

Black Sea NGO Forum, XIIth edition

Consolidating the Black Sea NGO Community for Sustainable Development

23rd – 25th of October 2019

Istanbul, Turkey

During the last edition of the Black Sea NGO Forum, held for the first time in Brussels (November 2018), the main objective was to bring more visibility on the importance of the Black Sea Synergy as a policy framework both for the European level, as well as for the civil society from this region, especially in the context of Romania's Presidency of the European Union Council (January – June 2019).

The first semester of 2019 included important regional policy processes connected to the Black Sea area, such as: the implementation report of the Black Sea Synergy 2015-2018 (5th of March 2019), the adoption of the Common Maritime Agenda (21st of May 2019), the launch of the Black Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (8th of May 2019), and very important, the Council Conclusions on the EU's engagement to the Black Sea regional cooperation (17th June 2019)ⁱ, which highlighted the relevant contribution of civil society organisations (CSO) for their implementation. The efforts of more than ten years of the Black Sea NGO Forum to facilitate and promote the regional dialogue and cooperation of CSOs in this region were recognized in these Council Conclusions:

“The Council reiterates the importance of stimulating regional cooperation and dialogue among the civil society organisations in the Black Sea region with a view to facilitating sustainable development and increasing societal resilience. Creating space for civil society remains a constant priority for the EU. The Council calls for active engagement with representatives of civil society and for supporting the successful Black Sea NGO Forum.”

The priorities mentioned above reflect very well the discussions initiated as part of the Forum: emphasizing the role of CSOs in fostering society resilience at the local community level, national and regional level; presenting different monitoring initiatives and support mechanisms on enabling environment for CSOs at regional and international level and exploring the relevance of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for supporting regional cooperation.

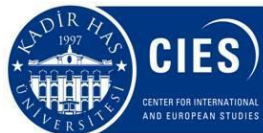
Taking account of all of these, the 2019 edition of the Black Sea NGO Forum will continue to create an open space for debate, for sharing mutual knowledge and understanding, communication and cooperation among civil society representatives, with specific focus on:

- Raising awareness on the work of CSOs in the region and their added value for building resilience and sustainable development at community and society levels;
- Introducing resilience assessing frameworks for CSO taking into consideration both external threats and internal vulnerabilities;
- Revising the regional Strategic Framework for Civil Society Cooperation and its thematic cooperation priorities (endorsed as part of the Black Sea NGO Forum in 2015), as well as, the objectives and organization of the forum's thematic working groups;
- Presenting the main outcomes of the European policy processes supporting regional cooperation at the Black Sea region and their relevance for civil society engagement.



The first edition of the Black Sea NGO Forum was organised in 2008 as a unique regional event by the Romanian NGDO Platform (FOND), with the support of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Representation of the European Commission and the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation. The Forum was initiated within the framework of the Black Sea Synergy, a European policy launched at the initiative of Romania, Bulgaria and Greece with the purpose of consolidating regional cooperation at the Black Sea.

The XIIth edition of the Black Sea NGO Forum is organized by the Romanian NGDO Platform (FOND) in partnership with the Center for International and European Studies (Kadir Has University), with financial support of the European Union.



ⁱ Council Conclusions on the EU's engagement to the Black Sea regional Cooperation, 17th June 2019: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39779/st10219-en19.pdf>

