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TACSO Position with Civil Society Organizations, Media and Government Institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Branding Survey

After TACSO project's presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina for more than a year through a number of contacts with civil society organizations and public activities held (events and training programs), Media Plan Institute carried out research with the goal of identifying TACSO's position with its target audiences and assistance beneficiaries.

The results of this research can serve as a guideline on the road to developing a long-term strategy tailored to everyday practices. In addition to findings offered by the research regarding TACSO's position and its brand, the structure of questions was made in such a way that the answers offered information on the aspirations and problems of current and potential beneficiaries related to the process of applying for EU projects, which is the main preoccupation of the TACSO project.

The non-governmental sector in BiH is very large in number, but it is not very active. Estimates based on integrated data from the cantonal, entity and state level of registration point to the number of 3,000 NGOs, which exist at least formally. Figures from the Center for Promotion of Civil Society show that as many as 10,000 organizations have been registered since BiH's independence, although a huge number of them are so-called non-profit foundations and humanitarian organizations which are not considered classical development NGOs. However, civil society experts believe that barely 300 NGOs are active at this moment.

The first local non-governmental organizations started operating in 1993, of course in large cities. Many organizations were created as parts of projects of international organizations and the majority focused on issues that were priorities at the time. The term civil society started being used at that same time, referring to activities on development of democratic values, to which international donors largely contributed. Today, non-governmental organizations, especially so-called development organizations, rely largely on European funds which have become easier to access after the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement. Precisely these NGOs are TACSO's target group and they for the most part constituted the sample for this survey.

Polling and sample

The research method that was used was survey through a poll. The polling was performed directly, using the face to face method as well as by email.

The dominant target group that was surveyed is civil society organizations. A total of 36 active organizations from different parts of BiH were surveyed. The sample was based on several variables:

Position in relation to EU funds: We polled 21 organizations which applied for an EU fund, half of which won projects, as well as 15 organizations which have not applied, but intend to.

Regional representation: 24 organizations from the BiH Federation, 11 organizations from the Republika Srpska and one organization from Brcko District. Organizations come from different parts of BiH, reflecting the regional and ethnic component specific of BiH.

Size of organization: 10 large, 10 medium, 10 small

Capacity: 10 organizations which are recognized in BiH society as very active; 14 which have presented the results of their work to the public; 12 which are active, but are not present in the public. Of this number, 22 organizations are registered in PADOR and 23 organizations participated in training programs organized by TACSO.

Position of location: 15 organizations from large cities in BiH and 21 from small communities in BiH.

Forming a sample in line with these criteria allowed us to create a relevant indicative sample offering a group of NGOs that match different criteria of relevance to TACSO's target group. However, as this is a small, indicative sample, cross-referencing along all these elements is not possible. The only breakdown that was made was related to whether NGOs have applied for European projects.

In addition to the main target group for polling, the survey was also conducted on media outlets and state organizations. Media are important for TACSO as mediators in carrying information to organizations and also as organizations which may themselves apply for EU funds. State organizations, either independently or in partnership with non-governmental organizations, also apply for projects and focus on different development components. The research encompassed 10 media organizations and 10 state organizations as some kind of *flash backup* for gaining insight into their perceptions as well as for comparison with results obtained from NGOs. For media, we contacted editors-in-chief of three public broadcasting services (BHRT, RTFBiH and RTRS), a large commercial television, two local radio-television stations, as well as editors of dailies. For state organizations, we polled different levels of government (municipal, cantonal, entity and state levels) which have different characters of operation.

Number of employees and associates: On average, 5.6 employees

The 36 polled organizations have 204 regular employees, or on average 5.6 per organization. The criterion of regular employment was not just a full-time job, but also a temporary service contract. Regular employment with an NGO, as the pollsters found out, does not mean an office job from 8 to 16, but more or less everyday implementation of projects, as well as lobbying with the goal of raising funding and implementation of projects. Organizations which have applied for EU projects have a larger number of employees – 7.4 (those which have not applied have 3.2), which shows that in terms of staffing, and most likely infrastructure as well, they are better equipped to deal with applications for projects.

Both kinds of organizations have a much larger number of regular associates, totaling 329, or on average 9.1 per organization. Those which have applied for projects have nearly twice as many associates as those which have not.

Number of employees and associates in NGOs		
NGOs	Number of employees	Number of associates
Which have applied for EU projects (21)	156	242
Which have not applied for EU projects (15)	48	87
Total	204	329

Average number of employees and associates in NGOs		
NGOs	Number of employees	Number of associates
Which have applied for EU projects (21)	7.43	11.52
Which have not applied for EU projects (15)	3.2	5.8
Total (36)	5.67	9.14

Main field of activity: Most work on development of civil society

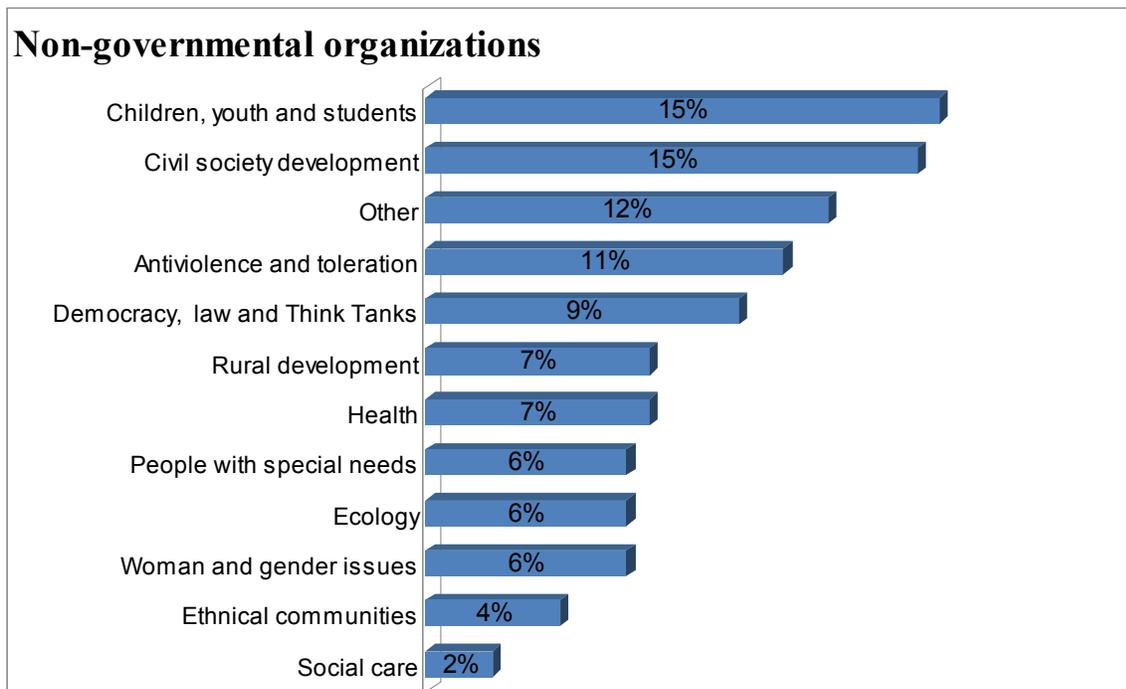
The biggest percentage of polled organizations work on *Development of civil society* and *Children, youth and students*, 11 percent each, followed by the categories *Fighting violence and development of tolerance*, 8 percent, and *Democracy, law and think thank*, 7 percent.

As for organizations which have applied for EU projects, the biggest percentage of polled organizations work on *Development of civil society*, 20 percent, followed by the categories *Children, youth and students*, *Democracy, law and think tank* and *Fighting violence and development of tolerance*, 15 percent each. The category *Other* carries 14 percent and includes, for example, development of information society, development of rural society, media and communication, etc.

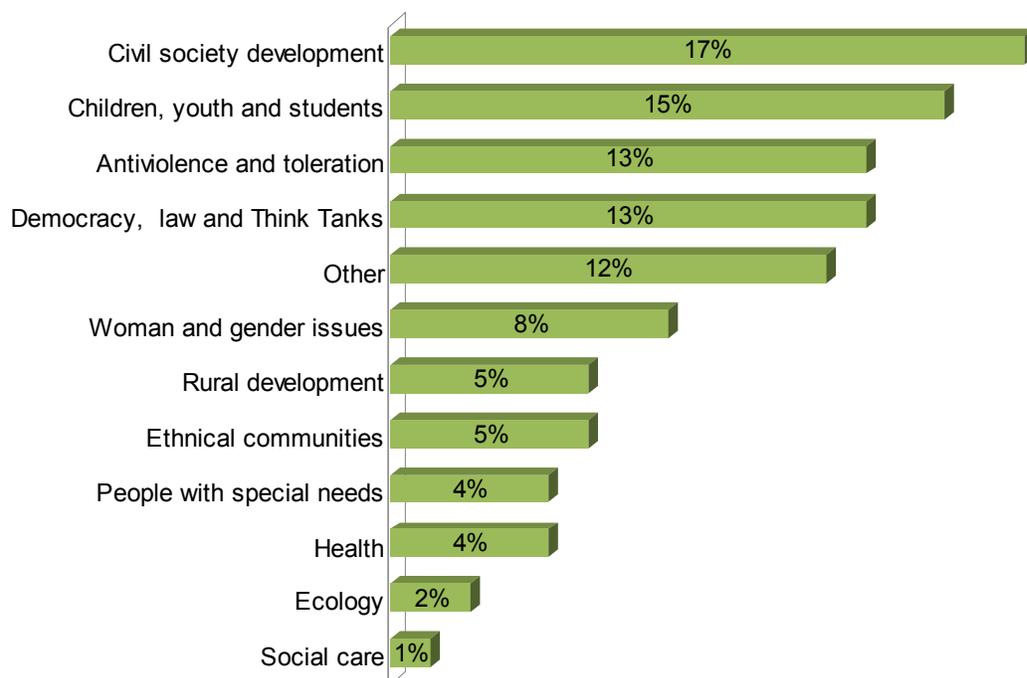
The field of activity is a little different for organizations which have not applied for projects: for 16 percent it is *Children, youth and students*, followed by *Ecology* with 13 percent, and 11 percent each for *Health* and *Development of civil society*.

Generally speaking, it ensues from the above that the vast majority of organizations which apply for EU projects work on development of democratic values. If we integrate the categories *Development of civil society* and *Democracy, law and think tank*, which overlap to some extent, they cover more than one-third of those polled.

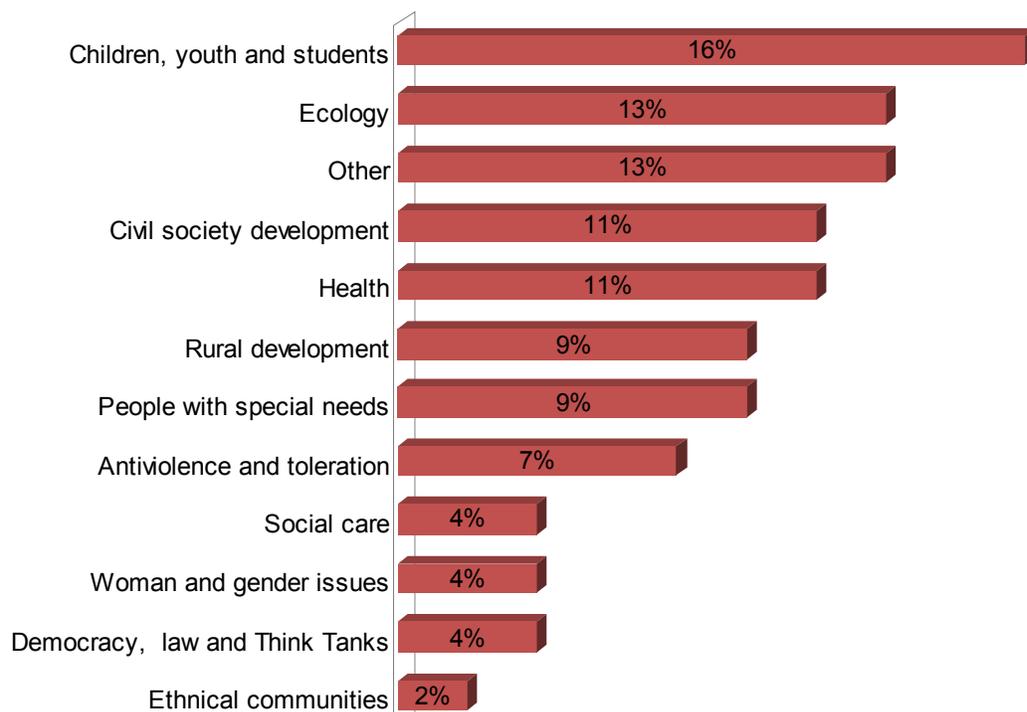
Main topics of operation



NGO which have applied for an EU fund



NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



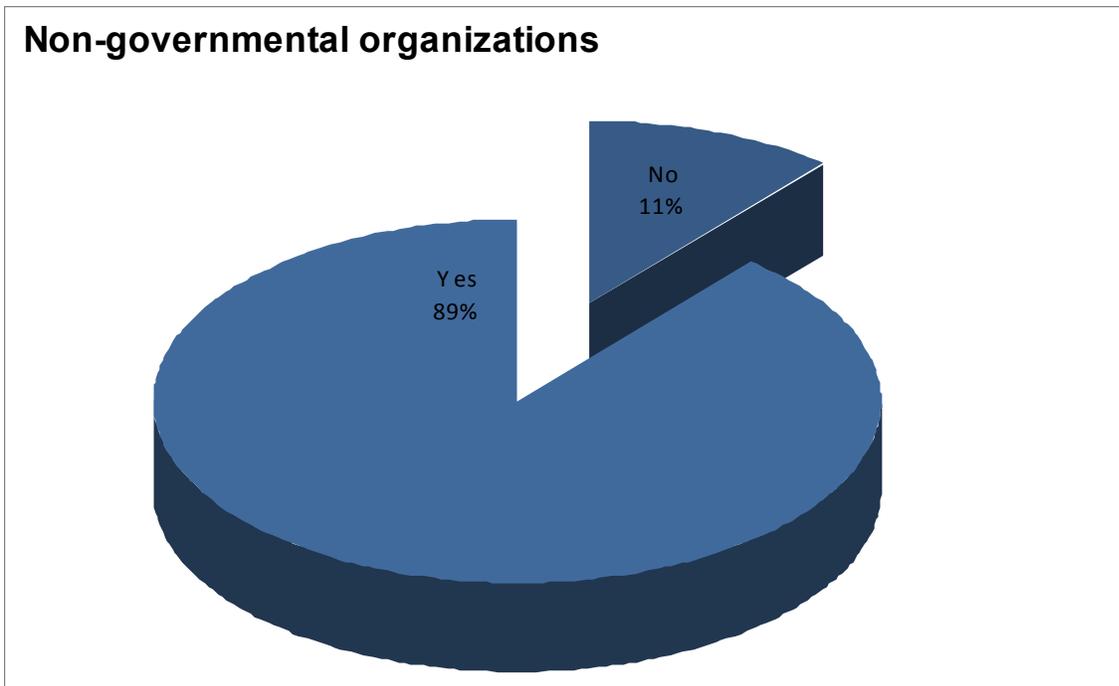
Majority have heard of TACSO

The majority of non-governmental organizations polled, as many as 89 percent, have heard of the TACSO project. With regard to NGOs which have not applied, the percentage of affirmative answers among them is 100 percent, whereas among those which have applied for projects, 81 percent have heard of TACSO.

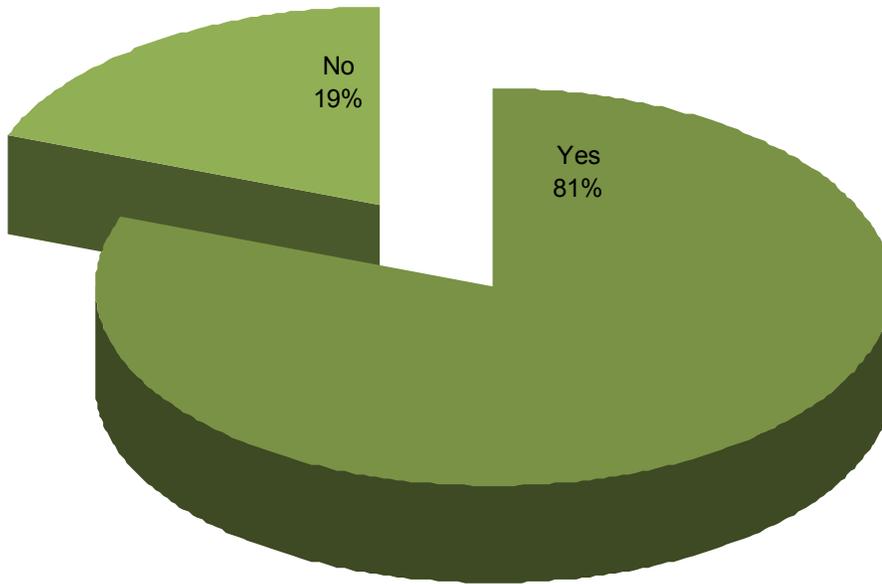
When we look at answers given by editors-in-chief of media, the majority of respondents, 60 percent, said they heard of TACSO. Perhaps it is a little worrisome that the majority of the polled media are among so-called influential media which cover more than half of Bosnia-Herzegovina but it is precisely some heads of these media who have not heard of TACSO. So-called field journalists are probably better acquainted with TACSO as they are more involved in NGO issues, but the percentage obtained indicates that a more active approach to media editors should be used.

As for state organizations, 80 percent of their polled respondents have heard of TACSO.

Have you every heard of TACSO project?



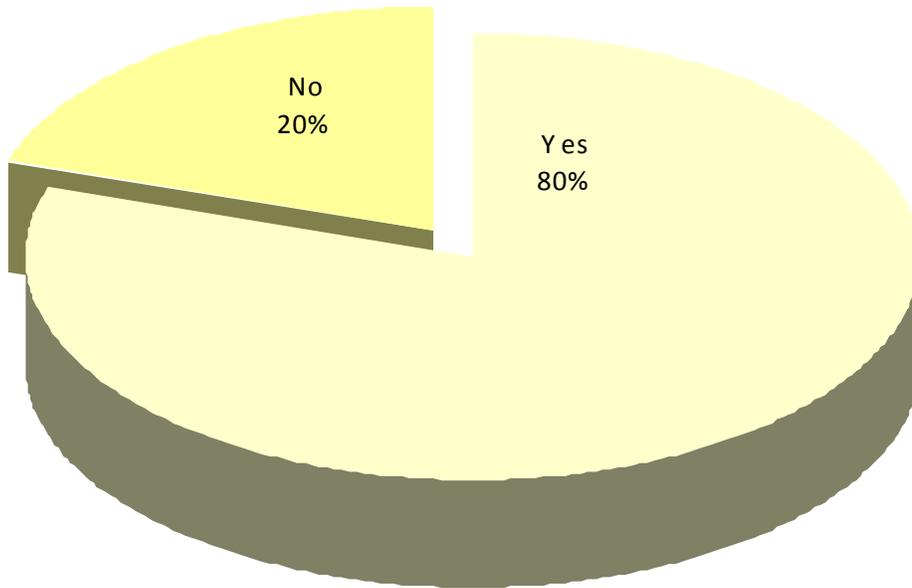
NGO which have applied for an EU fund



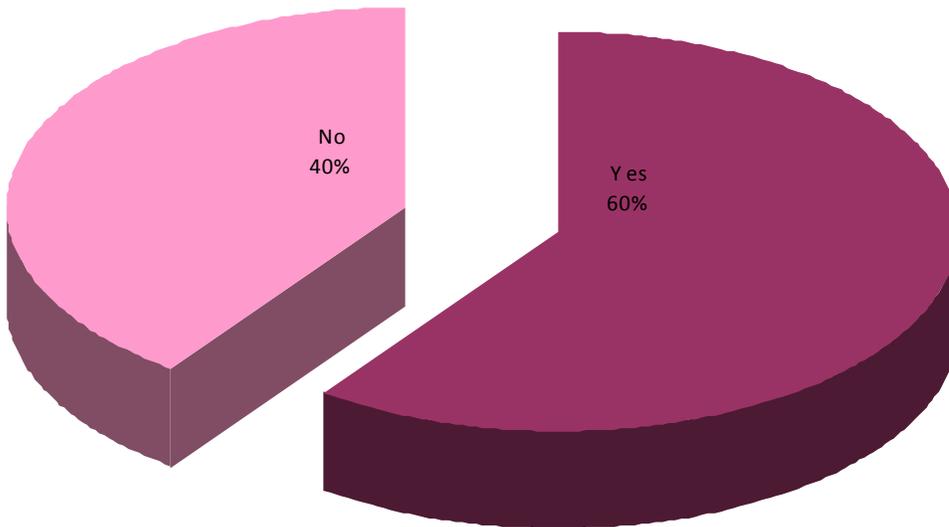
NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions



Media

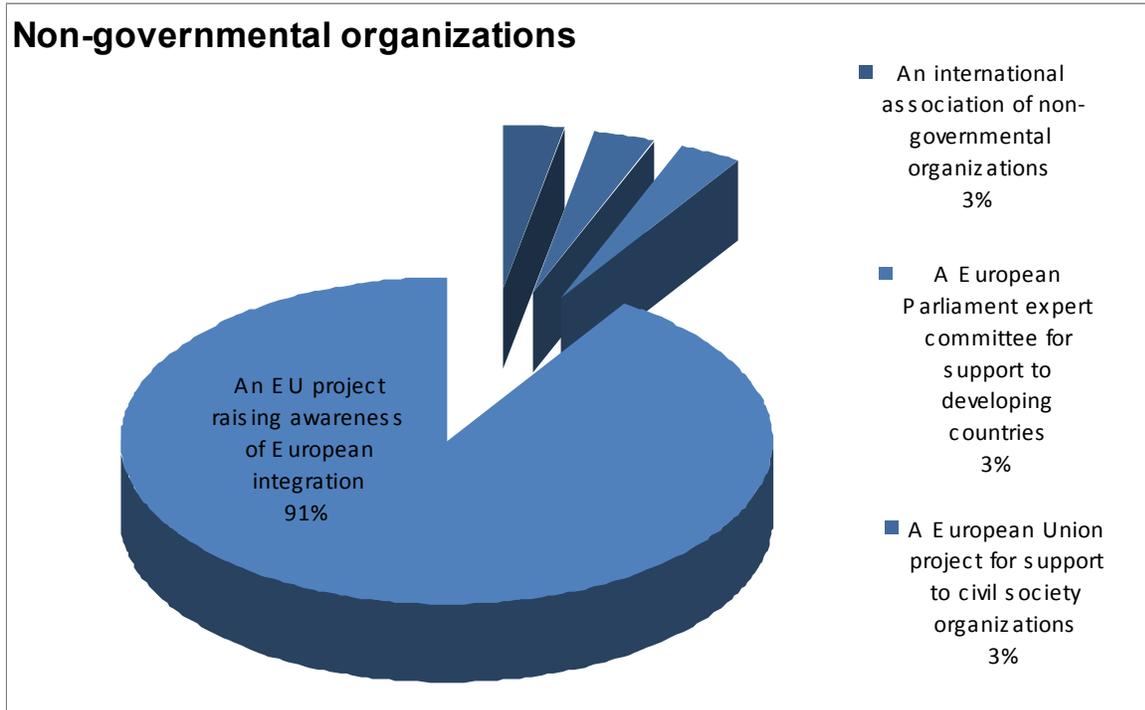


Nearly everyone who has heard of TACSO knows the exact meaning of the acronym

Although these questions were closed, i.e. full names of TACSO were already offered, 91 percent of NGOs answered *European Union project on assistance to civil society organizations*. Three percent each went to other meanings given in the charts. This answer also shows that the percentage of those who know the meaning of the name is somewhat higher among organizations which have not applied for projects (93% compared to 89%).

Among media we have a relatively high percentage of editors who think that TACSO is *International union of non-governmental organizations*, whereas among state organizations everyone knew what TACSO stands for.

