



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

**NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE
CREATION OF AN ENABLING
ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY
DEVELOPMENT
FROM 2012 TO 2016**

adopted by the Government of the Republic of Croatia on 12 July 2012

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FOREWORD

National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development from 2012 to 2016 was adopted at the session of the Croatian Government which was held on 12 July 2012. This strategic document sets forth the policy of the Croatian Government regarding the strengthening of the legal, financial and institutional system of support to civil society organisations. On the one hand CSOs are important components of social and economic development of the Republic of Croatia and on the other they are important stakeholders in shaping and implementing European Union policies.

The text of the *National Strategy* consists of four main parts, namely: the value basis of relations between the state and civil society; an overview of civil society development in Croatia; *National Strategy* objectives, measures and activities; and *National Strategy* implementation. At the end of the document there is a glossary which gives more detailed explanations of key terms used in the text. Basic areas covered by the *National Strategy* include: the institutional framework for civil society development support, civil society and participatory democracy, strengthening of the role of CSOs for social and economic development and further development of civil society in the international context. Objectives, which *National Strategy* aims to achieve, are defined for each of the four areas as well as the measures and implementation activities necessary for their implementation. Implementing bodies and co-implementing partners are designated for each activity as well as the deadlines and sources of funding needed for their implementation. Monitoring and evaluation indicators are set, which will facilitate the evaluation of progress in the implementation. The document lists in total 26 objectives, 27 measures and 91 implementation activities.

The process of drawing up the *National Strategy* was based on the highest standards in providing information, conducting consultations, participation and partnership with CSOs in all stages of its development. From the earliest stage of defining priority objectives and areas of the Strategy throughout many months of work in working groups and subgroups, to numerous public debates and consultations, more than 200 CSOs from all parts of Croatia have given their contribution to the final version of the *National Strategy* as well as the representatives of many state administration bodies, local and regional self-governments, academic community and business sector. Due to such a broad range of participants involved in its development, we can safely say that this document reflects a consensus between key social stakeholders about the steps which need to be taken in order to improve the conditions in which CSOs in Croatia work as well as the vision that they all share for the civil society progress in the next five years.

ABBREVIATIONS

AEM	Agency for Electronic Media
AMEUP	Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes
AVETAЕ	Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
AETT	Agency for Education and Teacher Training
APDP	Agency for Personal Data Protection
ASPM	Agency for State Property Management
SSPA	State School for Public Administration
CBS	Croatian Bureau of Statistics
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
HAKOM	Croatian Post and Electronic Communication Agency
CBRD	Croatian Bank for Reconstruction and Development
HIDRA	Croatian Information-Documentation Referral Agency
HRT	Croatian Radiotelevision
CP	Croatian Parliament
CES	Croatian Employment Service
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
LRS GU	Local and Regional Self-government Units
LAG	Local Action Groups
MF	Ministry of Finance
MC	Ministry of Culture
MEC	Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts
MLPS	Ministry of Labour and Pension System
MRDEUF	Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds
MSPY	Ministry of Social Policy and Youth
MA	Ministry of Administration
MFEA	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
MSES	Ministry of Science, Education and Sport
NCEEE	National Centre for External Evaluation of Education
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NFCSD	National Foundation for Civil Society Development
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
NSOP	Operational Implementation Plan for the National Strategy for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development from 2006 to 2011
RC	The Republic of Croatia
RNO	Registry of Non-profit Organisations
CFCA	Central Finance and Contracting Agency
SAB	State Administration Bodies
GOHRRM	Government Office for Human Rights and the Rights of Minorities
ONSC	Office of the National Security Council
GOFCNGOs	Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs
CEM	Council for Electronic Media

1 INTRODUCTION

Creation of an enabling environment for civil society development is one of the preconditions and measures of democracy and stability of any country's political system. The concept of unity and cooperation between the state authorities and civil society in creating, implementing and monitoring of public policies, which are in the direct interest of public benefit, is among the fundamental characteristics of a modern state which is at the service of its citizens. The Republic of Croatia was one of the first countries in Central and Southeast Europe to adopt a systematic approach to the creation of an institutional and legal framework for civil society support and development. The beginning of building a systematic legal and institutional framework in Croatia dates back to the late 1990s, the time of growing awareness on the importance of civil society development as an important factor of pluralism and for the development of democracy in Croatia. Since then, it has been clear that the development of democracy is not simply a question of political parties, electoral legislation, capital ownership, shares and stock markets, but also of creating a strong civil society – citizens organised and active in a broad spectrum of special and group interests.

At the period of Croatia's preparing to join the European Union, the National Strategy provides guidelines for the creation of an enabling environment for civil society development until 2016 in order to further improve the legal, financial and institutional system of support for the work of civil society organisations as important factors of social and economic development in the Republic of Croatia, and important stakeholders in shaping and implementing the European Union policies. Also, the Strategy includes specific deadlines and implementing bodies, sources of funding for the implementation of the planned measures and activities, as well as the indicators for evaluating the success of their implementation.

The objective of the Strategy is to create conditions for community development in which citizens and civil society organisations, in synergy with other sectors, actively, equally and responsibly, in line with the principles of sustainable development and acting for public benefit, participate in building a society of wellbeing and equal opportunities for all. In order to achieve these goals, it is necessary for all stakeholders in society to accept and apply common values of democracy, based on social change, cooperation, openness, solidarity, social justice and social cohesion, publicity of work, personal power and responsibility, participation in the decision-making process, respect for identity and differences, self-organisation, lifelong learning, volunteerism, citizen contribution and free information flow.

As far as the Strategy implementation is concerned, we expect continuous work on re-examining and widening the space for civil society development, as well as cooperation among sectors in society: the public, profit and non-profit. In this process the state should strengthen its role as mediator and partner in social and economic change, whereas the profit sector should increasingly develop its social responsibility based on the principles of public benefit and organisational ethics.

In the light of the new roles in society and in an ever-changing world, this Strategy starts from the value basis of relations between the state and civil society, then continues with an overview of past efforts leading towards civil society development in Croatia, and ultimately defines the basic preconditions for further progress in the areas of institutional framework, participatory

democracy, contributing to social and economic development, and working in the international context. The concluding part contains a list of the main determinants of efficient monitoring of the progress achieved in the implementation of the Strategy and defines the key concepts which occur in the text in more detail.

2 THE VALUE BASIS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The term civil society denotes that citizens, in different groups, organisations and even individually, by participating in the public political process, endeavour to represent different interests and values. Although each of these groups has a more or less clearly articulated value or interest, their freedom of speech, association, public gathering, civil disobedience and action must not depend on any specific value or interest in question. The only permissible limitation could derive from the demand not to endanger the freedom of others or violate the constitutional values. The most important result of such a determination is that the fundamental value, the very basis of relations between the State and civil society relations, is respect for civil society autonomy. It means that the State should primarily ensure for citizens free choice of values and interest orientations, and freedom of public speech, assembly, association and action.

From different, freely chosen values or interests pluralism ensues as one of the fundamental value and a principle of free speech and the expression of differences. In order to ensure free speech and expression of differences it is necessary, together with pluralism, to foster multiculturalism, which ensures a better and more humane society. No special interest or value can justify the suppression of other interests or values, either by the State or by other civil society participants. Therefore, the State has to ensure the environment in which civil society acts autonomously in relation to the state and other participants in public and political processes. Such environment implies that there are established mechanisms through which civil society can influence public policy not only on the level of information and comments, but in such a way that civil society contribution has a major influence on shaping particular political decisions. Relations between the state and civil society are regulated and defined in terms of procedure as well as substance. The number of those who support a certain position, view or interest is not the decisive factor for civil society; instead, this constitutes the principled grounding of civil society, while the key “procedural values” of civil society are its autonomy, pluralism, openness and horizontality, which denotes the equal rights of participants in a society organised in such a manner. By ensuring the space for autonomous civil society action, the state respects civil society as an equal participant and as a corrective mechanism in the passing of decisions related to public issues and in the implementation of public decisions and measures with public effect. Special attention should be given to situations when civil society criticizes particular political decisions. In such moments it is important to take the criticism primarily as constructive, not destructive – provided it is based on transparent and verified information arising from the authentic needs of different citizen groups. The state does not perceive civil society as a threat or an obstacle, but as an unavoidable participant in public policy development, implementation and evaluation. This is the basis for the values which underlie relations between the state and civil society, and are encompassed in the principles of transparency, publicity and openness in implementing and evaluating public policy. Such

relations imply an access to comprehensive, timely, and accurate information, openness to well-argued suggestions and a readiness for consultations.

As far as “substantial values” are concerned, the most important are civil society activities contributing to the actual implementation of the highest values of the constitutional system in Croatia: freedom, equal rights, national equality and equality of genders, love of peace, social justice, respect for human rights, inviolability of ownership, conservation of nature and of the environment, the rule of law and a democratic multiparty system. Attainment of the highest substantial values already adopted in the Constitution, the State’s highest normative act, does not depend only on the work of state and public institutions, but also on the active participation of citizens, civil society organisations and the general public.

Pluralism is ensured not only by legal measures but also by opening public space for communication that is free of violence or threat. In this manner we are creating the environment in which the right to diversity is constantly reaffirmed. Civil society contribution to the overall society growth and development namely, to the public benefit, should be recognized and acknowledged within the appropriate legal framework. The precondition for the achievement of such relations between the state and civil society are state and public institutions and political processes which are open to the public, and which abide by and enhance the procedures and mechanisms of public participation in the processes of adopting political decisions. Finally, a developed civil society is based on the continuous interaction between the non-profit, public and private sectors and the citizens working together for public benefit.

3 CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT IN CROATIA

It is evident that the term civil society cannot and must not refer merely to nongovernmental organisations, but to a broader sphere of social life which does not belong directly either to the state or to the private profit sector. Namely, it is an arena of action outside of the family, state, and market where citizens associate in order to achieve their common interests. Thus, civil society in itself, in different ways, means the active relations of citizens, to public policy, services and affairs, ranging from participating in public debates and influencing the creation of political will, through specific initiatives aimed at certain political and legal measures, to taking over those public affairs that the state and public institutions cannot accomplish either at all, entirely, or in a sufficiently high quality manner.

What was previously known as the non-profit, charity, voluntary or third sector, or nongovernmental organisations, has recently been termed civil society which, as a collective noun that is associated with freedom of association and working for public benefit, encompasses all the aforementioned connotations.

European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) defines “civil society organisations” as “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”. According to EESC this view of civil society organisations includes a whole range of organisations: social partners; organisations which bring people together in a common cause, such as environmental organisations, human rights organisations, consumer associations,

educational and training organisations, etc; community based organisations, such as youth organisations, family associations and all organisations through which citizens participate in the life of the local community; religious communities.

On the other hand, when we talk about the legal structure of civil society organisations in Croatia, then we are referring to associations, foundations and funds, private institutions, trade unions and employers associations, various organisational forms of religious communities, but also to various types of informal civic initiatives.

As far as the objectives, measures, and activities in this Strategy are concerned, the term civil society organisation primarily denotes nongovernmental organisations founded on the basis of the Associations Act, as well as foundations and funds founded on the basis of the Act on Foundations and Funds.

In spite of the existence of certain forms of civic organisations at the end of the 19th and in the course of the 20th century, which can be considered the predecessors of civil society in a broader sense, more apparent forms and first civil society initiatives, as we understand them today, emerged in Croatia in the second half of the 1980s.

Bearing in mind that civil society theoreticians seem to agree that it takes six months for political transition to take place and democratic institutions to be established and legalised; six years to establish a market economy; but it takes sixty years for civil society to develop, the common problem of all post-communist countries, including Croatia, is that those three transitions have to be carried out simultaneously, that they are intertwined, and that the final result depends on all of them.

The Act on Social Organisations and Citizen Associations in Croatia from 1982, as the basic legislative framework regulating the right to free association, recognized the difference between an association as an organisation of citizens and an association which works for public benefit (social organisation). Civil society organisations in Croatia gained respect and strength immediately before, during, and after the Homeland War, when the activities of humanitarian and peacemaking organisations were mostly developing. The majority of studies on this period clearly indicate the development of solidarity among Croatian citizens, with a significantly higher level of volunteerism than today. Guided by the principle that human rights belong to all persons regardless of their ethnic, racial, religious or other affiliation, this period saw the establishment of non-governmental organisations for the protection and promotion of human rights in Croatia. Besides, women's rights organisations, organisations engaged in the environmental protection and other civil society organisations were also prominent in the same period. It is worth mentioning that there were about sixty associations in the Croatian Green Alliance in the early 1990s.

Although a large majority of civil society organisations in Croatia appeared as a spontaneous expression of the wish for civic organisation around certain values or interests, it is indisputable that various international organisations and donors present in Croatia at that time had a significant influence on the development of civil society and the work of certain organisations, transferring to them knowledge and skills necessary for their work and development. Therefore, people sometimes talk about "imported civil society", i.e. a language and terms (such as "facilitacija" [facilitation] or "evaluacija" [evaluation]), which were once incomprehensible to

the average Croatian citizen. Besides, the character and importance of civil society was not sufficiently understood in Croatia in the early 1990s and there was no structured and institutionalised relation between the state and civil society. As a result, the evaluations of civil society development in that period were also ambiguous.

The development of civil society organisations began to gather momentum with the building of the institutional and legislative framework at the end of the 1990s and in the first decade of the 21st century. Its backbone were institutions such as the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs (established in 1998), the Council for Civil Society Development (established in 2002) and the National Foundation for Civil Society Development (established in 2003). With the establishing of *Kultura nova* (New Culture) Foundation in 2011, the preconditions for civil society promotion and development in the area of contemporary art and culture were created. This was another indication that the importance of public foundations in solving problems in the systematic financing of specific areas in civil society work has been recognised. Also, a number of laws and strategic documents were adopted: the Act on Foundations and Funds from 1995, the Associations Act from 1997 and 2001, the proposal of the Programme of Cooperation between the Croatian Government and Nongovernmental, Non-profit Sector in the Republic of Croatia from 2001, the National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2006-2011, The Act on Organising Games of Chance and Prize-Winning Games from 2002 and 2009, Act on Volunteerism from 2007, Code of Good Practice, Standards and Benchmarks for the Allocation of Funding for Programs and Projects of NGOs adopted in 2007, and the Code of Practice on Consultation with the Interested Public in Procedures of Adopting Laws, other Regulations and Acts adopted in 2009. A number of strategic documents and programmes namely, the National Strategy on Equal Opportunities for People with Disabilities, the Anti-Corruption Strategy and its accompanying Action Plan, the National Programme for Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, National Policy for Promotion of Gender Equality, Programme of Activities for Prevention of Violence among Youth, National Youth Programme, the Strategy of Social Welfare System Development, recognize the importance, values, and needs of civil society and envisage civil society organisations as co-implementing partners in a series of implementation activities.

The number of organisations is one of the important indicators of civil society development. Nongovernmental organizations had been registered on the basis of the aforementioned Law on Social Organisations and Citizen Associations from 1982, and its amendments, until 1997 when the first Associations Act was adopted. In 1985 there were 10,844 social organizations and 547 citizen associations in Croatia. According to the Croatian Bureau of Statistics data in 1997 there were 21,945 associations, out of which 8208 were registered in the period from 1991 – 1997. The number of associations grew each year in the following manner – the number of newly established citizen associations was increasing while the number of newly established social organisations was declining. According to the data from official registries 46,000 registered associations, 181 foundations, 12 funds, more than 500 trade union and employers' associations, 52 religious communities and over 2000 Catholic Church legal persons, 428 organizational forms of the Orthodox Church and, according to estimates, more than 600 private institutions are active in Croatia today. As far as the areas of interest are concerned, around 16,000 associations are registered in sports and recreation, almost 7000 in art, culture and creativity, more than 4000 in various forms of economic activity, almost 4000 in the field of technical culture. Also, more than 4000 associations are active in social and health activities as well as children, youth and family protection, and there are more than 1000 Homeland War

associations. Additionally, more than 6000 associations are involved in humanitarian, environmental, hobby, educational, scientific, and spiritual activity, as well as in the protection of human rights and rights of minorities, informational and other activities. Such a high number of civil society organisations should certainly be considered a national treasure.

The Republic of Croatia has a developed system of financially supporting the projects and programmes of civil society organizations on the national and local levels. According to the data which have been regularly collected and analysed by the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs since 2007, the programmes and projects of civil society organisations are allocated on average around HRK 1.5 billion from public sources, out of which one third comes from the state budget while the other two thirds of the allocated grants come from county, city and municipal budgets. The analyses of allocated funds according to the field of activity indicate that almost a quarter of the total amount is allocated to sports in the Republic of Croatia annually. The next to follow is the support for persons with disabilities, persons with special needs, and socially vulnerable groups, which are financed with about 20 percent of the annual funds allocated to NGO projects and programmes. An almost equal amount of funds from the total amount goes to the projects for protection and promotion of culture, cultural and historical heritage and nature protection. 10 percent of the total amount of funds supports the participation of minorities in the country's public life while 7 percent goes to the projects in the areas of democratisation, civil society development, and volunteerism, strengthening of social cohesion and philanthropy development. The share of other areas in relation to the total amount of public funds allocated to CSO projects and programmes is lower than 5 percent.

It is important to mention that nongovernmental organisations in the Republic of Croatia have so far used almost 100 percent of available EU funds intended for civil society sector. The funds were used for financing education programmes for all sectors of the society as well as for various social services which the state was not able to provide, environmental protection, social entrepreneurship, fight against corruption, etc.

It is evident from the internationally comparable studies which were conducted in Croatia (e.g. Civicus – civil society index study) that the most critical area for civil society development in Croatia is connected to the limited space for action, determined by legal, political and socio-cultural framework for such development. Although citizens generally have a positive attitude towards civil society organisations, they are still insufficiently included in the work of such organisations or initiatives. This is in direct correlation with insufficient development of volunteerism or a culture of giving when it comes to projects and programmes which are in the interest of public benefit.

The role of civil society organisations in every society is manifold. Civil society in Croatia is a part of a global phenomenon which has its national history and is at the same time subject to global influences. The mission of civil society organisations is to equally participate in building a democratic, open, inclusive, wealthy and socially just, sustainable and environmentally friendly society; to be a corrective for the authorities; and act as a link between citizens and the public sector. Apart from acting for the benefit of their members, a significant number of organisations are working for public benefit. Bearing in mind the degree to which the legal and institutional framework for the work of civil society organisations is developed and the practices in some EU countries, the efforts of the previous National Strategy have not been fully put into practice yet. These were aimed at adequately regulating the status of organisations working for public

benefit and enabling a more just, efficient and responsible allocation of central and local authorities' funds to projects and programmes in the interest of public benefit implemented by civil society organisations.

Given that they encompass the principles of non-profit work, self-organisation, and transparency as well as acknowledge volunteerism and entrepreneurship in their work, civil society organisations should encourage citizens and the private and public sector (primarily the state) to donate funds to initiatives which are in the interest of public benefit. Furthermore, they should encourage the association, connection, and cooperation in dealing with issues in the common/public interest and advocating public policy.

Achieving the objectives of civil society organizations is possible through various tasks and activities which such organisations engage in. From advocacy associations, which fight for the rights of socially vulnerable and minority groups; through civic initiatives they start and the advisory part they play in shaping public policy, which is reflected in the active participation of civil society organisations in the enactment of acts, national programmes or strategies; to the work of local community foundations and local association networks, which support civil society development and civic activism on the local levels. Of course, we should not overlook the importance of nongovernmental organisations in providing social and public services of general interest in education, health, and social welfare where, modelled on European examples, they can be a desirable and good partner to the state.

The majority of civil society organisations are linked to the four biggest cities in Croatia, where the total of 21,000 associations is registered as well as the largest number of foundations. It is indisputable that markedly large differences in citizens' standards across Croatia's regions directly correspond to the degree to which civil society is developed in those regions. Consequently, in the previous years additional effort was put into the development of programmes supporting equal regional civil society development while the processes of decentralisation in financing NGO project and programmes from public sources were continued. The effects are yet to be seen in the forthcoming period, especially in the context of Croatia's preparing to absorb the EU structural funds.

In the last five years, due to the work of the Council for Civil Society Development, the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, the National Foundation for Civil Society Development, but also other institutions involved in the implementation of the measures from the Operational Implementation Plan for the National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development from 2007 to 2011, the awareness of state administration bodies about the value of civil society organisations' work, as well as about the many processes connected with the democratisation and transparency of public authority bodies, has greatly increased. In this period, the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs had the role of a coordinator in monitoring the implementation of the National Strategy Operational Plan (NSOP) on which it submitted a report to the Government of the Republic of Croatia once a year. From February 2007 until the end of 2011 three annual reports on the implementation of the NSOP were drawn up – for 2007, 2008, and 2009 and one biennial report for 2010 and 2011, which monitored the implementation of 58 original measures and 45 measures that stemmed from reviewing the activities to be implemented in 2011. In the reporting period the implementation of 93 measures began. 37 measures were successfully and 56 partially implemented, which showed that the implementation of NSOP had encompassed 90

percent of all envisaged measures. In this respect NSOP can be assessed as satisfactory. The Council for Civil Society Development and the Commission for the Monitoring of NSOP Implementation, comprising coordinators appointed by measure implementing institutions, took part in the monitoring of the Strategy implementation. The implementation of NSOP measures required horizontal coordination of 23 implementing bodies within state administration bodies, with local and regional self-governments as well as systematic consultations with a number of non-institutional actors, especially civil society organisations.

Concluding findings about the five-year long implementation of the Operational Plan, attached to this document, point to a series of challenges in connection with the fact that numerous measures were in many ways avant-garde compared with the existing system. They also pointed to the problem of vaguely set indicators in measure implementation monitoring as well as to the insufficient capacity of the competent institutions/measure implementing bodies. These challenges were taken into account in the course of preparing this Strategy. Valuable experience gained in the previous period and the lessons learnt in the aforementioned challenges constitute a good basis for continuing with the creation of an enabling environment for civil society development in Croatia.

4 NATIONAL STRATEGY AREAS

The National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2012-2016 focuses on four priority areas: I Institutional framework for civil society development support, II Civil society and participatory democracy, III Strengthening the role of CSOs for social and economic development and IV Civil society action and its further development in the international context. These areas include key themes of the NSOP 2007-2011 and take into account the results of consultations with the interested public in all phases of the strategy development. The backbone of the document consists of 26 objectives, 27 measures, and 91 implementation activities which the Republic of Croatia aims to achieve in the forthcoming five-year period, setting the activities, implementing bodies, co-implementing partners, deadlines, sources of financing the implementation, as well as clear indicators on which the annual implementation assessments are to be based.

I INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT

The basic institutional framework for civil society development support in the Republic of Croatia comprises the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs (established in 1998), the Council for Civil Society Development (established by the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia in 2002), which is now in its fourth mandate, and the National Foundation for Civil Society Development (established by law in 2003), on which many advisory bodies rely, on the national level, as well as regional foundations and networks for support to civil society development which together make up a solid framework for structured cooperation between the state administration and local and regional self-governments and civil society organisations. Joint Advisory Committee EU-Croatia is in itself a bridge towards EESC as an institutional form of dialogue between organised civil society and EU institutions.

The legal framework for support to civil society development in a specific sense consists of the Associations Act from 2001, Act on Foundations and Funds from 2005, the proposal of the Programme of Cooperation between the Croatian Government and Nongovernmental, Non-profit Sector in the Republic of Croatia created in 2001, the National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2006-2011, Act on Volunteerism from 2007, Code of Good Practice, Standards and Benchmarks for the Allocation of Funding for Programs and Projects of NGOs adopted in 2007, the Act on Organising Games of Chance and Prize-Winning Games from 2009 and the Regulation on Criteria for Establishing Beneficiaries and the Manner of Distribution of a Part of the Income from Games of Chance – which pursuant to the aforementioned Act the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopts every year, and the Code of Practice on Consultation with the Interested Public in Procedures of Adopting Laws, other Regulations and Acts adopted in 2009.

The National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2006-2011 clearly sets and defines the areas of legal and institutional framework for civil society development, however a part of its objectives and operational measures were not realised or were realised in an unsatisfactory manner, especially those referring to regulating the status of organisations which are acting for public benefit.

Adopting the Code of Good Practice, Standards and Benchmarks for the Allocation of Funding for Programs and Projects of NGOs should be highlighted as a special success in the previous period. Nevertheless, in practice the Code has been mainly implemented on the national level and only partially on the local levels. In the forthcoming period a challenge for the state administration bodies, as well as local and regional self-governments, will be the equal implementation of regulations for allocation of grant funds from all public sources (including the EU funds) intended for public benefit. The lack of joint, coordinated planning of priorities in the allocation of state budget and EU funds to projects and programmes of NGOs is underlined as one of the key challenges.

Codes and charts of cooperation between the state administration bodies and/or local and regional self-government units with civil society organisations have been implemented only partially, to be more exact, they have been concluded in only 14 percent of local and regional self-government units. In spite of the significant progress, there are still difficulties in the strengthening of trust and cooperation between the state administration bodies and civil society, especially on the local levels. Applying for and implementing CSO projects in partnership with other CSOs or local and regional self-government units or public institutions, has been recognized as an added value in almost all calls for proposals financed from the local, national or EU sources, in which partners are expected not only to co-finance the project activities but also to actively participate in their implementation.

The Council for Civil Society Development comprises the representatives of 15 subsectors or forms of civil society activity (chosen by civil society organisations themselves) and 14 representatives of the state administration bodies or the Government Offices. Nevertheless, it still does not have an adequate role in shaping public policy which influences civil society development. Also, there is a lack of sufficiently developed methods and forms of consulting and informing civil society organisations about its work and providing general information about civil society in Croatia that is pertinent to them.

In the process of consultations about the existing legislative framework for CSO work and development, a series of challenges were identified which need to be resolved by making appropriate changes in legislation, primarily the Associations Act, the Act on Foundations and Funds, and the regulations pertaining to non-profit organisations' accounting as well as the tax regulations. The existing Associations Act has not adequately dealt with the type and scope of activity which associations may engage in, the issue of financing projects and programmes in the interest of public benefit implemented by NGOs, different types of supervision to be conducted over the work of NGOs, cessation of activity, and other issues.

The tax system does not provide enough incentive for giving to and acting for public benefit and philanthropy, thus it is not conducive to civil society development. Also, due to the over complicated procedure of establishing a foundation, the Act on Foundations and Funds is not conducive to foundation development.

Since 2007, with the support of the National Foundation for Civil Society Development, a decentralised model with four regional foundations has been implemented, as well as the Programme of Regional Development and Strengthening the Capacity of CSOs on the Local and Regional Level in partnership with five regional networks of specialised CSOs which are active on the regional level in the Republic of Croatia. In spite of these efforts, the preconditions have not yet been created for equal regional development and strengthening the capacity of CSOs and civic initiatives, or for the sustainability of regional foundations' work, and foundation and philanthropy development in local communities. Furthermore, the conditions have not been created for further decentralisation in the allocation of grants from public funds to CSOs through the cooperation of specific Ministries, the Government Offices, the National Foundation for Civil Society Development and other providers of grants from public funds on the national level with local and regional self-government units and regional and local foundations. Further encouraging of this form of decentralised allocation of grants from public funds is important because local and regional self-government units and local community foundations have better knowledge of the local community needs and the capacity of CSOs that are active in their area.

Although the projects and programmes of CSOs and their regular activities, which are recognised in special regulations (on sport, technical culture, the Croatian Red Cross, the Croatian Automobile Association, etc) as a public need, every year considerable funds are allocated from public funds on the national and local levels, the system of CSO financing is not in accordance with the needs; the priorities are often repeated in calls for proposals from year to year, not actually following the real needs and trends, there is no good and systematic monitoring of the allocated funds or evaluation of the results and effects of the funded CSO programmes and projects. The only system of monitoring is the one that the National Foundation for Civil Society Development has and the contracting authorities in specific programmes and projects on the national level, which monitor and evaluate projects implementation and the spending of funds. It is very often that on the local levels NGOs are still funded by being included in the local budget or based on mayor's or head of a local and regional self-government unit's decision rather than on a call for proposals, which is evident from the annual reports on CSO projects and programmes financing that the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs has repeatedly drawn up since 2007. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that the Foundation Council, although envisaged in the Act on Foundations and Funds, has never been established, which additionally weakens the functioning of the Act in the area of

monitoring/supervision and promotion of organised philanthropy through foundations and funds.

Despite the introduction of the Registry of Non-Profit Organisations which also allows the state administration bodies to monitor CSOs' financial operation, the absence of a system for quality assurance in CSOs' work leads to insufficiently visible efficiency and effectiveness of CSOs, rendering the results and impacts in society immeasurable and the quality of CSOs' work unrecognizable among donors, and to fragmentation of funds allocated to CSOs. On the other hand, this makes the civil society sector uncertain for employment, with great fluctuation of high quality work force. Also, there is insufficient coordination among NGO registration bodies, which do not inform the newly established NGOs about the obligation of registering in the Registry of Non-Profit Organisations, while at the same time discouraging the registration of self-financing or entrepreneurial activities. Absence of incentives for employment in the non-profit sector points to the problem of recognising NGOs as desirable employers, which in turn diminishes the credibility of CSOs and renders the change in public perception of CSOs work more difficult. Furthermore, support centres and local/regional foundations are not sufficiently recognisable or valued as a part of local and regional infrastructure for the development of CSOs by the state administration bodies and local and regional self-government units, although they have large social capital and are continuously present in the community and thus, by working together, they are better able to put themselves at the disposal of civil society development in general and CSO development in particular. Taking into consideration that civil society organisations lack systematic support as well as a mechanism for secure interim financing (financing until the payment of contracted funds), an important role in the structure of interim financing could be assumed by the regional/local foundations together with the state administration bodies, local and regional self-government units, the National Foundation for Civil Society Development and the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs. In addition, the banking sector was not favourably inclined towards CSOs credit financing and so did not offer specific interim financing mechanisms (e.g. special credit lines with low interest rates).

On the other hand, the European Union allocates considerable funds to CSO projects under its pre-accession funds, but in view of the EU procedures, associations which are beneficiaries of the EU funds increasingly encounter problems in obtaining funds for interim financing and co-financing. Therefore, the co-financing mechanism, which the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs initiated in 2011 by assigning a part of the income from the games of chance, was accepted as good practice which must continue even after the Republic of Croatia becomes the beneficiary of considerably larger funds from EU Structural Funds upon the accession. An additional challenge is the discrepancy between the financing of NGO projects and programmes from EU funds and from the state budget. This very often brings into question the sustainability of significant investments in programmes and services which were established and developed by specific NGOs on the one hand, and leads to uncontrollable fragmentation of the allocation of grants on the other.

Volunteerism, as one of the key values on which CSO activity is based, is still not recognized or visible enough in the CSOs work. The key challenges for CSOs in relation to volunteerism development are evident in the insufficient knowledge about the Act on Volunteerism among CSOs, lack of systematic financial support to volunteerism programmes development, but also still inadequately developed CSO capacity to appeal to and include a larger number of citizens in their work.

In order to ensure that civil society development is based on the needs in the community and in harmony with the social context as well as to ensure the grounds for decision making in the process of creating and implementing new policies of the Strategy, it is necessary to additionally support needs analysis in the field and continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the institutional framework.

What is still lacking in the Republic of Croatia is the equal regional presence of CSOs as well as sufficient capacities in some of the local and regional self-government units for developing strategic cooperation with CSOs and co-financing their work and development.

Although the level of social and economic development in some areas corresponds to the level of CSO development, civil society development largely depends on the readiness of local and regional self-government units to recognise the advantages of supporting this development, forming partnerships with CSOs, and including them in the process of decision making on the local levels.

Additional boost to civil society development on the local levels can be given by foundations as an expression of organised philanthropy, which show individual awareness and responsibility towards the community, promote active citizenship, improve social connections, and are committed to achieving a more just society for all. Foundations can be an addition to or a supplement of public policy and influence the development of intersectoral partnerships by connecting the business sector, state administration bodies, local and regional self-government units, public institutions and civil society organisations while they work together to promote public benefit. Foundations and organised philanthropy are not recognised or strengthened enough to be able to, as is the case in the EU, additionally support social services provision (services in the areas of health, education, professional integration and culture). It is essential to promote philanthropy and encourage individual philanthropic activities for the purpose of solving increasingly present problems. Also, it is necessary to invest additionally into the existing foundations and establishing new specialised private and/or public foundations whose purpose it is to support local community development. Furthermore, regional/local foundations can have an important role in the implementation of high quality supervision/monitoring of smaller CSOs and informal civic initiatives.

Rural development in Croatia is characterised by the implementation of the LEADER approach under IPARD Programme. In view of the fact that 92 percent of Croatia's territory is made up of rural areas the implementation of the LEADER approach has an important role in supporting a balanced regional CSO development in Croatia. CSOs have a marked role in promoting, explaining and advocating the LEADER approach, particularly the Croatian Rural Development Network. The basic LEADER tool is encouraging the local population to self-organise by setting up local action groups (LAG), which are registered as associations. More than 30 LAGs have been established so far.

Finally, it needs to be emphasised that in the Republic of Croatia there is still not enough incentive for the development of new civil society initiatives, which contribute to the local community development and strengthen participatory democracy on the local levels. Therefore, additional effort should be invested in supporting informal civic initiatives and small

organisations, which do not have experience in applying to calls for proposals or the capacity to implement projects financed from national sources and the EU funds.

OBJECTIVES

- Improve the institutional and legal framework for civil society development support
- Ensure continuity, efficiency and coherence of systems of financing CSO projects and programmes in the interest of the common/public good
- Establish joint, central planning of the Government priorities in financing CSO projects and programmes from the state budget and efficiently monitor their implementation
- Ensure equal development and presence of CSOs in all regions of the Republic of Croatia
- Strengthen the capacities of civic initiatives and civil society organisations, which are active in local communities, for active participation in social processes
- Increase the scope of scientific and evaluation research about the role of civil society in social development

MEASURE 1 IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY OF THE EXISTING AND ESTABLISHING NEW FORMS AND MODELS OF INSTITUTIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT ON THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS

This measure will be accomplished through 5 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 1.1	Conduct evaluation of the work of the Council for Civil Society Development
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	The Council for Civil Society Development
Implementation Deadline:	November 2012
Necessary Funds:	HRK 20,000
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 External evaluation of the work of the Council for the Development of the Civil Society 2007 – 2012 is conducted. 2 On the basis of the conducted evaluation recommendations for the improvement of the work of the CDCS are made and the necessary amendments to the Decision on Establishing the CDCS are drawn up.

Implementing Activity 1.2	Ensure preconditions for strengthening the position and the tasks of the Council for Civil Society Development in shaping public policy which
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	influences civil society development
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	The Council for Civil Society Development
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Following the consultations with the interested public a decision on the amendments to the Decision on Establishing the Council for the Development of the Civil Society is adopted. 2 In line with the new decision a new Council for the Development of Civil Society is appointed and working bodies and other structures for the Council's work constituted. 3 Number of laws, other regulations and acts about which the Council submitted its opinions.

Implementing Activity 1.3	Conduct evaluation of the existing and define new partnership agreements between the local authorities and CSOs in public policy development on the local levels
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	NFCSD
Implementation Associates:	Croatian County Association, Association of Cities, Association of Municipalities, the Council for Civil Society Development
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	HRK 20,000
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Evaluation of the existing partnership agreements is conducted. 2 Draft Model Partnership Agreement between the local authorities and CSOs is drawn up; consultations on the Draft Model Partnership Agreement between the local authorities and CSOs and on the implementation of previous agreements and the need for their revision are conducted. 3 Partnership Agreements between the local authorities and CSOs are concluded. 4 CSO representatives in the councils for monitoring the implementation of partnership agreements are appointed and/or elected. 5 Councils for monitoring the implementation of partnership agreements are established and council sessions in some LRSG units are held.

Implementing Activity 1.4	Develop and systematically implement programmes and models of continuous training for national and local civil servants on civil society and participatory democracy focusing on the modalities of communication and cooperation between the authorities and active citizens
Implementing Body:	State School for Public Administration (SSPA)
Co-implementing Partner:	GOFCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	HRK 21,200 per year
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Training programmes for national and local civil servants are developed. 2 2 seminars are held on the national and 2 on the local levels per year. 3 Number of participants, national and local civil servants in all training programmes.

Implementing Activity 1.5	Ensure a support system for the development of volunteerism in the Republic of Croatia
Implementing Body:	Ministry of Social Policy and Youth (MSPY)
Implementation Associate:	Croatian Network of Volunteers' Centres
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 An infrastructure for volunteering is developed due to the committed work and increased number of local and regional volunteers' centres and their networking. 2 Increased number of CSOs and public institutions and other organisers of volunteering envisaged by the Act on Volunteerism which use volunteers' centres service in comparison with the first year of implementation. 3 Increased number of citizens participating in various organised volunteering programmes through volunteers' centres.

MEASURE 2 IMPROVING THE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS FOR EQUAL DEVELOPMENT OF CSOs IN ALL PARTS OF CROATIA

This measure will be accomplished through 3 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 2.1	Establish the infrastructure for civil society development support on the regional and county levels through an integral programme of equalising possibilities for development
Implementing Body:	NFCSD
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs, LRSG units, regional and county support centres
Start of Implementation Deadline:	November 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	HRK 3,000,000
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Evaluation of the work of five regional networks is conducted within the National Foundation's Regional Development Programme. 2 Number of established regional and county civil society development support centres. 3 Number of civil society organisations and public institutions using the services of regional networks for civil society development support.

Implementing Activity 2.2.	Establish coordination mechanisms between structures which support equal regional civil society development
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partners:	NFCSD, LRSG units
Start of Implementation Deadline:	December 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of coordination meetings of the existing structures (regional support networks, regional development agencies, LAGs, etc.). 2 Number of bodies, institutions and structures involved in coordination activities.

Implementing	Establish models of sustainability of regional/local foundations in
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Activity 2.3	implementing activities aimed at developing the local community and philanthropy, i.e. the culture of giving to public benefit causes
Implementing Body:	NFCSD, LRSG units
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	December 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The analysis of capacities and competencies of regional/local foundations and the evaluation of their previous work is conducted as a basis for developing a sustainability programme. 2 Increased number of sources of financing regional/local foundations. 3 Increased number of sources of financing local CSOs through regional/local foundations.

