



Civil Society Development Foundation
Annual Report 2015

Message from the Chairman of the Board

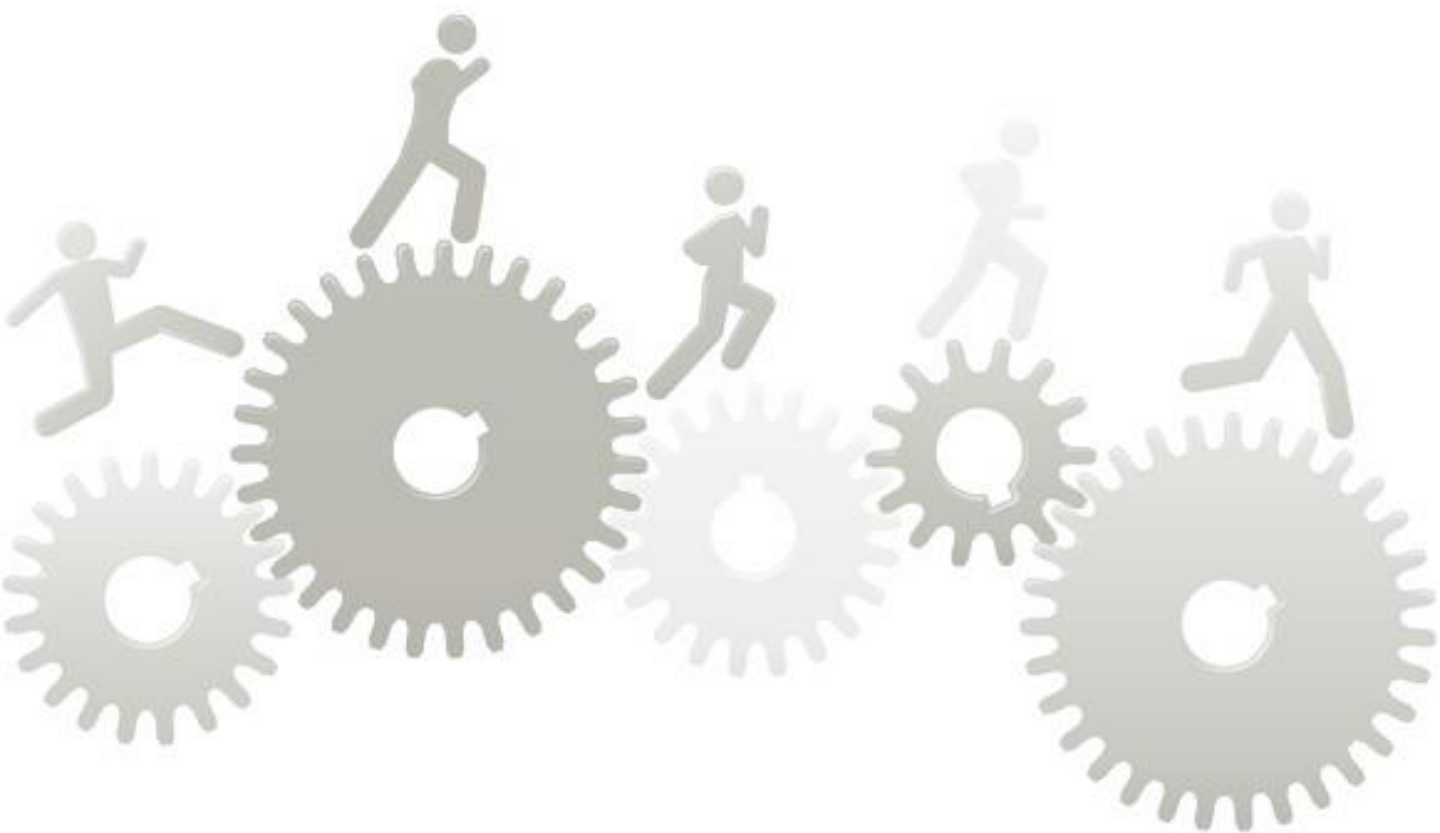


The massive mobilization of civil society actors depending on the Foundation's work - more than 200 projects under implementation and about 50 to start while thousands of individuals are involved, makes us aware about our role and impact, and about the duty to continue to serve our stakeholders.

Hundreds of NGOs are involved at national level. Grass roots and think tanks, individual, in partnerships or in networks and coalition. They have invested time, energy, knowledge and they have generated changes at the level of their communities. Their work and results are the base we rely upon, validate what we do and motivate for the future.

We thank all our supporters and partners for their trust in building together a stronger civil society.

Cătălin Crețu



Message from the executive director



2015 was the year of stories and results. All the programs developed or managed by FDSC - Civic Innovation Fund, NGO Fund and Swiss – Romanian Cooperation Program - were under implementation and the NGOs results from the funded project began to appear. This year, in projects funded under NGO Funds, more than 2600 volunteers were involved, 120 reports on public policies were drafted, 10.000 beneficiaries received basic services, and over 6000 communities' members from 166 villages were engaged in local activities. The NGOs funded were very much involved and the changes were visible.

20 projects were also funded within Civic Innovation Fund and grass roots NGOs will be engaged in civic engagement development. These projects are very important, new models of solving local problems with citizens' engagement are tested, that might be applied at national level or funded in other programs. The results will continue to appear next year also in the projects funded with Swiss – Romanian Cooperation Program. The second Call for Proposals was launched within NGO Block Grant. From 771 applications, 33 projects will be funded only on Social Component, with a total amount of 3.994.945 CHF.

Model communities were the theme of the sixth edition of NGOFest. It was a sharing space for best practices between Romanian NGOs and NGOs from other countries from European Economic Area, on democracy and civic participation. The event is becoming increasingly popular each year, as a moment when NGOs and citizens are meeting. This year, over 230 NGOs, public institutions and companies participated and over 20.000 visitors attended the festival.

Social economy was an active area also. The Vidra Vegetable Cooperative, with our assistance, manages to become more productive and increase their production and sales. It's one of the most profitable cooperative from Romania, at this moment. In partnership with 4 foreign organizations and institutions train of trainers in the management of agricultural cooperatives was provided, for those who want to set up cooperatives and social enterprises or to improve their management. We are glad that the third edition of the Atlas of Social Economy was published this year again by the Institute of Social Economy, initiated by CSDF, containing the main data on the social economy sector in Romania.

(Continued on the next page)



This year we continued the activity in education, especially in making the connection between formal and nonformal education. Over 1000 teachers attended the training in youth life skills in the context of sustainable development, organized at national level. Prof21.ro became an online community of practices.

2015 was also a year of beginnings. The first edition of International Solidarity Gala took place at National Theater and marked the closing of The European Year of Development. Most active promoters of international solidarity, from different areas were awarded – activists, journalists, public institution representatives and academia.

Starting 2015, Civic Innovation Fund benefits of a strategic partnership with the Romanian American Foundation and focuses more on grass root NGOs. ENEL Romania joined the group of civic innovation friends, in partnership with them, a new component dedicated to civic engagement for improving the access to energy, will be launched in 2016.

The public consultation with NGOs representatives and protesters, initiated by President Klaus Iohannis was an important moment for civil society. In a sad moment, after the Colectiv tragedy, and a turning point for the Government, the president opened the dialogue with NGOs to establish the priorities for future governmental plans. Hopefully this will be an example of partnership between NGOs and public institutions. CSDF also participated at this consultation and we hope the spirit of dialogue and partnerships will be preserved for the future.

