

Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index – Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia

Overview The Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index (CSOSI) regional report for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, produced by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with FHI 360, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), and an implementing partner in each participating country, assesses the status of CSO sectors in 24 countries in the region. The CSOSI provides a comprehensive assessment of the capacity of civil society to serve as both a short-term partner in implementing development solutions and a long-term actor in ensuring development outcomes are sustained. The CSOSI empowers local civil society to collectively assess not only the environment in which they are operating, but also their own capacities to advocate, operate sustainably and communicate with citizens. Allowing local civil society to self-identify their development challenges is the first step in promoting resiliency and long-term self-reliance.

This year's Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia Index reports on the state of CSO sectors in 24 countries in the region, from the Baltics in the north to the Caucasus in the south, and the Visegrad countries in the west to Russia, which stretches east to the Pacific Ocean. It addresses both advances and setbacks in seven key components or "dimensions" of the sustainability of the civil society sector: legal environment, organizational capacity, financial viability, advocacy, service provision, sectoral infrastructure, and public image. The Index is intended to be a useful source of information for local CSOs, governments, donors, academics, and others who want to better understand and monitor key aspects of sustainability in the CSO sector.

Results Twelve of the 24 countries covered by the CSOSI for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia reported regression in the legal environments governing their CSO sectors in 2017, though the level of CSO sustainability continues to vary widely across the region. While the closing of civic space has been well-documented in the last several editions of the CSOSI, in 2017 governments of a more diverse range of countries further tightened control over their CSO sectors, including both those that have long been ruled by repressive regimes as well as long-standing European Union members. In addition, 10 countries reported deterioration in the public image dimension of the Index, reflecting the increasingly negative rhetoric by government and pro-government media towards CSOs, especially those that are critical of government. The reported improvement in sectoral infrastructure in many countries provided one bright spot in the findings, with over a third of countries in the region covered by the Index reporting improvement in that dimension, though dependence on funding from foreign donors remains a challenge.

2017 CSOSI Reports can be found at <https://www.fhi360.org/resource/civil-society-organization-sustainability-index>.

Explore historical CSOSI data at <https://www.csosi.org>.



2017 OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY

