

Alliance for EU Integration
Initiative supported by TACSO
Final Report (October 20th, 2017)

Project Overview

The Alliance for EU Integration is an open platform for representatives of the civic and economic sectors of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), and represents a thematic-based structure with the capacity and expertise to contribute in the upcoming and all-encompassing social reforms within the context of BiH's EU integration processes. The Alliance for EU Integration (A4EU) seeks active participation of all interested individuals and/or organizations, including non-governmental organisations, business sector representatives and entrepreneurs, media, academia, activists, bloggers, etc. Initiated in April 2017 by the Centres for Civic Initiatives (CCI) and the Agency for Cooperation, Education and Development (ACED), the six-month period was used to promote and set up the structure of the Alliance, with the publication "Alternative responses to 716 questions of the EC questionnaire for BiH" as one of the concrete results of the Alliance's work. In order to produce such a significant publication, the Alliance sought to motivate as many as possible stakeholders to participate in this initiative for a solid future setup of BiH:

- A total of 7 promotional events and 30 individual meetings were conducted to promote the Alliance, with a total of 216 participants attending the events;
- Covered by a total of 70 media reports, an estimated 120,000 citizens have been made aware of the Alliance for EU Integration, its goals and its structure;
- An interactive (bi-lingual and bi-script) web platform is operational, allowing two-way communication with interested parties (www.A4EU.org; www.pitamo.se), but also registration and exchange of sector-specific information;
- As of October 2017, a total of 135 entities (legal and physical) have registered to participate in the work of the Alliance, with 107 CSOs (78%), 9 businesses (7%), 9 individuals (7%), 5 academia (4%) and 5 media representatives (4%). It is to emphasize that the 135 registered members of the Alliance cover a total of 38 municipalities of BiH, ensuring the representation of interests of a significant number of residents on a wide-spread area;
- The 135 entities have signed up 509 times to participate in a total of 33 chapters, which provides a considerable number of averagely 15.4 participating entities per chapter;
- The 33 chapters of the EC questionnaire were divided into 13 thematic Working

Groups, with the Alliance having established 12 operational Working Groups – gathering sector- and theme-specific practitioners and experts, and hence providing a knowledge-based coverage of themes relevant to the reform processes to come;

- The 12 Working Groups cover a total of 31 chapters (94%), as well as both criteria (political and economic). The Coordinators of the 12 Working Groups are outstanding, experienced and dedicated organisations from the non-governmental sector – ensuring objective expertise of the thematic Working Groups, but also the promotion, awareness raising and advocating for topics relevant to the Working Group themes;
- As a concrete result of the work so far, the Alliance has been able to provide a total of 716 responses to the EC questionnaire, representing 22.1% of the 3,242 questions submitted to BiH in December 2016;
- As an enormous value, the Alliance has initiated the cooperation and synergy between thematic-based experts outside the governmental sector with an average of 42.3 entities per Working Group – a dimension that has not yet been evidenced in BiH and/or neighbouring countries.

Achieved Results

a) Mapping of relevant stakeholders:

During the inception phase, CCI and ACED assessed existing stakeholders relevant and interested to join the initiative "Alliance for EU Integration". A total of 7 regional presentation meetings were conducted, to geographically cover BiH in order to motivate especially grass root organisations to participate in the presentation meetings. Several CSO databases were consulted when CSOs were invited to the presentation meetings, which resulted in 877 CSOs, companies, media, academia and individuals having been invited to the 7 regional presentation meetings. In addition, ACED and CCI undertook several individual meetings with relevant stakeholders. In an overview, the regional and individual presentation meetings were conducted as follows:

Location	Date	# of participants (# of CSOs)
Bihać	25.04.2017	15 (11)
Travnik	27.04.2017	17 (10)
Bijeljina	03.05.2017	26 (21)
Foča	04.05.2017	20 (15)
Sarajevo	10.05.2017	28 (22)
Mostar	12.05.2017	14 (12)
Banja Luka	15.05.2017	43 (31)
Individual	May - July 2017	53 (11)
Total		216 (133)

As of October 20th, 2017, a total of **135** CSOs, companies, media and individuals from **38** municipalities in BiH have signed up and joined the Alliance.