It may seem difficult to describe the CSDF activity in less than a page. But summarizing, 2015 was the year when we saw the results of NGOs engagement into the community. It's the best motivation we can receive for our future work and projects.

Ionuț Sibian



About us

CSDF Board

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Karen Fogg
former Head of European Commission
Delegation in Romania

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Country Leader
Analytical Solutions

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Simona Gherghina
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University of Bucharest, Faculty of Law

CSDF is an “organisation for organizations”, sharing the belief that the very development of non-governmental organizations is an indicator of the progress of communities and citizens.

CSDF's growth has been certainly connected to the changing needs of the Romanian non-governmental organizations (NGOs): in the first half of the 1990s, we catered to the immediate need for funding of the emerging national NGO sector, through grant programs, while later on we gradually added new programs and services designed to meet specific needs identified in every development stage of the non-governmental sector.

Reaching out to other categories of stakeholders and target groups, which had become more and more relevant for the overall development of the civil society, CSDF is currently pursuing its mission by providing services not only to NGOs, but also to public administration, the business sector, journalists, academia. Our grant programs, information services, consultancy and training, as well as advocacy, coalition and platform building program are interconnected and with a mutual added valued. That is what makes us different and comprehensive in its approach on the development of the civil society.



About us

Grants management and technical assistance

CSDF provides technical assistance for the planning and implementation of financing programs, whether from public or private funds. We assist donors throughout the entire program cycle.

Training and consultancy

To respond to the development needs of local NGOs, CSDF created several training and consultancy services in the areas of organizational management, project management, structural funds.

Information services

CSDF acts as a resource center for NGOs providing real-time information updates on projects, activities and opportunities for organizations, through the news portal www.stiriONG.ro.

Advocacy and public policy

As a proponent of positive changes made as a result of a constant dialogue between the third sector and the public administration, CSDF has the ability to mobilize a significant number of non-governmental organizations and the expertise to manage the entire process of advocacy.

Research

CSDF is a research center dedicated to the civil society, this role being assumed since the beginning.

**Grants
management
and technical
assistance**

NGO Fund



2015 was the year in which the last 177 contracts, the ones awarded in the Second Round of the NGO Fund in Romania, were signed. A total of 390 projects were funded. EEA Grants is still the most important donor in terms of general allocations for NGOs as well as in key areas such as human rights, democracy, welfare, advocacy, anticorruption, think-tanks, networks and coalitions, some of this areas having as unique funding opportunity the NGO Fund; more than that, strong partnerships with different important stakeholders at local, regional or national level develop through funded projects.

Through the financed projects, in 2015 there were more than 2,600 volunteers engaged in volunteer programmes. More than 120 reports on public policies were drafted. A great diversity of partners were approached and involved in joint initiatives within projects, with the purpose of facilitating the access to target groups, ensure cross-sectoral interventions, transfer new methods, ensure sustainability of the interventions etc.

Over 130 partnerships between NGOs and public authorities at all levels were established, highlighting an increased recognition of NGOs expertise, capacity to adapt to the needs of the beneficiaries, tackle and promptly respond to new and emerging issues at beneficiaries' and communities' levels.

The programme has contributed at building or consolidation of 42 networks and coalitions. Out of the 42, 20 new coalitions and networks were created, mostly in areas that needed coalisation and representation, such as: education, fighting violence against women, new media technologies, youth unemployment, Roma inclusion, civil rights and functioning of state institutions, peace building, NGO management, open political market, patrimony and culture.

Over 10,000 new beneficiaries have received welfare and basic services due to increased capacity of NGOs. Also, more than 10,000 beneficiaries accessed basic services in deprived / disadvantaged areas, such as interethnic, Roma, poor, rural, isolated, etc.

On "Rural interethnic communities development subcomponent", a significant number of community actions were organised, bringing together all the ethnic groups and offering the opportunity for sharing experience – around 6,000 members of the community participated, which means around 100 on average per each project, in 166 villages.



NGO Fund

Complementary actions



Several events were organised, the biggest of them being the annual [Romanian NGO fair](#). It had model communities as main theme and it promoted the contribution of NGOs to developing models of successful communities in Romania. The 3-day event took place in Bucharest between 8-10 May, encompassing 1 day of indoor programme and 2 days of outdoor festival. The opening of the fair was hosted by the National Library of Romania, where more than 230 participants from Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain discussed and shared experiences and opinions about model communities in Europe.

The projects financed within the programme were constantly promoted on the dedicated Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/FondulOng>). The page had almost 10 million views in 2015 and reached to 8,000 followers.

Through the media partnership with Dilema Veche, media pitching to journalists from other publications or participation at various radio and TV shows, the NGO Fund was mentioned in over 150 media releases in 2015.



Swiss-Romanian Cooperation Programme



PROGRAMUL DE COOPERARE ELVEȚIANO-ROMÂN
SWISS-ROMANIAN COOPERATION PROGRAMME

The two Thematic Funds from the Swiss-Romanian Cooperation Programme are managed by a consortium formed by KEK-CDC Consultants (Zurich, Switzerland) CSDF and the Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation (Miercurea-Ciuc, Romania).

Thematic Fund "Partnership and Expert Fund"

In the year 2015, all 40 projects (14 of the 1st Call for Proposals and 26 of the 2nd Call for Proposals) financed through the Partnership Block Grant were under implementation. The total financial allocation for the grants is of **CHF 7,990,612**. The funded projects aimed at promoting and strengthening institutional partnerships between Romanian and Swiss partners and covered topics as diverse as community development, environment, education, social economy and public policy. A total of 67 Romanian and 43 Swiss entities (NGOs, public institutions) benefitted from these projects. CSDF monitored 32 projects out of the total of 40, providing the necessary assistance and monitoring to the Executive Agencies for the successful implementation of the funded projects. The total amount of the grant for partnership projects monitored by CSDF, totaled **CHF 6,258,842**.

Thematic Fund for Civil Society Participation

During 2015, the 2nd Call for Proposals was launched within the NGO Block Grant, with an online platform. There were registered a total of 771 applications, out of which 586 under the Social Component and 185 under the Environmental Component. On Social Component, a total of **CHF 3,944,945** is committed to finance 33 projects.

CSDF is in charge with monitoring the projects under the Social Component. During the reporting period, 19 projects out of 30 financed within the 1st Call for Proposals continued their implementation and were closely monitored, CSDF offering advice to the Executing Agencies for a successful implementation of the funded projects. The total amount of the grants for the Social Component, 1st Call for Proposals is of **CHF 3,893,576**.



The Civic Innovation Fund



Starting 2015, the Civic Innovation Fund (CIF) benefits of a strategic partnership with the Romanian American Foundation and focuses more on grass root NGOs. At least 80% of the grants will be allocated to organizations that have an annual budget up to 60.000 \$.

2015 also marked a new focus on CIF's image. The program gained a new logo, new tailored PR materials, and actions were taken in order to grow its popularity to stakeholders outside our beneficiaries' area.

The call for proposals 2015 was launched on the 15th of May. The submission process took place exclusively online and competition exceeded the expectations, 724 applications being uploaded on our platform www.finantare.fdsc.ro by the deadline. 53 applications were proposed for admission into the next stage and the applicants received training in order to better develop their full proposals.



By the end of the year, 20 projects to be implemented in 2016 were selected for financing. These projects cover a broad range of topics, from advocacy for minority groups, to building citizen action groups in small towns, creating dialogue between youth and the authorities in rural or small urban areas, monitoring the coming elections or getting citizens involved in awareness campaigns on important medical topics.



**Training and
consultancy**

Support for the establishment and development of the association "CERC Boldești-Scăeni"

Between August and December 2015, CSDF provided consulting services within the "CIF Petrom 2015" project for the creation and development of the "CERC Boldești Scaeni" association.

Thus, in order to create the association, preparatory activities were conducted which involved the analysis of the social situation of the community, group and individual meetings in the community and with other local level stakeholders. At this stage, for CERC's establishment the following have been considered:

- community information about the role of CERC, community organization which will represent the interests of all communities, including the Roma community
- identifying the main needs on the local level
- Identifying people who want to get involved in the organization and the way they see its activities

The main needs identified during the meetings were *dropping out of school, poor results of students in compulsory education, low participation of fathers in childcare, poor professional qualifications of members of the Roma community, the low number of local jobs, lack of leisure time opportunities for children in Boldești Scaeni, the need for teacher training, the need for ongoing curricular activities with students, the precarious situation of the housing of Roma families and especially those living in the forest, carrying out projects that also have other disadvantaged groups in the village as beneficiaries.*

The main categories of persons with whom meetings were held are members of the local community, Roma community leaders, teachers, employees of the town hall, directors of schools, school inspector, local representative of OMV Petrom, school mediator, parents, young people. Some of those who attended the meeting have manifested their interest to engage in CERC's activities and took part in the legal proceedings of establishing the "CERC Boldești Scaeni" association.

To achieve the association's operational plan, being set up in December 2015, a planning meeting was held. Representatives of OMV Petrom also participated in the various meetings related to the activities of formation and development of the association "CERC Boldești Scaeni".



Main Results of “Developing Youth Lifeskills in the Context of Sustainable Development”

1

- national research on analysing training needs in life skills area conducted
- launching conference organized
- study visit organized in Cyprus with 12 teachers from Oradea, teachers that will apply at their schools life skills development activities
- online training platform launched: prof21.ro. The platform continues to be developed as an online community of practice.

2

- thematic seminars organized with teachers and other different stakeholders (NGOs, educational public institutions etc.)

10

- days training course developed and accredited on the thematic of life-skills development in the context of sustainable development

53

- Training courses at a national level (1062 participating teachers / 1056 certificates)



“Legume de Vidra” Cooperative

During 2015 the cooperative continued producing and selling its products to the retail sale system (Mega Image, part of the international group Ahold Delhaize) and doubled it’s sales compared to 2014.



„Legume de Vidra” Cooperative was initiated by FDSC in 2012 benefiting from a project financed by the Romanian American Foundation, aiming at establishing a viable model of entrepreneurial association in the rural settlements in Romania. The cooperative sells a variety of nine vegetables: lettuce, cabbage, tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, lavage, peppers, German turnip, cauliflower.

During 2015 the cooperative continued producing and selling its products to the retail sale system (Mega Image, part of the international group Ahold Delhaize) and doubled its sales compared to 2014.

It got its affiliation to the Romanian National Inter-professional Organisation **PRODCOM** fruits and vegetables at the beginning of 2015, which strengthened its position and role in the local community. More local producers joined the cooperative and the **membership increased** from 12 to 21 members during 2015. A **Development Fund** was set up in order to offer support for members to develop their individual production capacity and to move on from subsistence farming to supplying supermarkets (such as investments in larger and better greenhouses, work technologies, storage and conditioning facilities, transportation etc).

The cooperative proved to be a **sustainable rural entrepreneurship model** in the community, by building on existing agricultural practices and capabilities and enhancing local farmers’ capacity to produce and sell their products for a better value on the market.

Romania's experience in democratic transition and education for Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova

The project “Romania's experience in democratic transition and education for Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova” aimed to identify and facilitate the exchange of experience in the fields of democracy, good governance and education in Romania, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

On 28-29 March 2016, a 1 and ½ day workshop on non-formal education was organized in Vadul lui Voda, in the Republic of Moldova, for 20 local participants. The aim was to introduce Romania's experience with creating a community of non-formal educators and to present a set of useful tools for colleagues in the Republic of Moldova. On 21 April 2016, together with the Institute for World Policy from Ukraine and the German Marshal Fund office in Bucharest, the expert roundtable “Romania – Ukraine: A Relationship retrieval?” was organized in Bucharest, as a side event during the visit of President Petro Poroshenko to Romania.

Between 25-27 April, a series of working meetings were organized in Kiev dedicated to mass media reform with participation of 4 experts from Romania. On 26 April, a roundtable on “The Public Broadcasting Reform: lessons learnt from the Romanian experience” was organised at Ukraine Crisis Media Center with local media representatives on the Reform Public Media and it was broadcasted live online.

The project was funded by the Romanian Ministry of Foreign through the RoAid program with support from UNDP Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia.

New Crops – Social entrepreneurship to create new opportunities for socially excluded in rural areas

Good practices of social enterprises and cooperatives from rural areas – Italy:

- Cooperativa A.L.P.I. - Avviamento al Lavoro su Progetti Individualizzati - società cooperativa sociale- (Cooperative for Vocational Training with Individualized Projects)
- Agraria Riva Del Garda Agricultural cooperative enterprise
- Cassa Rurale di Pergine – Banca di credito cooperative s.c. (credit cooperative bank)
- Consorzio Elettrico Industriale di Stenico s.c.
- Ecoopera cooperative enterprise
- Gruppo 78 – Social solidarity cooperative society
- La Coccinella Social cooperative enterprise
- Mezzacorona Agricultural cooperative enterprise
- Risto3 Cooperative enterprise
- S.A.D. Società Cooperativa Sociale

Good practices - Spain (Almeria):

- Acorex S.C.L. (Limited Cooperative Society)
- BioSabor S.A.T.
- Cajamar Caja Rural Credit Cooperative
- Caprina de Almería SCA
- Cooperativa Agrícola San Isidro (CASI)
- Clisol Agro
- COVAP (Cooperativa Ganadera del Valle de los Pedroches)
- Mugiverde Sociedad Cooperativa Andaluza
- Vicasol, S.C.A. Cooperative of first degree/tier Cooperative Society of Andalucía (SCA)
- Agroiris SAT

Good practices Skaraborg – Sweden:

- Ekebohuset Economic Association
- Kooperativet I Götene
- Hellidens Trädgårdar (The gardens of Helliden)
- Lantgården Economic Association
- Lärkan Ekonomisk Förening Economic association
- Kooperativet Laxen Economic association (work integrated social cooperative)
- Mikrofonden Väst Economic Association
- Qvinnovindar Economic association
- Vilske Kleva Föräldrakooperativ Economic Association
- VISTA Karlsborg

Good practices – Romania:

- Workshops without Borders (AFF - Ateliere Fara Frontiere) - Work integration social enterprise
- Mutual Help Association Tractorul Brasov (CAR Tractorul Brasov IFN)
- Caritas Campulung Association
- Pensioners' Credit Union /Mutual Help House Association Omenia (CARP Omenia)
- Dobrogea Sud Agricultural Cooperative
- Association of Fruiters and Fruits Processors in the Odorhei Area (Asociatia Pomicultorilor si Procesatorilor de Fructe din zona Odorhei)
- Lunca Somesului Mic Agricultural Cooperative
- "Alaturi de Voi" Romania Foundation – the Util Deco social enterprise
- Village Life Association
- Asociatia Legume Romanesti Isalnita



New Crops – Social entrepreneurship to create new opportunities for socially excluded in rural areas

The project provides a framework for developing the necessary knowledge and skills for trainers, managers and future managers of cooperatives and social enterprises mostly from rural areas.

Objective 1

- Design and development of training materials dedicated to the innovative start-up and management of social enterprises and cooperatives in rural areas

Objective 2

- Capacity building training for those who want to set up cooperatives and social enterprises or to improve their management

Results and main activities 2016

Identifying and promoting best practices of 40 of the 4 partner countries

Document 16 successful business models in the form of case studies and using them in training materials

Training of Trainers in the management of agricultural cooperatives Almeria Spain November 2016

Beneficiary: Civil Society Development Foundation - Institute of Social Economy;

Partners: Federazione Trentina della Cooperazione (Italy); Universidad de Almeria (Spain); Asociacion De Productores De Frutas Y organizaciones De Hortalizas Dealmeria - Coexphal (Spain) and Coompanion Kooperativ Utveckling Skaraborg (Sweden);

Funding: The project is funded through Erasmus +.

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ICAR project: Inclusion through Microcredits and Mutual Aid - strategy for a sustainable social economy and creations of employment for social enterprises

Main partner: Uniunea Nationala a Caselor de Ajutor Reciproc ale Salariatilor din Romania (U.N.C.A.R.S.R.)



- 9 social economy-type structures established (Credit Union type) - establishing and licensing activity (5 in the rural area and 4 in the urban area)

- development of 17 social economy-type structures (Credit Union type)

The main targeted localities: Pitesti Curtea de Arges Stefanesti Corbeni Voinesti Targoviste Titu Gaiesti Buzau Maracineni Braila Cazasu Gropeni Hunedoara Deva Brad Hateg Sebes Bod Brasov Targu Mures Covasna Suceava Falticeni Buhusi Craiova Goiesti Dragasani Ramnicu Valcea

ICAR seminar "Boosting social economic development - national and European regulatory framework" - Chamber of Deputies Committee Work May 12, 2015

At the seminar, IES launched the "Creating an eco-system of financial inclusion through social economy in Romania", a preliminary analysis on financial inclusion through activities of social economy. The document was presented at the seminar attended by representatives of the European Economic and Social Committee, the Romanian Parliament, Ministry of Labor, Family, and Social Protection and civil society organizations.

The main theme of the seminar was the financial exclusion.

- Only 60.8% of the "15 years and over" population in Romania holds an account at a financial institution; the Euro zone average level is 94.8%.
- Romania is the country with the lowest access to bank accounts both from the EU member states and new neighboring countries.



Handbook of financial inclusion through social economy: Published in December 2015 under the supervision of dr. Cristina Barna and Ancuta Vamesu, and having Irina Sinziana Opincaru (Institute of Social Economy - Foundation for Civil Society Development), Dr. Paul A Jones (Faculty of Education, Health and Community, John Moores University, Liverpool) and Stelian Minoiu (National Union of Credit Unions of Romania) among the authors, the paper addresses the issue of financial inclusion and the role of social economy organizations in achieving it.



This paper addresses the general public (researchers, academia, environmental NGOs, financial institutions and their representatives, decision makers and also the simple people seeking solutions for getting out of indebtedness, financial exclusion and the vicious circle of poverty) and opens the debates to the need for a inclusive financial system, in which financial service providers in the social economy can play a decisive role.

Examples of good practice - social economy and financial inclusion

Romania

The ICAR project, through the research conducted, extends the European expertise acquired by Credit Unions and the project expertise to the entire national network of UNCARS, ensuring its valorisation. At a national level, the following best practices have been identified:

- ICAR - Best practice Braila
- ICAR - Best practice CARP Omenia
- ICAR - Best practice IF CreditCoop
- ICAR - CAR Targoviste
- ICAR - CAR Tractorul

Great Britain

The following best practices were identified in Great Britain - three credit unions and an organization that combats the financial exclusion through a complex of actions and methods:

- Lodge Lane Credit Union
- Manchester Credit Union Ltd
- No.1 CopperPot CU
- Scotcash

Training of Trainers – TOT program - Education and financial inclusion through ICAR social economy, 21 to 27 September 2015: The Institute of Social Economy and the National Union of Employees' Credit Union held between the 21st and 27th of September 2015 the TOT program "Education and financial inclusion through ICAR social economy".

The training program was attended by 20 participants, including 10 specialists in social economy of credit unions and 10 specialists from non-governmental organizations providing social services.

The course lasting six days is part of a complex training program brought together under the umbrella of the School of entrepreneurship in the social economy and financial inclusion initiated by IES. In the coming months, course participants will go to community coming to support financial education courses in order to increase capacity, skills, knowledge and self-esteem of vulnerable people.

In this way, the credit unions once again show their commitment to the financial education of their members and the communities from which they come.



The fifth edition of the National Conference of Social Economy, organized by IES along with the National Union of Credit Unions, took place in Bucharest. There have been debated the main advances made by the social economy and the solutions for the social economy to remain a key player in combating poverty .

“After five years from the launch of the first line of the POSDRU funding, dedicated to the social economy, we meet to discuss the funding priorities for this field in Romania. It is a unique meeting between unions, NGOs and insertion enterprises and at the end of the day we expect to get some resolutions for the future funding of social economy and social exclusion in Romania. From our point of view, of the Institute of Social Economy, we want all sectors of assets, which have proven results, to be supported and to enjoy the public policies that would revive both the social insertion enterprises and the Credit Union institutions, or organizations of small agricultural producers. The mixed social services market is also one of the solutions for inclusive economic development, the social services such as home care or those offered by the credit unions of pensioners contributing to the generation of jobs and active aging.” **said Ancuta Vamesu, IES coordinator.**



In 2015, CSDF trainers delivered 3 training sessions within the Regional Programme of the ERSTE Foundation NGO Academy, focused on strengthening management competencies of non-profit managers and staff members: **Situational Leadership** (January 27-28, 11 participants), **Project Management - effective and efficient planning and implementation** (October 29-30, 22 participants) and **Fundraising** (December 14 – 15, 20 participants).

Initiated in 2011 by IES, the Coalition for Social Economy is made up of NGOs (associations, foundations and federations), unions of pensioners and employees through unions and federations, consumer cooperatives through Centrocoop, employers' associations and agricultural cooperatives. Within the Coalition, the organizations working in social economy were consulted in order to centralize the proposed amendments to the draft Law on Social Economy initiated by the Ministry of Labour.



In 2015, the proposals were submitted to the Romanian Parliament for debate at the Commerce and Labor Committee.

February 18th, 2015

- The Minister of Labor attend the meeting of the Committee on labor and social protection, from the Chamber of Deputies. Some of the amendments supported by the Coalition for Social Economy are approved.

June 17th, 2015

- The Committee for Economic Policy, Reform and Privatization, the Committee on Work and Welfare and the Committee for Industries and Services adopt a joint report on the bill, which take forward some of the amendments put by the Coalition for Social Economy, the law as so amended being adopted by the Chamber of Deputies.



A new fiscal code

February 18th, 2015

- The Ministry of Finance launches a public debate on the Tax Code Bill and the Draft Law on Tax Procedure Code, in the context of the budgetary strategy for 2014-2016.

February 23rd, 2015

- The Social Economy Institute (a CSDF program) begins an advocacy approach to promoting a fiscal framework favorable to the social economy.

March 2nd, 2015

- The Coalition for Social Economy submits to the Ministry of Public Finances a series of recommendations that aim to support the development of the social economy sector. Some of them were formulated in collaboration with the Labor Commission of the Chamber of Deputies and the Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Protection during the debates on the Social Economy Law promoted by the Government in 2014 and adopted by Parliament on June 24 2015 from the need to ensure a stimulating framework to develop this steadily increasing sector. The main amendments concern:
 - Tax relief / tax on buildings and land, by law, of buildings used for providing social services to associations and foundations accredited as social service providers, buildings used by associations and foundations exclusively for non-profit activities and buildings used by social insertion enterprises;
 - The possibility of granting by the local councils, by decision, of an exemption or reduction from paying the taxes on land and buildings for the buildings used by social enterprises, buildings owned by agricultural cooperative societies (1/2005 Law and the agricultural cooperatives Law) and cooperatives certified as social enterprises;
 - VAT exemption of provision of services and / or deliveries of goods and works addressed to the final consumer provided by social enterprises insertion.

June 24th, 2015

- The amendments proposed by The Coalition for Social Economy were adopted by the Committee for Budget, Finance and Banks of the Chamber of Deputies through the report adopted on 24th of June 2015. The Chamber of Deputies adopted the draft law on the Tax Code as decisional chamber without the proposed amendments.

August 14th, 2015

- The Social Economy Coalition continues the work of promoting a fiscal framework favorable to the development of social enterprises and social insertion enterprises. The Social Economy Institute sent a letter to the Ministry of Finance on recommendations to improve the Tax Code.

September 3rd, 2015

- The Chamber of Deputies adopted the draft law on the Tax Code as decisional chamber. The new Fiscal Code includes two of the amendments put forward by The Coalition for Social Economy:

Art. 456 - Exemptions

1) No tax is paid for the buildings:

Al w) buildings owned or used by social insertion enterprises.

1. Law exemption from payment of taxes for buildings owned or used by social insertion enterprises.

2) Exemption by the decision of the local council for buildings used for provision of social services by NGOs and social enterprises as providers of social services;

July 22nd, 2015

- The Ministry of Finance launches a public debate on the draft law on public procurement

August 11th 2015

- The Social Economy Institute and CSDF initiate a process of consultation of the organizations working in the social field, in order to centralize proposals to amend the public procurement law.

November 12th, 2015

- The Romanian Government approves the draft law on public procurement and forwards it the Romanian Parliament. The amendment of the Coalition for social economy regarding the contracting authority's possibility to reserve contracts for authorized protected units and social insertion enterprises was taken over by the Government.

A new public procurement legislative package

**Information
services**

StiriONG.ro

288.237 Sessions

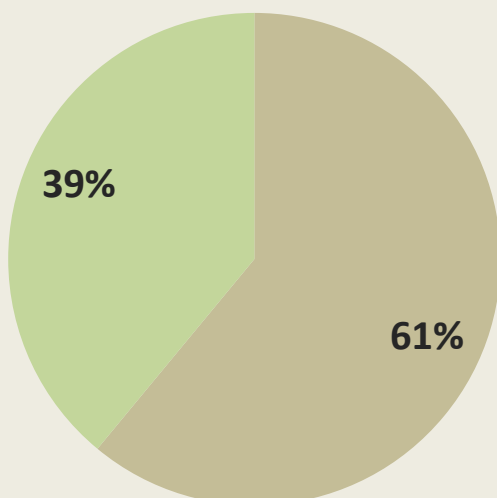
180.188 Users

537.544 Page views

"StiriONG.ro" is a product of the CSDF developed within the "Catalogue of the civil society 2008" financed by CEE Trust - Trust for Civil Society in Central & Eastern Europe.

"StiriONG.ro" is a constant resource for current information and news that facilitate the development of partnerships between civil society, businesses, public institutions and citizens by providing useful and updated information in the field of CSR, news about projects, events and training courses run by NGOs, public financing, private financing etc.

- New Visitor
- Returning Visitor



@StiriONG
1.559 Followers



@StiriONG.ro
9.414 Likes

After consultations with representatives of NGOs, of resource centers, public authorities, donors and companies with CSR activities, the portal was divided into six general dimensions, each dimension and interest providing structured information for each category of beneficiaries.

NGOFest 2015: The Romanian National Fair of Non-Governmental Organizations

ONGFest is the biggest civil society public event in Romania.

In May 2015, the 6th edition of the annual [Romanian NGO fair](#) had model communities as main theme. It promoted the contribution of NGOs to developing models of successful communities in Romania. The 3-day event took place in Bucharest between 8-10 May, encompassing a 1 day indoor programme and 2 days outdoor festival. The opening of the fair was hosted by the National Library of Romania, where more than 230 participants from Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain discussed and shared experiences and opinions about model communities in Europe.

Over 20 000 visitors in 2015



NGOFest 2015: The Romanian National Fair of Non-Governmental Organizations



5 practical workshops and 2 side-events followed, focusing on successful relations with donors, labour relations in NGOs, social media, gender issues, learning through international projects and rules and principles for NGOs. The workshops were organised and facilitated by various partners of the festival. A dedicated matchmaking session and programme was organised for foreign participants, aiming to contribute to the exchange of experience and best practices between Romanian NGOs and NGOs from other countries of the European Economic Area. Representatives of organisations coming from these countries were hosted for half a day by Romanian colleagues from organisations with similar profiles and interests. They had the opportunity to learn from each other about their organisations, as well as the main successes and challenges faced in their work.



The International Solidarity Gala

The International Solidarity Gala celebrated Romania's activity in the field of international development cooperation. It focused on how Romanians and Romania support communities and people worldwide. The most active promoters of international solidarity from civil society, academia, the media and the public sector in Romania received symbolical awards and shared their experience, dreams and lessons learnt with more than 200 participants. The International Solidarity Gala was the closing event of the European Year for Development 2015 and it was organized in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Commission Representation in Romania and FOND, the Romanian Platform of NGOs working in development cooperation.



Civil Society Corner at Dilema Veche

Cum văd nevăzătorii filme

Vera ULARU



CARICATURA SĂPTĂMĂNII



« Vezi toate copertiile »

DILEMABLOG



Mica mea distopie

Ana Maria SANDU



Spațiul personal

Cristina ȘTEFAN



Cum se mai simt grecii

The media partnership with Dilema Veche continued in 2015.

Over 20 articles were published at Civil Society Corner and other sections of the publication. Various topics on civil society, volunteering, democracy, human rights and other subjects related to NGOs were covered.

Civil Society Gala 2015



Dan Manoleli award, for engagement in civil society development, was offered for the fifth time at Civil Society Gala. Alături de Voi Foundation's activity for was recognized for it's achievement in social economy and support of vulnerable groups at national level.

Two projects funded within the programs administrated by FDSC were awarded at Environment Protection and Civic Engagement and Public categories. Ecopolis, the Centre for Sustainable Policies was awarded with the second prize at Medium Environment category, for "5% in 5 years" project funded by Swiss-Romanian Cooperation Programme. The third place at Civic Engagement and Public Participation was won by Romanian Academic Society for Clean Romania project, funded by NGO Fund.

**Advocacy and
public policy**

CSDF representative in the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)



In 2015, Ionut Sibian, our representative in EESC, received the support from over 250 NGOs, coalitions, federations, networks and platforms for a new term as member of the Group III (civil society) in EESC.

- During the first semester of 2015, under the old mandate, Ionut Sibian finalized his term as President of the Western Balkans Follow-up Committee. During his mandate, Ionut focused on further developing the contacts the EESC has within Western Balkan civil society, organizing the decentralized meeting of the Western Balkans Follow-up Committee in Tirana and Shkodra - Albania, in Belgrade – Serbia, Podgorica – Montenegro, Pristina – Kosovo, Skopje – Macedonia. Those meetings were an opportunity to organize a broad based consultation with various civil society stakeholders and to include the findings in the new EC strategy on Western Balkans and enlargement.
- Within the new mandate, from September 2015, Ionut was elected by the Group III as President of the Joint Consultative Committee EU - Serbia (JCC). The JCC is a civil society platform established between the EESC and Serbian civil society. It complements with a civil society point of view the EU institutional framework related to the Stabilization and Association Agreement between the EU and Serbia. This joint institution will allow the civil society organizations on both sides to monitor the country's accession negotiations. It is also a platform to discuss issues of common interest and to inform the public at large on the challenges ahead during the accession period.



Ionut Sibian is member in the following bodies of EESC: member of the Social Economy Category, SOC Section (Social, Citizenship), and a Bureau member of the REX section (External Relations).

During 2015 he was appointed as **rapporteur** for two opinions of the EESC requested by the European Commission on [REX 420 - The role of civil society in EU-Albania relations](#) and [REX/453 EU Enlargement Strategy](#). He was also appointed as **President** for the study group drafting the opinion on [Energy - Western Balkans \(own-initiative opinion\)](#).

Pro Bono 2016

ONGLex is an initiative of FDSC started in 2012 in the framework of the project “Pro bono legal services for Romanian NGOs”, a free service dedicated exclusively to Romanian nongovernmental organizations. 11 law firms have joined the initiative and support it by either sharing their expertise and experience during dedicated seminars or by processing legal requests coming from NGOs.

FDSC continued to support the development of the pro bono practice in Romania, as a main measure to increase access to justice for vulnerable groups that are beneficiaries of services provided by NGOs. Two ONGLex seminars were organized in 2015, debating various legal situations NGOs face in their activities and counting over 50 participants in total.

The first ONGLex seminar dealt with the **labor relations legal framework applicable in NGOs** and was held in May in Bucharest, during ONGFest. It facilitated the interaction between NGO representatives and lawyers of Bondoc si Asociatii SCA, a leading Romanian law firm, part of a formal exclusive alliance with White & Case LLP regarding Romania.



Current regulations on volunteering was the topic of the second seminar, organised in partnership with Kinstellar law firm. The seminar was part of a joint approach to support NGOs clarify the most important legal aspects of their work, given that over 23,000 associations and foundations in Romania operate with the contribution of volunteers.

No Hate Speech @ NGO Fund

Youth Bloggers for NO Hate Speech gathered 25 bloggers from Romania, Poland, Lithuania, Portugal and Greece, between 26 - 28 March at Baile Tusnad. Within a series of interactive sessions, participants learned more about hate speech.

September 28, at Cluj-Napoca: the first of the regional seminars with local media. 20 NGO representatives and journalists attended the event. The aim of the session was to create an open space for debate among journalists and activists in the fields of education and human rights.

**NO
HATE**

**NO HATE
SPEECH
MOVEMENT**

December 10, International Human Rights Day: NGOs financed within the programme were encouraged to sign and promote the petition to establish a European Day for victims of Hate Crime on July 22, while also running a sponsored add campaign using the video animation "The right to be UNIQUE", produced under the program.

On April 2, a team of CSDF speakers delivered a lecture in the seminar "Hate Speech in Romania - How we recognize it and how we react" organized by React Association.

During the event, in front of an audience of over 30 participants (representing mainly civil society organizations), the two CSDF speakers piloted an interactive information session module on combating Hate Speech.

Research

USAID CSO Sustainability Index

The Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index (CSOSI) has been used since 1997 to assess the sustainability of the CSO sector. The Index has expanded considerably since its inception – it went from covering 18 countries in the Europe and Eurasia Region, to covering over 60 countries in different regions around the world. By using standard indicators and collecting data each year, the CSOSI enables users to track developments and identify trends in the CSO sector over time while allowing for cross-country and cross-region comparison.



CSDF continued the tradition of developing the annual sustainability index for the Romanian civil society sector, in the framework of the **USAID CSO Sustainability Index**.

Thus, in September 2015 we launched the 18th edition of the index, in the presence of the US Embassy in Bucharest, the Romanian representatives of nongovernmental organizations and the media.

By using standard indicators and annual collection of data, the index helps to track and to identify the associative sector's developments and trends, also allowing comparisons between countries and between regions.



“Making Social Economy Visible in Romania” (MSEVR)

The project “Making Social Economy Visible in Romania” (MSEVR) was implemented by the Civil Society Development Foundation (FDSC) together with the National Centre for Training in Statistics (CNPS) and the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and Elderly (MoLFSPE).

The project was financed by the European Commission, DG Enterprise and Industry (Economic impact of social enterprises) and had a total budget of 63.130 Euro.

MSEVR had as main objective to draw the satellite accounts of the social economy using as methodological framework the European System of National and Regional Accounts (“ESA 1995”) and the *CIRIEC Manual for drafting satellite accounts for the enterprises in social economy*.

Another important part of the project was the publishing of the third edition of the Atlas of Social Economy (Romania 2014), containing the main data on the social economy sector in Romania. The Atlas of Social Economy provided a comprehensive statistical picture of the dimensions of the social economy sector in Romania and of its main actors (associations; foundations; cooperatives - consumers’ coops, handicraft coops, credit coops, agricultural coops; credit unions of pensioners and employees; commercial companies controlled by social economy organizations) and an analysis of main trends registered by the sector.

The 2014 edition of the Atlas of Social Economy presented detailed indicators for the fiscal years 2011 and 2012 and an analysis of the dynamic of the sector over the period 2000-2012. This edition also brought elements of novelty: the first-time inclusion and detailed analysis of organizations regulated by special laws: agricultural societies, worker owned enterprises – association of workers / shareholders, agricultural cooperatives and commercial companies controlled by social economy organizations.

The main results and products of the project were presented in a series of regional seminars organised by MoLFSPE in collaboration with CSDF (in Sibiu, Constanta and Targoviste) and during the National Conference on Social Economy. More than 200 participants at the events had the opportunity to discuss and analyse the important role which the social enterprises can play in generating growth and jobs, to discuss the statistical data that demonstrate the importance of social economy enterprises at national level and the special position they are able to play as public policy partners.

A policy brief with major proposals for statistical changes proposed by the project was prepared and presented during the Conference and the 3 local seminars.

The project’s results and products, in both Romanian and English are available for download on the Institute of Social Economy’s web page, at this link: <http://www.ies.org.ro/mserv>.

**CSDF:
networking,
figures and
people**

European Network of National Civil Society Associations

CSDF continued its active involvement and representation as Board member of **ENNA - European Network of National Civil Society Associations**.

19

umbrella
bodies

national
platforms

resource
centers

from EU member states, Norway and
Turkey

In 2014, by valuing the national members' expertise and experience, ENNA continued its involvement in the „*Balkan Civil Society Acquis – Strengthening the Advocacy and Monitoring Potential and Capacities of CSOs*” project and got to be partner in two other initiatives „*Civil Society Dialogue between EU and Turkey - Active Civil Society Participation in EU Accession Talks*” and respectively „*SecurePART - Increasing the engagement of civil society in security research*”.

At policy level, ENNA got to be part of the task force group of the *Civil Society Europe - the European Coordination of Civil Society organizations* that aims to create an enabling environment for horizontal exchanges between civil society organizations and movements across europe and be influential in shaping the agenda on transversal issues of common interest for organised civil society in europe.

ENNA – European Network of National Civil Society Associations

Rue de la Science 10, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

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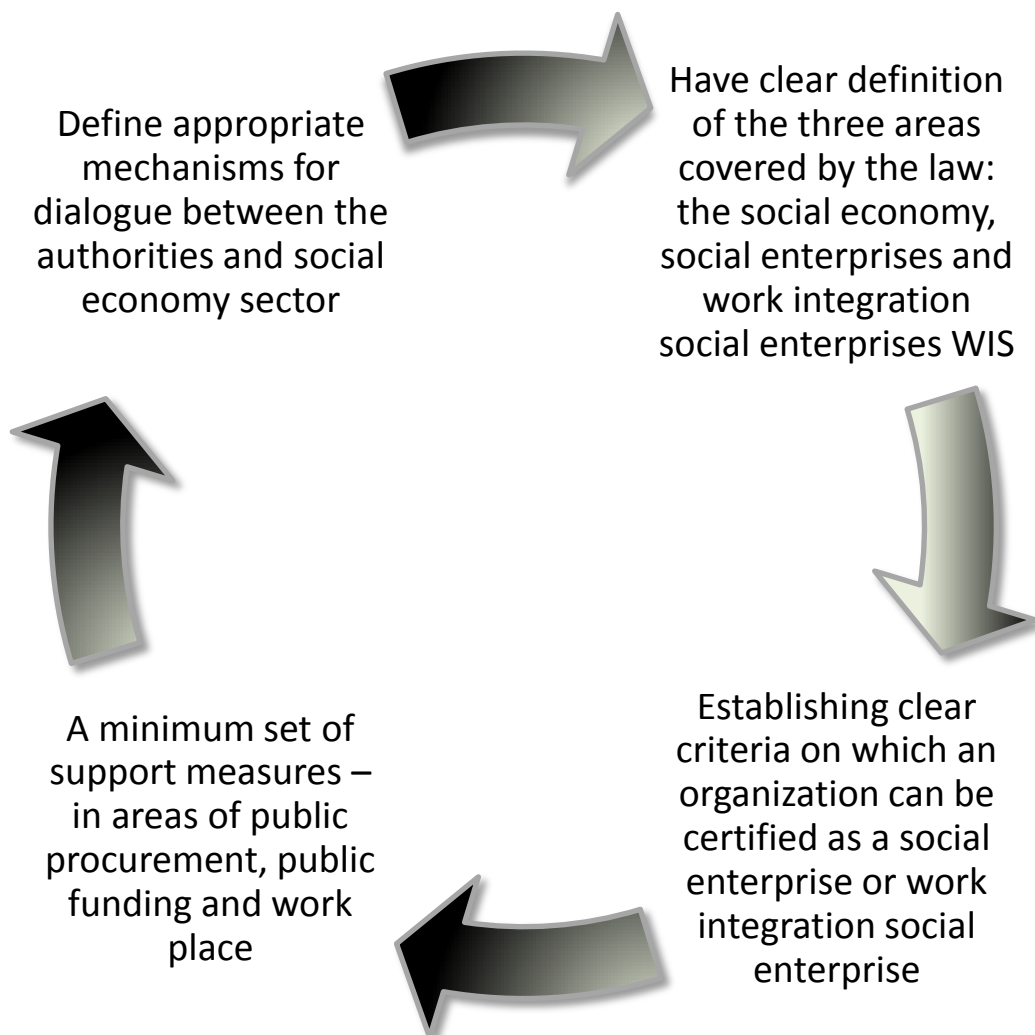
Fax: +32 (0) 2-537-51-08 |

Find out more at: www.ennaeurope.org

Social Economy Coalition

Social Economy Coalition was **established in 2010** during the campaign against the Law on Social Entrepreneurship – a Parliamentary initiative that miss defined social economy and social enterprises classifying as social enterprises the state and multinational companies. Since than the Coalition has advocated for the social economy as a sector that can contribute decisively to solving Romania’s employment problems and widespread poverty.

Following the launch of the public debate on social economy bill by the Ministry of Labor (in December 2011), the Institute for Social Economy has initiated a consultation process among organizations in the social economy in order to gather amendments to the Draft. The Coalition formed of work integration social enterprises Network in Romania RISE, associations and foundations active in social economy and their federations, umbrella organizations of credit unions of employees and retired through their unions and federations, consumer cooperatives through Centroccoop, and agricultural cooperatives through Pro Agro has again mobilized and initiated an advocacy campaign promoting amendments in order to:



Social Economy Coalition

December 2013

The Romanian Government approved **draft law on social economy** and submit it to the Romanian Parliament. Following this, the law was than made public and it was than clear that the draft had incorporated a small part of the Coalition amendments.

February 2014

IES and RISE initiated an open letter around which the Coalition for Social Economy was mobilized. Amendments were sent to the Senate aimed at clearly defining the three areas covered by law : social economy, social enterprises and work integration social enterprises and the support measures.

The Labor and Social Protection Committee of the Romanian Senate decides to consider the amendments & establishes a joint working group with the other two committees to discuss the amendments. IES and other Coalition meetings attended the working group meetings.

The Ministry of Labor was asked to review the draft law in the light of the sector proposed amendments.

The General Directorate of Social Assistance of the Ministry of Labor initiated consultations with representatives of the Coalition & it was agreed that the provisions relating to social clauses in public procurement to be updated in the light of the new European Directive on public procurement.

June 2014

Though the Senate adopted the Law without including amendments proposed by the Coalition for Social Economy and sends it to the Chamber of Deputies.

**Autumn
parliamentary
session**

The Coalition for Social Economy submitted a **simplified form of amendments made earlier** by the Committees of the Chamber of Deputies. By the end of the year two of the three committees of the Chamber have adopted most of the Coalition amendments.

Financial Report

Income

31.473.709 lei
6.956.284 euro*

Expenditure

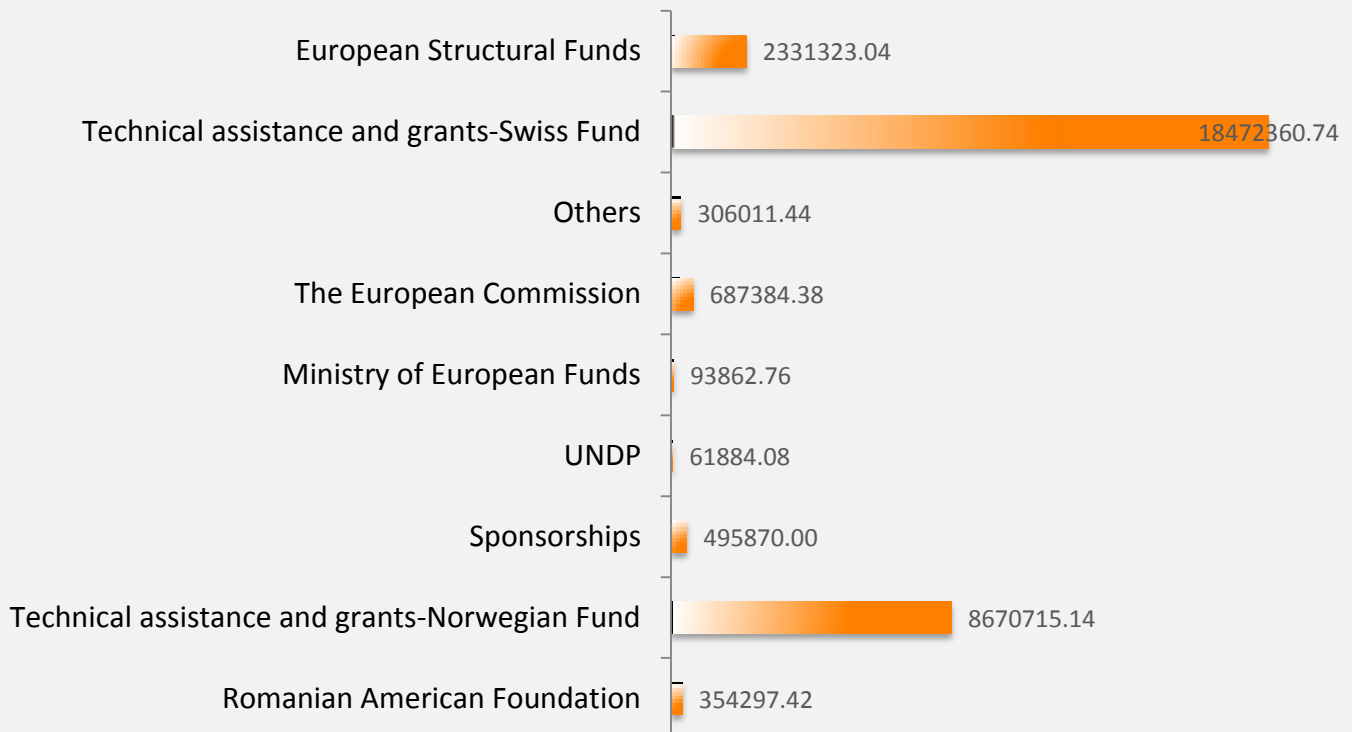
30.299.164 lei
6.696.688 euro*

Net result

1.174.545 lei
259.596 euro*

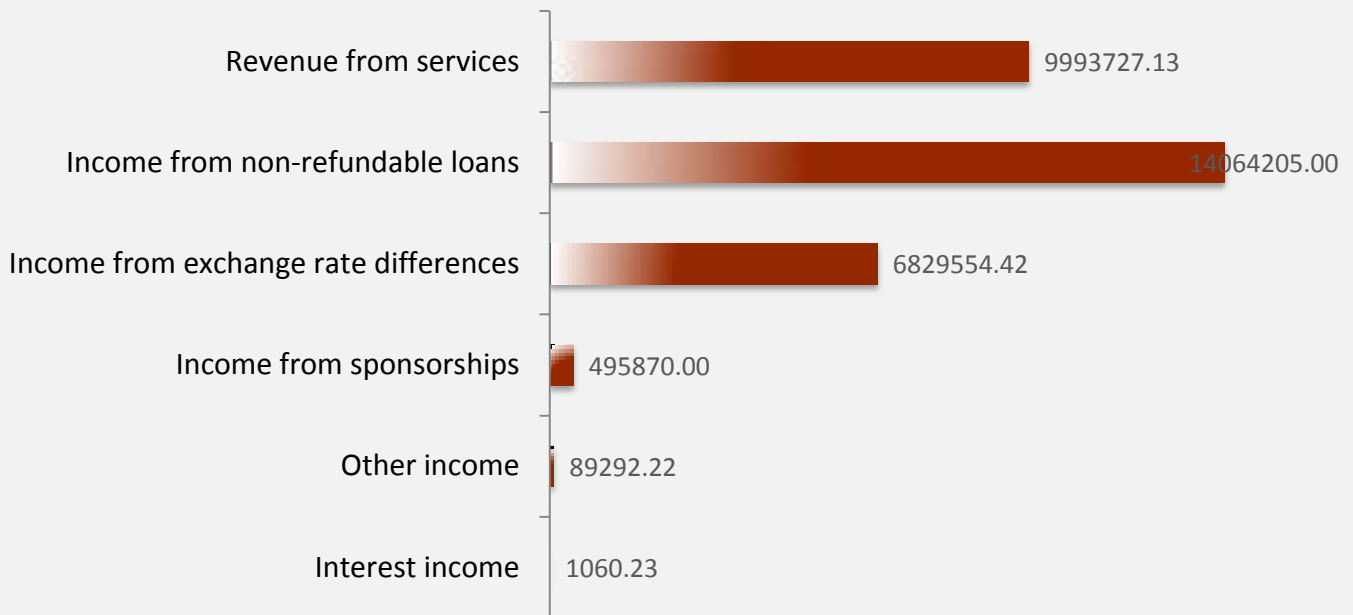
*The central bank average exchange rate for 2015 (4.5245 lei) was used to calculate the equivalent in euro

Funders of 2015 (lei)

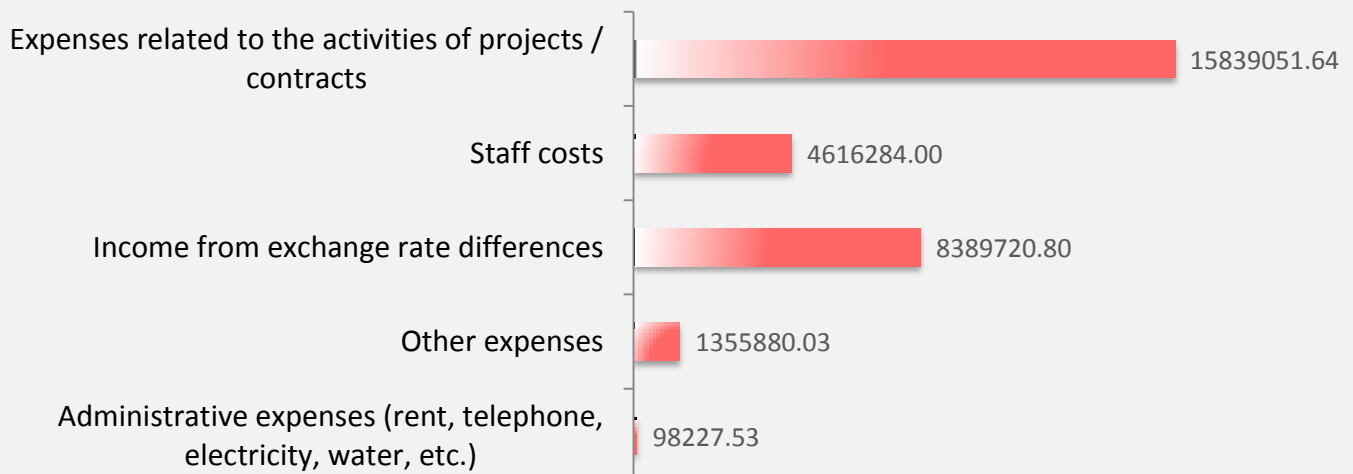


Financial Report

Sources of Income (lei)



Expenditure (lei)



CSDF Team



“In 21 fulfilling years of public service, the foundation has contributed to the development of civil society organizations. We encouraged the collective action by civil society to improve the quality of life and to strengthen democracy in Romania. We have bridged gaps, crossed borders and become an active actor in civil society. We learned that freedom is an everyday struggle for individuals and requires constant effort in terms of pluralism, initiative and community involvement.”

