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Role of Civil Society in the European policy development processes

EU-Turkey Climate Policy Dialogue

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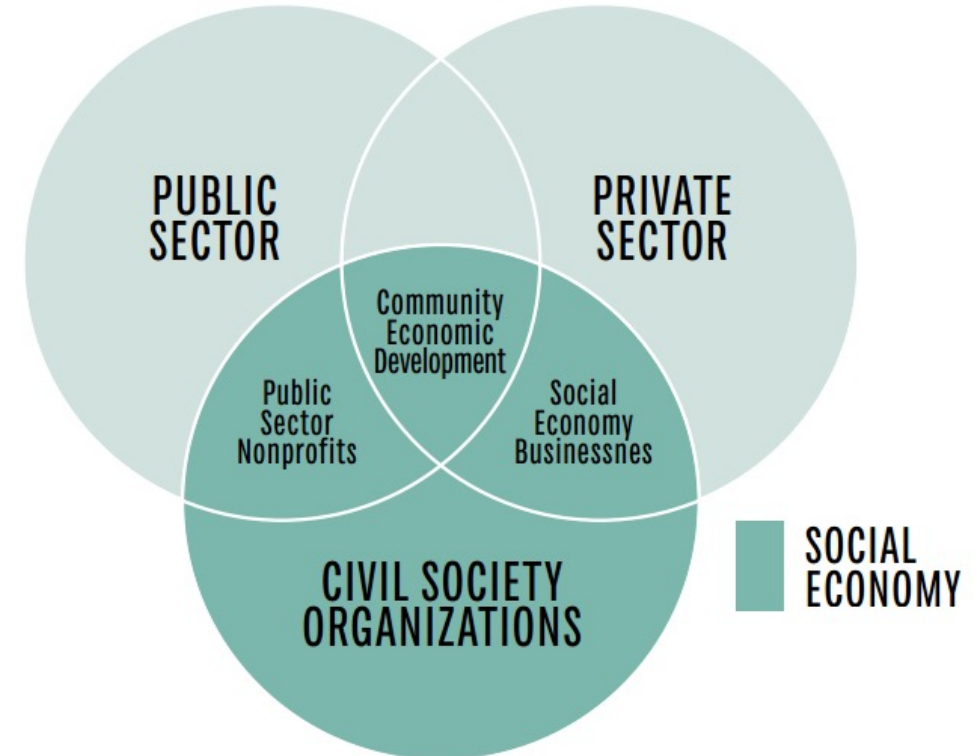


What are Civil Society Organizations & their role in the EU



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- **Civil society organisation (CSO):** is an organisational structure whose members serve the general interest through a democratic process, and which plays the role of mediator between public authorities and citizens.
- Civil society bridges the information, knowledge and capacity gap between governments and citizens/communities
- **Art 15 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU):** recognises civil society's role in the European good governance.
- **Art 11 of the Treaty on EU (TEU):** stresses the need for the EU to have an open, transparent and regular dialogue with civil society organisations, e.g. when preparing proposals for EU laws.



Why is Civil Society important?



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- While states carry the primary responsibility for development and democratic governance, synergies between states and CSOs can **help overcome challenges of unsustainable development** (EC)
- Represent and foster pluralism and **contribute to more effective policies, equitable and sustainable development and inclusive growth** (EC)
- CSOs embody a growing demand for **transparent and accountable governance** (EC)
- **Contribute to social welfare** by raising concern and awareness of economic injustices, socio-economic inequality, and environmental damage (Omelicheva 2009, J. Smith 1998)
- **Increases the number of access points to the policy process** through demands for inclusion in feedback mechanisms and public consultation, and the **creation of “shadow” conferences when access is denied** (Chandhoke 2009)
- Facilitate the **translation of policy preferences into policy proposals** (Fung and Wright 2001)
- **Helps to balance power between the established elites** and working groups (Sorensen and Torfing 2005)
- Improves the problem solving and decision making capacity of governing institutions by **increasing bottom-up participation** (Sorensen 2005)

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CSO Mapping in the EU



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Business and sectoral associations



Environmental NGOs (ENGOS)



* Other NGO types include: BINGOs, BONGOs, RINGO's, ENGO's, GROs, IPOs, GONGOs

Think Tanks and Academia

*can include Not for Profit Universities



Trade Unions & Employers Associations



Network Associations



*This is a non-exhaustive of European Civil Society Organizations



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Source: ERCST, 2022



Tools for campaigning and communication



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Depending on the nature of the organization, there are multiple ways in which a CSO can engage and articulate in climate policy development processes, including but not limited to:

- Advocacy and lobbying
- Capacity building and trainings
- Sharing best practices
- Technical research and offering policy suggestions
- Keeping track of legislative processes and providing inputs via position papers
- Cooperation and partnerships – aligning with other partners and/or relevant stakeholders and providing joint statements
- Organizing and participating in events and roundtable discussions
- Bilateral meetings with key stakeholders
- Demonstrations and protests
- Visibility and communication/outreach activities, including social media channels

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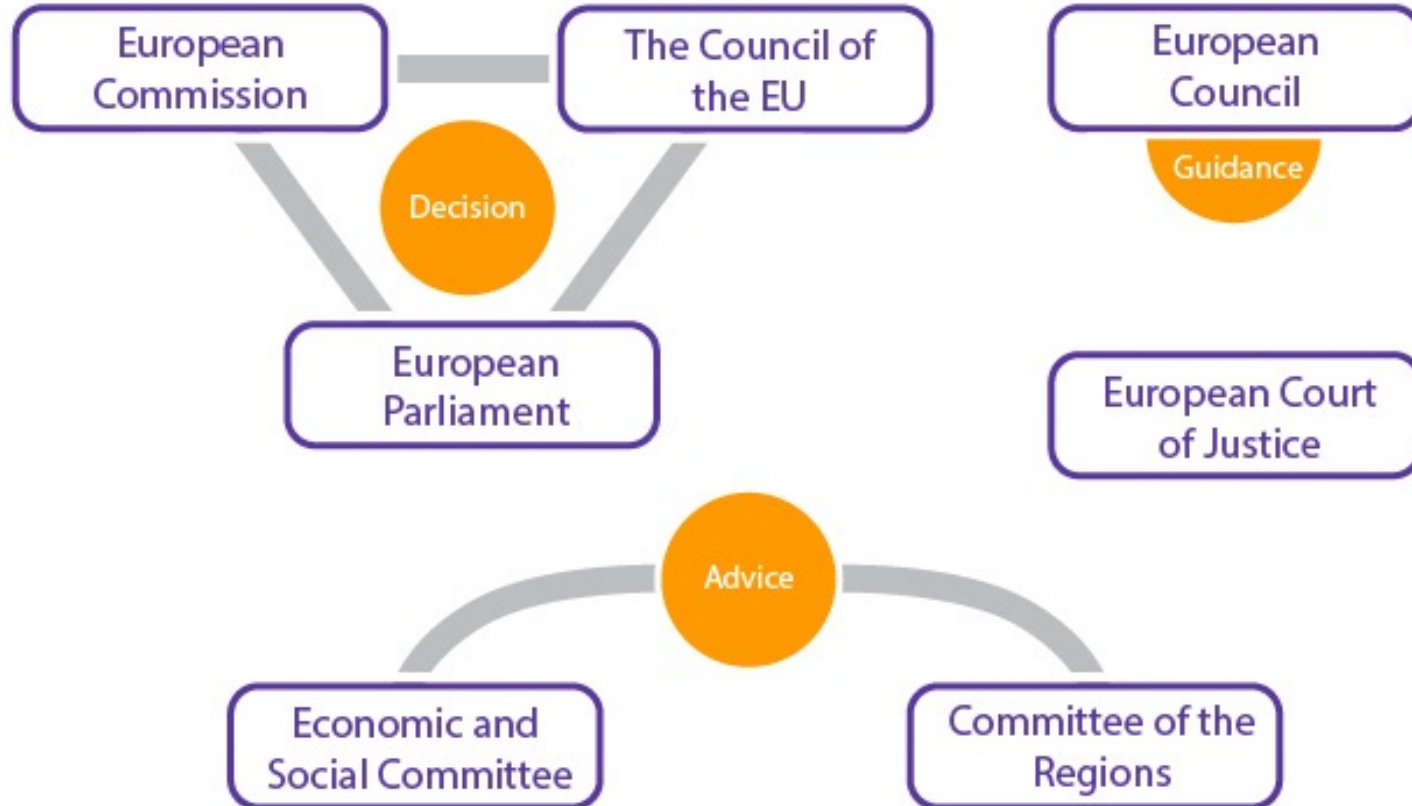
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EU Institutional Structure



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Source: University of Portsmouth

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Participatory processes



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CSO's can engage in policy development through different formal and informal participation processes. Some of these are listed below:

- **European Commission**
 - Providing feedback at different stages of the legislative process of a policy - [Have Your Say Platform](#)
 - Alliances and Coalitions created by the commission - [Clean Hydrogen Alliance](#)
 - Advisory and Support Platforms - [Just Transition Platform](#) (technical & advisory support) and [Platform on Sustainable Finance](#) (advisory body)
 - Expert Working Groups - [High Level expert Group on energy-intensive industries](#)
 - EU Country Roadmaps for engagement with CSO's outside the EU
 - Thematic Programme for Civil Society Organisations under the proposed NDICI-Global Europe
- **European Parliament**
 - Bilateral meetings with MEPs and MEPs assistants
 - Sending proposed amendments in key stages of the legislative process
- **European Council**
 - Participate in national and local government processes and then depends on a case by case by Member State
 - Efficient participation processes and best practices
- **European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)**
 - EU consultative body set up to represent the interests of the various economic and social groups in EU countries
 - Employers, trade unions and various economic and social interest actors (i.e. farmers, small businesses, professions, consumers, cooperatives, families, environmental groups)
 - The EESC produces opinions at the request of the Council, the Commission or the Parliament. It may also deliver opinions on its own initiative