A total of 32 media reports were observed to be released by BiH media regarding the initial actions of the Alliance and regional meetings. Rough estimations indicate that the potential of the media reports is to cover 100.000 citizens – measured by share of electronic media, printing numbers of newspapers, number of visits for commercial portals etc. Please find the press clipping attached as Annex 1 to this report.

b) Defining working group members in accordance with thematic groups of EU acquis chapters:

During the initial stage, a total of 13 Working groups were formed, encompassing all 33 chapters of the EC Questionnaire and combining individual chapters into 13 thematic groups. Out of the 13 defined Working Groups (WGs), a total of 12 WGs were set up and are operational, headed by their respective WG Coordinator. The overview is as follows:

WG #	WG Title	Chapters covered	Coordinator	# of members (# of CSOs)
1	Public Finance	4, 9, 16, 17, 32, 33	CPI - Centar za zastupanje građanskih interesa	18 (16)
2	Education	25, 26 (part I)	Omladinski komunikativni centar - OKC	40 (31)
3	Culture	26 (part II)	Cultural Heritage without Borders - CHwB	8 (3)
4	Economy	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 20	LiNK – Udruženje za poduzetništvo i posao	30 (22)
5	Transport and energy	14, 15, 21, 22	CRP – Centar za razvoj i podršku	14 (9)
6	Social policy and employment	19	FSU - Fondacija za socijalno uključivanje BIH	75 (67)
7	Consumer and Health Protection	28	Futura – Udruga za unapređenje kvalitete življenja	31 (26)
8	Agriculture and rural development	11, 12, 13	Mreža za ruralni razvoj u Bosni i Hercegovini - MRR	22 (19)
9	Responsibility	5, 23, 24	Transparency international BIH	41 (33)
10	Environment and Climate Change	27	Centar za životnu sredinu - CZŽS	23 (18)
11	Media	10	BH Novinari - BHN	28 (19)
12	External relations	30, 31	Centar za sigurnosne studije - CSS	7 (7)
13	Customs union and Statistics	18, 29	N/A	2 (2)
Total				339 (272)

c) Consolidate and complement answers on EU questionnaire submitted by non-governmental parties:

All Working Group Coordinators received the list of all applicants relevant to their WG. In addition, the Coordinators were asked to also motivate stakeholders they are aware of to be relevant for the thematic field, but have not yet applied to participate in the A4EU initiative. For easier reference, the Alliance has transferred all questions from the Questionnaire into Excel sheets, broken down by chapter and WG. These overviews were submitted to the WG Coordinators for further distribution, in order to make the response- and coordination-process inside the WG more efficient.

WG Coordinators compiled all answers from their WG members, after which they initiated consultative processes in order to ensure mutual agreement regarding the final form and content of the answers. The overview of the number of WG members and other interested stakeholders which the WG Coordinators reached out to in order to ensure consensus-based consolidation of the answers is presented below:

WG Number & Coordinator	# of WG Members & Other Stakeholders Reached Out To for Consultation
WG 1 – CPI	14
WG 2 – OKC	48
WG 3 – CHwB	10
WG 4 – LiNK	3
WG 5 – CRP	115
WG 6 – FSU	72
WG 7 – Futura	3
WG 8 – MRR	35
WG 9 – TI	34
WG 10 – CZZS	33
WG 11 – BHN	46
WG 12 – CSS	2
Total	415

In addition to this, seven of the twelve operational Working Groups decided to further formalize the consultative process by organizing an official meeting with their WG members.

Working Group meetings were conducted as follows:

WG number & Coordinator	Location	Date	# of participants at the meeting
WG 1 – CPI	Sarajevo	27.09.2017	14
WG 2 – OKC	Doboj	29.09.2017	12
WG 3 – CHwB	Sarajevo	05.10.2017	10
WG 6 – FSU	Sarajevo	28.09.2017	18
WG 9 - TI	Sarajevo	13.09.2017	15
WG 11 – BHN	Sarajevo	04.10.2017	17
WG 12 – CSS	Sarajevo	09.10.2017	2
Total			88

Aside from ensuring mutual agreement on the answers to be submitted, the meetings also served to improve internal cohesion among WG members, as well as to increase the capacities and relevant knowledge of all of the participants regarding the relevant chapters of the EC Questionnaire for BiH. Some of the WG members possessed the appropriate expertise only in a specific topic/field, and through the meetings these members were informed and strengthened on other topics as well, improving their general knowledge on the situation in BiH and all the needed reforms and processes that are necessary for the country's successful EU integration, especially concerning their respective EU accession chapters.

d) Mutual agreement on alternative response and final conference:

All agreed-upon answers from all Working Groups were then compiled by the Alliance and published in a single document titled "Alternative Responses to 716 Questions of the EC Questionnaire for BiH". The publication included **716** answers out of 3,242 questions from EC Questionnaire for BiH, amounting to 22.1% of total questions covered. The publication was officially presented at the final conference event at the EU Delegation in Sarajevo on October 19th, 2017.

