



**EU Western Balkans and Turkey Civil Society Forum 2022  
Launch of the 2021-2027 EU Guidelines for Support to Civil Society in the Enlargement  
Region**

**Wednesday and Thursday 8 – 9 June 2022  
Hotel Aleksandar Palace Skopje, North Macedonia**

**DRAFT AGENDA**

<b>7 June, Tuesday</b>	
	<b>Arrival of participants</b>
<b>8 June, Wednesday</b>	
08:30 – 09:30	<b>Registration of participants and welcome coffee</b>
09:30 – 10:30	<p><b><u>Welcome and opening speeches</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Michela Matuella, Acting Director of DG NEAR Directorate D</li> <li>• Mr Metodija Dimovski, Secretary General of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia (TBC)</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Mr Richard Allen – TACSO Team Leader</p>
10:30 - 11:00	<b>Break</b>
11:00 – 13:00	<p><b>Plenary session: A new reality. Challenges and opportunities for Civil Society in the Western Balkans and Turkey</b></p> <p>The session will help the participants obtain a shared understanding of the context in which civil society in the Enlargement region operates today. After two years of COVID-19, new challenges have arisen because of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine.</p> <p>CSOs are operating in an increasingly complex environment, marked by economic, social and political challenges, a high degree of polarisation in society, and ambitious change processes, including the green and digital transitions. CSOs are among the first players to see and be affected by the changes. It is therefore important that we hear the voice of the CSOs.</p> <p>The session will be organised as a series of interventions by CSO networks from the region on how they see the current context and what it means for their work, followed by comments from other stakeholders.</p>



	<p><b>CSO interventions from:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSO Regional Network covering civil space, public administration reform, etc</li> <li>• CSO Regional Network covering social inclusion</li> <li>• CSO Regional Network engaged in the climate challenge</li> </ul> <p><b>Comments from</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member of European Parliament : TBC</li> <li>• Ms Elitsa Mincheva, Coordinator for the Western Balkans and Turkey, DG JUST Inter-institutional and International Coordination</li> <li>• Mr Holger Schröder, Head of Unit, Western Balkans Regional Programmes, Economic Investment Plan, DG NEAR</li> <li>• A representative for a public authority in the region</li> <li>• EU-based CSO collaborating with the region</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Ms Liselotte Isaksson, Head of Section – Civil Society, Social Inclusion and Human Capital Development, DG NEAR D5 (Western Balkans Regional Programmes, Economic Investment Plan)</p>
13:00 – 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>
14:00 – 15:30	<p><b>Video message from Mr Maciej Popowski, Acting Director General of DG NEAR</b></p> <p><b>Plenary session: Launch of the 2021-2027 EU Guidelines for Support to Civil Society in the Enlargement Region (EUCSG)</b></p> <p>The session is dedicated to getting acquainted with the revised Guidelines. A brief presentation will highlight the key elements, and explain the continuity and differences between the revised and the original version. The methodology applied in the process of creation will be presented, with specific emphasis on how the indicators are formulated within the document.</p> <p>Thereafter, a series of comments from representatives of key stakeholders will follow – focusing on the aspects of the Guidelines that they consider most important.</p> <p>The subsequent breakout sessions will foster more specific discussion on the operationalisation of the EUCSG 2021 - 2027 in the future period across the three key sections of the guidelines.</p> <p><b>Brief Presentation of the Guidelines:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Snjezana Bokulic, EU TACSO 3 Expert</li> </ul> <p><b>Comments focussing on what are the key benefits and uses for the guidelines, from the perspective of each intervening stakeholder:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil society representative</li> <li>• Government representative in charge of CSO cooperation</li> <li>• Donor representative</li> </ul>



	<p>Limited Q&amp;A</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Ms Liselotte Isaksson, DG NEAR</p>
15:30 – 15:45	<b>Break</b>
15:45 – 16:45	<p><b><u>Breakout sessions: Operationalisation of the EUCSG 2021 – 2027</u></b></p> <p>Each breakout session will explore the future use of the EUCGS 2021 – 2027, in light of the ‘new reality’ facing CSOs. Crosscutting questions will include the following: How do we see the future implementation of the EUCGS 2021 – 2027? What do we think the major CSO role in this process should be? Are there any expected trends? What are examples of good practice in the application of the EUCGS? How do we see the strengthening capacities of civil society?</p> <p><b><u>Breakout session 1: The future of the enabling environment for civil society</u></b></p> <p>How do the guidelines help in enlarging, protecting and monitoring civic space?</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> [TBD]</p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b> CSO from regional network [TBD]</p> <p><b><u>Breakout session 2: Relations between civil society and the public authorities</u></b></p> <p>How have/will governments use the Guidelines for their respective strategies for cooperation with civil society?</p> <p>What are the benefits and challenges for public authorities in the region on working with civil society? How to maximise the benefits?</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Ms Irena Ivanova, EUD Skopje [TBC]</p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b> CSO from regional network</p> <p><b><u>Breakout session 3: The capacities of civil society</u></b></p> <p>How can CSOs use the guidelines in advancing their own organisational development, effectiveness and resilience?</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Mr Dario Di Benedetto, EU Office in Pristina [TBC]</p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b> CSO from regional network</p>
16:45 – 17:30	<p><b>Reporting from the breakout sessions and wrap up of the Day 1</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Mr Richard Allen – TACSO Team Leader</p>
17:30 – 19:30	<b>Recess period</b>
19:30 – 21:00	<b>Dinner/Reception</b>
<b>9 June, Thursday</b>	

08:30 – 09:30	<b>Registration of participants and welcome coffee</b>
09:30 – 11:15	<p><b><u>CSOs engagement in relation to four thematic areas (four parallel sessions)</u></b></p> <p><b>Green Agenda for the Western Balkans;</b></p> <p><b>CSOs promoting Rule of Law;</b></p> <p><b>CSOs and Antidiscrimination, Human Rights, Community Resilience and Poverty;</b></p> <p><b>Cooperation between CSOs and Media</b></p>
	<p><b><u>Parallel Session 1. Green Agenda for the Western Balkans</u></b></p> <p>The session will provide information on progress in the implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, tackling priorities on climate neutrality and resilience, circular economy, fighting pollution of air, water and soil, sustainability of food systems and rural areas, and protecting biodiversity. Specific attention will be dedicated to the role and cooperation of CSOs in the Green agenda.</p> <p>This session will explore the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, latest developments</li> <li>• Connecting Stakeholders in the Western Balkans; existing structures (Platforms, established networks, lessons learned)</li> <li>• Upcoming Initiative EU4 Green Recovery – Introduction and explanation of foreseen involvement and active participation of stakeholders</li> <li>• Experience and recommendations for improved cooperation</li> </ul> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representative of Regional Cooperation Council</li> <li>• Ms Jelena Milos, Policy Coordinator Environment, Climate Change, DG NEAR D5 (Western Balkans Regional Programmes, Economic Investment Plan)</li> <li>• CSO environmental network from WB</li> <li>• CSO environmental network from EU</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> EU4 Green Recovery, Environment Agency Austria UBA</p>
	<p><b><u>Parallel Session 2. CSOs role in promoting Rule of Law</u></b></p> <p>CSOs are essential players in promoting Rule of Law. Many of their day-to-day activities contribute in this area, whether specifically targeting Rule of Law as a theme, or whether part of work in areas such as environment or gender equality.</p> <p>This session will explore how CSOs can engage even more meaningfully in this important area, and what type of support they may require to do so. One key</p>



	<p>question is how their work can be made representative of broader stakeholders in society.</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSO Networks focussing on Rule of Law</li> <li>• CSO Networks focussing on Anti-corruption</li> <li>• CSO Networks addressing Rule of Law as part of their thematic work</li> <li>• Representative of EUD</li> <li>• Representative of DG NEAR</li> <li>• Representative of DG JUST</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> to be appointed</p>
	<p><b><u>Parallel Session 3. Human Rights, Anti-discrimination, Community Resilience and Fight against poverty</u></b></p> <p>The session will focus on current trends and best practices in CSOs’ efforts in promoting and protecting human rights, anti-discrimination and poverty reduction in the region. Specific attention will be dedicated to the effects of recent developments (including the COVID-19 pandemic aftermath and impacts of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine) on the most vulnerable/marginalised groups of society, including Roma, other minorities, migrants/refugees, LGBTIQ persons and persons with disabilities. The session will also discuss the Gender Action Plan III of the European Commission.</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSO network on Gender equality</li> <li>• CSO on LGBTIQ</li> <li>• CSO on Roma</li> <li>• CSO on migration</li> <li>• UNDP /RELOAD [TBD]</li> <li>• EUD representative</li> <li>• DG NEAR</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> to be appointed</p>
	<p><b><u>Parallel Session 4. Cooperation between CSOs and media</u></b></p> <p>This session will stimulate discussion on some of the key issues in regards to CSOs and media cooperation including: How are CSOs using the media to connect and build constituencies? How are media outlets using CSOs to generate stories and increase relevance to their communities? How are CSOs and media outlets working together to increase the accountability of local and national level governments? What is civil society’s role in promoting evidence-based policies, truth and countering disinformation?</p>



	<b>Speakers:</b> TBD <b>Moderator:</b> to be appointed
11:15 – 11:45	<b>Break</b>
11:45 – 12:45	<b>Reporting back from the thematic sessions</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Ms Liselotte Isaksson, DG NEAR <b>Presentation of the Key Forum Messages, Conclusions and Recommendations, and Closing of the Forum</b> Mr David Geer, Head of Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of North Macedonia
13:00 – 15:00	<b>Lunch and departure of participants</b>