MEASURE 3 IMPROVING THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

This measure will be accomplished through 5 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 3.1	Draw up Draft Associations Act
Implementing Body:	Ministry of Administration (MA)
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Implementation Deadline:	March 2013
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Draft Act on the Amendments to the Associations Act is drawn up 2 Consultations about the Draft Act are conducted. 3 Act on the Amendments to the Associations Act is adopted. 4 Adequate regulations are adopted within the statutory deadline.

Implementing Activity 3.2	Draw up Draft Act on Foundations and Funds
Implementing Body:	MA
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Implementation Deadline:	December 2013
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary

Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Draft Act on the Amendments to the Act on Foundations and Funds is drawn up. 2 Consultations on the Draft Act are conducted. 3 Act on the Amendments to the Act on Foundations and Funds is adopted.
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Implementing Activity 3.3	Draw up Draft Non-Profit Organisations Accounting Act and adopt regulations for the implementation of the Act in connection with the Registry of Non-profit Organisations
Implementing Body:	Ministry of Finance (MFIN)
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Implementation Deadline:	March 2013
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Draft Non-Profit Organisations Accounting Act is drawn up which, inter alia, regulates the issues of transparent access to the spending of the public sources funds allocated to CSOs as non-profit organisations. 2 Consultations on the Draft Act are conducted. 3 Non-profit Organisations Accounting Act is adopted. 4 Relevant regulations are adopted.

Implementing Activity 3.4	Draw up draft amendments to the tax regulations whose provisions pertaining to the tax issues of CSOs, especially those acting for public benefit (reductions, reliefs, exemptions, deductions, lower tax rates, etc.), shall be harmonised with other regulations and regulated uniformly; and which shall establish additional ways of encouraging donations and philanthropy
Implementing Body:	MFIN
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Implementation Deadline:	December 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Draft amendments to the tax legislation and regulations are drawn up. 2 Consultations on the draft amendments to the tax legislation and regulations are conducted. 3 Amendments to the tax legislation and regulations are adopted.

Implementing	Evaluate the implementation of the Act on Volunteerism and draw up
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Activity 3.5.	the Draft Act on the Amendments to the Act on Volunteerism based on the evaluation results
Implementing Body:	MSPY
Co-implementing Partner:	National Committee for the Development of Volunteerism
Implementation Deadline:	December 2013
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The evaluation of the implementation of the Act on Volunteerism in cooperation with volunteers' centres is conducted. 2 Draft Act on the Amendments to the Act on Volunteerism is drawn up. 3 Consultations on the Draft Act on the Amendments to the Act on Volunteerism are conducted. 4 Act on the Amendments to the Act on Volunteerism is adopted.

MEASURE 4 ENSURING TRANSPARENT AND EFFICIENT SYSTEM OF ALLOCATING FUNDS FROM PUBLIC SOURCES TO PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES WHICH ARE IN THE INTEREST OF THE PUBLIC BENEFIT AND ARE IMPLEMENTED BY CSOs

This measure will be accomplished through 13 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 4.1	Regulate the principles and procedures for allocating grants from public sources to projects and programmes in the interest of the public benefit which are implemented by CSOs
Implementing Body:	GOFCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	MA
Implementation Deadline:	March 2013
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Following consultations with the interested public a draft special regulation is drawn up. 2 Special regulation is adopted. 3 Monitoring the implementation of principles and procedures in allocating grants from public sources to projects and programmes in the interest of public benefit implemented by NGOs.

Implementing Activity 4.2	Encourage further decentralisation of the system of allocating grants to CSOs and civic initiatives which carry out the activities for the public benefit in local communities
Implementing	GOFCNGOs, NFCSD

Bodies:	
Co-implementing Partners:	Competent SAB, LRSG units, regional and local foundations
Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Dissemination activities on the advantages of a decentralised system of grants allocation are implemented. 2 Number of agreements concluded between LRSG units and foundations in local communities about the decentralised allocation of grants to CSOs which carry out activities in the interest of public benefit in local communities. 3 Amount of funds decentralised to LRSG units and local community foundations. 4 Number of contracted projects, the amount of grants and the results of project implementation within the decentralised financing system.

Implementing Activity 4.3	Ensure the set up and usage of a joint information system for allocating grants from public sources to civil society organisations and monitoring the implementation of CSO projects and programmes intended for the public benefit
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partners:	NFCSD, MA, Informatization Commission, competent SAB
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012, and continuously onwards
Necessary Funds:	HRK 200,000 per year
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of SABs (Ministries and Government Offices) which are using the information system for allocating grants from public sources to civil society organisations and for monitoring the implementation of NGO projects and programmes intended for public benefit. 2 Number of LRSG units which are using the integrated information system for allocating grants from public sources to civil society organisations on the local levels (county, city and municipality budgets). 3 Number of local community foundations which are using the information system for allocating grants from public sources to civil society organisations.

Implementing Activity 4.4	Improve accessibility and transparency of data on the results of projects and programmes financed from public sources and
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	implemented by civil society organisations
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partners:	Competent SABs – grants providers, NFCSD, LRSF units, regional and local foundations
Start of Implementation Deadline:	December 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	HRK 50,000 per year
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Annual reports on allocating grants from public sources to civil society organisations and monitoring the NGO projects and programmes intended for public benefit implementation are published. 2 Publicly accessible and searchable database on grants from public sources and the EU funds allocated to civil society organisations on the national and local levels with the data on results achieved by the financed projects and programmes.

Implementing Activity 4.5	Systematic education of civil servants on all levels about the standards of allocating grants from public sources to civil society organisations and monitoring the implementation of CSO projects and programmes intended for public benefit
Implementing Body:	SSPA, GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partners:	SABs, NFCSD, LRSF units, regional and local communities
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	HRK 20,000 per year
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of training seminars for national and local civil servants on the standards of allocating grants from public sources to civil society organisations and monitoring the implementation of NGO projects and programmes intended for public benefit. 2 Informational and educational Internet site intended for national and local civil servants with guidelines, forms, good practice, and advice about managing the financial support to NGOs is developed. 3 Number of national and local civil servants who have been trained and who responsibly and consistently implement the standards for financing NGO projects and programmes from public sources. 4 Positive shifts in the quality of financing NGO projects and programmes from public sources on the level of SABs and LRSF units according to GOfCNGOs annual report findings.

Implementing Activity 4.6	Ensure co-financing, pre-financing and interim financing for CSO projects which have obtained support from the EU funds
Implementing Body:	GOFCNGOs, SAB, LRSG units, NFCSD
Co-implementing Partners:	Council for the Development of Civil Society, CBRD, Croatian Banks' Association, regional and local foundations
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	HRK 12,000,000 per year
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of approved applications for co-financing obligatory own contributions of civil society organisations in the implementation of EU projects contracted under the programmes of the European Union. 2 Total number of approved funds for co-financing obligatory own contribution of civil society organisations in the implementation of EU projects contracted under the programmes of the European Union. 3 Number of approved supports/loans for pre-financing and interim financing of projects and programmes which are implemented with the support of the EU funds.

Implementing Activity 4.7	Ensure efficient programming and implementation of projects financed from the EU funds
Implementing Bodies:	GOFCNGOs, NFCSD
Co-implementing Partners:	The Council for Civil Society Development, MLPS, MRDEUF, MSES and MSPY
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of partner consultations. 2 Number of published calls for proposals intended for strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations for the EU accession, that is to say, for providing support to civil society organisations in developing, executing and monitoring the implementation of public policy and policy connected with the Acquis Communautaire. 3 Number of published calls for proposals aimed at strengthening the role of civil society organisations for social and economic growth and democratic development. 4 Number of CSO projects contracted on the basis of calls for proposals under IPA Component I, IPA Component IV – Human

	<p>Resource Development, and the European Social Fund.</p> <p>5 Total amount of funds approved for the implementation of EU projects to civil society organisations contracted under the programmes of the EU.</p>
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Implementing Activity 4.8	Draw up and present annual plans and calendars for announcing calls for proposals for allocating grants to projects, programmes and the institutional activities of civil society organisations
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partners:	NFCSD, SABs, LRSO units, local community foundations, the Council for Civil Society Development
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Info Days are organised for the purpose of presenting different types of calls for proposals and other forms of support to civil society organisations on all levels, aimed at supporting civil society organisations in their work for public benefit. 2 Annual plans and calendars for announcing calls for proposals for allocating grants to projects, programmes and the institutional activity of civil society organisations are published on the Internet sites of GOfCNGOs and grants providers.

Implementing Activity 4.9	Establish Interdepartmental Commission for Coordinating the Policy for Financing CSO Projects and Programmes from the State Budget
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	SABs – grants providers
Implementation Deadline:	July 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 A decision on establishing the Interdepartmental Commission for Coordinating the Policy for Financing NGO Projects and Programmes from the State Budget is adopted. 2 A methodology for joint, coordinated planning of priorities in allocating state budget and EU funds to NGO projects and programmes is established.

Implementing Activity 4.10	Encourage the application of a quality assurance system in the implementation of CSO projects and programmes financed from public
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	sources
Implementing Bodies:	SAB and LRSF units
Co-implementing Partners:	GOFCNGOs, NFCSD and Regional Support Centres
Start of Implementation Deadline:	December 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of SABs and LRSF units which include a quality assurance system in the implementation of CSO projects and programmes financed from public sources in their calls for proposals as one of the advantages in CSO financing. 2 Number of SABs and LRSF units which ensure funds for introducing a quality assurance system in CSOs. 3 Number of organisations using a quality assurance system.

Implementing Activity 4.11	Establish models of providing financial support to CSO programmes aimed at local community development
Implementing Body:	NFCSD
Co-implementing Partners:	LRSF units, regional and local foundations, GOFCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Models of providing financial support to CSO programmes aimed at local community development are developed. 2 Increased share of the state budget, a part of the games of chance income and the EU funds financing aimed at local civic initiatives and programmes (in comparison with 2012, 2014 and 2016). 3 Number of LRSF units which have defined the budget lines and calls for proposals for the development of local community initiatives. 4 Number of profit sector entities which are financing the development of local community initiatives. 5 Number of regional and local foundations which have developed programmes for financing local community development initiatives.

Implementing Activity 4.12	Encourage CSO networking in the implementation of projects and programmes financed from public sources
Implementing	SABs – providers of grants to CSO projects and programmes

Bodies:	
Start of Implementation Deadline:	November 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of announced calls for proposals for local, national and EU financing in which partnerships were given added value. 2 Number of CSO projects implemented in partnerships.

Implementing Activity 4.13	Enable stabilisation and the development of new models of cooperation and networking among civil society organisations whose activity directly contributes to social development and citizen participation in the processes of shaping public policy
Implementing Bodies:	NFCSD, <i>Kultura nova</i> Foundation
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	December 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Increased number of formal and non-formal CSO networks. 2 Number of thematic CSO networks which have been established with the aim of advocating changes in some areas of public policy. 3 Number of legislative and other CSO initiatives in shaping public policy.

MEASURE 5 SETTING UP A TRANSPARENT PROCEDURE OF ALLOCATING PREMISES OWNED BY THE STATE AND LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT UNITS TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPLEMENTING PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES IN THE INTEREST OF THE PUBLIC BENEFIT

This measure will be accomplished through 5 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 5.1	Establish criteria for the allocation of premises owned by the Republic of Croatia to civil society organisations for the purpose of implementing programmes and projects in the interest of the public benefit
Implementing Body:	State Property Management Agency (AUDIO)
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Implementation	September 2012

Deadline:	
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Public consultations on the draft criteria so that the possible proposals for the improvement of premises allocation to CSOs can be collected on time. 2 The criteria for the allocation of premises owned by the Republic of Croatia to CSOs for the purpose of implementing programmes and projects in the interest of public benefit are adopted and publicly announced.

Implementing Activity 5.2	Publicly announce a list of civil society organisations which were allocated premises owned by the Republic of Croatia
Implementing Body:	State Property Management Agency (AUDIO)
Co-implementing Partner:	GOFCNGOs
Implementation Deadline:	September 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 List of CSOs which were allocated premises owned by the Republic of Croatia publicly announced on the AUDIO and GOFCNGOs Internet sites.

Implementing Activity 5.3	Revise the previous use of premises owned by the Republic of Croatia by civil society organisations
Implementing Body:	State Property Management Agency (AUDIO)
Co-implementing Partner:	GOFCNGOs
Implementation Deadline:	December 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Revision to determine which premises are used for the implementation of programmes and projects in the interest of public benefit for which they were initially approved is carried out. 2 Based on the revision findings, the proposals are defined for improving the system of monitoring and assessing the sense of purpose and justification for the use of allocated premises, and deadlines are set by which the users of premises must be aligned with the adopted criteria.

Implementing Activity 5.4	Conduct information and education activities on developing transparent criteria and efficient models for the allocation of premises
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	owned by LRSg units to CSOs
Implementing Bodies:	NFCSD in cooperation with IMPACT centre, GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partners:	Croatian County Association, Association of Cities, Association of Municipalities
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The samples of efficient criteria and models for the allocation of premises owned by LRSg units to CSOs are drawn up. 2 Number of conducted workshops/seminars/meetings on the criteria and models for the allocation of premises owned by LRSg units to CSOs.

MEASURE 6 ENSURING THE ANALYTICAL BASIS FOR MONITORING THE PROGRESS OF CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

This measure will be accomplished through 2 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 6.1	Support research in the areas of importance for civil society development
Implementing Body:	NFCSD
Co-implementing Partners:	<i>Kultura nova</i> Foundation, GOfCNGOs, MSES, Croatian Science Foundation, Universities, Science Institutes
Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	HRK 700,000
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of calls for proposals from different sources for conducting research in key areas of social development which are encompassed by the National Strategy. 2 Number of conducted researches in key areas of social development that are encompassed by the National Strategy. 3 Number of analyses about CSO programme activities focused on their status, development, sustainability and the influence of different forms of financing (national sources and financing through EU funds). 4 Number of conducted evaluations of SAB and LRSg units' calls for proposals for NGO programmes and projects financing.

Implementing Activity 6.2	Improve statistical monitoring of data pertaining to CSO work in the Republic of Croatia
Implementing Body:	MFIN

Co-implementing Partners:	GOFCNGOs , CBS, NFCSD
Implementation Deadline:	December 2012 and continuously onwards
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The accounting regulations for non-profit organisations stipulate the obligation of submitting financial reports for all non-profit organisations adjusted to their level of income, property value and source of income. 2 Reporting forms have been supplemented with questions on the structure of employees according to their gender and level of income, number of volunteers, number of volunteering hours and other issues relevant for the monitoring of CSO development. 3 All CSOs have submitted their financial reports to the Croatian Financial Agency (FINA) for 2013 and onwards. 4 The data collected about the work of CSOs are integrated and published on the Internet site of the GOFCNGOs. 5 Technical support to CSOs for drawing up financial reports is available.

II CIVIL SOCIETY AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

It is noticeable that the level of general political and civic literacy and culture in the Republic of Croatia is low, which is made worse by the fact that civic education has not been systematically included in the educational system.

Therefore, initiatives and good practice examples in this area are mostly based on the enthusiasm of individuals, although with great limitations. Namely, educational institutions do not have adequate resources or possibilities of providing (financial) support to teacher training, and future teachers are not trained in civic education on the undergraduate or graduate level. Although the National Programme for Human Rights Education was adopted in 1999, a decision on its compulsory implementation in schools was never passed. Consequently, the existing civic education topics, activities, and projects within the system are implemented separately, without a systematic approach and greatly depend on individual efforts. Despite the fact that there is abundant expertise in government and non-government sectors, gained through good practice examples in schools, available teacher support provided by the Education and Teacher Training Agency and the fact that civic education was included in the National Curriculum Framework (MSES 2010), civic education curriculum with teaching plans, defined staff requirements and other elements important for its systematic implementation has not been adopted yet. The National Centre for External Evaluation of Education does not include civic competences in its evaluations.

In spite of the increasingly strong engagement of NGOs in this area, and their projects and programmes being co-financed by the competent Ministry, the competent bodies have not officially recognised NGOs as non-formal education providers in an adequate manner.

Coordination between specific educational system stakeholders which deal with civic education is quite poor. Against this background, the topic of civic education has been dealt with mostly by civil society organisations.

The environment is still not conducive to NGOs setting up institutions which would carry out certified civic education programmes. Also, there is no system of validating the process of learning or competencies gained through non-formal education carried out by CSOs.

The reasons for the current situation can be found in years of delaying the introduction of a civic education programme into the formal educational system, which is the reason why this programme is still not obligatory or balanced in terms of contents and methodology. Furthermore, the problem lies in the fact that the systems of primary, secondary and higher education are not sufficiently adapted to contemporary living and working conditions, which are characterised by constant change, rapid scientific innovations in all walks of life and the need for lifelong learning. If this was not so, the system of education could be a contributing factor in coming out of the crisis and making individuals and the society as a whole more successful. In addition, public education institutions are largely uninformed about the specific requirements of a sustainable, social and economic development. Namely, education for sustainable development as an interdisciplinary link between socio-cultural and material and economic aspects of education, although mentioned in certain documents (e.g. National Curriculum Framework), is not sufficiently recognised within the educational system as the key aspect of creating a more just, stable, cooperative and sustainable society. Additional reasons to look for are poor cooperation and connecting of various institutions and stakeholders as well as insufficient alignment with the European standards. In 2011 the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Action Plan on Education for Sustainable Development (available on the Internet site of the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection) for the purpose of implementing the Strategy for Sustainable Development of Croatia (OG/30/09). During the drawing up of the Action Plan data on more than 180 formal, non-formal and informal education programmes and projects were collected, which have been carried out in recent years in the territory of the Republic of Croatia. The analysis of sustainable development educational activities showed that these topics were well covered in formal and non-formal education in all tested areas. However, it is evident that there is a disconnection between the areas of education as well as a lack of interdisciplinary approach.

The fact that the education system does not include a systematic civic education or human rights, democratic citizenship and participatory democracy education does not only contribute to the low level of political literacy and democratic culture among citizens, low level of awareness about the importance of participatory democracy, and citizens' mistrust of the system and the bodies which implement public policies, but it is also one of the reasons why citizens do not sufficiently participate in shaping public policy.

Citizen participation is rendered more difficult by the insufficient legal framework, and even more by the implementation of legal acts which make up the basis for citizen participation: Code of Practice on Consultation with the Interested Public in Procedures of Adopting Laws,

other Regulations and Acts (hereinafter: Code on Consultation) and the Right of Access to Information Act as well as by the practice of enacting laws under summary procedures.

The use of the Code on Consultation in practice has still not taken hold on the national level, and is especially fraught with problems on the regional and local levels. One of the reasons certainly lies in the fact that the Code is not an obligatory document so non-compliance with it is not sanctionable. In spite of certain efforts which were invested in civil servants' training in the previous period as well as a series of established advisory mechanisms and structures, good mechanisms for the participation of citizens and civil society organisations in the processes of shaping public policy and decision making have still not become a reality.

The implementation of the Right of Access to Information Act, which is incongruent with the Constitution and the Data Confidentiality Act, represents a special problem and is one of the important issues that need to be resolved as soon as possible given the fact that being informed and having free access to information is the basis for further citizen and civil society organisations participation.

More significant citizen participation is also hindered by the manner in which legislative procedure is conducted. Namely, it is dominated by the enactment of laws under summary procedures while the regulatory impact assessment is often neglected. Although the Act on Regulatory Impact Assessment was enacted, its implementation was postponed while the Act itself is incomplete.

Insufficient awareness among officials and civil servants about the importance of participatory democracy (especially on the local levels) represents an additional problem in terms of citizen participation. In that respect, the absence of a more substantial dialogue with citizens is noticeable in officials and civil servants' communication with CSOs and citizens as well as their unawareness of the existence of the Code on Consultation and a lack of adequate consultation procedure. Citizens are still only rarely perceived as those who have the right to participate in decision making or partners who can contribute to the better quality of laws, decisions and regulations. It is evident from the aforementioned that a traditional perception of the relations between the authorities and the citizens prevails and that a culture of openness, sharing responsibility and a dialogue with citizens is lacking. However, even when there is a will for a different and more open approach, there is the problem of lacking financial, technical, and qualified human resources for implementing the consultation procedure.

When it comes to promoting civic engagement, civil society organisations are still faced with a lack of consistent support framework for their activities, i.e. with inadequate models of support from public sources for programmes and projects which promote participatory democracy and civic activism. This further contributes to the fact that the majority of civil society organisations do not have sufficient capacity for high-quality participation in consultation procedures which is why their participation is lower than expected.

There are problems in the area of volunteering as well. Volunteerism, as one of the most frequent and prevalent forms of civic activism, is neither present in school curricula in an adequate manner nor given systematic attention on all levels of the educational system. In other words, additional efforts are necessary in order to systematically include volunteerism and voluntary work in the educational system. Systematically elaborated mechanisms of

rewarding and validating volunteerism are still lacking from the educational system while the existing activities are a result of individual efforts. Another additional problem is the fact that even if educational institutions recognize the need for organising volunteering programmes and validating the teachers and students involved, they often lack adequate resources or possibilities of providing (financial) support for teacher training in this area.

There is a problem even in terminology, namely, the terms in connection with volunteering are not clear. The examples from practice point to a terminology clash between terms such as volunteerism, internship, traineeship, new professional development measures provided by the Croatian Employment Service, etc. This has grave consequences on the general impression of volunteerism and leads to the blurring of boundaries between volunteerism and unpaid work. Volunteering is a part of lifelong learning and the outcomes of learning through volunteering can be validated. However, this is an issue which has not been adequately resolved in Croatia.

Numerous initiatives for developing volunteering programmes in schools are a result of many years of dedicated work on the part of a number of civil society organisations, especially regional volunteers' centres. Due to the rather intense promotion and efforts of volunteers' centres, volunteering programmes are being successfully developed in some schools today.

The causes for the situation include the absence of systematic civic, sustainable development and volunteerism education from the educational system and insufficient competent institutions support to volunteering programmes. The adverse situation is further aggravated by the low level of intersectoral cooperation, especially on the local levels. Consequently, it is evident that the progress in the development of volunteerism still largely and primarily rests on the efforts of civil society organisations.

A stimulating environment for social and political engagement and self-organisation of citizens implies the existence of a public sphere and media space in which topics of public and joint interest are being affirmed, and which enables a wider range of interested stakeholders' access to informed public discussion which is based on respect of differences of opinion and dialogue. In a market oriented media system, such as the one in Croatia, the public media should be contributing to the quality of the programme and protecting the journalistic profession from the destructive influence of advertising and hidden advertising thus at the same time protecting the right of citizens, who are financing it, to information. Also, in this manner the basic values of public media are protected, such as the protection of quality and programme diversity, respect for viewers and listeners as thinking citizens and not as consumers through whom profit is generated.

Along with public media, non-profit media are of great importance. They are created through self-organization of citizens including journalists, editors and experts, who noticed that there was a need for media information in their community and through their civic, professional and volunteering engagement wished to contribute to its fulfilment in a manner which is directed towards public benefit and joint interests rather than profit generation. Despite an important role of non-profit media in the development of pluralism, freedom and social responsibility of the media, and in building democracy, exercising human rights and active citizenship, their status in Croatia is extremely low. Understanding the importance of non-profit media is lacking on all levels. The development of non-profit media in Croatia is limited by the unfavourable legislative framework and an absence of a clear definition of what they are. Specifically, non-

profit media have been inadequately placed under the scope of three basic acts which regulate media in Croatia while electronic publications (portals) have been inadequately placed under the scope of the Electronic Media Act. In practice there is a prevalent problem of non-profit media not being able to obtain concessions for work. At the same time, electronic media in Croatia do not adhere to the obligations assumed upon being granted their concessions by the Council for Electronic Media.

Non-profit media get very little or no financial support for their work and development. It is enough to mention that with the exception of a few non-profit web portals Croatia has not got community radio or non-profit television. On the contrary, the situation in the European Union countries is completely different. According to a European Parliament research from 2007, for example the Netherlands has got 264 non-profit radio and 123 television stations whereas our neighbour Hungary has got more than a hundred non-profit radio stations. The main reason for Croatia's lagging behind in the development of non-profit media is the incomplete legislative framework which is the cause for the lack of targeted, effective measures for initiating, developing and systematic financing of projects, publishers and producers of non-profit media contents and their cooperation with other media, especially public; as well as the primary role of Croatian Radiotelevision in co-production, repurchase and distribution of non-profit media contents in its programme. Although these issues should primarily be resolved within an integrated media policy, the Strategy especially underlines the importance of the Croatian Radiotelevision in civil society affirmation as well as the strengthening of previously marginal social status and the conditions for non-profit media the development and sustainability.

OBJECTIVES

- **Improve legal framework and the practice of consultations with the interested public in shaping public policy**
- **Improve conditions for the development of participatory democracy**
- **Raise the level of competence among children and youth for social and political participation**
- **Improve CSO participation in the decision making process on the local levels**
- **Increase awareness of children and youth about the benefits of volunteering and increase the number of citizens who volunteer**
- **Create preconditions for the improvement of non-profit media status**

MEASURE 7 IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CONSULTATIONS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN PROCEDURES OF ADOPTING LAWS, OTHER REGULATIONS AND ACTS

This measure will be accomplished through 4 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 7.1	Introduce amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Croatian Government so that they stipulate the obligation of referring the proposals of draft regulations to the process of consultations (in line with the Code on Consultation) and require submitting the report on conducted consultations together with draft laws and other regulations
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Implementing Body:	the Government of Republic of Croatia, upon GOfCNGOs proposal
Implementation Deadline:	September 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funding necessary
Implementation Indicators:	Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Croatian Government are adopted so that art. 29, par. 4 stipulates the obligation of submitting the report on conducted consultations, and par. 5 the obligation of referring the proposals of draft regulations to the process of consultations in line with the Code and a Plan for consultations on the draft laws, other regulations and acts, which is passed by the head of the competent body together with the plan of legislative activities.

Implementing Activity 7.2	Develop and use a system of regular monitoring of the implementation of the Code on Consultation on the national and local levels
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funding necessary
Implementation Indicators:	Annual Report on the Implementation of the Code on Consultation is submitted to the Croatian Government and published every year no later than 15 April for the previous year.

Implementing Activity 7.3	Conduct systematic training for consultation coordinators and other civil servants in state administration bodies and local and regional self-government units so that they are proficient in using the Code on Consultation efficiently
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	SSPA
Start of Implementation Deadline:	October 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	HRK 10,600
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 At least two training workshops/seminars for consultation coordinators and other civil servants are conducted per year. 2 Number of consultation coordinators and other civil servants who had undergone the training workshops/seminars. 3 An internal information and education Internet site of the GOfCNGOs is set up intended for consultation coordinators with good practice examples, advice and tools for preparing and conducting consultations providing the possibility of experience and knowledge exchange.

Implementing Activity 7.4	Set up an integrated internet system for consulting the public in the procedure of adopting new laws, other regulations and acts
Implementing Body:	MA
Co-implementing Partner:	the Office of the Prime Minister of the Croatian Government
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funding necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 All competent SABs which conduct consultation procedures publish information about conducting consultations, with all accompanying materials, in the same manner on their Internet sites. 2 Draft laws, other regulations and acts about which the competent SABs conduct the process of consultations with the interested public are published on the Internet portal for consultations in a timely manner, before being submitted to the Croatian Government for adoption, in line with the Code. 3 All relevant information and data about the consultation processes and pending consultations; descriptions and lists of working and expert groups tasked with working on relevant documents; working materials and session minutes; and the explanations of decisions are published on the Internet portal upon the completion of each consultation process.

MEASURE 8 IMPROVING THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR EXERCISING THE RIGHT OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND IMPROVING ITS IMPLEMENTATION

This measure will be accomplished through 1 implementing activity.

Implementing Activity 8.1	Amendments to the Right of Access to Information Act
Implementing Body:	MA
Co-implementing Partners:	PDPA, Office of the National Security Council, GOFCNGOs, Croatian Information-Documentation Referral Agency (HIDRA)
Implementation Deadline:	September 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funding necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 CSO representatives dealing with the issue of the right of access to information are included in the overall process of drawing up the amendments to the Act 2 Amendments to the Right of Access to Information Act are adopted, particularly in parts regulating the need for transposing the Directive on the re-use of public sector information, the

	<p>obligation of consulting the public in the procedure of adopting new laws, other regulations and acts, in line with the Code on Consultation as well as other issues in connection with improving the exercise of the right of access to information in the first and second instance.</p> <p>3 Provisions about sanctions for non-implementation of the Act are introduced.</p> <p>4 Data Confidentiality Act is harmonised with the amendments to the Right of Access to Information Act.</p>
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MEASURE 9 SETTING UP THE TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR OFFICIALS AND CIVIL SERVANTS ON THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS FOR EFFICIENT COOPERATION WITH CIVIL SOCIETY IN SHAPING AND IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICY

This measure will be accomplished through 2 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 9.1	Make topics in connection with participatory democracy, consultations with the interested public and the right of access to information an integral part of the state qualifying exam, and related preparation seminars
Implementing Body:	MA
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funding necessary
Implementation Indicators:	The contents of the state qualifying exam and the preparation seminars include topics in connection with the aforementioned areas.

Implementing Activity 9.2	Conduct information and education activities on the models of civil society organisations' participation in local and regional self-government units working bodies
Implementing Body:	LRSB units, NFCSD
Co-implementing Partner s/Implementation Associates:	GOfCNGOs, Croatian County Association, Association of Cities, Association of Municipalities in the RoC
Start of Implementation Deadline:	November 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funding necessary
Implementation Indicators:	1 Number of information/education activities on the models of civil society participation in local and regional self-government units

	<p>working bodies.</p> <p>2 Number of civil servants in local and regional self-governments participating in information/education activities on the models of civil society participation in local and regional self-government units working bodies.</p>
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MEASURE 10 INTRODUCING AND SYSTEMATICALLY IMPLEMENTING CIVIC EDUCATION ON ALL LEVELS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

This measure will be accomplished through 5 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 10.1	Introduce civic education in the regular educational system
Implementing Body:	MSES
Co-implementing Partners:	ETTA
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	Funds ensured under the MSES budget line
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Civic education introduced in elementary schools according to the following plan: 2 Grades 1 to 4 – cross-curricular and extracurricular, 3 Grades 5 and 6 – cross-curricular and extracurricular, as well as elective (modular), 4 From grade 7 to 8 – cross-curricular and extracurricular, as well as elective (modular and elective). 5 Civic education introduced in secondary schools according to the following plan: 6 From grade 1 to 2 – obligatory subject and cross-curricular, modular and extracurricular, 7 From grade 3 to 4 – modular and extracurricular. 8 Civic education topics are integrated in teaching plans and programmes (subject curricula). 9 Number of school classes in which civic education is taught.

Implementing Activity 10.2	Carry out and support continuous professional development of preschool teachers, elementary and secondary school teachers, expert associates and headmasters in the area of civic education
Implementing Body:	ETTA
Co-implementing Partners:	MSES, GOfCNGOs, NFCSD
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funding necessary

Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Staff requirements for carrying out civic education are defined. 2 Programmes for continuous professional development of teachers in the area of civic education are developed. 3 Seminars and workshops for continuous professional development of teachers in the area of civic education are conducted. 4 Funds for covering the cost of participation in civic education trainings organised by other stakeholders (CSOs) are ensured. 5 Number of preschool teachers, elementary and secondary school teachers, expert associates and headmasters who had undergone the training in the area of civic education.
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Implementing Activity 10.3	Develop a database on the implementation of civic education in the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport and the Education and Teacher Training Agency
Implementing Body:	MSES
Co-implementing Partners:	ETTA
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	Funds ensured under regular MSES and ETTA activities
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 E-questionnaires on the models of carrying out civic education are developed. 2 Data are collected in all elementary and secondary schools. 3 Database is developed.

Implementing Activity 10.4	Include competences needed for interactive studying and teaching civic education in the study programmes for future teachers
Implementing Bodies:	Universities
Co-implementing Partners:	MSES, Agency for Science and Higher Education
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funding necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Programmes for civic education study courses for future elementary and secondary school teachers are developed. 2 Programmes are approved, in line with the approval procedure, and included in the process of university education.

Implementing Activity 10.5	Include developing the outcomes and competences acquired through civic education in the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education programme of work
Implementing Body:	NCEEE
Co-implementing Partner:	MSES
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013 ; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funding necessary
Implementation Indicators:	1 Outcomes and competences of civic education developed and included in the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education work programme.

MEASURE 11 ENSURING SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS WHICH ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY IN THEIR PROGRAMMES AND ENSURING PRECONDITIONS FOR THEIR EVALUATION

This measure will be accomplished through 4 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 11.1	Inform and educate civic initiatives and civil society organisations about the consultation processes, monitoring the legislative procedure and encouraging citizens to participate in the consultation processes through education
Implementing Body:	GOFCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	NFCSD
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funding necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 No less than four one day seminars in different regional support networks about the process of public consultations for civic initiatives and CSO representatives are organised per year. 2 Information about the forthcoming, current and previous consultations with the consultation process outcomes and the information about the different ways of the interested public participation are systematically published on the Internet site of the GOFCNGOs.

Implementing Activity 11.2	Encourage the development of participatory democracy, namely citizen and CSO participation, in the priority setting process in the local community and creating and monitoring public policy on the local levels
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Implementing Body:	NFCSD
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	HRK 2,600,000
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of announced calls for proposals with the aim of developing participatory democracy, that is, citizen and CSO participation in priority setting processes in the local community and creating and monitoring public policy on the local levels. 2 Number of financed CSO social innovation projects and programmes aimed at developing participatory democracy, that is citizen and CSO participation, in priority setting processes in the local community and creating and monitoring public policy and programmes on the local levels.

Implementing Activity 11.3	Develop an online Catalogue of Non-formal education Programmes which are carried out by civil society organisations
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	NFCSD
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funding necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The data on non-formal education programmes which are carried out by civil society organisations for primary and secondary school teachers and other educators are being collected. 2 An Online Catalogue of Non-formal education Programmes carried out by CSOs is developed. 3 Catalogue is updated once per year no later than September for the following year.

Implementing Activity 11.4	Analyse the existing situation in connection with non-formal education and define the criteria and validation procedures as well as possible certification procedures
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partners:	The Government Office for Human Rights and the Rights of Minorities, National Committee for Human Rights Education and Democratic Citizenship
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary

Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Working group responsible for analysing the current situation is set up. 2 The analysis of the situation in connection with non-formal education is completed. 3 Consultations on the criteria and validation procedures are conducted. 4 The criteria for validation are established and procedure of validation and certification of non-formal education programmes is designed. 5 Continuous implementation of validation and certification of non-formal education programmes from 2013 onwards.
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MEASURE 12 INTRODUCING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AIMED AT ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND VALUES IN CONNECTION WITH VOLUNTEERING INTO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

This measure will be accomplished through 2 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 12.1	Support the organisation of volunteering programmes carried out by CSOs in educational institutions
Implementing Bodies:	MSES and MSPY
Co-implementing Partners:	ETTA, Croatian Network of Volunteers' Centres, National Committee for the Development of Volunteerism, GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Good practice of volunteering is promoted in educational institutions through a developed public data base on volunteers' programmes. 2 Volunteers' centres are affirmed as organisations which can provide support to educational institutions in setting up and carrying out volunteers' programmes. 3 Number of trained volunteering coordinators in educational institutions.

Implementing Activity 12.2	Develop systems of recognition and validation of pupil and student volunteering in line with the existing positive EU practice
Implementing Bodies:	MSES and MSPY
Co-implementing Partners:	National Committee for the Development of Volunteerism, ETTA, Universities
Start of Implementation	January 2013

Deadline:	
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Systems of recognizing and validating pupil and student volunteering are developed. 2 Number of pupils and students participating in the volunteering system. 3 Annual evaluations of pupil and student volunteering are carried out.

MEASURE 13 IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR NON-PROFIT MEDIA ACTIVITIES

This measure will be accomplished through 5 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 13.1	Conduct analysis and evaluation of media legislation and regulations pertaining to the conditions for non-profit media work
Implementing Body:	MC
Co-implementing Partners:	Electronic Media Agency (AEM), Council for Electronic Media (CEM), GOFCNGOs, NFCSD, Croatian Post and Electronic Communication Agency (HAKOM)
Implementation Deadline:	December 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The evaluation of media legislation and regulations pertaining to the conditions for non-profit media work is conducted. 2 Recommendations for improving the conditions for non-profit media work as the basis for creating a new legislative framework are drawn up. 3 Based on the analysis, improvements and modifications are introduced in the implementation of relevant legislation.

Implementing Activity 13.2	Define the legal status and new models of financing non-profit media activities aimed at public benefit
Implementing Body:	MC
Co-implementing Partners:	Electronic Media Agency (AEM), Council for Electronic Media (CEM), GOFCNGOs, NFCSD, <i>Kultura Nova</i> Foundation, Croatian Audiovisual Centre
Implementation Deadline:	June 2014
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The proposal of amendments to the acts regulating the non-profit media status and financing are drawn up. 2 The process of consultations with the interested public about the proposed legislation amendments is conducted. 3 New models and allocated sources of the non-profit media financing are developed on the national level.

Implementing Activity 13.3	Strengthen the support to civil society organisations' electronic publications through grants to CSOs by the state administration bodies
Implementing Bodies:	MC, MSES
Co-implementing Partners:	Other SABs and LRSG units
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of calls for proposals aimed at supporting electronic publications. 2 The amount of funds earmarked for supporting electronic publications. 3 Number of financed civil society organisations' electronic publications.

Implementing Activity 13.4	Strengthen the programme and financial support to non-profit media projects as well as the visibility of working for public benefit by concluding a contract between the Croatian Radiotelevision and the Croatian Government
Implementing Bodies:	Croatian Government upon the proposal of the Ministry of Culture, Croatian Radiotelevision (HRT)
Co-implementing Partner:	GOFCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	Upon the expiry of Temporary Contract
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The contract between the Croatian Radiotelevision and the Croatian Government stipulates the obligations of HRT in reference to the non-profit media and the representation of media contents about working for public benefit. 2 Obligatory quota (financial amounts and programme quantities) for purchasing programmes from non-profit producers, as part of the obligation of purchasing works by independent producers, is determined. 3 Increased number of educational programmes on civil society at HRT Education Centre.

Implementing Activity 13.5	In the public tender procedure for awarding concessions, give additional attention to bidders for non-profit television and/or radio
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	work within available free frequencies
Implementing Body:	Council for Electronic Media (CEM)
Co-implementing Partners:	MC, Croatian Post and Electronic Communication Agency (HAKOM)
Start of Implementation Deadline:	Continuously
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	Report on the work of the Council for Electronic Media especially the parts pertaining to conducting public tenders for awarding concessions.

III STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF CSOS FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1 Provision of social services by civil society organisations

Along with the already established role of civil society organisations in advocating the topics in the public interest, CSOs have increasingly been recognized as social service providers as well as the catalysts for employment and social cohesion on the local levels. Civil society organisations' work in the area of social welfare is aimed at protecting the vulnerable groups (children and youth, women, persons with disabilities, the elderly and frail persons, unemployed, victims of violence, victims of human trafficking, the homeless, substance abusers, etc.) and enabling the beneficiaries' integration in the society through improving their quality of life and helping them overcome social exclusion and poverty. In addition, civil society organisations advocate the rights of certain groups by influencing public policy and introducing innovations in social service provision; they mobilise additional human and financial resources in which the potential of volunteers' work should be especially emphasised.

According to the Council of Europe document (2007) *Integrated Social Service in Europe*, social services "include all services a) which are considered to be of special importance for the society on the whole and where b) personal interaction between providers and users has the key role. Using such a broad definition, health, education, occupational integration and cultural services become as well part of the picture beyond the usual three fields of child day care, care services for the elderly and various small areas of services for problem groups."

Social services play the key part in prevention and social cohesion – due to the population aging, changes in the household composition, the increased participation of women on the labour market, the need for such services is growing. At the same time, the need for social services has also grown due to the economic crisis because they can mitigate the impact of the crisis on the individuals and encourage them to return to the work force faster. CSOs contribute to the integration of the existing social services; which in turn improves the access to social rights, decreases social exclusion of the vulnerable groups, and contributes to the general aim of strengthening social cohesion. Social cohesion is one of the significant elements of economic and social development of every country because it aspires to an efficient approach to

economic resources; enables the development of individual and group human potentials, as well as the overall economic potential, which in turn propels further development of a society in the cultural, economic or any other sense. One of the most important elements or values of a well-structured society on which social cohesion is based, is the social, socio-cultural or community capital. According to the social capital theory and the results of studies in western democracies – horizontal social interactions strengthen social trust, reinforce social connections, and broaden social identities. All this contributes to the integration of a plural society. Social capital includes citizens' participation in the work of citizens' associations, non-governmental organisations, membership in trade unions, work in religious communities, socialising in hobby groups, good neighbourly relations, and similar instances.

Given the changes in the approach to social service provision in the Republic of Croatia, namely Croatia opted for decentralisation and deinstitutionalisation of services for which the state lacks sufficient resources, or where there is regional inequality in social service provision in local communities, CSO role is increasingly becoming more important. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen CSO capacity for providing social services. Social services provided by CSO need to be aligned with the growing complexity of the users' needs, establishing a balanced network of institutional and non-institutional forms of social care (community based social services), developing services which encourage marginalised groups employment, that is, the groups at risk of social exclusion, development of social planning on the local levels, developing quality standards for social services and pointing out the need for social service integration.

Some of the problems that CSOs come across in responding to the challenge of social service development are related to the limited project management capacity of smaller CSOs. The work of small CSOs, which are based in the local community, often takes place in poorly developed areas with limited access to necessary sources of funding/co-funding big projects. Moreover, limitations include insufficiently developed human resources for providing professional social services, as well as insufficiently developed infrastructure for the sustainable development of CSOs on the local levels.

Although preconditions exist in legislation for civil society organisations to provide social services, it is necessary to work on raising public awareness about CSO role in this field, especially on the local level, in order to ensure service provision sustainability, but also use the CSO potential in local social planning – in which CSOs should be equal partners with local and regional self-government units and public institutions working on the local community level in setting priorities in social service development.

Additional problem which civil society organisations encounter while providing social services in adult education is the inability of issuing public documents for participants attending verified programmes carried out by CSOs. This is due to the restrictions in the Adult Education Act because of which the scope of their work is narrowed down and their programmes' sustainability is doubtful. In the last few years (taking into account the process of Croatia's accession to the European Union and opening up of the possibilities of co-financing projects under IPA programmes), this problem is becoming increasingly notable bearing in mind the increased CSO activity in preparing persons who are at risk of social exclusion for the labour market. NGOs develop programmes and services under EU projects which are good and needed by the community or by certain groups however, their sustainability is often doubtful due to the

discrepancies between the policies of financing projects from the EU funds and from the state budget.

Bearing in mind that volunteering is one of the most powerful elements which contributes to the development and shaping of democratic changes in any society, as well as the economic development of a country, and that volunteering activities are essential for the promotion of active citizenship (which was discussed in part II of the Strategy), it is necessary to intensify the efforts in promoting voluntary work and thus contribute to the social inclusion of service users.

Volunteering exists in different forms all over Europe, reflecting different approaches and traditions in the European Union member states. Nevertheless, all these forms share common characteristics. *Manifesto for Volunteering in Europe* (European Volunteer Centre, 2007) talks about volunteering as activities undertaken of a person's own free will, choice and motivation, and is without concern for financial gain, with a wish to help others and the society as a whole by contributing to common values, without personal interest.

Regardless of different traditions and cultural backgrounds, volunteering is increasingly recognised as an important catalyst for employment and social inclusion of marginalised social groups because it helps establish a relationship between people; contributes to the expansion of their social network and enables acquiring new knowledge and skills. It also integrates the users' perspective in the social service provision through active participation of volunteers from the community, which in turn contributes to the social inclusion of social service users. According to the CIVICUS index data on Croatia, only 17 percent of Croatian citizens are members of CSOs, and less than 7 percent of the population on average does some form of voluntary, unpaid work, while volunteering is not recognised as a virtue in wider society. Furthermore, the problem of health institutions' unresponsiveness to including volunteers in their work has been noticed. In that case CSOs often serve as mediators between the institutions and potential volunteers. The need for building capacity for inclusive volunteering is based on the experiences according to which the inclusion of socially excluded users in volunteering means the end of their personal isolation and leads to empowerment, helping others, developing social and occupational skills and improved employability. At the same time, there is a problem of general lack of CSO capacity for developing high quality, sustainable programmes for volunteer participation.

2 Social innovations and the development of social entrepreneurship

Along with the development of social services, civil society organisations can contribute to social and economic development by initiating various forms of social innovations and especially by developing social entrepreneurship initiatives.

Social innovations are not sufficiently developed in Croatia. Although civil society organisations have developed some solutions and good practice examples that could be considered socially innovative, these examples were not documented and there are no analyses of the existing social innovations, which makes it difficult to talk about their impact on improving the quality of Croatian citizens' life. The importance of the concept of social innovation on the level of the

system has still not been recognised enough and that is why it is important to work on appreciating social innovation as a means which can lead to positive social change and can be effective in many especially important areas such as employment, poverty, ageing, family and housing policy.

Throughout history social entrepreneurship has been connected with grass-roots organisations and cooperatives. The system of values and principles of action which NGOs adhere to was the basis for developing modern social entrepreneurship concepts. Imbibed with civil society values, social entrepreneurship has developed a new, flexible model of sustainable development – development models are approached in an entrepreneurial manner and they contribute to general social development.

Although the Republic of Croatia is yet to opt for a clear definition of social entrepreneurship in its future Strategy for Social Entrepreneurship Development (but also its wording: social/community/non-profit entrepreneurship as well as the additional legal solutions which would give more boost to social entrepreneurship development), the prevailing understanding of social entrepreneurship is that it is solving social problems by applying entrepreneurial methods, taking sustainable development into account and using a democratic system of decision making (with solidarity and mutual assistance). The majority of what are considered good practice examples of social entrepreneurship in Croatia was initiated by none other than civil society organisations (whether by establishing a separate legal person, most often a cooperative or a company, which returns its profit to the CSO which founded it; or by organising a social entrepreneurship initiative within the organisation's own work – as one of the activities which it undertakes in order to ensure self-sustainability, and also by organising education programmes for private persons and organisations interested in social entrepreneurship development). There are various forms of social entrepreneurship manifestations in Croatia – ranging from institutional (forms of social entrepreneurship developed through the legal framework of NGOs, cooperatives, companies) through the areas they cover (provision of intellectual services, manufacture, agriculture, tourism, culture, etc.), to the ways in which they contribute to solving social problems (employing groups at risk of social inclusion or providing services to socially vulnerable groups, preserving natural resources, promoting regional development and reviving the resources of the local community in which they work).

When discussing social entrepreneurship in Croatia we should bear in mind the rich tradition of school cooperatives which exist in primary and secondary schools and in child and youth care institutions. There are more than 300 school cooperatives in Croatia. Croatian model of cooperatives offers young members the opportunity to adopt basic “entrepreneurial virtues” such as hard-work, common sense in risk taking, earning trust and loyalty in interpersonal relations and strength to implement tough and painful decisions necessary for joint work and overcoming obstacles. All this can serve as an additional boost to social entrepreneurship development.

The difficulties that CSOs encounter in their work are insufficient knowledge and skills in administration, financing, legal aspects of business operation and marketing of social entrepreneurship initiatives as well as the lack of funding for social entrepreneurship development – funds for initiating and expanding business activity. There is general misunderstanding of the concept of social entrepreneurship in the banking sector which is why there are only rare cases of approved loans to CSOs initiating new businesses based on social

entrepreneurship principles. An additional challenge lies in the misunderstanding on the part of state administration and local and regional self-government units about CSOs' ability to become initiators of social entrepreneurship activities, which was often the cause of problems in the activities' implementation and the reason for absence of stronger support for social entrepreneurship development in Croatia.

In order to design as high quality activities aimed at social entrepreneurship development as possible, which are aligned with the needs and the context of the Croatian society, it is necessary to conduct additional analyses/studies about the existing situation, development potential and social impact of social entrepreneurship. Maintaining the balance between CSO vision and mission, the need for creating stable funding sources, and the wish to create new value through social entrepreneurship development could represent a special challenge facing CSOs in the future.

OBJECTIVES

- **Ensure sustainability of social services provided by civil society organisations**
- **Develop a system of monitoring and continuously improving the quality of social services provided by civil society organisations**
- **Enhance the recognition of the role of volunteering in social service provision**
- **Increase visibility of civil society organisations' work in the area of social and economic development**
- **Support the development and impact of social innovations on social and economic development**
- **Create legal and institutional framework for social entrepreneurship development**
- **Develop social entrepreneurship as a lever of social development and poverty reduction**
- **Inform general public about the topics in reference to social entrepreneurship**
- **Increase the share of the employed in civil society organisations**

MEASURE 14 ESTABLISHING A HIGH QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR THE SUSTAINABILITY OF SOCIAL SERVICE PROVISION BY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

This measure will be accomplished through 6 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 14.1	Set criteria and standards for defining the price of social services provided by civil society organisations
Implementing Body:	MSPY
Co-implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects

Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 A working group to draw up the social service price setting methodology for a selected target group is established. 2 A social service price setting methodology for a selected group is drawn up to serve as a sample for adopting a rule book regulating the Social service price setting methodology in social service institutions whose founders are the Republic of Croatia and local and regional self-government units as well as the price of services provided by CSOs and other legal and natural persons that are being paid from the state budget.

Implementing Activity 14.2	Adopt a rule book which regulates the social service price setting methodology in social service institutions whose founders are the Republic of Croatia or local and regional self-government units as well as the price of services provided by CSOs and other legal and natural persons that are being paid from the state budget
Co-implementing Partner:	MSPY
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	March 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 A rule book is adopted, in line with the Social Welfare Act. 2 The system of financing CSOs which provide social services ensures an adequate level of service quality, but also adequate organisational requirements for their continuous provision and the sustainability of service providers' work. 3 The list of prices for services provided by CSOs is aligned with the list of prices for services provided by social welfare institutions and by the private sector with which the state has concluded contracts for social service provision.

Implementing Activity 14.3	Informing CSOs about the social services quality standards
Implementing Body:	MSPY
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Activities aimed at informing CSOs about social services quality

Indicators:	<p>standards are carried out on the county level including LRSG and CSO representatives – the number of counties, LRSG units and CSOs that participated.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2 The number of CSOs which participated in the information activities about social services quality standards. 3 Number of CSO representatives who are involved in the information cycle about social services quality standards
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Implementing Activity 14.4	Ensuring systematic and wide implementation of social services quality standards provided by CSOs – community service providers
Implementing Body:	MSPY
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	March 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The procedure of licensing service providers in line with the social services quality standards is defined and carried out. 2 Implementation of social services quality standards within awarding the grants from the state budget and the games of chance revenue to NGOs which provide social services and their monitoring based on the financing contracts between SABs and NGOs that now contain a clause about the obligatory implementation of standards. 3 Number of contracted community service providers financed from the state budget which are implementing the standards at the end of every year. 4 Increased user satisfaction with the quality of social services compared to the initial state (2012) based on a questionnaire about the satisfaction with services within standard implementation monitoring on the level of individual service providers for every year. 5 Number of social service providers who are expressing a positive opinion about standard implementation as a point of reference for planning and providing good quality service to users in comparison with the initial state (2012) for every year.

Implementing Activity 14.5	Include CSOs in the planning and development of social service network and the exercise of social service rights, obligations, measures and objectives on the local levels in accordance with the Social Welfare Act provisions
Implementing Bodies:	MSPY, LRSG units
Co-implementing	GOfCNGOs

Partner:	
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Social plans about social welfare activity in the areas of local and regional self-government units are adopted. 2 The scope and quality of civil society organisations' participation in the process of creating social plans (number of participants in each planning process, participant satisfaction with the social planning process and outcomes). 3 Intersectoral mechanisms for coordination of social plans implementation on the county level which include CSOs are established and operational. 4 Number of CSO social service providers which are participating in the social service network in Croatia or in LRSG units.

Implementing Activity 14.6	Improve CSO capacity for the implementation of social service provision projects, especially those financed by the EU funds
Implementing Body:	GOFCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	NFCSD
Start of Implementation Deadline:	June 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 A support system to CSOs in the process of applying and implementing projects financed from the local, national and EU sources is in place. 2 Number of regional and county CSO support networks providing CSOs with technical assistance in applying and implementing projects financed from the local, national and EU sources. 3 Number of civil society organisations social service providers which have undergone project cycle management training. 4 Number of civil society organisations social service providers which have applied to calls for proposals financed by the EU funds. 5 Number of civil society organisations social service providers which have successfully implemented projects financed by the EU funds.

MEASURE 15 ENCOURAGING AND DEVELOPING VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMMES IN ORGANISATIONS/INSTITUTIONS SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

This measure will be accomplished through 2 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 15.1	Develop good quality volunteering programmes in organisations/institutions social service providers
Implementing Body:	MSPY
Co-implementing Partner:	Croatian Network of Volunteers' Centres
Start of Implementation Deadline:	June 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of volunteers participating in volunteering activities of CSOs social service providers. 2 Number of volunteers participating in the work of social welfare institutions and other public institutions – social service providers. 3 Number and type of volunteering programmes in civil society organisations – social service providers. 4 Number and type of volunteering programmes in social welfare institutions and other public institutions social service providers. 5 A system of continuous education and training in volunteer management for CSOs as well as social welfare institutions and other public institutions social service providers is established.

Implementing Activity 15.2	Capacity building for the development of inclusive volunteering programme
Implementing Body:	MSPY
Co-implementing Partner:	Croatian Network of Volunteers' Centres
Start of Implementation Deadline:	March 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 A methodology for the collection of data on the number of persons at risk of social exclusion who are participating in volunteering programmes is developed. 2 Number of persons at risk of social exclusion participating in CSO and other public institutions' volunteering programmes. 3 A system of continuous education and training in inclusive volunteering for CSO social service providers as well as social welfare institutions and other public institutions social service

	providers is established.
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MEASURE 16 STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN ADULT EDUCATION

This measure will be realized through 1 implementing activity.

Implementing Activity 16.1	Enable CSOs to issue public documents to participants who successfully completed CSOs' verified adult education programmes
Implementing Body:	MSES
Co-implementing Partner:	AVETAE
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013, continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Amendments to the Adult Education Act and rule books which regulate the conditions and the manner in which programmes are verified, public documents are issued, and andragogical documents and adult education records are kept by CSOs.

MEASURE 17 ENCOURAGING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

This measure will be accomplished through 2 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 17.1	Conduct an analysis of the situation including future perspective of CSO contribution to civil society entrepreneurship
Implementing Bodies:	MLPS
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	March 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The analysis of resources and potential for social entrepreneurship development in Croatia is conducted. 2 The analysis of the current situation including the future perspective of legislation development in the EU countries, and the recommendations for developing a model appropriate for the Croatian context is made.

Implementing Activity 17.2	Ensure active CSO participation in the development of the Strategy for Social Entrepreneurship Development and the necessary legal, institutional and financial framework for the development of social entrepreneurship, especially in parts referring to CSOs
Implementing Body:	MLPS
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	November 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The Strategy for Social Entrepreneurship Development from 2013-2016 is adopted as well as the necessary legal, institutional and financial framework for the development of social entrepreneurship. 2 The interested stakeholders from the public sector, civil society, entrepreneurial and academic community have actively participated in the drawing up of the Strategy.

MEASURE 18 ENSURING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

This measure will be accomplished through 2 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 18.1	Establish a system of financial incentives for the development of social entrepreneurship initiatives of CSOs
Implementing Body:	MEC
Co-implementing Partners:	MLPS, MSPY, GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	November 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of calls for proposals by the State Budget aimed at initiating, achieving and maintaining the solvency of social entrepreneurship initiatives. 2 A Fund for Social Entrepreneurship Development is established. 3 Announced calls for proposals for projects financed by the EU funds which are aimed at encouraging social entrepreneurship development in the area of social inclusion. 4 The analysis of fiscal and other reliefs for encouraging social entrepreneurship development is conducted.

Implementing Activity 18.2	Establish a system of support to CSO social entrepreneurship initiatives and of supporting social innovation and employment in the non-profit sector
Implementing Body:	MEC
Co-implementing Partner:	NFCSD
Start of Implementation Deadline:	November 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The infrastructure for providing support to the development and sustainability of social entrepreneurship initiatives and to social innovation and employment in the non-profit sector is developed. 2 Number of initiated education and specialist programmes at existing universities, polytechnics and business schools dealing with the topic of social entrepreneurship and social innovation. 3 Number of conducted workshops, seminars and programmes on social entrepreneurship and social innovation organised by CSOs. 4 Number of social entrepreneurship programme participants who started a social entrepreneurship initiative upon completing the programme.

MEASURE 19 RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT THE ROLE OF CSOs IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This measure will be accomplished through 3 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 19.1	Conduct information and education activities aimed at the CSO contribution to social entrepreneurship development
Implementing Body:	MLPS
Co-implementing Partners:	MSPY, GOfCNGOs, NFCSD, CSOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of public events organised in connection with the topic of social entrepreneurship (fairs, conferences, etc.). 2 Number of media reports covering the topic of social entrepreneurship. 3 Number of officials and civil servants, experts and the academic community and private profit sector representatives who are informed about the topic of social entrepreneurship.

Implementing Activity 19.2	Encourage public promotion of good practice examples of CSOs implementing social entrepreneurship initiatives
Implementing Body:	MLPS
Co-implementing Partners:	MSPY, GOfCNGOs, NFCSD, CSOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Presenting awards to CSOs for social entrepreneurship initiatives. 2 Number of public events (conferences, debates, round tables, etc.) organised to promote CSO social entrepreneurship initiatives. 3 Number of public events (conferences, debates, round tables, etc.) dealing with the topic of social entrepreneurship.

