



This project is funded by the European Union

REGIONAL PROGRAMME ON LOCAL DEMOCRACY IN THE WESTERN BALKANS (ReLOaD)



Empowered lives. Resilient nations.



ReLOaD in brief:

Overall objective: To strengthen participatory democracies and the EU integration process in the Western Balkans by empowering civil society to actively take part in decision making and by stimulating an enabling legal and financial environment for civil society.

- ➔ **Funded by the European Union (EU)**
- ➔ **Implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**
- ➔ **Budget:** 10 million EUR (8.5 million funded by the EU, while 1.5 million is funded by local governments and the UNDP)
- ➔ **Project start date:** February 1, 2017
- ➔ **Duration:** 36 months
- ➔ **ReLOaD locations:** 6 Western Balkans countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia
- ➔ **Target groups:** 50 local governments from the participating countries and CSO
- ➔ **Partners:** Institutions in charge for the civil society in each of the participating Western Balkans country and the associations of cities and municipalities
- ➔ **CSOs will implement 200 projects for over 38.000 beneficiaries**

? Why ReLOaD?

Promoting further development of participatory democracies is an integral part of the EU accession agenda in the Western Balkans. All Western Balkans countries face challenges related to the lack of collaboration between local governments and civil society organizations (CSO).

Another challenge is the lack of transparency in allocating financial support to CSOs, which is perceived as one of the major obstacles for the development and functioning of credible civil society.

Based on the extensive experience from the previous project interventions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, **the Regional Program on Local Democracy in the Western Balkans (ReLOaD)** will be able to address these issues and challenges in each of the participating Western Balkans countries: **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.**

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

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What is a project goal?

For the next three years, the goal of the Project is to strengthen partnerships between local governments and civil society in the Western Balkans by scaling-up a successful model from Bosnia and Herzegovina concerning funding of CSOs from local governments' budgets in line with local priorities.

ReLOaD project will work with local governments on adopting the **transparent, development-oriented and project-based approach to funding of CSOs** focusing on its citizens and their needs. It will also offer a platform for networking, between a state and CSO actors, within the participating Western Balkans countries to share the experience and lessons learned in providing better services to citizens.



What are the expected key project results?

Some of the project results that **ReLOaD** will achieve in 50 local governments in six Western Balkans countries are:

- ➔ Local governments use transparent and project-based model for funding of CSOs,
- ➔ CSOs deliver services which address the needs of local communities and implement local development plans and strategies,
- ➔ Strengthened capacities of CSOs and local governments to implement grant schemes and deliver good quality projects,
- ➔ Improved regional networking, dialogue, practice sharing and cooperation between local governments and CSOs across the Western Balkans.



What is the expected impact of the project?

ReLOaD will promote synergy between local authorities and civil society thus contributing to higher quality of living in 50 local communities that are expected to take part and have direct benefits on inclusive and more transparent decision making processes.

It is expected that the CSOs will implement around 200 projects and offer improved and diversified services for over 38.000 citizens at the local level in six Western Balkans countries.

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