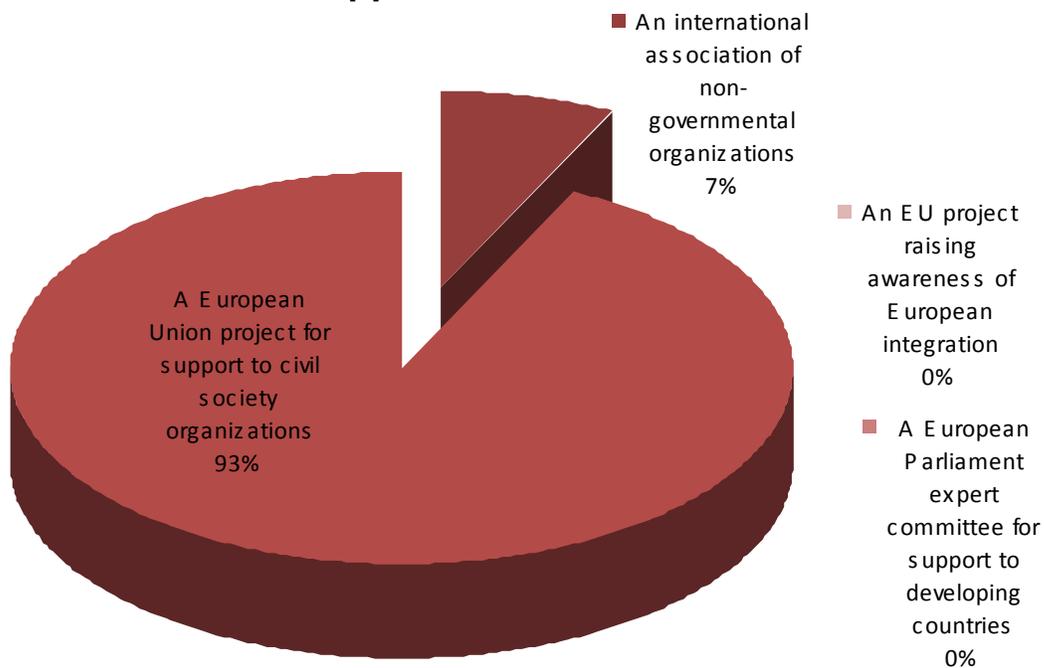
TACSO is:



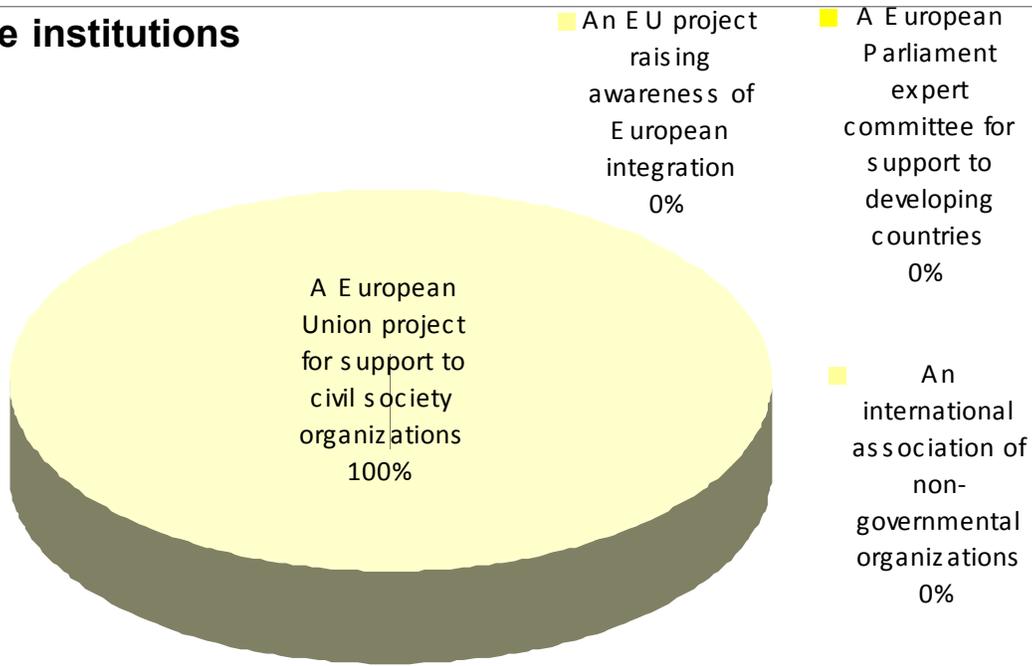
NGO which have applied for an EU fund



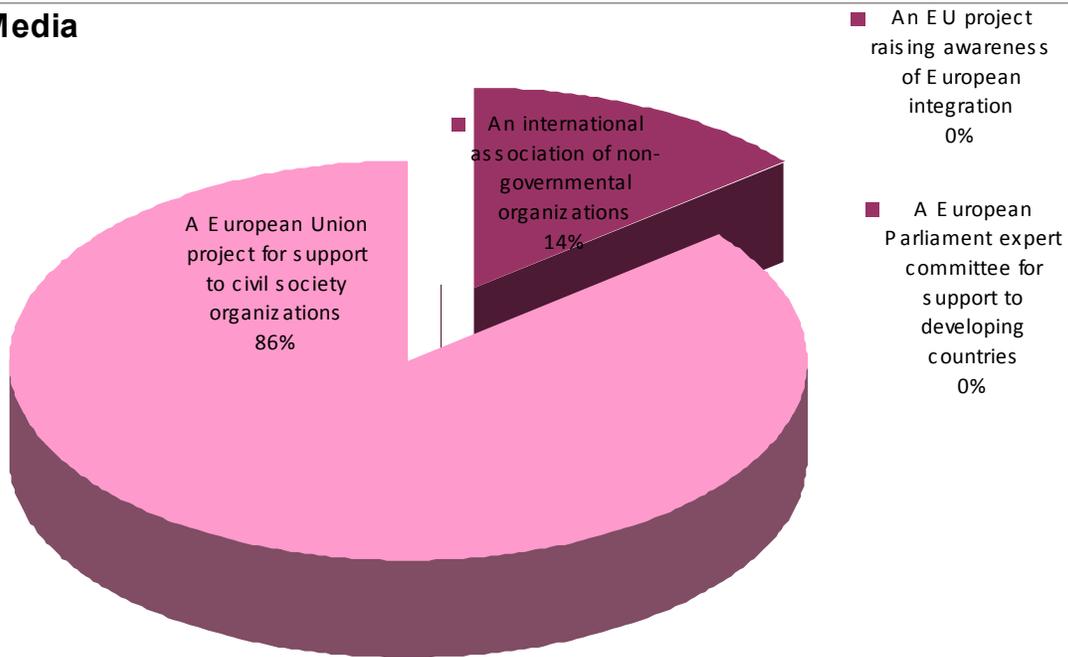
NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions



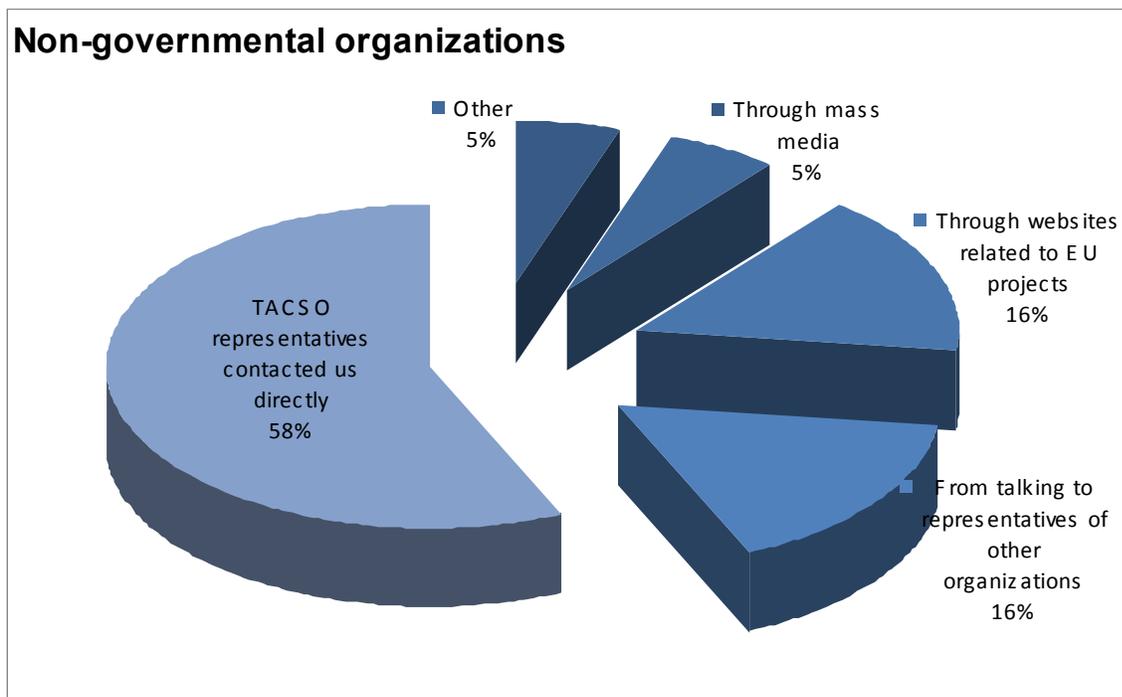
Media



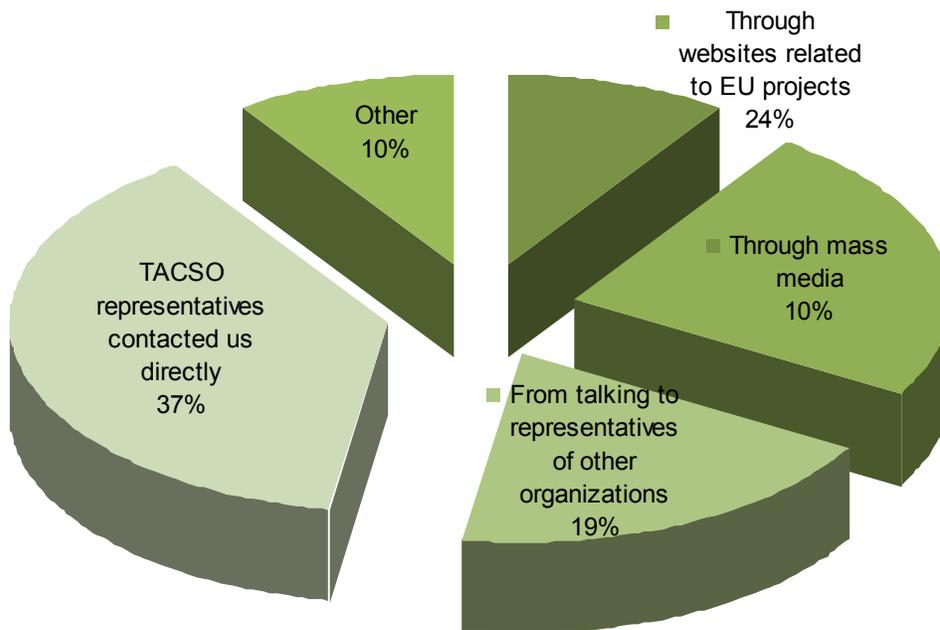
Majority heard of TACSO by being directly contacted by its representatives

When asked how they heard of TACSO, 58 percent of non-governmental organizations answered that they were *directly contacted by TACSO representatives*. There were 16 percent answers each for *through mass media* and *through talking to representatives of other organizations*. That the majority was directly contacted shows activity of the TACSO project and its employees, but what is a little worrisome are somewhat smaller percentages related to other levels of communication. If we break this down, we see a big difference. Among those who have not applied for EU projects, we have as many as 81 percent who said they were directly contacted by TACSO. However, among organizations which have applied for EU projects, the way they found out about TACSO shows a much bigger variation: 38 percent were directly contacted, 24 percent found out through the internet, and 19 percent found out from talking to other organizations.

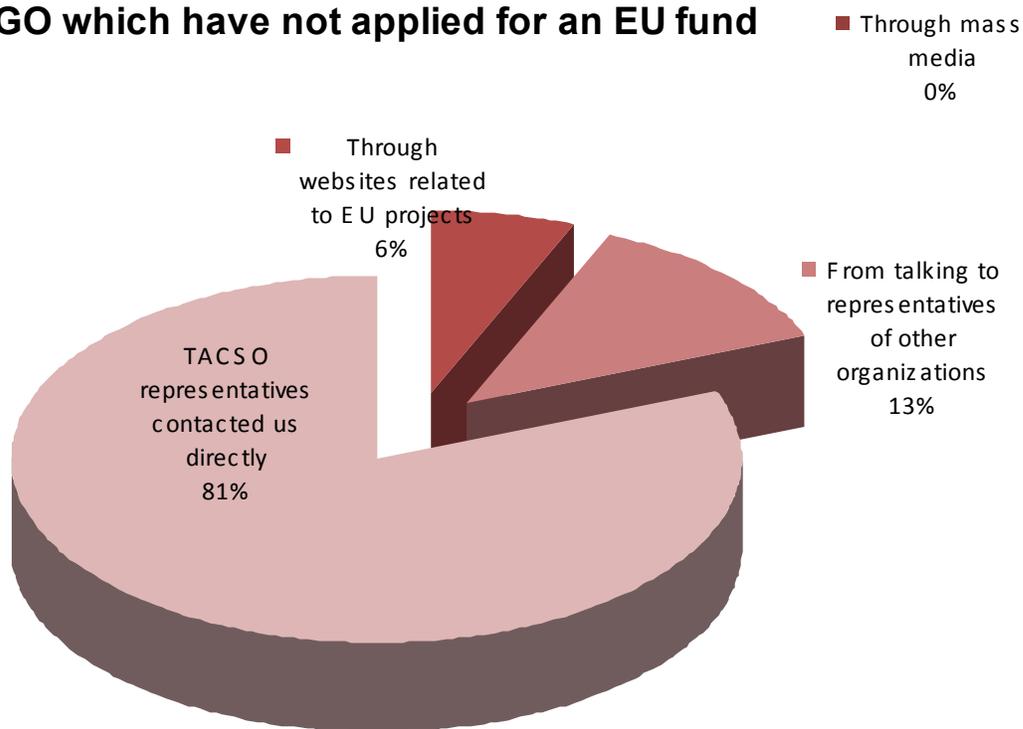
How did you hear of TACSO?



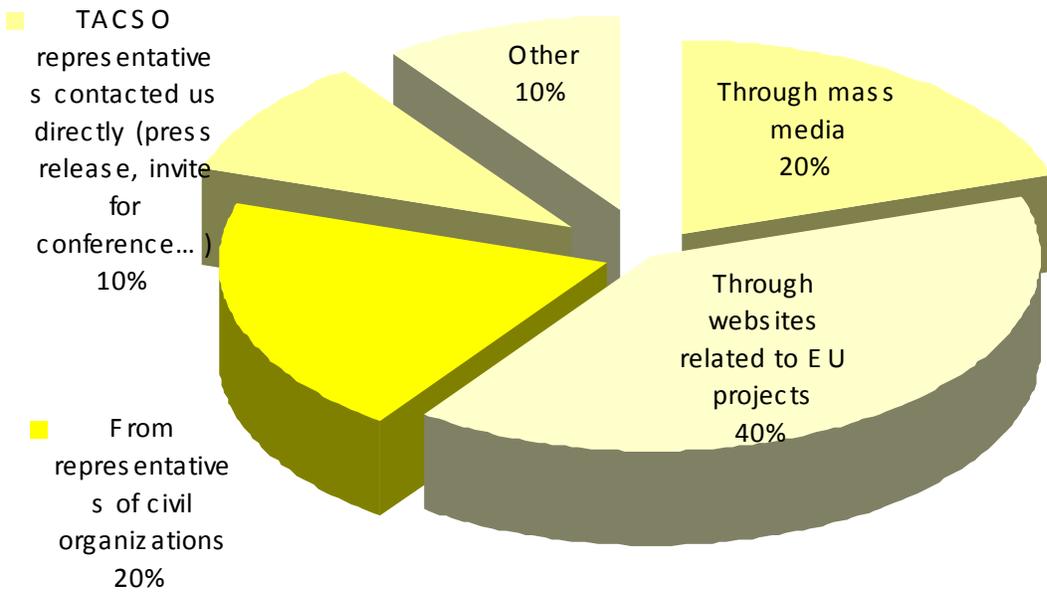
NGO which have applied for an EU fund



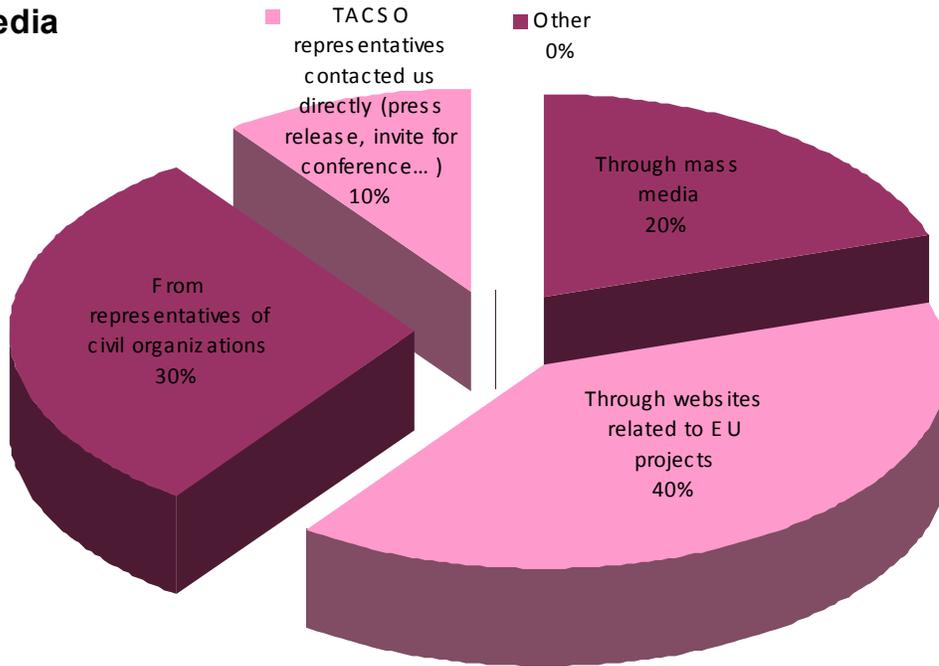
NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions



Media



Conferences and seminars are most common form of cooperation with TACSO

To the question on the kind of cooperation with TACSO, more than two-thirds of organizations answered that representatives of their organization attended a conference or seminar. Then

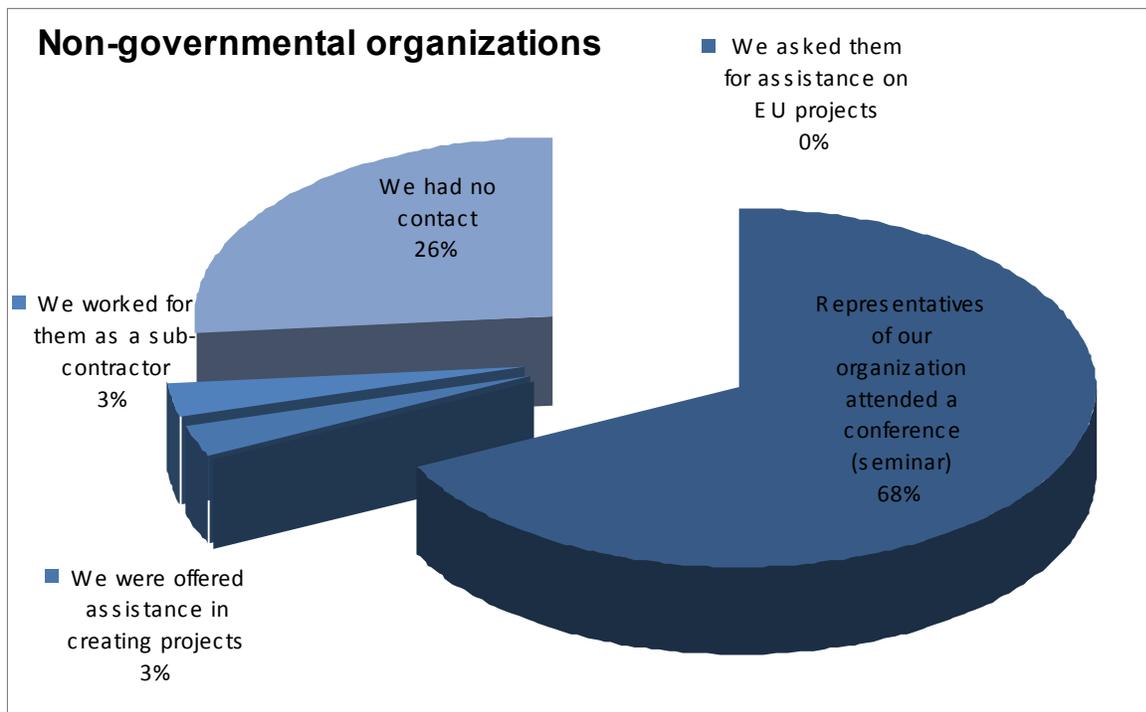
there were 26 percent of those who heard of TACSO, but did not have any contact with it or its representatives. Other offered choices received a minimal number of answers.

Looking separately at whether or not NGOs have applied for EU projects, the percentages are relatively similar. Yet, it is noticeable, even if at a small percentage, that those who have applied had contact with TACSO related to assistance in creating projects or working on projects as sub-contractors.

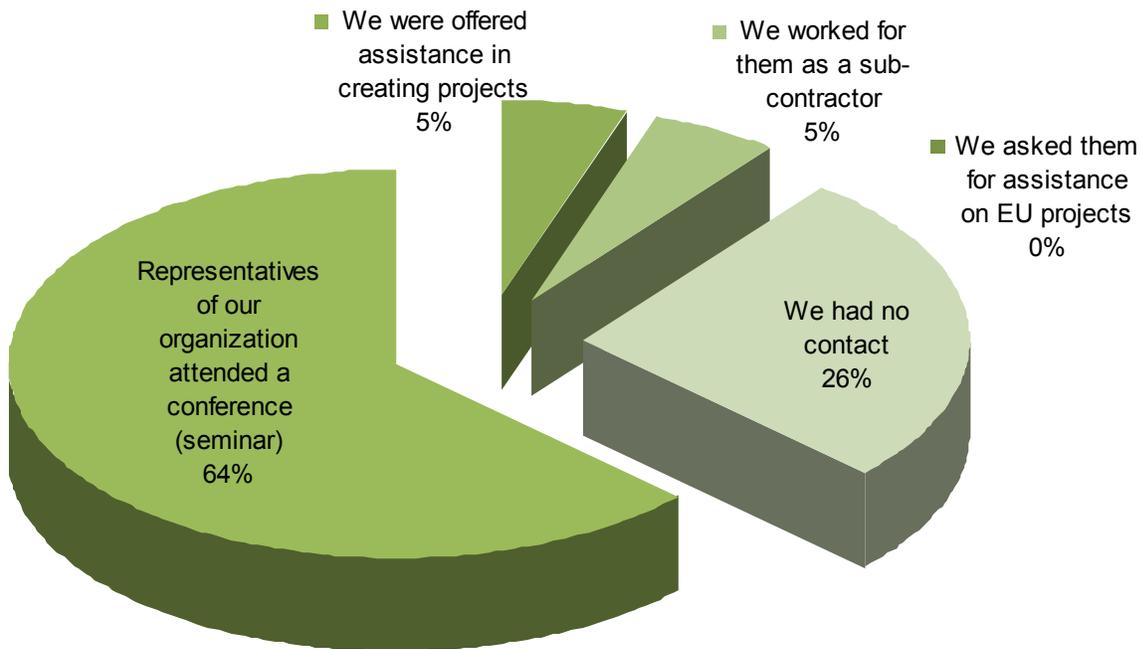
With regard to state institutions, in as many as 75 percent of cases the surveyed institutions had no contact with TACSO.

With regard to media, they had no contact with TACSO in 38 percent of cases. However, in relation to media we have a specific characteristic that is related to their function, which is that in 25 percent of cases they had contact with TACSO because they covered events that it organized. Also, in 38 percent of cases representatives of those media were at such events as participants.

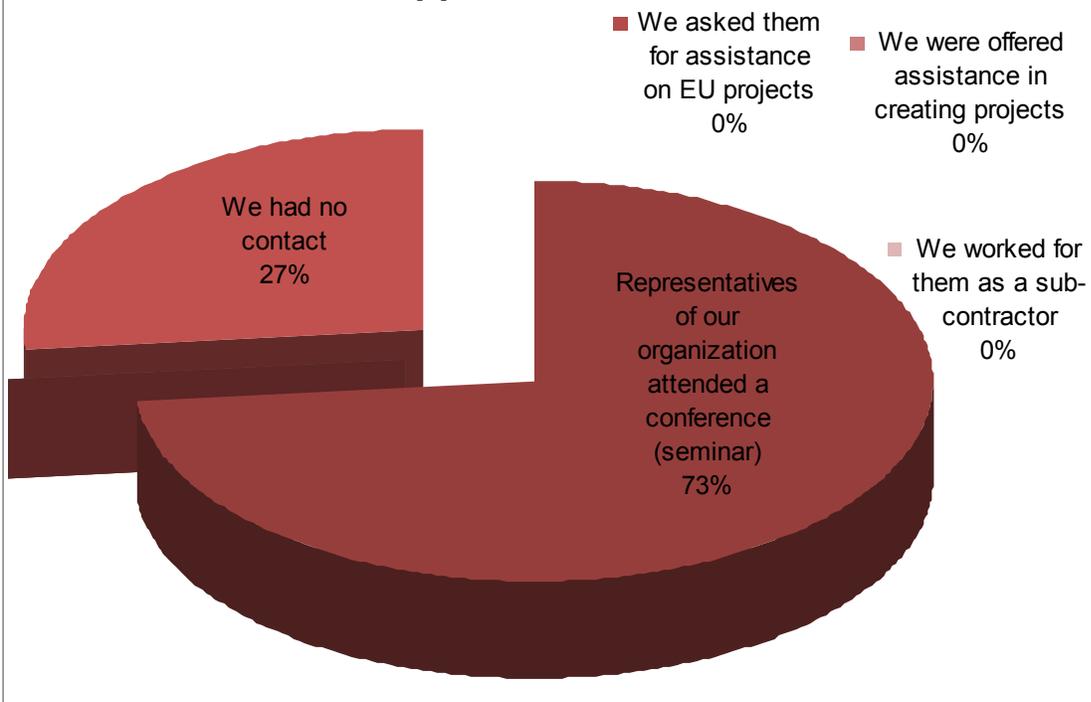
Have you ever cooperated with (contacted, encountered...) TACSO project activities?



