

January 2014



TACSO 2 Brochure

TACSO's mission is to increase and improve the capacity and actions of CSOs as well as their democratic role. Through TACSO's capacity building activities, support and assistance the aim is to achieve a strengthened civil society and to stimulate a civil society-friendly environment and culture.





TEHNIČKA POMOĆ
ORGANIZACIJAMA CIVILNOG DRUŠTVA



VIDLJIVOST I JAVNA PERCEPCIJA
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Background - What is the

TACSO Project

Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations (TACSO 1) is a European Union (EU) funded project, which provided technical assistance and support to civil society organisations (CSOs) located in the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) countries, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. The TACSO 1 Project began in August 2009, received an extension in 2011 and officially closed in August 2013.

The TACSO 2 Project began in September 2013 and will be implemented until August 2017. SIPU International AB Sweden is again lead partner, but with a new consortium:

- Ecorys International, Netherlands;
- Association for Civil Society Development (SMART), Croatia;
- International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC), United Kingdom;
- Partners Foundation for Local Development (FPDL), Romania; and
- Euclid Network, United Kingdom.

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



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TACSO is part of the Civil Society Facility (CSF) which is an EU mechanism that provides support to CSOs in those countries that are not yet part of the EU.

CSOs play an important role for the EU, because they are seen as key actors in supporting their country's accession process. The CSF's aim is to therefore strengthen CSOs so that they are able to actively participate in public debate and eventually have the capacity to influence policy and decision making processes.

The TACSO Project, in this regard, worked to support CSOs in their capacity building as well as contributed to the enabling of the civil society environment.

With over 30 professionals, TACSO 1 supported Civil Society Organisations through the help desk, which provided CSOs with direct contact to TACSO staff; through trainings, workshops, conferences, cross-border events, and study visits at both the national and regional level, which not only allowed for topics to be introduced, but gave CSOs the opportunity to network and establish new partnerships; and through the Web site, www.tacso.org, where information about the Project and civil society environment was shared with all stakeholders.



EMERALD HOTEL



IPA CSF and TACSO 2 LAG conference
Regional Conference on Reflections and Elaborations of
TACSO 2 Planning I For the LAG, EUPC, EUD, EU and TAC
Prishtina, Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/99
24-26 October 2011

TACSO 2 will have a similar structure with staff working across the region. Since Croatia has joined the EU, it will no longer be a beneficiary country of the Project.

While TACSO 2 will continue to support CSOs and contribute to enabling the civil society environment along the same lines and actions as the past four years, there are four key issues that the project will centre its activities around:

1. further strengthening civil society's role in national democratisation and accession processes;
2. increasing the communication and visibility of civil society's contributions to society;
3. supporting the discovery of new resource mobilisation strategies and approaches, which are needed to provide for civil society sustainability and development; and
4. improving the legal and institutional framework for civil society actions.

Two new aspects have been added under the TACSO 2 area of responsibility, the People to People (P2P) Component and the gradual transfer of TACSO services to resource centers.

The TACSO People 2 People Component provides an excellent opportunity for civil society organisations in the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey (WBT) to expand their knowledge about the European Union and the accession process through visits to the European institutions, meetings with European CSOs, and the opportunity to network internationally and regionally.

For the management of the component, as of September 2013, the European Commission (EC) relies on the TACSO project, which under the guidance of the Directorate General for Enlargement (DG ELARG), has the overall responsibility to plan, organise and provide followup support for the realisation of P2P events.

The TACSO P2P Component is driven by the priorities and topics emerging from the civil society needs assessments and consultations. Furthermore, TACSO P2P will create a synergy with the priorities of other Civil Society Facility strands and EC initiatives to support civil society in the region by closely coordinating and consulting with relevant stakeholders.

The gradual transfer to national institutions and organisations as **resource centres** will begin following year one of TACSO 2. These resource centres will steadily take over more and more of the services and expertise that TACSO provides and ultimately be the main vehicle through which CSOs in the region can find support and assistance.

TACSO 2

Activities Beyond 2013

- P2P events including multi-beneficiary and single beneficiary events
- information events that will promote CSOs and their work as well as introduce topics of interest to the civil society in the region
- training courses targeting weaker and smaller CSOs including possible sector needs
- training of trainers courses which will provide capacity building to the resource centre staff
- thematic partnership events, inter or intra-sectorial networking events and cross-border events that will facilitate and focus on networking and building partnerships and coalitions with neighbouring countries in specific areas on all levels
- CSF monitoring events that will review the P2P Component implementation



TACSO 1

Numbers

- The National Office Help Desks received close to **5,000** phone call or e-mail inquiries, while over **4,000** CSOs were supported through the Help Desks.
- Over **19,800** individuals participated in over **600** trainings, workshops and information events, which not only introduced them to the given topic area and gave them the necessary tools, methods and skills, but also resulted in concrete actions, such as the establishment of networks and partnerships; development of strategies and action plans; applications for open calls; and rewarding of funds and projects.
- Additional capacity building was provided in the form of **five** training manuals that were translated in **eight** languages as well as over **10** guidelines.
- The TACSO Web site, www.tacso.org, had over **1.7 million** page views and over **four hundred thousand** visits, while the TACSO mailing lists disseminated information and publications to over **11 thousand** addresses.

TACSO 1

Main Achievements

- TACSO, as a brand, became recognized in the region as a Project that is fair, neutral and transparent;
- it strengthened regional cooperation among CSOs, government units and other stakeholders;
- it provided capacity building opportunities to CSOs through trainings, workshops and other similar events;
- it standardised approaches and enabled benchmarking in the region;
- it promoted and contributed to the establishment of partnerships and networks; and
- it introduced policy changes all throughout regional and national events.



Technical Assistance for
Civil Society Organisations
www.tacso.org

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