This conference also served to stabilize the members' dedication to participate in the working groups (also in the EU Integration processes to come, which are expected in the near future), as well as to confirm the roles and responsibilities of the leading Working Group Coordinators.

The programme for the final conference included:

- Working Group Coordinators' meeting – internal A4EU sharing of experiences on good practices, recommendations and any issues encountered throughout the project duration
- Press Conference & handing over of the publication to Head of the Delegation of EU to BiH, Ambassador Lars-Gunnar Wigemark
- 'Next steps' and planning of future A4EU activities, preparing for the EU integration processes to come.

In order to ensure visibility, the publication was also published on the official A4EU website where all CSOs, media, private sector entities and individuals were encouraged to read through the answers and get involved with the future work of the Alliance.

The final conference had a total of 43 participants, including mostly Working Group Coordinators, but also other CSOs interested in the work of the Alliance and relevant government stakeholders. 16 media representatives attended the press conference. During the conference, participants were given a hand-out which contained the summary of the project action, highlighting the achieved results and encouraging further involvement in the future actions of the Alliance. The fact-sheet with achieved results was also included in the short promotional animation presented during the conference.

The final event alone was covered in **38** media reports (across newspapers, TV, radio and social media) and had roughly reached 20,000 citizens in BiH.

At the very end of the final event, 30 participants have evaluated the results of the initiative through an evaluation form:

1. 93% of the participants deemed the results of the A4EU initiative – handing over the alternative answers to the EC Questionnaire to BiH as **extremely**

important.

2. 77% of the participants perceived the connection between delivering the alternative answers to the EC Questionnaire and potential future sectorial/thematic self-organising of the civil society in BiH as **already accomplished**, with likelihood to continue in the future.
3. 67% of the participants rated the knowledge and information gained at the final event as **important**, with 33% recognising it as **very important**.

The participants also indicated the following suggestions as potential next steps for the future work of the Alliance:

- Strengthen capacities of civil society for relevant chapters and future negotiations in order to get higher quality inputs and better advocacy activities within thematic/sectorial groups
- Strengthen the communication between coordinators and the organisation structure within Working Groups
- Try to secure funding for the continuation of Alliance's activities (more productive meetings)
- Improve and harmonize the work methodology

Short-term outcomes of the Conference and related process

- Civil society in BiH has been self-organized on sector based approach related to the EU integration process
- Civil Society has demonstrated ability to provide both qualitative and quantitative data for its field of expertise
- Civil Society has shown the competence to be a strong source of knowledge and expertise for having monitoring and a watch-dog role and function related to the implementation of different public policies in BiH

e) Promotion and Visibility

The visual identity of A4EU has been developed and prepared:



It has been used in all activities and communication.

The promotional animation containing a fact sheet of the achieved results of the Alliance was first presented during the final conference, and was uploaded to the A4EU website, along with the publication "Alternative Responses to 716 Questions of the EC Questionnaire for BiH". Prior to the final event, a media handout was produced in order to clearly summarise the importance of the project action and the achieved results. Roll-up stands were used throughout the project action and a special roll-up stand containing the results fact sheet was used during the final event. All of these are shown in the Press Clipping.

The web site for the Alliance has been operational since June 2017 (www.A4EU.org and www.pitamo.se). It is an interactive platform with multiple possibilities:

- Interested have access to all relevant documents and EU news,
- Individuals can register to participate,
- Registered ones can submit questions, answers to Questionnaire questions, comments for the signed-up Working Group, etc.
- Interested can inform themselves about activities of the Alliance.

In order to avoid any kind of discrimination, the A4EU web platform is prepared in B/H/S languages in two scripts (Latin and Cyrillic), as well as in English language.