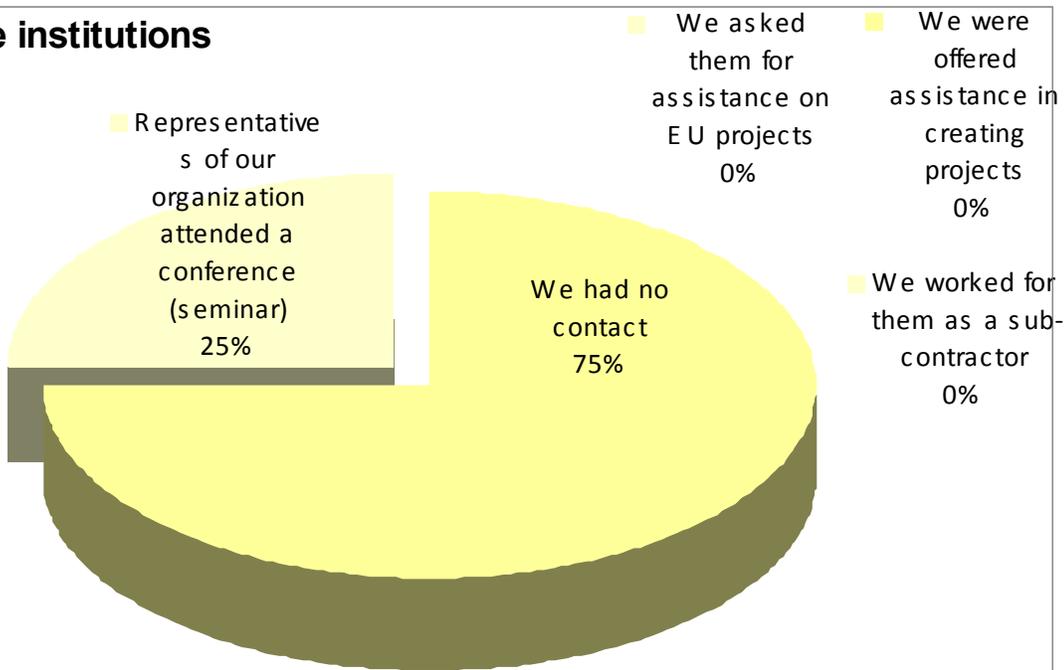
NGO which have applied for an EU fund



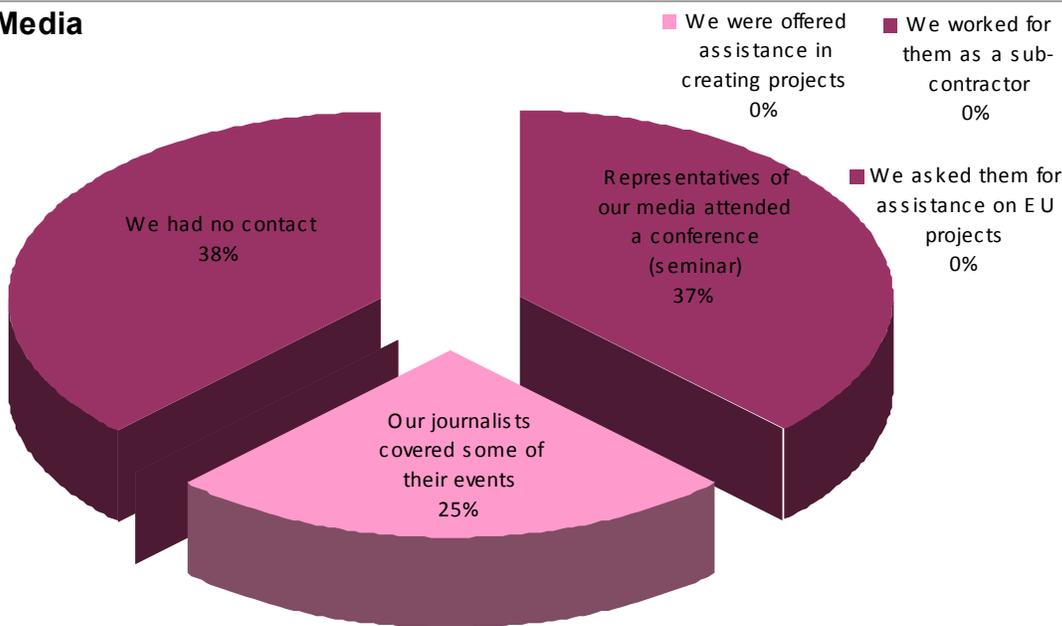
NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions



Media



The aim of the next set of questions was to identify which TACSO institutes and activities the respondents came into contact with. Thirty-six percent of non-governmental organizations had contact with the **TACSO Help Desk**. An optional question was to say why that activity was carried out. Here are the answers given by those who had contact with this institute:

“Regarding activities, plans for the next period, requesting details on a seminar in Zagreb planned in September on the issue of raising the quality of services of the civil sector.”

“We just needed some information.”

“We regularly receive three newsletters from TACSO.”

“We have heard of the TACSO Help Desk and we know what its purpose is, but we have not contacted them yet.”

“Registration in PADOR” (2 same answers)

“Workshop on registration in PADOR” (3 same answers)

“Role of civil society organization in the European integration process”

Looking at a breakdown of who has heard of the Help Desk, 50 percent of cases were organizations which have not applied and 21 percent of cases were those which have applied. State institutions had contact in 13 percent of cases and media have not heard in a single case of this TACSO institute.

Training activities, as we could see in the previous question, are the most common form of contact of organizations with TACSO. Forty-four percent of NGOs attended a training program. These programs are:

“Regional Training Programme: Developing and Managing EU Projects”

“We received invitations from TACSO to several regional workshops for which we applied but our applications were not approved”

“Siroki Brijeg, training for registration in the PADOR database”

“Training in writing projects for the EU”

“Regional Pilot Training in Fundraising”

“Learning about TACSO and importance and role of the PADOR number”

“Registration of civil society organizations in PADOR” (3 same answers)

“Learning about TACSO and importance and role of the Pador number”

With this activity again, a much bigger percentage of those who attended training are from the NGO sector which has not applied for projects (55 compared to 36 percent). Media representatives did not participate in these activities, whereas two state organizations attended training in Zadar, as they stated, in a meeting with all members of TACSO where this project is implemented.

The activity **Conferences/meetings with partners** was attended by 36 percent of organizations. Here is their description:

“Advisory Board, meetings of consortium partners/briefings/information events/Kick-off”
“Implementation of partnership event ‘Prevention circle (coordination, information, respect, cooperation, law, education) / building common strategies against juvenile delinquency in BiH’ – public debate and debate forum ‘Juvenile Delinquency – A Global Issue’ on eve of international debate competition”
“Safety network”
“Civil society organizations – the power of BiH citizens on the road to European integration”
“Conference in Banja Luka”

Unlike the previous two activities, in this one there is a higher percentage of those who have applied for projects (44 compared to 17 percent). One media outlet also participated in a conference which its editor-in-chief dubbed as “Union of Blind Persons of the Republika Srpska”. As for state organizations, only one participated in “a meeting in Banja Luka”.

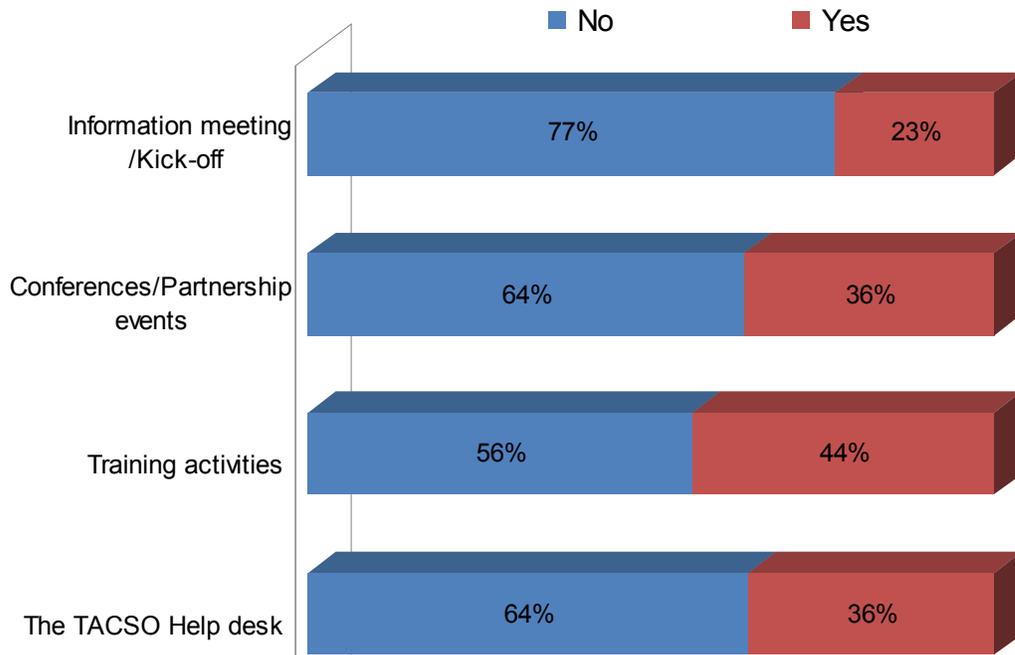
The last activity offered was **Briefings/information events/Kick-off**, which was attended by 23 percent of organizations. Looking separately at the character of organizations, a little more attended from the sector which has already applied for EU projects. Here are the open answers that were provided:

“Briefings, information event, 2 kick-off meetings”
“Information events on achievements of civil society organizations in April 2010”
“Presentation of TACSO projects and workshop: role of civil society organizations in the European integration process”
“Through cooperation to more efficient assistance to victims of violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 23 and 24 June 2010, Sarajevo”
“Civil society organizations – the power of BiH citizens in the European integration process, 27 April 2010, Holiday Inn Hotel, Sarajevo” (2 same answers)
“Information event held in Sarajevo, 27 April 2010”

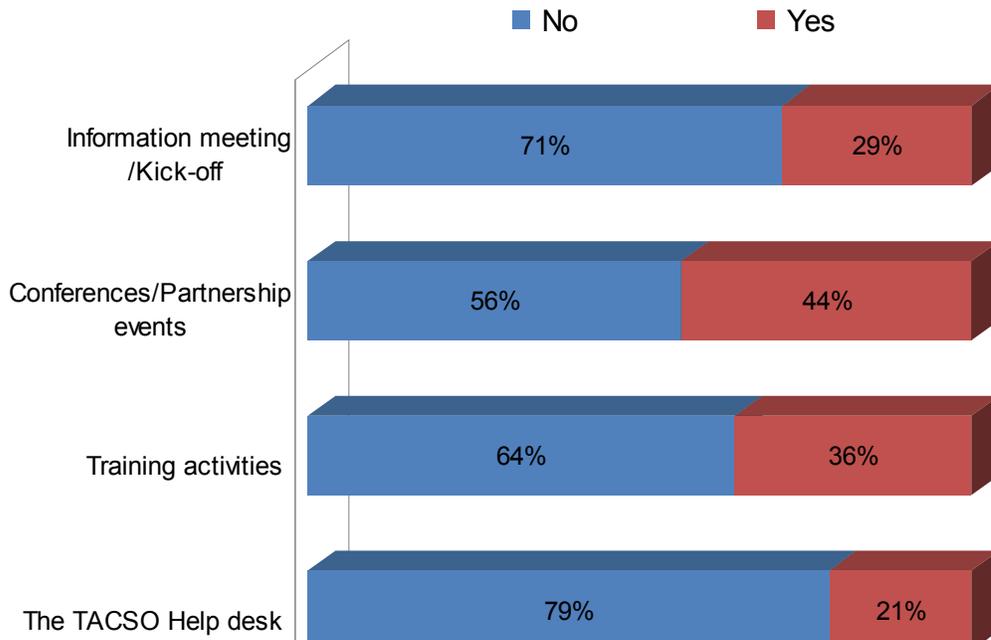
Neither media outlets nor state organizations, at least the ones that were surveyed, attended these events.

Did you hear about or was in contact with:

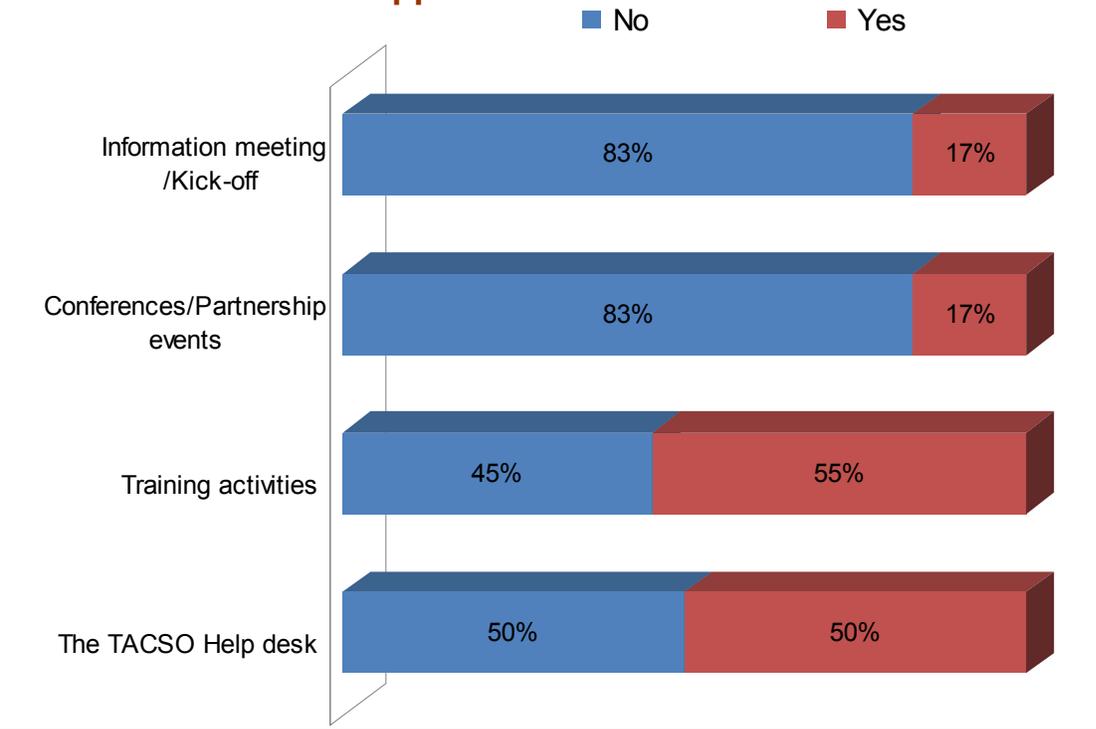
Non-governmental organizations



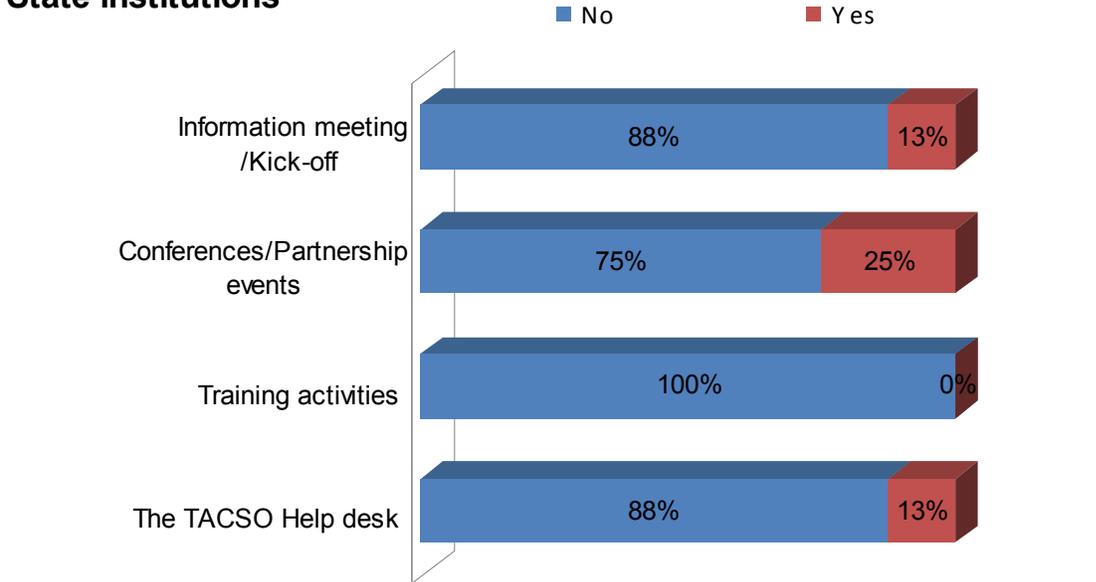
NGO which have applied for an EU fund

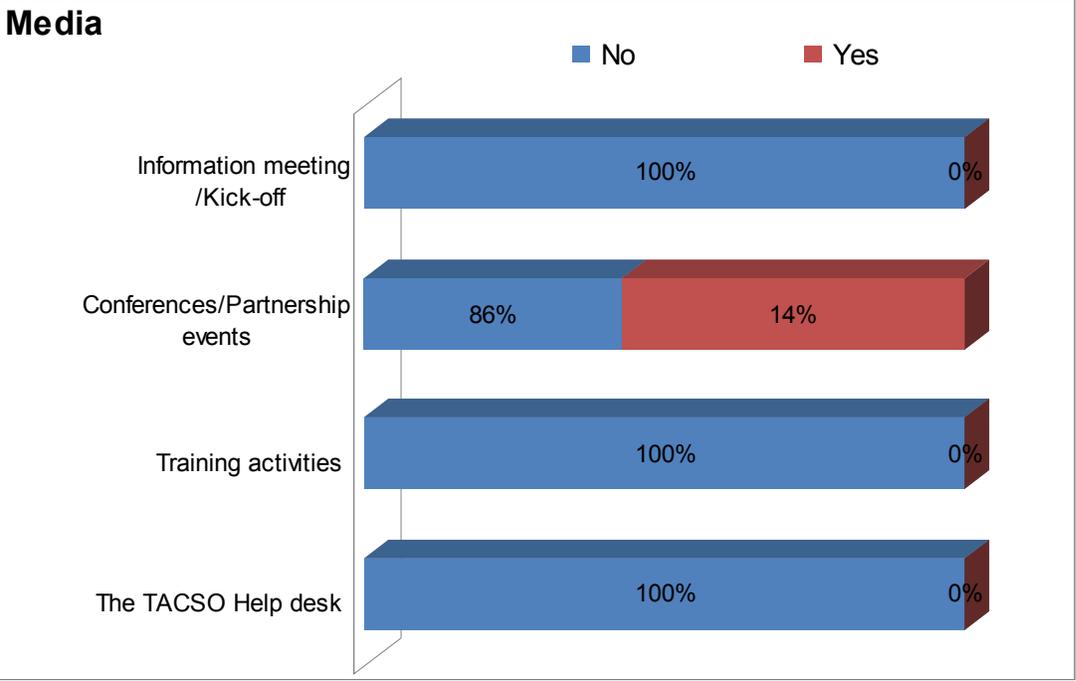


NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions



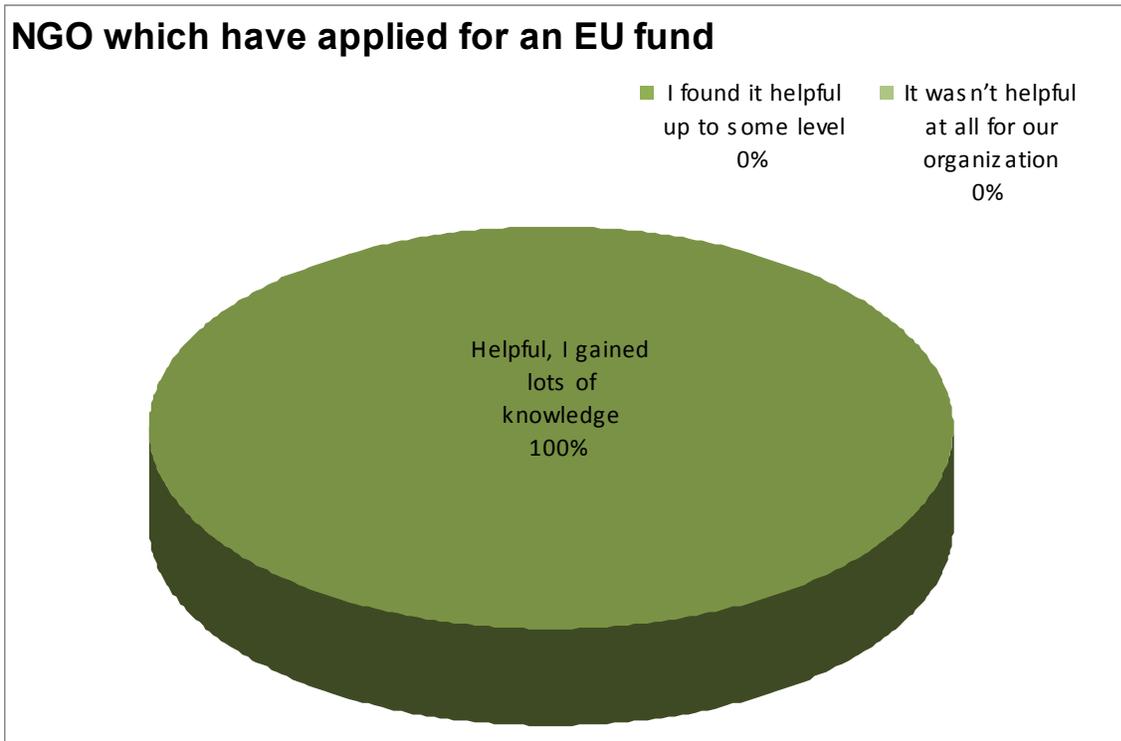
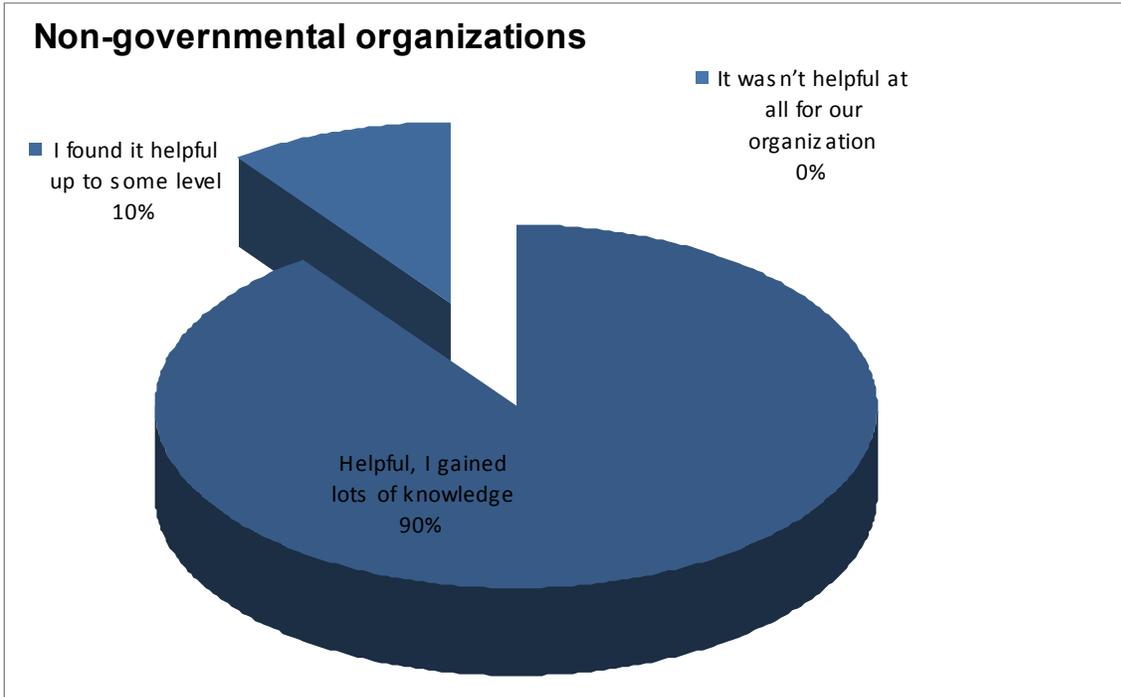


Nearly all respondents assess TACSO training as useful for their organizations

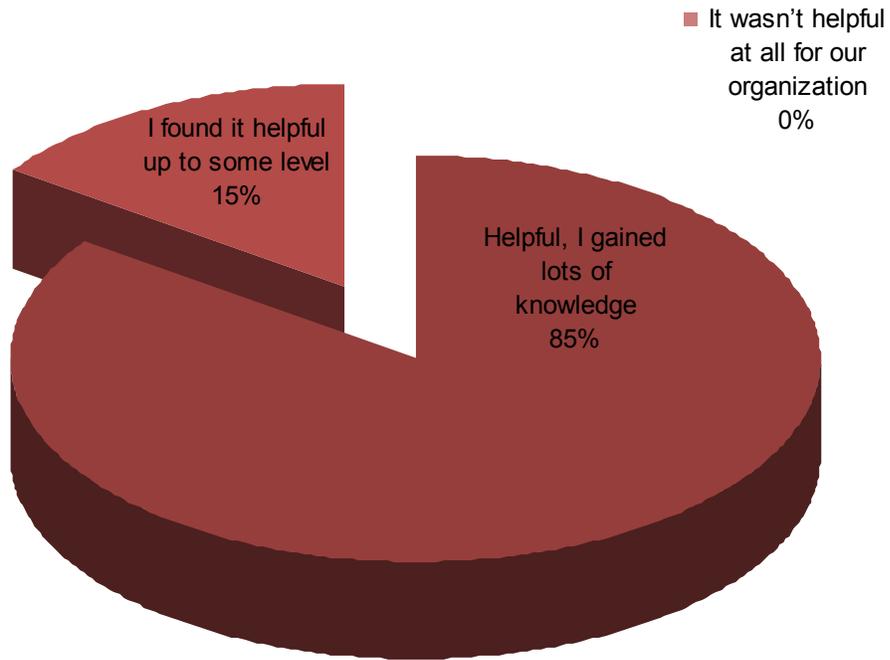
Related to training itself, organizations which attended training answered in 90 percent of cases that it was useful for them. Ten percent of respondents answered *partly useful* and no one said they attended training that was of no use to their organization. Among NGOs which have applied for EU projects, usefulness of training was 100 percent.

As for media and state institutions, just one respondent from polled media and two from state institutions sent their representatives to attend training. They assessed it as useful.

