

Standard Summary Project Fiche – IPA centralised programmes

Project number 7: Support to Civil Society

1. Basic information

- 1.1 CRIS Number: 2009/021-765**
- 1.2 Title: Support to Civil Society**
- 1.3 ELARG Statistical code: 01.35**
- 1.4 Location: Republic of Serbia**

Implementing arrangements:

- 1.5 Contracting Authority:** EU Delegation to the Republic of Serbia
- 1.6 Implementing Agency:** EU Delegation to the Republic of Serbia
- 1.7 Beneficiary:** The main beneficiaries will be Civil Society Organisations¹ (CSOs) i.e. all not-for-profit structures outside government and public administrations²,

Financing:

- 1.8 Overall cost (VAT excluded): 2.220.000 EUR**
- 1.9 EU contribution: 2.000.000 EUR**
- 1.10 Final date for contracting:** 2 years after signature of the Financing Agreement (FA)
- 1.11 Final date for execution of contracts:** 4 years after signature of the FA
- 1.12 Final date for disbursements:** 5 years after signature of the FA

2. Overall Objective and Project Purpose

2.1 Overall Objective:

To enable active participation of civil society in the EU integration process by supporting the development of partnerships between public, private and civil society actors.

¹ The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) defines ‘civil society organisations’ as “*all organisational structures whose members have objectives and responsibilities that are of general interest and who also act as mediators between the public authorities and citizens*”.

² e.g. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), professional and business associations, employers’ organisations, trade unions, associations of local self-governments.

2.2 Project purpose

The Project Purpose is twofold:

- To contribute to socioeconomic development in Serbia by building human resources capacity and strengthening partnerships within the triangle of public, private and civil society actors.
- To support decentralisation and active participation of civil society in the development, implementation and monitoring of policies and EU standards at the local level.

2.3 Link with AP/NPAA / EP/ SAA

The importance of civil society has been highlighted in several Commission Communications. Two Communications from the Commission on the Western Balkans³, the Communication on Civil Society Dialogue in Candidate countries⁴ and the Communication on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007-2008⁵ and 2008-2009⁶ all clearly state the importance of the issue.

In order to better meet the needs of the region, support to civil society development and dialogue will be coordinated and streamlined by focusing on three areas of intervention, constituting the new *Civil Society Facility (CSF)*:

- (i) *Support to civic initiatives and capacity-building* thereby enforcing the role of civil society at national level.
- (ii) A *"People 2 People" Programme* supporting visits to EU institutions and bodies to exchange experience, know-how and good practice between beneficiaries and EU and Member States Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). This programme will target in particular groups with influence over decision-making and society, such as journalists, young politicians, social partners, cultural foundations, health and consumer protection organisations, and teachers.
- (iii) *Partnership Actions* carried out between beneficiary CSOs and the EU leading to a transfer of knowledge and networks as well as trans-national innovative projects.

As part of its Political criteria short term priorities, the **European Partnership** highlights the need to, "...encourage the development of civil society organisations and regular dialogue with civil society on policy initiatives." Under European Standards, the EP cites, "*Continue efforts to improve the education system; establish better links between vocational and higher*

³ Commission Communications – "The Western Balkans on the road to the EU: consolidating stability and raising prosperity" COM(2006) 27 of 27 January 2006 and "Western Balkans: Enhancing the European perspective" COM(2008) 127 of 5 March 2008

⁴ Commission Communication "Civil Society Dialogue between the EU and Candidate Countries" COM(2005) 290 of 29 June 2005

⁵ Commission Communication – "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007-2008", COM(2007) 663 of 6 November 2007

⁶ Commission Communication – "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2008-2009", COM(2008) 674 of 5 November 2008

education and the labour market and economic needs... and improve coordination among relevant bodies.” And among its Economic criteria, the EP mentions, *“Continue efforts to promote employment, including by means of vocational training and labour market reforms.”* This project has been designed to cover the range of these priorities by providing CSOs with the opportunity to develop partnerships which will enhance dialogue among CSOs, public institutions and private sector actors, with the aim of enhancing civil society’s role in the socioeconomic development of Serbia and in local level policy development and advocacy.

The **Serbia 2008 Progress Report** confirms that *“Unemployment is still a major challenge,”* while also stating that, *“Civil society organisations continue to play a major role in social, economic and political life in Serbia.”*

In chapter VIII of the **SAA**, Cooperation Policies, the article dedicated to regional and local development emphasizes the need for developing regional and local cooperation with the objective of contributing to economic development and reducing regional imbalances. The article dedicated to public administration emphasizes that the cooperation between the EU and Serbia shall aim at ensuring the development of an efficient and accountable public administration in Serbia, notably to support rule of law implementation, the proper functioning of the state institutions for the benefit of the entire population of Serbia and the smooth development of relations between the EU and Serbia.

The project will aim to build cooperation between civil society, public institutions and the private sector in support of joint efforts to identify solutions for unemployment and to build human resources capacity in Serbia to better meet the needs of the market economy. The project will encourage dialogue to strengthen partnerships among these sectors to enable greater civil society involvement in promoting local level alignment between Serbia’s policies and standards with those of the EU.

2.4 Link with MIPD

The MIPD 2009-2011 asserts that, *“Civil society development will be given special attention for the promotion of dialogue through capacity-building and exchange projects,⁷”* stating also that, *“...strengthening civil society’s role in shaping policies and monitoring the effectiveness of government policies and programmes,”* will be among the activities contributing to the continued aim of supporting Serbia in its reforms (Strategic Choices, 2.2.2).

