



Policy Association for an Open Society

Increasing donor effectiveness and co-ordination in supporting think-tanks

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Donor Exchange, Coordination, Information Mechanism (DECIM),
3rd Donors' Roundtable, Trento, Italy, 17 November 2006

www.pasos.org

Strengthening policy centres and policymaking

Mission

PASOS (Policy Association for an Open Society) promotes and protects open society values, including democracy, rule of law, good governance, respect for and protection of human rights, and economic and social development by supporting independent policy centres.

26 Members (and two Associate Members*)

Albania

- Institute for Contemporary Studies (ISB), Tirana

Azerbaijan

- Economic Research Center (ERC), Baku

Bulgaria

- Center for Economic Development (CED), Sofia
- European Institute (EI), Sofia
- International Centre for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations (IMIR), Sofia*

Croatia

- iDEMO Institute for Democracy, Zagreb*

Czech Republic

- EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy, Prague

Estonia

- PRAXIS Center for Policy Studies, Tallinn

Georgia

- Institute for Policy Studies, Tbilisi

Hungary

- Center for Education Policy Analysis (CEPA), Budapest
- Center for Policy Studies at the Central European University (CPS - CEU), Budapest
- Local Government Initiative Development Limited (LGID), Budapest

Kazakhstan

- Public Policy Research Center (PPRC), Almaty

Latvia

- Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS, Riga

26 Members (and two Associate Members*)

Macedonia (Republic of)

- Center for Research and Policy Making (CPRM), Skopje
- International Centre for European Culture Euro Balkan Institute (Euro-Balkan), Skopje

Moldova

- Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) 'Viitorul', Chisinau
- Institute for Public Policy (IPP), Chisinau

Poland

- Institute of Public Affairs (IPA), Warsaw

Romania

- Center for Rural Assistance (CRA), Timisoara
- Institute for Public Policy (IPP), Bucharest
- Romanian Center for Economic Policies (CEROPE), Bucharest

Russian Federation

- Center for Legal Support to Local Government (LSLG), Moscow
- Strategia - St. Petersburg Center for Humanities and Political Studies, St Petersburg

Serbia

- Jefferson Institute, Belgrade

Slovakia

- Institute for Public Affairs (IVO), Bratislava

Slovenia

- Peace Institute - Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies, Ljubljana

Ukraine

- International Centre for Policy Studies (ICPS), Kiev

Core activities

- Organising conferences, seminars, workshops, joint working groups
- Supporting joint international projects in public policy and accompanying advocacy
- Providing training in matters of public policy
- Joint advocacy in international policy priority areas
- Developing appropriate standards for public policy, and strengthening comparative research.



Policy dialogue strengthens legitimacy of decision-making

In a professional policymaking environment, government policy units work in dialogue with independent policy centres to effect policy change with :

- (a) measurable policy outputs and outcomes, and
- (b) accompanying accountability and monitoring mechanisms.

Policy dialogue, such as civil society monitoring of PRSP process, strengthens the legitimacy of government decisions - while dialogue with policy centres in the policymaking phase enables potential problems and objections to a course of action to be identified earlier.

Donors should encourage aid-receiving governments to include critical voices in policy dialogue.

Government-NGO dialogue must go hand in hand with greater policy skills

Western Balkans:

There is a shortage of capacity and skills in the civil society sector, so capacity-building is essential for their viability and to establish sufficient sectoral expertise. The think-tank community in Croatia is weak and under-resourced. Increased pressure needs to be applied on the government to include independent think-tanks and the general public in decision-making processes.

New EU members:

With EU accession, a perception has developed that 'the job is done' and some donors are withdrawing - yet civil society groups, especially think-tanks, need to work to deepen democracy, to work for more tolerance of minorities, and to strengthen the public service ethos and good governance at national and local level. In addition, corporate and individual philanthropy remain at a very low level.

Partnerships to strengthen policymaking skills

Central Asia:

Given the lack of an effective policymaking process in government departments, and the low level of policy writing skills in the NGO community, there is an urgent need for support from policy centres and government policy units in advanced transition countries for their counterparts in Central Asia. PASOS, working with the Soros Foundation Kyrgyzstan and Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia, is seeking partnerships with donors to strengthen policymaking skills in both government and civil society in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Effective aid co-ordination crucial to foster sustainable economic and social development

The challenges fall into two main categories:

1. the challenge of fostering effective policymaking to promote sustainable economic, social and human development in individual countries;
2. the challenge of assessing, and acting on, needs in-country, and evaluating the impact of donor aid, particularly in the areas of good governance, public services delivery, and economic development.

Moving from outside experts to nurturing local expertise and education structures

More accountable governance and professional policymaking processes are essential

- Effective government policy units and planning process, and a professional civil service
- Career training for policymakers in both the non-government and government sectors
- Measurable policy outputs and outcomes
- Accompanying accountability and monitoring mechanisms

Donor co-ordination to support civil society in policy dialogue and public advocacy

In the framework of DECIM (donor exchange, co-ordination and information mechanism), it has been proposed that a donor fund might be launched (2007-8) to support civil society activity in policy dialogue, public advocacy and governance, in particular capacity-building.

- Donors can make a major contribution to averting potential crises by working to support the establishment of efficient, forward-looking and inclusive policymaking processes.
- The synergies between the donors' objectives and the PASOS network of policy centres are very strong.

Investing in Transition

Ensuring the lessons of transition are shared, understood and applied

A Cross-Border Skills Partnership and Project Development Fund

The *Policy Centres Development Fund* is a PASOS initiative to strengthen policy centres in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Funding

- Initial US\$ 100,000 for 2006 from Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (LGI) of OSI; further US\$ 150,000 for 2007
- If matching funds of US\$ 300,000 are found, OSI Human rights and Governance Grants Programme (Think-Tank Fund) will contribute US\$ 50,000

Support for professional development and for international projects

Professional and Institutional Development

- training and capacity-building in proposal writing, research skills, and policy writing
- project management, project evaluation, and financial management
- advocacy
- mentoring, fellowships, and twinning
- institutional strengthening.

Joint Project Development - *grants to enable policy centres to prepare well-researched proposals, through funding:*

- preparatory research
- project development meetings for regional initiatives between two or more centres
- international co-operation between the policy communities in different countries.

Tackle the causes, not just the symptoms: *it is essential to strengthen policymaking in government and civil society*

1. Donors can partner with policy centres in-country to assess existing policymaking structures and their effectiveness, and impact of donor aid in contributing to better policy outputs and outcomes.

By working together with PASOS, donors can also become active in:

(a) analysing in-country demand for policy work, and how to create a culture where such a demand will evolve

(b) strengthening the identification of needs to be addressed by the Policy Centres Development Fund.

Donors and policy centres can work together to foster sustainable and accountable policy processes

2. Donors should pay increased attention to training and capacity-building, and to the sustainability of both policy planning units within government ministries and of independent public policy centres.
3. Policy centres and donors can together draw up a strategy to establish professional policy units within government ministries, and procedures to monitor policy outcomes and to implement an effective impact assessment process. A complementary initiative would be to support the development of public policy curricula (for both civil service and policy centres).



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