



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

AGENCY FOR THE SUPPORT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Empower together...

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Working meeting of the National Council for Civil Society (NCCS)

Tirana, 4 April 2018

A working meeting of CSO members of the National Council for Civil Society (NCCS) with representatives of Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS) and the EU expert was held at the premises of the ASCS, at 10:00am.

Meeting agenda:

- NCCS's Annual Report and Reporting Models
- The NCCS's long-term work plan 2018-2020
(based on work plan for 2018, already approved)
- By-laws of the Code of Conduct, for members of civil society organizations
- NCCS's budget updates
- NCCS's travel reimbursement policies

Roundtable on the preparation of Albanian civil society for EU accession negotiations

Tirana, 12 April 2018



The EU-funded project "Technical Assistance to Promote a More Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development in Albania" in cooperation with the Prime Minister's Office organized the workshop "Preparation of the Albanian Civil Society for EU Accession, Exchange of Practices and Experiences with other countries in the region", which was held at Rogner Hotel, Tirana.

Invited to this Roundtable were civil society members at the National Council for Civil Society (NCCS), representatives from the Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS), representatives of civil society organizations in the country, representatives from the Albanian Government, EU Delegation in Albania and the members of the Technical Assistance Team.

The activity was supported by the Agency for the Support of Civil Society (AMShC).



The aims of this roundtable:

1. Support for Albanian civil society to get prepared better for the opening of EU accession negotiations
2. Support the Albanian Government in accommodating the role of civil society within the accession negotiation process
3. Sharing of regional experiences in the accession negotiations and engagement of civil society between the member states and the candidate countries
4. Identifying the next steps in involving civil society in Albania's EU Negotiation Strategy and in the Roadmap for a More Enabling Environment for Civil Society in Albania

The roundtable was greeted by Mr. Stephen Stork - Representative from the EU Delegation in Albania; Mrs. Orjana Arapi - Representative from the Prime Minister's Office; Mr. Sokol Dedja - Representative from the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs; Mr. Blendi Dibra – Deputy Chairman of the National Council for Civil Society and Mr. Andi Kananaj - Executive Director of the Agency for the Support to Civil Society.

Subsequently, was followed with the presentations on good practices and challenges in involving CSOs in the negotiation process by three foreign experts from Serbia, Croatia and Montenegro.

Also, CSOs representatives worked in groups on EU negotiations and made the presentation of the conclusions and discussions:

- Chapter 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights)
- Chapter 24 (Justice, Freedom and Security)
- Chapter 26 (Education and Culture)



Progress Report on Transparency and Public Consultation Process

Shkodra, 25 April 2018



In the framework of the project “Youth dare”, supported by the Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS), the Association "Young Intellectuals, Hope" organized a meeting, where was presented the Progress Report on the Transparency and the Public Consultation Process in the Municipality of Shkodra.



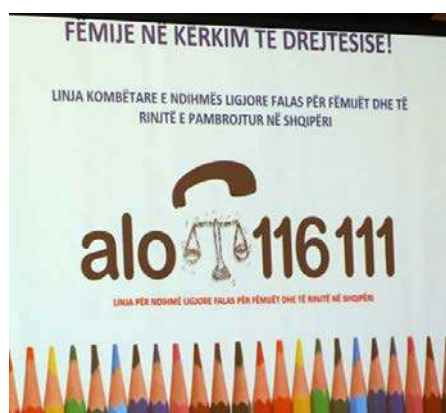
Thematic meetings with NCCS on the Revised Roadmap

Tirana, 25, 26, 27 April 2018

The Prime Minister's Office and the Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS), in cooperation with Technical Expertise, organized a preliminary round of meetings to inform and consult with members of the National Council for Civil Society (NCCS) regarding the revised Roadmap document.

These meetings were organized in the premises of the Prime Minister's Office, according to the strategic directions set out in the document and were attended by representatives from NCCS as well as representatives of state structures / institutions under these three thematics:

- **Date 25 April 2018**
Strategic Direction 1:
Institutionalized government cooperation with civil society in policy making and EU integration
- **Date 26 April 2018**
Strategic Direction 2:
An enabling legal environment and governance of data / information
- **Date 27 April 2018**
Strategic Direction 3:
Facilitating the fiscal framework and financing



Presentation for the first time of the concept of "National Line of Free Legal Aid for Unprotected Children and Young People in Albania"

Tirana, 30 April 2018

The Legal Protection Office CRCA Albania, ALO 116 and the PINK Embassy, with the support of the UNDP Office and the Ministry of Justice, organized at the premises of COD, the event where they presented for the first time the concept of "National Line of Free Legal Aid for Unprotected Children and Young People in Albania".

The meeting was attended by Ms. Vasilika Hysi, Member of Parliament, Chairwoman of the Commission of Legal Affairs, Public Administration and Human Rights; Ms. Edlira Papavangjeli, Program Manager for Gender Equality at UNDP; a representative from the Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS) and the Ministry of Justice; representatives of civil society organizations, etc.



Mr. Altin Hazizaj opened the meeting and summarized all the achievements and difficulties encountered to date and briefly presented the purpose and objectives of this concept. In his speech, he emphasized that this office has been in operation since 2001 with the focus of protection from violations of the rights of children and youth in Albania by the administration and public institutions.

Since 2001 more than 150 issues have been followed up and over 2000 children and young people have benefited from the services of this office throughout Albania. Legal protection and advocacy, advocacy for rights and access to justice are the main priorities of the Office.



Mrs. Vasilika Hysi greeted the meeting and emphasized the importance of this concept and the

cooperation with law enforcement and institutions to assist to vulnerable children and young people.



The representatives of UNDP and the Ministry of Justice emphasized the importance of this line, the achievements of this cooperation and promised to strengthen cooperation in the future.

Further on, was introduced the concept, comments and suggestions were made in the function of a qualitative and comprehensive project. There were also questions and answers that hinted at certain uncertainties.

At the closing of the meeting, the organizers thanked the participants for their thoughts and their suggestions.

Presentation of the Transparency Monitoring Report for Courts

Shkodër, 2 May 2018



In the framework of the project “Youth dare”, supported by the Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS), the Association “Young Intellectuals, Hope” organized a meeting, where was presented “The Transparency Monitoring Report for the Administrative Court of the First Instance and the Court of the Shkodra Judicial District”, which was held at the Library of the University of Shkodra “Luigj Gurakuqi”.

The presentation was developed with the students of the Faculty of Law, who had the opportunity to be the ones who visited the Court websites, noting the progress achieved in the publication of required information under the law on the right to information.



Roundtable on observance of human rights

Tirana, 4 May 2018



In the framework of the EU-funded project "Supporting the Improvement of Citizen-Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania - IPSED", the "Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services Albania" – (ADISA) with the support of the EU Delegation organized a roundtable with representatives of Civil Society with focus on human rights in Albania, which was held at the premises of Hotel Tirana International.

The purpose of this round table was to inform stakeholders (CSOs on human rights, gender equality, children's rights / youth and the LGBT community) with what the Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services Albania – (ADISA) provides, such as keeping track of the specific needs and problems that these groups face in their daily lives, with the aim of improving these services in the future.





PROMOTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Agency for the Support of Civil Society



www.amshc.gov.al/promo

ASCS launches the online Platform “PROMOTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY”

Tirana, 7 May 2018

The Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS) launches the online Platform “**PROMOTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY**” – www.amshc.gov.al/promo.

“PROMOTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY” is an open communication and interaction platform with the Civil Society Organizations.

This platform will serve to promote projects and activities of Civil Society Organisations and exchange ideas through forums.

For more information visit:
www.amshc.gov.al/promo



Beyond Barriers – Training in European Voluntary Service (EVS)

18 - 19 May 2018

Representatives of the Agency for the Civil Society (ASCS) attended the two-day training of civil society organizations in European Voluntary Service (EVS), organized by the "Beyond Barriers" organization.



Consultative meeting with civil society organizations about the IPA 2015 Program

Tirana, 24 May 2018

The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs held a consultative meeting with the Civil Society Organizations in the framework of the implementation of the Civil Society Support Component from the IPA 2015. This activity was also supported by the Agency for the Support of Civil Society (AMShC).

