



IPA III Civil Society Facility (CSF) and Media Programme and the NDCI Human Rights and Democracy (DHR) Programme for Kosovo* Consultation Meeting

10 FEBRUARY 2022
Event Report

INTRODUCTION

On request of the EU Office in Kosovo (EUOK), the EU TACSO 3 project organised an on-line meeting to discuss the priority sectors/themes of planned EU funded calls for proposals in 2022 under the Programmes IPA CSF and Media and the NDCI DHR for Kosovo on Thursday, 10 February 2022, at 10:00 CET.

The aim of the event was to conduct consultations with potential beneficiaries such as civil society organisations, media as well as other stakeholders, prior to the launch of calls for proposals for the programme. Additionally, the event aimed to inform the participants on the further steps on the IPA CSF and Media Programme 2021–23, Action for Kosovo.

The consultation focused on the relevance for the sectors/themes as well as the most relevant modalities for implementation.

The main areas of CSF support are:

- Sustainability and resilience of civil society organisations;
- Freedom of expression and media resilience;
- Combatting discrimination.

The call for participants to take part in the consultation was published on the EU TACSO 3 website and sent directly to around 230 active CSOs and media organizations in Kosovo. The event was organised online. Eighty representatives of CSOs, and media organizations and other stakeholders from Kosovo applied to participate, while 50 representatives attended in full or partially ([Annex 2: List of participants](#)).

DISCUSSION

Introduction, objectives, expectations

The meeting was opened by Richard Allen, EU TACSO 3 Team Leader. An overview of the EU TACSO 3 support to the activity was provided to the participants, followed by the purpose of the event.

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After the welcoming speech, TL provided technical information on the interpretation (English, Albanian, Serbian and sign language). Also, effective participation and exchange was encouraged. Furthermore, the agenda of the event was presented ([Annex 1: Agenda](#)).

Session 1: Areas of IPA III CSF and Media Programme 2021-23, Action for Kosovo presentation

Dario Di Benedetto, Cooperation Section/Team Leader - Social Development at EU Office in Kosovo (EUOK) briefly presented the background of the consultation. In December 2021, the CSF and Media Programme 2021-23 was approved by the European Commission. It was explained that Programme is the instrument of the European Commission for supporting CSO actors and media organizations as direct beneficiaries. Therefore, inputs of the beneficiaries through consultations prior to the opening of the Call for Proposals (CfP) are encouraged.

The total allocation for three years is 7.2 million EUR for this programme for both CSF and Media. The overall financial allocation for the first CfP, planned for launching in March 2022 is EUR 2 million from IPA III CSF and Media Programme CSF and EUR 1 million from NDCI on Human Rights and Democracy (HRD).

The consultation focused on the relevance for the sectors/themes as well as the most relevant modalities for implementation. Additionally, a detailed presentation was made on the main areas of CSF support, followed by discussion for each area.

Area of support 1: Sustainability and resilience of civil society organisations

Priority sectors:

- fighting corruption, advance justice and public administration reforms;
- capacities to influence policies and decision making in the field of energy;
- strengthening the cultural sector as a driver for local development.

The area focuses on civil society capacities and is based on multi-year support to the sector and the current needs of the sector. Progress on the enabling environment was noted in the past years in Kosovo and is considered to be among the more positive examples in the region. Most notably, the platform for cooperation between the Government and CSOs is fully functional. The sectors identified for CSF support are highlighted in the EC Kosovo Report as areas for improvement. The first sector is based on fighting corruption and the call welcomes proposals on alternative ideas such as use of confiscated assets. In terms of public administration reforms, it is expected that simplification of procedures is addressed. In terms of capacities to influence policies and decision making in the field of energy, it is expected that there would be strong advocacy on renewables. In regards to the strengthening of the cultural sector as a driver for local development, is area can contribute to the economic development. It can also have a variety of positive effects in cross-cutting themes, such as cultural heritage.

Discussion

Aferdita Pustina, EU TACSO 3 Country Coordinator presented the ground rules for the discussion and the two main questions for the discussion in all three areas:



- *What are the main issues that you think we should focus on per priority area? And why?*
- *What do you think could be the best modalities of implementation for each of the priority areas?*

Nicole Farnsworth, Kosovo Women's Network

It is important **to keep the sub-granting component** this is very needed at the local level to reach smaller diverse organisations that have no capacity to apply [directly for CSF funding]. In terms of contracting modalities, there are suggestions **to simplify the monitoring** of the work done by the smaller organisations. In this case, results-based monitoring can be applied. The aim would be to simplify the administrative burden and enable them to focus on content. The **engagement of EU partners** should be **optional** in order for the lead applicant to assess the added value.

