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This Policy Action Brief serves as a guiding document to government, key constituencies and civil society to take the actions necessary to strengthen civil society and address weaknesses identified in the 2008-2011 CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) project.

The CSI findings define civil society in Macedonia as moderately well-developed. The strongest aspects of civil society are its level of organisation and practice of values. Still, civil society does not use effectively its internal strength to influence society or to motivate citizens to take part in its activities. Impact of civil society on social concerns and policies is moderate or average, and civic participation is low. The external environment in which Macedonian civil society operates is only partly enabling.

CSI participants identified recommendations for improving the state and impact of civil society, especially in the areas where it is weakest. There are recommendations for civil society actors as well as actors in other sectors for improving citizens' participation, impact on social concerns and policies, and using the opportunities that the environment provides.

The key policy recommendations presented in this Policy Action Brief address the sustainability of civil society. There is a need to improve civic and social dialogue between civil society organisations (CSOs) and decision-makers. It is necessary for CSOs to be involved in parliamentary work, in working groups of the government, and in the processes of European integration. In order to ensure its financial sustainability civil society needs improved and strengthened direct government support, from the budget and lotteries, as well as indirect state support through tax incentives and the development of the status of public benefit organizations.

CSI Policy Action Brief is based on the findings, conclusions and recommendations published in the comprehensive CSI Analytical Report.