

REGIONAL  
**INDEX OF  
OPENNESS**

Published by **Citizens' Association "Zašto ne"**

Citizens' Association "Zašto ne" is an organization that works on the creation of a safe, secure, healthy, active, efficient and accountable BiH society through increasing civic participation, influencing government accountability, use of new technology tools and promotion of socially engaged culture on the whole territory of BiH together with other interested groups, organizations, institutions and individuals.

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# **REGIONAL INDEX OF OPENNESS**

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# ABOUT THE PROJECT

Good governance is key to rule of law and while issues of corruption, transparency, rule of law and good governance are always in the spotlight, there remains a lack of understanding and systemic problems that hardly receive sufficient coverage. The project aims to raise awareness of such challenges by facilitating cooperation among civil society organizations (CSOs) and consolidated strategic efforts for representation.

The “Accountability, Technology and Institutional Openness Network in South East Europe - ACTION SEE” project is implemented by Foundation for Internet and Society Metamorphosis (North Macedonia), Westminster Foundation for Democracy (UK), Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability - CRTA (Serbia), Citizens Association Why not? (Bosnia & Herzegovina), Center for Democratic Transition (Montenegro), Open Data Kosovo (Kosovo) and Lëvizja Mjaft! (Albania).

ACTION SEE provides a platform for dialogue between significant stakeholders and a concrete tool to measure the degree to which state institutions uphold principles and standards of open governance (Openness Index).

The project aims to increase the inclusion of CSOs and media organizations in decision making processes and the creation of public opinion and policies, as well as to raise the capacity of civic societies to address sensitive issues.

## The project aims to:

- Promote a dynamic civic society which effectively mobilizes citizens for active participation in issues related to the rule of law and good governance and affects policies and decision making processes at a national and regional level.
- Strengthen mechanisms for dialogue between civic organizations and government institutions and influence good governance and public administration reforms.
- Stimulate civic and media organization networking at local and EU level, allowing the exchange of know-how, skills and connections, as well as increase the influence of their representation efforts.

# OPENNESS INDEX – METODOLOGY

Openness represents a key condition of democracy since it allows citizens to receive information and knowledge, necessary for an equal participation in political life, effective decision-making and holding institutions accountable for policies which they conduct.

Around the world institutions undertake specific activities with the aim to increasing their transparency and accountability to citizens. The Regional index of openness is established in order to define to which degree citizens of the Western Balkans receive opportune and understandable information from their institutions.

The Regional index of openness measures a degree up to which institutions of Western Balkan countries are open for citizens and society and it is based on the following four principles:

- 1) transparency
- 2) accessibility
- 3) integrity
- 4) effectiveness

The principle of transparency includes that organizational information, budget and procedure of public procurements are publicly available and published. Accessibility is related to ensuring and respecting procedures for a free access to information, improving availability of information through a mechanism of a public debate and strengthening interaction with citizens.

Integrity comprises of a mechanism for prevention of corruption, conducting code of ethics and regulations of lobbying. The last principle, effectiveness, refers to monitoring and evaluation of policies conducted by institutions.

Following international standards, recommendations as well as examples of good practice, these principles are further developed through special quantitative and qualitative indicators, which are evaluated on the basis of: accessibility of information on the official websites of institutions, quality of a legal framework for individual issues, other sources of public informing and questionnaires delivered to institutions.

**6**

**Countries**

**3**

**Measurements**

**50-130**

**Indicators per  
institution**



## Executive Power

Core Executive - Office of Prime minister  
Line of Ministries  
Executive Agencies



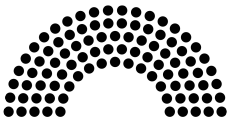
## Prosecution

Prosecutorial Council  
Public prosecution  
Supreme State Prosecution



## Courts

Court Council  
Courts



## Parliament



## Local self-government



# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

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The creation and improvement of the **Openness Index** as a composite indicator that measures the degree to which institutions in the Western Balkan countries are open to citizens, in the areas of **transparency, accountability, integrity and awareness**. In each of the countries the openness of the institutions was measured within the legislative authorities (parliaments), executive authorities (governments, ministries, and executive agencies), judicial authorities (courts, prosecutors, judges and prosecutors) and local self-governments.

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On the basis of the Openness Index data, in total **72 Policy papers, 18 National and 3 Regional Roadmaps** were created and translated into 6 languages, that served further for promoting institutional transparency and good governance.

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A total of **3 Grant Scheme cycles** were implemented as part of which **35 grants were to local CSOs and media organisations located in the six Western Balkan countries**. Each of the grantees implemented their unique projects focused on addressing the urgent local and national issues in the upcoming period in order to advance good governance and the rule of law.

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A total of 3 Grant Scheme cycles were implemented as part of which 35 grants were to local CSOs and media organisations located in the six Western Balkan countries. Each of the grantees implemented their unique projects focused on addressing the urgent local and national issues in the upcoming period in order to advance good governance and the rule of law.

■

Did an assessment of media coverage of Good Governance and Public Administration Reforms in all 6 countries to provide an overview of the manner of media reporting on good governance, transparency, and accountability and the type of undertaken civil initiatives, i.e., covered project topics. The analysis also detected the type of changes caused by the media reporting on those topics at the level of policies, legislative amendments or public debates organization with the aim to spur amendments in terms of legislation or change certain conditions through civic activism.

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Our social media community consists of more than 3500 followers on Facebook and Twitter, among which are decision-makers, public administration officials, journalists, etc. In one case, the prime minister of North Macedonia even shared our content (data visualization) on his Facebook page, commenting the Index results. Our social media community is still growing steadily.

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Established a good cooperation with a number of institutions with whom we have organized meetings, trainings and created separate guides on how to improve their level of openness.

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Contributed to raising awareness about the importance of openness of the state administration, by organizing regional, national and international conferences, multilateral meetings, advocacy events, online campaigns, knowledge exchange workshops, etc.

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CDT and Why not? both have representatives in Government Partnership (OGP) in their countries, which allows them to directly advocate for ROI recommendations.

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Contributed to raising awareness about the importance of openness of state administration, by organising 3 POINT, 3 NED, 3 E-Society conferences.

■

Managed to increase the level of openness in all branches of institutions.



# GRANT SCHEME

Grants for implementation of six-month projects have been awarded to 18 civil society organizations from six countries: North Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which will address urgent local and national issues in the upcoming period in order to advance good governance and the rule of law.

Awardees from Bosnia and Herzegovina are:

**The organization UAMPI BUM** (Association for Alternative Music Production and Publishing BOOM) shall implement the “Preglasaj” project, created as a collaboration with UNSA Geto (Association for Independent Creators and Activists GETO) and Impuls Portal, as a necessity to reach new content on our media and journalism scene. In our country, this year is an election year and every election year here is overcrowded and overstuffed with useless information and negative campaigns of political opponents. The real problems voters actually face remain hidden under the surface, yet again. Preglasaj is a project that will produce textual works and video reports which will speak about real problems young people face and their lives. The content will be created by students and activists under the guidance of experienced journalists from Bosnia and Herzegovina and our region.

**The organization Association for Media and Civil Society Development (URMCD)** and its media partner web portal Perspektiva.plus have the „Faktograf“ project idea. The need for this project is a result of lacking accountability of political stakeholders and growing presence of false information and „fake news“. Regular use of dishonest campaigning and misleading promises by the country’s politicians helps them gain voter sympathy but also presents a manipulative tactic that has not been called out by the media that often. Thus, news are rarely fast checked and usually a form of spreading misinformation. Since there is no video format that tackles this topic URMCD and Perspektiva.plus decided to create one. By producing 5 episode miniseries to identify misleading narratives in popular media and politics, map financial and political motivations for their existence and to find key actors in their production this project aims to help make political accountability a key expectation of the general public in the electoral process of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to raise general public’s expectation toward media platforms in terms of quality and reliability of the cited sources. Also its objective is to initialize and provide a starting audience for a grassroots online based video platform to be oriented exclusively towards fast-checking news sources and politician’s credibility in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**The organization Centre for Policy and Governance** implemented “Consistency of the budget with reforms” (Budžet u ogledalu). The overall objective of this project was to enhance the role of civil society and media during the pre-election period by providing objective information on the commitment of authorities to the socioeconomic reforms. This overall objective will be achieved through: advocacy for fiscal policies in line with the goals of the socioeconomic reforms, advocacy for accountability of the authorities in relation to distribution of public funds and targeting of those in need and reaching out to citizens and getting them interested in socioeconomic topics during the pre-election period. Concrete activities include: research on the consistency of budgets with reforms (identifying the most important weak spots of 2018 budgets which are not in line with the socioeconomic reforms), advocacy campaign (writing analytical articles in partnership with one of the leading online news portals in the country – BUKA and managing a social media campaign) and an event during the peak of the pre-election campaigns (to inform citizens about the importance of looking beyond the populist topics into the socioeconomic policies of the parties which are competing in elections).

**Center for Civic Cooperation Livno** – Towards Local Government Accountability: Improving Local Community Communication. Project had an aim to improve communication of local communities with citizens, municipal authorities and media in six municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Pro Educa** – Local Administration Employment Before and After Local Elections in Republika Srpska project aim was to locate the employment level over the course of an electoral year and address the issue in order to eliminate this impediment toward democratic society.

**Liberalni forum** – “Towards efficient and transparent SOEs” – The overall objective of this project was to enhance the role of civil society and media by providing objective information on efficiency of some of the biggest SOEs in BiH.

# ABOUT THE PARTNERS

The **ACTION SEE** project was created on the basis of the experiences of the members of the ACTION SEE network gained in the implementation of projects at a national, regional and international level with the aim of strengthening civic organizations for a more efficient and more significant inclusion in the policy creation processes.

The **ACTION SEE** network is composed of CSOs that jointly work on promoting and ensuring government accountability and transparency in the region of South-East Europe, raising the potential for civic activism and civic participation, promoting and protecting human rights and freedoms on the internet and building capacities and interest within civil society organizations and individuals in the region in using technology in democracy promotion work.

## Partner organisations

**Foundation for Internet and Society Metamorphosis** (North Macedonia)

[www.metamorphosis.org.mk](http://www.metamorphosis.org.mk)

**Citizens Association Why not?** (Bosnia & Herzegovina)

[www.zastone.ba](http://www.zastone.ba)

**Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability** (Serbia)

[www.crta.rs](http://www.crta.rs)

**Center for Democratic Transition** (Montenegro)

[www.cdtmn.org](http://www.cdtmn.org)

**Levizja MJAFT!** (Albania)

[www.mjaft.org](http://www.mjaft.org)

**Westminster Foundation for Democracy** (UK)

[www.wfd.org](http://www.wfd.org)

**Open Data Kosovo** (Kosovo)

[www.opendatakosovo.org](http://www.opendatakosovo.org)

More information about the project:

**ACTION SEE project website**

<https://actionsee.org/>

**Openness Index**

<https://opennessindex.actionsee.org/>

**ACTION SEE Resource Center**

<https://resource.actionsee.org/>

**ACTION SEE Facebook page**

<https://www.facebook.com/ACTIONSEEnetwork/>