Implementing Activity 19.3	Ensure public presentations of contracted CSO projects and programmes in the field of social and economic development
Implementing Bodies:	SABs, LRSG units
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of SABs and LRSG units which organised the public presentations of the contracted projects and programmes. 2 Number of CSOs which participated in the public presentations of the contracted projects and programmes.

MEASURE 20

PROMOTING THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

This measure will be accomplished through 1 implementing activity.

Implementing Activity 20.1	Conduct situation analysis and promote CSO contribution to the development of social innovation
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	NFCSD
Start of Implementation	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects

Deadline:	
Necessary Funds:	HRK 75,000
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The analysis of the existing examples of social innovation in Croatia is carried out. 2 Annual presentation of awards to innovative proposals for solving social problems in the Republic of Croatia which include basic implementation outlines of proposed social innovation models.

MEASURE 21 PROMOTING CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS' CONTRIBUTION TO EMPLOYMENT

This measure will be accomplished through 3 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 21.1	Stimulate the employment of persons implementing projects and programmes financed from national and EU sources by CSOs
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	SABs grants providers, MLPS, MSES, MSPY
Start of Implementation Deadline:	November 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Instructions to grants providers about the need for CSOs to employ professionals who would work on the implementation of projects and programmes financed from the national and EU sources are developed. 2 The conditions of the competitions stipulate the requirements for employment in CSOs for the purpose of project implementation. 3 Number of employees in CSOs which are implementing projects and programmes financed from national and EU sources.

Implementing Activity 21.2	Encourage the development of CSO projects and programmes aimed at increasing employability, especially of socially excluded and marginalised groups
Implementing Bodies:	SABs grants providers, MLPS, MSES, MSPY
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	November 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of announced calls for proposals aimed at increasing employability, especially of socially excluded and marginalised

	<p>groups.</p> <p>2 Number of CSO projects and programmes aimed at increasing employability, especially of socially excluded and marginalised groups.</p>
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Implementing Activity 21.3	Ensure conditions for higher participation of civil society organisations in active labour market measures
Implementing Bodies:	MLPS, CES
Co-implementing Partner:	GOfCNGOs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	November 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<p>1 CSOs included among the potential employers able to implement active labour market measures.</p> <p>2 Number of CSOs participating in CES employment programmes as public works organisers.</p>

IV CIVIL SOCIETY WORK AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

In the modern 21st century society we are witnessing an interactive, multiplying, and cohesive process of public policy development, implementation, and monitoring where the traditional frameworks (boundaries) of individual policies are not clearly defined and one policy often spills over into another so that the constructive coordination and cooperation of all society actors becomes inevitable. Also, civil society development and activity in Croatia does not take place within traditional, national borders so it cannot be viewed as an isolated process, outside of the international context. In that respect, we can recognise no less than three parallel processes which are mutually intertwined and complementary.

i) Due to the inevitable impact of globalisation and the growing internationalisation of problems and challenges which go beyond the traditional role of the state in international relations, civil society development should be viewed in a wider context of international relations. In that respect, the traditional approach of international relations which includes security, diplomacy, and trade has been joined with a whole range of different topics e.g. human rights promotion and protection, environmental protection, fight against poverty, human health protection (fight against the spread of contagious diseases, equal accessibility of treatment, equal accessibility of quality health services), etc. Furthermore, along with the growing number of topics within the international context, the process also includes a wide number of actors who participate in two

ways: either by influencing the solution of a certain issue and/or challenge or by being the subject of influence caused by undertaken activities (being influenced). In the process, the traditional, formal forms of communication in the international (diplomatic) relations are increasingly opening towards CSOs action and their active engagement, which is clearly recognised. In line with global trends and active civil society participation in countries with centuries-old democracy, civil society in Croatia in general and CSOs in particular, are increasingly actively participating in the mechanisms for preventing, resolving or managing regional and/or global problems and challenges. Owing to the tendency towards formal and non-formal cross-border networking and cooperation in projects of joint interest, CSOs have strong potential to encourage the development of regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations.

ii) On the other hand, in the last ten years in Croatia we have witnessed an intense and accelerated process of European integration within which comprehensive reforms of all segments of Croatian society have been initiated (horizontal level) but also numerous sector reforms (vertical level). A specific feature of this process is the spilling over of its various segments into a wider social and political context, the direct participation of other society actors, as well as the undisputed changes implemented in almost all segments of the society. Therefore, civil society participation in Croatia should not be regarded only on the level of implementation and/or supervision of the process of aligning the national legislation with the EU acquis within sectoral reforms, but also in a wider context of adopting European standards in all segments of the society through its comprehensive reform. Moreover, the specific, invaluable, and irreplaceable role of CSOs is reflected in their communicating European topics to citizens.

iii) Additionally, the Croatian membership in the EU from mid 2013 gives additional tenor to the future civil society role in Croatia both within the EU and its intense cooperation with third countries, especially countries of southeast Europe. The challenges of the membership in the EU imply the active participation of the whole society on all levels of the EU functioning (including influencing EU policy by advocating national interests and positions, but also a good quality transposition and implementation of EU policies on the national level). In this respect, there are great expectations when it comes to CSOs' active participation in the decision making process, effective implementation of public policy by working within local (national), European, and wider international context as well as further strengthening of their own administrative capacities.

Bearing in mind the challenges arising from the modern relations in the international environment, as well as the civil society potential to effectively participate in dealing with these challenges, it is the Government's strategic objective to create preconditions for the active contribution of CSOs as a credible and indispensable partner in the implementation of foreign policy objectives through the mechanisms of preventing, resolving or managing regional and/or global processes, as well as for the active role of CSOs in the process of EU accession and membership, and for CSO participation in the process of Croatia's engagement in the international development cooperation.

1 CSO Participation in Implementing Foreign Policy Objectives through Mechanisms of Preventing, Resolving or Managing Regional and/or Global Processes

The process of globalisation and modern global political, military, and economic processes as well as the impending Croatian membership in the EU, are increasingly putting the area of foreign policy and international relations into the focus of citizens' interest. This is particularly reflected in the growing interest of Croatian citizens for public debates on particular foreign policy priorities of the Republic of Croatia.

Therefore, assuming that foreign policy is of prime importance to all citizens and that the Government acts as a coordinator with executive decision making authority in a limited number of areas, there is a clear need for closer cooperation between CSO and the Government (through the concept of so called social diplomacy, CSOs contribute to shaping and implementing foreign policy objectives). Also, the appointment and active participation of CSO representatives in the international organisations' representative and executive bodies is perceived as Croatian engagement in foreign policy (diplomacy).

Since it is Croatia's objective to have an active role in foreign policy which pronouncedly reflects the positions of its citizens, the comparative strengths of CSOs are their flexibility and ability to respond quickly to critical situations, which contribute to the effectiveness of national programme implementation and strengthening Croatian presence in the social sphere of international relations (e.g. in cultural and educational activities, support given to democratic changes, providing humanitarian aid, etc.).

2 The Role of CSOs in Croatian Accession to and Membership in the EU

i) The process of globalisation as well as the process of European integration and Croatia's impending membership in the EU have greatly contributed to the development and maturing of the Croatian society as a whole in the last ten years. Namely, the process of aligning the national legislation with the EU *acquis* and adopting European standards is reflected in the political, economic and all other social processes.

Furthermore, the universality of European integration process extends to almost all sectors in which CSOs actively participate. Therefore, the process of accession to the EU can be regarded as *spiritus movens* in further developing the processes of good governance, culture of dialogue, and the usual practice of consultations between the Government and the non-government sector. The participation of CSO representatives in the work of bodies making up the structure for the negotiations on the Croatian accession to the EU was evident. In the process, CSOs were acknowledged as an important partner to the Government and an essential multiplier in communicating European topics to citizens (The Communication Strategy Aimed at Informing the Croatian Public about the EU and Preparations for EU Membership adopted by the Croatian Parliament on 27 January 2006), both in terms of the level of technical adjustment to the EU standards and in ensuring the transparency of the adjustment process.

The Government also gave its support to strengthening the dialogue between Croatian civil society and the EU by establishing the Common Advisory Committee between the European Economic and Social Committee and the Republic of Croatia, which has an important role in promoting the positions of civil society.

Finally, civil society organisations have an important part in planning and implementing programmes of pre-accession assistance to Croatia. The timely inclusion of civil society in this

field is also important in terms of adequate preparation for the effective use of structural funds after accession to the EU, especially the European Social Fund. Croatia has had an acceding country status from signing the Treaty of Accession of Croatia to the European Union on 9 December 2011 and will have it to the day of the accession to the EU, which is set to be 1 July 2013. Consequently, further engagement of all stakeholders, especially CSOs, is needed in order for Croatia to be as ready as possible for the phase of EU membership.

ii) Croatian membership in the EU from 1 July 2013 represents a crucial change both for the Croatian citizens and for all actors in the decision making process on the national level. It is also a change in the process of implementing and supervising the implementation of all adopted acts. Namely, the already complex functioning and interaction between the public administration and the citizens is further complicated by adding the EU dimension to the decision making process. In this respect, CSOs have been recognised as invaluable partners in formulating (decision making process on the EU level) and implementing the overall process of European affairs in Croatia (its transposition into national legislation and implementation).

In an operational sense, CSOs can participate on more levels which make up a well rounded whole in terms of functioning under EU membership conditions: on the national level (in formulating national positions), on the European level (in formulating legal proposals) and again on the national level (in transposing and monitoring their implementation in line with European standards).

The positioning of Croatian CSOs in the European context is especially important because it enhances the good reputation of CSOs and the country. It is for this reason that recognisable positioning (branding) in the first years of its EU membership should be one of Croatia's priorities on all levels and in all issues relevant to the membership. Active CSO participation will provide for a better positioning of Croatian CSOs in Bruxelles and transferring positive practice regarding CSO advocacy areas (i.e. social policy, health sector, human rights, and supervision of national and/or European legislation implementation) to our neighbour countries as well as other countries from the region.

3 CSO Participation in Croatia's Engagement in International Development Cooperation

Civil society is not only an important promoter of democracy, social justice, and human rights, but it is also an important part of shaping Croatian international development cooperation policy and preparing and implementing its specific programmes. This indicates the need for cooperation with CSOs in the context of their participation in the process of implementing the established legislative and strategic framework in the area of international development cooperation. CSOs participation in Croatia's engagement in providing international development cooperation is both desirable and necessary because they have specific know how and share a connection with the people and problems in the field, which enables them to have a better insight into the needs in the field and establish connections with international partners and developing countries. Also, CSOs have very concrete experience of working in Croatia in the post conflict period which can be of assistance to developing countries.

The Republic of Croatia, as a future European Union member state is expected to assume the obligation of helping people and organisations of developing countries with the aim of improving their living conditions by providing financial or other types of support. In this respect,

it is necessary to start thinking more actively about the ways of involving CSOs in the implementation of Croatia's international development cooperation. An initiative for establishing a CSO Platform for cooperation in the area of international development cooperation is a movement which would engage Croatian CSOs actively and completely in promoting the national policy of development cooperation and would have a positive influence on developing countries.

In the last few years the Republic of Croatia has been actively involved in the processes of providing international development cooperation on the global and the EU level. Upon becoming a member state of the EU Croatia is expected to make additional efforts in this area. International development cooperation policy is an integral part of Croatian foreign policy which is becoming increasingly important in the forthcoming period. Croatian transition from a country which was a beneficiary of aid into a country which is providing aid, having gone through extremely demanding process of democratic transition in the post conflict period and implemented comprehensive social, economic, and institutional reforms in the span of only twenty years since its independence, is considered an exceptional achievement.

As a future EU member state Croatia is expected to assume the obligation of helping people and organisations of developing countries with the aim of improving their living conditions by providing financial or other types of support. Taking into account that civil society is an important promoter of democracy, social justice, and human rights and that Croatia has concrete experience of working in the post conflict period, which can be of assistance to developing countries, it is necessary that CSOs be involved in the process of implementing the established legislative and strategic framework in the area of international development cooperation. Involving CSOs in Croatia's providing development cooperation is desirable and necessary because they have a specific connection with the people and problems in the field, which enables them to have a better insight into the needs of the most vulnerable groups. At the same time, CSOs have the ability to establish connections with international partners and partners in the countries which are aid beneficiaries.

More active thinking about CSO involvement in the implementation of the official Croatian development cooperation is reflected in the initiative for establishing a CSO Platform for cooperation in the area of international development cooperation. This format would engage Croatian CSOs actively and completely in promoting the national policy of development cooperation and would have a positive influence on the countries aid beneficiaries. Establishing such a Platform is necessary for encouraging CSO consolidation and providing support to the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs in the area of development cooperation. The main task of the Platform is designing national priorities in cooperation with MFEA and other relevant stakeholders so that CSOs can subsequently become a relevant partner in their implementation. The Platform would also have a role of a focal point where CSOs can get advice and which collects information on the capacities of national CSOs for providing development cooperation. This would help ensure not only that international development cooperation is provided according to objective criteria, but also that the projects are implemented in a way that really helps their end users and contributes to the aid effectiveness.

OBJECTIVES

- Improve the consultation process between CSO representatives and key foreign policy implementing bodies about relevant global and/or regional processes
- Increase the level of informing the citizens about the social and economic effects of the EU membership through the work of CSOs
- Ensure CSO participation and contribution in the programming and use of EU pre-accession funds, EU cohesion policy instruments, and EU programmes; and in creating, implementing and supervising the implementation of national strategies, programmes and other programme documents dealing with the use of EU structural instruments
- Increase Croatian CSO networking at the European level and improve the cooperation of Croatian and European CSOs in joint projects
- Strengthen and actively involve CSOs in programming, implementation, and reporting about Croatia's international development cooperation and encourage their networking with European CSO networks for providing international development cooperation.

MEASURE 22 CONDUCTING CONSULTATIONS AND EXCHANGING INFORMATION WITH CSOs IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND SUPPORTING THEIR ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

This measure will be accomplished through 2 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 22.1	Organise exchanges of opinion with CSO representatives about certain current issues in the context of international relations
Implementing Body:	MFEA
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	1 Number of meetings with CSO representatives about the current situation in international relations for the purpose of exchanging opinions on activities.

Implementing Activity 22.2	Create a data base on CSO representatives' participation in international and regional organisations and institutions
Implementing Bodies:	GOFCNGOs with the Council for Civil Society Development, MFEA
Co-implementing Partner:	other departmental bodies
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013 and continuously onwards
Necessary Funds:	HRK 15,000

Implementation Indicators:	1 An online database on CSO representatives' participation in international and regional organisations and institutions is created.
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MEASURE 23 IMPROVING THE MECHANISM OF CONSULTATIONS WITH CSOs IN THE PROCESS OF CROATIA'S EU ACCESSION AND MEMBERSHIP

This measure will be accomplished through 1 implementing activity.

Implementing Activity 23.1	Improve the cooperation between the Government and CSOs in the process of Croatia's EU accession and membership by organising consultations, public debates, panels, and discussions with the aim of analysing the implementation of the membership criteria, social and economical impacts as well as the advantages of the EU membership
Implementing Bodies:	Competent SABs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	1 Number of all types of consultations which were conducted per year (containing a description of activities).

MEASURE 24 ENSURING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROCESS OF CROATIA'S EU ACCESSION AND MEMBERSHIP TO CITIZENS

This measure will be accomplished through 2 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 24.1	Organise public debates, panels, discussions, and lectures as well as TV and radio broadcasts dealing with the current developments in the EU and public policy which impacts Croatia
Implementing Body:	MFEA
Co-implementing Partner:	SABs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	1 Number of public debates, panels, discussions or lectures organised per year. 2 Number of radio programmes broadcasted on the Croatian Radio per year. 3 Number of programmes broadcasted on the Croatian Television

	per year.
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Implementing Activity 24.2	Ensure the translation and distribution of EU publications about the role of citizens in making and adopting decisions under EU membership conditions
Implementing Body:	MFEA
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of translated publications. 2 Number of distributed publications. 3 The electronic versions of publications are available.

MEASURE 25 ACTIVELY INCLUDING CSO REPRESENTATIVES IN PROGRAMMING AND PREPARING FOR THE USE OF EU STRUCTURAL INSTRUMENTS

This measure will be accomplished through 2 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 25.1	Conduct information and education activities with the aim of strengthening CSO capacity for the use of EU structural instruments
Implementing Body:	GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partners:	MRDEUF, CFCA, NFCSD, regional support networks
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of organised Info Days dealing with financing possibilities.

Implementing Activity 25.2	Ensure active CSO participation in drawing up and adopting programme documents dealing with the use of EU structural instruments
Implementing Bodies:	SAB involved in the management (operational) structure for the implementation of EU structural instruments and the Cohesion Fund
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of CSO representatives in formal and non-formal groups which contributed in a measurable way to the drawing up of the strategic programme documents (National Strategic Reference

	<p>Framework, strategic documents for particular Operational Programmes aimed at the use of funds from the European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund, and the Cohesion Fund, as well as other accompanying documents).</p> <p>2 Number of CSO representatives in management bodies during the use of pre-accession funds as well as the use of EU structural funds.</p>
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MEASURE 26 ENSURING CSO PARTICIPATION IN DECISIONS MAKING PROCEDURES AND MONITORING DECISIONS IMPLEMENTATION UNDER EU MEMBERSHIP CONDITIONS AND ENCOURAGING COOPERATION BETWEEN CROATIAN AND EU CSOs

This measure will be accomplished through 5 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 26.1	Carry out education for the purpose of improving CSO knowledge and skills about topics dealing with the EU
Implementing Bodies:	NFCSD in cooperation with IMPACT centre, MFEA
Co-implementing Partners:	GOFCNGOs and other competent bodies
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013, and continuously onwards
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of organised seminars and workshops aimed at strengthening the CSOs' capacity for participation in shaping European public policy.

Implementing Activity 26.2	Ensure continuous informing of CSOs about European public policy
Implementing Bodies:	NFCSD in cooperation with IMPACT centre in Bruxelles
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013
Necessary Funds:	HRK 200,000
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of informational newsletters about topical developments in European public policy which are of interest to CSOs. 2 Number of financed visits to European institutions with IMPACT's logistic support.

Implementing Activity 26.3	Establish selection criteria and select CSO representatives in the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
Implementing Body:	GOFCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	Council for the Development of Civil Society
Start of Implementation Deadline:	September 2012
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3 The selection criteria for CSO representatives in EESC are defined. 4 Reporting obligations and models of regular communication between EESC members and CSOs are defined.

Implementing Activity 26.4	Analyse the needs of CSOs participating in the work of different EU working bodies/institutions/organisations for financial support
Implementing Body:	GOFCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	NFCSD in cooperation with IMPACT centre in Bruxelles
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The analysis of CSO needs for co-financing travel costs for the purpose of participating in meetings of different EU working bodies/institutions/organisations is carried out. 2 A proposal of criteria for co-financing the travel costs of CSO representatives for the purpose of participating in meetings of different EU working bodies/institutions/organisations is developed.

Implementing Activity 26.5	Encourage networking of Croatian and EU CSOs in joint project implementation
Implementing Bodies:	GOFCNGOs
Co-implementing Partners:	Competent SABs, AMEUP, NFCSD
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of information and education activities about the possibilities of networking between Croatian and EU CSOs. 2 Number of contracted partnership projects between Croatian and EU CSOs.

MEASURE 27 STRENGTHENING CSO CAPACITY AND INCLUDING THEM IN PROGRAMMING, IMPLEMENTING, AND REPORTING ABOUT INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

This measure will be accomplished through 2 implementing activities.

Implementing Activity 27.1	Conduct information and education programmes about international development cooperation
Implementing Body:	MFEA
Co-implementing Partners:	GOfCNGOs, NFCSD
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	1 No less than one seminar on international development cooperation organised for CSO representatives per year.

Implementing Activity 27.2	Actively include CSOs in planning, implementing, and reporting about international development cooperation, especially within the Platform for CSO cooperation in providing international development cooperation (invitation to participate in calls for proposals to all interested CSOs)
Implementing Body:	MFEA
Co-implementing Partners:	GOfCNGOs, NFCSD
Start of Implementation Deadline:	November 2012
Necessary Funds:	HRK 200,000
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The Platform is established. 2 Consultations with CSO representatives during the process of drawing up the international development cooperation plan are conducted. 3 Number of international development cooperation projects in which CSOs are participating (within the Platform).

Implementing Activity 27.3	Encourage the transfer of knowledge from Croatian CSOs through international development cooperation projects
Implementing Body:	NFCSD
Co-implementing Partner:	MFEA

Start of Implementation Deadline:	December 2012; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	HRK 750,000
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of approved projects. 2 Number of countries beneficiaries of international development cooperation through Croatian CSOs' projects.

Implementing Activity 27.4	Involve CSO representatives in the drawing up and implementation of the National Strategy of RC for Development Cooperation from 2014 – 2019
Implementing Body:	MVEP
Co-implementing Partners:	GOfCNGOs, competent SABs
Start of Implementation Deadline:	January 2013; continuous monitoring of the effects
Necessary Funds:	No additional funds necessary
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of CSO representatives participating in the working group for drawing up the National Strategy. 2 Number of CSOs which participated in providing international development cooperation per year.

Implementing Activity 27.5	Conduct research about the current Croatian CSO capacity for providing international development cooperation and make a catalogue of knowledge and skills which Croatian CSOs have and which could be of importance to other donors (in order to implement joint projects) and to the countries aid beneficiaries (partner countries)
Implementing Bodies:	MFEA, GOfCNGOs
Co-implementing Partner:	competent SABs
Implementation Deadline:	June 2013
Necessary Funds:	HRK 20,000
Implementation Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 A catalogue of CSO knowledge and skills is created. 2 Obstacles to increasing CSO capacity are detected and appropriate steps are taken.

5 NATIONAL STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of measures and activities from the National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development will be monitored and coordinated by

GOfCNGOs. The Office shall establish a Committee for National Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation comprising the representatives of GOfCNGOs, NFCSD, the Council for Civil Society Development, other advisory bodies to the Government in whose work a significant number of CSO representatives are involved (the National Committee for the Development of Volunteerism, etc.) as well as other National Strategy implementing bodies.

The National Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Committee shall make detailed instructions for reporting on the implementation of each measure/activity and tabular monitoring of the implementation status of the measures/activities by their implementing bodies and co-implementing partners as a basis for making annual reports on the National Strategy implementation.

The National Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Committee shall establish models of cooperation with LRSG units during the implementation of individual measures/activities whose implementing bodies or co-implementing partners are LRSG units.

GOfCNGOs shall submit a written report to the Government of the Republic of Croatia about the National Strategy implementation biannually and more frequently if necessary. With the aim of enhancing the National Strategy implementation, upon the proposal of the National Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Committee and the Council for Civil Society Development, GOfCNGOs can propose a revision of individual measures/activities, their implementing bodies and/or co-implementing partners and associates, implementation deadlines, necessary funds and indicators to the Government in the forthcoming period.

All state administration bodies which are implementing bodies and co-implementing partners in the implementation of the National Strategy activities are obliged to plan the funds under their budget lines for the implementation of the activities in the forthcoming budget period in a timely manner.

GOfCNGOs shall plan the funds under its budget line for the external evaluation of the National Strategy every other year.

6 FINAL PROVISIONS

The National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development from 2012 – 2016 shall be published on the Internet site of the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs following its adoption by the Government of the Republic of Croatia.

GLOSSARY

Accessibility of the education system denotes open access to the education system to all members of society under equal and acceptable terms. (Dželalija, M. ed., *Croatian Qualifications Framework. Introduction into Qualifications*. Zagreb: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, 2009)

Association is any form of free and voluntary association of natural or legal persons which, in order to protect their interests or promote the protection of human rights and freedoms, and environmental, humanitarian, informative, cultural, ethnic, pronatalist, educational, social, professional, sports, technical, health care, scientific and other convictions and objectives, and without the intention of gaining profit, submit themselves to the rules that regulate the organisation and activities of that form of association. (Associations Act, Official Gazette 88/2001).

Civil society organisations denote 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. According to EESC, this view of civil society includes a whole range of organisations: social partners; organisation which bring people together in a common cause, such as environmental organisations, human rights organisations, consumer associations, educational and training organisations, etc; community-based organisations, such as youth organisations, family associations and all organisations through which citizens participate in the life in local and municipal life; religious communities. (European Economic and Social Committee)

Civil society The space between the family, state, and market where citizens associate in order to advocate common interests. Civil society is a society of citizens, their initiatives, groups and organisations, which have their own structure and management, a non-profit status; include volunteers in their activities, in which citizens associate voluntarily, and which as such receive financial support from various stakeholders (Bežovan, G., Zrinščak, S., *Civil Society in Croatia*. Zagreb: Jesenski and Turk Publishers, Croatian Sociological Association, 2007)

Consultations with the interested public connote a wider concept of the interested public participation in decision making procedures. (Code of Practice on Consultation with the Interested Public in Procedures of Adopting Laws, other Regulations and Acts, Official Gazette, 140/2009)

Curriculum (lat. curriculum) denotes a series of planned activities aimed at the acquisition of certain competences by an individual, and it includes: objectives; learning outcomes; content and methods of teaching; forms of learning, learning outcome validation, and a quality assurance system. (Dželalija, M., ed., *Croatian Qualifications Framework. Introduction into Qualifications*. Zagreb: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, 2009)

European Social Fund One of the cohesion policy instruments aimed at reducing the differences in living standards and wellbeing across European Union member states and their regions, thereby promoting economic and social cohesion.

Formal learning denotes the activities of an authorized institution, performed in accordance with approved programmes of study, aimed at advancing knowledge and skills and the associated autonomy and responsibility for individual, social and professional demands, and accompanied by a certificate issued by a competent body. (Dželalija, M., ed., *Croatian Qualifications Framework. Introduction into Qualifications*. Zagreb: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, 2009)

Foundation is the property assigned to serve the accomplishment of some generally beneficial or charitable purpose. Generally beneficial purpose implies that a cultural, educational, scientific, spiritual, moral, sports, health care, environmental or any other social activity has been promoted. (Act on Foundations and Funds, Official Gazette 36/1995)

Informal learning denotes unorganized activities of acquiring knowledge and skills and the associated autonomy and responsibility, through every-day experiences and other influences and sources from the environment, for individual, social and professional demands. (Dželalija, M., ed., *Croatian Qualifications Framework. Introduction into Qualifications*. Zagreb: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, 2009)

Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance – IPA is the pre-accession programme for the period 2007 – 2013 which replaced the previous programmes of CARDS, Phare, ISPA and SAPARD. The main objectives of the IPA programme include assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries in the harmonisation of their legislation with the EU Acquis Communautaire and implementing the harmonised legislation, as well as in preparing for the use of the funds which will be available to Croatia upon its becoming the EU member state (structural and agricultural funds, Cohesion Fund).

LAG (abbr. for local action group) Basic “tool” of the LEADER approach under IPARD programme. LAG is formally registered as an association and comprises members of three sectors (public, civil, economic) in which the share of public sector representatives is lower than 50 percent. LAG territory represents a unified and recognizable economic, social, and geographical whole. It is a partnership of neighbouring local communities for rural development which is based on their common features, resources, and interests. These communities consider, prepare, and implement rural development strategy.

LEADER (acronym of Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale - links between rural development actions) A method of rural development policy of the European community implementation and an integral part of European rural development policy. LEADER approach is characterised by the following elements: local development strategies, public-private partnership, bottom-up approach; multisectoral approach to drawing up and implementing strategies which is based on the interaction of different stakeholder groups characteristic for a certain rural area; innovation, cooperation, networking.

Lifelong learning All forms of learning activities undertaken during one's lifetime and aimed at advancing one's knowledge and skills and associated independence and responsibility for personal, social and professional needs (Dželalija, M., ed., *Croatian Qualifications Framework. Introduction into Qualifications*. Zagreb: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, 2009)

Non-formal learning denotes organized learning activities aimed at advancing knowledge and skills and the associated autonomy and responsibility for individual, social and professional demands, which are not accompanied by a certificate issued by a competent body. (Dželalija, M. ed., *Croatian Qualifications Framework. Introduction into Qualifications*. Zagreb: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, 2009)

Non-profit media A part of civil society which is created through self-organisation of citizens who observed that there was a need for media information in their community and through their civic, professional and volunteers' engagement wished to contribute to its fulfilment. The primary goal is to work together for the achievement of the common, public good without profit generation. The non-profit media programme schemes comprise educational contents, including media literacy, providing information about civil society organisations working for public benefit, empowering citizens for active participation in civil society, promoting volunteerism and pluralism of ideas as well as the affirming the needs and views of marginalised groups. Significant part of the contents which non-profit media often deal with is defined by art. 9 of the Electronic Media Act as programme contents whose publication is of interest to the Republic of Croatia. Such media are called non-profit media, independent media, third sector media, community or participator media as well as tactical media. Each of these terms has specific characteristics and is not necessarily interchangeable with the others. Community and participatory media are the terms most often used on the European level whereas in Croatia they are known as non-profit media. (N mreža – Alliance of Associations for Non-profit Media Development, winter document, May 2012, www.nmreza.hr)

Grants Public source funds intended for financing non-profit activities which are of public or common benefit, regardless of their source of funding (state budget, local or regional self-government unit, European Union funds). Grants from the state budget and/or local/regional self-government unit budgets must be planned and earmarked in the competent bodies' budgets.

Philanthropy is a voluntary individual act or group giving for the purpose of improving the common good. This refers to individuals or group donations to organizations (foundations and NGOs) that then channel these funds through diverse programs to achieve various valuable goals. "Common good" can be enhanced through many diverse activities including research, health, education, art, culture, elimination of poverty, and others all with the goal of improving the quality of life in a village, community or a country. (Milković, D., *Foundations and Philanthropy in Croatia*. Zagreb: AED CroNGO, 2003) Available on the Internet site [http://www.GofCNGOs.hr/userfiles/file/filantrop%20-%20cro\(1\).pdf](http://www.GofCNGOs.hr/userfiles/file/filantrop%20-%20cro(1).pdf)

Public policy refers to the contents of political decision making, namely the process and contents of the work of the Government in reference to solving recognised public issues, in whose shaping and implementing a number of actors from government and non-government sphere, on local, national, and international level participate with optimum openness of government institutions, efficient coordination and carefully thought out impact assessment of the possible options during planning and evaluation of the implementation results. Public policy generally refers to social issues or sectors which it regulates thus we can talk about health, education, or economic policy. In the process of shaping public policy, the interest public, which includes civil society organisations, exercises its influence through public consultations and public advocacy, which include a series of activities ranging from public debates through media campaigns to direct civic action and lobbying with decision makers.

Public sources comprise the state budget, the budgets of local/regional self-government units and the European Union funds, whose funds are planned in the state budget and in the budgets of local/regional self-government units.

Service learning A method under which students or participants learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organised service which is conducted in and meets the need of a community; is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education or community service program, and with the community; and helps foster civic responsibility; and that is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum for students, or the educational components of the community service program in which the participants are enrolled; and provides structured time for the students and participants to reflect on the service experience. (The National and Community Service Act of 1990, available at the Internet site http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/cncs_statute.pdf)

Social capital refers to the number and quality of interactions in the civil arena – and this includes citizens' participation in the work of citizens' associations, non-governmental organisations, membership in trade unions, work in religious communities, socialising in hobby groups, good neighbourly relations and similar instances. Empirically, social capital is structured from three elements: (a) trust in people and societal institutions, which is marked by a readiness for cooperation (not only with family members or acquaintances); (b) association and collective actions providing for the direct experience of cooperation and its advantages in the exercise of interests which lie outside the scope of individual action; (c) respect for social and legal norms.

Social cohesion is a multi dimensional concept for which there are many different definitions. Social cohesion mainly implies the capacity of a society to ensure the well-being of all its members, minimising disparities and avoiding marginalisation. (Source: Council of Europe)

Social entrepreneurship refers to a way of solving social problems by employing entrepreneurial methods, taking sustainable development into account and using a system of democratic decision making (with solidarity and mutual assistance).

Social innovation is about creating new ideas that work to address pressing unmet needs; they are new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations. (European Commission, according to Murray, Calulier-Grice and Mulgan, *Open Book of Social Innovation*, 2010)

Social services According to the Council of Europe document (2007) *Integrated Social Service in Europe*, social services “include all services a) which are considered to be of special importance for the society on the whole and where b) personal interaction between providers and users has the crucial role. Using such a broad definition, health, education, occupational integration and cultural services become as well part of the picture beyond the usual three fields of child day care, care services for the elderly and various small areas of services for problem groups”. Available on the following Internet site: http://www.udruga-pragma.hr/images/stories/INTEGRIRANE_SOCIJALNE_USLUGE_U_EUROPI.pdf

Sustainable development education is a learning process (or approach to teaching) based on the ideals and principles that underlie sustainability and is concerned with all levels and types of learning to provide quality education and foster sustainable human development – learning to know, learning to be, learning to live together, learning to do and learning to transform oneself and society. Source: UNESCO.

Validation of learning outcomes A series of procedures aimed at assessing whether competences have been acquired, including the issuing of a certificate by the competent body in accordance with predefined and accepted criteria and standards. (Dželalija, M., ed., *Croatian Qualifications Framework. Introduction into Qualifications*. Zagreb: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, 2009)

Validation of non-formal and informal learning A series of procedures aimed at assessing whether learning outcomes have been achieved through nonformal or informal learning, including the issuing of a certificate by the competent body in accordance with predefined and accepted criteria and standards (Dželalija, M., ed., *Croatian Qualifications Framework. Introduction into Qualifications*. Zagreb: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, 2009)

Volunteering is voluntary investment of personal time, effort, knowledge and skills with which services or activities are executed for the well being of others or for the common good without the requirement of monetary payment or any other material gain for volunteering done (Volunteerism Act, Official Gazette 58/2007). The definition of the term volunteering in EU countries derives from “activity that demands time without compensation”, via “personal spontaneous activity” to “voluntary work”. Regardless of the different traditions and cultural circumstances, volunteering could be defined as an activity that is implemented through one’s own free will and which is useful to others and to the person implementing it, but is not primarily motivated by financial gain.

ANNEX

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEASURES OF THE OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE CREATION OF AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT FROM 2007 TO 2011

Introduction

The National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2006-2011 brought certain terms into Croatian public space for the first time. It influenced the introduction and development of new standards into the process of consultations with the interested public. Furthermore, it encouraged transparent work of civil society organisations and their financing from public sources as well as contributed to the increase of funds awarded under the calls for proposals. It identified social entrepreneurship and social responsibility as priorities for Croatian institutions and civil society.

The previous National Strategy was a development strategy and the main challenge in implementing the measures from its Operational Implementation Plan 2007 – 2011 was that they were in many ways avant-garde in comparison with the existing system. In the period from February 2007 until the end of 2011 three annual reports on the implementation of the NSOP were drawn up – for 2007, 2008, and 2009 and one biennial report for 2010 and 2011 (all four reports are available in their original form on the Internet site of the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs: www.uzuvrh.hr), which monitored the implementation of 58 original measures and 45 measures that stemmed from reviewing the activities to be implemented in 2011. Namely, upon the proposal of individual measures implementing bodies and the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, the Government of the Republic of Croatia accepted the recommendation in 2008 and 2009 reports to rephrase a part of the measures in order to allow for new circumstances and create preconditions for their more effective implementation thereby enhancing the achievement of National Strategy objectives. Consequently, we are talking about the implementation of the total of 103 measures, structured in 4 thematic sections and 11 chapters with subheadings.

In the reporting period the implementation of 93 measures began. 37 measures were implemented successfully and 56 partially, which showed that the implementation of NSOP had encompassed 90 percent of all envisaged measures. In total the Strategy envisaged 23 implementing bodies with the participation of other public authority bodies and civil society organisations. The largest number of thoroughly and timely implemented measures belongs to subheading 8.1 which focused on enhancing the system of financing civil society organisations from the state budget and EU pre-accession funds. On the other hand, the implementation of measures in subheading 8.3 – non-profit entrepreneurship and social economy, and in chapter 9 – regional development, lagged behind in comparison with other areas. It is worth mentioning that the evaluation was based on submitted data, which were particularly lacking in these

measures. This implies that the monitoring in these areas should be significantly improved in the future.

The Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs had the role of a coordinator in monitoring the implementation of NSOP (which the Government adopted on 1 February 2007) on which it submitted a report to the Government of the Republic of Croatia once a year. The Council for Civil Society Development and the Commission for the Monitoring of NSOP Implementation, comprising coordinators appointed by measure implementing institutions, took part in the monitoring of the Strategy implementation. The implementation of NSOP measures required horizontal coordination of dozens of state administration bodies, but also local and regional self-government units, as well as systematic consultations with a number of non-institutional actors, especially civil society organisations. Taking all this into account, the NSOP implementation can be assessed as satisfactory. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise and use its lessons as opportunities for increasing the efficiency and effectiveness in the drawing up the subsequent Strategy.

General Overview of the Operational Plan Implementation

NSOP evaluation was conducted as participatory, internal evaluation which focused on objectives and measures relevance, implementation challenges and immediate effects. The success factors and implementation challenges that were recognised served as the basis for defining the preconditions for successful implementation of future measures and maintaining results which were achieved.

The evaluation was carried out by the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, in cooperation with the Council for Civil Society Development and the working group for the development of Draft National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development. It should be mentioned that qualitative analysis of all existing reports on the NSOP implementation in the period from 2007 – 2011 was used as the basis for the evaluation report.

This evaluation report is primarily intended for the use of a working group in developing the new National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development as well as for other experts involved in the drawing up of a new Strategy. It is meant to serve as a baseline for the development of new measures and activities. Furthermore, the report is intended for all state administration bodies – implementing bodies and co-implementing partners, government officials and public policy makers as well as other stakeholders in the creation of an enabling environment for civil society development.

It should be underlined that the number of measures was not the same in all chapters and that they also differed in scope. The evaluation focused on two aspects: scope and quality. The scope of implementation refers to quantitative evaluation and was meant to give information about the number of measures carried out in the implementation period and conversely the number of measures whose implementation had not begun (see table below). The quality of the implementation was evaluated based on three categories so that a measure could be evaluated as implemented, partially implemented or unimplemented. In line with the aforementioned categories, each measure in the Operational Plan was given a grade and points were added for each chapter (see table below).

The Operational Plan envisaged the total of 23 implementing bodies with the participation of other public authorities and civil society organisations. **Subheading 8.1 particularly stands out in terms of the implementation scope which focused on enhancing the system of financing civil society organisations from the state budget and EU pre-accession funds.** The largest number of measures from this area was implemented thoroughly and in a timely manner. **On the other hand, the implementation of subheading 8.3 – non-profit entrepreneurship and social economy, and chapter 9 – regional development, lagged behind in comparison with other areas.** It is worth mentioning that the evaluation was based on submitted data, which were particularly lacking in these measures. This implies that the monitoring in these areas should be significantly improved in the future.

Taking into consideration the complex nature of the implementation of civil society development policy which required horizontal coordination of dozens of state administration bodies, local and regional self-government units, as well as non-institutional actors the implementation of the National Strategy Operational Plan can be assessed as satisfactory. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise and use its lessons as opportunities for increasing the efficiency and effectiveness in the drawing up the subsequent Strategy.

An Overview of the Operational Plan Measures Implementation of the National Strategy for the Creation of An Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development from 2007 to 2011		
Number of measures envisaged for implementation		103
Number of successfully implemented measures		37
Number of partially implemented measures		56
Number of measures which were carried out		93
Number of measures whose implementation has not begun		10
Number of measures whose completion has exceeded the deadline		66
Operational Plan scope of implementation	93/103	90%
Chapter 4 scope of implementation	12/16	75%
Chapter 5 scope of implementation	16/26	62%
Chapter 6 scope of implementation	9/14	64%
Chapter 7 scope of implementation	4/6	67%
Subheading 8.1 scope of implementation	23/28	82%
Subheading 8.2 scope of implementation	7/10	70%
Subheading 8.3 scope of implementation	7/24	29%
Chapter 9 scope of implementation	11/20	55%
Subheading 10.1 scope of implementation	12/18	67%
Subheading 10.2 scope of implementation	5/6	83%
Chapter 9 scope of implementation	24/38	63%

Achievements, Challenges and Recommendations of NSOP Measures Implementation According to Chapters

This is an overview of the achievements and difficulties in the previous OP measures implementation, structured according to its former chapters and the recommendations for drawing up the measures of the future National Strategy. The first three chapters of the National Strategy, as well as its Operational Plan, did not contain any measures so they shall not be covered by the evaluation.

Chapter 4 *Citizen Participation in shaping public policy*

Eight envisaged measures were implemented in the reporting period. Four were implemented successfully and the other four partially.

The main achievement under this subheading was the adoption of the *Code of Practice on Consultation with the Interested Public in Procedures of Adopting Laws, other Regulations and Acts* (measure 4.1). Crucial success factors in this respect were the implementation of a wide consultation procedure and including the adoption of the Code in the Action Plan for Combating Corruption. The future Strategy should certainly include a measure concerning systematic training for consultation coordinators with the possibility of expanding the system to local and regional self-governments. Also, it is necessary to focus on good monitoring of the consultation process and work on the institutionalization of the Code of Practice on Consultation by e.g. including a job description for coordinators in the regulations stipulating the scope of work of individual public authority bodies.

As far as measure 4.2 is concerned, **the right of access to information has become a Constitutional right in the meantime** so that the amendments to the Right of Access to Information Act as well as the monitoring of the implementation of regulations dealing with the right of access to information and the training of public authority bodies should be given due attention in the new Strategy. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that both civil society organisations working in the area of democratisation and fight against corruption and the experts expressed dissatisfaction with the adopted amendments because the new text of the Act did not respond to all of the amendments' objectives, especially when it comes to testing the public interest by an independent body. Therefore, this issue should be given reconsideration in drafting new amendments to the aforementioned regulation in the subsequent strategic period.

Chapter 5 *Education for democratic citizenship and human rights*

All thirteen measures under this chapter were implemented during the reporting period. Three were successfully and the other ten partially implemented.

The main achievements under this chapter were the establishment of the National Committee for Education for Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship and the drawing up of the Draft Curriculum for Civic Education and its referral to public consultations. This also entails a partial implementation of measure 5.1 (which was merged with previous measure 5.2). However, it is important to point out significant delays in the implementation. According to the implementing body's view the measure should be retained in the subsequent strategic period with further specification of implementation activities. These activities should include creating and

maintaining a database of non-formal human rights and democratic citizenship education programmes, which are carried out by civil society organisations in the Republic of Croatia; continuous professional development of teachers; systematic monitoring of civic education implementation in schools; ensuring the time in school timetables and organisational conditions for the implementation of the curriculum also in vocational education and training schools. Moreover, the Education and Teacher Training Agency proposes that a Civic Education course be introduced in university study programmes primarily with the intention of providing the training to future teachers on the undergraduate and graduate levels for teaching civic education in schools.

Chapter 6 *Legal framework for the activities and development of civil society organisations*

Out of the seven measures under this chapter, two were implemented successfully and five partially.

Measure 6.2 *Drawing up new legislation, harmonising existing acts for the purpose of further developing civil society in the Republic of Croatia, and implementing such legislation: the Foundations Act, the Public Benefit Organisations Act and other regulations and measure 6.3 *Establishing criteria for gaining the status of public benefit organisations, registering such organisations, and monitoring their activities** (in its original form) encountered difficulties in the implementation. Namely, there was no consensus, either among civil society organisations or among competent state administration bodies, about the open issues from the Draft Act on Public Benefit Organisations (competent body for awarding and monitoring this status and reliefs to which such organisations would be entitled). In line with the recommendations put forward at the NGO Days 2011, where participants clearly expressed the need for regulating the issue of public benefit activities by law, the first measure should be retained with certain modifications which would shift the emphasis from the status of an organisation to the status of activities carried out by many different organisations in Croatia. In this way, additional process of organisations' registration could be avoided and the evaluation of activities instead of whole organisations is in line with the standards for grants allocation, which are stipulated in the Code of Good Practice, Standards and Benchmarks for the Allocation of Funding for Programs and Projects of NGOs, where the evaluation is focused on the proposed project or programme rather than the organisation proposing it.

Chapter 7 *Institutional framework for support to civil society development*

Out of the three measures under this chapter, one was implemented successfully and the other two partially.

Measure 7.1 *Adopting a Decision on Amendments to the Decision on the Appointment of Members of the Council for Civil Society Development* was implemented successfully, while **measure 7.2 *Encouraging the establishment of bodies responsible for the promotion of partnerships between non-governmental, non-profit organisations and the local government*** should be modified in the subsequent strategic period and linked with the chapter

dealing with regional development. Concerning the work of the Council in the subsequent strategic period, the overloaded schedule of topics for the plenary sessions should be reduced, and the emphasis given to better preparation and more prolific discussions on the Council's working sessions.

Chapter 8.1 *Financing initiatives, projects and programmes of civil society organisations*

Out of the total of fourteen measures under this subheading, ten were successfully and three partially implemented, while one measure was not implemented at all. The implementation was thorough, comprehensive and timely during the reporting period. This is why this subheading is given a prominent place in terms of implementation quality within the whole Operational Plan.

Regarding this chapter it should be pointed out that reports on CSO financing increasingly show higher compliance with all the standards stipulated by the Code of Good Practice, Standards and Benchmarks for the Allocation of Funding for Programs and Projects of NGOs on the national and local level from year after year. The data collected in this way are used for updating the online database of all financed projects and programmes. The practise of *organising info days on which financial support providers on the national level present plans for announcing calls for proposals in the current years to the interested NGOs* has begun which proved to be an important step forward given that they enable two-way communication between support providers and beneficiaries. A *Manual for Using the Code of Good Practice, Standards and Benchmarks for the Allocation of Funding for Programs and Projects of NGOs* was created as a tool for the application of standards stipulated by the Code and the training of civil servants on the local level were initiated. Moreover, it needs to be emphasised that the civil society sector is one of the most successful sectors when it comes to using the EU funds. The percentage of available funds usage is almost 100 percent, as in programming the calls for proposals by the Unit for Implementation of NGO Projects so also in disbursement of programmed funds by civil society organisations through calls for proposals under IPA I, which certainly speaks of the quality of the implementation of NSOP measures which are connected with the using of EU funds. In the forthcoming period it is necessary to continue implementing the measures pertaining to education and training and give prominence to the IT component of the entire financing process. In this way providers of financial support from public sources could be connected in order to boost the efficiency of allocated funds and avoid overlapping in financing of the same activities. A possibility of including the profit sector in co-financing projects and programmes financed by the EU funds should be considered as well.

Chapter 8.2 *Conclusion of contracts with civil society organisations on the provision of public services*

Five measures were implemented in the reporting period, two were successfully and three partially implemented. Based on a meeting with relevant stakeholders GOfCNGOs drew up a proposal of Rules about the Conditions and Procedures of Allocating Funds to NGOs and National Alliances of Persons with Disabilities Associations. However, the position of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare was that this issue should be dealt with by a special law.

Within social welfare system reform, which was characterised by a shift towards an active social state which implies emphasising and supporting social cohesion and helping and protecting the vulnerable members of the community, in partnership with all social service providers, a more active role of civil society organisations in providing social services was envisaged. As a result, regulations and strategic documents additionally underlining the need for cooperation with civil society organisations were adopted. Namely, the Joint Inclusion Memorandum – JIM from March 2007, which was signed between the Republic of Croatia and the European Commission; Strategy of Social Welfare System Development in Croatia from 2011 – 2016, the Plan of Deinstitutionalisation and Transformation of Social Welfare Institutions and Other Legal Persons Social Service Providers in Croatia from 2011 – 2016 (2018) and finally the new Social Welfare Act (OG 59/11). Thus civil society organisations became one of key stakeholders in expanding social services network. Developing the services which are missing from the community enables users to get services at home and in their local communities, which means that the community itself has created conditions for their integration. Expanding the social services network should be further enhanced by the introduction of quality standards in all service providers, social planning on the local level as well as the process of transformation and deinstitutionalisation of social welfare institutions.

Given the many civil society organisations' expectations in developing social services it is necessary to retain this measure in the forthcoming period. Its successful implementation requires consultations with civil society organisations in the process of creating acts and regulations which stipulate the conditions for social service provision (i.e. establishing the price of social services and the framework for financing civil society organisations which provide social service, introducing quality standards for social service provision, etc.), but also civil society organisations participation in training programmes for professionals, which were (until now exclusively) envisaged for social welfare institutions.

Also, significant funds for social exclusion and strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations which provide social services are planned within European Social Fund. Taking into account the insufficient capacity of social welfare institutions for using the EU pre-accession funds, it is necessary to encourage the cooperation of public institutions and civil society organisations. At the same time, it is necessary to improve the process of applying and implementing projects financed from national and local sources in order to even out the criteria for the allocation of national and EU funds. This would ensure successful absorption of the programmed funds, but also guarantee the quality and sustainability of services provided by civil society organisations.

Chapter 8.3 *Development of the social economy and non-profit entrepreneurship*

Out of the total of twelve measures under this chapter, seven was implemented partially while the implementation of the remaining five has not begun.

In 2009 in cooperation with GOFCNGOs, Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship and Ministry of Health and Social Welfare as well as a few commercial banks, the National Foundation for Civil Society Development started an initiative for the establishment of the Social Entrepreneurship Development Fund. However, due to insufficient funds the initiative was not

accomplished. Therefore, it is recommended to continue with these activities in the forthcoming strategic period.

Within the programming of measures to be funded from the European Social Fund the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare designed a call for proposal focused on providing support to social economy development in the fight against social with the aim of improving the possibilities of employment of socially vulnerable persons by way of developing social/community entrepreneurship. The challenges in the implementation of measures under this chapter arise from the fact that it is an innovation in the system and the implementation bodies of the majority of measures were not familiar with the concept until recently so they did not give it high priority. The majority of what are considered good practice examples of social entrepreneurship in Croatia was initiated precisely by civil society organisations (whether by establishing a separate legal person, most often a cooperative or a company, which returns its profit to the CSO which founded it; or by organising a social entrepreneurship initiative within the organisation's own work – as one of the activities which it undertakes in order to ensure self-sustainability, and also by organising education programmes for private persons and organisations interested in social entrepreneurship development).

Against this backdrop and due to ample possibilities of financing social entrepreneurship development from the EU funds it is necessary to involve the competent Ministry as the main coordinator of measures aimed at social entrepreneurship more intensely in the forthcoming period. Given the fact that the drawing up of the new National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development coincides with the development of the strategic document for encouraging social entrepreneurship, which is a novelty in Croatian public policy, coordination and active participation of all relevant departments – entrepreneurship, social policy and finances – shall be extremely important. Also, the support of GOFCNGOs and the National Foundation for Civil Society Development as bodies which recognised the potential and development possibilities contained in the concept of social entrepreneurship in their strategic documents and programmes of cooperation with civil society organisations in the previous period

Chapter 9 Regional development

Out of the total of ten measures under this chapter two were successfully and seven partially implemented.

The establishment of Zagreb Coordination of support providers which is made up of all city offices representatives which provide support should be pointed out as one of the more important achievements under this chapter. The representatives of Zagreb Coordination regularly take part in coordination meetings of financial support providers on the national level, which are organised by GOFCNGOs. The measure aimed at establishing and continuous work of County Coordination should be retained in the subsequent strategic period. Also, measures 9.2 and 9.3, which deal with the decentralised programmes of support to civil society organisations and smaller civic initiatives with low capacity, need to be retained. Defining specific activities for more intense participation of local and regional self-government units and stronger encouragement of civic activism are also needed.

The biggest challenge in the implementation of measures under chapter 9 lies in their excessive fluidity. Therefore, it is recommended that in the subsequent strategic period emphasis be put on clearly specifying the measures and the possibilities of cross-border cooperation, regional foundations, but also setting up local action groups.

Chapter 10.1 *Development of volunteerism in Croatia*

Out of nine measures under this chapter, three were implemented successfully and six partially.

The problem of the institutional recognition of voluntary work (measure 10.1.1) is still prevalent so it is necessary to continue working on defining the models of recognising voluntary work in the educational system, health institutions and in social services development. Also, the cooperation between main implementing bodies and the Ministry of Finance in the activities of collecting data on voluntary activities needs to be continued. It is worth mentioning that the Croatian Bureau of Statistics proposed the cancellation of the measure connected with including the value of voluntary work within the GDP in drawing up the future Strategy because according to the currently valid standards of national accounts as defined in United Nations manuals, the value of voluntary work is measured outside of the GDP. Therefore, the CBS proposes that voluntary work be measured within national accounts of non-profit institutions since the value of voluntary work is not included in the official GDP of other countries in the world.

Chapter 10.2 *Development of foundations*

Out of three measures two were successfully and one was partially implemented. Successfully implemented measures were aimed at the establishing and developing the financial and infrastructure support to the development of foundations in local communities in cooperation with civil society organisation. The measure referring to the establishing a transparent Registry of Foundations was implemented only partially. It was envisaged that the Registry would contain the data about the registration of foundations and the annual financial report about their business activity which would serve as basic information for monitoring the development of foundations. Namely, the Internet site of the Ministry of Administration offers a possibility of online viewing of the Foundation books however, this record is lacking in terms of information about the work of foundations themselves, such as founding acts, contact information, etc. On the other hand, in the reporting period the Ministry of finance significantly improved the monitoring of non-profit organisations' financial management through establishing a Registry of Non-profit Organisations. Connecting these two records should be considered in the subsequent strategic period for the purpose of increasing transparency and enabling easier monitoring of the work of foundations. In accordance with this, the Ministry of Finance and the State Audit Office should be included among the main implementing bodies. Also, it is necessary to make setting up a foundation easier by amending the legislative framework so that in the forthcoming period local foundations can cooperate with state administration bodies in conducting calls for proposals for financing local micro projects.

Chapter 11 *Civil society development in the international context*

Nineteen measures were implemented under this chapter out of which eight were implemented successfully and eight only partially, while three measures were not implemented at all.

The main recommendations in connection with civil society organisations participating in international activities are to make the measures more specific so that they are easier to monitor and focus on the continuity of consultations and the structures for dialogue. In the context of providing international development aid by civil society organisations it is necessary to map those services which Croatian CSOs have the capacity to provide and prepare the ground for stronger participation of Croatian CSOs in providing international development aid in the forthcoming period.

Conclusion and general recommendations – coordination, monitoring and reporting

The National Strategy National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2007-2011 is a strategic document in whose creation more than a hundred experts from the civil, academic and public sectors were involved. Looking at the way in which the Operational Plan measures were formulated, we can state that this was a developmentally oriented and in many areas innovative strategy. A part of the challenge in measure implementation was related to the fact that the proposed measures were avant-garde in comparison with the existing system, e.g. in the area of introducing a new approach to social and economic development through social, non-profit entrepreneurship. Another part of the problem in connection with the way in which measures were formulated arises from the fact that many of them were descriptive so the Operational Plan did not clearly define indicators which would enable easier implementation monitoring. Hence, it is necessary to set realistic deadlines, precise budget commitments and clear indicators for implementation monitoring in the text of the future Strategy and Operational Plan. It is especially important to mention that the implementation of such a complex and comprehensive strategy requires co-responsibility, coordination and taking initiative of a number of state administration bodies whose scope of work is extensive and in many cases only marginally touches upon cooperation and the creation of preconditions for civil society development. In this respect, in some areas the Strategy certainly presumed a higher level of knowledge and capacity of certain stakeholders than the one present in reality.

It needs to be emphasised that it is important to follow all standards for consultation so that as many interested stakeholders as possible can participate in the process of drawing up the new Strategy, but also in order for the new Strategy to be aligned and linked to the already existing or planned strategic documents thus creating additional synergy which will undoubtedly increase the efficiency of new measures' implementation.

In the last five years, due to the work of the Council for Civil Society Development but also the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, we can conclude that the awareness of state administration bodies about the value of civil society organisations' work, as well as about the many processes connected with the democratisation and transparency of public authority bodies, has greatly increased. However, we still cannot be satisfied with the capacity or knowledge about the sector of some of the measure implementing bodies. Therefore, in the subsequent strategic period it is necessary to continue with the positive practice of organising periodic meetings of the Commission for the Monitoring of OP Implementation, which is a

horizontal body comprising representatives of the more important OP measure implementing bodies, at least twice a year (at the beginning of the year and in September, after the data on the implementation during the first semester of the current year have been collected). For the purpose of more focused activity and encouraging cooperation among implementation bodies it is recommended that, if possible, separate meetings be organised with measure implementation bodies according to chapters and thematic sections of the future Strategy.

In addition, more frequent consultations with key implementing bodies in individual chapters and thematic sections are necessary in order to give them additional explanation and if necessary even additional professional support. This particularly pertains to the measures which require programme innovations and whose previous implementation was lagging behind (topics connected with social entrepreneurship and regional development).

In connection with the system of planning, monitoring and reporting on the Operational plan it is necessary to focus additional efforts in the forthcoming period on:

- (1) Developing an annual Operational Plan of all measures, which is delivered to the implementing bodies at the end of February,
- (2) Formulating detailed instructions on reporting about the implementation of each particular measure with additional questions, which is sent to the implementing bodies twice a year (June and December),
- (3) Tabular monitoring of the implementation status of the measures/activities which is sent to all implementing bodies twice a year (September and February),
- (4) The new Strategy providing for the balance in focusing on the vision and particularities of certain measures and envisage flexibility in their changing during the implementation in case of changed circumstances,
- (5) Drawing up the plan of annual reports on the Operational Plan implementation which leaves enough time for additional consultations with the implementing bodies and the participation of the Council for Civil Society Development in formulating recommendations for improving the implementation in the subsequent year.