The Action Document of the European Integration facilitating instrument, as the general objective has strengthening the capacity and accountability of the state administration in order to ensure a sustainable role for the Government to prepare for EU membership.

The 2017 Progress Report for Albania emphasizes the importance of Civil Society Inclusion in the European Integration Process: "Considerable efforts are needed to ensure meaningful consultation with civil society actors as part of a comprehensive political dialogue. Financial sustainability of civil society organizations remains a challenge due to fiscal and legal frameworks."

The consultative meeting serves as a basis for identifying the needs of Civil Society to make their utmost contribution to the process of EU integration.

Working meeting of civil society members of the National Council for Civil Society (NCCS)

Tirana, 30 May 2018



Civil Society members of the National Council for Civil Society (NCCS) held a working meeting, which was held at the premises of the "Europe House" - Tirana.

Agenda's topics:

1. Evaluation of the raised issues
2. Determining the continuity and concrete steps that should be taken

Info Session on IPA Cross-Border Greece-Albania Programs

Gjirokastra, 4 June 2018



The Executive Director of the Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS), Mr. Andi Kananaj and the Head of Project Development Sector, Mr. Erion Banushi, attended the meeting in Gjirokastra on the implementation of the First and Second Call for Proposals. These project proposals are oriented to the IPA Cross-Border Greece-Albania Cooperation Programs, which are part of the information campaign on the application. Participants in the meeting were civil society organizations and eligible applicants for the program. The info days of the program will continue with the realization of other meetings of this focus.

IDEA Project "Investment Developments and Empowerment Actions"

Vlora, 11 June 2018

The Executive Director of the Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS), Mr. Andi Kananaj and the Head of Project Development Sector, Mr. Erion Banushi, participated in the IDEA Project "Investment Developments and Empowerment Actions", in the framework of INTERREG IPA CBC GREECE – ALBANIA Program. This activity was organized by AULEDA - Local Economic Development Agency, Vlora, in the capacity of Lider Partner, which was held at Hotel Palace, Vlora.



Other present participants were the Mayor of Himara, Partners of the Project and other local actors.

The project aims to create an information portal that through which will enable planning of participation of social interventions, creation of hybrid models, funding tools and attracting investors.

Study visit to the civil society in Albania of the Delegation of Ukraine

Tirana, 18 - 19 June 2018

The Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS), in the framework of the project "Enhancing Institutional Capacity of the Government of Ukraine and Civil Society Organizations to implement joint project effectively", organized several joint meetings with representatives of the Delegation of Ukraine and Albanian state institutions; representatives from the civil society of the National Council for Civil Society (CSC) and representatives from civil society organizations.

According to the project, this study visit takes place in Albania on 18 - 19 June 2018 and Spain on 21-22 June 2018.

The Delegation of Ukraine, some of whom were members of the Civil Society Coordinating Council in Ukraine, consisted of:

- **Governmental officials:**
Ministry of Youth and Sports; Administrate of the President of Ukraine; Ministry of Finance; State Fiscal Service of Ukraine; Ministry of Social Policy; Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers
- **CSOs representatives**
- **OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine staff**

This study visit was organized by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine.

Over 2016-2017 the OSCE PCU has been supporting the Administration of the President and the Government of Ukraine to develop a legislative framework on funding mechanism to support civil society development in the framework of implementation of the National Strategy for civil society development during 2016-2020. The purpose of this study visit is to learn the international experience from two OSCE –participating States – Albania and Spain where practices on state/budgetary

funding mechanisms and sources to support civil society organizations are similar to those proposed in the draft law on National Fund in Ukraine and thus, could be applicable in Ukraine: specifically, in the context of Albania, through a mechanism of an Agency for civil society support, while in the context of Spain, a mechanism of a percentage subsidy to CSOs.



