



European Training Foundation

# EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION

ETF SURVEY ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY  
ORGANIZATIONS TO HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN  
THE CONTEXT OF LIFELONG LEARNING

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ZOOM MEETING 30TH MARCH 2021, 10.00 CET



Currently, over 32,000 registered associations and over 900 foundations, 32% of which work in education and research sector in Serbia and 34% of which are active in providing non-institutionalised learning and additional education/training.

EC notes that *'a national strategy and action plan to help create a positive environment for CSOs have still not been adopted'* and that *'the enabling environment for the development and financing of civil society still needs to be established'*.



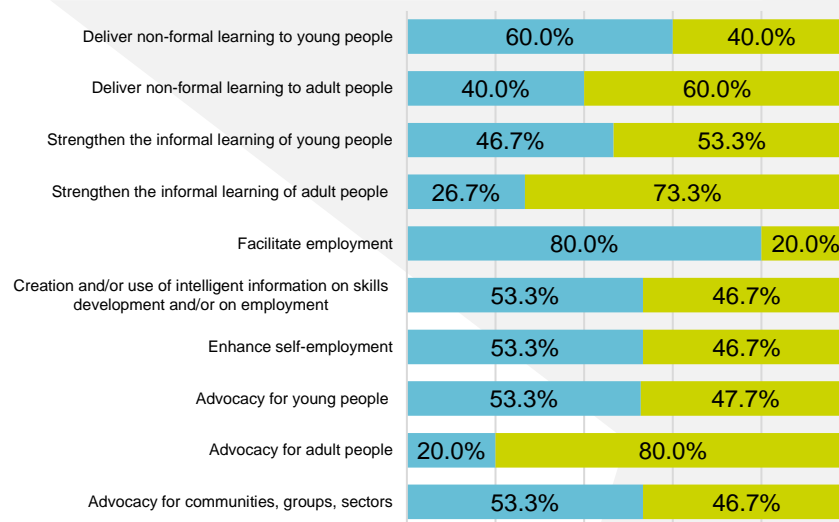
# BACKGROUND

- For the purposes of this survey a database of 31 CSOs active in the area of lifelong learning in Serbian was developed.
- The database includes a mix of CSOs working at transnational, national and local level and a mix of CSOs active in research and policy analysis and those providing direct services to the beneficiaries, including training and learning related activities to groups such as migrants, refugees, IDPs, youth and/or people with disabilities.
- The CSOs who took part in the survey total 15.

# ORGANISATIONAL DATA

- The largest number of organizations surveyed are located in the capital city (60%). Most surveyed CSOs operate at the local, grassroots level (73,3%).
- 73% of CSOs participate in one or more networks, and 26% manage a civil society network in Serbia. Use of social media among CSOs is widespread.
- Surveyed CSOs believe that most effective ways to implement organization's activities are non-formal training courses (66,7%), coaching and counselling people (46,7%). The most effective learning environments are classrooms and training centers (86.7%) and informal places (86.7%).
- 40% of surveyed CSOs have between 5 and 14 staff and 40% have between 15 and 59 employees. Surveyed CSOs seem to be largely donor driven, as major source of funding for them are donor funds (in 93,3%).
- Most observed CSOs work with youth (60%), women (46%) and vulnerable youth (46%), to facilitate employment among their target groups (80%).

