



DEVELOPMENT HUMANITARIAN EDUCATION CENTRE
HELLENIC NGO



R E P O R T

on

**Regional two-day conference:
"Achievements, lessons learnt and recommendations for
regional civil society development and networking in the
Western Balkans"**

**06 - 09 July 2006
Ohrid**

within the project:
**Regional Capacity Building of CSOs in Serbia, Kosovo and FYROM
(2005-2006)**

co-financed by:
**the European Union - European Commission - CARDS -
Civil Society Development Programme
and
the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs -
Department for International Development and Cooperation - Hellenic Aid**

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Report on regional two-day conference is published at
www.hhdn.org

I INTRODUCTION

**Regional two-day conference:
“Achievements, lessons learnt and recommendations
for regional civil society development and networking
in the Western Balkans”**

- ❖ The conference was organised by:
 - European Perspective, Development Humanitarian Education Center, Hellenic NGO, Greece, Regional Office in Kragujevac, Serbia
 - NGO Educational Center - Leskovac, Serbia
 - NGO Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms – Prishtina, Kosovo
 - Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research-Skopje, FYRoMacedonia
 - NGO SUNA Association – Skopje, FYRoMacedonia

- ❖ The conference was the part of the project titled “Regional capacity building of civil society organizations in Serbia, Kosovo and FYROM” (May 2005 - July 2006).

- ❖ The conference was co-financed by:
 - European Union, European Commission – CARDS Civil Society Development Programme
 - Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for International Development and Cooperation – HELLENIC AID

- ❖ The conference took place in Ohrid, from July 6-9, 2006 (Thursday-Sunday) in Hotel Granit.

- ❖ The overall aim of the conference was overview of achieved results and lessons learnt of regional civil society activism and potentials for its further development with emphasis on cooperation and networking.

- ❖ The specific objectives of the conference were the following:
 - Overview of the importance for regional civil society development and networking in the Western Balkans from the EU point of view
 - Overview and assessment of the common regional issues:
 - Poverty reduction
 - Human and minority rights with emphasis on returnees and refugees

- Decentralization and EU integration
- Regional economic sustainable development

through analysis and definition of the:

- civil society structures dealing with the said issues
 - applied methodologies
 - progress achieved
 - best practices achieved
 - lessons learnt
 - recommendations for further actions and potentials for regional civil society networking
 - obstacles and risks for recommended actions
- Establishing contacts and creation of potentials for networking between regional civil society representative structures on the common regional issues

- ❖ The conference methodology had interactive character with plenary session at the very beginning by EU key speakers, presentation of project results, workshops, presentations of the workshops' results with recommendations and participants' bilateral and multilateral meetings on potential future cooperation/networking.

Key speakers gave their view on the importance of the regional civil society development in Western Balkan Region.

The two-day workshops were divided into four groups targeting the topics according to the conference goals as follows:

- I - "The role of the civil society in poverty reduction: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives"
- II - "The role of the civil society in protection of human and minority rights with emphasises on refugees and returnees: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives"
- III - "The role of the civil society in strengthening the process of decentralization and EU integration: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives"
- IV - "The role of the civil society in regional economic sustainable development: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives"

The two-day workshops were facilitated by workshops moderators/facilitators.

- ❖ The conference participants were local and international NGOs and networks, media, public and business representatives dealing with conference issues and with sound know how and achievements in the mentioned issues, adaptable to multiethnic environment, willing to share experience and know how. They were allocated to the workshops according to their sectoral background and achieved experience relevant to the workshop topic. There were around 100 participants.

II CONFERENCE AGENDA

DAY I – 06/07/2006

15:00 – 18:00 Arrival of participants

18:00 – 19:00 Accommodation of participants - delivery of room keys

20:00 - Official dinner and welcome, socializing

DAY II – 07/07/2006

07:00 – 09:00 Breakfast

09:00 – 10:00 Registration of the participants (ID cards, conference info-material, etc.)

Plenary Session:

- 10:00 – 10:15 Welcome note by Mr. Dr Pantelis Sklias, Chairman of the Board of EP
- 10:15–10:30 Key speaker - Head of the Office, Mr. Dimitrios Papandreou, Hellenic Office of Consular Economic and Commercial Affairs in Bitola: The importance of the Western Balkans regional civil society development from the Greece, as EU Balkan member state, point of view

Presentation of programme results:

- 10:30 – 11:00 “Regional capacity building of civil society organizations in Serbia, Kosovo and FYROM” - overall project results presentation: Ms. Radmila Radovic, EP Program Manager

11:00 – 12:00 Coffee break and workshops’ participants allocations

Workshops:

- 12:00 – 14:00 Workshops

14:00 – 15:00 Lunch

- 5:00 – 16:30 Workshops

16:30 – 17:00 Coffee break

- 17:00 – 19:00 Workshops

20:00 – 21:00 Dinner and socializing

DAY III – 08/07/2006

Workshops:

07:00 – 09:00 Breakfast

- 09:00 – 11:00 Workshops

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

- 11:30 – 14:00 Workshops presentations and conference conclusion

14:00 – 15:00 Lunch

15:00 – 18:00 Participants' contacts exchange, bilateral and multilateral meetings on potential future cooperation/networking

20:00 - Cocktail party

DAY IV – 09/07/2006

07:00 – 08:00 Breakfast

08:30 - Departure of participants

III

PLENARY SESSION DESCRIPTION

- KEY SPEAKERS

At the opening ceremony of the conference, key speakers gave their view on the importance of the regional civil society development in the Western Balkan Region:

- **Mr. Dr Pantelis Sklias, Chairman of the Board of EP**, welcomed all the conference participants on behalf of European Perspective and Regional Partners wishing successful and fruitful work during the conference. Mr. Sklias emphasized that presence of each participant at the conference was very useful - in order to share the work now and to continue in the years to come. Two years ago, EP and Regional Partners understood that there were so many needs for the civil society since the common regional civil society activities were not enough supported. The background idea, built between EP and Regional Partners, was to identify and support great number of existing and new-established formal and informal civil society organizations networks and to promote regional cooperation and networking. This is how EP and Regional Partners found the common ground in order to work together. "We managed to achieve the level of understanding between civil societies in all 3 regions. We overcame the difficulties and we had successful project implementation. We want to demonstrate our will to go further - this is the reason why we are here. We have to find the way how to go further since final outcome of our present and coming cooperation is better future for ourselves and our civil societies" - said Mr. Sklias. At the end Mr. Sklias welcomed once again conference participants inviting them to present new proposals, ideas, suggestions and new achievements for the future to come.
- **Mr. Dimitrios Papandreou, Head of the Hellenic Office of Consular, Economic and Commercial Affairs in Bitola** emphasized that civil society was very active during the past years with a lot of achieved results especially in the region of the Western Balkans. Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Hellenic Aid supported all the activities of the civil society, NGOs in their work and this conference as well. Mr. Papandreou also said that they would like to see the possible existing solutions for the better work of NGOs in order to provide support according to the already identified solutions. Mr. Papandreou used opportunity to invite all the participants to be actively involved in the realization of the conference towards the achievement of good results and recommendations for future common work. At the end, Mr. Papandreou also added that Greek Consulate in Bitola started with its work in October 2005 and it is open to cooperate with civil society organizations.

IV

PLENARY SESSION DESCRIPTION - PRESENTATION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Following the opening speech of the conference key speakers, **Ms. Radmila Radovic, EP Program Manager**, presented the achieved project results.