Tirana, 18.06.2018

Meeting of representatives of the Delegation of Ukraine with representatives from Albanian state institutions



Tirana, 18.06.2018

Meeting of representatives of the Delegation of Ukraine with representatives from Albanian state institutions



Tirana, 19.06.2018

Meeting of representatives of the Delegation of Ukraine with members of the National Council for Civil Society



Tirana, 19.06.2018

Meeting of representatives of the Delegation of Ukraine with representatives from civil society organizations

“Youth Intellectuals, Hope” – The 1st Report on Transparency in the Courts

Shkodra, 25 June 2018

In the framework of the project “Youth dares”, supported by the Agency for the Support of Civil Society (ASCS), the “Youth Intellectuals, Hope” NGO presented the “1st Report on

Transparency to Courts: the Shkodra Judicial District Court and the Administrative Court of First Instance, Shkodra”.

The “Youth Intellectuals, Hope” Association, which is fully committed to supporting judicial reform and enhancing access to justice since August 2017, has started monitoring the level of

transparency in the Shkodra Judicial District Court and the Administrative Court of First Instance, Shkodra, has published the first Transparency Report on Courts focusing on Law enforcement no. 119/2014, "On the Right to Information".

In order to build a better cooperation in the function of this monitoring report, 3 requests for direct meetings were held with the heads of the Administrative Court of First Instance, the Shkodra Judicial District Court and the Ministry of Justice, from which only the Ministry of Justice expressed the readiness to meet by giving to the "Youth Intellectuals, Hope" the opportunity to make a presentation of the project, its way of implementation and its importance.

It turns out that the Administrative Court of Shkodra meets only 12 of the 28 criteria set out in Law 119/2014 "On the Right to Information" or expressed in percentage 42% of them while Shkodra Judicial District meets only 11 out of 28 criteria defined by law or expressed in percentage only 39% of them.

For the collection of official information to the Shkodra Judicial District Court, 14 requests for information were sent out of which no response was received within the 10-day legal deadline. For the collection of official information, 14 requests for information have been sent to the Administrative Court of First Instance – Shkodra,

where formally the response was returned within the legal deadline but not the completed required information. Complete information was provided only for 7 requests for information, for 5 other requests the answer was partial, 1 request was referred to other institutions, whereas for 1 request the answer was not given in the form requested and defined by law.

To provide information from the Administrative Court of First Instance, Shkodra and the Shkodra Judicial District Court have followed the ways of administrative appeal to the Ministry of Justice and the Institution of the Commissioner for the right of information and protection of personal data where 4 complaints have been lodged which are accepted by accessing partial provision of the required information.

For the needs of this report are monitored the official websites of the Administrative Court of First Instance, Shkodra and the Shkodra Judicial District Court Shkodër, from where it was observed whether the categories of information required by law are made available to the public on their website. The progress and performance of both courts in the updating of the web pages administered by them during the monitoring period has been satisfactory.

The report among others recommends that Courts should

evaluate compliance with legal procedures and deadlines for returning responses and addressing claims / complaints to guarantee the right of information by providing the required information within legal deadlines.

It is recommended that the official website of the Courts to be updated correctly with information serving the citizens and increasing the transparency of the courts, but also at the same time facilitating their service to citizens by addressing them towards online information.

The findings and recommendations of this report aim to encourage court executives in the direction of steadily increasing the level of transparency by providing information to citizens in the simplest and most understandable way to influence access to justice and services court.

You can read the full Report by clicking the link:



<http://irsh.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Rap-mon-te-gjyk-2018.PDF>

Meeting of the National Council for Civil Society (NCCS)

Tiranë, 22 qershor 2018



The meeting of the National Council for Civil Society (NCCS) has been held at the premises of the Center for Openness and Dialogue (COD), at the Prime Minister's Office and was opened to the media and were invited to participate civil society organizations.

In this meeting was approved the Minutes of the last meeting on 6 March 2018 of the National Council for Civil Society (NCCS) held on 6 March 2018; was introduced the process for revising the Roadmap; was introduced and approved the contents of the Revised Roadmap; the five most voted online names were presented by the members of the NCCS elected members of civil society for the National Council for Child's Rights and Protection; the draft of the NCCS Declaration in support of SDGs was introduced and approved; etc.





