



7TH CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM REPORT



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19 July 2017, 14:30 – 19:30
Osman Ağa Cultural House, Trikomo

The 7th Civil Society Forum of Civic Space was held at Trikomo/İskele on 19th July 2017 with the participation of 58 Participants from 32 CSOs. The Forum started with the welcoming speech of Marija Jancic-Amberg, the Team Leader of Civic Space and continued with the agenda topics, as presented below. (*Please see Forum Agenda in Annex 1 and Participant List in Annex 2.*)

INFO-SESSION: CYPRIOT CIVIL SOCIETY IN ACTION VI CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The first session of the Forum was dedicated to an information session on the guidelines and technical requirements for the Cypriot Civil Society in Action VI Call for Proposals for Grants that has been launched recently. Charlotte Goyon, the European Commission Programme Manager explained the objectives, priorities, eligibility requirements and other important information regarding the CS in Action VI Grant Scheme. Following a questions and answers session, this part of the Forum continued with a presentation made by the EU Grant Support Team on PADOR and PROSPECT systems, required for online applications and registration of potential applicants.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW CSO MEMBERS OF THE CIVIC SPACE STEERING COMMITTEE & PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The next session of the Forum was dedicated to the brief presentation of Civic Space past and future activities as well as the introduction of the new CSO representatives of the Civic Space Steering Committee. The activity presentation was made by the Team Leader, Marija Jancic-Amberg and then the 3 members of the Steering Committee, Hassan Vahib, Özgül Ezgin and Süreyya Celmen Değer, introduced themselves to the participants. They also explained their ideas, visions and plans about their position as civil society representatives. The 4th member, Melis Eroğlu was not able to attend the Forum.

PRESENTATION OF THE OPEN CALL FOR CSOs TO DRAFT A STRATEGY FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Süreyya Celmen Değer, Civic Space Steering Committee CSO member as well as the active member of the Working Group on Enabling Environment explained the process of drafting the Open Call, the content of the document and upcoming plans to finalize the process. She invited all participants to review the Open Call and to take part in the drafting of a Strategy for Improving the Enabling Environment for Civil Society in the northern part of Cyprus. She then distributed the Open Call document in hard copy for those CSOs interested to take part in the process.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE OPEN DOOR FESTIVAL

One of the most important sessions of the Forum was dedicated to introduce the 2nd Open Door Festival plans and to receive recommendations of the participants for its planning and implementation.

The tentative plans for the Open Door Festival to be held during the month of October 2017 was presented by the Team Leader, Marija Jancic-Amberg. Steering Committee members of Civic Space also took active part in explaining the Festival plans, since they have also been a part of the Organization Committee. The information provided are presented below briefly in bullet points:

- The Festival will be organized in 5 districts, at district squares while participation of youth and universities will be promoted. Transportation support will also be provided.
- A logistical service provider will be available and support the logistical needs of CSOs in their activities during the Festival.
- The final plan of the Festival will be worked during the month of August and will be finalized during the first half of September. The programme will be designed and finalized with the recommendations and input of CSOs. There will be various visits during the month of July and August to the districts to introduce the Festival and to compile recommendations.
- This year, the Festival theme will be “voluntarism” and due energy and effort will be put forwards to engage as many CSOs and volunteers as possible.
- Civic Space will also provide small budget support in the form of in-kind support as well as volunteers’ support for activities to be held during the festival. A special form will be designed and distributed for CSOs to add their activity in the Festival Calendar and to request support if need be. The maximum support to be provided for each activity is identified as 300 EUR.
- For activities of public benefit and rights-based approach, CSOs can also request support from Grow Civic In-Kind Support Programme of Civic Space, which approximately takes around 30 days to result. For actions found eligible, Grow Civic can provide support up-to 3000 EUR.
- CSOs can organize either specific activities for the Festival, or dedicate on ongoing or already planned activity to the Festival to publicize and promote their activities.
- Open Door Festival is an important opportunity to publicize and promote civil society activities for greater transparency and increased public support.
- Creative and innovative ideas and activities are encouraged as well as holding or participating in an activity in another district than regular.
- A closing event will be held at the end of the Festival, in which a documentary will be screened which will include the video recordings of activities held within the context of the Festival.

Recommendations shared by the participating CSO members are summarized below:

- It is important to include people in rural areas, especially those who are outside the civil society. Special measures (such as children’s corners, baby-sitting and day-care services, etc.) should be taken to ensure the participation of women in rural areas and their children. Otherwise, it is difficult for women to take part in civil society activities.
- Children can be encouraged to take part, bring their toys or books and barter with other children.
- Educational tournaments or activities can be held with prizes.
- People in rural areas cannot normally take part in civil society activities, so it will be meaningful to go to their areas/localities rather than take them/bring them to bigger centrals. Activities can be conducted in rural settings to bring liveliness and participation in villages.
- Support from “municipalities” should also be secured, they can provide stands and transportation for activities in rural areas, villages.

INFO-SESSION ON CHARTER ADAPTATION FOR ASSOCIATIONS

The last session of the Forum was dedicated to the presentation of the guide prepared by Civic Space to support the associations in adapting their charters. The guide was also distributed in hard-copy to the participating CSOs. In this part of the Forum, only 2 associations stayed and Selen Lermioğlu Yılmaz, the Capacity Strengthening Expert of Civic Space provided them with tailor-made support

regarding the adaptation process and requirements they should be taking into account. Other participating CSOs were either not associations or already finalized the adaptation process.

ANNEX I – Agenda

- 14:30 – 15:00 Registration
- 15:00 – 16:30 Information session: Cypriot Civil Society in Action VI Call for Proposals
Charlotte Goyon, European Commission Programme Manager
EU Grant Support Team
- 16:30 – 17:00 Coffee break
- 17:00 – 17:10 Forum Agenda & Report from the 6th Civil Society Forum presentation
- 17:10 – 17:30 Introduction of the new Steering Committee CSO Members:
Hassan Vahib, Özgül Ezgin, Süreyya Celmén Değer, Melis Eroğlu,

Presentation of the open call for CSOs to draft for CS Sector Strategy
- 17:30 – 18:00 2nd Open Door Festival- Ideas & recommendations
- 18:00 – 18:30 Charter Adaptation for Associations
- 18:30 – 18:45 Closure and Recommendations
- 18:45 – 19:30 Refreshments and Snacks

ANNEX II – List of Participants

Name	Organization Name	E-mail Address
Serkan Kırmızı	Iskele Shopkeepers and Artisans Union	baskan@iezb.org
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