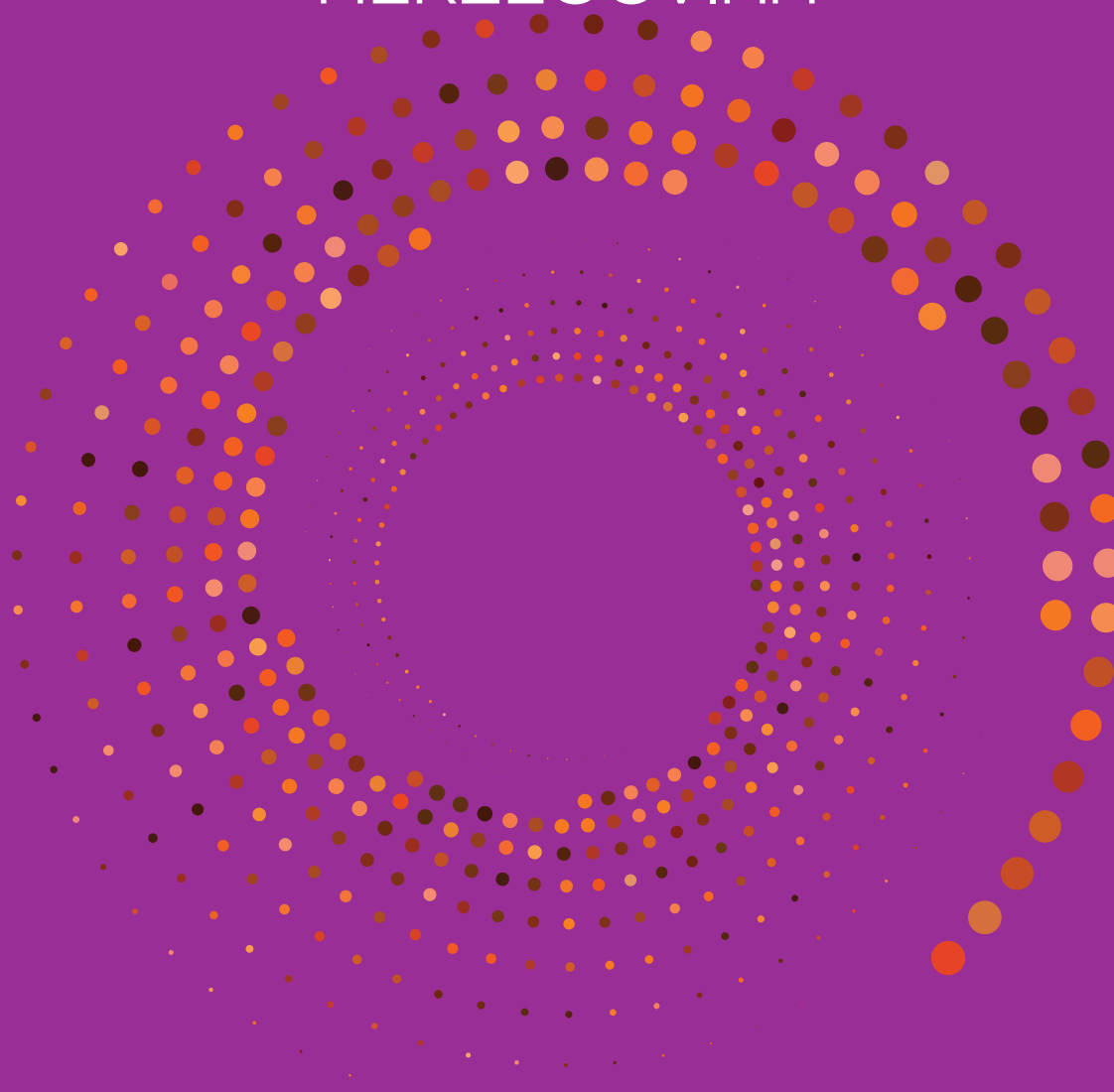


DG NEAR Guidelines for EU Support to Civil Society
in the Enlargement Region
2021-2027

2025 Assessment

REPORT FOR BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA





This study was carried out by a team of experts under the supervision of the Hajde4EU project.

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List of Abbreviations

AML	Anti-Money Laundering
BAM	Bosnia and Herzegovina Convertible Mark
BCSDN	Balkan Civil Society Development Network
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CAF	Charities Aid Foundation
CCI	Centres of Civic Initiatives
CFT	Combating the Financing of Terrorism
CIVICUS	World Alliance for Citizen Participation
CoE	Council of Europe
CSO / CSOs	Civil Society Organisation(s)
DG ENEST	Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECF	European Civic Forum
EU	European Union
EU4CS	EU4 Civil Society project
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
HR	Human Resources
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer
MONEYVAL	Council of Europe Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism
NPO / NPOs	Non-Profit Organisation(s)
NRC	National Resource Centre
OGP	Open Government Partnership
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe



* 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

OHCHR	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
RS	Republika Srpska
SLAPP	Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation
TACSO	Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations
TI	Transparency International
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value Added Tax

Methodology

Common methodology (Western Balkans and Türkiye)

This assessment applies the common methodology used across the seven targeted countries to assess the DG NEAR Guidelines for EU Support to Civil Society in the Enlargement Region 2021-2027, Hajde4EU's principal recurring analytical product, delivered annually as seven national reports and one regional report. It is an upstream advisory exercise for DG ENEST B1 and the EU Delegations and EU Office in Kosovo*, in which CSOs and independent media are subjects of analysis and dialogue partners, not direct beneficiaries.

The 2025 cycle applies the official, slightly revised methodology, retained to preserve comparability with the 2021 baseline and the 2023 and 2024 TACSO assessments. Assessment is organised around three Specific Objectives, scored through approximately 55-59 indicators, each combining an indicator-based grade with a qualitative narrative:

SO	Dimension assessed	What it measures
SO1	Legal and financial enabling environment	Registration, operation, freedoms of association/assembly/expression; state funding, fiscal framework, financial viability.
SO2	Public authority - civil society cooperation	Consultation and cooperation mechanisms, their mandate and effectiveness, inclusiveness (incl. HRBA-inclusive composition).
SO3	CSO capacity, sustainability and effectiveness	Organisational capacity, accountability, networking, and effectiveness in influence and service delivery.

Prior-year scores (2021-2024, particularly under SO3, are reference points only, not comparison baselines, due to inter-year methodological changes that widened the assessment's scope. For 2025, regional summary reports from the FRA Civic Space Update, ECF Civic Space Watch and the BCSDN Monitoring Matrix are appended where available for comparability, but not merged into the scoring.

Coordinators for IPA beneficiaries (and dedicated enabling-environment experts where needed) gather country-level evidence through a mixed-methods design: legal and desk review; structured online questionnaires targeting three groups (general CSOs, expert CSOs competent in the enabling environment, and public administration); key informant interviews; and focus groups. Evidence is processed through indicator-based scoring and qualitative narratives, verified through national validation meetings in June 2026 and internal Key Expert review, with working-draft consultation where agreed with EUDs. Internal or restricted Commission documents may inform data collection but are not cited.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - country-specific approach to the methodology

The 2025 assessment for Bosnia and Herzegovina is based on targeted desk review, survey data, specialised CSO input, key informant interviews and validation feedback. These sources are read together rather than in isolation. The desk review provides legal, policy and documentary evidence; the General

CSO Survey provides quantitative CSO percentages; the Specialised CSO Survey provides qualitative expert input used to confirm, nuance or challenge wider survey and desk-review findings; and the Public Institutions Survey provides an institutional perspective and a means of triangulation, not a substitute for CSO experience.

Evidence base at a glance

Instrument	Responses	Notes
General CSO Survey	43	43 in final export, used for respondent-level aggregation; denominators vary by question
Specialised CSO Survey	2	Circulated to expert CSOs and CSO networks; 2 substantive responses
Public Institutions Survey	8	2 state-level, 1 entity-level, 5 cantonal/local (of which 2 municipal or city administrations); no entries excluded
Key informant interviews	3	Qualitative triangulation; not statistically representative
Validation meeting	1	Online, 16 June 2026; 6 participants

Survey data

The General CSO Survey, which was publicly available and open to all CSOs was distributed from 20 May to 5 June 2026 via the Hajde4EU email database and platforms (LinkedIn¹, facebook²) the Civil Society Resource Centre³, the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina and national CSO networks, with targeted outreach to grassroots and local organisations. It was further disseminated to grassroots and local organisations through direct invitations and one-to-one follow-up by the Coordinator for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The questionnaire was anonymous and consisted for the most part of closed questions. As not every respondent answered every question, the number of valid answers typically decreases as the question-naire progresses. Unless stated otherwise, the percentages in this report are calculated against the valid responses to each question rather than the full sample. In total 43 valid responses from general CSOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina were recorded and used where respondent-level aggregation was required.

The Specialised CSO Survey was addressed to expert organisations and networks working on civil society enabling environment, governance, civic space and LGBTIQ+ rights. Its purpose was qualitative: to let expert voices confirm, qualify or push back against what the General CSO Survey and the desk review suggested. The two substantial responses received were used for triangulation and validation of the General CSO survey findings and desk-review analysis. The low number of substantive responses constrains the weight that can be placed on this instrument.

The Public Institutions Survey, in turn, went to central, regional or entity-level and local bodies with experience of working with CSOs. The eight responses received (two at state level, one at entity level, 5 at cantonal or local level, of which two were municipal or city administrations) offer the institutional side of the picture and a point of triangulation, but it is not a stand-in for the experience of civil society itself.

¹ Hajde4EU, LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/hajde4eu/>

² Hajde4EU, facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Hajde4EU>

³ Center for Civic Initiatives (CCI): <https://dev.creativocentar.ba/>

Respondent profile and reach

CSO respondents were distributed across Bosnia and Herzegovina rather than concentrated in a single centre. The most frequent locations were Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Tuzla and Mostar, with further responses from Zenica, Goražde, Bihać, Doboj, Travnik, Bugojno, Lukavac, Velika Kladuša, Kupres, Pale, Modriča, Istočno Novo Sarajevo, Ilidža, Bosansko Grahovo, Priboj, Lopare and Bijeljina. Of the 43 respondents to the General CSO Survey, 22 were men, 18 were women and three did not specify. Outreach included local administrations; however, the aggregate survey export did not allow systematic cross-tabulation by level of administration for all indicators.

Other relevant respondent information: *(Percentages as reported; totals may not sum to 100 due to rounding or multiple response options.)*

Bosnia and Herzegovina	
Type of CSO	90% registered association; 5% registered foundation; 2% unregistered organisation; 2% other
Scope of work	42% regional/sub-national/entity; 33% national; 14% local; 12% international
Position in the CSO	31% Executive director; 29% President; 19% Manager; 9% Project staff; 7% Vice president; 5% other
Thematic fields: top 5	56% community building and development; 47% human rights; 40% socio-economic development; 33% public participation in policy and decision-making; 33% social inclusion
Thematic fields: bottom 5	5% open data; 2% media and information; 2% consumer protection; 0% transport and urban development; 0% animal rights
Age	14% 18-35; 70% 36-65; 16% 66+

Key informant interviews

Three key informant interviews were integrated into the report. They were used as qualitative triangulation and are not treated as statistically representative evidence.

The first interview was held on 2 June 2026 with a Head of Department at the Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, focusing on the civil society strategy and its action plan, consultations, the Advisory Body, legal remedies and AML/CFT requirements. The second was held on 4 June 2026 with the Director of the Civil Society Promotion Centre, who also represents the Council of Ministers Advisory Body for Cooperation with CSOs, focusing on the civil society strategy, the Advisory Body, CSO participation, public funding, consultations and the enabling environment. The third was held on 8 June 2026 with a representative of the National Resource Centre for Civil Society, focusing on public consultations, CSO participation, public funding, local cooperation, donor funding and the enabling environment.

Validation

A validation meeting was held online on 16 June 2026 with six participants, representing the Centre for Investigative Journalism, the National Resource Centre, Transparency International BiH, the Local

Democracy Agency Mostar, the Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Hajde4EU Key Expert 3. Participants generally confirmed the preliminary findings and proposed changes, clarifications or additional explanations on selected issues. Feedback was used in particular to refine the findings on protection from threats and attacks, public funding, civil society cooperation strategies and the Advisory Body, and to clarify the interpretation of regional indicators in the context of the country's multi-level governance structure.

Interpretation and context

Survey results are interpreted as indicative findings and read together with the desk review, key informant interviews, the Public Institutions Survey and validation feedback. The findings should be read in the context of the decentralised constitutional structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of political polarisation during the reporting period. Relevant developments in 2025 include restrictive legislative initiatives in Republika Srpska, notably the adoption and subsequent invalidation of the Law on the Special Register and Publicity of the Work of Non-Profit Organisations; the adoption of the first state-level strategy for cooperation with civil society; the non-functioning of the Advisory Body during 2025; and reduced donor funding affecting the sector.



Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the 2025 assessment of Bosnia and Herzegovina's civil society environment against the DG NEAR Guidelines for EU Support to Civil Society in the Enlargement Region 2021-2027. The reporting period was shaped less by uniform change than by the country's decentralised structure, in which developments at the level of the Council of Ministers of BiH and in Republika Srpska diverged sharply. The defining event was the adoption in Republika Srpska of a Law on the Special Register and Publicity of the Work of Non-Profit Organisations, which classified foreign-funded CSOs as "agents of foreign influence" and was **struck down ab initio by the Constitutional Court of BiH in May 2025** as incompatible with the Constitution and Article 11 ECHR. Against this backdrop, the assessment finds constitutional safeguards that functioned in practice but did not remove the chilling effect of restrictive initiatives, alongside a **landmark first-ever state-level civil society cooperation strategy**, and a persistent gap between the generally positive self-assessments of public institutions and the markedly more critical experience reported by CSOs.

Specific Objective 1 - Conducive Environment for Civil Society

Specific Objective 1 examines whether the legal, institutional and financial environment enables civil society organisations to operate freely, independently and sustainably. It assesses the protection of the fundamental freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression, safeguards against undue interference, the proportionality of regulatory requirements, access to domestic and foreign funding, public financial and non-financial support, taxation, philanthropy and volunteering, as well as the overall enabling environment for both registered organisations and informal civic initiatives.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's legal framework continued to formally guarantee freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression in 2025, with no substantive change to the core rules, and the **core-freedoms score remained unchanged at "moderately meets standards."** The most consequential development was the Republika Srpska Law on the Special Register and Publicity of the Work of Non-Profit Organisations, **struck down ab initio by the Constitutional Court of BiH by Decision U-6/25 of 29 May 2025** as incompatible with Article 11 ECHR; the annulment confirmed that **constitutional safeguards functioned**, but the adoption of the law itself created legal uncertainty and a chilling effect, particularly in Republika Srpska.

Freedom of expression remained a concern, driven by the continued application of criminal defamation provisions in Republika Srpska, where **cumulative defamation complaints reached 206 by June 2025, up around 69% year-on-year**, and by unresolved SLAPP pressure, with the House of Peoples of the FBiH Parliament declining to adopt a draft anti-SLAPP civic-protection law. International assessments pointed to a mixed rather than uniformly deteriorating picture, with Freedom House rating the country Partly Free at 54/100, a slight improvement, and CIVICUS maintaining an "obstructed" classification.

Protection from threats and attacks weakened while formal remedies were held. The indicator on access to effective remedies remained at **"meets most standards"**. The constitutional review of the Republika Srpska Law showed that constitutional safeguards functioned in practice. The decision of the Constitutional Court of BiH was the key outcome, while separate proceedings initiated by CSOs before the Constitutional Court of Republika Srpska confirmed that CSOs were also able to use available legal remedies. However, the indicator on protection from threats, attacks and judicial harassment remained at **"minimally meets standards"**, reflecting a deterioration relative to 2024." Some 22% of surveyed CSOs reported that their organisation or members had experienced threats, physical attacks,

property damage, unlawful searches or interference with communications, up from 14% in 2024, while official complaints remained low at 12%. Republika Srpska amendments removing “gender identity” as a protected characteristic, the detention and home search of an investigative journalist later cleared by the Court of BiH, and findings by the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders regarding smear campaigns and self-censorship all pointed to **sustained pressure on activists, journalists and watchdog organisations**, only partly offset by a functioning network of contact persons for journalist safety.