Listed under the Objectives and Choices, Political criteria (2.3.1.1), the MIPD includes, *“Further support to the civil society in order to promote the creation of a genuine dialogue and partnership between the Serbian authorities and civil society in the democratic stabilisation and the economic and social development of the country...Promoting and strengthening civil society capacity in monitoring the effectiveness of government policies and programmes.”*

Among the expected results (2.3.1.2), the MIPD lists, *“A permanent dialogue between authorities and the civil society is developed. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Professional Associations and their partners improve their internal communication and improve their capacity to both to scrutinise and build viable partnerships with the Serbian authorities both on central and local levels.”* This is particularly relevant in terms of

⁷ MIPD 2009 – 2011, Executive summary (page 4)

strengthening partnerships within the triangle of public private and civil society sectors, which will also contribute to the expected result (2.3.2.2), “*Social partnership dialogue for employment improved.*”

Also emphasized in the Strategic Objectives, Economic criteria (2.2.1), “*The main objective under this axis is to tackle unemployment and support the job creation, while improving the competitiveness of the economy and labour productivity... The EU support aims at raising productivity and generating employment by investing in education and human capital...*”

The Political criteria Objectives and Choices (2.3.1.1) specify, “*Advancing on the reform of local self-government as part of the decentralisation process... Support municipal, inter-municipal and cross-border municipal projects and implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy at the local level,*” while under Socio-economic Criteria (2.3.2) the MIPD contains, “*Enhance access to employment and participation in the formal labour market...*” and “*Fostering social inclusion...*”

The IPA 2010 grants scheme for civil society will address these priorities by encouraging CSOs to develop and implement activities which will tackle some of the socioeconomic causes of unemployment and poverty, while also promoting greater cooperation among public, private and civil society actors in an effort to achieve more viable solutions for these critical issues. The project will strive to help build human resources capacities among the population in Serbia so that the work force will be better prepared to meet labour market demands in the coming years. By improving dialogue among the public, private and civil society sectors, the project also envisages supporting projects which will enhance civil society’s advocacy role in harmonizing Serbia’s policies and standards with those of the EU.

The Oslo Agenda for Entrepreneurship Education⁸ aims to step up progress in promoting entrepreneurial mindsets in society, systematically and with effective actions. The suggested action **D9 offers entrepreneurship education specifically geared toward disadvantaged groups**. In particular, this prioritizes young people at risk of social exclusion (low-income youth, school dropouts, adolescents in danger of long-term unemployment, refugees, etc.) The suggested action **E1 encourages the creation of learning communities with the mission of fostering entrepreneurial mindsets**, by building links between the public and the private sector, involving schools, academia and businesses, as well as relevant intermediary organizations.

2.5 Link with National Development Plan (where applicable)

N/A

2.6 Link with national/sectoral investment plans

By focusing its support on the broad themes of socioeconomic development through human resources capacity building and partnership building within the triangle of public, private and civil society sectors, the IPA 2010 civil society project links with several relevant national policy documents including the following strategic documents:

⁸ The Agenda is an outcome of the Conference on "Entrepreneurship Education in Europe: Fostering Entrepreneurial Mindsets through Education and Learning" – an initiative of the European Commission jointly organised with the Norwegian government - held in Oslo on 26-27 October 2006, which followed the Communication from Commission on the same topic

The **National Programme for Integration** (2008), in the section on Human Rights and Protection of Minorities, states as one of its priorities, “To encourage the development of civil society organisations and establish a regular consultation process on political initiatives.” The NPI mentions reform of local government in the following priorities: *employment policy* – improvement of social affairs; active involvement of different social educative, trade and regional bodies with an aim of establishing conditions for employment growth; decentralization and modernization of work of National Employment Services. In addition, one of the short term priorities in the area of *social inclusion* is establishment of conditions in local communities for better service delivery and protection of vulnerable groups...

The National Programme for Integration, within the section dedicated to Human capital highlights the need for improvement of social dialogue and efficiency of socio-economic councils and local councils for employment, more active participation of actors of social, educational, tax, economic, regional and other policies towards creating the conditions for employment increase;

The National Programme for Integration, within the section dedicated to Social Dialogue, highlights the need to improve social dialogue especially on the local level.

The **Poverty Reduction Strategy** (2003) was prepared through a wide consultative process and it represents one of the government’s most successful endeavours to elaborate and utilise a participatory mechanism for involving citizens directly in the development of democratic governance. The PRS is founded upon three strategic objectives: 1.) Dynamic development and economic growth, focusing on job creation and higher personal income; 2.) Prevention of new poverty as a consequence of economic restructuring; and 3.) Efficient implementation of existing programmes and creation of new programmes, measures and activities directly targeting the poorest and socially most vulnerable groups, particularly in the least developed regions in Serbia. Development of the three partite social dialogue is essential for the process of the education of the unemployed for the purpose of achieving stronger and more functional ties between the requirements of the labour market and the educational system.

The **National Youth Strategy** (2007) was developed and adopted as a significant step in the public administration’s effort to identify systematic solutions to young people to attain a better quality of life. According to recent statistics, young people (aged <25 years) are among the greatest share of the unemployed labour force, with nearly 50% of this population remaining unemployed. Young people in Serbia have often been referred to as the “lost generation” The basic principles of the Strategy include, “...*lifelong learning, and employment according to their specific personal characteristics, choices and capabilities,*” while a key objective of the Strategy focuses on the need to encourage and stimulate all forms of employment, self-employment and youth entrepreneurship.

Social Protection Development Strategy was adopted in 2005 with the objective to facilitate the development of, among others (1) partnership between public, non-governmental and private service providers (2) local initiatives in designing social protection services and (6) service standards, control mechanisms, system of licensing of services, service providers and training programmes.

Strategy implementation results are primarily related to the accomplished level of deinstitutionalisation of protection of children and youth without parental care, improvement of protection of children in foster care as an alternative to institutional protection, when separation of children from their parents is in their best interest, developing services at the

local level (with support to local self-government through Social Innovation Fund or donor funds), enhancement of social protection facilities and consensus made around decentralisation process.

The **Strategy for the Development of Vocational Education and Training** (2005) confirms that stronger links are needed between the education system and labour market demands. In the Republic of Serbia, one of the tasks already commenced as part of the education reform processes is the adjustment of vocational education and training to the needs of the market economy. It requires active participation of all the stakeholders who place their respective demands on the vocational education system – employers, companies, trade unions, employment services, the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, Serbian Association of Employers, parents, students and the public administration, in accordance with the Law on Socio-Economic Council. The main strategic direction for the joint action of all participants in vocational education and training is to ensure: compatibility with European standards; greater access to vocational education qualifications for all citizens; cooperation between educational institutions and employers; networking and collaboration between all social partners; and application of lifelong learning principles.

The **National Employment Strategy** (2005) promotes active employment measures which in practice call for stronger collaboration between public, private and civil society sectors. Labour market demands need to be properly assessed so that educational programmes can better link the work force's qualifications to present and forecasted labour market demands in an effort to increase employment opportunities. The Strategy highlights long-term unemployment as a particular issue, as well as the combination of problems facing first-time job seekers and those who need to upgrade their skills to qualify for present and future employment opportunities. Improved dialogue among the public, private and civil society sectors would help to contribute to achievement of the Strategy's objectives.

National Strategy of Economic Development of the Republic of Serbia 2006-2012 defines the future development of the Republic of Serbia based on knowledge as the fundamental capital. In the further phases of reforms of educational system, sustainable development in the Republic of Serbia will involve (1) improvement of the structure and educational system that would provide flexible and both horizontally and vertically mobile system, which involves introduction of new organizational models and new programmes based on the results of studying and competences, related to the agreement with social partners and interest groups; (2) institutionalisation of permanent and active social dialogue, especially in areas of developing vocational education and employment.

National Strategy of Sustainable Development (2008) was adopted by the Government in 2008. **The third key priority is Development of human resources, increased employment and social inclusion. It foresees** generating increased new employment, attracting experts, enhancing the quality and adjustability of the labor force, increasing investment in human resources through:

- o Preventing the expert-drain by providing better working conditions;
- o Enhancing the adjustability of labour and achieving greater flexibility of the labour market;

- o Investing in knowledge and development of human resources through high-quality, efficient and practical education and continual education of all social groups based on the principle of equal opportunities;
- o Social inclusion and affirmative measures for promotion of employment of the young, women and marginalized groups;

In the **Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia** (2004), prepared by the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-government, the need for enabling local self-government bodies to take over new competences is mentioned in the context of the forthcoming decentralisation. The Strategy stresses the importance of the decentralisation process and highlights basic principles for the reforms which aim to provide a high quality of services for citizens through decentralisation of the state administration.

Law on Local Self-Government (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 129/2007) for the first time, there can be found a competence for creating so called *public private partnerships*. Moreover, and this is also new and very important, there is now the principle of *competing for providing public services* at the local level. Amongst the old, explicitly listed, competences of municipalities in the provisions of Article 20 there can be found some new ones: adoption of programs and implementation of projects of local economic development; care about environmental protection; establishment and regulation of activities of institutions in the field of social protection; management of a municipal property; supporting the development of various forms of self-help for and solidarity with people with special needs; compulsory organizing of legal aid services to citizens; care about informing the local public and establishment of local television and radio stations for reporting in the language of national minorities.

CSOs have exhibited particular competencies in many of these areas, and have demonstrated that civil society is a viable partner in implementing these principles at the local level.

3. Description of project

3.1 Background and justification

The foremost political objective of the Western Balkans is accession to the European Union. This step is not automatic: the negotiation and ratification of an Accession Treaty must come first. But such a treaty is in itself not enough to make accession a success: since new Member States are to share the same values as those of the existing Member States, support at all levels is necessary in the social transformation of their societies before joining the EU.

This project is part of the Civil Society Facility. It offers the opportunity to better meet the needs of the region and in Serbia by providing support to civil society development and dialogue. This will be coordinated and streamlined by focusing on different areas of intervention such as civic initiatives.

The Sector for Programming, Management of EU Funds and Development Assistance within the Ministry of Finance has recently endeavoured to incorporate consultations with civil society into the IPA Programming process. The first steps of this initiative have contributed to the design of the IPA 2009 and 2010 civil society grants programmes. Firstly, the Sector conducted a survey to identify civil society sector priority support areas. Nearly 70 CSOs

responded to the survey, describing the sectors in which they felt that CSOs could have an important role to play within IPA programming and implementation. The results from the survey formed the basis for the design of the IPA 2009 national programme on civil society.

The survey was followed up by a Civil Society Conference held on May 28, 2009, providing a forum for direct consultation with civil society about IPA programming. Building upon the original electronic consultations, nearly 100 CSOs attended the Conference and participated in the working groups where the question of priority areas for CSO involvement was further explored. Working groups were organised according to the axes listed in the MIPD: political, socioeconomic and ability to assume responsibility of membership in the EU (European standards). Each group was tasked with identifying a priority area or problem towards which civil society could make a significant contribution. Notwithstanding the obvious time constraints, the views expressed at the Conference have been taken into account when formulating the foundation for the national programme on civil society for IPA 2010. While many different topics were discussed and elaborated upon, two broad themes emerged as key areas for CSO involvement: human resources capacity building as a means of contributing to socioeconomic development; and support to decentralisation by promoting civil society participation in the development, implementation and monitoring of policies and EU standards at the local level. The justification for the selection of these priority themes is discussed further in the subsequent sections.

Despite significant growth rates in recent years, unemployment remains a major challenge in Serbia while a shortage of skilled employees still inhibits the establishment of a competitive and dynamic private sector. Recent statistics from the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy report that poverty in Serbia has decreased by nearly 50 percent in the period 2002-2007, even though about 6.6 percent of the population in Serbia still lives in poverty. The unemployment rate in Serbia (share of the labour force that is unemployed) stands at 18.3%, with 16.0% share of males and 21.2% share of females unemployed.⁹ Notably, 43.7% of young people in the labour force (aged <25 years) are unemployed, while 14.8% of the total labour force is among the long-term unemployed.

One of the factors identified as constituting a major barrier to job creation and employment growth is inadequate labour force skills.¹⁰ It is clear that the labour market needs and the existing skills of the labour force should be more closely linked. Improving cooperation between public and private stakeholders and involving civil society in this dialogue can help contribute to the process of planning and launching initiatives which will boost the human resources capacity among present and future labour forces in Serbia. Participants at the Civil Society Conference held in May 2009 concurred that CSOs can play an important role in helping to build opportunities for persons in the labour force to upgrade their skills and/or acquire new skills. In cooperation with public institutions and private enterprises, CSOs can deliver appropriate interventions which will complement those which are being offered by the public administration and other social partners.

Civil society plays an important role in enabling the development of a participatory democracy, and opportunities for civil society's active involvement in policy making are

⁹ Serbia 2008 Progress Report SEC(2008) 2698 final

¹⁰ According to results of focus group discussions conducted by the ESPI Institute Belgrade, as part of the Employment Promotion Project (2006), cited in the *Assessment of the Effectiveness of Active Labour Market Programmes* commissioned by the PRS IFP.

available at the local level, where CSOs can both play an advocacy role and contribute to the decentralisation process in Serbia. Participants at the Civil Society Conference expressed that CSOs are in a unique position to both help in the development and implementation of policies, as well as to play the characteristic watchdog role in monitoring these processes. In Serbia, local self-governments (LSG) have over time begun to view civil society organisations, and specifically NGOs, as important partners in eliciting socioeconomic changes at the community level. Participants in this working group of the Conference emphasized that this is particularly important as concerns the harmonization of Serbia's policies with those of the EU. Civil society can play an important part in the development and monitoring of EU standards which LSGs have undertaken to implement, as well as in advocating for new measures which will align Serbia close to the EU as the accession process continues.

3.2 Assessment of project impact, catalytic effect, sustainability and cross border impact (where applicable)

The project will complement initiatives of other donors, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the IPA 2009 Multi-beneficiary CSO project. The projects which will be supported through the grants scheme will help to establish and build partnerships among CSOs at different levels by using various types of actions so as to improve mutual knowledge and understanding. This dialogue and cooperation will also promote bilateral exchanges, thereby enhancing the participation of civil society in the political, social and economic development of Serbia.

The project will also complement ongoing actions under the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme which stimulates joint actions between Serbian and neighbouring civil society actors. By encouraging dialogue centred on the broad themes socioeconomic development and promotion of EU standards at the local level, the project can build opportunities for networking among CSOs in Serbia and those from both the Western Balkans region as well as the EU.

The project will help building an awareness of the importance of partnership building among the various actors in the public, private, civil society sector triangle. As a positive consequence, the project aims to boost public awareness about civil society's potential as a reliable and effective partner to both public and private sector actors.

3.3 Results and measurable indicators:

Result 1: New partnerships and established among actors in the public, private and CSO sectors through joint efforts aimed at boosting human resources capacities

Measurable indicators:

- At least 3 projects implemented which contribute to building cooperative partnerships between public institutions, the private sector and CSOs.
- At least 4 projects implemented which contribute to building human resources capacities of the labour force in Serbia.

Result 2: CSOs actively involved in developing, implementing and monitoring policies and actions that harmonize with EU standards at the local level.

Measurable indicators:

- At least 4 projects approved which support the active participation of CSOs in the development, implementation and/or monitoring of policies and EU standards at the local level.
- At least 4 projects implemented which enable the provision of actions constituting social dialogue at the local level.

3.4 Activities:

The project will be implemented through a Call for Proposals, with a fund of 2 million € in IPA funding available to support projects to be implemented by CSOs under the grants scheme. Both results described will be delivered through the transparent selection and approval of a minimum of 15 projects. The programme priorities in the guidelines will strive to create an enabling environment for the active participation of civil society in the EU integration process by supporting the development of partnerships between public, private and civil society sectors. The grants scheme will be designed to support CSOs' role in socioeconomic development by helping to tailor human resources capacities to link them more closely with labour market needs; as well as to promote CSOs' advocacy role in shaping, implementing and monitoring government policies that will contribute to greater harmonization with EU standards. It is envisaged that this also will contribute to enhancing cooperation between civil society, public institutions and private enterprises, particularly at the local level, and to strengthening social dialogue.

The implementing partner will be the one chosen under the IPA 2009 civil society project, and will be responsible for the following:

- Organise and publicise the Call for Proposals through a wide information campaign.
- Design and launch of the grants scheme.
- Assessment and selection of project proposals, with ongoing support to grant beneficiaries and monitoring of projects awarded.
- TA to the grantees including training (project management and project implementation), daily assistance in implementing different project activities, monitoring and approving of all procurements and initial approval of final project reports.

The contractor will ensure that the process of identification and selection of projects for grant support is transparent, accountable and reflects an objective assessment of needs of the target groups. The proposals should clearly contribute to the achievement of the project purpose. Eligibility requirements for applicants and project proposals will be elaborated in the Guidelines for Applicants, which are to be prepared in compliance with PRAG regulations. Co-financing of at least 10% (of the total grant amount) will be provided by the grant recipients.

This project will be implemented through 1 grant scheme. No TA is required as the TA from the similar IPA 2009 project will assure grant management.

3.5 Conditionality and sequencing:

This project assumes that the IPA 2010 funding will be available in time for the grant management to be handled by a 2 ½-year service contract issued under IPA 2009.

The development of a civil society culture in the region requires political stability and a favourable environment for the enhancement of CSOs and civil society dialogue. The present general political framework should allow for dialogue development about and with CSOs.

Consequently, partner CSOs and/or authorities should be willing to establish and improve their exchange of information. CSOs should be wholeheartedly working together to establish alliances and coalitions to help strengthen advocacy, etc. All these efforts will fail if the authorities implement policies and actions that are counterproductive to achieving a civil society culture. It is therefore of paramount importance that the EU and other donors keep a close eye on this and take appropriate measures if necessary. It is very important that donors remain committed to a strong civil society in Serbia.

CSOs have to demonstrate their legitimacy and credibility as reliable and constructive partners representing important elements of society: citizens should trust CSOs. In addition, beneficiary CSOs should be keen on establishing partnerships with other CSOs in Serbia and actors in the public and private sectors and they should have the capacity to absorb and successfully implement contracts awarded to them. These matters will be analysed thoroughly during the selection of proposals.

Civil society organisations need to demonstrate their willingness to cooperate both amongst themselves as well as with actors in the public and private sectors.

Civil society organisations need to have the capacity to produce quality project proposals in line with technical specifications laid out in the grants scheme.

The Call for Proposals should encourage cooperation and the building of partnerships between public institutions, the private sector and civil society organisations in Serbia. Public institutions and private sector actors must be willing to participate in joint projects and engage in social dialogue with CSOs.

