

National Council for Civil Society

MEETING 22.06.2022

Meeting agenda

1. Welcoming speech Ms. Denada Seferi, Deputy Minister
2. Presentation of the election process on the new members from Civil Society to NCCS
3. Monitoring of Roadmap, Ms. Elona AJAZI, Director
4. Introducing mechanisms for Open Government, Ms. Oriana ARAPI
5. Presentation of the Law "On Local Action Groups"- Mr. Enio CIVICI, Deputy Minister.
6. Diskutions

ROADMAP, FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY FOR CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Roadmap

The 2019-2023 Roadmap includes three strategic directions and nine priority areas, which take into account the principles and objectives set out in the EU Guidelines on Support to Civil Society (SC).

Purpose:

1. Creation of instruments and institutional infrastructure for an institutionalized Government-Civil Society dialogue and cooperation.
2. The creation of a legal, institutional and administrative framework favorable for a participatory democracy, as well as for the development and operation of the CS sector.
3. Improving public financing and the fiscal regime of CS.
4. Involvement of civil society in policy making, implementation and monitoring of government policies.
5. Improving social services standards and developing active citizenship and volunteerism.

Roadmap structure and Action Plan

The Roadmap and the Action Plan foresee measures/activities for each strategic direction as well as respective planned costs:

Strategic direction 1: Institutionalized government - civil society cooperation in policy making and EU Integration.

- ✓ 5 priority areas;
- ✓ 28 measures;
- ✓ 90 indicators

Strategic direction 2: Enabling legal environment and data governance

- ✓ 2 priority areas;
- ✓ 6 masa;
- ✓ 25 indicators

Strategic direction 3: Enabling fiscal and funding framework

- ✓ 2 priority areas;
- ✓ 7 measures;
- ✓ 30 indicators

Strategic direction 1: Institutionalized government - civil society cooperation in policy making and EU Integration.

This direction includes 5 priorities, 28 measures and 90 indicators.

In total, the first strategic direction has been realized to the extent of 85%, of which:

- ✓ 2 priorities, 20 measures and 68 indicators are realized to the extent of 100%
- ✓ 1 priority to the extent of 96%
- ✓ 1 priority to the extent of 81 %
- ✓ 1 priority to the extent of 50 %

Strategic direction 1: Institutionalized government - civil society cooperation in policy making and EU Integration.

Achievements:

- Realization of 76% of the measures and indicators planned in the Roadmap
- Monitoring and guaranteeing continuous commitment to the implementation of the inter-ministerial working group, including all line ministries
- Drafting by ASCS of the regulatory framework for the manner of conducting elections of civil society members of NCCS;
- The inclusion of NCCS as an advisory body in all development initiatives and programs of civil society.
- Update and implement the Agency's 2015-2021 strategy and annual work plans to achieve main objectives including its role as secretariat to the NCCS
- Draft and implement communication, information and outreach plan for ASCS to respond to increasing demand for information and support from local CSOs.

Strategic direction 1: Institutionalized government - civil society cooperation in policy making and EU Integration.

Achievements:

- Adapt the electronic register on public notification and consultation to include CSOs as a standalone contributor category;
- Develop a methodology for annual reporting on the results of public consultations and transparency of the decision-making process according to OECD/SIGMA principles.
- Prepare a manual for civil servants on conducting effective public consultations, with detailed step-by-step guidelines
- Set up an official training programme for civil servants that would be run by the Albanian School of Public Administration (ASPA) focused on government-civil society cooperation in public policy making and related areas to public consultations and dialogue;
- Drafting the Platform of Civil Society Involvement in the accession negotiation process of the Republic of Albania in European Union

Strategic direction 1: Institutionalized government - civil society cooperation in policy making and EU Integration.

Achievements:

- Involvement of CSOs in the accession process in accordance with the European Integration Partnership Platform;
- Enhance participation of CSOs in the management of the EU pre-accession instrument based on the principle of partnership.
- Coordination of funding and EU programs for the development of civil society
- Enable effective involvement of CSOs in the work of the National Council for European Integration

Strategic direction 1

Implementation of priorities and measures for each priority

Priority 1: Creation and maintenance of a nationwide strategic policy for civil society development

(5 measures, 16 indicators)

This priority has been realized to the extent of 81% for the period 2019-2021. Currently from 5 measures: **2 are fully realized 100%. Concretely, it has been realized:**

- Proper planning and implementation of the Roadmap;
- Ensuring continuous commitment to the implementation of the inter-ministerial working group, including all line ministries

2 measures are partially fulfilled. The measures, for which the responsible institutions continue to work until their realization are:

- Set up an internal tracking mechanism on the implementation progress via the Project Management tool - **75%**
- Enable the identification of CSOs in the Government Public Consultation Portal- **50%**

1 measure has not started its implementation yet. According to the deadlines set in the Roadmap Measure 1.5 Draft National Strategy/Road Map 2024-2028 for CSO support , **its planned to start implementation on 20224**

Strategic direction 1

Implementation of priorities and measures for each priority

Priority 2: Service-minded government institutions valuing cooperation with CSOs: (9 measures, 31 indicators)

7 measures are fully implemented in the extent of 100%, as follows:

- Agency to develop a manual on how to conduct the annual elections for the CSO members of the Council based on the previous support rendered by international donor community and facilitate elections according to the law.
- NCCS involved as an advisory body in all government civil society development initiatives and programmes
- Update and implement the Agency's 2015-2021 strategy and annual work plans to achieve main objectives including its role as secretariat to the NCCS;
- Draft and implement communication, information and outreach plan for ASCS to respond to increasing demand for information and support from local CSOs
- Continue technical assistance for ASCS to further develop the capacities in the priority areas of the organisation's revised strategic plan
- Define the concrete tasks of the Agency for Dialogue and Co-Governance in their support function to the PMO for the overall coordination, implementation and monitoring of the Road Map progress
- Appoint CSO contact persons in ministries of strategic importance to CSO cooperation

Strategic direction 1

Implementation of priorities and measures for each priority

2 measures have been partially implemented:

- Ensuring the efficient functioning of National Council for Civil Society in line with its work plan and government commitments- **85% completed**
- Ensuring efficient administrative support to the Council, including quality preparation for all activities and ensuring proper follow-up of all Council meetings and activities- **75% completed.**

Strategic direction 1

Implementation of priorities and measures for each priority

Priority 3: Sustainable and effective involvement of CSOs in policy making process (5 measures, 14 indicators)

This priority has been realized 100%. The percentages and measures fully realized are:

- Effective implementation of the Law on Notification and Consultation, through awareness raising and engagement of CSOs.
- Adapt the electronic register on public notification and consultation to include CSOs as a standalone contributor category. Develop a methodology for annual reporting on the results of public consultations and transparency of the decision-making process
- Prepare a manual for civil servants on conducting effective public consultations, with detailed step-by-step guidelines
- Set up an official training programme for civil servants that would be run by the Albanian School of Public Administration (ASPA) focused on government-civil society cooperation in public policy making and related areas to public consultations and dialogue.

Strategic direction 1

Implementation of priorities and measures for each priority

Priority 4: Ensure CSO contribution to Albania's EU accession process in line with EU good practice (5 measures, 11 indicators).

This priority has been realized 100%. 5 implemented measures are:

- Drafting the Platform of Civil Society Involvement in the accession negotiation process of the Republic of Albania in European Union
- Involvement of CSOs in the accession process in accordance with the European Integration Partnership Platform
- Enhance participation of CSOs in the management of the EU pre-accession instrument based on the principle of partnership
- Coordination of funding and EU programs for the development of civil society
- Enable effective involvement of CSOs in the work of the National Council for European Integration;

Strategic direction 1

Implementation of priorities and measures for each priority

Priority 5: Support CSO volunteering and active citizenship with a special focus on local level (5 measures, 18 indicators)

Implemented by 50%. The progress of the implementation of the measures is as follows:

- Develop a national concept on volunteering – **implemented by 0%**. The work for implementation of this measure has not yet started.
- Improve Law and necessary bylaws on volunteering and solve insurance issues based on a national concept- by **67%**
- State-funding schemes to promote volunteering as defined in the Concept- by **100%**
- Design instruments and a methodology for collecting data on the frequency and spread of voluntary activities – by **63%**
- Support for the involvement of special target groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities, minority groups, and unemployed people in all volunteer actions – implemented by **20%**

Strategic direction 2: Enabling legal environment and data governance

This direction includes 2 priorities, 6 measures and 22 indicators.

In total, the second strategic direction has been implemented to the extent of 64%, of which:

- ✓ 1 measure and 15 indicators have been implemented to the extent of 100%
- ✓ 1 Priority has been implemented to the extent of 77%
- ✓ 1 Priority has been implemented to the extent of 51%

Strategic direction 2: Enabling legal environment and data governance

Achievements:

- **Approval of the law nr.80/2021 “For registration of non-profit organizations”;**
- **Simplification of formal procedures for registration and activity of non-profit organizations;**
- The start of the work on the creation of the National Electronic Register of NGOs as well as the digitization of the historical data of NPOs
- The start of the work on the creation of the National Electronic Register of NPOs as well as the digitization of the historical data of NPOs (contract signed on 17.05.2022)

Strategic direction 2: Enabling legal environment and data governance

Priority 6: Introducing a more enabling legislative framework for the registration and operation of CSOs (3 measures, 14 indicators).