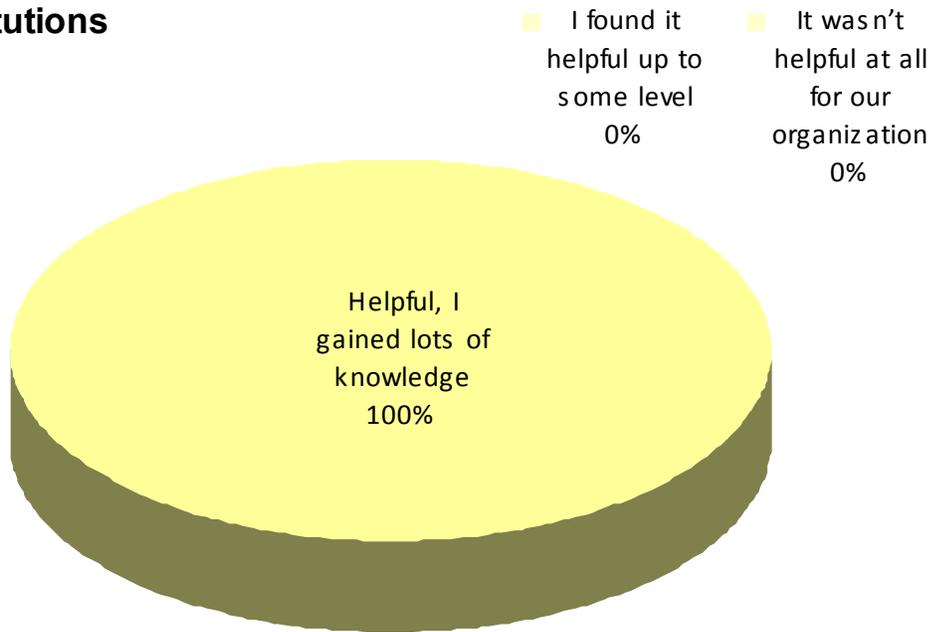
I find the TACSO trainings:



NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions



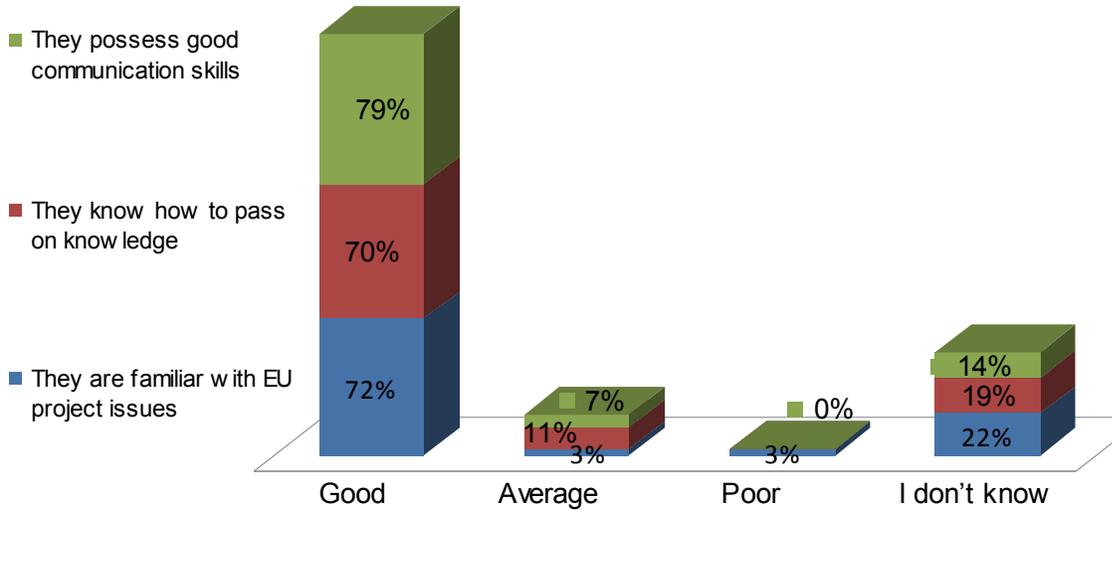
Non-governmental organizations have a high opinion of professional qualities of TACSO staff

We asked those who had contact with TACSO representatives to evaluate their expertise and their communication skills. Generally speaking, beneficiaries of TACSO services and partners have a very high opinion of TACSO staff skills. Seventy-nine percent of respondents from non-governmental organizations answered *they have good communication skills*, 72 percent answered *they are well acquainted with EU project issues*, whereas 70 percent of them think *they know how to convey knowledge*. The category “average” produced a double-digit result only in the category *they know how to convey knowledge* (11%), whereas in the category “poor” we only received one answer – in the area of *knowledge of EU issues*. It is interesting that 18 percent of respondents were unable to evaluate these competencies, i.e. they circled the answer *I don't know*. We noticed that there were no differences in percentages between the two groups of surveyed NGOs.

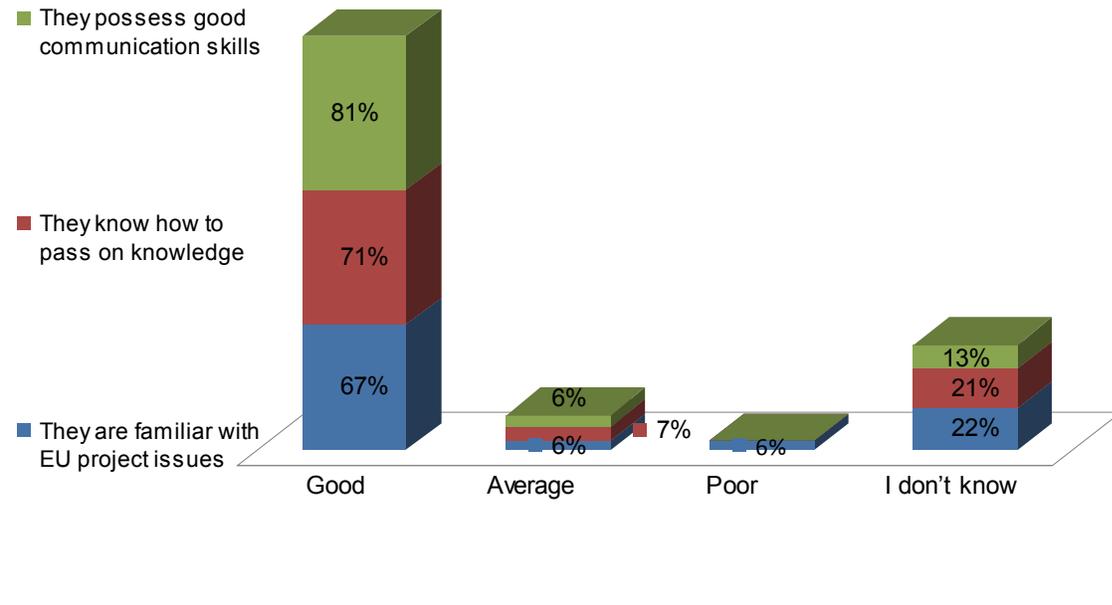
Although the sample is not large, it is indicative that representatives of state institutions in 33 percent of answers assessed as “average” the knowledge on EU project issues, as well as the way of conveying knowledge. A high percentage of *good* was only present in the category of *good communication skills* (67%). Media representatives in the most cases answered *I don't know*.

Our view of TACSO representatives' expertise:

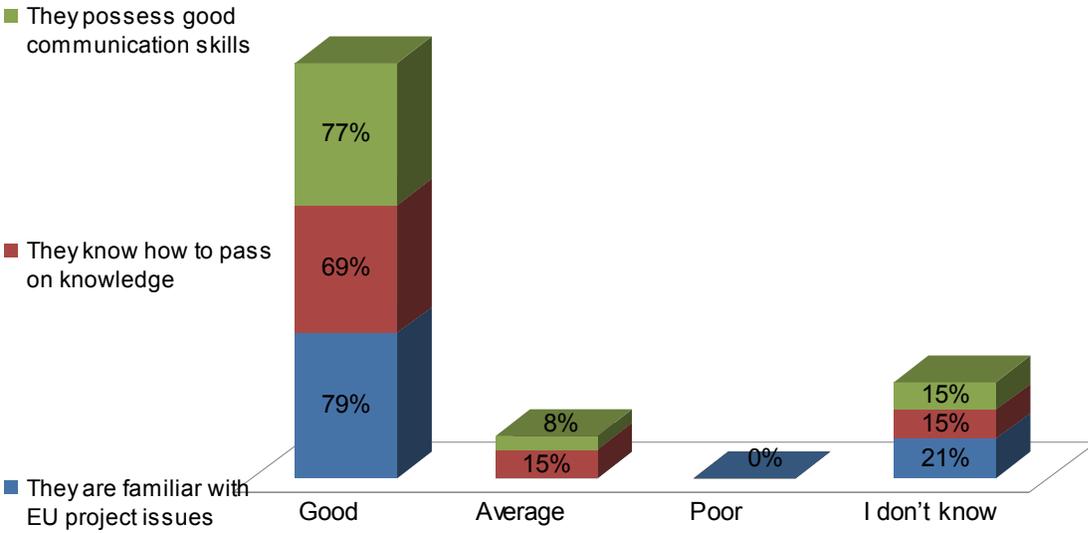
Non-governmental organizations



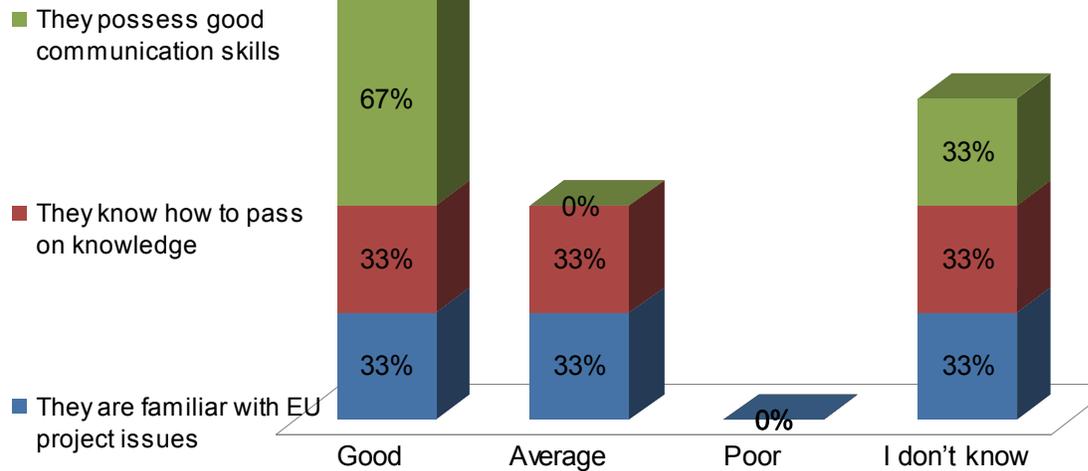
NGO which have applied for an EU fund



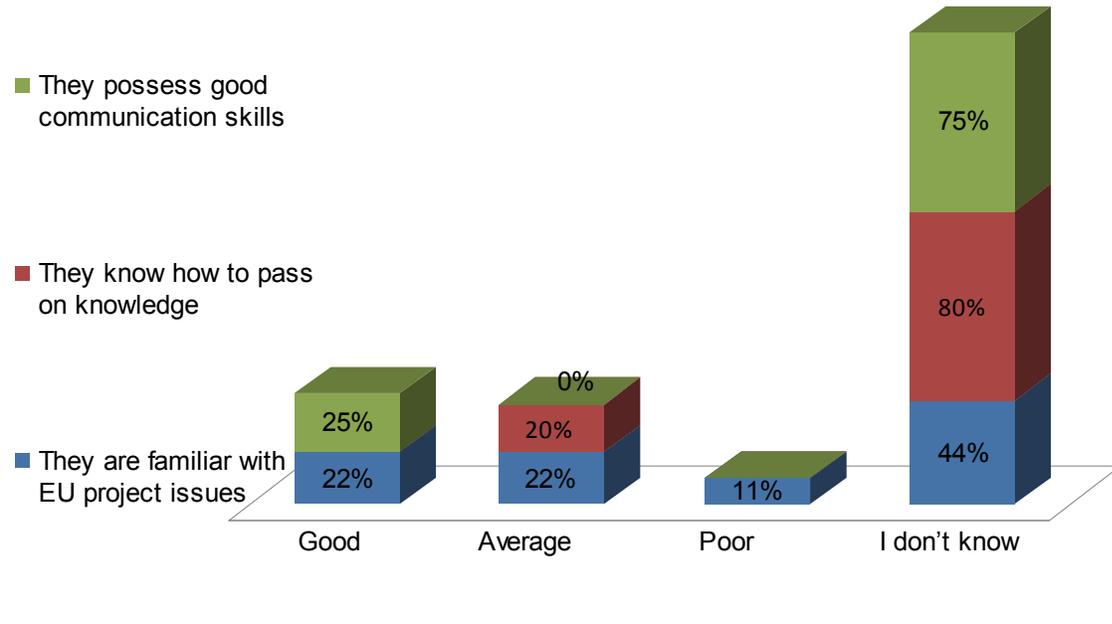
NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions



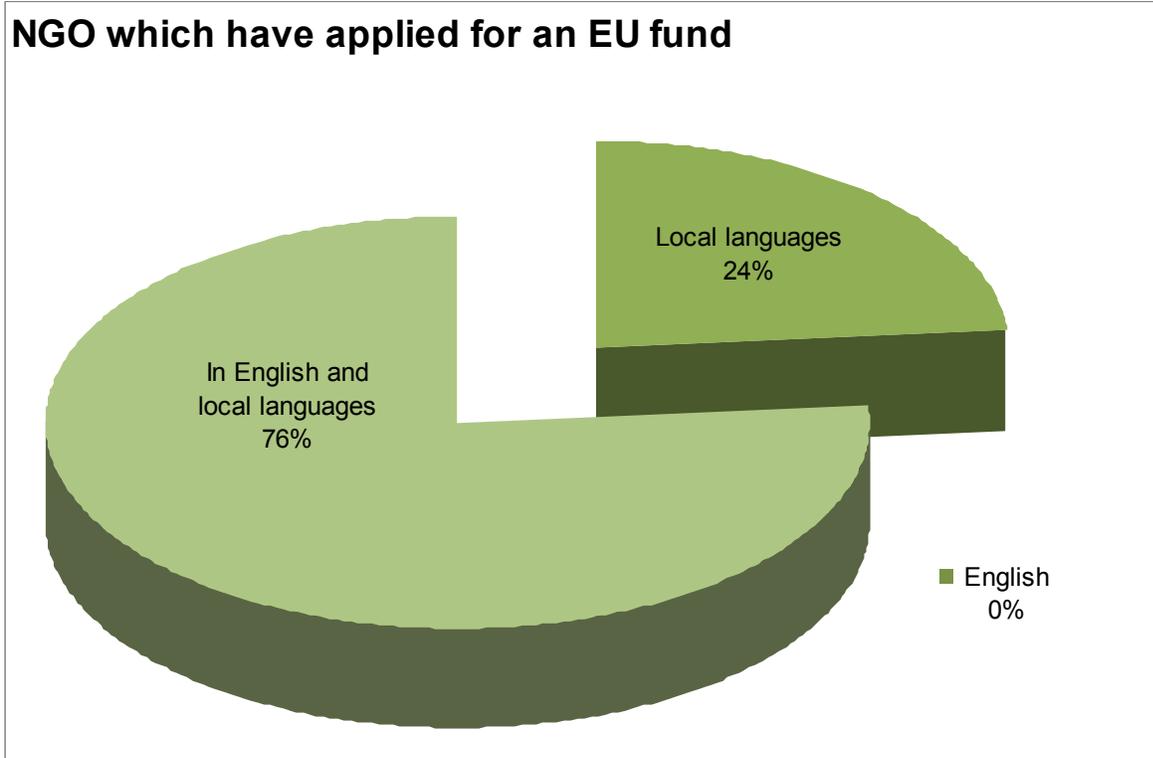
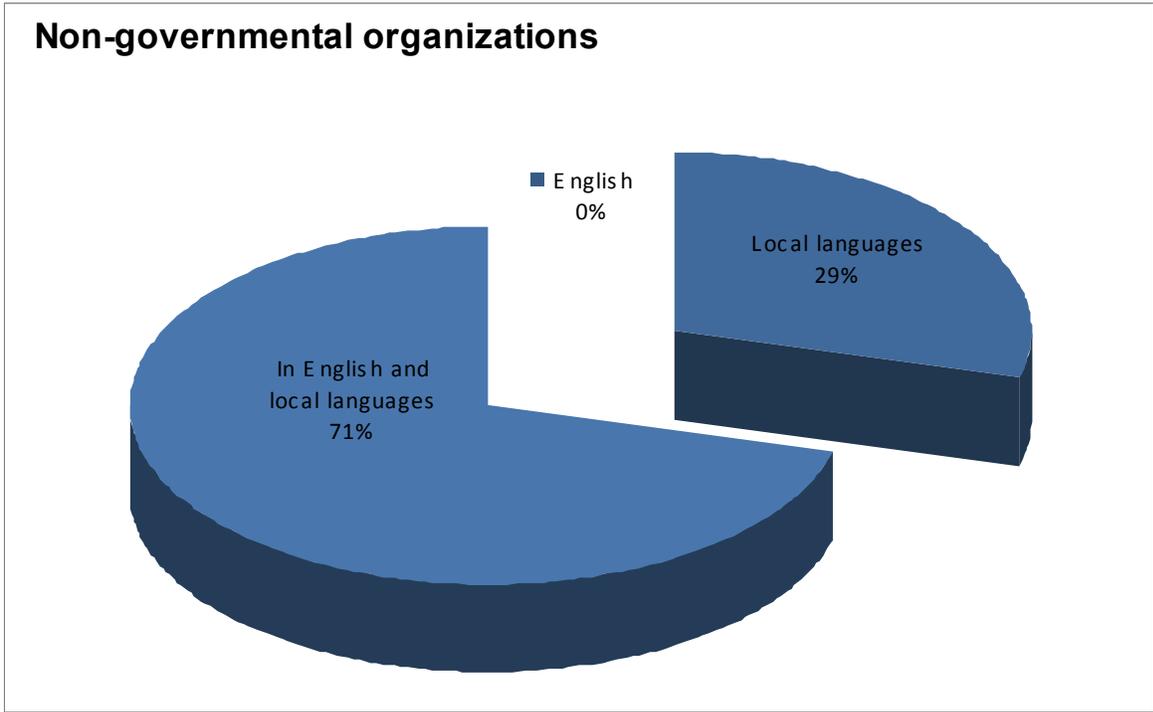
Media



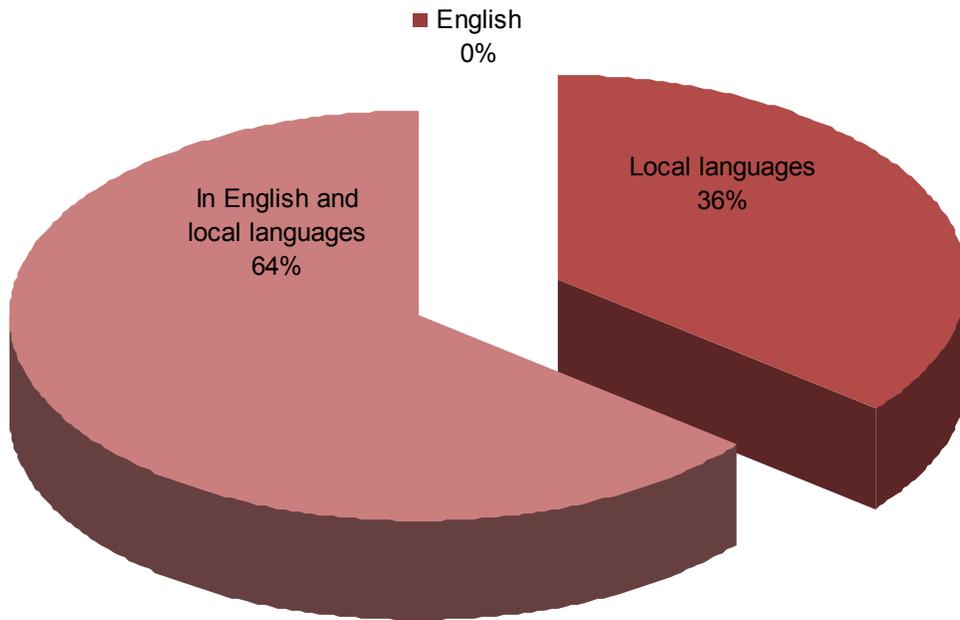
Majority wants material in both the local languages and in English

When asked in which language they prefer the material produced by TACSO, 71 percent of respondents chose the offered answer “In English and in the local languages”. Twenty-nine percent want it only in the local languages, whereas no one chose material just in English. NGOs which have not applied for projects prefer material in the local languages in a somewhat higher percentage (36 percent). Among media, we have the case that 25 percent each want just in English or just in their own language. Among state institutions is the highest percentage of those who want material in both languages – 86 percent.

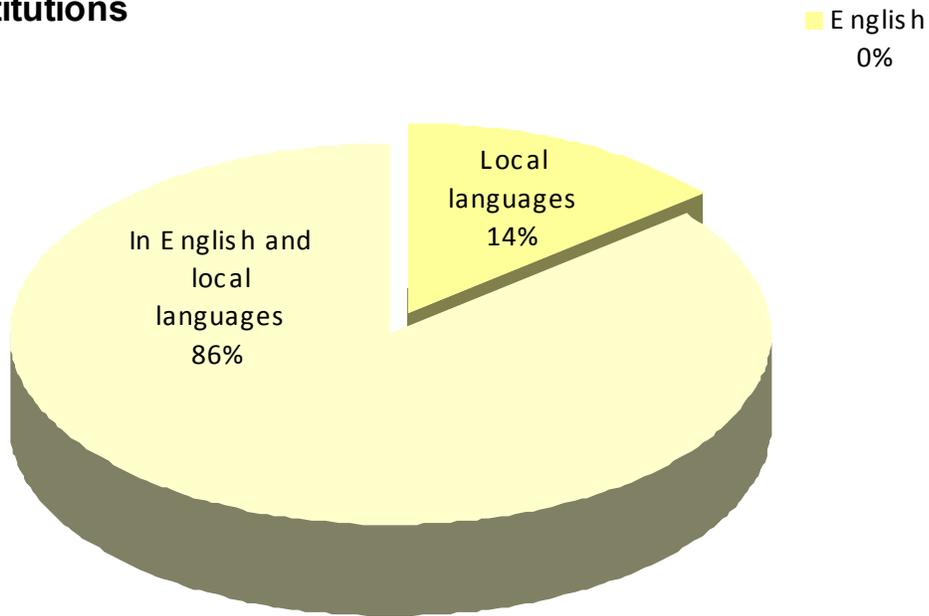
We prefer material produced by TACSO to be in:



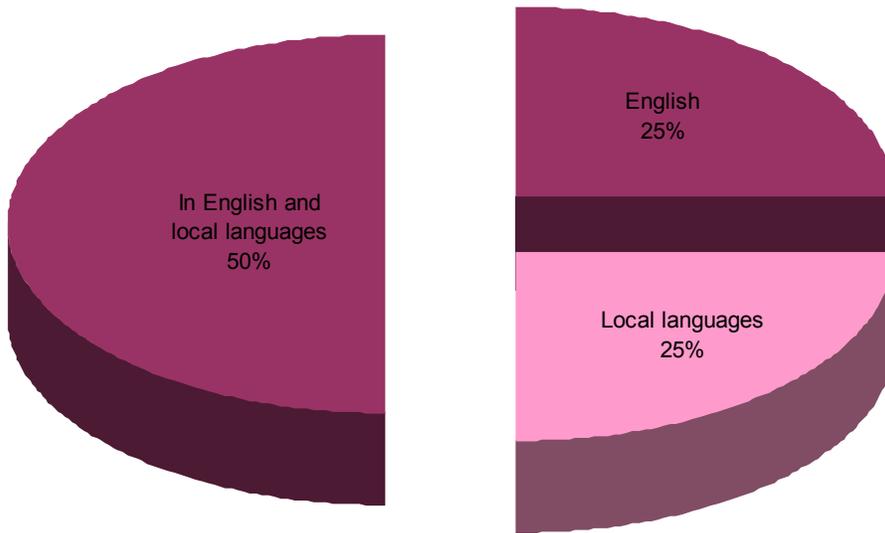
NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions



Media



Non-governmental organizations assess the TACSO website as good

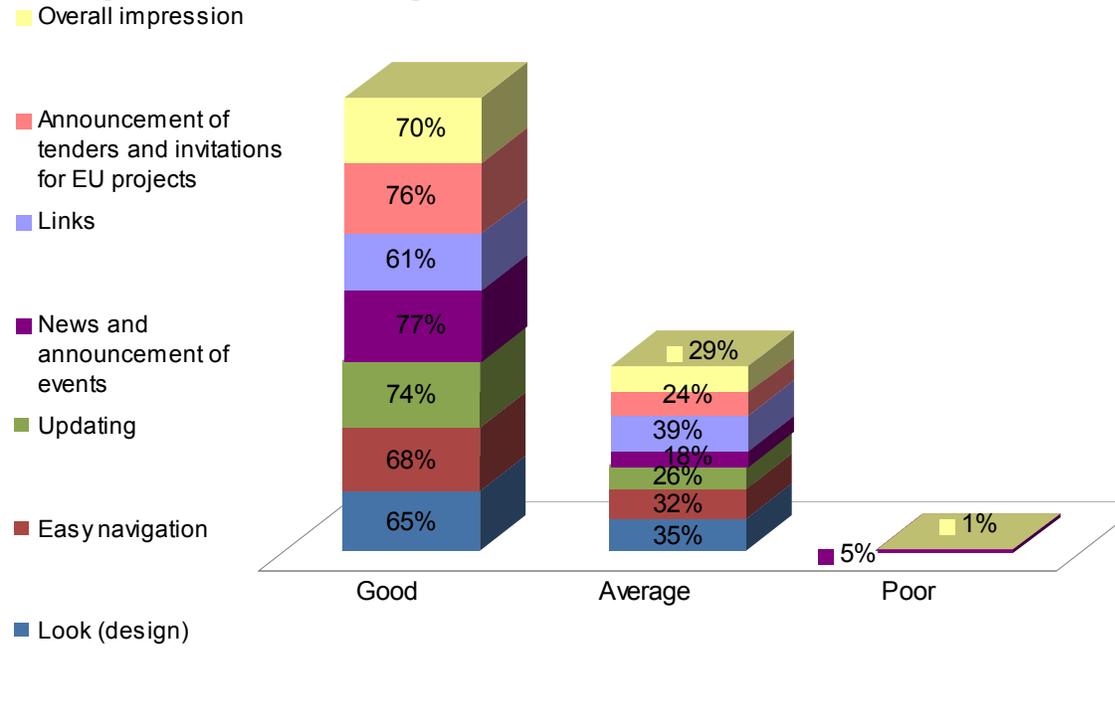
The majority of respondents have visited the TACSO website (77 percent) and the percentage is identical for organizations which have applied for EU projects and those which have not. The percentage for media is higher and 86 percent have visited the website, whereas among state organizations the figure is 100 percent.