The AML/CFT framework did not produce documented disproportionate restrictions and the indicator was **unchanged at “moderately meets standards.”** The 2024 Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing remained the main framework, with implementing by-laws adopted at end-2025, and no evidence was identified that AML/CFT rules were used to restrict legitimate CSO activity; MONEYVAL pressure and the FATF observation period concerned public institutions rather than CSOs, and a sectoral NPO risk assessment was initiated under the 2025-2027 OGP Action Plan but not yet completed. Survey evidence was mixed, with **no CSOs reporting judicial harassment** (an improvement) but 9% reporting funding-related discriminatory restrictions.

Small and unregistered organisations continued to operate lawfully without registration, with the relevant indicators unchanged at “meets most standards,” though such initiatives retain no legal personality and cannot independently access public funding or open accounts. Structural inequalities in participation persisted, with no CSO founded in 2015 or later holding working-group membership against 45.5% of older organisations, and a near four-fold gap in working-group access between larger and smaller organisations.

The legal framework for CSO funding remained broadly permissive, and **86% of CSOs reported no direct government interference in accessing funding**, though the 14% reporting at least one form of interference marked a sharp rise from 0% in 2024. Political pressure on foreign funding persisted, including announced investigations into USAID projects in Republika Srpska. Public financial support remained the sector’s central structural weakness: the system is **highly decentralised and fragmented, with no consolidated official register**, an estimated BAM 100 million-plus allocated annually across budget lines, and recurring audit findings of allocations made without public calls or measurable criteria. **Only 9% of CSOs assessed domestic public funding as transparent and fair**, a decline from 23% in 2024, the articulation-of-funding and award-transparency indicators remained at “minimally meets standards.” Tax incentives for giving and for CSO income remained partially enabling but unharmonised across jurisdictions, with scores unchanged.

Volunteering remained inadequately supported at the systemic level. There is **still no state-level law on volunteering**, no level of government adopted a dedicated volunteering strategy with allocated resources, and the relevant strategy indicator remained at “does not meet standards.” Only 13% of CSOs reported benefiting from state employment programmes and 4% from volunteering programmes, both broadly stable and well below 2021 levels, and CSO employment was estimated at approximately **0.62% of total employment**.

Specific Objective 2 - Cooperation and Partnership between CSOs and Public Institutions

Specific Objective 2 assesses whether civil society organisations are meaningfully involved in public decision-making processes and whether institutional mechanisms enable regular, transparent and inclusive dialogue between civil society and public authorities. The assessment covers the legal framework governing public consultations, the quality of consultation processes, participation in policy development and EU accession processes, as well as the effectiveness of institutional structures established to support government-civil society cooperation.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's consultation framework remained formally in place and showed more measurable activity at state level, but the indicator **remained at "minimally meets standards."** The state-level eConsultations platform recorded 454 consultations and 352 published reports, and Republika Srpska launched its own e-consultation platform in 2025, yet the European Commission noted that of only eight laws adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly, seven were passed under urgent procedure with civil society hardly consulted. A methodological refinement separating access to drafts from the minimum comment period revealed a striking gap between participation and quality: while **74% of CSOs reported involvement in at least one consultation, only 6.5% experienced a process meeting both effectiveness criteria simultaneously**, and selection of CSO representatives to working groups remained inconsistent and rarely based on public calls.

Public institutions' attitude towards civil society remained weak, with the indicator at **"does not meet standards."** Only **10% of CSOs assessed public institutions as supportive**, a decline from 20% in 2024, against seven of eight public institutions rating officials as very or sufficiently supportive, a pronounced institution-versus-CSO perception gap, partly affected by the addition of a "neutral" option in the 2025 survey.

The cooperation-strategy landscape saw the year's principal positive development. The Council of Ministers adopted the **first-ever state-level Strategy for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2025-2029, with a budgeted 2025-2026 Action Plan of BAM 789,000**, through a relatively inclusive process, raising the strategy-adoption and budgeted-action-plan indicators to "minimally meets standards." The reach of this progress is limited, however, since the Federation of BiH, Republika Srpska and Brčko District still lack their own valid strategies, and only 3% of CSOs assessed the new strategy as both relevant and effective, reflecting its recent adoption and BiH-level scope.

Institutional dialogue nonetheless deteriorated. The Advisory Body of the Council of Ministers for Cooperation with NGOs **was downgraded from "meets most standards" to "does not meet standards,"** as the previous composition's mandate expired, no new members were appointed by year-end, and the body held no regular structured meetings with the Council of Ministers, despite its outgoing members' contribution to drafting the new Strategy.

Specific Objective 3 - CSOs' Capacities and Resilience:

Specific Objective 3 assesses the organisational capacity, sustainability and resilience of civil society organisations. It examines internal governance, strategic and financial management, accountability, organisational learning, communication, evidence-based work, stakeholder engagement and financial sustainability, recognising that resilient civil society organisations require not only an enabling legal environment but also sound governance systems, professional management, diversified resources and the capacity to adapt to changing political, economic and social circumstances.

Internal governance indicators showed apparent improvement, **partly reflecting revised survey methodology**: 97% of CSOs reported having a governing body and all reported a governing document, up from 52% in 2024, raising the indicator to "meets most standards," while regular conflict-of-interest checks rose to 48% under a broadened question formulation. Transparency in sharing governance information moved in the opposite direction, **declining to 18%** of CSOs publishing all three key governance elements, from 32% in 2024, while an organisational gender-equality policy (53%) and an organisational strategy (67%) were more widely reported.

Communication and evidence-based practice remained strong. **All CSOs reported at least one online communication channel**, led by Facebook (93%), and media cooperation through partnerships rose to 47%. Some 93% of CSOs reported research-informed work, up from 74% in 2024, 90% engaged stakeholders through consultation or partnership, and network membership held at 83%, though

cross-sectoral partnerships with academia, social partners and the private sector fell to 43%, continuing a multi-year decline.

Funding diversification and human-resource sustainability presented persistent structural concerns despite some gains. **Some 63% of CSOs reported diversified donor income**, an improvement, and 83% raised at least some non-donor income, yet 37% remained dependent on a single dominant source and the **sector stayed heavily reliant on public and international funding**.

The share of CSOs employing paid staff **recovered to 69%**, from 58% in 2024, but comprehensive human-resource policies remained almost entirely absent, with **no organisation reporting the full set of nine listed policies**, essentially unchanged across every cycle. Public trust data, drawn from a non-comparable BH Journalists/FES survey rather than the unpublished Balkan Barometer, showed a **sharp fall to 17.3%**, and to just 1.8% in Republika Srpska, in the context of an intensified negative narrative against foreign-funded civil society.



IPA beneficiary Assessment

Specific Objective 1: A conducive environment for civil society to carry out its activities is in place.

SO 1.1 | All individuals and legal entities in the Enlargement Region can establish, join and participate in non-formal and/or registered organisations, can assemble peacefully and can express themselves freely.

Indicator 1.1.a – Extent to which relevant domestic legislation provides that:

- ➔ Associations can be established or registered without discrimination on any grounds.
- ➔ No unlawful restrictions are placed on the scope of their activities or pursuit of their objectives.
- ➔ Their termination may only occur following a decision by an independent and impartial court.
- ➔ No unlawful restrictions are placed on freedom of peaceful assembly.
- ➔ Freedom of expression is exercised by all, and no unlawful restrictions are imposed.

Year	Compliance
2025	3 – moderately meets standards
2024	3 – moderately meets standards
2023	3 – moderately meets standards
2021	4 – meets most standards

Despite heavy turbulence targeting the legal framework regulating freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression⁴, the framework did not substantially in 2025 and continues to formally allow individuals and legal entities to establish, register and participate in formal and non-formal organisations. The most significant development concerned the adoption of the Republika Srpska Law on the Special Register and Publicity of the Work of Non-Profit Organisations. However, by Decision No. U-6/25 of 29 May 2025, the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina⁵ found that the Law was not in line with the Constitution of BiH and Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights and declared it unconstitutional and repealed it. On 28 January 2026, the Constitutional Court of Republika Srpska subsequently suspended its own review proceedings, noting that the Law had ceased to be in force following the decision of the Constitutional Court of BiH⁶. This confirms that constitutional safeguards functioned in practice, although the adoption of the Law itself created uncertainty and a chilling effect among CSOs, particularly in Republika Srpska.

Freedom of peaceful assembly was generally respected in practice, with various public gatherings and protests taking place during 2025. However, the legal framework guaranteeing peaceful assembly

⁴ ECHR, Article 11

⁵ Constitutional Court of BiH 2025; Decision No. U-6/25

⁶ Constitutional Court of Republika Srpska 2026; Case No. U-35/25

remains fragmented across the countries' cantons and entities and often unevenly aligned with European standards. In Tuzla Canton, for example, reform of the law on peaceful assembly was ongoing, but the new law was not finally adopted. Structural concerns also remain particularly pronounced in Republika Srpska, where the applicable law on public assembly continues to be criticised as restrictive. The BiH Pride March was held in Sarajevo in 2025, mostly without reported incidents. Human Rights Watch's 2026 World Report, covering developments in 2025, points to weakened protection of gender identity in Republika Srpska through amendments to criminal legislation.⁷

Freedom of expression remains a concern, especially due to the continued application of criminal defamation provisions in Republika Srpska. By June 2025, the cumulative number of criminal complaints for alleged defamation and disclosure of personal and family circumstances in Republika Srpska had reached 206. Compared with 122 complaints recorded by August 2024, this represents an increase of 84 complaints, or approximately 69%.⁸ Although the precise annual number of complaints for 2025 is not publicly available in aggregated form, this increase confirms the continued suppression of journalists, activists and other public watchdog actors in Republika Srpska.⁹

Under the applicable laws on associations and foundations, associations and foundations may be deregistered from the register following a final administrative decision on termination, while any prohibition of their work may only be based on a final judgment of the competent court.

Freedom of expression and civic activism also remained affected by legal pressure, particularly through SLAPP lawsuits. Civil society monitoring indicates that SLAPP cases continue to create risks of self-censorship among journalists, activists and CSOs, while BiH still lacks a unified official register of SLAPP cases. According to the Aarhus Centre's SLAPP register, by June 2025 there were 11 documented lawsuits against environmental activists. In FBiH, the Draft Law on Civic Initiative and Protection of Citizens and Activists, prepared on the initiative of civil society, sought to regulate civic initiatives and introduce protection mechanisms, including an anti-SLAPP early dismissal mechanism for lawsuits aimed at intimidating citizens and activists acting in the public interest. However, although the Draft Law had entered parliamentary procedure, the House of Peoples of the Parliament of FBiH did not adopt it in July 2025.¹⁰ This represents a missed opportunity to strengthen legal protection for civic participation and public-interest activism in FBiH.

Overall, the situation regarding fundamental freedoms in 2025 remained mixed. The adoption of the Republika Srpska Law on the Special Register and Publicity of the Work of Non-Profit Organisations, together with the continued use of criminal defamation provisions and pressure on independent media and activists, contributed to uncertainty and had a deterrent effect on civic space.

International assessments also point to a mixed picture rather than clear deterioration. Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2026 report, which covers developments in 2025, rated Bosnia and Herzegovina as **Partly Free** with a score of 54/100, an improvement from 52/100 the previous year.¹¹ CIVICUS continued to classify BiH's civic space as "obstructed" with a score of 57/100¹², while Human Rights Watch's *World Report 2026* noted slow progress in human rights reforms, concerns regarding media freedom, and weakened legal protection of LGBTIQ+ persons in Republika Srpska. The European Civic Forum's *Civic Space Report 2026*¹³ places these developments in a wider European context, noting the spread of "foreign agents" legislation and rhetoric and growing restrictions on protest rights across Europe.



⁷ Human Rights Watch, World Report 2026: Bosnia and Herzegovina.

⁸ Buka.ba, 2025.

⁹ Gerila.info, 2025.

¹⁰ Federalna.ba 2025

¹¹ Freedom House, 2026

¹² CIVICUS Monitor – Bosnia and Herzegovina

¹³ European Civic Forum, 2026

SO 1.2 | Public authorities protect CSOs from interference and attacks and respect their right to privacy.

Indicator 1.2.a – Extent to which CSOs have access to an effective remedy to challenge or seek review of decisions affecting exercise of their rights.

Year	Compliance
2025	4 – meets most standards
2024	4 – meets most standards
2023	4 – meets most standards
2021	4 – meets most standards

The legal framework providing CSOs with access to judicial, administrative and constitutional remedies did not substantially change in 2025. CSOs continue to have formal access to legal remedies under criminal, civil and administrative procedure legislation at the state, entity and Brčko District levels. The clearest example of an effective remedy in 2025 was the constitutional review of the Republika Srpska Law on the Special Register and Publicity of the Work of Non-Profit Organisations. By Decision No. U-6/25 of 29 May 2025¹⁴, the Constitutional Court of BiH found the Law incompatible with Article II/3.i) of the Constitution of BiH and Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights, and invalidated the contested Law ab initio, determining that it ceased to be valid from the date of its publication in the “Official Gazette of Republika Srpska” No. 19/25. The Constitutional Court of Republika Srpska subsequently suspended its own proceedings on 28 January 2026, noting that the Law had ceased to be in force¹⁵. The proceedings before the Constitutional Court of Republika Srpska were initiated by CSOs and individuals, including the Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly Banja Luka and Capital.ba, which confirms that CSOs were able to use available legal remedies in practice.

However, while legal remedies formally exist, their practical effectiveness remains uneven and depends on the circumstances of each case. At the same time, broader concerns regarding the functioning of the judiciary, including the duration of proceedings, perceived politicisation and limited public trust in judicial institutions, may affect the extent to which remedies are perceived and used as effective tools by CSOs.

According to the 2025 CSO Survey, 24% of CSOs stated that government authorities had taken decisions negatively affecting their organisation’s ability to exercise its rights, compared with 21% in 2024 and 19% in both 2023 and 2021. Conversely, 76% of CSOs reported that no such decisions had been taken in 2025. This indicates a slight increase in reported negative decisions compared with previous years, while the formal legal framework for challenging such decisions remained in place.

¹⁴ Ibid, footnote 1.

¹⁵ Ibid, footnote 2.

Survey Results

	% CSOs saying the government did not take any decisions that negatively impacted their ability to exercise their rights	% CSOs saying the government took decisions that negatively impacted their ability to exercise their rights
2025	76%	24%
2024	79%	21%
2023	81%	19%
2021	81%	19%

Indicator 1.2.b – Extent to which CSOs are protected by law from threats, attacks, judicial harassment and discriminatory treatment, in particular:

threats including intimidation, harassment, defamation, as well as hate speech online and offline

attacks including acts of violence, physical abuse, searches and damage to property

judicial harassment including arbitrary arrest and detention, unlawful interference with communications, and abuse of criminal, civil and administrative proceedings, or threats thereof

discriminatory treatment, including disproportionate reporting requirements for CSOs.

Year	Compliance
2025	2 – minimally meets standards
2024	2 – minimally meets standards
2023	2 – minimally meets standards
2021	3 – moderately meets standards

The legal framework concerning the protection of CSOs from threats, attacks, judicial harassment and discriminatory treatment did not substantially change in 2025. As in previous years, CSOs are mainly protected through general provisions of criminal, civil, administrative and anti-discrimination legislation, including criminal codes, criminal procedure laws, civil and administrative procedure laws, anti-discrimination laws, gender equality laws, and defamation laws in the Federation of BiH and Brčko District. However, there are still no specific protection mechanisms tailored to the risks faced by CSOs, activists, human rights defenders and journalists.