3.6 Linked activities

The European Union has across the region to date supported CSOs in broadly defined areas such as inter-ethnic relations, poverty reduction, environmental protection, social development and equal opportunities. Particular attention has been focused on funding social services, rule of law, youth, education, journalists, women, minorities, vulnerable groups, internally displaced person and refugees. In reviewing the IPA funding which has thus far targeted civil society, it appears that a variety of sectors have been covered through both the national and regional programmes, while each of these IPA grants schemes has generally emphasized capacity building of CSOs to prompt their active participation in policy development and good governance (primarily through monitoring, and especially with regard to anti-corruption), and encouraged efforts to advance their role in the process of EU integration.

The 2007 Component 1 national IPA project has allocated resources to support the building of partnerships among Serbian professional organisations and their European counterparts from the legal, business, research, cultural, education and health sectors.

IPA 2008 Component 1 national IPA will focus on the participation of the civil society in the policy dialogue with the Serbian authorities, and to enhance knowledge and understanding of Serbia's EU integration process.

The 2008 IPA Multi-Beneficiary civil society project introduced the Civil Society Facility as part of the political criteria axis. It consists of Technical Assistance, "People 2 People" activities, and Partnership Actions.

The objective of the *technical assistance* is to help CSOs in the Western Balkans and Turkey increase their overall capacity, improve their democratic legitimacy and to promote networking of CSOs across regional borders. During this project, technical assistance desks will be established throughout the IPA region. The technical assistance will as far as possible be established within the existing civil society system so as to ensure that actions may eventually be taken over by local civil society platforms.

The "*People 2 People*" programme is implemented through the provision of TAIEX-type technical assistance, mainly study tours, conferences and workshops. The purpose of the "People 2 People" is to stimulate civic participation in the region by offering individuals and CSOs the possibility of participating in short-term visits to EU institutions and organisations. "People 2 People" events also offer the opportunity for CSOs to interact and network with their national, regional and European-level counterparts and to create new partnerships.

Partnership actions will complement activities already launched under the national CSF projects aimed at partnerships between one or more local organisations and organisations within the EU. IPA 2008 activities will focus on the following priorities: (i) environmental fora, (ii) environment, energy efficiency, health and safety at work and (iii) the fight against corruption, organised crime and trafficking.

The 2009 national IPA civil society programme was designed in compliance with the first steps which are to become part of a process through which civil society will be regularly and systematically consulted about IPA programming. The previously mentioned electronic survey formed the basis for the design of the 2009 civil society grants programme. Based upon the survey results, the programme was formulated to encourage CSOs to develop projects and actions which would cover the broad range of topics and actions centred around the objective of promoting cultural diversity and overcoming discrimination in Serbia.

The EU has also been providing funding support toward enhancing the role of civil society through the CARDS 2003, 2004 and 2005 programmes. "Strengthening the Role of Civil Society in Shaping Poverty-related Policies and Practice" is one of the recent projects implemented by UNDP from 2006 through the end of 2009. The project intends to strengthen CSOs and the links between them so that they can: hold Government accountable for poverty reduction through monitoring the strategy and policy implementation; and effectively advocate for an enabling environment for CSOs. The project also emphasizes gender mainstreaming in sectoral policies, with a special focus on social policy.

3.7 Lessons learned

Several recent examples show that civil society can play an important role in the policy making process in Serbia. This is a key lesson from the preparation of the national Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and the national Youth Strategy where civil society participation was essential. As can be seen from the controversy surrounding the finalization and adoption of the Anti-discrimination Law, civil society organisations provided an opportunity for the many different interest groups to express their views on this important issue which is essential to the political reforms that are a necessary part of the accession process. Building upon these lessons, new partnership opportunities with the government should be identified to afford civil society a greater policy development and implementation role.

Serbian society still needs to build an efficient consensus on EU accession. In a situation where Serbian society still has diverse attitudes towards EU integration, it is important to try to improve knowledge and skills concerning the European integration process, primarily by increasing exchange and partnership with EU counterparts concerning the challenges of future enlargement.

This project will favour types of actions that can provide continuity of established activities or maintenance of links and networks established among CSOs. With a view to ensure that this initiative will reach out to all regions and will include as many civil society actors as possible, joint project proposal by groups of CSOs will be encouraged. Particular attention will be paid to projects which aim to build and strengthen partnerships between public institutions, the private sector and CSOs.

4. Indicative Budget (amounts in EUR)

			SOURCES OF FUNDING									
			TOTAL EXP.RE	IPA COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION		NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION					PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION	
ACTIVITIES	IB (1)	INV (1)	EUR (a)=(b)+(c)+(d)	EUR (b)	% (2)	Total EUR (c)=(x)+(y)+(z)	% (2)	Central EUR (x)	Regional/ Local EUR (y)	IFIs EUR (z)	EUR (d)	% (2)
Activity 1												
Contract 1 Grants scheme	X		2,220,000	2,000,000	90	220,000	10				220,000	10
TOTAL IB			2,220,000	2,000,000	90	220,000	10				220,000	10
TOTAL INV												
TOTAL PROJECT			2,220,000	2,000,000	90	220,000	10				220,000	10

Amounts net of VAT (1) In the Activity row use "X" to identify whether IB or INV (2) Expressed in % of the **Total** Expenditure (column (a))

5. Indicative Implementation Schedule (periods broken down per quarter)

Contracts	Start of Tendering	Signature of contract	Project Completion
Contract 1	N	N+1Q	N+8Q

As the grants management TA will already be set up under IPA 2009, the CfP will be ready to launch as soon as the FA is signed. We assume grant projects of up to 18 months duration, which may have to be shortened depending on the relative dates of signing of the 2009 and 2010 FAs.

6. Cross cutting issues (where applicable)

6.1 Equal Opportunity

This project will contribute to the objectives of strengthening the position and participation of women in all aspects of Serbian society, as well as to promote women's rights and equal opportunities. Particular consideration will have to be given to women's representation in the labour market and their representation in political decision making, whether on the national level regional or local level. The project is encouraging gender equality and the equal opportunity dimension in all activities covered by these funds.

