

Civil Society Facility 2011-2012

(2) Multi-beneficiary Programme 2011-2012

1. BASIC INFORMATION

1.1 CRIS Number: 2011/22-965; 2012/23-324

1.2 Title: Civil Society Facility People-2-People Programme

1.3 ELARG Statistical code: 35 (Civil Society)

1.4 Location: Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, as well as Kosovo¹, Turkey, Iceland

Implementing arrangements:

1.5 Contracting Authority: European Commission

1.6 Beneficiary: Civil society organisations in Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, as well as Kosovo, Turkey, Iceland

Financing:

1.7 IPA contribution:

Total: EUR 1 000 000
2011: EUR 0
2012: EUR 1 000 000 ²
2013: EUR 1 000 000 ³

1.8 Final date for contracting:

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

1.10 Final date for disbursements:

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

¹ under UNSCR 1244/99

² Budget appropriations for 2012 are subject to the approval of the Budget Authority of the 2012 budget

³ Budget appropriations for 2013 (in greyed-out text) are for information only and are subject to the approval of the Budget Authority of the 2013 budget and the College adopting a new Financing Decision for activities proposed for 2013.

2. OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE

2.1. Overall Civil Society Facility Objective and Programme Purpose

The Commission Communication on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007-8⁴ and the latest Strategy Documents (2008, 2009 and 2010⁵) 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, as well as for 2012 subject to availability of funds for this purpose under the 2012 budget. Activities and budget allocations for 2013 are for information only and have been greyed out for easy identification. Agreement on 2013 budget appropriations will be subject to a future Financing Decision.

In line with the original vision for the Civil Society Facility (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 analyses⁶, 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. People 2 People Fiche Purpose

The project aims to

- help the beneficiary CSOs to familiarise themselves with the EU institutions and the decision-making process, as well as with key EU policies, legislation and programmes;
- offer the opportunity to CSOs to interact and network with their national, regional and European-level counterparts and to create new partnerships and

⁴ COM (2007) 663 "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007-2008"

⁵ 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"

⁶ TACSO (2010): "Civil society organisations' capacities in the Western Balkans and Turkey - A comparative summary of the eight country CSO needs assessments"

- stimulate civic participation in the beneficiary countries and in the region.

2.3. Link with the 2010 Enlargement Strategy and Progress Report

The People-2-People Programme is one of the three strands of the Civil Society Facility. To this end 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 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."

2.4. Link with Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document

The People-2-People Programme has been designed on the basis of the objectives pursued under the Multi Beneficiary MIPD through the priority "Political Criteria - Civil Society Development and Dialogue. It should contribute to the progress made to date, particularly with regard to the implementation of the EU *acquis* and to guarantee a participatory democracy. In line with the objectives pursued under the Multi Beneficiary MIPD, the project will complement and be consistent with the National approaches by ensuring a clear comparative advantage to be gained for example through tackling cross-border problems or facilitating networks of experts. It will therefore contribute to the European integration agenda.

The IPA Multi-beneficiary MIPD also includes support for the Information Exchange Instrument (TAIEX) under the heading "Other". The TAIEX instrument has been conceived to develop and strengthen the IPA beneficiaries' administrative capacities to transpose, implement and enforce the EU *acquis* and to foster the exchange of best practice among peers in all areas where reforms are required as part of the accession preparation process.

2.5. Link with Beneficiary Strategies on Civil Society

The People-2-People Programme is in line with national programmes. Its activities are consulted with stakeholders responsible for the development of country strategies. The choice of subjects and venue of the People-2-People Programme's events depends on regional needs.

These events also allow the CSOs to establish cross-border partnerships for future initiatives by giving the opportunity to civil society operators from the beneficiaries to be closer to the EU by allowing visit to relevant counterparts at EU level and notably within EU institutions.

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 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.

