

Strategic Framework for Civil Society Cooperation in the Black Sea Region (revised 2019 – 2024)

VISION

The vision of the Black Sea NGO Forum is to contribute to prosperity and stability in the Black Sea Region with effective CSO participation, by creating an open space for debate, mutual knowledge and understanding, communication and cooperation among civil society representatives, governments, international organizations and donors active in the wider Black Sea Region, with a focus on sharing good practices in various domains and success stories of regional cooperation.

MISSION

The Black Sea NGO Forum aims to:

1. Increase dialogue and cooperation among CSOs and other stakeholders in the wider Black Sea Region;
2. Strengthen CSOs' capacity to connect with, understand and influence European policies relevant for the Black Sea region;
3. Increase the number and quality of regional partnerships, projects and initiatives with the view of creating sustainable thematic NGO networks.

VALUES & PRINCIPLES

Throughout its work, the Black Sea NGO Forum has at its core the following values and principles:

1. Highlighting **OWNERSHIP** of the NGOs in the region
2. Welcoming a **DIVERSITY** of participants
3. Encouraging **DIALOGUE** among stakeholders
4. Building **RESILIENCE**
5. Creating **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**
6. Achieving **IMPACT**

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

The Black Sea NGO Forum's activity focuses on the Black Sea countries, both outside EU – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, Turkey, and within EU – Bulgaria, Greece and Romania.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The findings of the 2017 Evaluation Report of the 2012-2016 editions of the Forum, as well as the conclusions of the interactive sessions' carried out the 2019 edition of the Forum confirmed the relevance and necessity of creating regional thematic NGO networks in order to foster cooperation, sustainable development and prosperity in the region.

Taking into consideration this input coming from participants, the Black Sea NGO Forum will focus on:

1. **Supporting the creation of formal and informal thematic NGO networks** in the following cooperation areas:

<i>Thematic cooperation areas set in 2015 and reconfirmed</i>	<i>Thematic cooperation areas newly added in 2019</i>
KNOWLEDGE NETWORKS FOR DEVELOPMENT ANTI-CORRUPTION CIVIC ENGAGEMENT YOUTH CULTURE & EDUCATION SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT YOUTHBANKS HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORKING MEDIA & COMMUNICATION	CSO SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY VOLUNTEERING DEVELOPMENT

In order to adapt to the changing regional context, but also the needs, challenges and opportunities for CSOs, the Black Sea NGO Forum will also take into consideration supporting relevant regional initiatives in other thematic areas than those mentioned above, provided that they contribute to the overall goal of offering support to formal and informal thematic regional networks.

2. **Promoting and supporting an enabling environment for civil society in the Black Sea Region, with focus on building the resilience of civil society** based on its two dimensions identified at the 2018 consultation held at the Forum:

Internal referring to: investing in leadership, encouraging needs and risks assessments, building governance and accountability mechanisms, diversifying funding sources etc.

External referring to: investing in PR & pro-active communication, engaging in networking and partnerships, being part of regional and global networks etc.



SUPPORT INSTRUMENTS

In order to pursue these two strategic directions, the Black Sea NGO Forum will use several support instruments including but not limited to:

1. Providing space for dialogue, mutual knowledge and understanding, networking and cooperation among a variety of stakeholders – civil society representatives, governments, international organisations, donors active in the region (including non-traditional donors);
2. Supporting the transfer of know-how, best practices, success stories and lessons learnt among CSOs in the Black Sea Region;
3. Offering flexible support to CSOs in the region with the purpose of supporting their resilience and capacity to engage in regional cooperation through instruments such as: leadership programmes, trainings, mentoring and peer-to-peer learning, sub-granting mechanisms, virtual communication channels etc;
4. Acting as a resource hub in terms of disseminating information and opportunities relevant for the region, facilitating partner search and matching, highlighting synergies with other initiatives etc;
5. Advocating at regional level with donors for more support given to regional cooperation and the creation of regional thematic networks, as well as focusing on capacity building and resilience of civil society;
6. Bringing more visibility on the needs and challenges of CSOs in the Black Sea region at the global level.