6.2 Environment

Implementation of the project will allow CSOs to strengthen their ability to formulate plans for the reduction of pollution and to enforce existing and future environmental legislation, thereby protecting the health of present and future generations. The project will contribute to municipalities playing a full role in the implementation of national environmental strategies.

6.3 Minorities

This project will support actions that help build knowledge about minority cultures. Efforts will be made to include minorities groups in the human resources capacity building activities, as well as in the policy making and implementation initiatives at the local level. Minorities are encouraged to participate in order to highlight the inclusive nature of the European integration process. Finally, the contractor will actively try to motivate minority CSOs to access the EU networks and partners as part of the effort to build long-term cooperation and collaboration.

ANNEX I: Logical framework matrix in standard format

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project Fiche		Programme name and number	
Support to Civil Society		Contracting period expires: 2 years after signing of FA	Disbursement period expires: 5 years after signing of FA
		Total budget : 2.22 million €	IPA budget: 2 million €
Overall objective	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	
To enable active participation of civil society in the EU integration process by supporting the development of partnerships between public, private and civil society actors	Partnerships between public, private and civil society actors established and developed.	SAP, Council of Europe, OSCE Reports	
Project purpose	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
To contribute to socioeconomic development in Serbia by building human resources capacity and strengthening partnerships within the triangle of public, private and civil society sectors. To support decentralisation and active participation of civil society in the development, implementation and monitoring of policies and EU standards at the local level.	At least 15 project proposals approved under the grants scheme. Outputs/results of financed projects contribute to the attainment of the project purpose. CSOs actively cooperating with public and private sectors in building human resources capacity among citizens in Serbia. Strengthened CSO advocacy role at the local level. Improved implementation of local government policies. Social dialogue improved.	Beneficiaries' progress reports Reports from the monitoring unit Steering Committee meetings	Political and social stability Civil society organisations are willing to cooperate in the development, implementation and monitoring of policies and EU standards at the local level CSOs are interested to actively participate in playing the watchdog role Government and private sector cooperation with civil society actors at local and national levels

Results	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
<p>1. New partnerships and established among actors in the public, private and CSO sectors through joint efforts aimed at boosting human resources capacities.</p> <p>2. CSOs actively involved in developing, implementing and monitoring policies and actions that harmonize with EU standards at the local level.</p>	<p>Call for proposals launched and at least 15 project proposals approved under the grants scheme.</p> <p>At least 3 projects implemented which contribute to building cooperative partnerships between public institutions, the private sector and CSOs.</p> <p>At least 4 projects implemented which contribute to building human resources capacities of the labour force in Serbia.</p> <p>At least 4 projects implemented which support the active participation of CSOs in the development, implementation and/or monitoring of policies and EU standards at the local level.</p> <p>At least 4 projects implemented which enable the provision of actions constituting social dialogue at local and/or national levels.</p>	<p>Beneficiaries' progress reports</p> <p>Reports from the monitoring unit</p> <p>Steering Committee meetings</p>	<p>CSOs are interested in and have the capacity to carry out projects, particularly joint projects</p> <p>Public institutions and private enterprises are willing to participate in joint projects and engage in social dialogue with CSOs.</p> <p>Actors within the public, private and civil society sectors triangle are willing to collaborate and build partnerships.</p> <p>LSGs are willing to involve CSOs in the development, implementation and monitoring of policies and EU standards.</p>
Activities	Means & Costs	Assumptions	
<p>Call for proposals organised and publicised broadly through a wide information campaign. Design and launch of grants scheme. Assessment and selection of project proposals, with ongoing TA to grants beneficiaries and regular monitoring of selected projects.</p>	<p>Fund for civil society organisations (Call for Proposals) 2.22 million €</p>	<p>Sufficient capacity among CSOs to produce quality project proposals</p> <p>The Call for Proposals will encourage cooperation between public institutions and CSOs in Serbia, as well as the building of partnerships between CSOs in Serbia and their counterparts in the EU.</p>	

ANNEX II: Amounts (in million €) Contracted and disbursed by quarter for the project

Contracted	N+1Q	N+2Q	N+3Q	N+4Q	N+5Q	N+6Q	N+7Q	N+8Q	Total
Contract 1	2.000								2.000
Cumulated	2.000								
Disbursed									
Contract 1	1.700			0.150			0.150		2.000
Cumulated	1.700	1.700	1.700	1.850	1.850	1.850	2.000	2.000	2.000

ANNEX III - Description of Institutional Framework

There is no ministry in the Serbian government specifically dealing with civil society organisations and issues per se. Professional organisations that will be targeted by this programme belong to a wide variety of sectors, therefore it is not feasible to identify only one counterpart on the Government side.

ANNEX IV - Reference list of relevant laws and strategies

Key laws, regulations and strategic documents in the area of civil society and social dialogue:

- Constitution of the Republic of Serbia
- Law for the implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia
- The Law on Local Self-Government, 2007

In this Law (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 129/2007) for the first time, there can be found a competence for creating so called public private partnerships. Moreover, and this is also new and very important, there is now the principle of competing for providing public services at the local level. Amongst the old, explicitly listed, competences of municipalities in the provisions of Article 20 there can be found some new ones: adoption of programs and implementation of projects of local economic development; care about environmental protection; establishment and regulation of activities of institutions in the field of social protection; management of a municipal property; supporting the development of various forms of self-help for and solidarity with people with special needs; compulsory organizing of legal aid services to citizens; care about informing the local public and establishment of local television and radio stations for reporting in the language of national minorities.

- The Law on Public Administration, 2005
- Law on Socio-Economic Council, 2004
- Draft Law on Citizens' Associations
- Draft Law on the Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities
- The Strategy for the Development of Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Serbia (2005)

The Strategy for the Development of Vocational Education and Training confirms that stronger links are needed between the education system and labour market demands. In the Republic of Serbia, one of the tasks already commenced as part of the education reform processes is the adjustment of vocational education and training to the needs of the market economy. It requires active participation of all the stakeholders who place their respective demands on the vocational education system – employers, companies, trade unions, employment services, the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, Serbian Association of Employers, parents, students and the public administration, in accordance with the Law on Socio-Economic Council. The main strategic direction for the joint action of all participants in vocational education and training is to ensure: compatibility with European standards; greater access to vocational education qualifications for all citizens; cooperation between educational institutions and employers; networking and collaboration between all social partners; and application of lifelong learning principles.