Dorina Lluka Davies, YMCA

The **youth sector should be considered** in the call. The call should also **involve the self-sustainability** of organisations in order to ensure continuity of the work of the organisations.

Zana Hoxha, ARTPOLIS

There should be **more than one grant** allocated for culture per year. The reasons are due to effects that COVID-19 pandemic had on culture and the importance of this sector in various areas. It is important to recognise the **relevance of the cultural sector** in various areas of society.

Marigona Shabiu, YIHR

The sectors of the areas should **focus more on helping sustainability and resilience of the organisations** and not be implemented isolated and without an integrated approach. Supporting **human rights organisations** in their work and their sustainability would benefit due to positive changes in the political environment where human rights are taken more seriously.

Jeton Hajdari, Tennis Coach

Youth should be targeted in the call, especially through using the **alternative ways of bringing youth together such as sports**, i.e. tennis.

Jehona Gjurgeala, TOKA (chat)

A **consultation on the best way forward to optimise implementation** of projects, and reflect an adequate balance between result-orientation, administration and transparency/trust should be taken under consideration.



Nicole Farnsworth, Kosovo Women's Network (chat)

Several long-term, multi-year operational grants should contribute directly to CSOs' sustainability and resilience, supporting them directly in the areas of their missions and strategies (to achieve this aim in Area 1).

Elza Ramadani, Animal Rights Foundation Kosovo (chat)

Support is needed for NGOs that deal with animal welfare and rights and helped the Food and Veterinary Agency to change regulations and facilitate important work for better stray dog and dog population control. Animal welfare connects and is essential to public safety and health. Since 2018 the NGO monitored the project/tenders of the Food and Veterinary Agency that aimed to improve the stray dog situation. Many irregularities were found and were exposed thanks to the intervention.

Mirela Lavric, CONCORDIA Projekte Sociale (chat question)

Will NGOs providing direct social and educational services be supported Area 1, or rather will be included in Area 3?

Fabjola Terziu, NGO FINCH (chat question)

For NGOs protecting and promoting Biodiversity and Protected Areas that extend along the Sharri National Park and beyond, will they be given priority to the field of the environment during this call by integrating energy?

Dario Di Benedetto, EUOK responded to the questions as follows:

Sub-granting is being considered for the call. The type of sub-granting scheme, its purpose, selection, duration etc. (including core-funding/operating grants) should be proposed by the applicant as a tool to serve the purpose of the overall project. One proposal can have a sub-granting scheme that is more flexible but should be focused on results. And the overloading of implementing partners should be mitigated. Related to this, **monitoring** is focused on administrative impact; although a control mechanism, it has the purpose of capacity building of partners who can apply for larger projects in the future.

Inclusion of EU partners may be required for some areas due to the need for exchange of views and perspectives. This is based on the aspirations of Kosovo to become a part of the EU, and the exchange is highly encouraged.

In terms of **youth participation**, this target group is present in several calls throughout the year. Similarly, **gender is considered as a cross-cutting** topic and this will be specified in the guidelines as per the usual practice.

Self-sustainability should be reflected and planned by the applicants and the proposals should have a strategy to involve various actors. However, it is considered that the sustainability is of the action rather than the applicant.



In terms of **resilience and sustainability for CSOs**, there are various capacity and strategic interventions such as EU TACSO and there is financial support coming up in 2024 for operating grants.

Area of support 2: Freedom of expression and media resilience

Priority sectors:

- investigative journalism (professional, ethical and labour standards);
- media literacy: countering misinformation, negative stereotyping, and hate speech.

This objective will be focused on support to investigative journalism and in increasing the role of journalists in terms of professional, ethical and labour standards. Cooperation with Universities is encouraged rather than only training for the CSOs. This is to see how CSOs can intervene and encourage independent journalism. Media literacy aims to work especially with youth to equip them with tools to encourage critical thinking and judge information in an objective manner. In this context, media outlets could be involved (including through sub-grants) for non-profit projects to enable a wider spread of information.

Vesa Bala, Association of Independent Journalists of Kosovo

Kosovo has achieved some level of improvement of freedom of expression. However the 29 cases of attacks on journalists in 2021 is concerning. In this regard, **media freedom** is of the utmost importance. Additionally, topics such as **media literacy and fake news, and misinformation on the basis of gender** should also be considered for the call.

Ardita Zejnullahu, Association of Independent Broadcast Media of Kosovo

The proposed topics are supported, and [support for] **transposing of the Directive on audio-visual media services** into the local legislation should also be considered. The Directive was approved in December 2018, and needs to be reflected in Kosovo. In terms of investigative journalism, we encourage a **focus on local media** as these are weaker in terms of applying for funding. Media literacy and countering misinformation should be a **collaboration between the media the CSOs sector through which CSOs can do fact-checking** and inform the public.