Project title:

"Regional capacity building of CSOs in Serbia, Kosovo and FYROM"

Project duration:

May 2005 - July 2006

Project leader:

EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE
Development Humanitarian Education Centre
Hellenic NGO

Project regional partners:

- NGO Educational Center - Leskovac, Serbia
- NGO Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms, Prishtina/e, Kosovo/e
- Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research, Skopje / FYRoMacedonia
- NGO Skopje United Nations Association, Skopje / FYRoMacedonia

Project co-financed by:

- European Union - European Commission - CARDS Regional Civil Society Development Programme
- Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Department for International Development and Cooperation - HELLENIC AID

Project objective:

to raise the capacity and competence of the civil actors and social groups active in the region gathered together in the forms of formal and informal networks for the purpose of better and more effective promotion of democratic process and enhancement of the civil society at local levels.

Project objectives - more specifically:

- 1) Capacity building of the CSOs networks as an important part of the broader civil society in the region through trainings and transfer of know how, expertise and techniques concerning management skills, fundraising activities, advocacy, lobbying, strategic and marketing planning, networking and inter-sectoral cooperation and public relations based on the EU modern policies, standards and normative.
- 2) Raising the professionalism within networks' internal structures that would be capable to face external difficulties and whose well educated and experienced personnel will get the chance to properly raise a stronger and clearer voice towards the solving of the local problems, improve the local political dialogue and democratic process, transfer the received know how to socially sensitive groups and educate them about civil rights and mobilize them to take active part in the public decision making when about their rights.
- 3) CSOs to become a credible partner of local governances in the process of transition and reforms and a trustful link to the citizens in combat against xenophobia, corruption and advocacy for the rule of law, human rights and democracy.
- 4) CSOs to enhance informal links between various partners based on personal relations or ad hoc project initiatives comprehend the advantages of counting working together and eventually, realize the possibilities of regional cooperation - creation of background for well qualified and established partnerships which enhance the confidence building in the region, thus contributing to peace and stability.
- 5) Ensuring relations between local governments, public institutions and the rest of social and political actors are based on the values of good and fruitful partnership, through awareness meetings and media presentations (TV and Newsletter, promotion materials, flyers, etc.)
- 6) Awareness building on the necessity of inter-sectoral cooperation in order to raise the consciousness and the awareness of the target groups for the purpose of creation of healthy civil society and proportional local community development that has to help the region face the problems of all equally and impartially in the transition period.

Project target groups:

Direct: Main civil society actors such as: NGOs, CSOs networks, local authorities, government, local and national media and the general public.

Indirect: general public at local, regional and international level approached through the project activities including the newsletter, internet, the overall information campaign and broadcast.

Project activities:

1. Establishment of 3 Regional Coordination Resource Centers in 3 regions in which the project is implemented: Serbia, Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia
2. Identification of formal and informal CSOs networks in 3 regions - creation of Database of Civil Society Organizations Networks in Serbia, Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia
3. Maintenance of the programme web site
4. Realization of 21 TV broadcasts
5. Realization of 21 awareness building meetings
6. Realization of 21 press conferences
7. Realization of 18 two-day trainings/workshops
8. Realization of 1 international training of trainers in Greece
9. Realization of 15 follow up trainings/workshops
10. Printing of 7 issues of the project newsletter in 3.000 pieces each issue (in English and 3 local languages: Serbian, Albanian and Macedonian)
11. Realization of 5 Monitoring and Evaluation Committee Meetings - MECs
12. Realization of two-day regional conference

Quantitative project results:

1. Established Database of Civil Society Organizations Networks in Serbia, Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia. This activity was realized in the following way:

- research on existing formal and non formal civil society networks in the region
- production of assessment form
- assessment
- collection of fulfilled assessment forms
- production of database
- systematization of results

In total there are 75 networks in the database.

Database is available at the programme web site www.hhdn.org.yu

2. www.hhdn.org - maintenance of programme web site - with the following content:

- Info in the project
- Project implementing bodies contact details
- Project newsletters
- Database of 75 assessed civil society networks in the region (Serbia, Kosovo, FYRoMacedonia)
- Database/e-library of useful documentation/researches/sources for the civil societies in the region (Serbia, Kosovo, FYRoMacedonia)

- Project press clippings
- Useful links

Thousands of visits (2000 visits per month).

3. 21 TV broadcasts with estimation that a million of spectators have possibility to watch TV broadcasts
4. 21 awareness building meetings with average number of 1050 participants
5. 21 press conferences with average number of 100 media representatives participants and general public that was reached through TV reports
6. 18 two day trainings with average number of 450 participants
7. 1 international training of trainers in Greece with 30 participants (10 per region: Serbia, Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia)
8. 5 follow up trainings with average number of 375 participants
9. 7 publications of the project newsletter - 3000 copies each issue (in English and 3 local languages - Serbian, Albanian and Macedonian) with average number of 3000 recipients
10. 5 Monitoring and Evaluation Committee Meetings - MECs with 45 participants that are representatives of European Perspective and Regional Partners
11. Established regional exchange info internet group for CSOs networks - eptot@yahoo.com
12. 1 regional two-day conference
13. 100 experts (NGO, public, business sector) involved in realization of project activities - as key speakers

Qualitative project results:

1. Built capacities of the CSOs, formal and informal NGO networks and organizations through transfer of know how about management techniques and consulting and through:
 - two-day trainings/workshops
 - their participation in newsletter articles preparation and editing
 - CSOs data base researching
 - awareness building meetings preparing and organizing
 - follow up trainings preparing and conducting

2. Improvement of effectiveness and professionalism of networks internal structures through capacity building and direct participation in the implementation of project activities.

There were established personal contacts with more than a 100 NGOs, networks and e-mail communication with more than 500 NGOs and networks. All these CSOs were invited to participate in the project on beneficiary and partnership basis, either to participate in the capacity building activities or assist in implementation of some project activities such as organization of awareness building activities, TV broadcasts etc.

3. Increase of awareness among the target groups including them in TV broadcasting and newsletter editing, and awareness building meetings and press conferences organizing. The themes and the key speakers that were invited to ABMs and press conferences made the media and journalist to become more interested for specific issues that the project worked on and wished to participate by themselves on the press conferences. The number of media that participated to the ABMs and press conferences is around 100.

4. Improvement of local political dialogue and democratic process through raising and training activities between targeted groups and the civil society such as local authorities, NGOs, media, unions, political parties, etc. The direct product of the awareness building was increase and better understanding on the necessity for the development of the civil society institutions with equal participation of different ethnic groups as a tool for positive democratic and development changes in the local community as well as understanding the constructive need of cooperation and networking on local and regional levels among representative civil society structures such as NGOs, public and profit institutions for the overall citizens' benefit.

5. Empowerment of relations between local governments, public institutions and the rest of social and political actors based on good and fruitful partnerships. Representatives of governmental sectors were regularly invited to participate in project activities. The project managed to interconnect the civil society and governmental sectors through the topics for which it was necessary to hear the views from both sides. It was noticed that these views were complementary and recognized the need for mutual better cooperation and coordination.

6. Increased awareness on the necessity of inter-sectoral cooperation and proportional community development that has to help the region face the problems of all equally and impartially in the transition period. The project implementation had as its target group representatives from public and profit sectors. The idea was to connect these sectors with the civil society one in order to explore the potentials for mutual cooperation and partnership building.

7. Provision of stable and continuous up to date info on targeted groups of NGOs and their formal and informal networks. This is achieved through constant update of database and field assessment of new CSOs networks.

TV stations - project partners:

- 1) TV Leskovac - Leskovac, Serbia
- 2) TV Studio MT - Leskovac, Serbia
- 3) TV Besa - Prizren, Kosovo/e
- 4) TV Festina - Urosevac/Ferizaj, Kosovo/e
- 5) TV Mitrovica - Mitrovica/e, Kosovo/e
- 6) TV RTK - Prishtina/e, Kosovo/e
- 7) TV Iris - Stip, FYRoMacedonia

Written newspapers - project partners:

- 1) JNP Nasa rec - Leskovac, Serbia
- 2) Epoka e re - Prishtina/e, Kosovo/e
- 3) Koha ditore - Prishtina/e, Kosovo/e
- 4) Bota sot - Prishtina/e, Kosovo/e
- 5) Kosova sot - Prishtina/e, Kosovo/e
- 6) Lajm - Prishtina/e, Kosovo/e
- 7) Vreme - Skopje, FYRoMacedonia
- 8) Graganski svet - Skopje, FYRoMacedonia
- 9) Makedonsko sonce - Skopje, FYRoMacedonia
- 10) Vesnik - Skopje, FYRoMacedonia
- 11) Utrinski vesnik - Skopje, FYRoMacedonia
- 12) Nova Makedonija - Skopje, FYRoMacedonia

Other media involved in the project:

- Serbia:
 1. TV Kraljevo
 2. TV 10 Kraljevo
 3. TV Bor
 4. TV Kanal 9
 5. RTV IN Kragujevac
 6. RTK Kragujevac
 7. RTV Devic
 8. Independent Television Negotin
 9. Studio MT
 10. Radio 016 Leskovac
 11. Radio Leskovac
 12. Radio Staff
 13. Radio Kraljevo
 14. Radio 9 Kragujevac

15. Radio Slobodna Evropa
16. FoNET
17. Multimediala
18. Sezam Production
19. Blic
20. Vecernje novosti
21. JIP Rec Pomoravlja

- Kosovo/e:

1. RTV 21
2. KTV
3. TV Liria
4. Ekspres
5. TV Opinion
6. TV Prizren
7. TV Tema
8. AL SAT
9. Kosova Live
10. Radio K
11. Radio Helix
12. Radio Prizren
13. Radio Dardania
14. Radio Dukagjini
15. Radio Blue Sky
16. Radio Top Kosova
17. Radio Kontakti
18. Radio French International
19. Radio Free Europe
20. ZERI
21. Kosova Press
22. Zeri Ditor

- FYRoMacedonia:

1. Dnevnik
2. Vest
3. TV A1
4. TV Kanal 5
5. TV SITEL
6. RTV Prilep
7. TV Orbis
8. TV Kanal 77
9. TV Tera
10. Televizija Telma
11. TV SkyNet
12. TV BTR
13. MTV

14. MTM,
15. Macedonian Radio
16. Radio Struga
17. Vulkan
18. Bitolski vesnik

During the project implementation Regional Partners contacted and created useful relationships with many CSOs in the targeted region - apart from media: NGOs, public sector institutions, business sector institutions/companies.

Other CSOs/institutions/companies involved in the project:

Serbia:

NGOs:

1. NGO Belgarde Centre for Human Rights
2. NGO Women in Action, NGO Forum for Roma Initiative
3. NGO The Timok Club
4. NGO Civic Initiatives
5. NGO National Roma Council
6. NGO OGI
7. NGO MillenniumM
8. Fund Center for Democracy
9. Resource Center Negotin
10. Women's Center
11. Youth Coalition of Serbia
12. Vojvodina's Green Initiative
13. Women in Black Network
14. Federation of Romanians in Serbia

Public sector:

1. Centre for Free Elections and Democracy
2. Peoples Office of the President of the Republic of Serbia
3. Municipality of Kraljevo
4. Civil Council of Kraljevo Municipality
5. Ariadnae Filum – Romanian Culture Association
6. City Library Bor
7. Sport Centre "Mladost" Kragujevac
8. Home for Parentless Children "Mladost" Kragujevac
9. University of Kragujevac - Faculty of Law

Business sector:

1. "GRAFO S" Leskovac - printing company
2. Studio „Image“ marketing agency
3. Motel "Predejane"
4. Tourist company "Pobeda" Predejane

5. "Statovac" bookshop

Opportunity for further improvement of existing co-operation has been created through realization of the partnership projects, creating a mutual strategy with local institutions and through establishment of the coordinated actions. More specifically, new possibility has occurred, regarding the realization of the complex cross border projects for strengthening the civil society institutions (using already established capacities of partners' organizations from Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia) and spreading the partnership network on a state level.

The co-operation could be continued through new network of partners' organizations, which could have a chance to obtain the macro grant of EC, not individually, but through the organizations' consortium from this region.

Kosovo/e:

NGOs:

1. Kosova Women Initiative
2. HANDIKOS Kosova
3. Handikap Kosova
4. RINIA
5. KIPRED
6. LSHK
7. KWI
8. MDA
9. RRRP
10. NDD
11. AVONET
12. FDI, AFCR - Albania
13. Finish Human Rights Project

Public sector:

1. Assembly of Kosovo/e
2. Ministry of Returns and Communities
3. Ministry of Public Services
4. Ministry of Education
5. Ministry of Local Government
6. Municipal Assembly Mitrovica/e
7. Municipal Network Kacanik
8. Municipal Network Urosevac/Ferizaj
9. Kosovo Police Service
10. University AAB

Business sector:

1. "SHKROLA" - printing company

FYROMacedonia:

NGOs:

1. NGO CIRA
2. NGO MCMS
3. NGO MOST
4. SOZM - Union of Women in Macedonia
5. DRC
6. Macedonian Network of Trainers
7. MCIC
8. SOROS
9. OSCE
10. Delegation of the European Commission

Public sector:

1. Faculty of Economy
2. Macedonian Institute for Media

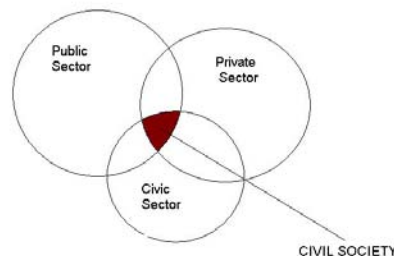
Business sector:

1. Dynamic Consulting
2. Macedonian Telecom,
3. SOFIJA - printing company
4. DUNA computers
5. Hotel Granit

All the project results achieved through regional inter-sectoral networking derive from the project methodology which in this case is the project added value itself.

Project methodology was based on the principles of holistic, interdisciplinary, synergetic, interactive and participatory approaches as well as on understanding that the civil society is **"the sphere of institutions, organizations and individuals located between the family, the state and the market in which people associate voluntarily to advance common interests" (Civicus)**

"This brings us to the end of presentation. I hope that shared info was useful for your future work but as well for understanding of our role today and forever that is improvement/advance of our regional common interests through joint, interactive, inter-sectoral, synergetic work and thinking" - said Ms. Radovic at the end of presentation.



Co-financed by:

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V DESCRIPTION OF WORKSHOPS

After the introduction-plenary session, participants were divided into four groups targeting the topics according to the conference goals such as:

- I - “The role of the civil society in poverty reduction: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives”
- II - “The role of the civil society in protection of human and minority rights with emphasises on refugees and returnees: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives”
- III - “The role of the civil society in strengthening the process of decentralization and EU integration: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives”
- IV - “The role of the civil society in regional economic sustainable development: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives”

The conference participants were allocated to the workshops according to their sectoral background and achieved experience relevant to the workshop topic.

The second day of the conference, after the morning session and before the lunch, the four workshops presented their results and recommended regional initiatives.

V-a WORKSHOP 1

1	WORKSHOP TITLE:	“The role of the civil society in poverty reduction: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives”
2	WORKSHOP FACILITATOR:	Ms. Jelena Markovic, General Manager, NGO Logos - Smederevska Palanka, Serbia
3	NUMBER OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:	16
4	WORKSHOP AGENDA (CONTENT):	DAY 2 <i>Workshop I</i> 12:00–12:30 Welcome speech, workshop agenda, introduction

		<p>Workshop participants' introduction</p> <p>12:30–13:00 General impression about poverty reduction processes from the perspective of workshop participants – (brainstorming)</p> <p>13:00–13:30 Main actors in poverty reduction processes – (group work – Venn diagram)</p> <p>13:30–14:00 Discussion about the roles and responsibilities of different actors in poverty reduction processes</p> <p>Workshop II</p> <p>15:00–16:30 Roles of the civil society in poverty reduction; desirable roles of civil society in the future; strengths and obstacles – (group work - Force-field analyses)</p> <p>Workshop III</p> <p>17:00–17:45 Group presentation and discussion</p> <p>17:45–18:30 Recommendations for future actions and mechanisms for active participation of CSOs in poverty reduction processes</p> <p>18:30–19:00 Closure discussion and workshops overview</p> <p>DAY 3</p> <p>Workshop IV</p> <p>9:00–9:30 Recommendations for regional civil society networking–potentials/preconditions; possible risks and obstacles; benefits (group work)</p> <p>9:30–10:00 Group presentation and discussion</p> <p>10:00–12:30 Preparation for workshops presentations and conference conclusion</p>
5	WORKSHOP GOALS:	Overview of achieved results, lessons learnt of regional civil society activism in the area of poverty reduction and potentials for its further development with emphasis on

		cooperation and networking.
6	WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY:	The workshop methodology was interactive, holistic and interdisciplinary Methods: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brainstorming 2. Venn diagram 3. Force field analyses 4. Discussions 5. Smaller groups work 6. Presentation
7	WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION:	- General impression about poverty reduction processes; - Main actors in poverty reduction processes; - Roles and responsibilities of different actors in poverty reduction processes, desirable roles of civil society in the future; strengths and obstacles; - Recommendations for future actions and mechanisms for active participation of CSOs in poverty reduction processes; - Recommendations for regional civil society networking: potentials/preconditions; possible risks and obstacles; benefits.
8	MOST SUCCESSFUL PARTS OF THE WORKSHOP:	Discussion about recommendations for regional civil society networking: potentials/preconditions; possible risks and obstacles; benefits.
9	ACHIEVED RESULTS:	During the workshops participants achieved the set up objectives. They discussed the results and lessons learnt of regional civil society activism in the area of poverty reduction; potentials for its further development with emphasis on cooperation and networking and provided the set of recommendations for civil society activism in the area of poverty reduction as well as recommendations for future regional networking and joint areas of interest. Also, the informal communication between participants was friendly and a lot of new contacts were established.
10	RECOMMENDATIONS:	Ideal role of CSOs in poverty reduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strong multi-sectoral/inter-sectoral partnership and cooperation ■ Increased capacities of local authorities ■ Developed corporative philanthropy of business ■ Sustainable influence of international community ■ Significant responsiveness of media and increased activities related to PR ■ Decentralization processes effectively implemented ■ Faith based organizations community oriented

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ More initial support for most vulnerable groups■ Strategy - operational and successfully implemented and monitored■ Supportive legislative framework for international investments■ Producing processes are stimulated and increased■ Significant role of diaspora■ Youth participation increased■ Quality of education is on higher level■ Standardization of NGO quality of work/ NGO codex <p>Preconditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Better coordination and cooperation between all CSOs actors■ National/local level support - each other■ Relevant and adequate legal framework■ NGO law■ Custom regulations■ Taxes policy■ Capacity building of relevant stakeholders■ And public awareness building■ Status and Constitution <p>Mechanisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Local and regional centers for multi - sectoral networking■ Inter regional centers■ Lobbying■ Cooperation with public sector <p>Preconditions for good networking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Joint goal/interest/mission■ Bottom-up approach■ Common standards of quality■ Permanent needs and capacity analysis of separate organizations/networks■ Technical cooperation agreement <p>Areas of common interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Sensibilization of venerable groups■ Public awareness■ Formed common market/custom regulations■ Establishment of regional info centers■ Prejudices/stereotypes
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Preservation of heritage ■ Environment (water, biodiversity...) ■ Regional platform for PRSP
11	<p>WORKSHOP FLIP CHART/ POWER POINT PRESENTATIONS:</p>	<p>Why inclusion of civil society is important?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To advocate for interests of different vulnerable groups • Opportunity to respond on different issues • Quick response and reaction • Coordination of different stakeholders/sectors • Lack of political ambitions of NGOs • CSOs should link Government and the most vulnerable groups • CSOs should raise public awareness and sensibilisation of citizens • Struggle against the manipulation of the most poorest • Institutionalization of active role of citizens/marginalized in decision making processes • Integrated initiatives and actions • From strategy to concrete actions <p>Who are the actors in poverty reduction processes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Ministries • Local authorities • Relevant public institutions • Business sector • International investitures • National Economic Council • Trade unions • Media • NGO • Faith based organizations • Humanitarian organizations /associations • Political parties <p>Networking:</p> <p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency • Volunteerism • Better territory coverage

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint capacities • Experience exchange • Better response to need to constituencies • Donors intentions • Quick response • Efficiency • Multiethnic • Standardization <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management problems • Leadership • Coordination • External influence • Lack of common interests/capacities • Huge administration • Objective monitoring/evaluation • Identity of organization • Rivalry • Sustainability • Monopolization/elitism <p>Apart from this, presentation covers all the recommendations listed above (under 10).</p>
12	PROVIDED MATERIAL FOR PARTICIPANTS (HANDOUTS):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PRSP – Prospects and limits of civil society involvements 2. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in Zambia – mechanisms for civil society inclusion 3. Monitoring the Civic Engagement in Bank Lending and Policy Instruments 4. PRSP – Serbia 5. PRSP implementation report 2005, Serbia

V-b WORKSHOP II

1	WORKSHOP TITLE:	“The role of the civil society in protection of human and minority rights with emphasizes on refugees and returnees: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives”
2	WORKSHOP FACILITATOR:	Ms. Gjylbehare Murati, Senior Investigation Lawyer at the Ombudsperson Institution in Kosovo, Prishtina/e,

		Kosovo/e
3	NUMBER OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:	20
4	WORKSHOP AGENDA (CONTENT):	<p>DAY 2</p> <p>12:00-12:15 Introduction of the participants</p> <p>12:15-13:00 Presentation on International Legal Framework covering minority rights</p> <p>13:00 -14:00 Discussions</p> <p>15:00-16:30 Identification of the issues surrounding returnees (minority) rights</p> <p>17:00-19:00 Case study/working in small groups</p> <p>DAY 3</p> <p>9:00-11:00 Discussions</p> <p>11:30-13:30 Concluding remarks/recommendations</p>
5	WORKSHOP GOALS:	Discussing the main issues surrounding the reintegration process with the particular focus on the role of civil society in ensuring the successful reintegration of returnees and internally displaced persons
6	WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Short presentation 2) Discussion 3) Case studies 4) Smaller groups work 5) Brainstorming 6) Approach - highly interactive
7	WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION:	<p>The workshop was mainly focused on discussion the reintegration process of returnees. It aimed in identifying major problems the returnees are facing upon their return to the country of origin.</p> <p>It has been divided into three parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction to the international framework on human rights in relation to the measures for the protection and promotion of minorities within the domestic legal system, referring to the main international covenants on human rights and non-binding documents 2. Identification of problems/needs surrounding

		returnees (minorities) 3. Recommendations
8	MOST SUCCESSFUL PARTS OF THE WORKSHOP:	The most successful part of the workshop was the part involving identification of needs/problems surrounding returnees. It was noticed that the participants were very much aware of the problems that the returnees might face upon their return to the country of origin.
9	ACHIEVED RESULTS:	The participants came out with a list of identified problems/needs that might be faced by returnees. In this regard another list was drawn (recommendations) as a proposal for overcoming the identified problems.
10	RECOMMENDATIONS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working on overcoming prejudices 2. Mediation services (returnees-local authorities, returnees-majority community members) 3. Collaboration with the media sector (training of journalists for promoting positive examples and good practice as well as informing returnees about their rights) 4. Collaboration with different stakeholders (trade unions, associations – sports, cultural, chambers of commerce) for reaching social dialogue 5. Coordination of activities with other CSOs and exchange of info (establishment of an info centre, database of projects, etc.) 6. Direct links with local CSOs without international intermediaries for the purpose of sustainable activities 7. Awareness raising about the new existing reality in place of return 8. Campaigns directed towards the youth for their re-socialization (e.g. multi-ethnic youth clubs, camps, concerts, sports activities) 9. Employment – re-qualification of returnees 10. Lobbying for the return of registries to place of origin (in the meantime - facilitate access to documents at municipal level) 11. Legal aid and representation free of charge 12. Psycho-social support for vulnerable groups 13. Good practice to be made public, especially with local governments 14. Lobbying for more efficient judiciary system and security enforcement mechanisms 15. Lobbying for more efficient work of the HPD (Agency for property issues) 16. Continuous education about the values of civil

		society.
11	WORKSHOP FLIP CHART / POWER POINT PRESENTATIONS:	<p>Reintegration of Returnees: Ensuring the successful reintegration of returnees and internally displaced persons is a major task, and is especially challenging in communities where the resident populations already strain limited resources</p> <p>Identification of Problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obstacles in obtaining personal documents • Problems with property and housing • Lack of employment (problems with returning to old work posts, lack of qualified staff of certain minorities for certain posts) • Access to privatisation processes • Lack of possibilities for objective informing • Reintegration into society faced with a new reality (inter-ethnic communication, reintegration of adolescents) • Further education in one's own language and curriculum • SECURITY and freedom of movement <p>The flip chart was used only in the last part of the session. The participants were asked to write down needs/problems surrounding returnees as well as recommendations (under 10).</p>
12	PROVIDED MATERIAL FOR PARTICIPANTS (HANDOUTS):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities 2. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 3. European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages 4. Framework Convention on National Minorities

V-c WORKSHOP III

1	WORKSHOP TITLE:	"The role of the civil society in strengthening the process of decentralization and EU integration: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives"
2	WORKSHOP FACILITATOR:	Ms. Jelena Jerinic, LL.M., Advocacy Team Leader, Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, Serbia

3	NUMBER OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:	18
4	WORKSHOP AGENDA (CONTENT):	<p>The workshop was divided into four sessions, each divided into several parts.</p> <p>DAY 2</p> <p>Session 1:</p> <p>12:00-14:00 <u>Introductory session – setting the frame</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of facilitator and participants - Defining working rules - Presentation of workshop goals and participants' expectations - Definition of main workshop themes: Civil Society, Decentralisation, EU integration - Decentralisation pro et contra – defining possible arguments for and against decentralisation in general and identification of the perspective of different civil society actors - Reform processes in the region – identification of stages in the decentralisation process achieved in each of the regions - Role of different civil society actors in reform processes, with particular stress on consultation mechanisms <p>Session 2:</p> <p>15:00-16:30 <u>Principle of Subsidiarity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principle of subsidiarity as provided by the European Charter of Local Self-Government - Division of competences between the levels of government - State of affairs in the region – how particular competences are divided in the three regions <p>Session 3:</p> <p>17:00-19:00 <u>EU integration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State of affairs concerning EU integration in the region - The European Constitution and Local and Regional Government

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role of different civil society actors in promotion of EU integration processes at local and regional level - Designing a model local action plan for EU integration <p>DAY 3</p> <p>Session 4:</p> <p>09:00-12:30 <u>Conclusions and recommendation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defining workshop conclusions and group recommendations - Preparation of presentation for the plenary
5	WORKSHOP GOALS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exchange of experiences on decentralization and EU integration issues and reform processes in participating states 2. Identification of best practice examples in identified issues 3. Identification of points of possible regional cooperation on identified issues
6	WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY:	<p>The following methods were used:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Presentations by facilitator 2) Interactive input 3) Discussion 4) Group work 5) Filling out comparative tables on the main topics discussed during the workshop in order to provide an outline of state of affairs in the region
7	WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION:	<p>After the introduction of facilitator and participants, the group defined its own working rules. The workshop began by definition of main workshop themes. The participants were asked to provide their own definitions of civil society, decentralisation and EU integration, which were then discussed and working definitions were agreed upon.</p> <p>After that, the participants divided into 4 groups discussed arguments for and against decentralisation in general, which they presented to the whole group. As main benefits of the decentralisation process, the participants identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vicinity of citizens and problems – more efficiently solved - More responsibility for local authorities - Necessity to assess citizens' needs <p>One of the most important conclusions was that we should not speak of arguments against, but rather threats to be considered when decentralising a particular system, such</p>

	<p>as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lack of political culture- Necessity of fiscal decentralization- Uneven development <p>A discussion was opened on particularities of the decentralisation process in each of the regions and the general conclusion was that, even though, some regions (e.g. FYRoMacedonia in the fiscal decentralisation area) are ahead with certain pieces of legislation, all of the 3 regions represented are more or less on the same stages in the reform processes.</p> <p>Finally, the group concluded that the civil society has a role to play in the decentralisation process, but that CSOs are in most cases not consulted on legislative or policy initiatives – both by central level and local level authorities. Therefore, one of the main workshop conclusions was that consultation should be institutionalised and obligatory and different mechanisms were identified, such as hearings, public debates, initiatives etc.</p> <p>The session on subsidiarity principle began with a presentation by facilitator on the main features of the European Charter on Local Self-Government and the principle of subsidiarity. After that, the participants, split into 4 groups were asked to divide 10 competences given by facilitator between different levels of government and to identify if some of them were to be shared between two or more levels. Presentation of group and the discussion afterwards showed that CSOs should favour decentralisation, i.e. more competences for the local levels of government, since this provides them with more opportunity to influence authorities and provide more benefit for the citizens. Also, the group realised that (parts) of almost all competences can be realised locally. After that, the group discussed how specific competences are distributed in each of the regions and filled out the pre-prepared comparative tables.</p> <p>Finally, the session on EU integration kicked off with a discussion on state of affairs concerning in the region, followed by a short presentation on the European Constitution and Local and Regional Government. After that, the discussion centred on the role of different civil society actors in promotion of EU integration processes at local and regional level. General conclusion was that CSOs should take a more prominent role in EU integration process both through raising awareness of the public and working together with the government - local and central.</p>
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		<p>The first day of the workshop ended with group designing model local action plan for EU integration. Participants were split into 3 regional groups (Serbia, Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia) and were asked to design a local action plan for EU integration, which must include local authorities and must have a cross-border or regional component. All 3 groups did very well and presented three very good project ideas, which could easily be realised in the near future. The project ideas are listed below (under 9). The second day of the workshop was focused on definition of workshop conclusions and group recommendations to be presented to the plenary. The group chose a presenter and made a Power Point presentation.</p>
8	<p>MOST SUCCESSFUL PARTS OF THE WORKSHOP:</p>	<p>From the perspective of the facilitator, it seems that the most useful parts of the workshop were the ones where participants discussed the state of affairs in the 3 regions on different issues – both while doing exercises in groups or in discussions led by the facilitator.</p> <p>Also, the action plans or project ideas which the participants drafted turned out very well, as almost ready made project ideas, which each of them would be able to implement quite successfully.</p>
9	<p>ACHIEVED RESULTS:</p>	<p>The group defined valuable recommendations for the work of CSOs in the fields of decentralisation and EU integration which were presented to all conference participants in the final plenary session. These are listed below (under 10).</p> <p>Also, as mentioned above (under 7), three model local action plans for EU integration were drafted. They are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Development of cultural and environmental action plan”, Kosovo 2. “Think European, act locally”, Serbia – focusing on dissemination of information on EU and cross-border exchange of experiences 3. “Local action plan for EU”, FYROM – focused on the implementation of the Law on Decentralization from the perspective of recommendations of the European Commission
10	<p>RECOMMENDATIONS:</p>	<p>The group defined a set of recommendations to CSOs, relating to the issues covered during the workshop. These are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CSOs should favor decentralization based on citizens needs and capacity of local authorities 2. CSOs should advocate for both functional and fiscal

		<p>decentralization</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Consultations should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institutionalized - Obligatory - Through the whole process (both central and local level) 4. CSOs should work on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising the level of political culture at local level - Develop stronger relations with local authorities 5. CSOs should advocate for mechanisms for participation in the work of local government bodies on a cooperation basis 6. CSOs should take a more prominent role in EU integration process both through : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising awareness of the public and - Working together with the government (local and central)
11	<p>WORKSHOP FLIP CHART / POWER POINT PRESENTATIONS:</p>	<p>The facilitator prepared 5 Power Point presentations – 4 were prepared beforehand and the fifth was a summary of group work and conclusions during the first day of the workshop :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introductory presentation – outlining workshop goals, contents and methodology 2. Definition of main workshop themes 3. European Charter of Local Self-government and the principle of subsidiarity 4. EU integration and local government – a view to EU constitution 5. Summary of first-day proceedings <p>During group work, the participants prepared flip chart presentations of their group work on the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition of main workshop themes: 3 empty flip chart papers were posted on the wall and participants were invited to post their definitions of civil society, decentralisation and EU integration 2. Arguments for and against decentralisation in general – 2 FCs for and 2 FCs against 3. Division of competences 4. Model local action plans on EU integration – 3 FCs (one for each region) <p>Finally, the participants prepared a Power Point</p>

		presentation of group recommendations for the plenary (described above - under 11).
12	PROVIDED MATERIAL FOR PARTICIPANTS (HANDOUTS):	<p>The facilitator prepared six handouts, which were forwarded to conference organisers beforehand:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full text of the European Charter on Local Self-Government 2. Selection of Internet resources on decentralisation and local self-government 3. Comparative table 1: State of local government system 4. Comparative table 2: Local government competences – distinguish own competences of LGs and competences shared with other levels of government 5. Comparative table 3: Consultation mechanisms 6. Comparative table 4: Process of EU integration

V-d WORKSHOP IV

1	WORKSHOP TITLE:	“The role of the civil society in regional economic sustainable development: achieved results and recommended regional initiatives”
2	WORKSHOP FACILITATOR:	Mr. Ilija Todorovski, Ph.D. Expert in Social-Economic Development, ISPRJ, Skopje, FYRoM
3	NUMBER OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:	22
4	WORKSHOP AGENDA (CONTENT)	<p>Day 2</p> <p>12:00 – 14:00 Introductory session: Setting the frame</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Introduction of facilitator and participants</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Defining working rules</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Presentation of workshop goals and participants’ expectations</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Power Point Presentation by the facilitator on the theory and opportunities of the local/regional economic development</p>

		<p>Analysis on the opportunities of the local/regional development Analysis of group work results from the perspective of different civil society actors</p> <p>Reform processes in the region – discussion, comparative tables¹ Role of different civil society actors in local/regional economic development – discussion, presentation of cases and best practice examples</p> <p>15:00 – 16:30 Opportunities and difficulties the local communities face in respect of local economic development</p> <p>Legislation on local/regional economic development in participating countries</p> <p>Fiscal opportunities and difficulties</p> <p>Human resource opportunities and difficulties</p> <p>The role of civil society in local/regional economic sustainable development</p> <p>17:00 – 19:00 Opportunities coming from neighbourhood and EU cooperation in the field of local/regional economic development</p> <p>Opportunities coming from cooperation with local government units in neighbouring countries</p> <p>Opportunities coming from cooperation with local government units in EU countries</p> <p>Support of the donor organizations</p>
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		<p>Day 3</p> <p>09:00 – 12:30 Conclusions and recommendations</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Continuation of previous discussions and group work Revision of comparative tables Preparation of presentation of workshop conclusions</p> <p>12:30 – 13:30 Presentation of workshop results in the plenary</p>
5	WORKSHOP GOALS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exchange of experiences on decentralization process in the field of local/regional economic development in participating states - Identification of best practice examples in identified issues - Identification of points of possible regional cooperation on identified issues
6	WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY:	Presentations and interactive input by the facilitator, discussion, brain storming, group work, presentation of best practice examples and comparative method.
7	WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION:	<p>The work of the workshop in achieving the workshop goals was going through these stages:</p> <p>First - the participants introduced themselves in respect where they had come from, what their professional occupation and status were, what their expectations of the seminar were, etc</p> <p>Second - facilitator made a Power Point Presentation on the theory and practice of the local/regional economic development and the best practices in the neighbouring countries</p> <p>Third - discussion was carried out in which the participants defined the local government structure in these parts of the region, described the forms and intensity of the economic development in Serbia, Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia, the reasons or obstacles for its low intensity, and the solutions towards its intensification as well as the opportunities and obstacles of regional economic cooperation and development</p> <p>Fourth - the summary of the conclusions and recommendations of this group were presented at the Plenary Session</p> <p>Generally, the workshop was successful, because through an active discussion, exchange of information and</p>

		experience and the cooperation established among them the workshop goals were attained.
8	MOST SUCCESSFUL PARTS OF THE WORKSHOP:	The tendency of the participants towards cooperation, joint action and surmounting of the existing obstacles in reality are the most successful parts of the workshop.
9	ACHIEVED RESULTS:	The following results were achieved: -Familiarization with the concept of local/regional economic development of small number of the participants -Familiarization with much more aspects and details of the local/regional development among the large number of participants -Familiarization of the opportunities for cooperation at the regional level among the participants -Strengthening pro-active consciousness among the participants towards changes in their surrounding of the circumstances that will advance the local/regional economic development -Strengthening the spirit of cooperation and constructive way of problems treating, etc
10	RECOMMENDATIONS:	At the national level: -The necessary step is enactment of legislation or its completion. It should not be waiting to initiative from the top but it should come from the business and civil society sector -It should be learnt from the good practice, at first domestic and later on from abroad but adapting this practice to domestic circumstances; -A significant step is raising the consciousness of the local stakeholders to the local economic development advantages and benefits, and the ways how to achieve them; -To establish agencies at local level that will deal with these issues and their networking to raise their effectiveness by their cooperation At the regional level -More meetings to be organized like this one where participants can exchange information on specific issues and can establish partnerships -Resolution of the political problems – FYRoMacedonia has a problem with the name; Serbia with the borders and Kosovo with its status; -Kosovo has a big problem with its foreign trade that requires urgent resolution – they import large quantities of commodities from Serbia and FYRoMacedonia, but can

		<p>not export there due to some administrative barriers – the sign Made in Kosovo is not recognized in FYRoMacedonia and Serbia, the UNMIK declaration as well and their commodities could not cross the borders of the aforementioned countries.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>WORKSHOP FLIP CHART / POWER POINT PRESENTATIONS:</p>	<p>During the sessions the following topics related to the local/regional economic development were discussed:</p> <p>I. First was the question referring to the local government structures in Serbia, Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia because these are the basic frames where the local economic development can be effectuated.</p> <p>Serbia:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One-tier local government system with municipalities and four cities 2. Competencies – local infrastructure 3. Organs – Mayor – executive directly elected, Assembly is legislative; Municipal Council is to propose the budget <p>Kosovo:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One-tier local government system with municipalities; in addition they have administrative regions that are link between central and local authorities 2. Competencies – all EU competencies 3. Organs – Executive President, Assembly is legislative; <p>FYRoMacedonia:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One-tier local government system with municipalities and the City of Skopje as a community of municipalities 2. Competencies – urban planning, environmental protection, local economic development, primary and secondary education, culture, social protection and care, etc 3. Organs – Mayor – executive directly elected, Council is legislative <p>II. The second issue raised was where and which forms of local economic development exist in Serbia, Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia, on which the following answers were obtained:</p> <p>Serbia:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In Serbia there are 15 municipalities with strategic

	<p>development defined but the same municipalities lack funds to implement the above plans into practice.</p> <p>2. There is an active project in Lebane where women from various ethnic origins, such as Serbian, Roma, and Albanian are being employed.</p> <p>Kosovo: Decentralization exists and municipalities can prepare their strategies in this context strategy on local economic development. Many specialists from abroad are involved in these activities. Therefore strategies on local level exist but they can not be implemented due to the lack of appropriate funds.</p> <p>FYRoMacedonia</p> <p>1. The Project is called Local Governance for Sustainable Human and Economic Development Program, sponsored by Finland and implemented by UNDP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Local Developmental Plans are in preparation in many municipalities but are already made or in the final stage in 20 municipalities-There are 9 groups within these strategies-One of the sections is the Sustainable Economic Development based on SWOT analysis.-One of the group is composed of 9-10 members dealing with a part of the strategy.-Local developmental plans are realized as public - private-Local Development Agencies are established in 7 municipalities dealing with Local economic development.-Next, the Local Development Plans will be forwarded to public debate.-The last will be their adoption by the municipal organs.-After that comes the Action Plan. <p>2. Revolving Fund (Development Fund) is established where the partners are the municipality of Kavadarci and UNDP participating with 50% in the Fund.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Within the municipality of Kavadarci 50% of the revenues come from the municipality of Kavadarci and 50% from the local business community.-Recipients get credits amounting 5-10.000 EUROS for grape and wine production, etc. <p>III. From the above answers it could be understood that local economic development is not so widespread and rich in forms, therefore the third issue raised was which were the problems or obstacles towards more</p>
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	<p>intensive local economic development existing in Serbia, Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia.</p> <p>Serbia: The characteristics of local government financing for Serbia is that the taxes are collected at the central level and later on are distributed to the municipalities. The municipalities have their original sources of revenues such as fees for parking, for firms etc. but they do not exceed 10% of the overall municipal revenues. It means the Central authorities provide 90% of the local revenues. At the side of the municipalities there is an uncertainty about which revenues and when they will be transferred from central to local authorities, and in this context the latter have a problem to plan their activities. Generally, because of insufficient revenues there is a small room for local economic development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-These sectors (public, business and private) have no capacity individually to deal with local economic development.-Municipalities have not funds or people to do with it and they lack partnership among the aforementioned sectors.-Problems lie in the financial institutions. Credits for the citizens were not available until recently, and now they can be gained, but under unfavourable conditions.-In Serbia a law on micro-crediting does not exist. Only the banks may provide credits and other types of crediting are not allowed by the law.-The problem of micro-crediting exists. Thus business incubators can be established but these projects can not work due to the unsolved status problems.-About decentralization is being debated a lot but nothing is actually changed because decentralization does not suit the politicians.-Legislation is not still decentralized or the competencies but local infrastructure are still in the hands of central authorities-The problem of regional cooperation is not only that on the cross-border level, but the same type of problem exists in Serbia as well. More precisely, there is no institutional frame for regional cooperation in Serbia. If somewhere exists a good practice in this respect, it is an individual case and not a general rule.-There is a problem of construction land ownership and property rights of the municipalities. It is still in the hands of central authorities that does not allow free hands to the
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		<p>municipalities in respect to their local economic development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The municipalities have not capacities to solve the problems. -The civil sector is neither sufficient nor turned towards the local economic development -NGOs do not establish partnerships -NGOs are in struggle to survive, and can not devote their acting to these problems -There is not a strong co-operation between the local government and NGOs -There is even opinion among some strata that NGOs are mercenaries of the foreign powers in Serbia. -It is very difficult to accept the new norms after the period of socialism. <p>Kosovo:</p> <p>All taxes are collected at the central level and then distributed to local authorities. About 80% of the local revenues come to the local budget from the central authorities (most of them collected at the borders); 20% are original sources coming from local fees or donors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack funds for local purposes – the funds are used for something else -Credits can be obtained from the commercial banks but the interest rates are at least 15%; <p>That what was said about the local government functioning in Serbia can refer to Kosovo as well. More precisely,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Laws on Local Government exist and these laws are made according to the EU laws, but the implementation is very poor -The salaries of local government staff are low -Human resources are insufficient to cope with the tasks -The relationship between the central and local authorities either does not exist or is pretty vague -Problems with the proportional electoral system – on the lists can be met persons that have never proved their qualities -In Kosovo there are municipalities without any industrial enterprise -The Chamber of Commerce is very close to the Government -Politics interferes into economy -We have regions with 8 representatives in the central assembly and regions without one representatives; the
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	<p>former dominate in financial terms, i.e. they allot central money to their municipalities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Only one Agency dealing with a lot of issues like privatization, economy, etc.-Many of the laws passed are without economic background-Problems with electricity-Laws are completely identical as in the European Union but the mentality of our population is different, or it is as it used to be in the previous period – in addition there is corruption-The Strategic Developmental Plan on national level does not exist-Everything is accepted from the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund and that is not adjusted to the domestic circumstances <p>FYRoMacedonia:</p> <p>The Macedonian Local Government was highly centralized in the period of 1991-2001/5 having only infrastructure as an original local government competency (maintenance and construction of local roads and streets, water pipes, sewage, etc). Then the Local Government Act (2002) was passed which transferred a lot of competencies at local level such as: urban planning, environmental protection, local economic development, primary and secondary education, social protection and care, culture, fire protection, infrastructure etc. but they became effective after passing the specific laws in the field of primary and secondary education, environmental protection (2005) etc that elaborated the competencies in the basic Local Government Act. But in this period of a year when the decentralized local government functions a lot of problems occurred specially in the sphere of education and transfer of staff from central to local level, therefore the vast majority of the municipalities did not have the time and energy to regard the problems of local economic development, neglecting its advantages. In addition, according to the Law on local financing, special funds for local economic development are not determined and this is another big problem in this respect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Decentralization does not function-One of the most effective municipalities is Veles and it faces a lot of problems.-There is a lack of inter-municipal cooperation-Lack of skilled employees in many municipalities
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-There are still municipalities without computers-Mayors do not know their competencies – the political parties could be blamed for that because they offer candidates without professional qualities-Many municipalities are without staff speaking foreign languages and they can not share the experience with the foreign municipalities.-Local planning is unknown in many municipalities and the mayors do not know what their developmental priorities are-Non-existence of national development plan at the national level in FYRoMacedonia-Lack of revenues for the tasks-The problems of the small municipalities exist-The small municipalities are now neighbourhoods within the large municipalities-Inappropriate legislation that nobody respects at the time being-The rate of corruption is high-Generally there is a resistance against the new solutions-Mandate of four years for a mayor is not sufficient to solve the problems-There is widespread nepotism-Quite long time ago the problem of centralization was faced. Now the legislation bringing decentralization is passed-Outdated urban plans, and the new municipalities do not have urban plans at all-Municipalities have not a vision where they can invest in infrastructure-The adoption of the new urban plans is linked with the construction land that is not clearly defined.-The land property is not regulated and that can not bring investment from abroad <p>IV. The fourth issue was what should be done to improve the situation at a national level.</p> <p>Serbia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Laws should be passed in the Serbian Parliament-The initiative for change of legislation must come from the bottom and through partnership of the local government, the business and civil sector.-In respect to the good practice, it should be taken into consideration first that one existing in Serbia, and next the foreign one, adapting to the circumstances in Serbia.
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	<p>-Campaigns for strengthening of civil consciousness should be launched</p> <p>-Associations networking the population on local level should be established</p> <p>-Association of entrepreneurs gained three seats at the local assembly elections and gained credits afterwards.</p> <p>-To establish agencies at local level that will deal with these issues and their networking to raise their effectiveness by their cooperation</p> <p>Kosovo:</p> <p>-Strengthening of civil consciousness</p> <p>-Decentralization should carry on</p> <p>-All problems identified in our surrounding - to commit to convey to the central authorities.</p> <p>FYRoMacedonia:</p> <p>In 2007 FYRoMacedonia will have the Pre-Accession Funds of the European Union. Once you have a strategy, the donors will come.</p> <p>V. The fifth issue was about the obstacles that can be met in the regional cooperation and the initiatives to undertake in order to surmount the obstacles</p> <p>Serbia:</p> <p>-Business contact with FYRoMacedonia is easier, but with Kosovo is grave. The political situation there is not very well known in Serbia. Serbs I do not know whether they can be safe there.</p> <p>-Good practices should be exchanged among each other because they can be developed everywhere.</p> <p>- Regional projects are needed as well as establishment of regional ties with Bosnia and all other regions.</p> <p>- The local economic development at the regional level is highly influenced by the situation on the national level. In this region all three parts have institutional problems. FYRoMacedonia has a problem with Greece, Serbia with the borders, Kosovo with its status. Finally, business should be developed and existing barriers should be overcome. Small players (entrepreneurs) can establish communication even in such circumstances as existing now.</p> <p>- Some of participants of Business Fair in Belgrade can hire joint premises at the fair with the entrepreneurs from the region.</p>
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		<p>Kosovo:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Economic development must be supported. The Balkan borders should be fictitious and society have to care much more about economy not only politics. Some people from Kosovo were in Belgrade and they did not have any problem. The same is the situation in Kosovo - Serbs could feel safe.-People must be realistic. In Serbia there are voices against separation of Kosovo, but in practice Kosovo is separated from Serbia, and that reality is to be accepted in Serbia.-Society is facing a lot of problems hampering this economic development. In a period of a year commodities amounting 178 mil. Euros from Serbia and 150 mil. Euros from FYRoMacedonia were imported - exporting at the same time 1 mil Euros, although there are many products that can be exported from Kosovo to Serbia like the Kosovo wines. <p>Both Serbia and FYRoMacedonia do not allow Kosovo to export their merchandise on which is the sign "Made in Kosovo" that provokes resistance against such politics or commodities from Kosovo are treated at the customs of these countries as commodities of unknown origin, although everyone from FYRoMacedonia or Serbia can establish a business enterprise in Kosovo. Generally, society is more engaged in resolution of political problems than economy. In Kosovo is strong the public opinion according to which the politicians must not mention anything but independence of Kosovo; in Serbia there are reverse tendencies. The Serbian Prime Minister pays the visit to Kosovo upon the authority of UNMIK and stirs the Serbian population in Kosovo to act against separation of Serbia. Still, there is not any tendency either in Serbia or in Kosovo about a joint economy. People suffered a lot in this period but they have to forget. The only way out is to remove the obstacles of the economic cooperation and establish it. In addition, Kosovo has a unique electoral system. There are 10 seats in the Parliament for minority representatives regardless the voting results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Otherwise it should be worked on market principles emphasizing the principle of reciprocity.-It would be desirable to meet much more frequently to solve these problems.-Campaign should be launched - to buy regional products and pay more attention to the economic cooperation than
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	<p>to politics.</p> <p>FYRoMacedonia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-This is a good opportunity to carry on with contacts.-There is Free Trade Agreement with the neighbourhood but there are still a lot of problems. For instance, there are long delays on the borders. As well there is some political instability in the region. The Prime Ministers of these countries should meet and solve the problems.-Business should meet more often in the fairs.-The largest problem in FYRoMacedonia in this respect in the course of the 1990s was the process of centralization. In the 21 century FYRoMacedonia reached decentralization. FYRoMacedonia draw experience from the Balkan countries, one of them is Croatia, but here communication with Serbia and Kosovo can be established which is very important. <p>General conclusions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In practicing local economic development we concluded that local economic development was stipulated as a specific competence in the legislations of Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia; in Serbia it was not stipulated in the law but in practice it existed because its existence was not forbidden by law and in some municipalities was practiced. Generally, local economic development in Serbia, Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia is in its initial stage. Until now the most of the activities can be led down to preparation of municipal sustainable development strategies that are financed or sponsored by international donor organizations like UNDP, EAR etc. In few municipalities only, we have allotment of small credits to entrepreneurs to invest in some economic activities.2. Initial stage of local economic development and its small effects are based, according to the participants to the difficulties the local governments in Serbia, Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia face, the most important of which are:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Lack of legislation on the basic local government issues such as local competencies, local financing, etc. in Serbia, and recently passed legislation in Kosovo and FYRoMacedonia, where the problem of transfer of competencies provided big problems and in that context the municipalities were more focused to traditional issues
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		<p>such as education, social security, property issues etc, neglecting the local economic development. In addition, the latter have incomplete legislation in some fields.</p> <p>b) The municipalities generally in all three parts of the region have insufficient funds for local functioning generally and lack specific funds for local economic development. Financial problem is one of the gravest one in this region.</p> <p>c) Considerable numbers of municipalities lack trained staff for successful performance of local tasks including local economic development</p> <p>d) Civil society sector is not concerned so much with these problems</p> <p>e) Generally there is a lack of cooperation between the central and local authorities</p> <p>f) All of these countries are without sustainable economic development strategy on the national level and it reflects at local level.</p> <p>3. Their local government structure by itself is favourable for any initiative by the civil of business sector because is consisted of one-tier local government system or municipalities that are closer to the citizens, NGO and local business sector, and because of strict separation of power between the executive and legislative bodies in which case initiatives by the civil and business sector can be launched in both directions.</p> <p>4. Participants appreciate the effects coming from regional economic cooperation and will intensify the economic contacts in spite of the existence of the political problems at regional level.</p>
12	PROVIDED MATERIAL FOR PARTICIPANTS (HANDOUTS):	Power point presentation created by the facilitator.

VI LISTS OF CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

VI - a Per region

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WORKSHOP I -
THE ROLE OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY IN POVERTY REDUCTION:
ACHIEVED RESULTS AND RECOMMENDED REGIONAL INITIATIVES

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**WORKSHOP II -
THE ROLE OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY IN PROTECTION OF HUMAN AND MINORITY RIGHTS
WITH EMPHASIZES ON IDPs, REFUGEES AND RETURNEES:
ACHIEVED RESULTS AND RECOMMENDED REGIONAL INITIATIVES**

Workshop facilitator:

**Ms. Gjylbehare Murati, Senior Investigation Lawyer at the Ombudsperson Institution in Kosovo,
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**WORKSHOP III -
THE ROLE OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY
IN STRENGTHENING THE PROCESS OF DECENTRALIZATION AND EU INTEGRATION:
ACHIEVED RESULTS AND RECOMMENDED REGIONAL INITIATIVES**

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WORKSHOP IV - THE ROLE OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: ACHIEVED RESULTS AND RECOMMENDED REGIONAL INITIATIVES

Workshop facilitator:

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TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN WORKSHOP IV: 22

- Legend for "SECTOR" column:

- N - NGO sector representative
- M - Media representative
- P - Public sector representative
- B - Business sector representative

VII PHOTOS

Photos from the regional two-day conference:

