall be complementary to the activities implemented by DG NEAR and the EU Office in Kosovo. It is the responsibility of the programme beneficiaries to keep the EU Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.