Lirika Bakija, Advocacy and Training Resource Center (ATRC) (chat)

It is considered that the Area 2 is very important for the effective and consolidated functioning of democratic journalism practices. Communities such as **LGBTIQ are threatened by hate speech**. By the analysis of “hate-o-meter”, it was indicated that media not only incites hate toward this community but also shares information that calls for the destruction of this community. Therefore, working in the Area 2, sector b) is crucial to contribute to **preventing misinformation and negative stereotyping**, with a specific emphasis on combatting spread of hate speech through the media.

Marigona Shabiu, YIHR (chat)

There should be a **separate sub scheme for businesses** under this call, because it puts CSOs at a disadvantage at all levels. Local CSOs (the majority of them) cannot compete with businesses in terms of capacity and resources. Also, it would be definitely very important if the support provided is organisation-specific (so based on the mandates and missions and experience of CSOs), rather than



project-specific. This approach would be very helpful in terms of sustainability of results in any field and it would support CSOs to not be donor-driven.

Shkelzen Osmani, hibrid.info/ADS (chat)

Hibrid.info is a fact-checking project, IFCN (International Fact Checking Network) verified signatory. **Increasing capacities for fact-checking outlets** and supporting Digital and Media Literacy projects should be one of the main goals of the respective topics. Spreading disinformation is becoming a serious concern and a threat.

Ardiana Bytyçi, KosovaPress (written contribution post event)

It is requested that in the eligibility criteria, **media outlets registered as businesses are eligible to apply** for projects. Media outlets/news agencies are entering a new era of re-directing their work on promoting social issues, human rights, preventing stereotypes, hate speech and negative beliefs. Media outlets are rather strict on their editing policies respecting the highest ethical standards and are contributing to eradicating public misinformation and hate speech. **Ethical journalism** should be further promoted considering that media outlets are a very crucial mechanism to alter public opinion.

Considering that Area 2 is mostly focused on investigative journalism and media literacy, it is proposed to also consider **the promotion of socio-economic components** among different ethnicities in Kosovo as affected by Covid-19 taking into account gender perspectives. The **impact of media on supporting family economies** would further empower local communities.

Dario Di Benedetto, EUOK responded to the questions as follows:

The legislative process of Directive transposition is an issue that is still ongoing and the EUOK is aware. This is more an advocacy and consultative role and this is a part of the work which the **local and central institutions** should take further.

It is needed to have more **local NGOs to advocate** more on various fields of interest. Additionally, the **media literacy and the combination of the work of the CSOs** as factcheckers is considered as a good approach to the relevant topic.

Although it was mentioned that outlets will be supported it should be made clear that **only projects with a non-profit purpose could be supported.**

Area of support 3: Combatting discrimination

Priority sectors:

- effectiveness of anti-discrimination policies (prevention and protection mechanisms); capacities to monitor and influence healthcare policies /patients' rights.

The area was presented by giving a full emphasis on the anti-discrimination policies. Among other things, this includes hate speech that is also related to Area 2. The aim is to support projects that implement the policies already in place for anti-discrimination. Cooperation from several organisations



is considered of added value. Institutions such as the Ombudsperson are considered important for cooperation.

In terms of healthcare policies and patients' rights, the call will be opened for projects that have activities and are external and independent of the sector and address universal access to healthcare. Management of vaccination policy and other areas related to the health insurance, as well as monitoring of this sector could be of interest. Projects should be focused on the role of the CSOs and not substituting the work of the institutions.

Dukagjin Kelmendi, HANDIKOS

Support is needed on the **networking of CSOs** that work in the same fields specifically for People with Disabilities (PwD). Implementation on **national strategy and action plan of PwD** and activities of monitoring of the same is of high interest and the sustainability of these initiatives is needed. The regional society needs to be educated over acceptance and inclusion of PwD so any support in this area is considered valid.

Fatir Berzati, Junior Chamber International Prizren

Support is needed in terms of the **language used in institutions**, especially Bosnian language. These issues affect the daily life of citizens and the exercising of their rights of this community. Similarly, the media should be plural and presented in more languages to include all communities.

Blert Morina, Centre for Equality and Liberty (CEL Kosova)

In Kosovo, there is **no shelter for LGBTIQ community** and we welcome any initiative to address this issue.

Nicole Farnsworth, Kosovo Women's Network

The regional call and how is this related to the CSF should be provided. The new call should try to **build networks and bring the joint expertise**. The areas should have a large call and bring NGOs together to provide more expertise.

Dario Di Benedetto, EUOK responded to the questions as follows:

The call will be crosscutting and areas should be open to all possible interventions. National networks in this area could be considered but this depends on the financial allocation of the lot. In terms of the legal assistance, i.e. legal clinics, there is a large project that was signed in January 2022.