In 2025, pressures continued through legislative initiatives and the criminal-law framework, particularly in Republika Srpska. In the same period, amendments to the Republika Srpska Criminal Code were adopted, introducing a new criminal offence of “failure to respect or enforce decisions of the institutions or bodies of Republika Srpska”. The Constitutional Court of BiH found in May 2025 that this law was also contrary to the Constitution of BiH. This pattern, in which restrictive measures are proposed or adopted, and subsequently annulled or withdrawn but with a chilling effect already produced, indicates that legal and political pressure on civil society was not an isolated incident.

Although the precise annual number of complaints for 2025 is not publicly available in aggregated form, the increase in criminal defamation complaints noted under Indicator 1.1.a confirms the continued use of the criminal-law framework in a way that may discourage public engagement.

A concrete example of possible criminal-law pressure was recorded in August 2025, when investigative journalist Nataša Miljanović-Zubac was detained and the family home of her parents was searched in proceedings concerning the alleged disclosure of classified information.¹⁶ The Court of BiH later rejected the Prosecutor's Office's request to impose prohibitive measures against her, finding that there was no grounded suspicion that she had committed a criminal offence.¹⁷ This case illustrates a pattern in which criminal proceedings and related investigative actions may be used as a means of pressure against actors publishing information about possible irregularities.

The findings of the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders from June 2025 further confirm that legal and political pressures are relevant for civil society in BiH. The Special Rapporteur expressed concern about the deterioration of the environment for human rights defenders, particularly in Republika Srpska, noting that human rights defenders and independent journalists were exposed to mass smear campaigns and stigmatisation by high level authorities. She also noted that the Republika Srpska Law on the Special Registry and Publicity of the Work of Non-Profit Organisations provided for the classification of CSOs receiving foreign funding and deemed to carry out "political actions or political activities" as "agents of foreign influence", as well as for the creation of a special register for such CSOs. Although the Law was later invalidated *ab initio* and the register was not established in practice, environmental defenders remained concerned that their work could be considered "political" at any moment and that they could therefore be included in such a register, despite the Law's formal exception for environmental CSOs. She specifically pointed to the targeting of persons defending the right to a healthy environment, who are threatened with lengthy and costly SLAPP lawsuits, as well as to increased self-censorship among environmental defenders and journalists following the recriminalisation of defamation in Republika Srpska.¹⁸ In July 2025, the House of Peoples of the Parliament of FBiH did not adopt the Draft Law on Civic Initiative and Protection of Citizens and Activists, which was intended to introduce a mechanism for the early dismissal of SLAPP lawsuits. As a result, specific anti-SLAPP protection for activists, journalists and CSOs has still not been established.

LGBTIQ+ organisations and activists remained particularly exposed to risks. In Republika Srpska, amendments to the Criminal Code were adopted in 2025 removing the term "gender identity" as a protected characteristic from relevant provisions, including those concerning hate crimes and hate speech.¹⁹ CSOs working to protect the rights of LGBTIQ+ persons assessed these amendments as a further step in the erosion of legal protection. This development should be viewed together with the continued impunity for the 2023 attack on LGBTIQ+²⁰ activists in Banja Luka, as also noted by the UN Special Rapporteur²¹.

Pressures were not limited to Republika Srpska. In the Federation of BiH, the proposed Article 193a of the amendments to the FBiH Criminal Code, which would have criminalised the unauthorised publication of documents, photographs and recordings of a personal nature, raised concerns among the journalistic community and CSOs about possible restrictions on investigative reporting and the publication of information in the public interest. This provision was not included in the final adopted text of the law, following criticism by the media community and civil society.²²

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¹⁶ Federalna.ba, 2025

¹⁷ Detektor.ba, 2025a

¹⁸ OHCHR, 2025.

¹⁹ Detektor.ba, 2025b

²⁰ Diskriminacija.ba, 2023

²¹ Ibid., footnote 19.

²² Media.ba, 2025.

The European Commission concluded in its 2025 Report on BiH²³ that civic space had narrowed further due to reduced donor funding and restrictive legislation in Republika Srpska, including the law labelling civil society organisations as “foreign agents” and criminal defamation sanctions, which continue to have a chilling effect. The Commission also stated that human rights defenders and activists working on sensitive issues, including anti-corruption, women’s rights, LGBTIQ+ rights, migrants’ rights and environmental protection, continued to be exposed to attacks, threats, harassment, verbal abuse, physical attacks and SLAPP lawsuits, and that the authorities neither condemned nor adequately investigated such attacks.

A positive development is that the network of contact persons for the safety of journalists in prosecutors’ offices and police agencies, established in the period 2023–2024, continued to function during 2025. The 2024 report noted that, by the end of May 2024, a total of 32 contact persons had been appointed in prosecutors’ offices and police administrations, with the task of recording threats against journalists, ensuring urgent action and monitoring attacks. In February 2025, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH organised a working meeting with contact points in prosecutors’ offices and police agencies for the safety of journalists, confirming the continuation of institutional work in this area.²⁴ However, this mechanism is still not sufficient to ensure full and effective protection, particularly in cases of online violence, political pressure and long-term intimidation campaigns.

Although the situation deteriorated compared with 2024, the indicator is assessed as minimally meeting standards rather than not meeting standards. General legal protection mechanisms formally exist and, in some cases, have been used to protect civic space, including through constitutional review of restrictive measures. However, these safeguards are not sufficient to ensure effective protection in practice. The deterioration in 2025 is reflected in the chilling effect of restrictive legislative initiatives in Republika Srpska, the continuing impact of criminal defamation provisions and legal pressure against public-interest actors, the vulnerability of activists, journalists, informal initiatives and watchdog organisations, and the absence of specific and effective institutional mechanisms tailored to their protection. The formal annulment or withdrawal of restrictive measures did not fully remove their deterrent effect, and there is no guarantee that similar initiatives or forms of pressure will not re-emerge in the future. For these reasons, while the situation does not amount to a complete absence of protection, the existing framework provides only minimal protection in practice; hence the scoring is the same this year at 2 (minimally meets standards).

Indicator 1.2.c – Proportion of CSOs that operate effectively without threats, attacks, judicial harassment in terms of:

- ➔ number of complaints concerning lack of protection of CSOs;
- ➔ number of attacks on CSOs and their members;
- ➔ number of instances of damage to property;
- ➔ number of instances of discriminatory treatment in reporting;
- ➔ number of instances when CSO offices were unlawfully searched, or subjected to inspections;
- ➔ number of instances of interference with the communications of CSOs.

According to the 2025 General CSO Survey, 22% of CSOs reported that their organisation or its members had experienced threats, physical attacks, property damage, unlawful searches or interference with their communications. This is considerably higher than 2024 and 2021, when the result was 14%, and lower than in 2023, when 26% of CSOs reported such experiences. 72% of responding CSOs stated that they did not experience such situations.

• • • • •
²³ European Commission, 2025.

²⁴ Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of BiH, 2025.

Among the reported incidents in 2025, 17% of CSOs stated that their organisation or their members faced verbal threats, 6% physical attacks, 14% interference with communications, while 11% reported property damage and 11% reported unlawful or excessive searches or inspections. In addition, 9% reported smear campaigns and 9% reported discriminatory restrictions as a consequence of receiving funding from a particular source. No respondents reported judicial harassment for alleged connections with extremism, terrorism, money laundering or corruption

In 2025, 12% of CSOs reported that they or their members had submitted an official complaint concerning lack of protection. This is slightly higher than in 2024, when approximately 9% of CSOs that had experienced threats reported submitting complaints, and comparable to 2023, when the corresponding figure was approximately 10%. In 2021, the figure was approximately 4%.

The results suggest that the proportion of CSOs reporting threats or physical attacks slightly increased compared with 2024. However, the comparatively low level of official complaints, together with the wider findings under Indicator 1.2.b, indicates that many CSOs may still lack confidence in institutional protection mechanisms or may choose not to report incidents. Comparable data for interference with CSO communications were not separately reported for 2023 and 2021 in the 2024 assessment.

Survey Results

	% CSOs saying that their organisation or its members were subject to threats or physical attacks, property damage, unlawful searches or interference with communications	% CSOs that submitted an official complaint	% CSOs saying that the authorities interfered with the communications of their CSO
2025	22%	12%	14%
2024	14%	9%	Not reported
2023	26%	10%	Not reported
2021	14%	4%	Not reported

SO 1.3 | Measures used to fight extremism, terrorism, money laundering or corruption are targeted and proportionate in line with the risk-based approach, and respect human rights standards on freedom of association, assembly and expression.

Indicator 1.3.a – Extent to which laws to combat extremism, terrorism, money-laundering and corruption do not unduly restrict legitimate activities of CSOs.

Year	Compliance
2025	3 – moderately meets standards
2024	3 – moderately meets standards
2023	2 – minimally meets standards
2021	2 – minimally meets standards

The legal framework for combating extremism, terrorism, money laundering and corruption did not produce documented disproportionate restrictions on the legitimate activities of civil society organisations in 2025. The new Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing, adopted in 2024, remained the main legal framework in this area. Compliance requirements under this Law were not identified as an obstacle to the legitimate activities of CSOs. Compared with 2024, when the implementing by-laws necessary for full implementation had not yet been adopted, further progress was made in 2025, as the Council of Ministers of BiH adopted the Rulebook on the Implementation of the Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing²⁵ at its 98th session, held on 30 December 2025.²⁶

During 2025, Bosnia and Herzegovina was under increased institutional and international pressure to improve its anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing system, particularly following MONEYVAL findings (dated 12/2024, published 02/2025) and the start of the FATF observation period (started 02/2025). MONEYVAL pointed, among other issues, to weaknesses related to the NPO sector, including the fact that BiH had not conducted a specific assessment of the risk of misuse of the NPO sector for terrorist financing and had not clearly identified the subset of NPOs that falls under the FATF functional definition.²⁷ However, this pressure primarily concerned public institutions and the need to strengthen the regulatory and supervisory framework. No evidence was identified that AML/CFT rules were used in 2025 to restrict the legitimate work of CSOs, or that laws against extremism, terrorism, money laundering or corruption were used to target CSOs or activists.

A positive development was that the 2025–2027 OGP Action Plan, adopted in 2025, envisaged the preparation of a Risk assessment of the vulnerability of the non-profit sector to misuse for terrorist financing. The implementation timeline envisaged risk-identification activities during September–November 2025, followed by institutional cooperation and further activities in 2026. During the 2025 reference period, the process had therefore been initiated, but the risk assessment had not yet been completed or operationalised. The procedure for selecting experts for this activity was initiated in 2025 with support from the EU4 Civil Society (EU4CS) project.²⁸ This approach is relevant for addressing the weaknesses identified by MONEYVAL, as it moves towards a sectoral risk assessment and future

²⁵ “Official Gazette of BiH” no. 41/25

²⁶ Council of Ministers of BiH, 2025a

²⁷ MONEYVAL, 2025.

²⁸ Open Government Partnership, 2025.

targeted and proportionate measures for potentially higher-risk parts of the NPO sector, rather than introducing general and disproportionate obligations for all CSOs.

In April and May 2025, four training sessions for CSOs were organised through the EU4CS project in Tuzla, Bihać, Zenica and Trebinje on beneficial ownership, anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing.²⁹ These activities contributed to a better understanding of AML/CFT obligations and standards and represented a continuation of an approach in which strengthening CSO compliance is combined with education and support, rather than restrictive measures.

In view of the above, laws and measures in the area of combating extremism, terrorism, money laundering and corruption did not unduly restrict the legitimate activities of CSOs in 2025. However, the situation did not substantially change in practice compared with 2024. While the legal and policy direction is positive, the full operationalisation of the risk-based approach towards the NPO/CSO sector had not yet been completed during the reference period, particularly in relation to the completion and adoption of the sectoral risk assessment and the identification of the FATF-relevant NPO subset. The actual effects of the new framework, including its implementation in practice, still need to be assessed before the score can be increased.

Indicator 1.3.b – Proportion of CSOs whose ability to undertake legitimate activities is not restricted by the implementation of laws to combat extremism, terrorism, money-laundering and corruption, and in particular by:

- ➔ Being judicially harassed for their alleged connections with extremism, terrorism, money-laundering and corruption
- ➔ Discriminatory restrictions placed on funding
- ➔ Authorities or banks preventing them from opening bank accounts, sending or receiving money

According to the 2025 General CSO Survey, no CSOs reported that their organisation or members had been subjected to judicial harassment for alleged connections with extremism, terrorism, money laundering or corruption. This confirms that no survey evidence was identified in 2025 suggesting that laws or measures in these areas were used to judicially harass CSOs, which is an improvement compared with previous years (3% in 2024, 9% in 2023 and 6% in 2021). Overall, 11% responding CSOs reported having one form of restriction in 2025, with 89% having none.

At the same time, 9% of CSOs reported discriminatory restrictions as a consequence of receiving funding from a particular source. In 2024, 3% of CSOs reported such restrictions, compared with 10% in 2023 and 9% in 2021. This suggests a higher reported level of funding-related discriminatory restrictions than in 2024, although the figure remains below the 2023 level.

Regarding banking and financial operations, 3% of CSOs reported being prevented from opening bank accounts, sending or receiving money. In the 2025 survey, these issues were captured as one combined response option. In 2024, as in previous years, no respondents reported being prevented by government authorities or banks from opening a bank account, or sending or receiving money, which shows that such restrictions have begun to appear and should be closely monitored in upcoming years.

The key informant interviews broadly confirmed these findings. They did not identify cases in 2025 in which AML/CFT regulations, banking practices, anti-corruption, counter-terrorism or anti-extremism measures restricted legitimate CSO activities. Overall, while a small share of CSOs reported funding-related discriminatory restrictions, there is no evidence that the implementation of AML/CFT or related legislation systematically restricted legitimate CSO activities in 2025.

²⁹ Ministry of Justice of BiH, 2025a

Survey Results

	% CSOs saying their members were subject to judicial harassment	% CSOs saying their organisation had been subjected to discriminatory restrictions	% CSOs saying they could not open a bank account or faced restrictions on sending/receiving money
2025	0%	9%	3%
2024	3%	3%	0%
2023	9%	10%	0%
2021	6%	9%	0%

SO 1.4 | Public authorities treat all CSOs equally with regards to their operations, and equitably with other entities (such as businesses).

Indicator 1.4.a – Extent to which laws:

- ➔ Do not require CSOs to submit more reports and information than businesses.
- ➔ Do not subject CSOs to more inspections and sanctions than business entities, all else being equal.

Year	Compliance
2025	5 – fully meets standards
2024	4 – meets most standards
2023	4 – meets most standards
2021	5 – fully meets standards

The legal framework regulating reporting, information submission, inspections and sanctions applicable to CSOs did not change in 2025. The relevant laws and obligations remained the same as in 2024, and no new legal provisions were identified that would require CSOs to submit more reports or information than comparable business entities, or subject them to more inspections or sanctions. With the Law on the Special Register and Publicity of the Work of Nonprofit Organisations being repealed by the Constitutional Court, **restrictive initiatives of this kind having driven the score decrease since 2023**, the overall framework has returned to a situation where there is no formal legal discrimination against civil society in terms of operational obligations. Hence its score is reinstated as 5 - fully meets standards.

SO 1.5 | Central and/or local public authorities have enabling policies and rules for small community organisations and civic initiatives (grassroots organisations)

Indicator 1.5.a – Small community/local organisations and civic initiatives are allowed to operate by law without registering.

Year	Compliance
2025	4 – meets most standards
2024	4 – meets most standards
2023	4 – meets most standards
2021	4 – meets most standards

No significant changes were identified in 2025.

In summary, the legal framework in BiH continues to allow small community organisations, local civic initiatives and informal citizen groups to operate without formal registration. There are no legal provisions requiring such initiatives to register in order to organise civic actions, public campaigns, petitions, public discussions or other forms of informal civic engagement.

