

The Black Sea NGO Forum

Supporting civil society regional cooperation
in the Black Sea area



- Background
- Main objectives
- Important milestones
- Next steps

Background



- Launched in 2008 (Bucharest), by the Romanian NGDO Platform (FOND),
- Approx. 130 participants from 11 countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine,
- With the support of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Representation of the European Commission to Romania and the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation, within the framework of the Black Sea Synergy.



Main objectives



- **MISSION:** to create an open space for debate, mutual knowledge and understanding, communication and cooperation as to contribute to the prosperity and stability in the region with effective CSO participation (the Black Sea represents a cooperation space, than a barrier);
- **OBJECTIVES:**
 - Increase the level of dialogue and cooperation among CSOs in the wider Black Sea region;
 - Strengthen CSOs' capacity to influence regional policies;
 - Increase the number and quality of regional partnerships, projects and networks.

Important milestones (I)



- **2008 - 2013**, Bucharest => regional and bilateral partnerships (1st evaluation)
- **2014** – Kyiv => first edition in the region with support from the EC
- **2015** – Tbilisi => first Regional Strategic Framework (10 priorities & WGs)
- **2016** – Varna => first regional thematic meetings of the Working Groups
- **2017** – Chişinău => 2nd evaluation – more tailored-made support for networks
- **2018** – Brussels => visibility at EU level / focus on CSO resilience
- **2019** – Istanbul => revisiting the Regional Strategic Framework's priorities



Important milestones (II)

“Strategic Framework for Civil Society Cooperation”

1. Promoting & supporting enabling environment for CSOs (cross-cutting);
2. Supporting the **creation of formal and informal thematic networks** in the following 10 thematic cooperation areas:

PRIORITY COOPERATION AREAS

*Knowledge Network
Anti-Corruption
Civic Engagement
Youth
Education and Culture*

EMERGING COOPERATION AREAS

*Sustainable Development,
Youthbanks
Human Rights and Freedoms
Networking
Media and Communications*

REVISITING THE PRIORITIES 2019:

*Environment & Climate Change
Sustainable Development Goals
Volunteering Development
CSO Sustainability and Resilience*

Important milestones (III)



“The Black Sea NGO Forum A Decade On: Evaluation, Impact and Perspectives”, the Forum:

- *Successfully meets its original mandate and shows consistency and perseverance in realising its agenda;*
- *Contributed to creating a regional identity through a functioning NGO-led networked-approach;*
- *Provided a platform for regional confidence building and dialogue during difficult times;*
- *Has a strong sense of common ownership;*
- *Helped nurture collaboration and regional coalitions amongst NGOs in important areas and policies.*



Next steps (I)



“Building CSO Capacity for Regional Cooperation within the Black Sea Region”, funded by the European Union for the period 2019 – 2021:

The new project seeks to transform the **Black Sea NGO Forum into a mechanism of support for CSOs** in the region by:


- Improving the internal capacity of the Black Sea NGO Forum;
- Providing capacity building opportunities for CSOs from the Black Sea region and for the Black Sea NGO Forum working groups;
- Providing support for the creation of joint partnerships, projects, networks and initiatives of CSOs in the Black Sea region;




Next steps (II)



- **The Mobility Fund** aims to support the exchange of **best practices** and **lessons learnt** in specific thematic areas among civil society organisations (CSO) experts in the Black Sea Region with the aim of strengthening their capacity to engage in **regional cooperation**.
- The Mobility Fund is awarded individually to experts from CSOs and covers **mobility costs** for active participation in seminars, workshops, study visits, working meetings in the **countries from the Black Sea NGO region**.

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