Respondents from the NGO sector who have visited it said in 70 percent of cases that it is “good”. The best assessed categories are “news and announcement of events” and “information about tenders and calls for EU projects”. 29 percent of respondents assessed the website as average and one percent assessed it as poor. There is not much difference in whether or not NGOs have applied for EU projects.

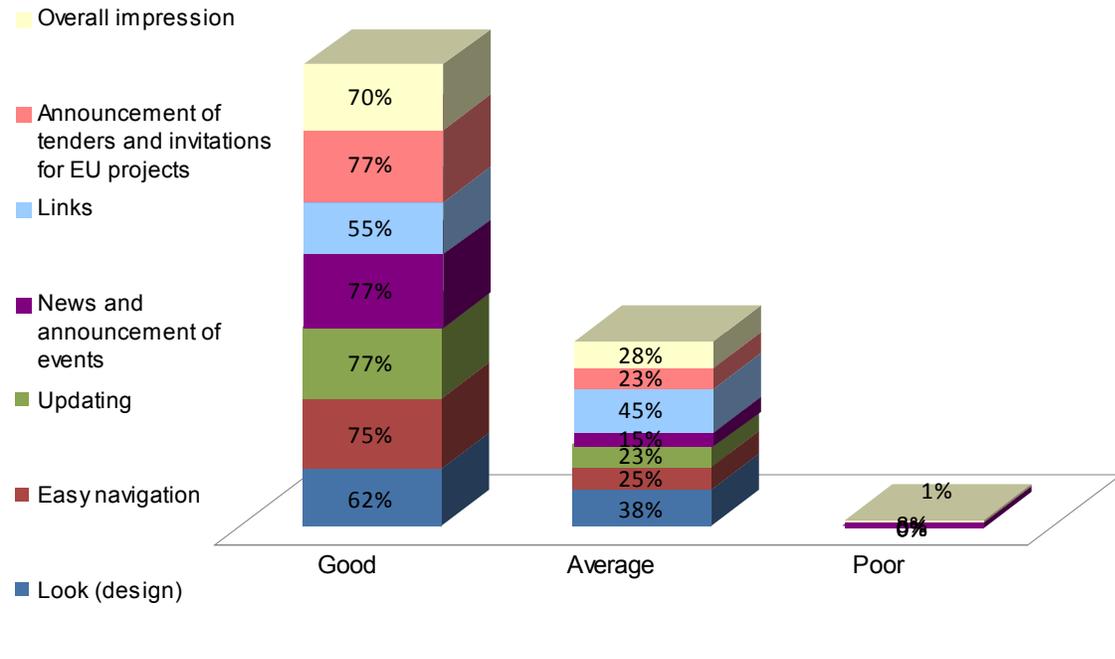
Media are somewhat more critical of the website – 52 percent consider it good and 46 percent consider it average. Representatives of state institutions are even more critical and they consider it good in 45 percent of cases and average in 55 percent of cases.

Evaluation of quality of the website:

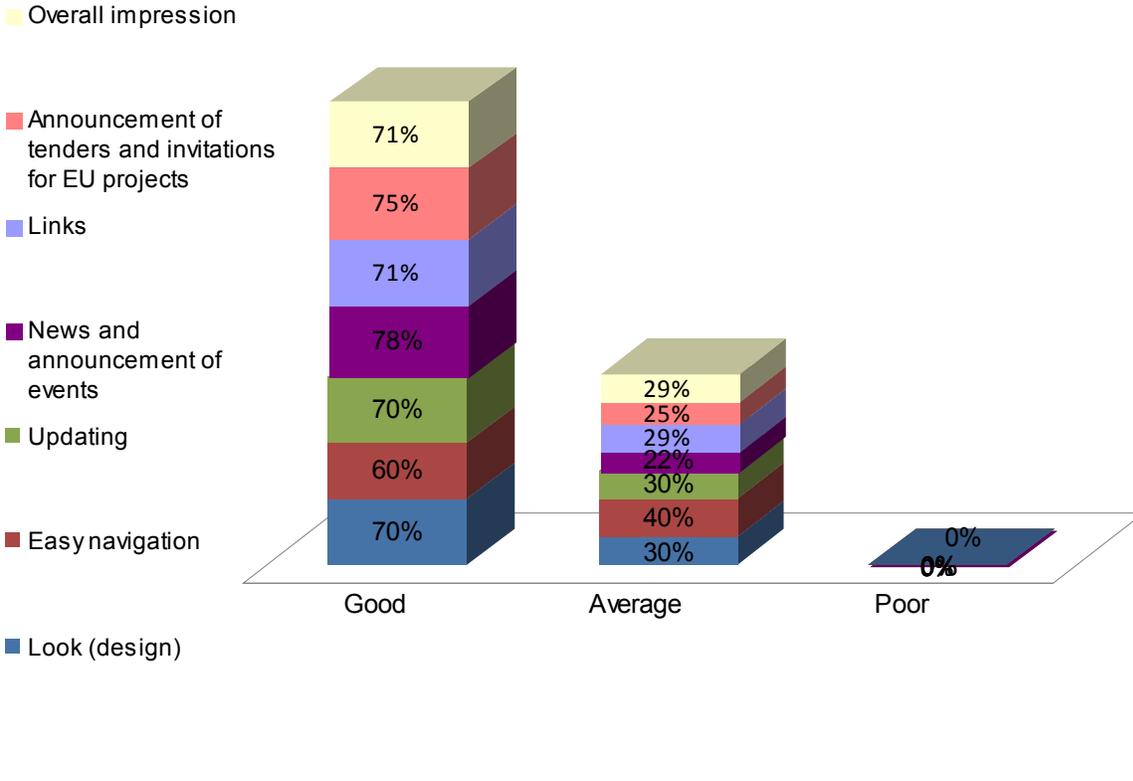
Non-governmental organizations



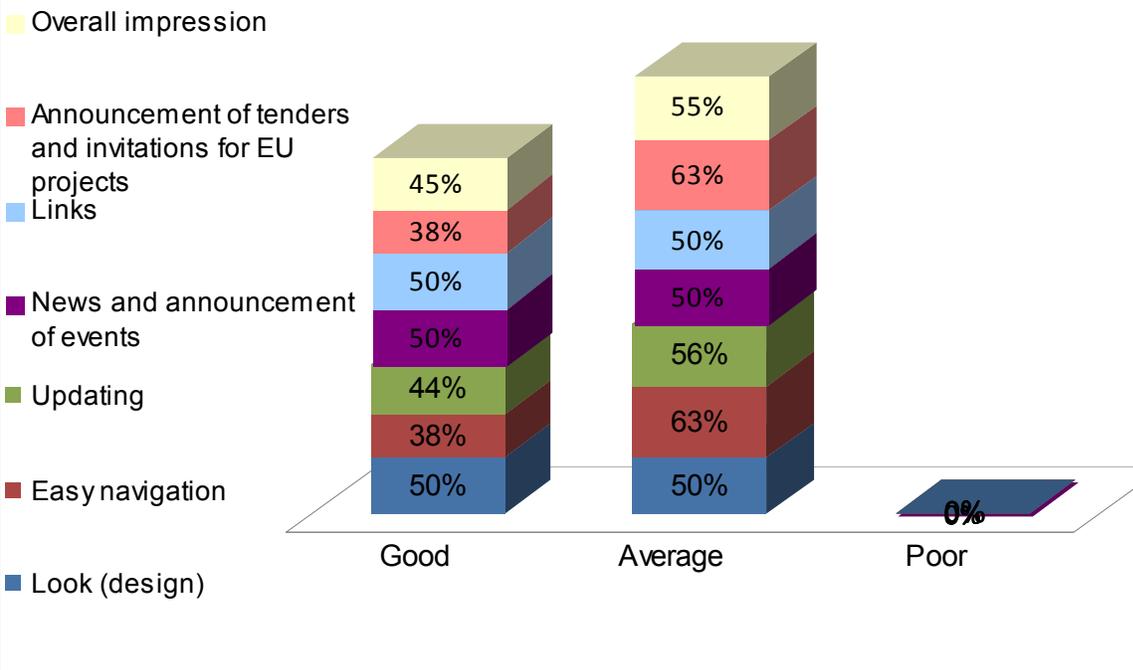
NGO which have applied for an EU fund

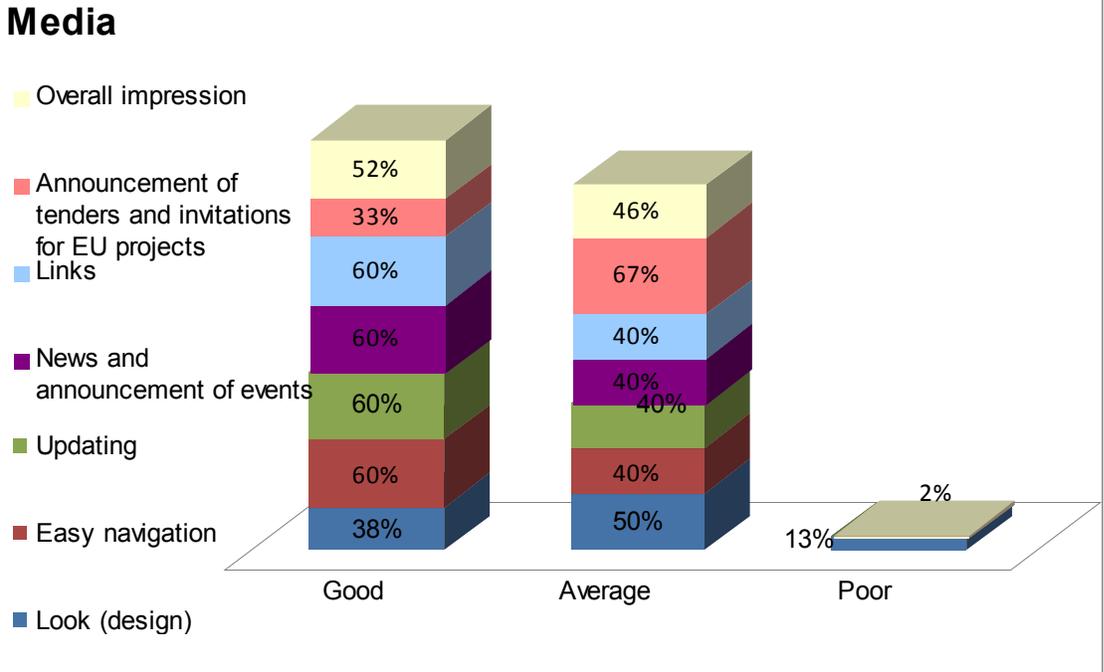


NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions





Most NGOs have not heard of LAG

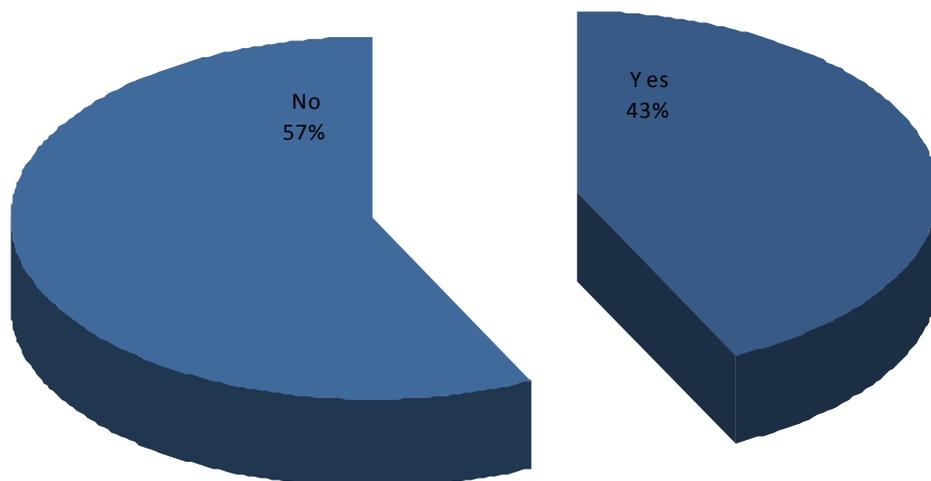
Even in the NGO sector the majority of those who have heard of the TACSO project have not heard of the Local Advisory Group (LAG) which takes part in implementation of the TACSO project. When it comes to media, the percentage of those who do not know about it is two-thirds. However, when it comes to state institutions, two-thirds of respondents said they know about LAG.

NGOs which have not applied for EU projects have heard of LAG at a slightly higher percentage than those who have applied (50 percent compared to 37 percent).

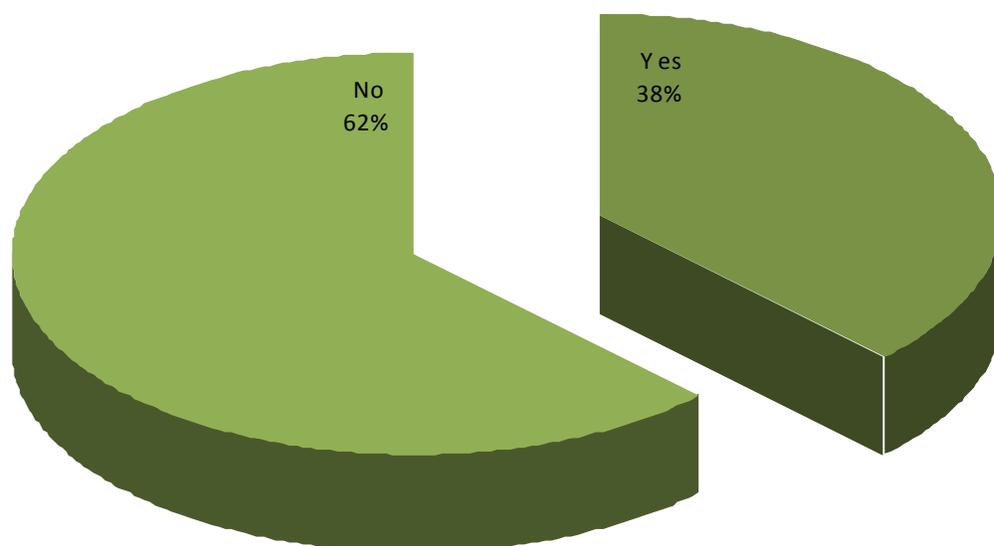
Among NGOs who have heard of LAG, 50 percent have met some of its members.

Do you know what is the role of Local Advisory Group (LAG) participating in implementation of TACSO project?

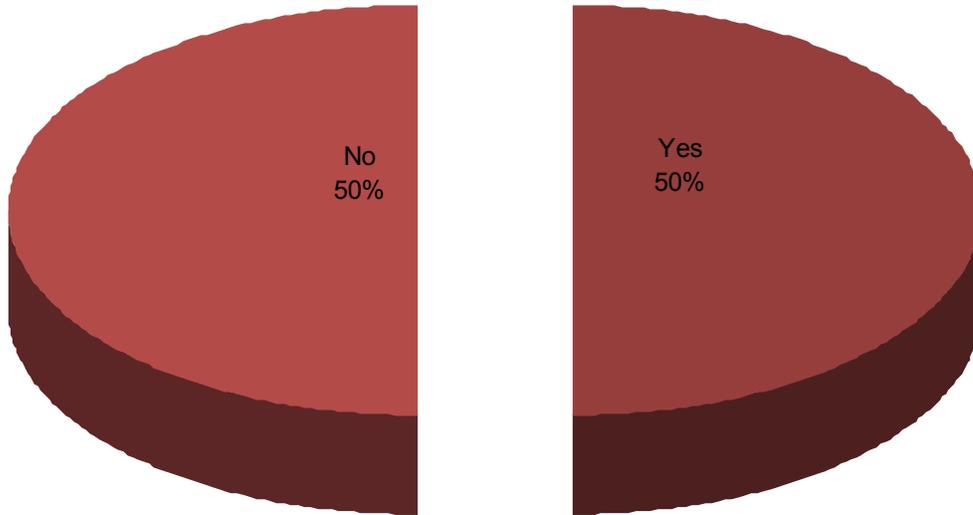
Non-governmental organizations



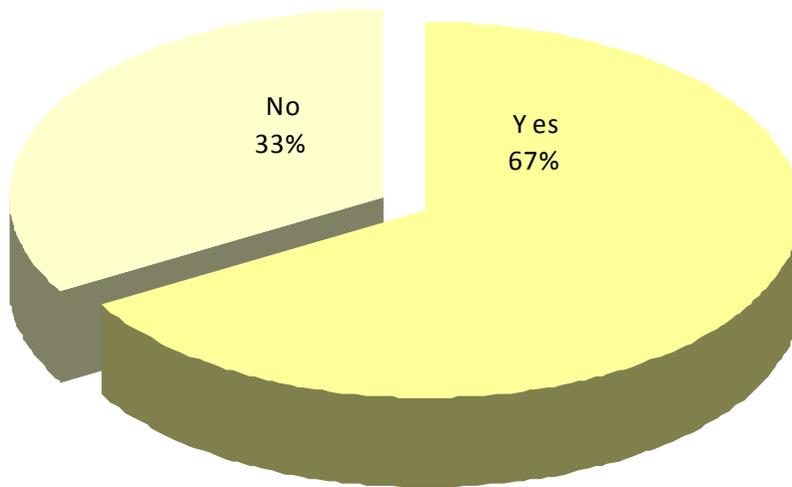
NGO which have applied for an EU fund



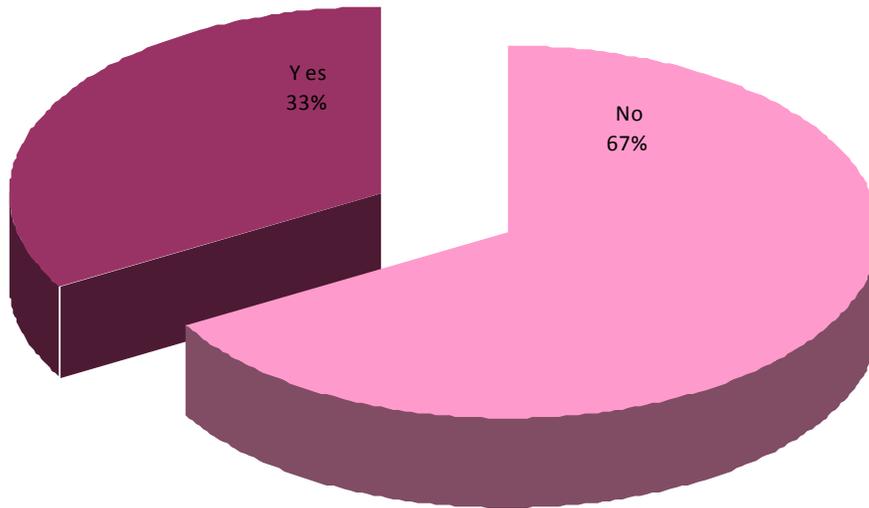
NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions



Media



Insistence on local experts

Absolutely all non-governmental organizations as well as media believe that it is crucial to include local experts both in LAG and in other TACSO activities. The main reason why they are in favor of this solution is that local experts better understand the context in BiH unlike foreigners and are thus able to answer some questions better. Among state institutions we had one answer that *only foreigners should be in LAG*, although that was explained in relative terms: “An expert is an expert, whether local or foreign”. Here are the explanations provided by those who are in favor of including local experts:

“It is necessary for the sake of having a link between the Project activities and the community, and for the sake of an outside objective and neutral evaluation of the Project”

“They better understand the BiH context” (3 same answers)

“Because of a realistic assessment of an approach which is best suited to the situation in this country”

“Better knowledge of socio-economic, political and other circumstances and situations in the NGO sector”

“They are more familiar with the situation in the local community and in the field”

“Because of better understanding of the complex BiH context, development of local resources and project sustainability”

“Because local experts know the situation, laws and NGOs in BiH”

“Because they know NGO issues best”

“Because the TACSO project will in that way answer in a better and more appropriate way the specific needs of civil society organizations in BiH”

“For more efficient and successful implementation of project activities” (2 same answers)

“Local experts know the situation in BiH society, as well as the advantages and shortcomings of civil society in BiH”

“We lack intellectual dynamism; that is why the EU does not appreciate us. We all need to participate more in affirmative projects.”

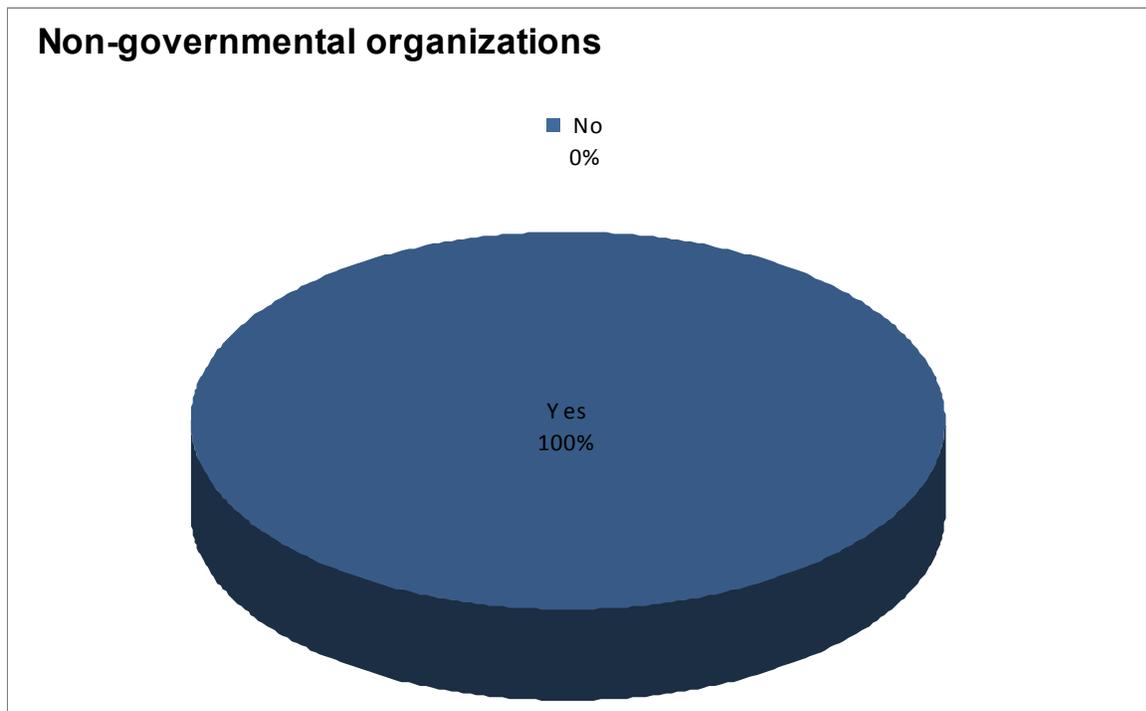
“Because in LAG there is not a single expert in the field of invalidity in BiH”

“For the sake of easier communication”

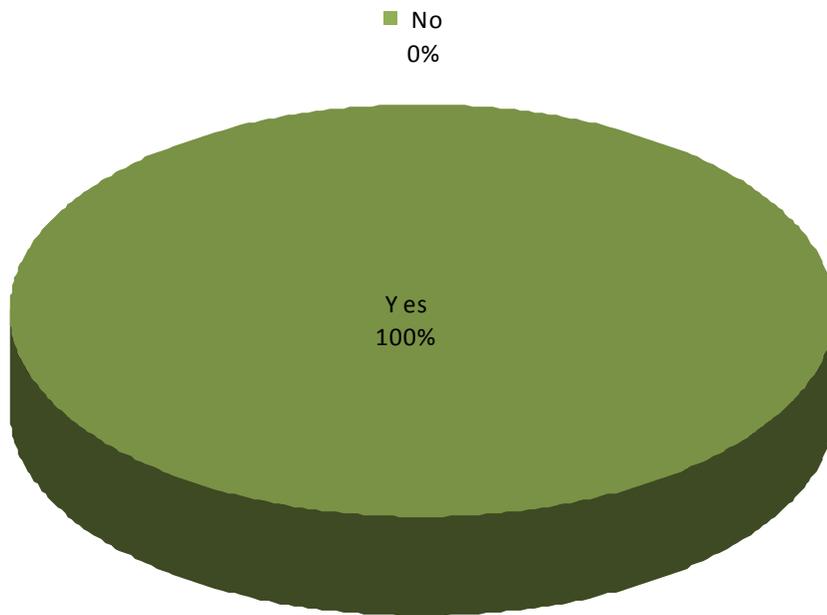
“This concerns BiH citizens and it is necessary for local people to participate in these activities too”

“Practical education, taking responsibility, etc.”