This priority has been realized to the extent of 77%. The progress of the implementation of the measures is as follows:

- Change the current registration law to introduce a simpler and more efficient registration procedure for CSOs and envisage the creation of a National Electronic Register of CSOs by law- 100% implemented;
- Change the Law on NBC and other associated legal acts (bylaws or regulations) to enable the NBC to take over the registration process of the CSOs through the creation of a National Electronic Register of CSOs- **implemented by 80%**;
- Adopt additional necessary primary and secondary legislation related to CSOs by 50% .

Strategic direction 2: Enabling legal environment and data governance

Priority 7: Collection and availability of data on civil society development: collecting and analyzing data for the development of civil society in such a way as to contribute to strategic decision-making and the transparency of support schemes (3 measures, 11 indicators).

This priority has been realized to the extent of **51%**.

The progress of the implementation of the measures is as follows:

- **Build a National Electronic Register of CSOs with full functionality – implemented by 75%**
- **Digitize CSO records and archives—implemented by 27%**
- **Build the MIS system of ACSC—27%**

Strategic direction 3: Enabling fiscal and funding framework

This direction includes 2 priorities, 7 measures and 30 indicators.

In total, the third strategic direction has been implemented to the extent of 63%, of which:

- 3 measures and 18 indicators have been implemented to the extent of 100%
- 1 priority has been implemented to the extent of 96%
- 1 priority has been implemented to the extent of 30%

Strategic direction 3: Enabling fiscal and funding framework

Achievements:

➤ **Social Plan assessment procedures and Social Service Financing Procedures through the Social Fund Program conducted**

Up to date, 40 services have been established with financial support from SF. In the framework of the PBA 2020-2022 regarding the financial support within the Social Fund, it is provided respectively:

- For year 2020 -70 ml ALL
- For year 2021- 200ml ALL
- For year 2022- 200ml ALL

45 municipalities were scrutinised in three years and 33 services at the municipality level and 13 services at the district level were financed, with a total financing value of 530 ml ALL

➤ **Publication of information on funding opportunities for CSO programs (funding plans and annual reports)**

Strategic direction 3: Enabling fiscal and funding framework

Achievements:

On the official website of the ASCS, the Summary Report is published every year, which details the financing, the area of distribution of funds, as well as the activities of the AMSHC.

- **Align the current by-laws with the new VAT law from 2015 on the VAT tax treatment of CSOs**
- NPOs that operate with EU funds or other projects, whose donors do not accept that taxes in Albania are also paid with these funds: (i) the Instruction for reimbursement of NPOs has been approved by the Minister of Finance; **(ii) delivering of trainings for the tax administration regarding the requests of NPOs and their quick addressing;** (iii) it is planned that in 2023 it will be passed from the reimbursement procedure to the VAT exemption procedure for purchases for NPOs. January 1, 2023 was set as the Fiscalization system must be fully operational before then.

Strategic direction 3: Enabling fiscal and funding framework

Priority 8: Creating a public funding framework for supporting CSO programmes in line with EU good practice(3 measures, 16 indicators).

This priority has been realized to the extent 96%.

Implementing progress as follows:

- Based on gap analysis, revision of existing legislation related to financing of CSO initiatives funded by central and local government Institutions, including clarification of the procedures related to calls for proposals- **100% implemented**
- **Performing of the SE status and social enterprise financing procedures through three forms of financial support. –implemented by 83%**
- Social Plan assessment procedures and Social Service Financing Procedures through the Social Fund Program conducted – completed by **100%**

Strategic direction 3: Enabling fiscal and funding framework

Priority 9: Financial reporting / accounting and taxation of CSOs (4 measures, 14 indicators).

This priority has been realized to the extent of 30%. The progress of the implementation of the measures is as follows:

- Repeal the legal requirement obliging CSOs to have one full-time paid and insured staff member - **0% implementation;**
- Align the current by-laws with the new VAT law from 2015 on the VAT tax treatment of CSOs - **100% implemented;**
- Draft a Tax Audit Manual for tax inspectors only for the purpose of treatment of the CSOs that considers the sector's specificity and training- implemented by **20%;**
- Amend Law on Sponsorships of 1995 and other tax laws to allow possibility for all individuals to deduct the donations to CSOs in order to encourage the individual philanthropy - **0% implemented.**