- National Employment Strategy (2005)

The National Employment Strategy promotes active employment measures which in practice call for stronger collaboration between public, private and civil society sectors. Labour market demands need to be properly assessed so that educational programmes can better link the work force's qualifications to present and forecasted labour market demands in an effort to increase employment opportunities. The Strategy highlights long-term unemployment as a particular issue, as well as the combination of problems facing first-time job seekers and those who need to upgrade their skills to qualify for present and future employment opportunities. Improved dialogue among the public, private and civil society sectors would help to contribute to achievement of the Strategy's objectives.

- Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia (2004)

In the Strategy for Public Administration Reform in the Republic of Serbia (2004), prepared by the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-government, the need for enabling local self-government bodies to take over new competences is mentioned in the context of the forthcoming decentralisation. The Strategy stresses the importance of the decentralisation process and highlights basic principles for the reforms which aim to provide a high quality of services for citizens through decentralisation of the state administration.

- National Strategy of Sustainable Development (2008)

National Strategy of Sustainable Development was adopted by the Government in 2008. The third key priority is Development of human resources, increased employment and social inclusion. It foresees generating increased new employment, attracting experts, enhancing the quality and adjustability of the labor force, increasing investment in human resources through:

- o Preventing the expert-drain by providing better working conditions;
- o Enhancing the adjustability of labor and achieving greater flexibility of the labour market;
- o Investing in knowledge and development of human resources through high-quality, efficient and practical education and continual education of all social groups based on the principle of equal opportunities;
- o Social inclusion and affirmative measures for promotion of employment of the young, women and marginalized groups;

- National Programme for Integration

The National Programme for Integration, in the section on Human Rights and Protection of Minorities, states as one of its priorities, "To encourage the development of civil society organisations and establish a regular consultation process on political initiatives." The NPI mentions reform of local government in the following priorities: employment policy – improvement of social affairs; active involvement of different social educative, trade and regional bodies with an aim of establishing conditions for employment growth; decentralization and modernization of work of National Employment Services. In addition, one of the short term priorities in the area of social inclusion is establishment of conditions in local communities for better service delivery and protection of vulnerable groups

The National Programme for Integration, within the section dedicated to Human capital highlights the need for improvement of social dialogue and efficiency of socio-economic councils and local councils for employment, more active participation of actors of social, educational, tax, economic, regional and other policies towards creating the conditions for employment increase.

The National Programme for Integration, within the section dedicated to Social Dialogue, highlights the need to improve social dialogue especially on the local level.

- Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2003)

The Poverty Reduction Strategy was prepared through a wide consultative process and it represents one of the government's most successful endeavours to elaborate and utilise a participatory mechanism for involving citizens directly in the development of democratic governance. The PRS is founded upon three strategic objectives: 1.) Dynamic development and economic growth, focusing on job creation and higher personal income; 2.) Prevention of new poverty as a consequence of economic restructuring; and 3.) Efficient implementation of existing programmes and creation of new programmes, measures and activities directly targeting the poorest and socially most vulnerable groups, particularly in the least developed regions in Serbia. Development of the three partite social dialogue is essential for the process of the education of the unemployed for the purpose of achieving stronger and more functional ties between the requirements of the labour market and the educational system.

- Social Protection Development Strategy

Social Protection Development Strategy was adopted in 2005 with the objective to facilitate the development of, among others (1) partnership between public, non-governmental and private service providers (2) local initiatives in designing social protection services and (6) service standards, control mechanisms, system of licensing of services, service providers and training programmes.

- National Youth Strategy (2007)

The National Youth Strategy was developed and adopted as a significant step in the public administration's effort to identify systematic solutions to young people to attain a better quality of life. According to recent statistics, young people (aged <25 years) are among the greatest share of the unemployed labour force, with nearly 50% of this population remaining unemployed. Young people in Serbia have often been referred to as the "lost generation" The basic principles of the Strategy include, "...lifelong learning, and employment according to their specific personal characteristics, choices and capabilities," while a key objective of the Strategy focuses on the need to encourage and stimulate all forms of employment, self-employment and youth entrepreneurship.

- National Employment Strategy (2005)

The National Employment Strategy promotes active employment measures which in practice call for stronger collaboration between public, private and civil society sectors. Labour market demands need to be properly assessed so that educational programmes can better link the work force's qualifications to present and forecasted labour market demands in an effort to increase

employment opportunities. The Strategy highlights long-term unemployment as a particular issue, as well as the combination of problems facing first-time job seekers and those who need to upgrade their skills to qualify for present and future employment opportunities. Improved dialogue among the public, private and civil society sectors would help to contribute to achievement of the Strategy's objectives.

- National strategy for Economic Development

National Strategy of Economic Development of the Republic of Serbia 2006-2012 defines the future development of the Republic of Serbia based on knowledge as the fundamental capital. In the further phases of reforms of educational system, sustainable development in the Republic of Serbia will involve (1) improvement of the structure and educational system that would provide flexible and both horizontally and vertically mobile system, which involves introduction of new organizational models and new programmes based on the results of studying and competences, related to the agreement with social partners and interest groups; (2) institutionalisation of permanent and active social dialogue, especially in areas of developing vocational education and employment

- Action Plan for Implementation of the European Partnership
- Strategy of Regional Development of Serbia (2007)
- National Strategy for Serbia and Montenegro's Accession to the European Union

Reference to AP /NPAA / EP / SAA

The importance of civil society has been highlighted in several Commission Communications. Two Communications from the Commission on the Western Balkans¹¹, the Communication on Civil Society Dialogue in Candidate countries¹² and the Communication on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007-2008¹³ and 2008-2009¹⁴ all clearly state the importance of the issue.

In order to better meet the needs of the region, support to civil society development and dialogue will be coordinated and streamlined by focusing on three areas of intervention, constituting the new *Civil Society Facility (CSF)*:

- (i) *Support to civic initiatives and capacity-building* thereby enforcing the role of civil society at national level.