Unregistered initiatives, however, do not have legal personality, and hence cannot act as legal entities, open organisational bank accounts, conclude contracts in their own name, formally apply for public funding, or assume legal rights and obligations in the same way as registered associations or foundations.

Indicator 1.5.b – In law, unregistered small community/local organisations and civic initiatives enjoy the same right to participation in decision-making processes as registered CSOs.

Year	Compliance
2025	4 – meets most standards
2024	4 – meets most standards
2023	4 – meets most standards
2021	4 – meets most standards

No significant changes were identified in 2025 in the legal framework regulating the participation of unregistered small community organisations, local organisations and civic initiatives in decision-making processes.

As in the previous reporting period, the applicable rules do not contain formal restrictions preventing unregistered initiatives or informal citizen groups from participating in public consultations, public hearings or other forms of participation in decision-making processes.

SO 1.6 | All CSOs are free to solicit and receive funding.

Indicator 1.6.a – Extent to which relevant laws allow CSOs to seek a broad range of funding, including from abroad, without undue restrictions as regards

- ➔ cash and in-kind donations from all sources
- ➔ funding from domestic public bodies
- ➔ funding from institutional, corporate or individual donors
- ➔ funding from foreign governments or multilateral agencies

Year	Compliance
2025	3 – moderately meets standards
2024	3 – moderately meets standards
2023	3 – moderately meets standards
2021	4 – meets most standards

The legal framework regulating the right of CSOs to seek and receive funding did not substantially change in 2025. Applicable laws at the state, entity and Brčko District levels continue to allow CSOs to receive cash and in-kind donations from domestic and foreign sources, including funding from domestic public institutions, institutional donors, corporate and individual donors, foreign governments and multilateral agencies. No legal amendments were identified in 2025 that would restrict the right of CSOs to raise their own funds, participate in public calls, receive foreign donations or cooperate with foreign and international donors.

However, the political and regulatory environment in 2025 continued to create pressure on organisations receiving funding from abroad, particularly in Republika Srpska. The Republika Srpska Law on the Special Register and Publicity of the Work of Non-Profit Organisations, although later invalidated ab initio by the Constitutional Court of BiH, created concern and legal uncertainty among organisations receiving funding from foreign donors until it was annulled. Additional pressure was generated by public announcements of investigations into USAID projects in BiH, with the President of Republika Srpska announcing that RS authorities would conduct checks of all transfers and USAID activities, while claiming that funds had mostly gone to non-governmental organisations.³⁰ Such statements did not amount to a formal legal prohibition on funding, but may have contributed to a chilling effect and fear of receiving foreign funds.

No evidence was identified that banks, tax authorities or other institutions systematically restricted CSOs in opening bank accounts, receiving donations, foreign grants or transfers in 2025 due to the nature of their funding. No legal provisions were identified that would cause CSOs to lose tax benefits, be subject to additional taxation, or submit special reports solely because they receive funding from foreign governments, multilateral agencies or international donors.

In view of the above, applicable laws continue to allow CSOs to seek and receive a broad range of funding, including funding from abroad. However, political pressure on foreign funding and attempts to introduce a special oversight regime for organisations receiving foreign funds justify maintaining the assessment at the same level as in 2024.

³⁰ Avaz.ba, 2025

Indicator 1.6.b – Proportion of CSOs that can access a broad range of funding without undue government interference.

In 2025, 86% of responding CSOs did not report direct government interference affecting their access to funding. Conversely, 14% reported at least one form of interference relevant to access to funding, including arbitrary audit or inspection, requirement to register as a foreign agent, or freezing of assets.

More specifically, 11% of responding CSOs reported arbitrary audit or inspection and 3% reported a requirement to register as a foreign agent.

When compared with exact criteria to previous years, there is a considerable increase in the proportion of CSOs experiencing such interferences. This is 14% in 2025, while it was 0% in 2024, 2% in 2023, and 3% in 2021, indicating a more difficult environment.

Although the survey has its limitations, the reported cases are sufficiently relevant to indicate the need for closer monitoring and further analysis, particularly given the increase compared with previous assessment years.

SO 1.7 | Public financial and non-financial support to CSOs is available in IPA beneficiaries, and provided in a transparent, accountable, fair and non-discriminatory manner.

Indicator 1.7.a – The level of public funding available for CSOs and associations is clearly articulated in laws and regulations, and the rights and duties of the state body invested with the ability to set and revise the level of public funding available is clearly defined in law.

Year	Compliance
2025	2 – minimally meets standards
2024	1 – does not meet standards
2023	1 – does not meet standards
2021	1 – does not meet standards

Available evidence shows that public funding for CSOs and associations in BiH exists at all levels of government and is generally planned through budgets, economic codes, spending programmes, public calls and individual decisions of competent authorities. The methodology of Transparency International (TI) BiH’s “NVO Transparentno” database shows that data on allocated funds can be tracked through freedom of information requests, official gazettes, public procurement databases and government websites.³¹ At the same time, the way in which data has to be collected confirms that there is no single official and consolidated system for monitoring public funding of CSOs.

The existence of public funding is also confirmed by TI BiH data, according to which approximately 3,100 grants were awarded in 2024 from state and entity-level institutions to 2,052 NGOs, with a total value of approximately BAM 46 million (approximately EUR 23.5 million).³² However, the same source also points to significant weaknesses, including allocations without public calls and clearly defined criteria, as well as political links among some beneficiaries of public funds.

³¹ Transparency International BiH

³² Odogovorno.st, 2026

At the level of the Federation of BiH (FBiH), public funding of non-profit organisations is clearly visible through budget categories and budget execution reports. The 2025 Budget Execution Report of the Federation of BiH states that current transfers to non-profit organisations amounted to BAM 41.05 million (EUR 20.5 million), representing 93% of planned funds and an increase of 6% compared with 2024. The report also shows that some transfers to non-profit organisations were executed on the basis of decisions of the Government of FBiH published in the Official Gazette of FBiH, including the distribution of part of the revenues from lottery games in the total amount of BAM 3.499 million (EUR 1.8 million).³³

At the same time, available audit and analytical sources confirm that the system remains fragmented and that the level of public funding is not presented in a sufficiently consolidated or comparable manner. The Audit Office of the Institutions in FBiH reported that current transfers to non-profit organisations³⁴ in the 2024 FBiH budget amounted to BAM 38.62 million (EUR 19.7 million), which confirms the existence of a budget category for such funding. However, the same audit also identified weaknesses in allocation procedures, including the lack of clear and measurable criteria, documentation proving fulfilment of criteria, and objective scoring mechanisms.³⁵

The policy brief on transparency of CSO financing from public budgets in BiH states that more than BAM 100 million (EUR 51 million) is allocated annually to CSOs from public budgets, and that funds are distributed through different budget lines, including current transfers and grants, current donations, capital transfers, intervention funds and budget reserves.³⁶ The same policy brief concludes that allocation upon individual request, without a competitive procedure or public call, remains a dominant practice, and that even where public calls are used, audit reports frequently identify the absence of clear and measurable scoring criteria.

The evidence shows that a legal and budgetary basis for funding CSOs exists, but that the system remains highly decentralised, fragmented, uneven and without a consolidated public overview of the total level of funding available to CSOs. This has been a persistent weakness over several assessment years, including 2025. The level of public funding is not clearly articulated in a comprehensive, comparable or easily accessible manner across all levels of government, and available information often has to be reconstructed from budgets, budget execution reports, public calls, government decisions, audit reports and external monitoring initiatives.

At the same time, the situation cannot be assessed as a complete absence of regulation or budgetary articulation across the whole country. Even though fragmented and uneven, there are examples of cases where the amount, purpose and a competent authority responsible for allocating public funding can be identified through budgets, spending programmes, public calls or official decisions. For this reason, the situation is assessed as minimally meeting standards: the basic legal and budgetary framework exists in parts of the system, but it remains insufficiently clear, uniform and transparent at country level.

Indicator 1.7.b – Percentage of public budget actually disbursed to CSOs in a year.

At the time of preparing the 2025 assessment, it was not possible to calculate a single reliable consolidated percentage of public budgets actually disbursed to CSOs across Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is due to the highly decentralised budget system and uneven availability of 2025 budget execution reports. Some reports were available for the full year, some only for the first half of the year or first three quarters, while others had not yet been published.

³³ Federal Ministry of Finance of FBiH, 2026.

³⁴ It should be noted, however, that in the context of public budget allocations, the term “non-profit organisations” covers a broader range of beneficiaries than CSOs alone, including certain public institutions, religious organisations, and similar entities that do not necessarily fall within the understanding of CSOs in the context of this assessment.

³⁵ Audit Office of the Institutions in FBiH, 2025.

³⁶ GEA, 2023

The assessment therefore relied on available budget execution reports and the NVO Transparentno monitoring platform.³⁷ According to Transparency International BiH's methodology, the NVO Transparentno database collects data on public funding of associations and foundations through freedom of information requests, official gazettes, public procurement databases and websites of public authorities. However, Transparency International BiH notes that, due to the way data are collected, it does not guarantee the full accuracy of the published data, meaning the platform should be used as a monitoring source rather than an official consolidated budget execution report.

According to the latest available data from 2024, approximately 3,100 grants were awarded by state and entity-level institutions to 2,052 CSOs, with a total value of approximately BAM 46 million³⁸. Since no comparable official register of CSO grants exists at any level of government in BiH, the NVO Transparentno database remains one of the key available tools for monitoring public funding allocated to CSOs in BiH. Therefore, while public funds were clearly disbursed to CSOs in 2025, a single reliable official percentage for BiH could not be determined.

Indicator 1.7.c – Extent to which legal provisions regulating the award of public funding to CSOs ensure that:

- ➔ funding criteria are clearly defined, objective and publicly announced
- ➔ evaluation of proposals is clear and impartial
- ➔ conflict of interest is clearly regulated
- ➔ reporting requirements are clear and proportionate

Year	Compliance
2025	2 – minimally meets standards ³⁹
2024	3 – moderately meets standards
2023	3 – moderately meets standards
2021	3 – moderately meets standards

Although formal rules and guidelines exist, public funding of CSOs remains generally fragmented and insufficiently transparent in practice. The main problem is not only the absence of legal provisions, but their inconsistent application across institutions and levels of government. This is also reflected in the 2025 CSO survey, in which only 9% of responding CSOs considered domestic public funding to be transparent and fair, while 91% assessed it negatively.

Financial audit reports for the 2025 fiscal year provide concrete evidence of these weaknesses.⁴⁰ In the Federation of BiH, audit findings identified several cases in which transfers to non-profit organisations, associations or similar beneficiaries were awarded without clear and measurable criteria, without public calls, with insufficiently documented evaluation or without full application of the FBiH Guidelines on minimum standards for awarding budget funds through transfers and subsidies. For example, the

³⁷ Ibid., footnote 27.

³⁸ Ibid., footnote 28.

³⁹ The validation focus group also criticised the earlier scores for this indicator, noting that it may have overstated the extent to which public funding procedures were clear, consistently applied and genuinely competitive. For the sake of continuity, previous scores are not retroactively changed. However, the 2025 score reflects both the available 2025 evidence and the validation finding that the practical application of public funding procedures remains fragmented, inconsistent and insufficiently transparent.

⁴⁰ Audit Office of the Institutions in FBiH, 2026

Audit Office found that at least BAM 1.6 million under the Federal Ministry for Veterans Affairs was distributed without clear and measurable criteria and without documentation proving fulfilment of the criteria. It also found that BAM 350,000 for the Youth Sports Games was allocated to a pre-defined association without a public call, making it impossible to assess the application of the criteria. In addition, BAM 148,500 of parliamentary transfers to non-profit organisations was awarded without applying minimum procedures such as a public call, appointment of commissions, contracting and public disclosure of awarded funds. The audit of the President and Vice-Presidents of FBiH also found insufficiently measurable criteria, incomplete publication of awards and non-application of the Guidelines in relation to BAM 353,800 in transfers to non-profit organisations.

If capital transfers to non-profit organisations are also taken into account, the audited amount affected by weak criteria and possible subjective assessment is higher, including BAM 2.995 million under the Federal Ministry of Culture and Sports. These examples show that minimum standards are not consistently applied even at the FBiH level, while the broader system remains uneven across the state, entities, cantons and local governments.

Similar problems have also been documented at the local level. A Center for Civic Initiatives (CCI) analysis of 29 local self-government units found that, in the period 2021–2023, only around one quarter of CSO funding was awarded through public calls, while a significant share continued to be distributed outside public calls or through less transparent procedures. Although these data do not refer to 2025, they confirm the systemic nature of the problem and are consistent with the 2025 audit, survey and validation findings.

Taken together, these findings show that the formal existence of rules and guidelines has not ensured their consistent and transparent application in practice. Public funding procedures remain fragmented, with recurring weaknesses in the definition and application of criteria, documentation of evaluation, use of public calls, conflict-of-interest safeguards, reporting and monitoring. As a result, the legal and procedural framework only minimally ensures clear, objective, impartial and proportionate allocation of public funds to CSOs.

Indicator 1.7.d – Central governments make the information on awards publicly available and sufficiently detailed to identify individual awards.

Year	Compliance
2025	2 – minimally meets standards
2024	2 – minimally meets standards
2023	2 – minimally meets standards
2021	2 – minimally meets standards

No centralised official register of public funding awards to CSOs existed in BiH in 2025. Information on awards is published by individual institutions at different levels of government, but the system remains fragmented, non-standardised and difficult to monitor. Given that hundreds of public institutions in BiH allocate public funds, it is not possible to determine comprehensively how many of them publish award information or whether the published information is consistently sufficiently detailed.

As a positive example, Sarajevo Canton has published an online Register of Transfers to Non-Profit Organisations and Individuals from the Sarajevo Canton Budget⁴¹, which provides publicly accessible

⁴¹ <https://www.anticorruptiks.com/registar-transfera>

information on allocated transfers and represents an important transparency measure at the cantonal level. However, this remains an isolated example and does not address the broader lack of comprehensive and standardised public data on public funding of CSOs across all levels of government.

A positive normative development at FBiH level was the adoption of the 2024 Guidelines on minimum standards for allocation of budget funds through transfers and subsidies, which include requirements related to planning, selection, contracting, monitoring, evaluation, public disclosure of data and reporting.⁴² However, the available evidence does not allow a reliable assessment of whether these Guidelines already resulted in more consistent or higher-quality publication of award data in 2025. Some institutions may have published such information before the adoption of the Guidelines, and publication practices remain uneven across institutions. The Guidelines therefore represent a relevant improvement in the regulatory framework, but not yet sufficient evidence of a systemic improvement in practice. For this reason, the adoption of the Guidelines supports maintaining the assessment at “minimally meets standards”, but does not yet provide a sufficient basis for upgrading the indicator.

The NVO Transparentno database⁴³ remains an important civil society monitoring source, as it collects data from freedom of information requests, official gazettes, public procurement databases and government websites. However, the need to reconstruct data from multiple sources confirms the absence of a comprehensive official system. Therefore, while information on individual awards is often publicly available, it is not published in a uniform, consolidated or consistently detailed manner across all levels of government.

Indicator 1.7.e – Proportion of CSOs indicating that the provision of domestic public funds is transparent, fair and non-discriminatory.

Year	Compliance
2025	1 – does not meet standards
2024	2 – minimally meets standards
2023	1 – does not meet standards
2021	1 – does not meet standards

According to the 2025 CSO Survey, only 9% of CSOs considered the provision of domestic public funds to CSOs to be transparent and fair. This represents a significant decline compared with 2024, when 23% of CSOs assessed public funding as transparent and fair, and is also lower than the 14% recorded in both 2023 and 2021. In terms of access to public funding, 18% of CSOs did not apply for public funding in 2025, while 30% applied but were not successful and 52% applied and were successful.

The detailed 2025 responses show that no CSO assessed the provision of public funding as very transparent and fair, while 9% assessed it as sufficiently transparent and fair. By contrast, 70% considered it insufficiently transparent and fair, and 21% stated that it was not transparent and fair at all. This means that 91% of CSOs that responded to this question assessed the provision of public funding negatively.

These findings are consistent with key informant input and validation findings. Interviewees noted that public funding practices remain fragmented and inconsistent, with public calls and defined procedures used in some institutions, while significant amounts continue to be allocated through direct requests,

⁴² “Official Gazette of FBiH” no. 37/24

⁴³ It should be noted that the published data do not cover all levels of government or all public budgets in BiH, but only the data that could be collected and processed. Therefore, the actual total amount of public funds allocated to CSOs is significantly higher than the amount currently presented in the NVO Transparentno database.

discretionary decisions or procedures with unclear criteria. The public institutions survey presented a more positive picture, with several institutions reporting that calls, criteria and award information are publicly available. However, the CSO survey results indicate that these practices are not perceived by civil society as sufficiently transparent, fair or non-discriminatory in practice.

Survey Results

	% CSOs that did not apply for public funding	% CSOs applied for public funding and were not successful	% CSOs applied for funds and were successful
2025	18%	30%	52%
2024	29%	61%	26%
2023	39%	70%	not reported
2021	34%	25%	not reported

Note: Historical rows as reported in prior assessments; totals may exceed 100 due to differing question structures.

Indicator 1.7.f – Public funding does not exclude CSOs on the basis of constituency representation

No legal or formal barriers were identified in 2025 that would exclude CSOs from access to public funding on the basis of the constituencies, interests or communities they represent. Public calls and relevant rules generally do not formally exclude organisations because they work with specific social groups, advocate for particular rights or represent specific categories of citizens.

The 2025 CSO Survey supports this finding. Among CSOs whose applications for public funding were rejected, only 10%, one out of ten respondents, stated that they believed the rejection was because the authorities did not want to fund work with the people they serve and represent. By contrast, 70% of rejected applicants stated that they believed the authorities funded their preferred organisations, which points more strongly to preferential treatment than to formal exclusion based on constituency representation.

However, while no formal exclusion was identified, available monitoring and investigative sources indicate the continued practice of favouring politically connected or ideologically aligned organisations. According to data published by the NVO Transparentno / Odgovorno.st platform, in 2024 approximately 3,100 grants were awarded from the state and entity levels of government to 2,052 NGOs, with a total value of around BAM 46 million, while almost 200 organisations linked to politics received public funds.⁴⁴

In addition, a Detektor.ba investigation from February 2026 found that 11 anti-gender associations in Republika Srpska received more than BAM 2 million from the budgets of 36 municipalities and cities over the previous five years. Some of these organisations had close links with political structures and acted against women's reproductive rights and LGBTIQ+ rights.⁴⁵ This example does not prove the formal exclusion of other CSOs, but it shows that public funding may be directed towards organisations that are politically or ideologically aligned with the authorities.

⁴⁴ Ibid., footnote 28.

⁴⁵ Detektor.ba, 2026.

The European Commission's 2025 Report on BiH also pointed to the need for a transparent and impartial framework for the allocation of public funds to associations, confirming that equal and impartial access to public funding remains an open issue⁴⁶.

Therefore, public funding does not formally exclude CSOs on the basis of the constituencies they represent. However, the continued practice of favouring politically connected or aligned organisations means that access to public funds is not always equal and impartial in practice. The assessment therefore remains unchanged compared with 2024.

SO 1.8 | Individuals and corporations enjoy tax benefits for their donations to CSOs.

Indicator 1.8.a – Tax legislation allows for tax relief as regards:

- ➔ Individual giving
- ➔ Corporate giving

Year	Compliance
2025	3 – moderately meets standards
2024	3 – moderately meets standards
2023	3 – moderately meets standards
2021	3 – moderately meets standards

No significant changes were identified in 2025 in tax legislation affecting tax relief for individual or corporate giving to civil society organisations. Tax rules in BiH continue to allow certain tax benefits for donations and sponsorships for public, humanitarian, cultural, educational, scientific, health, sports, religious and similar purposes, but the rules remain non-harmonised across different tax jurisdictions.

Corporate giving continues to be partially recognised as a tax-deductible expense under entity and Brčko District legislation. In Republika Srpska, donations for humanitarian, social, cultural and sports purposes are recognised as tax-deductible expenses up to 3% of total revenue, while sponsorship expenses are recognised up to 2%. In the Federation of BiH, legal entities can also deduct donations within prescribed limits, while individuals earning income from independent activities can use limited deductions for donations made for prescribed purposes. In FBiH, the Personal Income Tax Law recognises donations up to 0.5% of income earned in the previous year for cultural, educational, scientific, health, humanitarian, sports and religious purposes.

The system therefore remains partially enabling, but still fragmented and limited, particularly regarding the different treatment of individual giving and the lack of harmonisation between tax jurisdictions.

Indicator 1.8.b – Proportion of private individuals who have given money to a CSO.

No directly comparable 2025 data were identified for the proportion of private individuals in Bosnia and Herzegovina who gave money to a CSO. The previous assessments relied on the CAF World Giving Index indicator on donating money to charity. CAF's newer World Giving Report uses a broader methodology, distinguishing between giving money directly to a person or family in need, giving to charity, and giving to a religious organisation or for religious reasons. While the 2025 World Giving Report provides relevant information on giving behaviour, including that Bosnia and Herzegovina had a high

⁴⁶ Ibid., footnote 22.

level of support for humanitarian aid and disaster relief following the 2024 floods, this is not directly comparable with the earlier indicator on individuals giving money to a CSO.

The latest directly comparable value therefore remains the 2024 assessment value: 57% of private individuals gave money to a CSO in Bosnia and Herzegovina, compared with 51% in 2023 and 45% in 2021. This represents an increase of 12 percentage points over the 2021–2024 period.

SO 1.9 | Tax benefits are available to CSOs.

Indicator 1.9.a – Extent to which applicable tax laws provide for the following:

CSO income generated from grants, donations, and membership dues, income from economic activities, investment income, real property, gifts and inheritance is not subject to taxation;

Any excess revenue or profit generated through economic activity and used for mission-related purposes by CSOs is not subject to corporate income/profit tax.

Year	Compliance
2025	3 – moderately meets standards
2024	3 – moderately meets standards
2023	3 – moderately meets standards
2021	3 – moderately meets standards

No significant changes were identified in 2025 in tax legislation that would substantially alter the tax treatment of CSO income from grants, donations, membership dues, gifts, inheritance, investment income, real property or related economic activities. The tax regime remains partially enabling, but not harmonised across the different tax jurisdictions in BiH.

In the Federation of BiH, associations and foundations are generally not subject to corporate income tax, unless they generate market income that is not related to their statutory objectives. Membership dues in FBiH are not treated as income from economic activity. In Republika Srpska, humanitarian organisations and public institutions are exempt from corporate income tax on income generated from budgets, public funds or sponsorships in money or in kind, while the rules for other types of CSOs are narrower and less favourable, including the treatment of membership dues.

At the level of indirect taxation, it is relevant that BiH had previously amended the VAT Law to allow food donations without VAT under prescribed conditions, while in 2025 the Indirect Taxation Authority of BiH announced that the Rulebook on Amendments to the Rulebook on the Application of the VAT Law, published in the Official Gazette of BiH No. 25/25, would start applying as of 6 August 2025.⁴⁷ Under the applicable VAT Law, the donation of food is not treated as taxable supply when a taxpayer donates food, for the purpose of preventing its destruction, protecting the environment and assisting final beneficiaries, exclusively to food donation intermediaries registered for collecting and providing humanitarian aid.⁴⁸ In the first half of 2025, food close to expiry was donated without VAT in the amount of BAM 75,822.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Indirect Taxation Authority of BiH, 2025.

⁴⁸ “Official Gazette of BiH”, no. 9/2005, 35/2005, 100/2008, 33/2017, 46/2023, 80/2023 and 20/2025

⁴⁹ Klix.ba, 2025.

This represents a positive example of tax relief for in-kind donations for humanitarian purposes, but it concerns a specific type of donation and does not change the overall conclusion that the tax regime for CSO income remains only partially harmonised and only partially enabling. Excess revenue generated through economic activities continues to receive favourable treatment only where it is linked to statutory objectives and used for the organisation's mission, while market activities unrelated to statutory objectives may trigger corporate income tax liability.

SO 1.10 | The policies and legal environment provide incentives and facilitate volunteering for and employment in CSOs.

Indicator 1.10.a – Laws regulating volunteering are adopted.

Year	Compliance
2025	4 – meets most standards
2024	4 – meets most standards
2023	4 – meets most standards
2021	4 – meets most standards

No significant changes were identified in 2025. Volunteering in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to be regulated by laws at the level of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Brčko District. There is still no law on volunteering at the state level of BiH, despite continuous advocacy by civil society organisations for its adoption.

Indicator 1.10.b – Government volunteering strategies and programmes support volunteering for CSOs and have sufficient resources allocated for implementation.

Year	Compliance
2025	1 – does not meet standards
2024	1 – does not meet standards
2023	3 – moderately meets standards
2021	3 – moderately meets standards

No significant changes were identified in 2025 compared with the previous reporting period. No level of government in BiH was found to have adopted a dedicated volunteering strategy with related programmes and clearly allocated resources for implementation. Following the expiry of the Republika Srpska Strategy for the Improvement and Development of Volunteering for 2019–2023, no new strategy was identified as having been adopted in Republika Srpska.

Some programme elements related to volunteering exist within broader youth policy frameworks. In FBiH, the Government determined the Proposal of the FBiH Youth Strategy for 2025–2034 in 2025,

which includes youth activism, namely participation, volunteering and mobility. In Brčko District, the Youth Strategy 2022–2026 remains a relevant document, and in 2025 the award for the best volunteer was announced in line with the Brčko District Law on Volunteering and measures under the Youth Strategy. However, these elements do not amount to dedicated government volunteering strategies or comprehensive volunteering programmes with clearly allocated resources to support volunteering in CSOs.

In view of the above, although individual measures and activities promoting volunteering exist, no systemic strategic or programmatic framework for volunteering was established in 2025 at the level of FBiH, RS or Brčko District BiH. The assessment therefore remains unchanged compared with 2024.

Indicator 1.10.c – Proportion of CSOs that benefit from state employment strategies and programmes.

According to the 2025 General CSO Survey, 13% of CSOs stated that their organisation benefited from government employment programmes. This represents a slight decline compared with 2024, when 14% of CSOs reported benefiting from such programmes, and 2023, when the figure was 15%. It also confirms a continued decrease compared with 2021, when 23% of CSOs reported benefiting from government employment programmes.

The open responses indicate that benefits mainly related to employment support through public employment services, including temporary employment through public calls and training vouchers.

Expert CSO survey responses broadly confirm that access to employment programmes remains limited: one expert respondent assessed that CSOs benefit from such programmes only occasionally, while another stated that they benefit rarely. Overall, the data indicate that only a small proportion of CSOs benefit from state employment programmes, with no evidence of improvement compared with previous years.

Survey Results

	% CSOs saying they benefit from state employment strategies and programmes
2025	13%
2024	14%
2023	15%
2021	23%

Indicator 1.10.d – Proportion of CSOs that benefit from state volunteering strategies and programmes.

According to the 2025 General CSO Survey, 4% of CSOs stated that their organisation benefited from government volunteering programmes. This is the same as in 2024, when 4% of respondents also reported benefiting from such programmes, and slightly higher than in 2023 and 2021, when the result was 3%. This confirms that government volunteering programmes continue to have very limited practical reach among CSOs. Expert CSO survey responses also point to limited access: both expert respondents assessed government volunteering programmes as having only limited accessibility for CSOs. Overall, the data indicate no meaningful improvement compared with previous years.

Survey Results

	% CSOs saying they benefit from state volunteering strategies and programmes
2025	4%
2024	4%
2023	3%
2021	3%

Indicator 1.10.e – Proportion of employees in CSOs in relation to the total workforce.

Available tax administration and administrative data indicate that employment in the CSO sector remained below 1% of total employment in BiH in 2025. According to the Labour Force Survey for 2025, published by the Agency for Statistics of BiH, the labour force in BiH consisted of 1.423 million persons, of whom 1.249 million were employed and 173,000 unemployed.⁵⁰

For the purpose of this indicator, the denominator used is total employment, i.e. 1.249 million employed persons.⁵¹ For the numerator, available tax data for 2025 show 6,582 employees in relevant NPO/CSO legal forms in FBiH, after excluding churches and religious communities, cooperatives and cooperative unions, and international organisation/donor projects, which are not treated as functional CSOs for the purpose of this assessment. In RS, available administrative data on membership-based organisations show 1,184 employees. No comparable employment data were available for Brčko District.

On this basis, the estimated number of CSO employees in 2025 was 7,766, representing approximately 0.62% of total employment in BiH. This figure should be interpreted cautiously because the available datasets are not fully harmonised across jurisdictions. It is also not directly comparable with the 2024 assessment figure, as the source and coverage of the 2024 FBiH data are not fully clear. The 2024 figure may have included broader NPO categories such as religious communities, cooperatives or donor projects, which are excluded here for functional consistency with the assessment.

⁵⁰ Agency for Statistics of BiH, 2026.

⁵¹ Registered unemployment data are not used for this calculation because they are based on administrative records and are not methodologically comparable with Labour Force Survey data. For this indicator, the denominator is total employment from the Labour Force Survey.

Indicator 1.10.f – Percentage of people who have volunteered to give their time to an organisation.

No directly comparable 2025 data were identified for the percentage of people who volunteered their time to an organisation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Previous assessments relied on the CAF World Giving Index indicator on whether respondents had volunteered their time to an organisation. The latest directly comparable value therefore remains the 2024 assessment value: 12% of people in Bosnia and Herzegovina volunteered their time to an organisation, compared with 9% in 2023 and 7% in 2021.

CAF's newer World Giving Report uses a broader methodology and presents volunteering through indicators such as the percentage of the population who volunteered during the year and the average number of volunteer hours per person. The 2025 World Giving Report reports that 22% of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina volunteered, with an average of 6.4 volunteer hours per person. However, this is not directly comparable with the earlier World Giving Index indicator used in previous assessments. In addition, no new nationally representative domestic survey or official statistical register was identified for 2025 that would provide a comparable update for this indicator.

Specific Objective 2: Strengthened cooperation and partnership between CSOs and public institutions.

SO 2.1 | Public authorities and institutions include CSOs in decision and policy-making processes.

Indicator 2.1.a – Laws, by-laws, strategies, other acts of public interest and policy reforms are effectively consulted with CSOs in that:

- ➔ CSOs have access to the draft document from the beginning of the drafting process to the end of the adoption procedure;
- ➔ At least 15 days are allowed for commenting before the draft document enters the adoption procedure;
- ➔ The use of extraordinary/expedited procedures to adopt legislation without allowing for consultation is an exception and duly justified;
- ➔ Reports on results of public consultations, including reasons for rejection of comments, are published in a timely fashion;
- ➔ Working groups members from CSOs are selected based on a public call, clear criteria and in line with equal treatment;
- ➔ Working group members from CSOs include representatives of society as a whole, including women's groups, LGBTIQ groups, migrant groups, minorities, disability groups, and others as appropriate, in line with the Human Rights Based Approach.

Year	Compliance
2025	2 – minimally meets standards
2024	2 – minimally meets standards
2023	2 – minimally meets standards
2021	2 – minimally meets standards

No significant changes to public consultation rules were identified in 2025. At the state level, the eConsultations platform continued to function. According to the Ministry of Justice of BiH's 2025 Report on the implementation of the Rules on Consultations in Drafting Legal Regulations⁵², 69 institutions were registered on the platform, 454 consultations were conducted and 352 consultation reports were published. The report also states that 4,143 legal and natural persons were registered on the platform in 2025, an increase of 610 compared with December 2024.

At the state level, the legal framework formally meets a significant part of this indicator: it provides for minimum consultations, a minimum 15-day commenting period for acts without significant public impact and 20 days for acts with significant public impact, the obligation to consider comments and publish consultation reports, and the possibility of exemption from consultations only in exceptional and justified cases. However, the same report notes that public response remains low, that some

⁵² Ministry of Justice of BiH, 2025b

institutions do not publish consultation reports, and that seven institutions do not assess whether planned regulations have a significant public impact.

In Republika Srpska, the Government's e-consultation platform started being used in practice in 2025. According to the available extract, the first consultations were published at the end of August 2025, and around 37 consultations on regulations and strategic/policy documents were published by the end of the year.⁵³ However, no published reports on completed consultations were identified on this platform. In FBiH and Brčko District, the situation remained largely the same as in 2024, without systemic progress in unified monitoring of consultations or publication of reports on accepted and rejected comments.

As noted in the European Commission's 2025 Report on BiH⁵⁴, the use of urgent and shortened procedures remained a serious problem, with four of the six laws adopted by the House of Peoples in 2025 being processed under urgent, one under shortened and only one under the regular procedure.⁵⁵ The Commission also noted that the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH adopted only eight laws during the reporting period, seven of them under urgent procedure, and that consultations with civil society are hardly used. This continued reliance on urgent and shortened procedures significantly limits the possibility for CSOs to participate in the legislative process from the early drafting stage to adoption.

There were also positive examples of consultations and CSO involvement from early stages of policy and legislative drafting. On 8 July 2025, the Council of Ministers of BiH adopted the Strategy for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2025–2029.⁵⁶ The drafting process included a working group composed of representatives of the Ministry of Justice of BiH and the Advisory Body of the Council of Ministers of BiH for Cooperation with NGOs, while CSOs were additionally involved through a one-month public consultation on the eConsultations portal and in-person consultation meetings in Tuzla, Banja Luka, Bihać and Mostar. In February 2025, the Government of FBiH determined the Proposal of the FBiH Youth Strategy 2025–2034⁵⁷, stating that the document was prepared in a participatory manner, in partnership between the governmental and non-governmental sectors, with significant involvement of the FBiH Youth Council, youth organisations and young people through thematic consultations. In addition, the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence and Violence against Women in FBiH was adopted in 2025⁵⁸ after a multi-year process involving, alongside competent institutions, civil society organisations and international organisations working on protection from violence against women and domestic violence. This process represents a positive example of the inclusion of expert and advocacy organisations in legislative drafting, although the length of the process also illustrates institutional obstacles and the slow adoption of important reform laws.

With regard to CSO participation in working groups, the legal and procedural framework does not ensure a uniform country-wide approach requiring CSO representatives to be selected through public calls, clear criteria and equal treatment. Working groups are established in specific legislative and policy processes, but selection practices vary and are not consistently documented. The state-level civil society Strategy process, mentioned above, is a positive example, but it does not demonstrate a general practice applicable to all institutions and all levels of government.

The 2025 General CSO Survey also indicates that participation in working groups exists, but is not systematic. According to the survey, 48% of valid respondents stated that a representative of their organisation was a member of at least one working group: 26% reported participation in a government

⁵³ Government of Republika Srpska e-Consultations, 2025. www.e-konsultacije.vladars.rs

⁵⁴ Ibid., footnote 22.

⁵⁵ Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, 2026

⁵⁶ Ministry of Justice of BiH, 2025c.

⁵⁷ Government of FBiH, 2025.

⁵⁸ Gender Centre of FBiH, 2025.

working group, 3% in a parliamentary working group and 32% in a municipal working group. This suggests that working groups are used as a mechanism for CSO involvement, but there is insufficient evidence that CSO members are consistently selected through public calls, clear criteria, equal treatment and balanced representation of different constituencies.

Another notable finding is that not a single CSO founded in 2015 or later holds working group membership, while 45.5% of older CSOs have access to this participation mechanism. As the survey has its limitations, it cannot be argued that this is a representative finding, but it still shows an important direction for further analysis. Similarly, the capacity to recruit paid staff creates a difference in access to working group membership. Responding CSOs having more than three paid staff participate at 57% compared to just 15% among smaller ones, a near four-fold difference. Notably, however, this pattern reverses for broader consultation processes, where smaller organisations actually participate at a higher rate (85% compared with 67%), which may indicate that smaller organisations engage more actively in open consultation processes precisely because they lack the institutional access to working groups that larger, more established organisations enjoy.

With regard to the CSO survey, the question used to assess CSOs' involvement in effective consultation processes was revised this year to provide a more nuanced and detailed picture. In previous years, CSOs were asked whether they had been included in an effective consultation process, with "effective" defined as having access to draft documents from the beginning of the process and having at least 15 days to provide feedback. This year, the two criteria were split into separate questions, asking respondents independently whether they had access to drafts and whether they had at least 15 days to respond and whether both conditions were met within the same consultation process.

This methodological change reveals a significant gap between participation and quality: while 74% of responding CSOs reported being involved in at least one consultation process, this figure drops sharply to just 6.5% when the consultation process met both criteria simultaneously; indicating that meaningful, effective consultation remains the exception rather than the rule. This confirms that, while consultation opportunities exist, fully effective consultation remains rare in practice.

The Public Institutions Survey presents a more positive institutional perspective. Seven out of eight public institutions assessed their own consultations with CSOs as very or sufficiently effective, and the same number considered that the public and CSOs were fully or sufficiently informed about consultation opportunities. Institutions most commonly referred to working groups including CSO representatives, public consultations, public hearings and informal consultations.

However, Expert CSO survey responses and key informant interviews point to a more cautious assessment. Both expert CSO respondents described consultations as mostly formal, and neither confirmed that CSOs consistently had full access to draft documents or at least 15 days for comments. The NRC assessed consultation practice as fragmented: in some cases, CSOs participated meaningfully, while in others consultations were only formal or there was no real opportunity for participation. It also noted that CSOs were not included in the Reform Agenda or Growth Plan processes.

According to the 2025 CSO survey, participation in open consultation processes is broadly high across thematic areas, a sharp divide emerges when it comes to working group membership. The responding CSOs working on rule of law and anti-corruption participate in consultations at 83–100%, yet hold working group membership at only 25%. By contrast, organisations working on gender equality and LGBTIQ+ rights, minority rights, older persons' rights and disability rights manage to convert consultation participation into working group access far more effectively. With due attention to the fact that the CSO survey is not representative, this requires further analysis and close monitoring to properly assess potential barriers to participation based on thematic work.

Overall, the consultation framework remains in place and shows more measurable results at the state level than before. However, effective CSO participation is not consistently ensured across all levels of

government, urgent procedures continue to be used frequently, consultation reports are not available everywhere, and the selection of CSO representatives for working groups is not always based on public calls and clear criteria.

Survey Results

	% CSOs saying they were effectively consulted by authorities
2025	58% (7% when criteria are fully met)
2024	14%
2023	31%
2021	25%

As the methodology for this question changed and now provides a more accurate assessment for effective consultation, compared to last year, the score remains 2 to be reviewed in this light in next year's reporting cycle.

Indicator 2.1.b – CSOs are effectively included in oversight mechanisms.

This indicator was not assessed.

Indicator 2.1.c – Proportion of CSOs that have participated in consultations during preparation of state reports under international human rights and other legal obligations, and the implementation of treaty body recommendations.

This indicator was not assessed.

SO 2.2 | Public authorities and institutions acknowledge the importance of civil society in societal policy debate and EU integration processes.

Indicator 2.2.a – Extent to which CSOs assess the attitude of public officials towards civil society as supportive.

Year	Compliance
2025	1 – does not meet standards
2024	1 – does not meet standards
2023	2 – minimally meets standards
2021	1 – does not meet standards

Public institutions' attitude towards civil society remained weak in 2025, despite some positive examples of cooperation with individual institutions and officials. The CSO Survey shows that only 10% of CSOs considered public institutions supportive of civil society, a decline compared with 20% in 2024, 24% in 2023 and 12% in 2021.

It is important to note that comparisons with previous years should be interpreted carefully, as the indicator measured attitudes of public institutions towards CSOs in 2025, whereas earlier assessments

focused on public officials' attitudes. In addition, in previous years 'neutral' option was not offered to respondents, and its addition in the 2025 survey appears to have affected CSOs' assessments. Some 35% of CSOs stated that the approach was neutral while 55% found the approach as mostly negative. While no respondent found public officials' approach as very supportive, around 10% stated that it was mostly supportive. This suggests that the vast majority of responding CSOs do not experience public institutions as active supporters of civil society. At best, a large number of institutions are perceived as neutral, while a significant share are perceived negatively. Both expert CSO respondents described the general attitude of public institutions towards civil society as insufficiently supportive, while neither assessed it as very or sufficiently supportive.

The institutional perspective is much more positive. Seven out of eight public institutions assessed public officials as very or sufficiently supportive towards CSOs. This gap between institutional self-assessment and CSO perception is important: while institutions may consider existing cooperation mechanisms sufficient, CSOs clearly do not experience the overall environment as supportive.

While there are individual examples of constructive cooperation with specific institutions or officials, these remain isolated and do not reflect a broader institutional culture of recognising civil society as an important partner in policy debate and EU integration processes. The very low share of CSOs assessing public institutions as supportive, together with the high share of neutral or negative perceptions and the assessment of expert CSOs, indicates that public authorities are still generally not perceived as actively supportive of civil society. The gap between the positive self-assessment of public institutions and the much more critical CSO perception further confirms that existing cooperation practices have not translated into a visible improvement from the perspective of civil society.

Survey Results

	% CSOs that assess the attitude of public institutions as supportive	% CSOs that assess the attitude of public institutions as not supportive
2025	10%	55% (+35% neutral)
2024	20%	66%
2023	24%	68%
2021	12%	80%

SO 2.3 | Public authorities contribute to civil society strengthening by cooperating with civil society through strategic policy frameworks and relevant institutional mechanisms.

Indicator 2.3.a – Proportion of CSOs that were effectively consulted in the preparation of civil society cooperation strategies.

The preparation of the Strategy for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2025–2029 was one of the more positive examples of CSO consultation in 2025. The process built on the work initiated in 2024 and included a working group composed of representatives of the Ministry of Justice of BiH and the Advisory Body of the Council of Ministers of BiH for Cooperation with NGOs. CSOs were also consulted through the eConsultations platform and through four in-person consultation meetings.

This positive assessment was confirmed in the key informant interviews. The Ministry of Justice of BiH described the preparation of the Strategy and Action Plan as inclusive, noting that four consultation events were organised, comments were collected and considered, and approximately two thirds of submitted comments were accepted. The Ministry also confirmed that the draft Strategy and Action Plan were subject to public consultations through the eConsultations platform. Other key informants also confirmed that the process was inclusive and that CSOs were meaningfully involved in the preparation of the Strategy.

Survey data give a more mixed picture. In the 2025 CSO Survey, 45% of CSOs that responded to the consultation question reported that, in relation to civil society cooperation strategies, they either had access to draft documents from the beginning of the drafting process or had at least 15 days available for comments. More specifically, 16% reported access to draft documents, while 32% reported having at least 15 days for comments. These figures should not be added together, as some respondents may have selected both options.

Only two out of eight public institutions assessed CSO engagement in the development and implementation of the civil society cooperation strategy as very or sufficiently effective, while three considered it insufficiently effective and three did not know. This reflects the fact that the Strategy process was mainly led at the BiH level and was not equally visible or relevant to all institutions.

Overall, the preparation of the Strategy was a positive and relatively inclusive process, especially compared with the absence of such a strategic framework in previous years. Key informant interviews confirm that CSOs were meaningfully involved in the process. At the same time, the survey results show that effective consultation was not experienced by all CSOs, and less than half of responding CSOs reported access to draft documents or sufficient time for comments in relation to civil society cooperation strategies. The finding is therefore positive, but should not be overstated.

Indicator 2.3.b – IPA beneficiaries have adopted currently valid civil society cooperation strategies.

Year	Compliance
2025	2 – minimally meets standards
2024	1 – does not meet standards
2023	1 – does not meet standards
2021	1 – does not meet standards

In 2025, significant progress was made compared with previous reporting cycles. At its 84th session, held on 8 July 2025, the Council of Ministers of BiH adopted the Strategy of the Council of Ministers of BiH for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2025–2029⁵⁹, together with the Action Plan for 2025–2026. The Strategy is the first document of this kind at the level of the Council of Ministers of BiH and includes objectives, measures and activities concerning civil society organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, regardless of their place of registration. Its operational objectives focus on strengthening the transparency and efficiency of public funding of CSOs by BiH institutions, improving the normative framework and practice of CSO participation in the preparation and monitoring of regulations and policies within the competence of BiH institutions, strengthening institutional cooperation mechanisms between the Council of Ministers of BiH and CSOs, and strengthening civil society's resource infrastructure.

The adoption of the Strategy represents an important institutional step forward, given that in 2021, 2023 and 2024 there was no valid civil society cooperation strategy at the BiH level.

However, this progress should be interpreted with an important limitation. The Strategy was adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH and primarily concerns BiH-level institutions, while the Federation of BiH, Republika Srpska and Brčko District BiH still do not have their own currently valid civil society cooperation strategies.

A positive development was also recorded at the cantonal level. During 2025, the Government of West Herzegovina Canton, with support from the EU4CS project, prepared the Draft Civil Society Development Strategy of West Herzegovina Canton 2025–2030 and organised consultations with CSOs on the content of the document. Publicly available information indicates that a consultation meeting was held in December 2025, with the aim of improving cooperation between the civil and public sectors and preparing civil society for more active participation in the EU integration process.⁶⁰ However, the West Herzegovina Canton Strategy had not been adopted during the 2025 reference year. Overall, the adoption of the Strategy and Action Plan represents visible progress compared with 2024, when no strategic framework for cooperation with civil society was in place at the BiH level. However, this progress remains limited in scope. Given BiH's decentralised governance structure and the fact that many policies and public funding streams relevant to CSOs are implemented at entity, cantonal, local and Brčko District levels, the absence of complementary strategies at those levels limits the overall reach of this progress. In addition, the practical effects of implementation are yet to be seen, as the Strategy and Action Plan were adopted only in 2025 and implementation had only started during the reporting period.

⁵⁹ Ibid., footnote 52.

⁶⁰ EU4CS, 2025.

Indicator 2.3.c – Civil society cooperation strategies are accompanied by adopted budgeted action plans.

Year	Compliance
2025	2 – minimally meets standards
2024	1 – does not meet standards
2023	1 – does not meet standards
2021	1 – does not meet standards

Significant progress was made in 2025 compared with previous reporting cycles. At its 84th session, held on 8 July 2025, the Council of Ministers of BiH adopted the Strategy of the Council of Ministers of BiH for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2025–2029, together with the Action Plan for 2025–2026.⁶¹ This established, for the first time at the level of the Council of Ministers of BiH, a valid strategic framework for cooperation with civil society accompanied by an adopted action plan.

The foreseen budget for the implementation of activities planned under the 2025–2026 Action Plan amounts to BAM 789,000, with funds planned through the budget of BiH institutions and other sources of support.⁶²

Since the valid strategy at the level of the Council of Ministers of BiH is accompanied by an adopted and budgeted action plan, the indicator is mostly met in 2025. However, due to the absence of complementary strategies and budgeted action plans at entity and Brčko District levels, the assessment does not reach full compliance.

Indicator 2.3.d – Proportion of CSOs that rate civil society cooperation strategies as relevant and effective.

The adoption of the Strategy for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2025–2029 created, for the first time, a valid strategic framework for cooperation with civil society at the level of BiH institutions. The Strategy addresses several issues that are directly relevant for the enabling environment, including public funding of CSOs, public consultations, institutional cooperation mechanisms and the strengthening of civil society's resource infrastructure.

