



12TH CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM REPORT



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3 October 2018, 16:00 – 19:00
Civic Space Project Office, Nicosia

The 12th Civil Society Forum of Civic Space was held at Civic Space Project Office on 3 October 2018 with the participation of 12 people from 10 civil society organisation (CSOs).

The Forum started with a brief informal welcoming note and introduction of CSOs' Agenda by Marija Jancic-Amberg, the Team Leader of Civic Space. Later, Selen Lermioglu, Capacity Building Expert explained briefly the EU Study Visit on Anti-Trafficking in Human Beings. Participants of the visit shared their experience on the subject matter. The forum continued with the agenda topics, as presented below. *(Please see Forum Agenda in Annex 1 and photos in Annex 2.)*

PRESENTATION OF CSOs' AGENDA

The participants were invited to give information about their CSOs' organizational agendas in the coming months. Refugee Rights Association, Turkish Cypriot Human Rights Foundation, MAGEM (Famagusta Youth Center), Queer Cyprus Association, KAYAD (Association of Women Support to Living), SOS Children Villages Association, "Bar Association" Human Rights Committee gave brief presentations about their coming activities.

Refugee Rights Association

The Association is currently working on the second report on the Social and Economic Rights of Refugees and the draft legal text on refugee rights. In September a training was held on Detention Standards. Workshops and trainings are planned for refugee kids on children's rights as well as support packages for refugee children (stationary, clothes, etc.) are being prepared for the new school year. They have many other actions, projects and events in which they collaborate with many other groups working on the rights of LGBTI, children, and women.

Turkish Cypriot Human Rights Foundation

The Foundation has concentrated recently on legal draft texts related with different aspects of human rights that are in the agenda of the "parliament" or in its committees, such as the legal text on surveillance and the one on cybercrimes. There were articles in these legal texts that are not in line with international human rights standards and there were some opposition also by some "MPs". The Foundation has already started advocacy and provided opinions and recommendations for improvement and will be following up on the subject. Another topic they have been dealing with was the suicide case that occurred during police detainment. They issued a press statement requesting an independent investigation and will continue to follow-up on the topic.

MAGEM

MAGEM (Famagusta Youth Center) is currently busy with Deryneia/Derinya check Point opening; Famagusta CSOs campaigning/advocating and following up on this matter as they support the opening of the check point. They currently have also been criticizing and following up on the annual budget increase of the Famagusta Local Community on catering to 3 million TL. MAGEM is moving its premises to Pasaj and they are now looking into what additional services and activities they need to do in the upcoming months. For MAGEM's future activities, they are planning to request support from Grow Civic. In the meantime, they are currently busy with organizing the Street Festival collaborating with Civic Space for the Open Door Festival Famagusta CSO Fair and the bi-communal visit.

Queer Cyprus Association

Queer Cyprus Association is in a transition period as they are moving into new premises in front of Civic Space. Their previous project (Unspoken) is in its finalization phase. They are working on the capacity building of the organization and preparation for a new busy period, which will start as soon as their new grant contract will be signed.

KAYAD

KAYAD (Association of Women Support to Living) just finalized their previous grant project in which the domestic violence legal text was drafted and now the association is advocating for its adoption. They will need civil society support in advocating for the adoption of this draft legal text. Contracting period for the new grant project with the EU is ongoing.

SOS Children's Village Association

SOS is currently working on Child abuse/protection policy. As it is presented during the Civil Society Forum, children are being abused in school environments therefore SOS is advocating protection policies in schools. Another issue presented by the SOS representative attending the Forum was the problem about the definition of child as being 16 in social services system of the northern part of Cyprus, although it is defined as 18 in the "law". Hence there is a problem arising from this gap for children between 16 and 18 years old. Thus SOS is also advocating and following up for the improvement in this. Children's rights were already added into the curriculum due to earlier advocacy initiatives, but yet nothing exists for the awareness of families. Therefore, the association will advocate on this aspect as well. They are planning a joint event with the Children's Rights Initiative to raise awareness about children's rights between 19 November and 3 December.

"Bar Association" Human Rights Committee

Although the free legal aid protocol for domestic violence victims has been signed, its content for proper implementation has not been finalized yet. According to the protocol, "the ministry of labour" spared 50.000 TL budget for women who are victim of domestic violence and have no sufficient financial resources. The conditions and implementation steps for the legal aid provision are currently being discussed. Another issue that the association raised is the recent work regarding torture. Indeed, there is no procedure to activate a complaint of torture in the northern part of Cyprus. They already designed and disseminated a complaint form to lawyers in order to raise awareness about the issue but there is still a lack of awareness and information. As a result, they are facing some difficulties in data collection regarding torture complaints. During the discussions in the Forum about this problem, they were recommended by other participants, not to limit the dissemination of complaints form to the lawyers but to also share the form with other CSOs that can also help increase its outreach and awareness about the issue. The Human Rights Committee representative will be writing a brief note and share the form with other CSOs, as well as with Civic Space to disseminate it to a wider audience.

CSOs FUTURE PLANS TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

The rest of the Civil Society Forum did not go as planned in the agenda to discuss on CSOs future plans to combat Trafficking in Human Beings. This was also going to be a platform to share lessons learnt during the study visit. As all the participants to the Forum were from the CSOs that attended the study visit, this topic was not relevant any longer. Participating CSO representatives used the time and space to discuss their internal advocacy and action planning.

ANNEX I – Agenda



12TH CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM
NICOSIA

3 October 2018
16.00 - 19.00

Civic Space Project Office
Nicosia

AGENDA

- 16:00 - 16:15** Arrival & Registration
- 16:15 - 17:00** Welcome & Presentation of CSO's Agenda
- 17:00 - 17:45** Lessons Learned from EU Study Visit on Anti-Trafficking in Human Beings
- 17:45 - 18:00** Coffee Break
- 18:00 - 18:45** CSO's Future Plans to combat Trafficking in Human Beings
- 18:45 - 19:00** Closure & Recommendations

Simple signs
Wheelchair access

By funding from the EU, the European Commission is supporting the development of the 12th Civil Society Forum in Nicosia. The project is funded by the European Commission through the contribution of the EU budget.

B&S
COUNCIL

civilcivilianspace

ANNEX II – Photos from 12th Civil Society Forum





Civic Space project is funded by the European Union and implemented by a consortium led by B&S Europe. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the B&S Europe Consortium and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