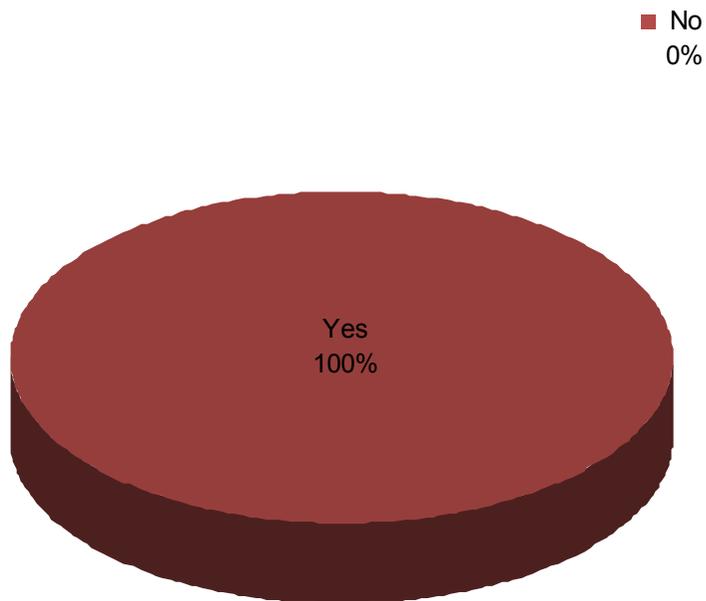
Do you think that it is important to include local experts in reviewing of project activities and results?



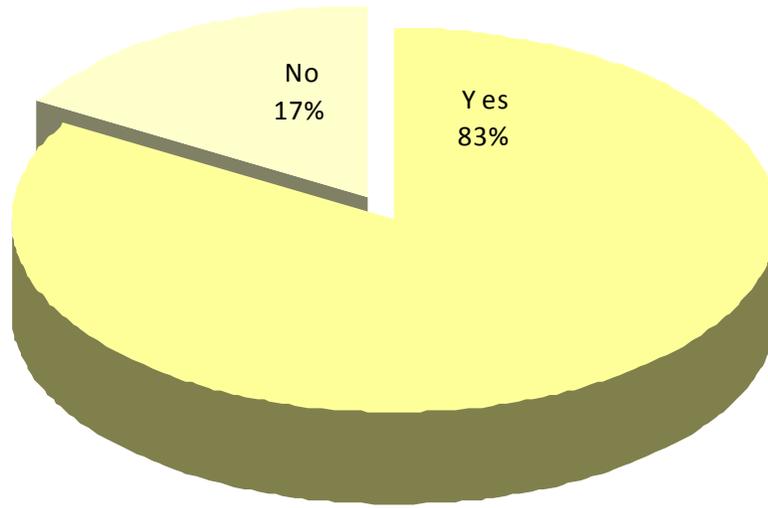
NGO which have applied for an EU fund



NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions



Media



TACSO deserves to be recommended

When asked if they would recommend cooperation with TACSO to another NGO, 92 percent of respondents circled the answer “Yes, with pleasure”. Eight percent said they would be

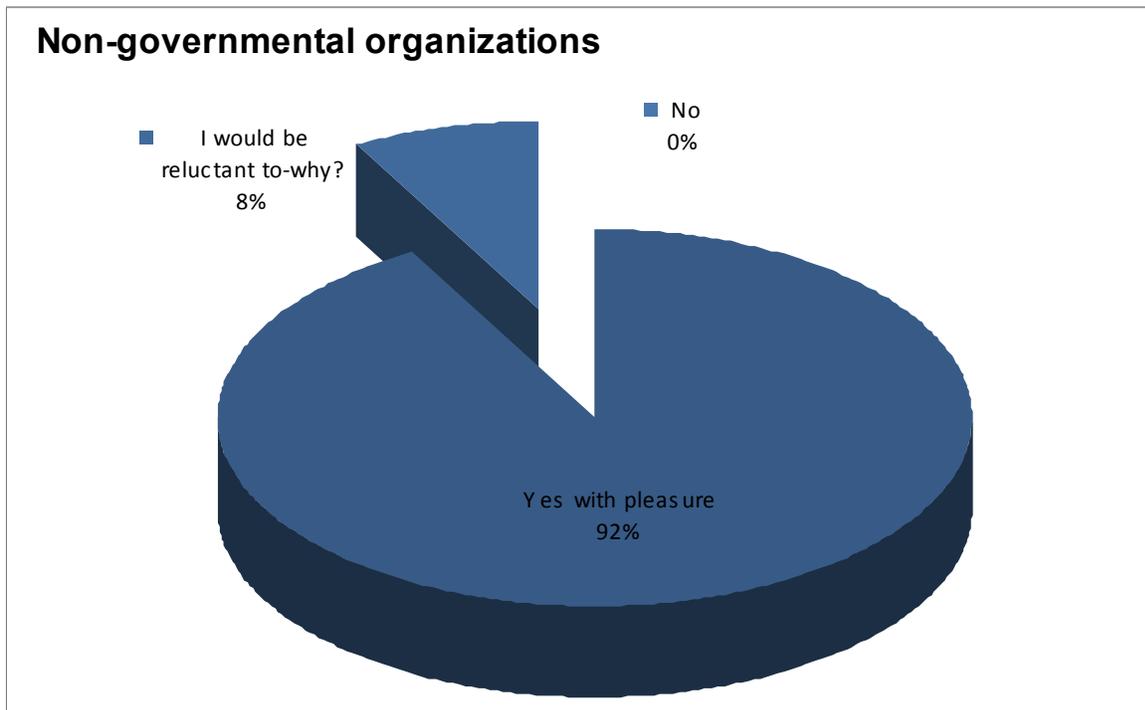
indecisive and no one circled the answer “No”. However, although respondents had an opportunity to explain why, whatever answer they gave, no one did that.

As for state institutions, in 88 percent of the cases they would recommend TACSO with pleasure to another state institution. In two cases they explained why:

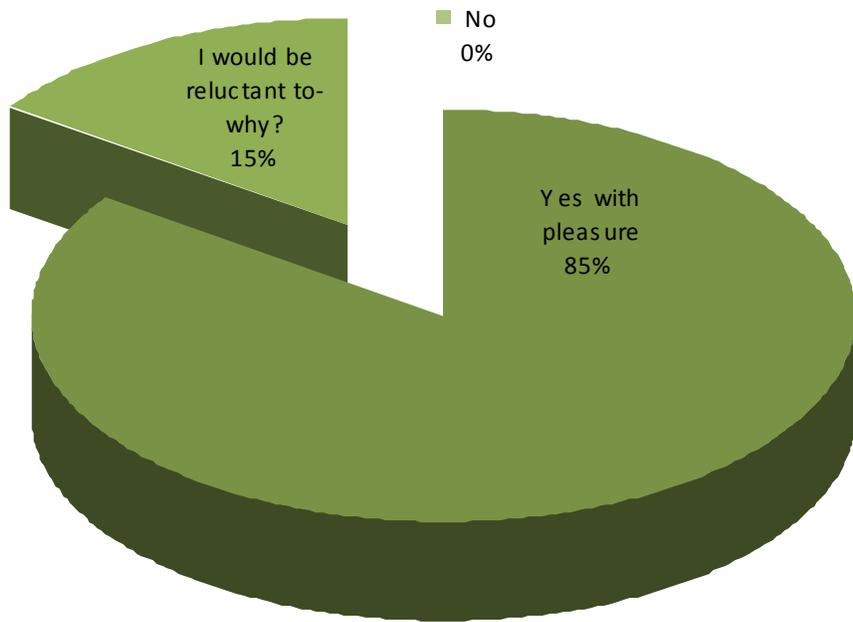
“TACSO project is a project which includes a broad spectrum of interested parties, whose common goal is fulfilling social corporate responsibility on the micro as well as macro level. In addition, many facts and factors are still unknown to the general public and potential problems would be avoided by informing the public as well as institutions as quickly as possible.”
“Without a developed civil society, there cannot be true democracy”.

Media would recommend TACSO to other media in 67 percent of the cases. Here, as in the two previous two categories of respondents, there was no answer that they “would not recommend it”.

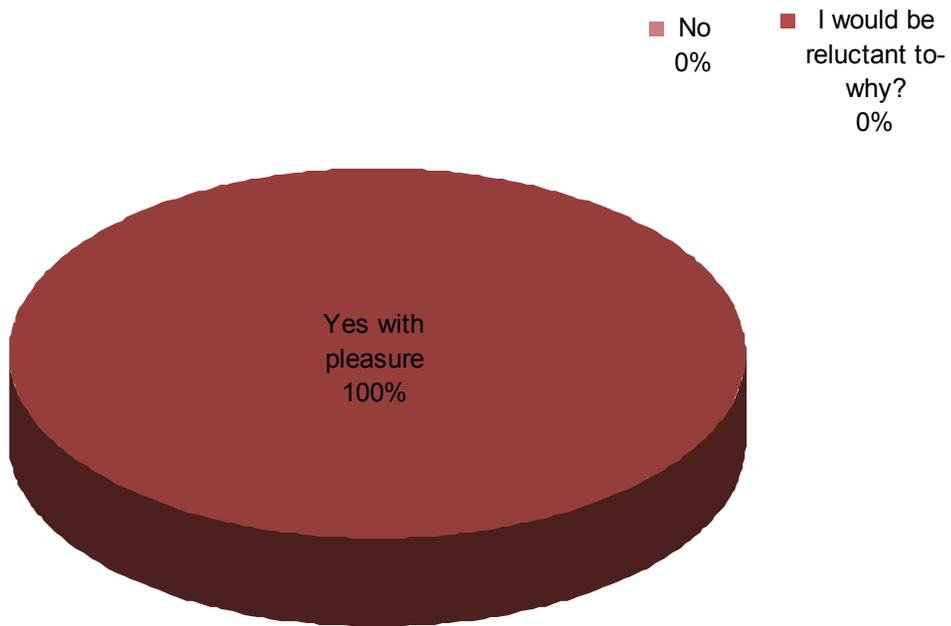
Would you recommend TACSO to another CSO/NGO/state institution/media?



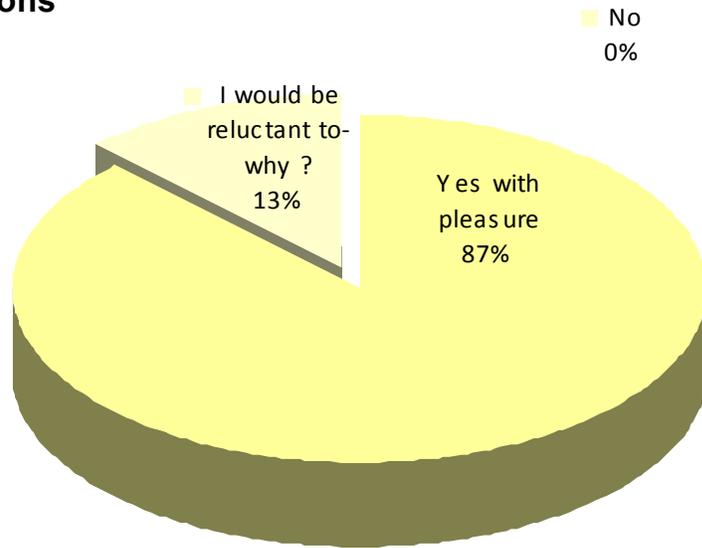
NGO which have applied for an EU fund



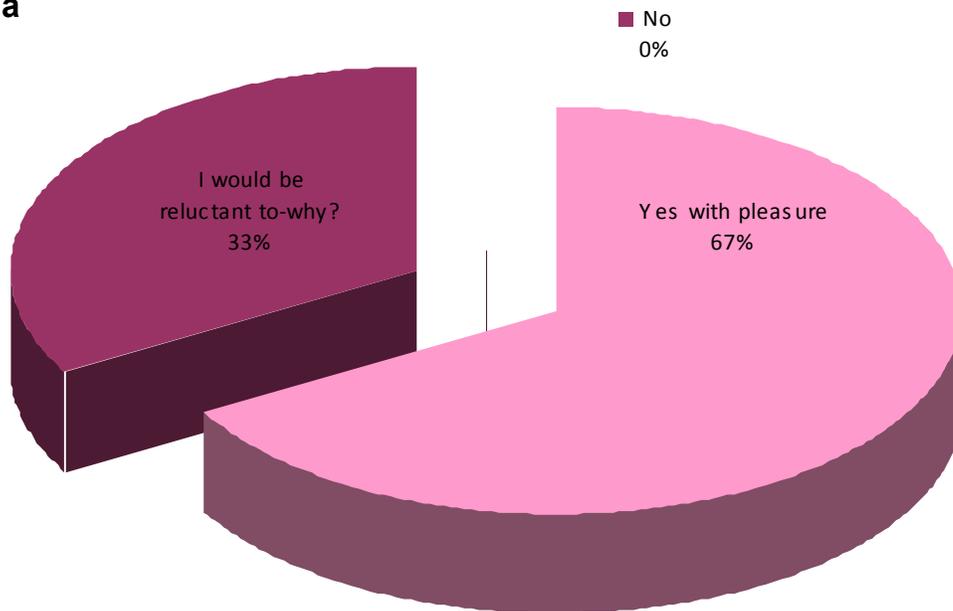
NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions



Media



Education is the most appealing content of NGO projects

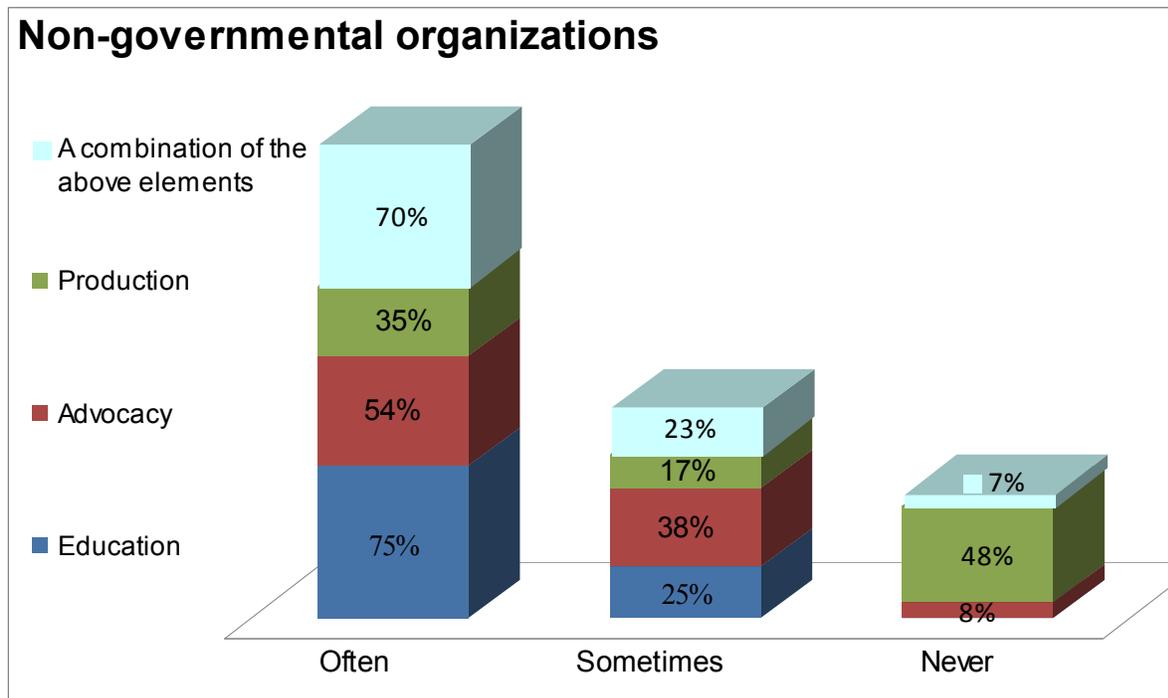
We asked both categories of non-governmental organizations what is the content of the project that they applied for or will apply for. In the category "frequently", NGOs usually apply (or will apply) for projects whose content is education (75%) as well as projects which have a combination of education, advocacy and production (70%). In the category "sometimes", the

category of advocacy is in the lead, whereas in the category “never” we have 48 percent of answers from the area of production. Very similar percentages of answers were given by organizations which have applied for EU projects and those which have not. We repeat that in the case of those which have not applied, this regards their intent, rather than already performed facts.

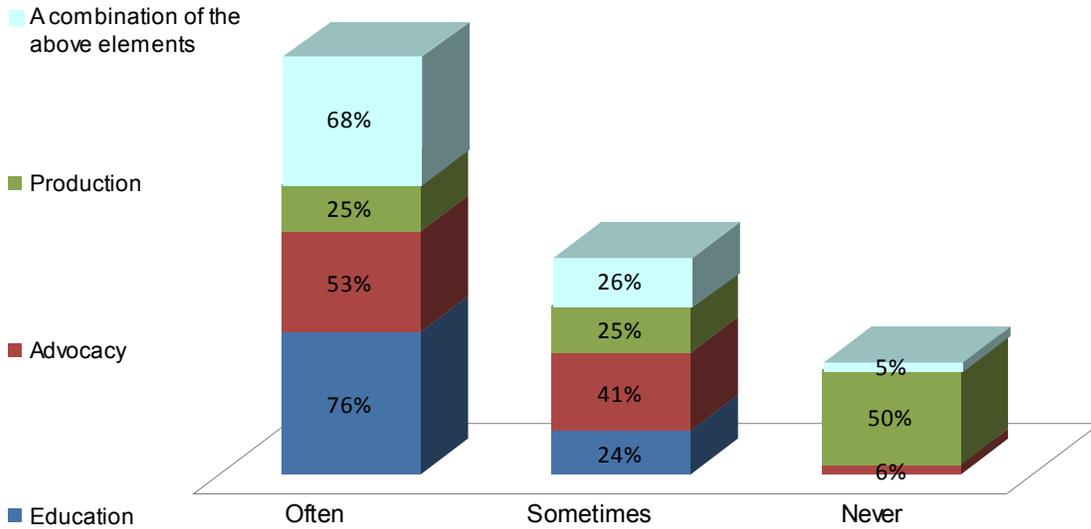
Fifty percent of state institutions said that projects whose content is a combination of different elements would suit them best, followed by projects which strengthen the institution’s capacity and projects based on education, with 25 percent each.

Media were not asked this question.

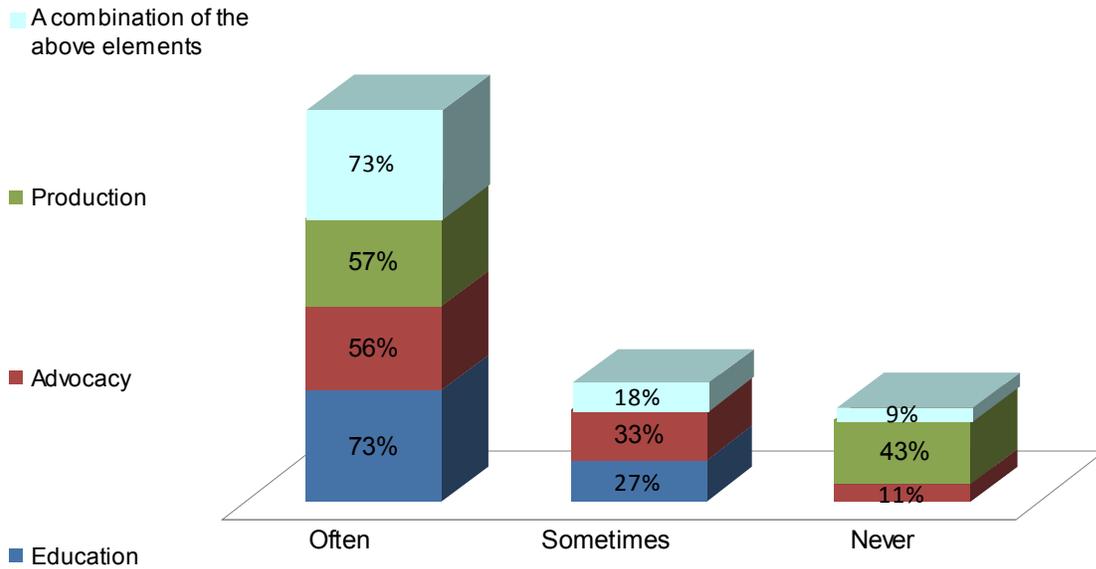
We apply for projects whose content is:



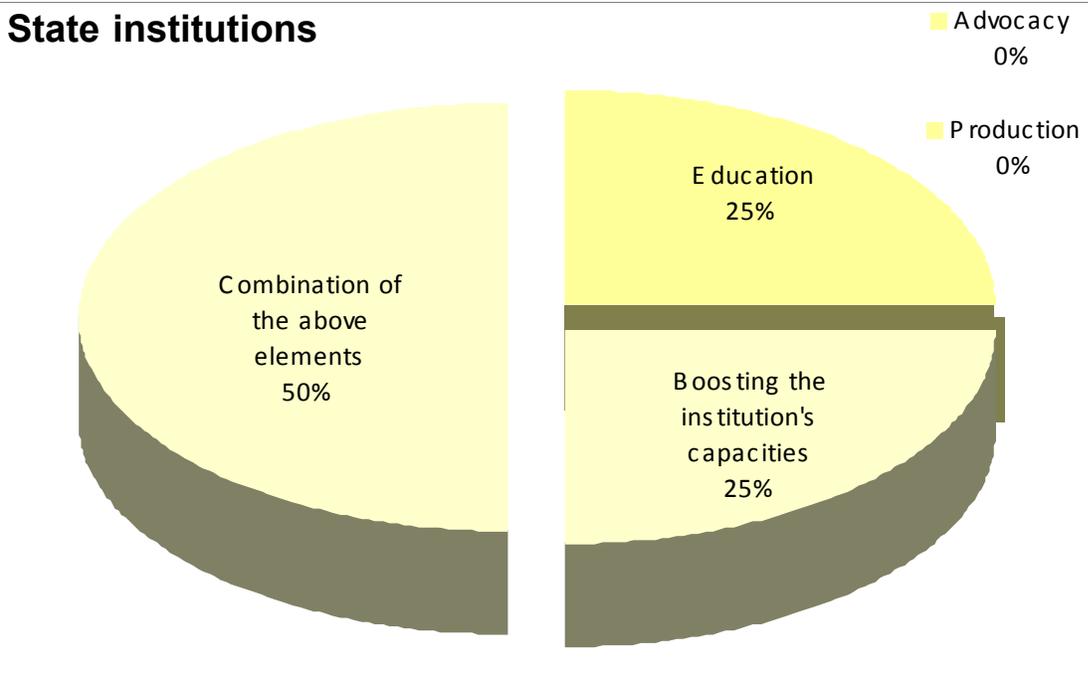
NGO which have applied for an EU fund



NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions

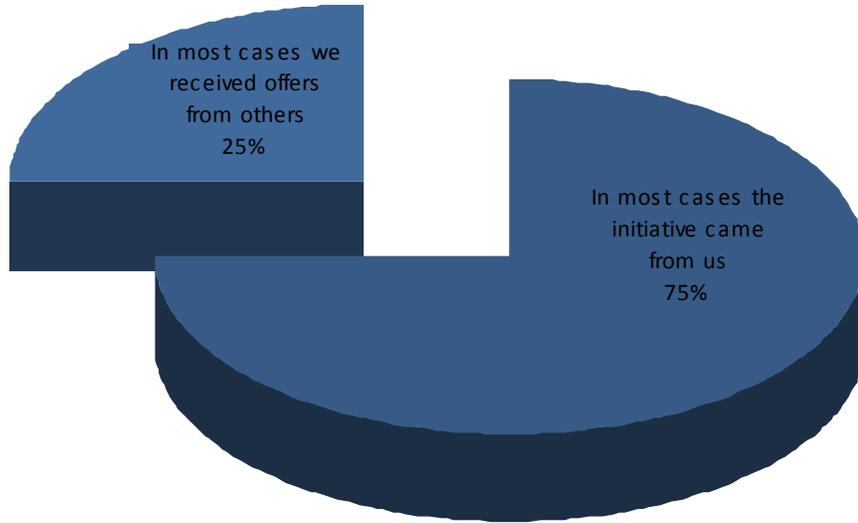


Surveyed NGOs in most cases initiate partnership on projects

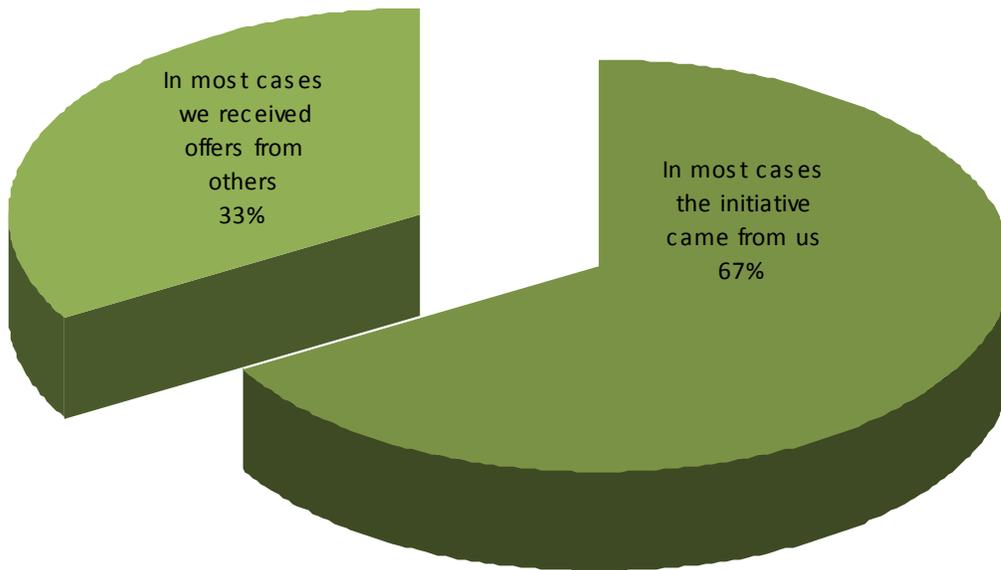
When we analyze answers to “How did you establish partnership relations on projects”, we reach the conclusion that the surveyed NGOs are very active in initiating projects. In as many as 75 percent of the cases, they said that initiative for projects came from them and in 25 percent of the cases they said they received offers from others. Those who have already applied, compared to those who intend to do that, have a lower percentage of answers that the initiative came from them (67 percent compared to 87 percent).

How did you establish partnerships for projects?

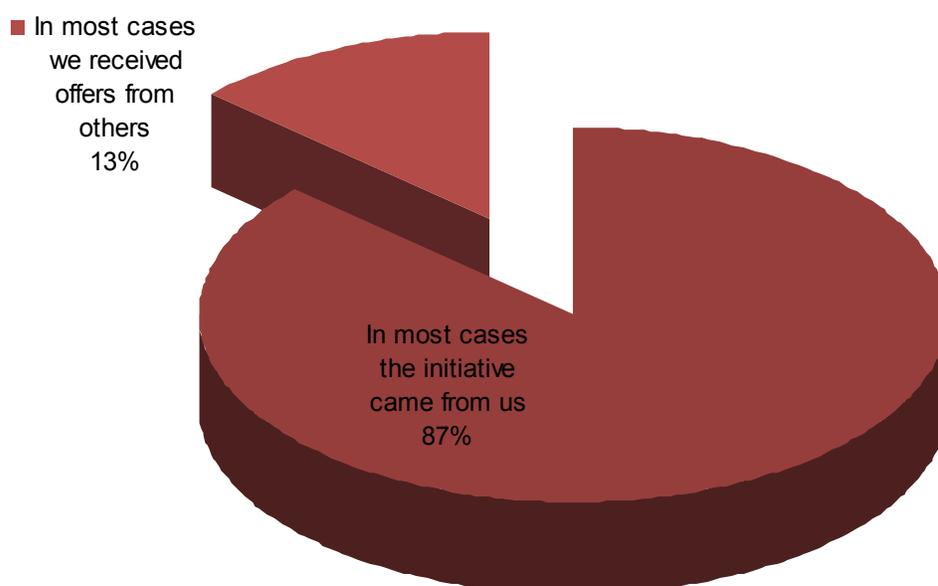
Non-governmental organizations



NGO which have applied for an EU fund



NGO which have not applied for an EU fund

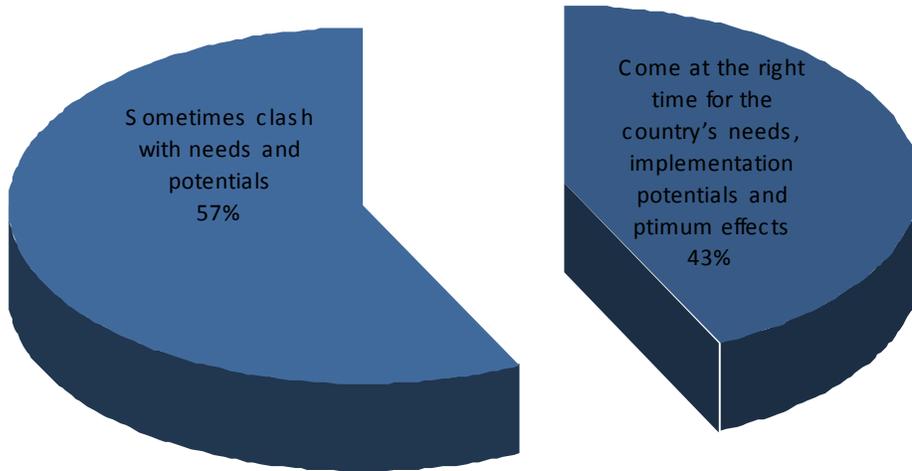


European Union projects sometimes diverge from the needs and capacities of the country and region

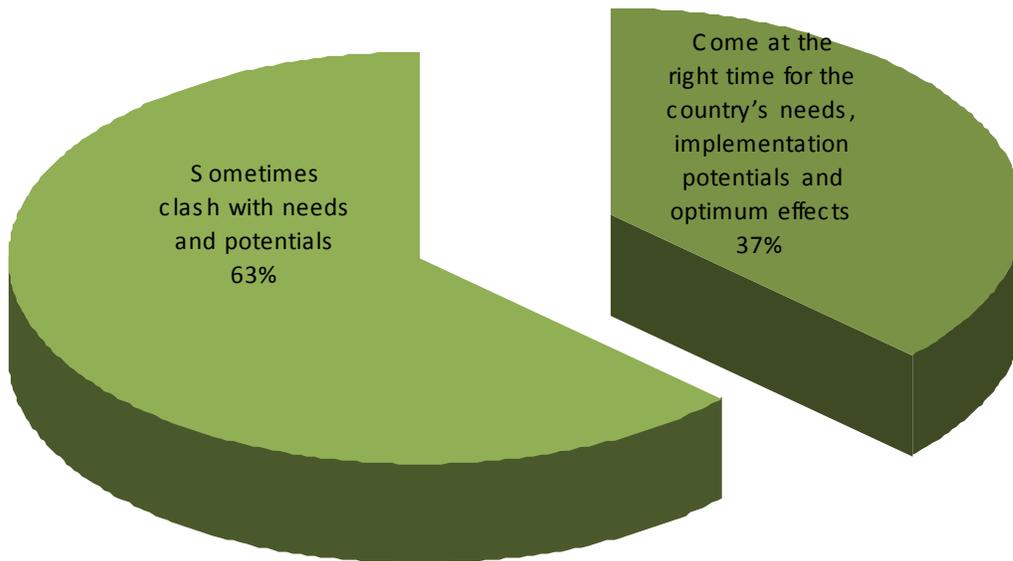
The majority of non-governmental organizations believe that European Union projects sometimes diverge from the needs and capacities of the country and region for which they are announced (57%). The percentage is more pronounced among NGOs which have applied for projects (63%). From the viewpoint of the EU's project policy, this may be worrisome. However, a mildly critical attitude toward the time and theme of projects can also be interpreted by the fact that applications are not won more often than they are, especially in correlation with the fact that those who have applied for projects are more critical. Very often, angry for not getting a project, the policy of the potential donor (partner) is attacked. Yet, despite these subjective elements, it is an objective circumstance that the EU has a slow administration and expert evaluations which do not have full insight into the BiH context. The result in a discrepancy, which is noticed by beneficiary non-governmental organizations and those who implement projects.

European Union projects:

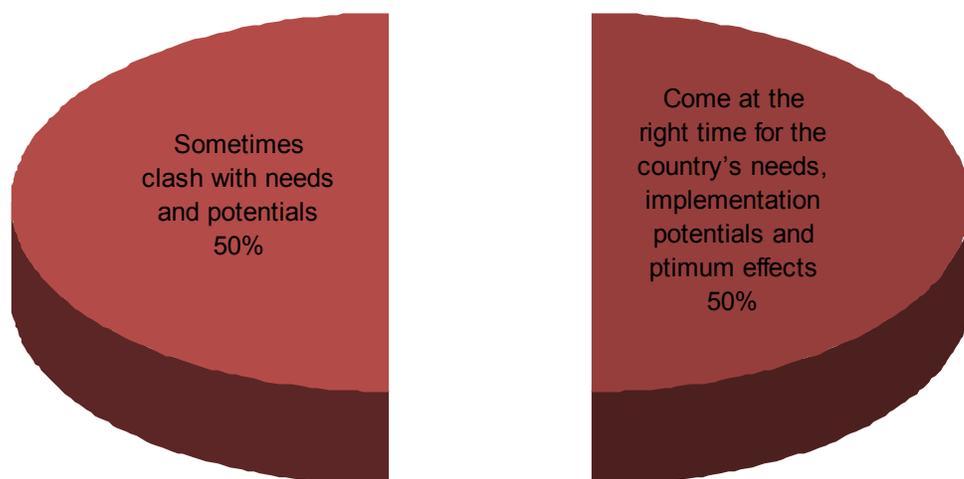
Non-governmental organizations



NGO which have applied for an EU fund



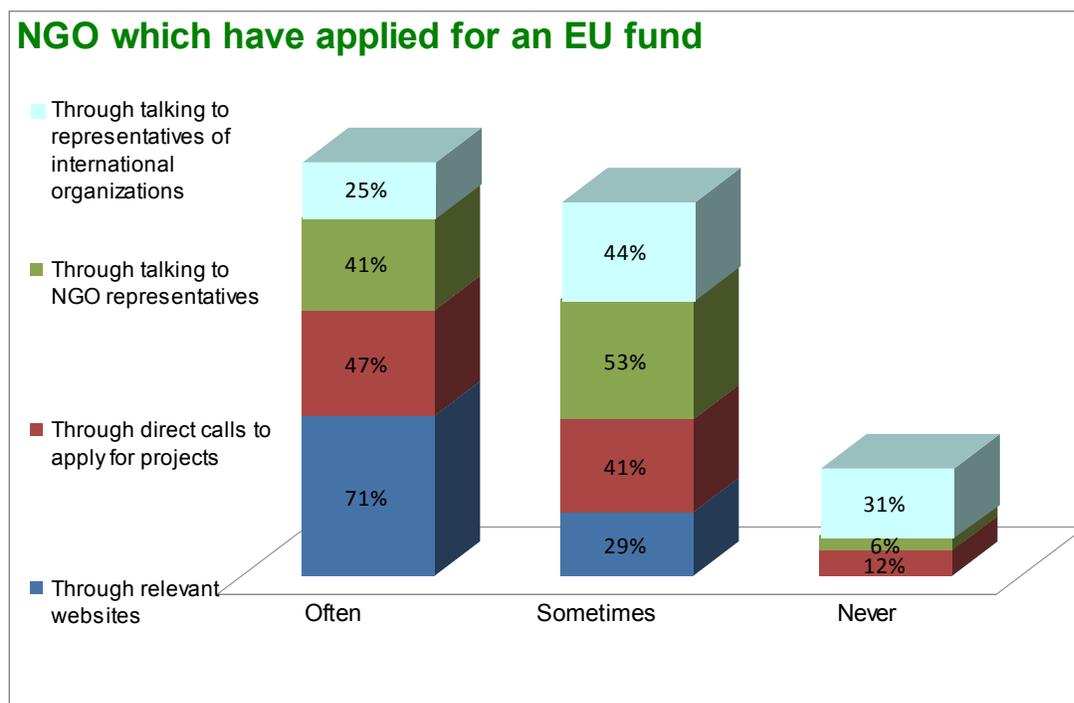
NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



Websites are most common ways of finding out about EU projects

We asked organizations which have already applied for European Union projects in what way they learn about announced calls of this kind. Judging by this research, convincingly the largest number by following relevant websites – 71 percent of respondents said this is the most common way. Some organizations answered that they get direct calls for applications from EU institutions. The category “sometimes” has the largest number of those who find out about projects by talking to colleagues from the non-governmental sector (53%).

In what way do you find out about tenders announced for European Union projects?



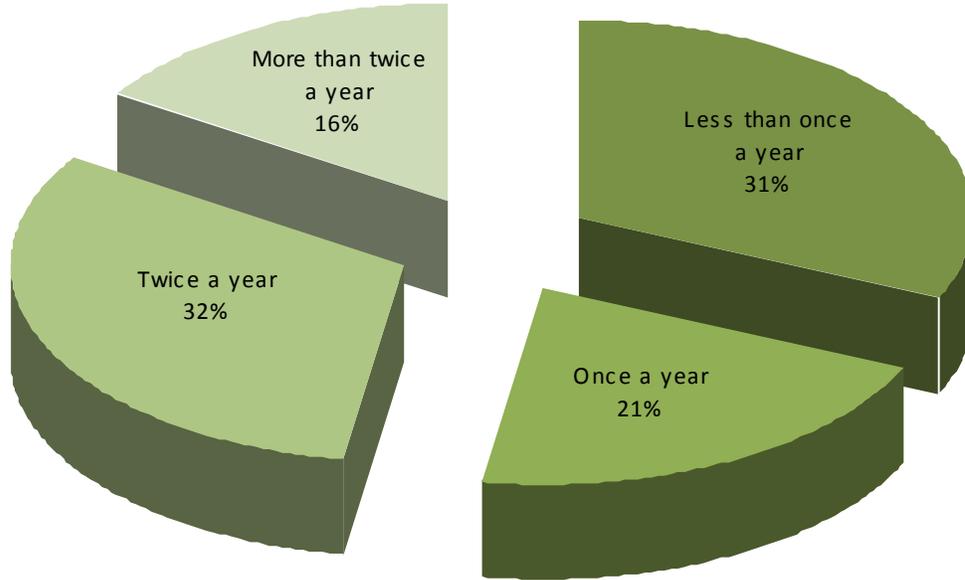
Frequency and modalities of application

With regard to frequency of application for EU projects, the research shows that 32 percent of organizations each apply *twice a year* or *fewer than once a year*. Twenty-one percent of organizations apply *once a year* and 16 percent apply *more than twice a year*.

The percentage of organizations which won a project that they applied for at least once is relatively high – 78 percent. However, most non-governmental organizations do not apply for projects on their own, especially those which have a regional character. Half of organizations choose partners based on the content of projects, i.e. calls, whereas 30 percent of NGOs have regular partners with which they work on adjustment to projects. This is a very common principle used by organizations which apply for regional projects, where in the broad spectrum of issues to which they might respond, they engage various experts from among their regular partners depending on the project content. On the other hand, 20 percent do not apply for regional projects at all; they apply, usually on their own, only in the framework of activities in their own country.

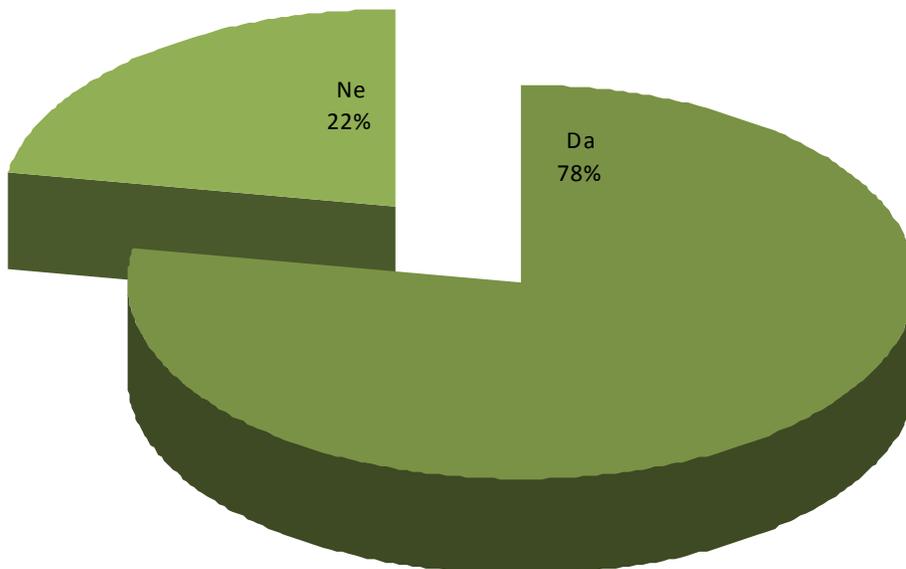
How often does your organization apply for European Union projects?

NGO which have applied for an EU fund



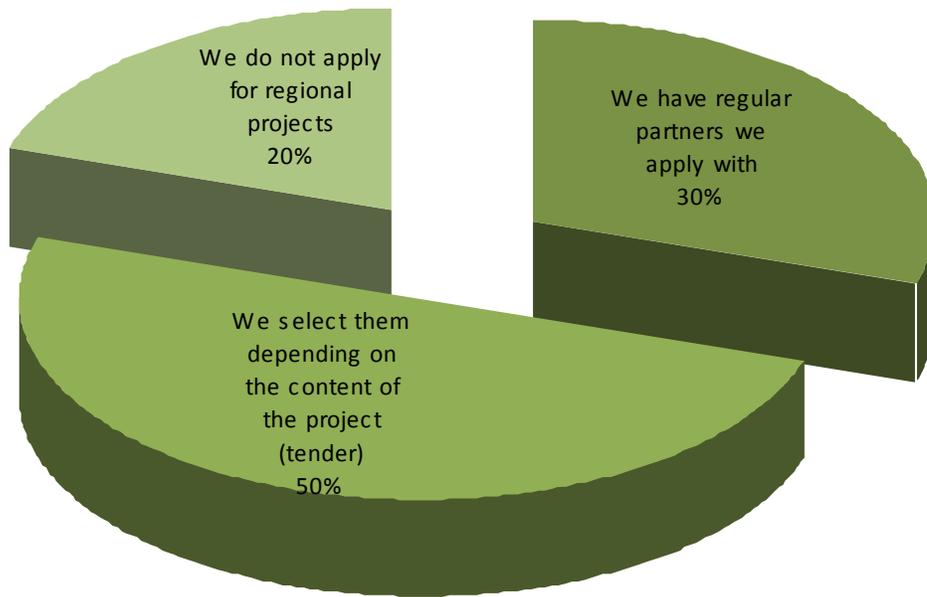
Did you ever get an EU-funded project?

NGO which have applied for an EU fund



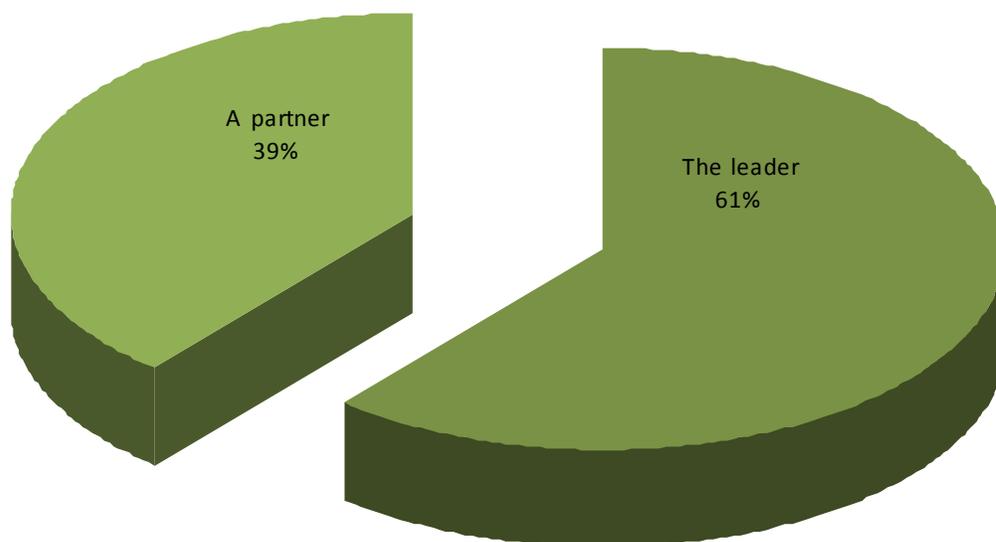
For regional projects that insist on multiple partners:

NGO which have applied for an EU fund



In projects we are more often:

NGO which have applied for an EU fund

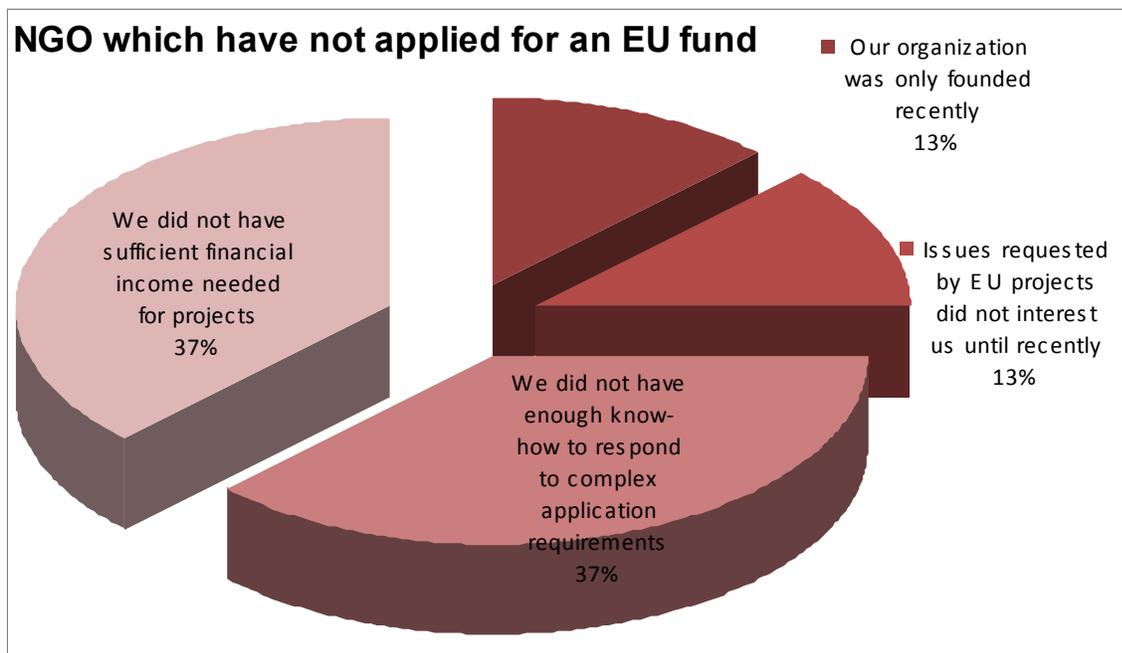


Know-how and money are main reasons for not applying for EU projects

We asked organizations which have not yet applied for EU projects what is the reason for that. The most common reason, in 38 percent of the case, is that they *did not have enough know-how to respond to the complex application requirements* and also that they *did not have sufficient financial income necessary for projects*. Thirteen percent of answers each went to the reasons *we were only founded recently* and *we were not interested until recently in issues requested in EU projects*.

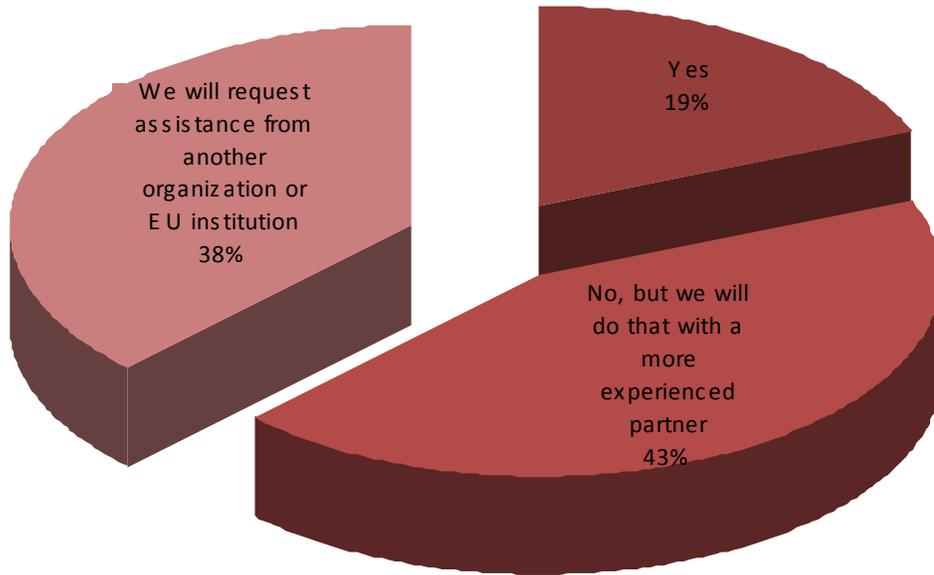
With regard to assessment of capacity for applying, only 19 percent of organizations answered that they will be able to respond independently to requirements from EU project applications. The majority, 44 percent, maintain that they will be able to do that, but in cooperation with a more experienced partner. Thirty-eight percent said they will request assistance from another organization or EU institution. On the other hand, among state organizations there is a certain confidence. Sixty percent answered that they will be able to respond to applications on their own and 40 percent said they will do that together with a partner. It is interesting that no one said they would seek help from another organization or institution.

Why has your organization not applied for EU project funds?

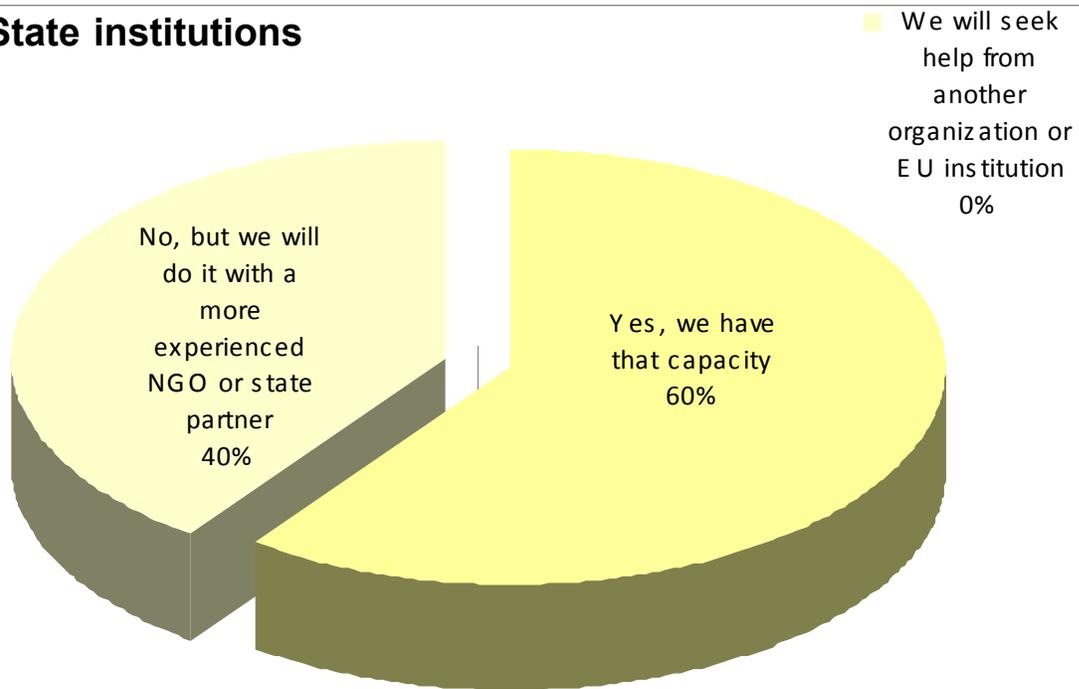


Do you think that you will be able to respond to requirements from the EU project application by yourself?

NGO which have not applied for an EU fund



State institutions

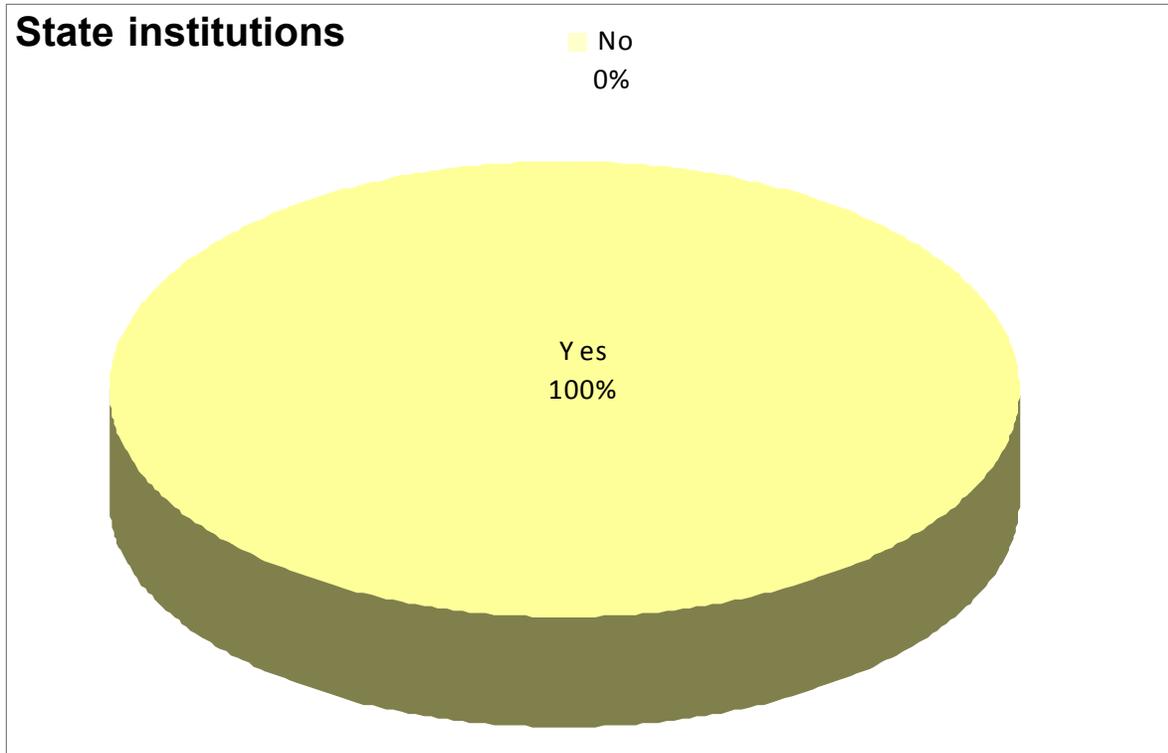


State institutions and media know that EU funds intended for their activity exist

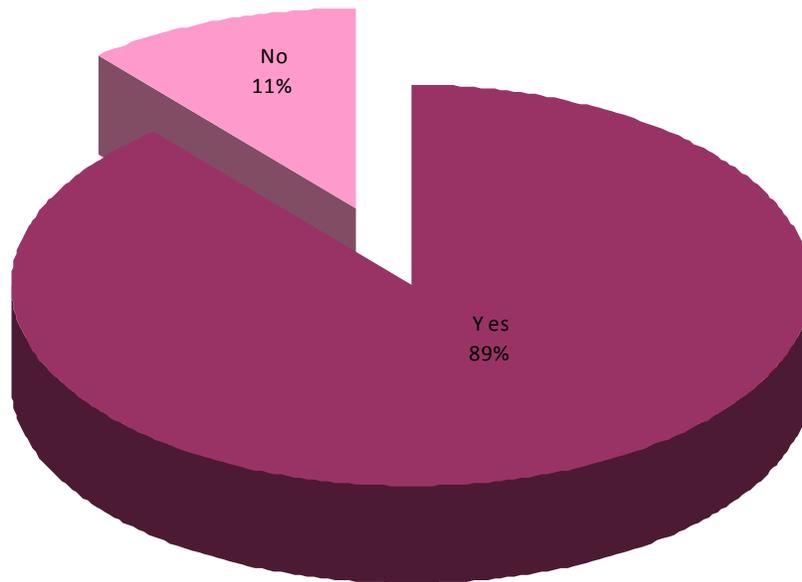
We asked state organizations and media if they know that European Union funds exist which support the project activities of state (public) institutions or media? Respondents from state institutions gave 100% affirmative answers, whereas among media the number of editors who know that is 89 percent. On the other hand, editors confirmed without exception that the *European Union should through different grants support the production of European integration issues in media.*

Surveyed state institutions in 90 percent of cases applied for EU projects and the remaining 10 percent plan to do that in the future. Media applied in 50 percent of cases. Of that, half won the project.

Do you know that there are European Union funds which support project activities of state (public) institutions/media?

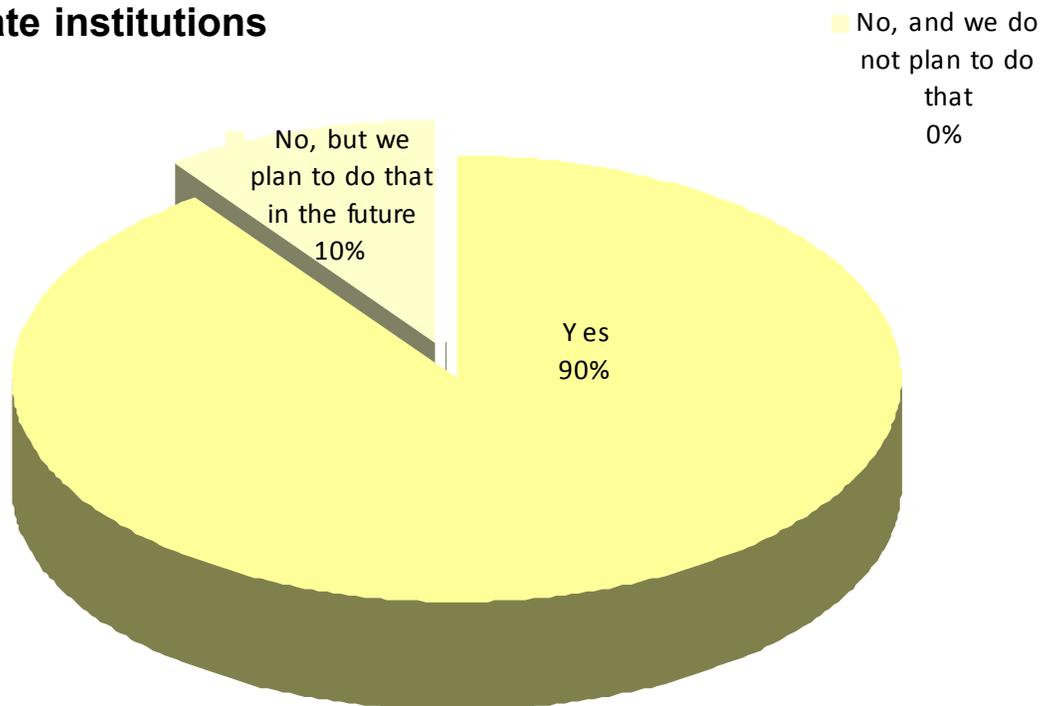


Media



(For those who answered YES) Has your institution ever applied for European Union projects?

State institutions



Media



Do you believe the European Union should support coverage of European integration issues in media through various grants?

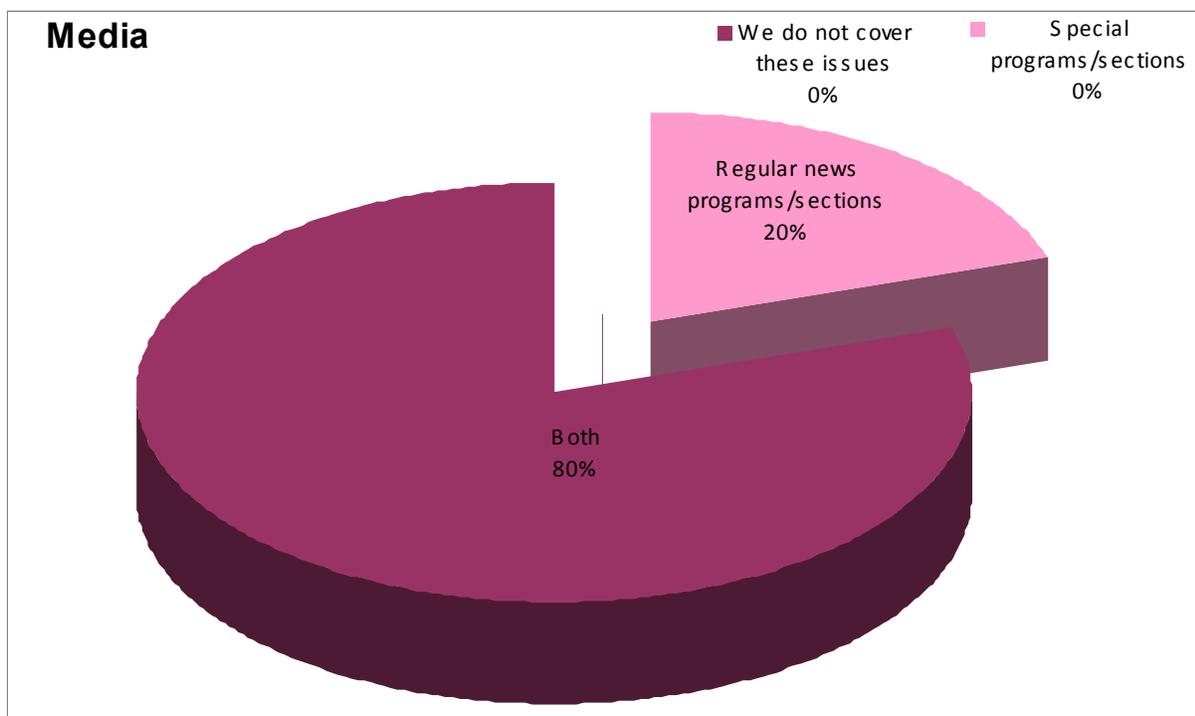
Media



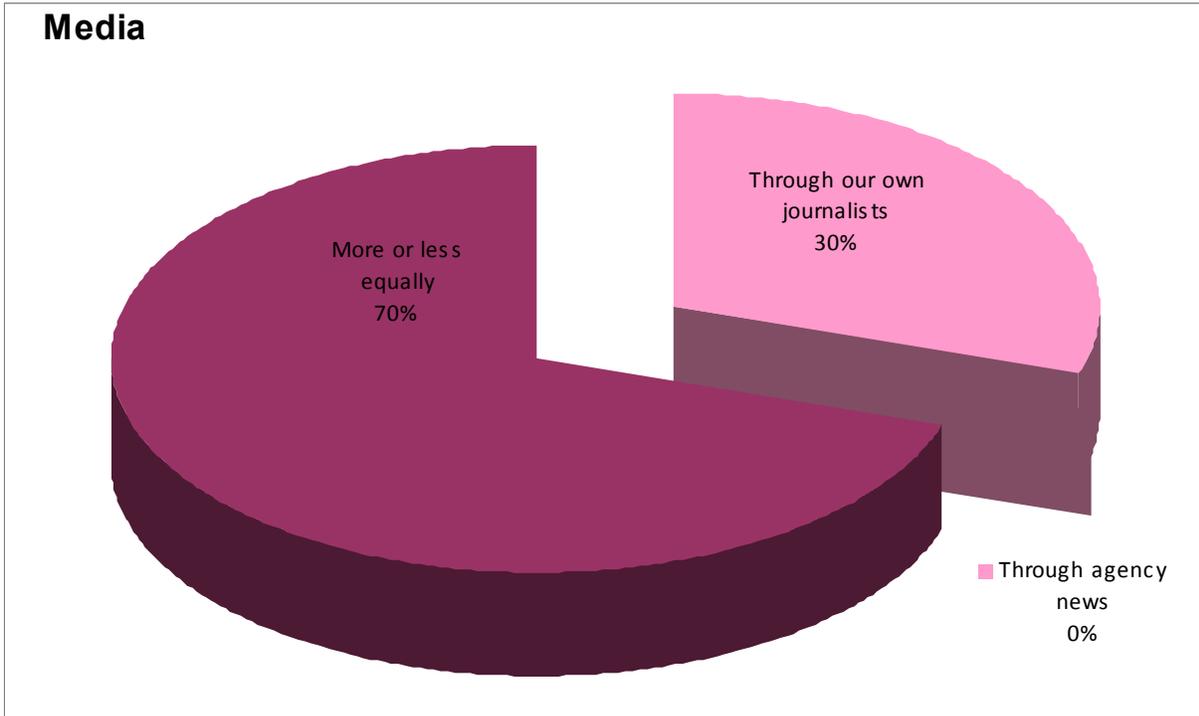
Media cover EU issues through a combination of agencies and their own journalists

We asked media editors in what way they cover European Union and European integration issues. Namely, this is a deficient, often unattractively covered field, for which EU grants exist which are aimed at stimulating production of this kind. Ninety percent of the surveyed editors said they cover this issue depending on the section and program in their media outlet, i.e. through a combination of coverage of day-to-day events and self-initiated (investigative) reporting. Also, at least based on this sample, it transpired that not a single media outlet covers EU issues exclusively through the news agency offer or Eurovision exchange. Most commonly, in 70 percent of cases, media cover this issue nearly equally by engaging their own journalists and agencies (either news or video). Thirty percent replied that they cover the issue exclusively through their own journalistic forces.

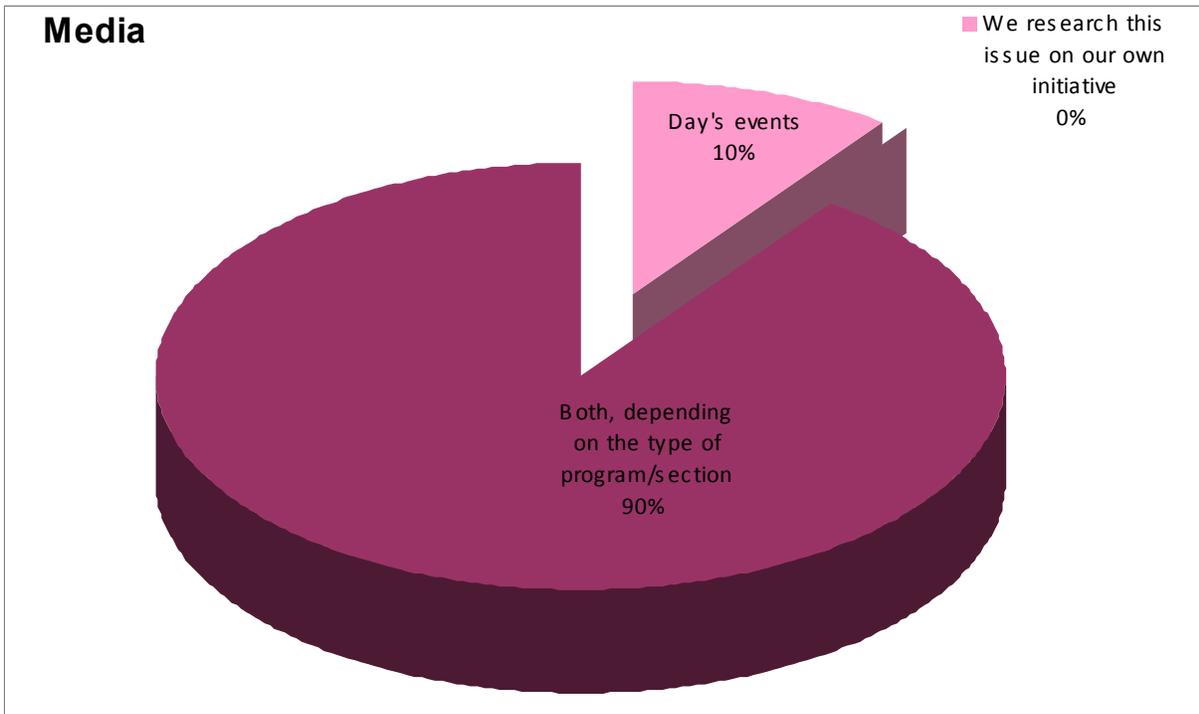
Through which program aspect/section does your media organization cover European Union and European integration issues?



We cover EU issues more often:



We usually cover issues related to the European Union based on:



TACSO acronym reminds editors of hot sauce

Acknowledging that the journalistic profession is imaginative and inclined to various associations, we asked media editors, if they did not know what the TACSO project was, what the acronym reminded them of. Most answers given do not link TACSO to EU issues or civil society and are related to other activities, with the hot Mexican sauce being mentioned several times.

Here are the associations given:

“A company working with oil or tobacco. Or a spice, such as Tabasco”

“Tabasco hot sauce”

“An administrative abbreviation – taxative”

“An IT company”

“A Mexican sauce brand or an organization working on tax policy”

“The name does not have much to do with the EU. It associates me more of a hot sauce”

Research abstract

- For the purposes of researching the position of the TACSO project in BiH, in July and August 2010 Media Plan Institute surveyed civil society organizations (NGOs), media and state organizations.
- Polled non-governmental organizations have 5.6 regular employees on average per organization. Organizations which have applied for EU projects have a larger number of employees – 7.4 (those which have not applied have 3.2), which shows that in terms of staffing, and most likely infrastructure as well, they are better equipped to deal with applications for projects. Both kinds of organizations have a much larger number of regular associates, totaling 9.1 on average per organization. Those which have applied for projects have nearly twice as many associates as those which have not.
- The biggest percentage of polled organizations work on *Development of civil society* and *Children, youth and students*, 11 percent each, followed by the categories *Fighting violence and development of tolerance*, 8 percent, and *Democracy, law and think thank*, 7 percent. The field of activity is a little different for organizations which have not applied for projects: for 16 percent it is *Children, youth and students*, followed by *Ecology* with 13 percent, and 11 percent each for *Health* and *Development of civil society*. Generally speaking, we may conclude that the vast majority of those who apply for EU projects work on development of democratic values.
- The majority of non-governmental organizations polled, as many as 89 percent, have heard of the TACSO project. When we look at answers given by editors-in-chief of media, the majority of respondents, 60 percent, said they heard of TACSO. Perhaps it is a little worrisome that the majority of the polled media are among so-called influential media which cover more than half of Bosnia-Herzegovina but it is precisely some heads of these media who have not heard of TACSO. As for state organizations, 80 percent of their polled respondents have heard of TACSO.
- Ninety-one percent of NGOs answered that TACSO is *European Union project on assistance to civil society organizations*. Among media we have a relatively high percentage of editors who think that TACSO is *International union of non-governmental organizations*, whereas among state organizations everyone knew what TACSO stands for.
- When asked how they heard of TACSO, 56 percent of non-governmental organizations answered that they were *directly contacted by TACSO representatives*. There were 16 percent answers each for *through mass media* and *through talking to representatives of other organizations*. The result that more than half were directly contacted shows activity of the TACSO project and its employees, but what is a little worrisome are somewhat smaller percentages related to other levels of communication.
- More than two-thirds of non-governmental organizations answered that representatives of their organization attended a conference or seminar organized by TACSO. Then there were 26 percent of those who have heard of TACSO, but did not have any contact with it or its representatives. With regard to state institutions, in as many as 75 percent of cases the surveyed institutions had no contact with TACSO. With regard to media, they had no contact with TACSO in 38 percent of cases. However, in

relation to media we have a specific characteristic that is related to their function, which is that in 25 percent of cases they had contact with TACSO because their journalists covered events which it organized.

- As for various TACSO institutes or activities, 36 percent of non-governmental organizations had contact with the **TACSO Help Desk**. The main reasons for these contacts are workshops or advice related to NGO registration in PADOR. Forty-four percent of NGOs attended **training**, usually to learn about registration in PADOR. Thirty-six percent of organizations attended **conferences/meetings with partners**, mostly those which have already applied for EU projects. The smallest number of NGOs, 23 percent, attended **briefings/information events/Kick-off**. Neither media nor state organizations, at least those which were surveyed, attended these events.
- With regard to training, organizations which attended training in 90 percent of the case answered that it was useful for them.
- Beneficiaries of TACSO services and partners have a very high opinion of TACSO staff expertise and communication skills. Seventy-nine percent of respondents from non-governmental organizations answered *they have good communication skills*, 72 percent answered *they are well acquainted with EU project issues*, whereas 70 percent of them think *they know how to convey knowledge*.
- When asked in which language they prefer the material produced by TACSO, 71 percent of respondents chose the offered answer “In English and in the local languages”. Twenty-nine percent want it only in the local languages, whereas no one chose material just in English.
- The majority of NGOs have visited the TACSO website (77 percent). The percentage for media is higher and 86 percent have visited the website, whereas among state organizations the figure is 100 percent. Respondents from the NGO sector who have visited it said in 70 percent of cases that it is “good”. The best assessed categories are “news and announcement of events” and “information about tenders and calls for EU projects”. Thirty-seven respondents assessed the website as average and 1 percent assessed it as poor. Media are somewhat more critical of the website – 52 percent consider it good and 46 percent consider it average. Representatives of state institutions are even more critical and they consider it good in 45 percent of cases and average in 55 percent of cases.
- The majority of respondents in the research who have heard of the TACSO project have not heard of the Local Advisory Group (LAG) which takes part in implementation of the TACSO project. Among NGOs who have heard of LAG, 50 percent have met some of its members.
- Absolutely all non-governmental organizations as well as media believe that it is crucial to include local experts both in LAG and in other TACSO activities. The main reason why they are in favor of this solution is that local experts better understand the context in BiH unlike foreigners and are thus able to answer some questions better.
- Around 90 percent of respondents would recommend cooperation with TACSO to another NGO or state organization. Ten percent said they would be indecisive and no one circled the answer “No”. However, although respondents had an opportunity to explain why, whatever answer they gave, no one did that.

- NGOs usually apply (or will apply) for projects whose content is education as well as projects which have a combination of education, advocacy and production (33 percent each).
- Surveyed NGOs are very active in initiating projects. In as many as 75 percent of the cases, they said that initiative for projects came from them and in 25 percent of the cases they said they received offers from others.
- The majority of non-governmental organizations believe that European Union projects sometimes diverge from the needs and capacities of the country and region for which they are announced (57%). The percentage is more pronounced among NGOs which have applied for EU projects (63%).
- Convincingly the largest number of NGOs learn about announced calls of this kind by following relevant websites (44%). Some organizations answered that they get direct calls for applications from EU institutions. The category “sometimes” has the largest number of those who find out about projects by talking to colleagues from the non-governmental sector (31%). The smallest number finds out by talking to representatives of international organizations (21% often, 24% sometimes and as many as 63% never).
- With regard to frequency of applying for EU projects, the research shows that 32 percent of organizations each apply *twice a year or fewer than once a year*. Twenty-one percent of organizations apply *once a year* and 16 percent apply *more than twice a year*.
- The percentage of organizations which won a project for which they applied at least once is relatively high – 78 percent. However, most non-governmental organizations do not apply for projects on their own, especially those which have a regional character. One-half of organizations choose partners based on the content of projects, i.e. calls, whereas 30 percent of NGOs have regular partners with which they work on adjustment to projects.
- The most common reason for not applying for EU projects, in 38 percent of the case, is that NGOs *did not have enough know-how to respond to the complex application requirements* and also that they *did not have sufficient financial income necessary for projects*.
- With regard to assessment of capacity for applying, only 19 percent of organizations which have not applied answered that they will be able to respond independently to requirements from EU project applications. The majority, 44 percent, maintain that they will be able to do that, but in cooperation with a more experienced partner. Thirty-eight percent said they will request assistance from another organization or EU institution. On the other hand, among state organizations there is a certain confidence. Sixty percent answered that they will be able to respond to applications on their own and 40 percent said they will do that together with a partner.
- We asked state organizations and media if they know that European Union funds exist which support the project activities of state (public) institutions or media? Respondents from state institutions gave 100% affirmative answers, whereas among media the number of editors who know that is 89 percent. On the other hand, editors stated without exception that the *European Union should through different grants support the production of European integration issues in media*.

- Ninety percent of surveyed editors said they cover European Union issues through a combination of reporting on day-to-day events and self-initiated (investigative) reporting. Most commonly, in 70 percent of cases, media cover this issue nearly equally by engaging their own journalists and through agencies (either news or video). Thirty percent answered that they cover the issue exclusively through their own journalistic forces.
- Looking at the overall research, it may be concluded that non-governmental organizations and state institutions are relatively well acquainted with the TACSO project. The majority of them have a very positive view of the project and are ready for some forms of cooperation, especially with the aim of advancing their know-how needed for getting bigger EU grants. It can be seen from the research results that NGOs most often participated in very practical and concrete activities such as, for example, registration in PADOR or writing EU projects. In line with this is an assessment by NGOs which have not applied for projects, a small number of which said that they will be able to respond to complex project requirements on their own. This is a clear sign for TACSO in which direction it should continue its activities. The research shows that it is necessary to increase the visibility of LAG, which most respondents have not heard of. Also, at least based on respondents' requests, local staff should be engaged as experts on the TACSO project, as well as LAG. The research also showed that media, which are important for TACSO as transmitters of information as well as a direct target group, know little about TACSO. True, these are editors-in-chief, not field reporters who certainly encounter this issue more often, but this information is indicative.