Key informant interviews generally confirmed that the Strategy is a relevant document and a positive institutional step forward.

In the 2025 General CSO Survey, only 3% of responding CSOs assessed the Strategy as both relevant and effective. Only 15% assessed it as relevant, while 42% not relevant; only 3% as effective, while 67% as not effective. Expert CSO responses confirm these findings, assessing the Strategy as insufficiently relevant and insufficiently effective. As there was no Strategy in 2024, this indicator was not assessed and hence no comparison is possible.

⁶¹ Ibid., footnote 52.

⁶² Ibid. footnote 52.

Survey Results

	% CSOs saying the civil society cooperation strategy is relevant and effective
2025	3%

This difference between the generally positive key informant assessment and the more critical survey results can partly be explained by the timing and scope of the Strategy. It was adopted only in July 2025, implementation had only started by the end of the reporting period, and the Strategy applies primarily to BiH-level institutions. Many CSOs may therefore not yet have experienced any practical effects. In addition, no corresponding strategies were adopted at entity, cantonal, local or Brčko District levels, where many policies and funding streams relevant to CSOs are implemented.

Overall, the Strategy is relevant as a policy framework and represents visible progress compared with previous years, when no such framework existed. However, its effectiveness could not yet be demonstrated in practice in 2025. The survey results therefore suggest that the Strategy should be assessed as relevant in principle, but still insufficiently effective in practice.

Indicator 2.3.e – Public structures responsible for the implementation of civil society cooperation strategies are appropriately resourced.

In 2025, progress was made with regard to public structures responsible for implementing the civil society cooperation strategy. The Strategy of the Council of Ministers of BiH for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2025–2029 assigns the monitoring and coordination role to the Ministry of Justice of BiH, with participation of the Advisory Body of the Council of Ministers of BiH for Cooperation with NGOs. The Strategy provides that the Ministry of Justice will report on progress every six months at the sessions of the Advisory Body, prepare annual and final reports, and organise annual meetings with CSOs and institutions responsible for activities under the Action Plan.

The Action Plan identifies responsible institutions for individual activities, including the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance and Treasury, Agency for Civil Service, Directorate for European Integration and other BiH-level institutions.

It also includes specific activities aimed at strengthening the role of the Advisory Body, establishing mechanisms for CSO participation in EU accession negotiations, improving statistical monitoring of the CSO sector, and strengthening resource infrastructure for civil society.

However, the implementation structure is still at an early stage. The Strategy was adopted only in July 2025, and the available documents mainly show planned institutional responsibilities and budget allocations rather than demonstrated implementation capacity. In addition, the Strategy applies primarily to BiH-level institutions, while entity and Brčko District levels do not have equivalent civil society cooperation strategies and implementation structures.

Indicator 2.3.f – Mechanisms for dialogue between civil society cooperation councils and central governments meaningfully include CSOs in that:

- ➔ they have an agreed programme of work
- ➔ they have agreed rules of procedure
- ➔ they meet regularly
- ➔ rules allow CSOs to call the meetings and contribute to agenda setting
- ➔ there is adequate follow-up to conclusions and recommendations

Year	Compliance
2025	1 – does not meet standards
2024	4 – meets most standards
2023	4 – meets most standards
2021	4 – meets most standards

The Advisory Body of the Council of Ministers of BiH for Cooperation with NGOs remained the main formal mechanism for dialogue between civil society and the central government along with the Sector for Legal Assistance and Civil Society Development of the Ministry of Justice of BiH. In 2025, however, the Advisory Body did not function as a continuous and fully operational dialogue mechanism, as the mandate of the previous composition had expired and a new composition had not been appointed by the end of the year. Despite this, the outgoing composition of the Advisory Body contributed to the preparation of the Strategy of the Council of Ministers of BiH for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2025–2029, including through the participation of its members in the working group coordinated by the Ministry of Justice of BiH. Although their mandate had technically expired, the members continued to support the Strategy drafting process in order to ensure continuity and facilitate the adoption of the Strategy..

A new composition of the Advisory Body was not appointed after the expiry of the previous mandate. The Ministry of Justice of BiH published a second public call on 18 September 2025 for the appointment of seven members, but the new members had not been appointed by the end of the year.⁶³ During 2025, the Advisory Body did not hold regular structured meetings with the Council of Ministers of BiH. As a result, there was no functioning Advisory Body with a valid mandate during the reporting period.

This had a direct effect on the quality of institutional dialogue. The Advisory Body did not hold regular structured meetings with the Council of Ministers of BiH in 2025. There was no regular programme of work, no functioning agenda-setting process through which CSO representatives could influence policy priorities, and no systematic follow-up to conclusions or recommendations. In that sense, the mechanism existed formally, but not as an effective and continuous cooperation mechanism.

The contribution of the outgoing composition to the preparation of the Strategy for Creating an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2025–2029 should be acknowledged. Former members participated in the working group coordinated by the Ministry of Justice of BiH and contributed to the drafting and consultation process. However, this was an exception linked to the Strategy process and cannot be treated as evidence that the Advisory Body functioned as a regular dialogue mechanism

⁶³ Ministry of Justice of BiH, 2025d

in 2025. Even in earlier years, the Advisory Body had no interaction with the Council of Ministers of BiH, and in 2025 the situation further deteriorated because the body was not reappointed and did not operate as a continuous institutional mechanism.

Key informant interviews confirmed this assessment. The Ministry of Justice of BiH stated that the Advisory Body had been practically non-functional after the completion of work on the Strategy and Action Plan. Other key informants also confirmed that the new composition was not appointed, that the body lacked continuity and legitimacy, and that there was no structured cooperation with the Council of Ministers of BiH during 2025.

Specific Objective 3: CSOs' capacities and resilience to carry out their activities are reinforced.

SO 3.1 | CSOs' internal governance structures follow the principles of good governance.

Indicator 3.1.a – Proportion of CSOs that have an independent and effective governing body, with clear terms of reference to oversee the organisation's strategic goals, impact, management, legal compliance, and accountability.

Year	Compliance
2025	4 – meets most standards
2024	3 – moderately meets standards
2023	3 – moderately meets standards
2021	3 – moderately meets standards

This indicator was assessed differently in 2025. In previous years, the relevant question in the CSO surveys required that the effective governing body is appointed by the assembly, which is a rather narrow and limited interpretation of an effective governing body, not only because it leaves out unregistered or small organisations but also because organisations may have different means and methods of their own to select/appoint/decide their governing bodies. In 2025, the question was formulated differently and inquired about the existence of a governing body (e.g. assembly, board or council responsible for oversight, legal compliance and accountability).

In 2025, 97% of responding CSOs reported having both a governing body and a governing document. More specifically, 97% of responding CSOs reported having a governing body, such as an assembly, board or council responsible for oversight, legal compliance and accountability, while all responding CSOs reported having a governing document. This is a notable increase compared with 52% in 2024, 56% in 2023 and 52% in 2021.

This suggests that a larger share of CSOs have the basic formal structures needed for internal oversight, legal compliance and accountability. A governing body and a governing document are essential preconditions for clearer internal roles, decision-making procedures and organisational accountability.

Survey Results

	% CSOs saying they have an independent and effective governing body
2025	97%
2024	52%
2023	56%
2021	52%

Indicator 3.1.b – Proportion of CSOs that regularly check potential conflicts of interest with regard to the political, economic and personal relationships of their governing body.

Year	Compliance
2025	2 – minimally meets standards
2024	1 – does not meet standards
2023	1 – does not meet standards
2021	1 – does not meet standards

This indicator was assessed differently in 2025. In previous years, the relevant question in the CSO surveys asked how often governing body members were signing a conflict of interest declaration, which is a rather narrow interpretation of the indicator standard, not only because it would leave out unregistered CSOs, but also because organisations may have different ways and means for assessing conflict of interest. Therefore, in 2025, the survey question asked how often organisations check for potential conflicts of interest in general.

In the 2025 survey, among responding CSOs, 36% reported checking potential conflicts of interest involving governing body members every year, while a further 12% reported doing so every two years. This means that 48% conduct regular checks.

This is a significant increase compared with previous reporting periods. In 2024, only 9% of CSOs reported regularly checking potential conflicts of interest, while the results were 17% in 2023 and 11% in 2021. The 2025 result therefore suggests that conflict-of-interest checks are becoming more common in CSO internal governance practice.

However, 30% of responding CSOs stated that they make this check only once upon entry into the role, while 6% reported that they never conduct such checks. This means that a considerable percentage of CSOs (36%) still rely on one-time checks rather than regular follow-up during the mandate of governing body members or do not conduct such checks at all.

Overall, the increase to 48% represents visible progress and justifies a higher score than in previous years. With due attention to the comparability with previous years, but based on the respective change in interpreting the applicability of this indicator, the compliance score is now raised to 2, as the result does not yet show that regular conflict-of-interest checks are standard practice across the sector, and a substantial share of CSOs still do not carry them out on a recurring basis.

Indicator 3.1.c – Proportion of CSOs that share relevant information on their organisation, using the means and channels that are accessible to all stakeholders in terms of publishing.

Year	Compliance
2025	1 – does not meet standards
2024	2 – minimally meets standards
2023	1 – does not meet standards
2021	2 – minimally meets standards

In 2025, 18% of responding CSOs published all three key governance elements (their governing document, the structure of their governing body and the names of governing body members) either on their website or through social media. This is a decrease compared with 2024, when the figure was 32%. In 2023, the figure was 16%, and in 2021, 24%.

Looking only at websites, 21% of CSOs published their governing document, 21% published the structure of their governing body, and 25% published the names of governing body members. When website and social media are both taken into account, these figures are higher: 29% published their governing document, 36% published the structure of their governing body, and 39% published the names of governing body members. The 2025 result still indicates a decline compared with the previous reporting period, although the decline is less pronounced when social media sharing is included.

Indicator 3.1.d – Proportion of CSOs that have an organisational gender equality policy.

Year	Compliance
2025	3 – moderately meets standards
2024	2 – minimally meets standards
2023	2 – minimally meets standards
2021	2 – minimally meets standards

In 2025, 53% of CSOs had an organisational gender equality policy. This represents an increase compared with 2024, when the figure was 36%. In 2023, the figure was 39%, and in 2021, 35%.

The 2025 result indicates visible progress compared with previous reporting periods, although gender equality policies are still not in place in all CSOs.

Indicator 3.1.e – Proportion of CSOs that have an organisational strategy, including vision, mission and goals.

Year	Compliance
2025	4 – meets most standards
2024	4 – meets most standards
2023	4 – meets most standards
2021	3 – moderately meets standards

In 2025, 67% of CSOs had an organisational strategy, strategic plan or similar document. This is slightly lower than in 2024, when the figure was 71%, and in 2023, when it was 75%, but remains higher than the 2021 result of 57%.

The result shows that most surveyed CSOs continue to have a strategic document setting out their organisational direction, vision, mission or goals.

SO 3.2 | CSOs are able to communicate the results of their activities to the public.

Indicator 3.2.a – Proportion of CSOs that have at least one online channel of communication.

Year	Compliance
2025	
2024	
2023	
2021	

Year	Compliance
2025	5 – fully meets standards
2024	5 – fully meets standards
2023	5 – fully meets standards
2021	5 – fully meets standards

In 2025, all CSOs responding to this question reported having at least one online channel of communication. This means that the result for 2025 is 100%, compared with 97% in 2024, 96% in 2023 and 100% in 2021.

The most commonly used online channel remained Facebook, used by 93% of responding CSOs. Other frequently used channels included Instagram, used by 77%, organisational websites, used by 70%, messaging apps such as WhatsApp, Signal, Viber or Telegram, used by 60%, and YouTube, used by 53%.

Indicator 3.2.b – Proportion of CSOs that have specialised communication staff.

This indicator was not assessed.

Indicator 3.2.c – Proportion of CSOs that cooperate with the media.

In 2025, 47% of CSOs reported cooperation with the media through partnerships. This is an increase compared with 2024, when the figure was 30%. In 2023, the figure was 36%, while in 2021 it was 30%.

The 2025 survey also shows that 48% of CSOs reported consultations with the media, while 24% reported both partnerships and consultations. Overall, cooperation between CSOs and the media remained broadly stable compared with the previous reporting period.

Survey Results

	% CSOs saying they cooperate with the media
2025	47%
2024	30%
2023	36%
2021	30%

SO 3.3 | CSOs are transparent about their programme activities and sources of funding.

Indicator 3.3.a – Proportion of CSOs that publish their annual reports and financial statements.

Year	Compliance
2025	3 – moderately meets standards
2024	2 – minimally meets standards
2023	2 – minimally meets standards
2021	3 – moderately meets standards

In 2025, 50% of CSOs published both their annual reports and financial statements either on their website or in hard copy. This represents a considerable increase compared with 2024, when the figure was 25%, 2023 (31%), and even the baseline year 2021 (42%).

The 2025 result indicates some improvement compared with previous years, but the regular publication of both annual reports and financial statements is still limited.

Indicator 3.3.b – Proportion of CSOs that publish information on their sources of funding and amounts received in the previous year.

Year	Compliance
2025	3 – moderately meets standards
2024	2 – minimally meets standards
2023	2 – minimally meets standards
2021	2 – minimally meets standards

In 2025, 50% of CSOs published information on both their sources of funding and the amounts received from each funding source, either through their website or in hard copy. This represents an increase compared with 2024, when the figure was 25% 2023 (34%), and 2021 (29%).

Looking at the specific information published, 55% of CSOs published information about their sources of funding, while 48% published information on the amounts received from funding sources. Some 16% of CSOs stated that they did not publish any of these documents or information.

In their open answers, several CSOs stated that they were not in the habit of publicly publishing this information, although financial reports are submitted to competent institutions, information is available to members or on request, or donor support is declared in relation to specific activities.

Indicator 3.3.c – Degree of public trust in CSOs.

The only available 2025 data identified for this indicator come from the public opinion survey conducted by BH Journalists and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in BiH. The survey found that 17.3% of respondents trusted the non-governmental sector in 2025.⁶⁴ This represents a sharp decline compared with the same survey in 2024, when 44.4% of respondents expressed trust in the non-governmental sector.⁶⁵

The decline was particularly pronounced in Republika Srpska, where only 1.8% of respondents expressed trust in the CSO sector in 2025. This extremely low level of trust should be read in the broader context of the negative public narrative against foreign-funded civil society organisations, which intensified in 2025. This narrative was shaped both by the termination of USAID operations and the accompanying negative campaign against USAID, as well as by the debate around the Republika Srpska Law on the Special Register and Publicity of the Work of Non-Profit Organisations. Together, these developments contributed to a public and media environment in which the CSO sector, particularly in Republika Srpska, was increasingly portrayed in a negative light.

In the 2024 assessment, this indicator was based on the Balkan Barometer, according to which 38% of respondents in Bosnia and Herzegovina stated that they tended to trust or totally trusted CSOs. However, at the time of drafting this report, the Balkan Barometer 2025 value for public trust in CSOs had not been published. Therefore, the 2025 finding from the BH Journalists survey should be interpreted with caution, as it comes from a different survey and is not methodologically comparable with the Balkan Barometer data used in the previous assessment.

⁶⁴ BH Novinari, 2025

⁶⁵ BH Novinari, 2024

SO 3.4 | CSOs monitor and evaluate the results and impact of their work.

Indicator 3.4.a – Proportion of CSOs that have carried out an evaluation of their work in the last year.

Year	Compliance
2025	5 – fully meets standards
2024	5 – fully meets standards
2023	5 – fully meets standards
2021	4 – meets most standards

In 2025, 83% of CSOs reported that they had carried out at least one evaluation of their work. This is almost unchanged compared with 2024, when the figure was 84%. In 2023, the figure was 89%, while in 2021 it was 78%.

The result shows that evaluation of organisational work remains a common practice among CSOs in BiH. Despite a slight decrease compared with 2024 and 2023, the indicator continues to fully meet standards.

SO 3.5 | CSOs use research and evidence to underpin their work.

Indicator 3.5.a – Proportion of CSOs whose work is based on evidence generated through research.

Year	Compliance
2025	5 – fully meets standards
2024	4 – meets most standards
2023	5 – fully meets standards
2021	4 – meets most standards

In 2025, 93% of CSOs stated that their work was based on evidence generated through research. This is higher than the 2024 value of 74%, the 2023 value of 79%, and the 2021 value of 86%.

The most common types of research used by CSOs in 2025 were focus group discussions, surveys with specific groups and desk research. Some CSOs also reported using field research, public opinion surveys and randomised controlled trials. Only 7% of responding CSOs stated that they did not carry out any research.

The 2025 result shows that the use of research and evidence remains widespread among CSOs in BiH and has increased compared with the previous reporting period.

Indicator 3.5.b – Proportion of CSOs whose work is informed through consultation with people who have a stake in their current or future work.

Year	Compliance
2025	5 – fully meets standards
2024	5 – fully meets standards
2023	5 – fully meets standards
2021	5 – fully meets standards

This year, the relevant question for this indicator was designed a bit differently from previous years, with a view to have a more detailed understanding of CSOs' engagement practices. In the 2025 survey, the question asked about engagement in two separate forms, consultation and partnership, whereas previous years covered consultation only.

In 2025, 83% of CSOs stated that their work was informed through consultations with at least one relevant stakeholder group including local communities or constituencies, members, local governments or municipalities, national government authorities, public institutions, the private sector or academic institutions. An additional 7% of responding CSOs stated that they engaged with these stakeholders through partnerships only. When consultation and partnership practices are combined, nearly all (90%) of responding CSOs were engaged with people and groups who have a stake in their work.

The 2025 result is lower than in 2024 (93%) and 2023 (96%), but remains close to the 2021 level (85%) and still indicates that consultation with relevant stakeholders is widely practised among responding CSOs.

In addition, this year's survey included a question on CSOs' engagement practices with other CSOs: 53% of responding CSOs reported consultation with other CSOs working in the same thematic area, and 43% with CSOs working in different thematic areas.

SO 3.6 | CSOs work in fair and respectful partnership to achieve shared goals.

Indicator 3.6.a – Proportion of CSOs taking part in local, central and international CSO networks.

In 2025, 83% of CSOs took part in local, national or international CSO networks. This is the same as in 2024, when the figure was also 83%, and almost unchanged compared with 2023, when it was 84%. In 2021, the figure was significantly lower, at 58%.

More specifically, 60% of CSOs participated in national networks, 53% in local networks, and 47% in international networks. Some 17% of responding CSOs stated that they were not members of any network.

The 2025 result shows that CSO participation in networks remained stable and relatively high.

A further relevant finding on networking concerns partnership practices with other CSO in Bosnia and Herzegovina: 48% of responding CSOs to the 2025 CSO Survey reported that they made partnerships with CSOs working on the same thematic field, while 32% of them stated that they acted in partnership with CSOs from other thematic fields.

Survey Results

	% CSOs taking part in local, central and international networks.
2025	83%
2024	83%
2023	84%
2021	58%

Indicator 3.6.b – Proportion of CSOs engaged in cross-sectoral partnerships with academia, social partners and private sector.

This year, the relevant question for this indicator was designed a bit differently than previous years with a view to obtaining a more detailed understanding of CSOs' engagement practices. In the 2025 survey, the question asked about engagement in two separate forms, consultation and partnership, whereas previous years covered consultation only.

In 2025, 43% of CSOs reported being engaged in cross-sectoral partnerships with academia, social partners or the private sector. This is lower than previous years: it was 45% in 2024, 57% in 2023 and 76% in 2021. However, an additional 30% of responding CSOs reported consulting with at least one of these cross-sectoral stakeholders. When combined, 73% of CSOs engaged either through consultation or partnership with the private sector, academia or social partners. Among the CSOs reporting partnerships, 54% partnered with the private sector, 38% with academic institutions, and 23% with social partners.

The 2025 survey shows that partnerships with the private sector were reported most frequently, followed by partnerships with academic institutions and social partners. These results indicate that cross-sectoral partnerships remain present, but are not yet a standard practice for a majority of CSOs.

Survey Results

	% CSOs engaged in cross-sectoral partnerships
2025	43%
2023	57%
2021	76%

SO 3.7 | CSOs have a diversified funding base.

Indicator 3.7.a – Proportion of CSOs whose sources of donor income are diversified.

Year	Compliance
2025	4 – meets most standards
2024	3 – moderately meets standards
2023	3 – moderately meets standards
2021	3 – moderately meets standards

In 2025, 63% of CSOs reported that they did not have a single donor or income source providing for more than 50% of their annual budget. This is the comparable indicator used to assess whether CSOs' donor income is diversified. At the same time, 37% of responding CSOs reported that one donor or income source provided more than half of their budget. This means that a significant share of CSOs remains financially dependent on one dominant source. The 2025 result is higher than in 2024, when the figure was 60%, 2023 (58%), and 2021 (55%). The proportion of CSOs reporting no donor funding was 7%.

With regard to donors, the most frequently reported funding source was local government (57%), followed by provincial/cantonal/entity-level government and international CSOs (both 53%), bilateral governments (44%), the EU (37%), foreign private foundations (30%), national government (24%) and domestic private foundations (23%). The least frequently reported donor was the Council of Europe (10%), followed by the UN and the OSCE (both 13%).

Indicator 3.7.b – Proportion of CSOs raising funds from sources other than donors (e.g. membership fees, corporate/individual giving and income generating activities)

Year	Compliance
2025	5 – fully meets standards
2024	4 – meets most standards
2023	4 – meets most standards
2021	4 – meets most standards

In 2025, 83% of CSOs reported raising funds from sources other than donors. This represents an increase compared with 2024, when the figure was 76%. In 2023, the revised value was 68%, while in 2021 it was 71%.

The most common non-donor sources of income in 2025 were individual donations, reported by 53% of CSOs, membership fees, reported by 40%, income from private businesses, reported by 37%, and income from the organisation's own business, social enterprise, services or goods provision, also reported by 37%. Crowdfunding was reported by 20% of CSOs, while income from assets was reported by 7%. The 2025 result shows that a large majority of CSOs raise funds from non-donor sources.

SO 3.8 | CSOs have effective, empowered and developed human resources.

Indicator 3.8.a – Proportion of CSOs that employ staff.

In 2025, 69% of CSOs employed paid staff. This represents an increase compared with 2024 (58%) and 2021 (65%), while slightly lower than 2023 (73%).

In 2025, around 26% of CSOs reported having no paid staff. Among those employing staff, 45% of responding CSOs reported having between 1-5 employees, 21% between 6-10, and 34% more than 10.

While 69% of organisations employ paid staff, 80% use volunteers, so volunteer capacity is slightly more widespread than paid staffing. The strongest organisations tend to have both, with 58.5% combining staff and volunteers. Organisational age strongly associated with staffing patterns: pre-2000 organisations average 44 paid staff and 33 volunteers, while 2000–2009 organisations average 9 staff and 64 volunteers. The 2010–2014 cohort is the weakest on paid staffing, with only 2 paid staff and 89 volunteers on average, while 2015+ organisations average 1 staff and 11 volunteers. Thematically, paid staffing is strongest among organisations working on anti-corruption, transparency, gender equality and LGBTIQ+ rights, and the conducive environment for CSOs, while volunteers are especially prevalent in health, human rights, reconciliation and children's rights.

Survey Results

	% CSOs that employ staff
2025	69%
2024	58%
2023	73%
2021	65%

Indicator 3.8.b – Proportion of CSOs that have organisational human resources policies.

Year	Compliance
2025	1 – does not meet standards
2024	1 – does not meet standards
2023	1 – does not meet standards
2021	1 – does not meet standards

In 2025, no responding CSO reported having all nine organisational human resources policies covered by this indicator. The result therefore remains 0%, the same as in 2024. In 2023, the figure was 1%, while in 2021 it was 0%.

This does not mean that CSOs do not have individual HR policies. Some policies are relatively common: 53% of CSOs reported having a gender equality policy, 50% a safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults policy, and 33% a bullying and harassment policy. Other policies were less frequent: 30% had a disciplinary policy, 27% a recruitment policy, 23% a diversity, equality and inclusion policy, 23% a performance appraisal policy, 20% a complaints policy, and 10% a redundancy policy.

For the purpose of this indicator, the headline value is calculated using the same strict approach as in previous assessments: only CSOs that reported having the full set of organisational HR policies are counted. The result therefore does not mean that responding CSOs have no HR policies at all. Rather, it shows that HR policy development remains partial and uneven, as many CSOs have individual policies in place, but none of the responding organisations reported having the complete set of nine policies covered by the indicator. For this reason, the indicator remains assessed as not meeting standards.

Indicator 3.8.c – Proportion of CSOs that have advertised publicly their staff and volunteering vacancies in the last year.

This indicator was not assessed.

Indicator 3.8.d – Proportion of CSOs that have organisational policies encouraging recruitment of a diverse workforce.

This indicator was not assessed.

Indicator 3.8.e – Proportion of CSOs whose staff and volunteers have attended a training course in the past year.

This indicator was not assessed.



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Comparative Scores Table per Indicator 2021-2025

		2025							2024							2023							2021						
		AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR
		SO1 - Enabling Environment for CSOs																											
1.1.a	Extent to which relevant domestic legislation provides for freedoms of association, assembly and expression	3	3	4	4	4	2	1	3	3	4	4	4	2	1	3	3	4	4	4	2	1	3	4	4	4	4	3	1
1.2.a	Extent to which CSOs have access to an effective remedy to challenge or seek review of decisions affecting exercise of their rights	3	4	4	3	4	2	2	3	4	4	4	4	3	2	3	4	4	4	4	3	2	3	4	3	4	4	3	2
1.2.b	Extent to which CSOs are protected by law from threats, attacks, judicial harassment and discriminatory treatment	3	2	4	3	4	2	1	4	2	4	4	4	3	1	5	2	4	4	4	3	1	5	3	4	4	4	3	1
1.3.a	Extent to which laws to combat extremism, terrorism, money laundering and corruption do not unduly restrict legitimate activities of CSOs	4	3	4	4	4	3	1	4	3	4	5	4	3	1	4	2	4	5	4	3	1	4	2	4	5	4	3	1

		2025							2024							2023							2021						
		AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR
1.4.a	Extent to which laws (1) do not require CSOs to submit more reports and information, and (2) do not submit CSOs to more inspections and sanctions, than business entities	5	5	5	5	5	3	1	5	4	5	5	5	4	1	5	4	5	5	5	4	1	5	5	5	5	5	4	1
1.5.a	Small community/local organisations and civic initiatives are allowed to operate by law without registering	5	4	5	5	5	5	2	5	4	5	5	5	5	2	5	4	5	5	5	5	2	5	4	5	5	5	5	2
1.5.b	In law, unregistered small community/local organisations and civic initiatives enjoy the same right to participation in decision making processes as registered CSOs	4	4	4	3	4	4	2	4	4	4	3	4	4	2	4	4	4	3	4	5	2	4	4	4	3	4	5	2
1.6.a	Extent to which relevant laws allow CSOs to seek a broad range of funding, including from abroad, without undue restrictions	5	3	5	5	5	4	2	5	3	5	5	5	5	2	5	3	5	5	4	5	2	5	4	5	5	4	5	2

		2025							2024							2023							2021						
		AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR
1.7.a	The level of public funding available for CSOs and associations is clearly articulated in laws and regulations, and the rights and duties of the state body invested with the ability to set and revise the level of public funding available is clearly defined in law	1	2	4	5	2	2	1	1	1	4	5	2	2	1	1	1	4	5	2	2	1	1	1	4	5	1	2	1
1.7.c	Extent to which legal provisions regulating the award of public funding to CSOs ensure that it is clear, impartial and well regulated	4	2	4	3	2	2	1	4	3	4	3	2	2	1	4	3	4	3	2	2	1	3	3	4	3	2	2	1
1.7.d	Central governments make the information on awards publicly available and sufficiently detailed to identify individual awards	2	2	4	5	2	2	2	2	2	4	5	2	3	2	1	2	4	5	2	2	2	1	2	4	5	2	2	2
1.7.e	Proportion of CSOs indicating that the provision of domestic public funds is transparent, fair, and non-discriminatory	2	1	3	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
1.8.a	Tax legislation allows for tax relief as regards individual and corporate giving	2	3	5	5	3	3	2	2	3	5	3	3	3	2	2	3	5	4	3	3	2	2	3	5	4	3	3	2

		2025							2024							2023							2021						
		AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR
1.9.a	Extent to which applicable tax laws provide for appropriate tax benefits for CSOs	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
1.10.a	Laws regulating volunteering are adopted	3	4	1	2	3	2	1	2	4	1	2	3	2	1	2	4	1	2	3	2	1	2	4	1	2	3	2	1
1.10.b	Government volunteering strategies and programmes support volunteering for CSOs and have sufficient resources allocated for implementation	1	1	2	3	3	3	1	1	1	2	1	3	3	1	1	3	2	1	3	3	1	1	3	2	1	3	2	1
SO 2 - Cooperation Between Government and CSOs																													
2.1.a	Laws, bylaws, strategies, other acts of public interest and policy reforms are effectively consulted with CSOs	3	2	3	3	2	2	1	3	2	3	4	2	2	1	3	2	3	4	2	1	1	3	2	3	4	2	2	1
2.2.a	Extent to which CSOs assess the attitude of public officials towards civil society as supportive	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
2.3.b	Currently valid civil society cooperation strategies are adopted	1	2	1	5	5	5	1	1	1	1	5	5	5	1	5	1	5	5	5	5	1	5	1	5	1	1	1	1
2.3.c	Civil society cooperation strategies are accompanied by adopted budgeted action plans	1	2	1	5	4	4	1	1	1	1	5	3	1	1	1	1	5	5	3	5	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	1

		2025							2024							2023							2021							
		AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	
2.3.f	Mechanisms for dialogue between civil society cooperation councils and central governments meaningfully include CSOs:	2	1	1	3	5	2	1	3	4	1	1	1	3	1	4	4	3	1	1	4	2	4	4	3	3	5	1	2	
SO 3 - Capacity and Accountability of CSOs																														
3.1.a	Proportion of CSOs that have an independent and effective governing body with clear terms of reference	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2
3.1.b	Proportion of CSOs that regularly check potential conflicts of interest with regard to the political, economic and personal relationships of their governing body	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1
3.1.c	Proportion of CSOs that share relevant information on their organisation using means and channels that are accessible to all stakeholders	2	1	2	3	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	3	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	3	
3.1.d	Proportion of CSOs that have an organisational gender equality policy	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	

		2025							2024							2023							2021						
		AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR
3.1.e	Proportion of CSOs that have an organisational strategy, including vision, mission, and goals	4	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	5	4	3
3.2.a	Proportion of CSOs that have at least one on-line channel of communication	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
3.3.a	Proportion of CSOs that publish their annual reports and financial statements	3	3	2	4	4	3	3	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	3	3
3.3.b	Proportion of CSOs that publish information on their sources of funding and amounts received in the previous year	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.4.a	Proportion of CSOs that have carried out an evaluation of their work in the last year	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5
3.5.a	Proportion of CSOs whose work is based on evidence generated through research	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	5	5
3.5.b	Proportion of CSOs whose work is informed through consultation with people who have a stake in their current or future work	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

		2025							2024							2023							2021						
		AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR	AL	BA	XK	ME	MK	RS	TR
3.7.a	Proportion of CSOs whose sources of donor income are diversified	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	4
3.7.b	Proportion of CSOs raising funds from sources other than donors	3	5	3	3	4	4	5	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	5
3.8.b	Proportion of CSOs that have organisational human resources policies	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1



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