¹¹ Commission Communications – “The Western Balkans on the road to the EU: consolidating stability and raising prosperity” COM(2006) 27 of 27 January 2006 and “Western Balkans: Enhancing the European perspective” COM(2008) 127 of 5 March 2008

¹² Commission Communication “Civil Society Dialogue between the EU and Candidate Countries” COM(2005) 290 of 29 June 2005

¹³ Commission Communication –“Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007-2008”, COM(2007) 663 of 6 November 2007

¹⁴ Commission Communication –“Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2008-2009”, COM(2008) 674 of 5 November 2008

- (ii) A *"People 2 People" Programme* supporting visits to EU institutions and bodies to exchange experience, know-how and good practice between beneficiaries and EU and Member States Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). This programme will target in particular groups with influence over decision-making and society, such as journalists, young politicians, social partners, cultural foundations, health and consumer protection organisations, and teachers.
- (iii) *Partnership Actions* carried out between beneficiary CSOs and the EU leading to a transfer of knowledge and networks as well as trans-national innovative projects.

As part of its Political criteria short term priorities, the **European Partnership** highlights the need to, "...encourage the development of civil society organisations and regular dialogue with civil society on policy initiatives." Under European Standards, the EP cites, "Continue efforts to improve the education system; establish better links between vocational and higher education and the labour market and economic needs... and improve coordination among relevant bodies." And among its Economic criteria, the EP mentions, "Continue efforts to promote employment, including by means of vocational training and labour market reforms." This project has been designed to cover the range of these priorities by providing CSOs with the opportunity to develop partnerships which will enhance dialogue among CSOs, public institutions and private sector actors, with the aim of enhancing civil society's role in the socioeconomic development of Serbia and in local level policy development and advocacy.

The **Serbia 2008 Progress Report** confirms that "Unemployment is still a major challenge," while also stating that, "Civil society organisations continue to play a major role in social, economic and political life in Serbia."

In chapter VIII of the **SAA**, Cooperation Policies, the article dedicated to regional and local development emphasizes the need for developing regional and local cooperation with the objective of contributing to economic development and reducing regional imbalances. The article dedicated to public administration emphasizes that the cooperation between the EU and Serbia shall aim at ensuring the development of an efficient and accountable public administration in Serbia, notably to support rule of law implementation, the proper functioning of the state institutions for the benefit of the entire population of Serbia and the smooth development of relations between the EU and Serbia. By initialling the Stabilization and Association Agreement between Serbia and the European Union in November 2007 the need of effective communication on these issues became even more important.

Reference to MIPD

The MIPD 2008-2010 asserts that, "Civil society development will be given special attention for the promotion of dialogue through capacity-building and exchange projects," stating also that, "...strengthening civil society's role in shaping policies and monitoring the effectiveness of government policies and programmes," will be among the activities contributing to the continued aim of supporting Serbia in its reforms (Strategic Choices, 2.2.2).

Listed under the Objectives and Choices, Political criteria (2.3.1.1), the MIPD includes, "Further support to the civil society in order to promote the creation of a genuine dialogue and partnership between the Serbian authorities and civil society in the democratic stabilisation and the economic and social development of the country...Promoting and

strengthening civil society capacity in monitoring the effectiveness of government policies and programmes.”

Among the expected results (2.3.1.2), the MIPD lists, “*A permanent dialogue between authorities and the civil society is developed. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Professional Associations and their partners improve their internal communication and improve their capacity to both to scrutinise and build viable partnerships with the Serbian authorities both on central and local levels.*” This is particularly relevant in terms of strengthening partnerships within the triangle of public private and civil society sectors, which will also contribute to the expected result (2.3.2.2), “*Social partnership dialogue for employment improved.*”

Also emphasized in the Strategic Objectives, Economic criteria (2.2.1), “*The main objective under this axis is to tackle unemployment and support the job creation, while improving the competitiveness of the economy and labour productivity... The EU support aims at raising productivity and generating employment by investing in education and human capital...*”

The Political criteria Objectives and Choices (2.3.1.1) specify, “*Advancing on the reform of local self-government as part of the decentralisation process... Support municipal, inter-municipal and cross-border municipal projects and implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy at the local level,*” while under Socio-economic Criteria (2.3.2) the MIPD contains, “*Enhance access to employment and participation in the formal labour market...*” and “*Fostering social inclusion...*”

The IPA 2010 grants scheme for civil society will address these priorities by encouraging CSOs to develop and implement activities which will tackle some of the socioeconomic causes of unemployment and poverty, while also promoting greater cooperation among public, private and civil society actors in an effort to achieve more viable solutions for these critical issues. The project will strive to help build human resources capacities among the population in Serbia so that the work force will be better prepared to meet labour market demands in the coming years. By improving dialogue among the public, private and civil society sectors, the project also envisages supporting projects which will enhance civil society’s advocacy role in harmonizing Serbia’s policies and standards with those of the EU.

The Oslo Agenda for Entrepreneurship Education¹⁵ aims to step up progress in promoting entrepreneurial mindsets in society, systematically and with effective actions. The suggested action **D9 offers entrepreneurship education specifically geared toward disadvantaged groups**. In particular, this prioritizes young people at risk of social exclusion (low-income youth, school dropouts, adolescents in danger of long-term unemployment, refugees, etc.) The suggested action **E1 encourages the creation of learning communities with the mission of fostering entrepreneurial mindsets**, by building links between the public and the private sector, involving schools, academia and businesses, as well as relevant intermediary organizations.

¹⁵ The Agenda is an outcome of the Conference on "Entrepreneurship Education in Europe: Fostering Entrepreneurial Mindsets through Education and Learning" – an initiative of the European Commission jointly organised with the Norwegian government - held in Oslo on 26-27 October 2006, which followed the Communication from Commission on the same topic

ANNEX V - Details per EU funded contract (*) where applicable:

The contractor responsible for grants management will be selected under the foregoing IPA 2009 Civil Society grant fund project.

The contractor will be responsible for designing and implementing the grants scheme, including assessment of grant proposals, ongoing support to grant beneficiaries and monitoring of selected projects.

All granted projects require a co-financing of at least 10% (of the total grant project's cost) which will be provided by the grant recipients.

All contracts implementing the financing agreement must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents lay down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure