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| **Technical Assistance to Civil Society Organizations in the Western Balkans and Turkey (EU TACSO 3)** **Info Note**  |

##### **Objectives and purpose of the EU TACSO 3 project**

The third phase of **the EU TACSO 3** projecthas started in January 2019 and is being implemented in Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*[[1]](#footnote-1), North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia) and Turkey. The project will last until 17 December, 2021.

**EU TACSO 3** is a technical assistance project, which focus on strengthening participatory democracies and the EU approximation process in the Western Balkans and Turkey. With this respect, EU TACSO 3 aims to strengthen capacities of civil society organisations (CSOs) to actively take part in the democratic processes and to stimulate an enabling environment for civil society and pluralistic media development.

EU TACSO 3’s primary target groups are civil society actors, including: non-governmental organisations (NGOs), organisations representing national and/or ethnic minorities, local citizens’ groups and traders’ associations, cooperatives, trade unions, organisations representing economic and social interests, CSOs networks, resource centres and training centres for civil society, consumer organisations, women’s and youth organisations, activists, community based organisation and independent foundations.

Secondary target groups are staff members of stakeholder organisations, including central and local governments, media and the private sector (e.g. social enterprises) where relevant.

EU TACSO 3 has a key role in creating coherent support to civil society development in the region by providing services to its beneficiaries in the following **5** **main Areas:**

1. Comprehensive programme of **organisational and operational capacity development** with a focus on sharing of experiences and lessons learned among different contexts including**the People to People (P2P) Programme);**
2. **Support improvement of enabling environment for CSOs** and contribute to the establishment of conducive legal environment for CSOs;
3. **Improvement of public awareness of civil society activities and public image of CSOs** through the project website and by collecting and disseminating civil society relevant information from different online and offline channels (e.g. internet, social media, databases, newsletters, events, etc.);
4. Facilitating the process of **updating and monitoring under the Guidelines for EU support** **to civil society and media;**
5. Facilitating **CSO consultation process (i.e. IPA sectorial working groups or EU accession related events)** and transpose CSO knowledge into the regions’ EU accession process.

##### **Planned Capacity Development activities at local and regional level**

EU TACSO 3 aims to develop aims to contribute to capacity development activities both at local and regional level, which would be complementary to the existing capacity development activities undertaken by the National Resource Centre (NRC) and other capacity development (CD) organisations. While the physical activities of CSOs were interrupted by recent coronavirus/COVID-19 spread, EU TACSO 3 has also adjusted its activities to online and developed specific targeted short-term (1-3 months) mitigation measures to address the emerging needs of civil society. Below, you can find some of the planned activities that will both take in place in Turkey and at regional level (covering Western Balkans and EU);

* Training for CD providers on **techniques and approaches to respond to emergency situation;**
* Design and organize **on-line course on service provision by CSOs in emergency/epidemic circumstances;**
* Training for CD providers in **innovative approaches to community development** such as community facilitation, asset-based community development etc.;
* Design **manuals, tools** and **provide training on information activism, data collection/management** which would also serve for CSOs monitoring and advocacy activities;
* **Mainstreaming rights-based approaches;** mainly targeting CSO networks as well as local CSOs and grassroots organisations. The training programme will also be supported with **online manuals;**
* **Child rights training programme;** targeting both rights-based organisations/child-led organisations and refugee/humanitarian aid organisations;
* **Active citizenship, citizen initiatives and volunteerism**; sharing of good practices from CSOs and citizen initiatives;
* **Diversified funding**; both in the form of a regional big event and a specific event for Turkey;
* **Local Participation, Good Governance, Social Inclusion and Monitoring;** particularly targeting the CSOs who have been conducting monitoring and advocacy activities in 3 metropolitan cities (İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir) and local CSOs.

In Turkey, EU TACSO 3 activities have started to be implemented as of March 2020, together with the mobilization of the Country Coordinator for Turkey. The Country Coordinator has been working in close cooperation with the NRC (Civil Society Development Centre – STGM) as the primary contact point of the EU TACSO 3 project in terms of dissemination of news published by project and ensuring the complementarity and coherence of EU TACSO 3 activities with the CD activities at country level. You can follow the news published by EU TACSO 3 on **TACSO 3 web site (www.tacso.eu)** and social media channels (in English) and follow **STGM web site (www.stgm.org.tr)** and social media channels in which EU TACSO 3 news are disseminated continuously. You can also find below the contact info of EU TACSO 3 Project Office and Country Coordinator for Turkey.

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1. \*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)