Executive bodies

Consultative body

Financing options for CSOs as enablers for policymaking



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- In the EU, funding constitutes an important component of the EU's engagement with CSOs and should allow better access for local organisations.
- **Civil Society support comes through a variety of funding modalities including:**
 - EC funding: programme funding, direct award of grants, pool funding, follow-up grants, core-funding, co-financing, ring fencing, simplified calls and re-granting
 - Europe for Citizens Programme: Civil Society Projects, Town Twinning and Networks of Towns
 - ERASMUS+ Key Action 3 Civil Society Cooperation
 - LIFE Programme (funding instrument for the environment and climate action)
 - Horizon Europe (largest EU research and innovation programme with funding for innovation projects)
 - **Public/government funding**
 - EUKI, a project financing instrument by the BMU in Germany
 - **Membership fees**
 - **Bilateral government support**
 - **Multilateral organizations support**
 - **Pooled donor mechanisms, private foundations, private donations**
- Within many EU Member States, the donations to local non-profit organisations are exempt from income tax

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Example 1: Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism



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Have your say Portal
European Commission



Citizens or business can comment at different stages of the process.

In preparation

Roadmap

Feedback period

04 March 2020 - 01 April 2020

FEEDBACK: CLOSED

Feedback: 224

Inception Impact Assessment or Roadmap

The Commission published for comments for a period of 4 weeks a document which describes the problem to be tackled and objectives to be met, explains why EU action is needed.

Public consultation

Consultation period

22 July 2020 - 28 October 2020

FEEDBACK: CLOSED

Feedback: 614

Public Consultation

Lasts 12 weeks and are usually online and questionnaire-based with more targeted questions. They must assess and if relevant incorporate feedback previously received on IIA. They present policy options and other key elements to be addressed.

Commission adoption

Feedback period

15 July 2021 - 18 November 2021

FEEDBACK: CLOSED

Feedback: 194

Commission Adoption

Provision of feedback once the proposal is out

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Example 2: Just Transition Fund & Territorial Just Transition Plans (TJTPs)



About the JTF

- The JTF is the 1st pillar of the JTM and is a key tool to support regions dependent on fossil fuels (coal, lignite, peat, oil shale) and high-emission industries which will undergo a deep transformation in the following years. Preparation of the TJTPs by Member States (MS) is a key condition for programming and subsequently implementing resources from the JTF.

Participatory framework of the JTF

- **The partnership principle**, a key feature of cohesion policy, is of utmost importance for the JTF.
- **The Common Provisions Regulation (CPR)** stipulates that MS organise a comprehensive partnership, including at least regional and local authorities, economic and social partners, civil society and research institutions and universities. These partners should also be involved throughout the preparation, implementation and evaluation of JTF programmes and TJTPs.
- JTF is implemented in a **more decentralized** manner compared to other instruments, with grants being disbursed on territories that have been identified by local authorities ensuring **local participation and ownership of the processes**. It is a **bottom-up governance approach**.
- **Example Preparation of TJTPs in the Slovak Republic:** created thematic working commissions at regional level under partnership councils (state institutions, public sector, local governments, NGOs, business, etc.) for each of the JT regions. Particular focus and involvement has been dedicated to youth groups.
- If adapted to the local context, the JTF and TJTPs governance framework could be an efficient tool in the following years for Turkey

The Just Transition Platform

- Provides technical assistance, fostering knowledge sharing and good practices, capacity building and bilateral and multilateral exchange of views across all affected sectors.

Conclusions and recommendations



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- Civil Society with **solid organizational structures and technical preparation in a certain area**, are more likely to have stronger influence in policy making. If this is lacking, **strengthening capacity and coordination among the group**, are key.
- The **relationship between States and CSOs is often delicate and the space for civil society can turn out being narrow** or even shrinking. In this situation outreach and the **role of media play a key role in public awareness**, how the CSO organizes will prove its success.
- **Funding and financing are a key enabler for CSOs operations** and empowerment. Many CSOs in Turkey lack the necessary funding for operating or being able to expand. Support should be provided by the government, multilateral organizations or from the private sector.
- To receive funding **CSOs must overcome capacity constraints** ranging from limitations in technical management and leadership skills to results management and issues of internal governance.
- If public funding is received, particular **attention needs to be paid to 'hard control' mechanisms**, where governments directly seek to steer the aims, activities and existence of CSOs
- Participatory processes such as the **Have Your Say during Public Consultations or the bottom-up preparation approach of the TJTPs for the JTF**, could be replicated and prove to be efficient mechanisms for CSOs participation in the different policymaking processes in Turkey.



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Thank you!

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