## Organisation ACTIVITIES related to skills development

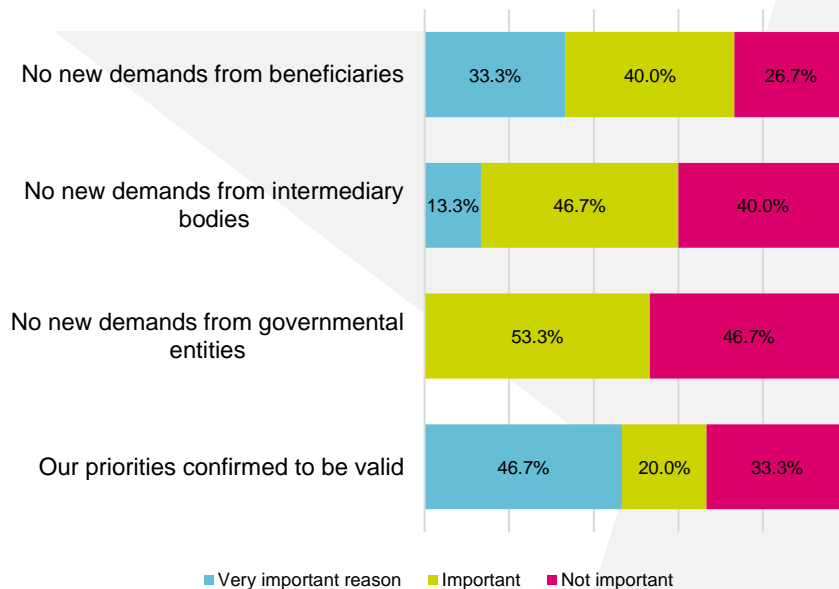


■ Often ■ Not often or never

# COVID-19 IMPACT

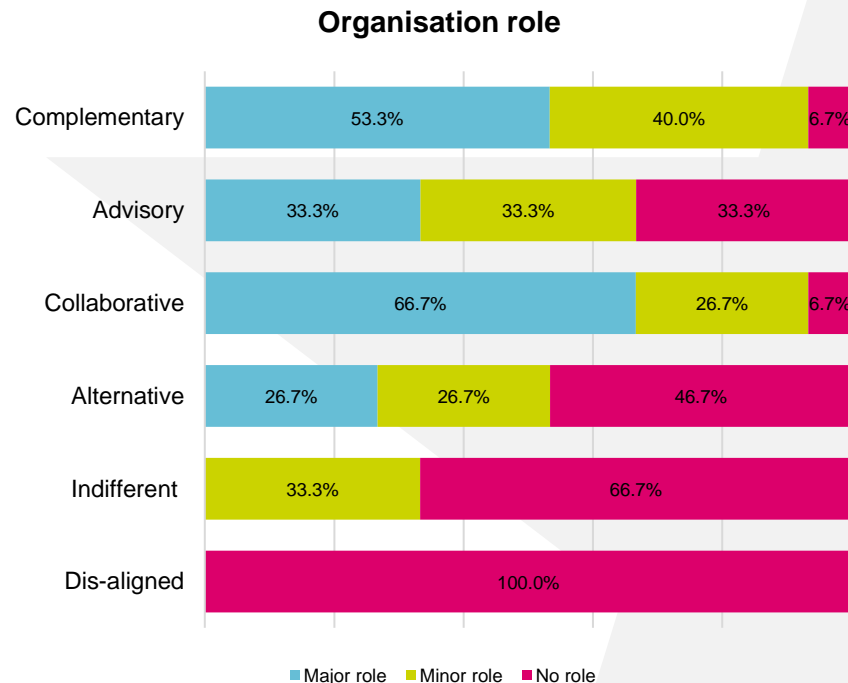
- CSOs have not changed their beneficiary's due to COVID 19 (93,3%). Majority (73,3%) have also not changed their priorities. Majority of CSOs report more frequent use of online tools (86,7%).
- Change in target groups/priorities did not occur as there were no new demands from beneficiaries (73.3%). In total 53,3% consider that the change did not occur as there were no new demands from government.
- Most organisations have identified short-term and long-term, lessons, most frequently this was to adapt the activity implementation and/or methods (84,6%) (short term) and to innovate their existing services (81,8%), but also to offer new services (45,5%) and attract additional funds (45,5%).

## Our organisation did not change the priorities in activities and/or beneficiary groups because:



# STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVEMENT AND DIALOGUE

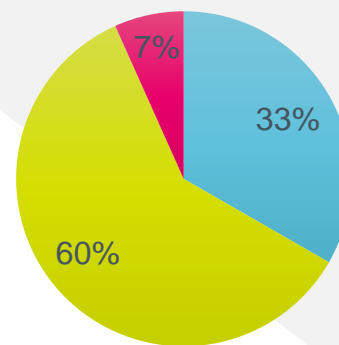
- 26,7% of CSOs are regularly and 53,3% occasionally involved in stakeholder involvement and policy dialogue.
- Main stakeholders include government institutions (75%), national employment agency (66,7%), employers (50%) and training providers (50%).
- The linkages with stakeholders are characterised by mainly analyses and research (75%) and advocacy (66.7%). The least important is reporting on the use of budget resources (16%) but also evaluation reporting (25%).
- None of the observed CSOs sees their position towards the stakeholders as dis-aligned, while most see themselves as either complementary (53,3%) and/or collaborative (66,7%).



# FORWARD LOOKING

- 93% of the CSOs surveyed are planning to strengthen their contribution to HCD
- Observed CSOs believe that their major advantage is their ability to detect needs of groups out of the formal learning and employment system and bring their voice to the policy dialogue (60%)
- 60% of CSOs do not consider that their ability to evaluate independently HCD policies' outcomes is an advantage and 66% that ability to guarantee transparency of public consultation
- Most important domains where CSOs believe HCD contributions can very likely be made are in the area of self-employment and entrepreneurship (57%), accessibility of formal, nonformal and informal learning (50%), using formal, nonformal and informal learning to support employment (50%)

## Is your organisation planning to strengthen its contribution to HCD?



- Yes
- Yes, to some extent
- No, the conditions are not in favour of this choice

# FINDINGS ON EFFECTIVENESS

Respondents did find the support offered useful. For some it helped obtain immediate income, job and/or new vocation. However, in some cases the support is also linked with social needs, community inclusion and peer to peer support, which is beyond employment.

Learning by doing seems like a preferred way of self-development.

Respondents do not have much choice in terms of HCD, which speaks of underdeveloped offer, linked with insufficient funding for these services.

Quality of trainers was adequate, evaluation culture is in place and appreciation for the work done is confirmed as respondents are willing to recommend similar experiences to their close ones, without hesitation.



**I got a job in April in the middle of the COVID-19 crisis, at the Gerontology Centre, where I still work as a caregiver. I cannot say anything else but thanks.**

**The lecturers were patient and correct. They also considered our health condition and accepted all suggestions.**

**I would absolutely recommend this programme, because in a short time you get the necessary knowledge and skills, you can go further alone, to become your own man**





# CONCLUSIONS

- Some favorable institutional setting, but also obstacles and lack of belief in influence
- Solid resources, localized presence, ability to attract funding, appropriate mission statements, focus on vulnerable,
- Resilience as a contributing factor, usefulness confirmed, while COVID 19 did entail the feeling of a global paralysis of public life, it also offered an opportunity for stimulation of creativity and finding new ways to cope and conduct activities and common work tasks.
- Room to make use of the evaluation culture, adopt more complex digital learning tools, cover adults as the target group, extend the service offer (not only training),
- Interest, but also reluctance to engage in more advocacy,
- Interest to engage further in areas of supporting entrepreneurship, self-employment, and transition from informal to formal employment.

# END CONTACT SLIDE

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