In order to allow civil society to prepare in due time for accession, access to information, knowledge and sharing of experiences between decision-makers from CSOs is a crucial step. The relevant knowledge concerns the legislation and implementation of the EU *acquis* with relevance at civil society issues, the steps of the EU accession process and the institutional set-up and functioning of the European Union, as well as opportunities provided under EU programmes and projects.

By bringing together representatives from different organisations the programme enhances regional cooperation and understanding beyond the regional and national levels.

3.2. Activities

3.2.1. Types of events

3.2.1.1. Multi-beneficiary study tours to Brussels:

The People-2-People Programme focuses on multi-beneficiary study tours to Brussels. This type of event remains the primary tool of the programme. Study tours are organised for 3-6 representatives per beneficiary. The participants have similar professional backgrounds but come from different beneficiaries. The aim of these visits is to build up regional and European networking and to offer the opportunity to CSOs to interact and associate with their national, regional and European-level counterparts and to create new partnerships. The participants learn also about the functioning of the EU structures.

3.2.1.2. Single-beneficiary events in the region:

These events focus on the same beneficiary with the objective of stimulating and strengthening dialogue and cooperation among local players. They are organised in the

region. The single-beneficiary events provide for an opportunity to discuss the state of play of the national legislation in a specific area. The events are often the only occasion where CSOs and representatives of public authorities can meet and discuss on a given topic. It has therefore been agreed with the stakeholders that the EU Delegations may invite around 10% of participants from the public sector.

3.2.1.3. Single-beneficiary events in Brussels

Should a need arise, beneficiary-specific events will be organised in Brussels.

3.2.1.4. External requests for ad hoc support

In individual cases the People-2-People Programme may support organisation of events requested by the Commission.

3.2.2. *Language regime*

Multi-beneficiary study tours to Brussels are held in English to allow a thorough participation and exchange among the participants.

Interpretation will be provided in the respective languages depending on the participants present at the seminar in cases of single-beneficiary events in the region and single-beneficiary events in Brussels.

3.3. Expected results and measurable indicators

Results:

- Increased knowledge of EU accession process and the relevance of EU among CSOs
- Regional or cross-border cooperation strengthened as a result of contacts established between representatives of civil society;
- Enhanced provision and accessibility of EU-related information at local level;
- Improved information sharing on EU matters between the EU Institutions – as well as central government – and local and regional structures.

Since the beginning of the programme in 2008, 2600 participants have taken part in 80 events involving more than 1000 speakers.

Dissemination of results will be encouraged by requesting that participants provide in advance an outline of their proposed methods of dissemination after the event (media, internet, seminars, reports, networking etc). As a part of the communication strategy the participants may be asked to join internet fora.

Objectively verifiable indicators:

- Number of CSOs participating at the programme;
- Number of representatives of the CSOs participating in the programme;

- Number and quality of joint initiatives / contacts involving stakeholders from different Beneficiaries;
- Number and quality of initiatives aiming to enhance EU-related information at local level resulting from the participation of local representatives of CSOs in the programme;
- Information flow (activities, requests made etc.) between stakeholders at EU / national / local levels in relation to EU integration and accession.

3.4. Selection mechanism

The People-2-People Programme is implemented through the provision of TAIEX-type technical assistance and implemented by Commission. The logistical aspects of the programme will be managed through a new TAIEX service contract from 1 August 2012 till 31 July 2014 with possibility for extension up to the maximum of further 2 years. The contribution to this contract from the People-2-People Programme will be determined as unit costs and detailed in the bid.

3.4.1. Selection procedures

3.4.1.1. Participants

Participants to the People-2-People Programme are representatives of the CSOs in Iceland, Turkey and the Western Balkans.

Each multi-beneficiary study tour in Brussels hosts around 30-40 participants (up to six eligible persons are invited from each beneficiary). The single-beneficiary events in the region gather around 50 participants each.

Regardless of the type of event, the participants are selected by the EU Delegations in consultation with the geographical Units of DG Enlargement and drawing, where appropriate, on the advice of local associations in the beneficiaries.

The selection of participants is arranged, where appropriate, in cooperation with the TACSO offices in the region.

The selection of participants pays particular attention to aspects of gender balance, geographical balance, as well as balance in terms of size of CSOs.

3.4.1.2. Topics

The topics under the People-2-People Programme are defined by the Directorate General for Enlargement, in accordance with the political, legislative and social priorities established in relation to the targeted region and beneficiaries, taking into account proposals from the European Union Delegations, geographical units of the DG ELARG and recent Enlargement Strategy and Progress Reports. Suggestions from the People-2-People Programme participants are also taken into account.

3.4.1.3. Aspects covered:

- Knowledge of EU institutions and functioning of the EU
- Knowledge of the EU accession process
- Overview of aspects of the *EU acquis* of particular relevance for civil society including: social policy, environment, cultural heritage and education, health, minorities, media etc.
- Information on EU programmes
- Networking and exchange of best practise

3.4.2. *Speakers and facilitators:*

Speakers and facilitators are selected from among:

- Members of EU institutions and bodies
- Leading representatives of CSOs in the EU Member States;
- Specialists and experts on civil society from think tanks across the EU.

3.5. Conditionality and sequencing

The duration of the project, number of activities and types of events will depend on the assessments from beneficiaries.

3.6. Linked activities

The People-2-People Programme is one of the three strands of the Civil Society Facility.

Other Civil Society Facility components:

Technical Assistance for the Civil Society Organisations (TACSO): The aim is to continue the regional technical assistance started in 2009, which *inter alia* is to analyse and identify the priority needs of the civil society sector in the region, design and deliver training programmes, develop communication tools, support the creation of a regional Civil Society Forum, evaluate the impact of (donor-funded) actions, monitor the implementation of grants awarded following EU calls for proposals, and to make a needs analysis supporting future programming.

Partnership Actions: The activities in the framework of the Partnership actions should lead to increased professionalism and cooperation among primarily the civil society but also indirectly governments in the region. With the knowledge gained through activities and partnership between experts, it should be possible to improve the strategy and monitoring of national programmes.

3.7. Lessons learned

According to the past assistance and experience, beneficiaries have made efforts favourable to the development of civil society. However, civil society still remains weak in the region.

Local CSOs require training to adapt to present conditions and also need to strengthen their capacities in order to be included in the process of European integration.

Experience from the past two and a half years has shown that the People-2-People Programme developed activities which provide for successful training mechanisms. However the People-2-People Programme needs to be flexible and respond to the changing realities in the beneficiaries. This can be assured by the use of the TAIEX instrument.

4. BUDGET (IN EUR)

	EU - IPA assistance 2011-2012 (indicative only for budget appropriations 2012; planned appropriations for 2013 for information only)				Total Co- financing of Project 2011-2012 (indicative)	Total IPA + Co- financing 2011 -2012
	2011	2012	Total 2011-2012	2013		
	All Institution Building					
Measure	-	1 000 000	1 000 000	1 000 000	-	1 000 000
TOTAL	-	1 000 000	1 000 000	1 000 000	-	1 000 000

5. INDICATIVE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE (PERIODS BROKEN DOWN PER QUARTER)

Contracts	Start of Tendering	Signature of contract	Project Completion
Service Contract	Not Applicable	Q3 2011	Q4 2013

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

6.1. Equal Opportunity

Specific attention will be paid to the gender dimension during the selection procedure of the participants to the study tours. Several workshops will consider gender issues.

6.2. Environment

The European Union has a longstanding commitment to address environmental concerns in its assistance programmes (as part as a wider commitment to sustainable development).

Many of the foreseen subjects of events will concern rights and obligations related to the environment *EU acquis*.

6.3. Minorities

Topics of study visits may include aspects related to public services, legislation and socio-economic development of relevance for intercultural dialogue, rights of minorities and vulnerable groups. The activities of the People-2-People Programme include this specific aspect of minorities and vulnerable groups in programme (incl. vocational training, working conditions, social protection, persons with disabilities, youth, unemployment, minorities' issues, etc.).