Implementing National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development in Croatia
Key lessons learned

- Strong local ownership of the process both within the government and civil society
- Leadership (both within government and CSOs) and effective policy coordination
- Clear mechanisms of monitoring and reporting
- Continuous investment in building capacities of government officials/civil servants
- Harmonizing domestic and international public funding schemes with Strategy priorities
Ownership through participatory process of developing the Strategy

Combining various methods of engaging civil society

- „Open space” method
- Public debates/hearings
- Working groups/sub-groups
- Internet consultations
- Social networks
Broad consensus on key strategic priorities until 2016

- **common platform** that brings together key stakeholders vital for creating conditions for sustainability of an independent and vibrant civil society

- Importance of **ownership of Strategy measures** among responsible government bodies
Need for leadership and effective policy coordination

• complex area with many interrelated policy issues - 27 priority measures / 91 implementation activities / 251 implementation indicators

• Wide variety of stakeholders involved in implementation: 30 state bodies, local and regional government bodies associations, CSOs

• Need for leadership and effective coordination – both vertical (hierarchical – towards state bodies) and horizontal (with CSOs, other stakeholders)
## Mechanisms of policy coordination

### Vertical
- Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs
- 3 departments – 20 staff
- Special Department dealing with National Strategy implementation
- Organizing meetings with ministries and other state bodies to encourage implementation of Strategy

### Horizontal
- Council for Civil Society Development
- Enabling dialogue with various actors on challenges in implementing the Strategy measures
- Government Office provides expert support in preparing materials for all Council sessions
Council for Civil Society Development

12 elected representatives of NGOs

1. Protection & promotion of human rights
2. Health protection & improvement of quality of life
3. Disabled persons care
4. Child care
5. Environmental protection & sustainable development
6. Social welfare
7. Youth
8. Democratization & social development
9. Culture
10. Homeland war-veterans care
11. Sports
12. Technical culture
13. Consumer Protection

1. Trade Unions
2. Employers Association
3. Foundation

14 appointees from state administrative bodies

1. Ministry of Science, Education and Sports
2. Ministry of Health
3. Ministry of Culture
4. Ministry of Social Policy and Youth
5. Ministry of Finance
6. Ministry of Environmental Protection
7. Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
8. Ministry of Administration
9. Ministry of War veterans
10. Ministry of Labour and Pension System
11. Ministry of Regional Development and EU funding
12. Office of Prime Minister of Croatia
13. Government Office for Human Rights
14. Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs
15. National Foundation for Civil Society

1 Trade Unions
1 Employers Association
1 Foundations
Mechanisms of monitoring and reporting

3 levels of monitoring:

• Reports on Strategy implementation adopted by the Government
• Regular monitoring on Strategy implementation by the Council for Civil Society Development
• Public web platform dedicated to National Strategy - with latest information on status of implementation of all measures (monitoring by wider public)
Continuous monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy through the support provided by the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs – web platform

http://strategija.uzuvrh.hr/

Implementation status of all measures continuously updated based on latest reports from ministries
Permanent investment in building capacities of civil servants/government officials

- Training seminars
- Workshops
- Individual meetings
- Public hearings

Multiplying opportunities for dialogue of civil servants and CSOs – promoting the culture of dialogue
Allignement and harmonization of donors in supporting the Strategy

- Strategy goals alligned with EU accession requirements
- EU actively supported implementation of Strategy – basis for PHARE 2006, IPA 2008-2012 grant schemes, TACSO, European Social Fund 2014-2020
- DECIM – (donor exchange,coordination and information mechanism) in Croatia – EC/World Bank initiative - efforts in 2007-2008
- Importance of coordination of national public funding for CSOs
Through effective Strategy implementation to sustainability of EU accession reforms

Creating enabling environment for development of active, vibrant, independent civil society

guarantee of sustainability of reforms undertaken in the European Union accession process
Further information

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