In relation to **housing rights of LGBTIQ**, proposals are welcome for advocacy of this group, however the cooperation with institutions is highly encouraged as well.

CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS

In the last session, it was concluded that the consultation event was useful in exchanging constructive feedback from different actors with EUOK. After the consultation launch event, participants were thanked for their participation and presented the timeline for 2022.



Annex 1. Agenda

IPA III Civil Society Facility (CSF) and Media Programme and the NDCI Human Rights and Democracy (DHR) Programme for Kosovo* Consultation Meeting

AGENDA

Thursday, 10 February 2022

09:45 – 10:00 Registration and entry to the Zoom meeting room

10:00 – 10:10 Introduction, objectives, expectations

Opening by: Richard Allen, Team Leader, EU TACSO 3

10:10 – 11:20 Areas of IPA III CSF and Media Programme 2021-23, Action for Kosovo presentation

Presented by: Dario di Benedetto, Team Leader, Cooperation, EU Office in Kosovo (EUOK)

Ongoing discussion (after presentation of each area)

Moderated by Afërdita Pustina, Country Coordinator for Kosovo, EU TACSO 3

11:20 - 11:30 Conclusions, next steps

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Annex 2: List of participants

IPA III Civil Society Facility (CSF) and Media Programme and the NDCI Human Rights and Democracy (DHR) Programme for Kosovo* Consultation Meeting			
No.	First name	Last name	Organization
1	Dajana	Berisha	Forum for Civic Initiatives
2	Iliriana	Gashi	Kosova-Women 4 Women
3	Marigona	Shabiu	Youth Initiative for Human Rights - Kosovo (YIHR KS)
4	Sara	Kalvachova	PLAY International
5	Jehona	Gjurgjeala	TOKA
6	Mirela	Lavric	CONCORDIA Projekte Sociale
7	Ardi	Ponosheci	IPKO Foundation
8	Jovana	Radosavljevic	New Social Initiative
9	linda	Ilulla	dokufest
10	Jovan	Simić	slobodna produkcija
11	Ahmet	Rushiti	Kosovar Civil Society Foundation
12	Dorina	Lluka-Davies	YMCA Movement
13	Ardiana	Bytyci	
14	Anita	Plakolli	Teach For Kosova
15	Delvina	Haxhijaha	Open Data Kosovo
16	Ardita	Zejnnullahu	AMPEK
17	Elza	Ramadani	Animal Rights Foundation Kosovo
18	Fabjola	Terziu	OJQ FINCH
19	Blert	Morina	Centre for Equality and Liberty (CEL Kosova)
20	Bardha	Tahiri	Fondacioni Kosovar per Shoqeri Civile
21	Shkelzen	Osmani	Action for Democratic Society (ADS)/hibrid.info
22	Ardita	Kabashi	Qendra per Arsim e Kosoves
23	Jeton	Hajdari	Shkolla e Tenisit "Toni"
24	Blerta	Aliu	KCSF
25	Aida	Topanica	Shoqata Autizmi
26	Vesa	Bala	Asociacioni i Gazetarëve të Kosovës
27	Ridvan	Gashi	Multiethnic Culture of Kosovo
28	Lirim	Krasniqi	GERMIN
29	Mehmet	Musaj	Kosova Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (KRCT)



30	Zana	Hoxha	ARTPOLIS OJQ
31	Nertila	Qarri-Gërguri	ARTPOLIS OJQ
32	Donika	Elshani	Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN Kosovo)
33	Vullnet	Sanaja	Anibar
34	Gjeneta	Cocaj	OJQ CONCORDIA Projekte Sociale
35	Dukagjin	Kelmendi	HandiKOS
36	Teuta	Osmani	Centre for Research and Gender Policy
37	Gentiana	Bucaj	EdGuard
38	Albana	Rexha	Democracy Plus
39	Okarina	Gorani	Aksioni per Nena dhe Femije
40	Hana	Bucinca	Action for Mothers and Children
41	Rijeta	Haxhiu	Association for Environmental Protection and Clean-up of Kosova "PAMKOS"
42	Pajtim	Kastrati	Green Art Center Prishtina
43	Lirika	Bakija	ATRC
44	Enver	Kurtalani	Shoqata Kosovare e te Shurdherve
45	Avni	Mustafa	Roma Versitas Kosovo
46	Ali	Misimi	People in Need
47	Jeton	Hajdari	Tennis School "Toni"
48	Fatir	Berzati	bih.kosova.info
49	Berzat	Berzati	Junior Chamber International Prizren
50	Nicole	Farnsworth	Kosovo Women's Network



AREAS OF EU SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY, MEDIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN KOSOVO, 2022

Area 1: Sustainability and resilience of civil society organisations

Area 2: Freedom of expression and media resilience

Area 3: Combating discrimination