REPUBLIKA E SHQIPËRIË

**KËSHILLI KOMBËTAR
PËR SHOQËRINË CIVILE**



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

**DECLARATION
ON
UNITED NATIONS 2030 AGENDA
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

Tirana, 22 June 2018

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which entered into force in January 2016, are a new universal set of economic, social and environmental goals that United Nations member states are expected to reach by 2030.

SDGs, though not legally binding, represent a political commitment to development, by all UN member states. These universal goals are expected to create a benchmark that ensures the balance of economic development and global environmental goals with poverty reduction targets.

Albania has joined the Global Partnership, designed to make a strong contribution to achieving the Agenda 2030 and remains fully committed to its implementation in the context of the National Strategy for Development and Integration as well as the European Integration Process.

Up to now, discussions on SDGs have been mainly linked to the definition of goals and indicators. Less attention has been paid to the discussion on the roles and

responsibilities that different social partners should take, to achieve these goals and to implement this universal framework at central and local level.

Given the purpose and ambition of SDGs, it is clear that the Government itself could not achieve these goals. The Government should facilitate and enable the participation of all sectors of society, including civil society organizations (CSOs), the private sector and the general public.

The involvement of CSOs, in these processes, becomes necessary because they play a crucial role in society, as the agents of accountability, social mobilization, advocacy and service delivery.

The National Council for Civil Society considers the accession into the European Union as a top priority and the country's most important strategic ambition, as the EU integration process bears full political consensus and nationwide support, turning it into a solid way to reach a sustainable future for the citizens of Albania.

The Council appreciates the efforts undertaken to link SDGs with EU integration goals, referring to the National Strategy for European Integration 2014-2020.

In this process, the civil society plays a critical role in promoting advocacy and mediation regarding policy development, by identifying key development priorities and alternative presentations for practical solutions regarding main issues.

Particularly, we encourage CSOs working to summarize these goals in four key areas:

1. giving voice to the poorest and most marginalized citizens,
2. serving as accountability agents,
3. acting as service providers and
4. monitoring development through data collection and reporting.

Special attention is given to initiatives that precede the Sustainable Development Goal: "Leave no one behind", which reflects the ambition for an all-inclusive process, whereby the Government enters into partnership with all sectors of the society, and where "The Agenda 2030" clearly emphasizes the role of civil society to involve all stakeholders, but mainly those in need, in this initiative.

For this reason, it is important to create opportunities, spaces and platforms to be engaged, in order to promote true dialogues, sustainable cooperation between the CSOs and Government to encourage the participation of the community in the direction of improving governance.

SDGs are a globally legitimate reference for CSOs, which may propose the introduction of many issues in policy-making framework. CSOs should identify improvements and interventions which can bring a significant change for people in need, by converting the voice of the poorest and most marginalized citizens to rational and strong arguments, to be addressed by the central and local government.

The National Council for Civil Society values, as very important, the development of the relationships and partnerships with central and local government, and particularly, the identification of the government structures, actors or responsible institutions for the solution of various problems, faced by society.

We encourage all Civil Society efforts to play the crucial role and transformer in the Albanian society by being engaged in the consulting and advocacy processes, by enabling the information, capacity building and active participation of the citizens in the decision making processes and fulfillment of SDGs.

In line with SDGs implementation, data collection, reporting and monitoring should be a comprehensive and transparent process, involving statistical experts, CSOs, national human rights institutions, service providers and citizens.

In this process, beyond the contribution and expertise of data collection, CSOs are encouraged to also play an important role in direct monitoring of the implementation of SDGs. We encourage Parliament, Central and Local Government and all public institutions to report with transparency, objectivity the fulfillment of SDGs by creating all possible spaces for participation, dialog and consulting with the CSOs in Albania.

The National Council for Civil Society considers essential the development of the role of the civil society sector for the effective implementation of SDGs, as well as the necessity to increase its engagement, impact and effectiveness in the country's development processes. In this context, the Council confirms its readiness, commitment and unwavering willingness to provide and enable the assistance of civil society organizations throughout the process of fulfillment of SDGs, through knowledge and experiences according to areas covered by the Council.