

July 2018

European Policy Centre - CEP

2017

annual report

# I. MAIN DEVELOPMENTS IN 2017

Overall, 2017 was another successful year for CEP, as the organisation continued to grow and improve and strengthen internal organisation and capacities. In 2017, the greatest improvement CEP achieved was with the outreach of its publications, as well as in terms of its visibility in media and the public, and influence on policy makers and civil society in Serbia. At the beginning of 2017, CEP's Council, entrusted with an advisory and steering role in shaping the CEP strategic and programme framework and providing recommendations for its further development and outreach of CEP's policy products, was established. The Council members include distinguished national and international experts, high-level representatives of renowned national institutions, academia and international and multi-lateral organisations. **The kick-off meeting of the Council was held in January 2017.** In addition, **CEP welcomed Mr Srđan Majstorović as its new Chairman of the Governing Board** in late-2017, marking a smooth transition from its first to its second GB Chairman. The newly appointed Governing Board also includes CEP's Executive Director Ranka Miljenović (previously CEP's Senior Project Manager) and Programme Director Milena Lazarević.

To reflect increasing workloads and needs in the management sphere, CEP also recruited a new Senior Project Manager, who oversees all project operations, as well as a Senior Financial Officer in charge of overseeing financial management. Due to the growth of the organisation achieved in the past period

CEP invested in 2017 in the development of its human resource management (HRM) policy and hired an external HRM consultant who started her function by assessing the HR needs and potentials of the organisation and work on developing CEP's HRM procedures.

In 2017, beside its umbrella development document, Organisational Development Strategy of the European Policy Centre – CEP, Belgrade (**CEP 2020**), and the CEP Communication Strategy, a more specific Digital Strategy (**CEP Digital 2020**) was developed as an addition to the **CEP Comms 2020**. All these strategic processes were led by CEP's internal resources, through collaboration of different team members.

In 2017 CEP continued to invest in the improvement of the research and analytical skills of its staff, mainly by building up the internal capacities of the research team for quantitative methods, more specifically inferential statistics and regression. Moreover, we had several major policy products undergo external review by prominent domestic and foreign experts and analysts, to further improve the quality of the final research and analytical products. We also sought every opportunity to send our researchers to high quality trainings and other educational opportunities abroad, in order to boost their research skills and widen their knowledge base.

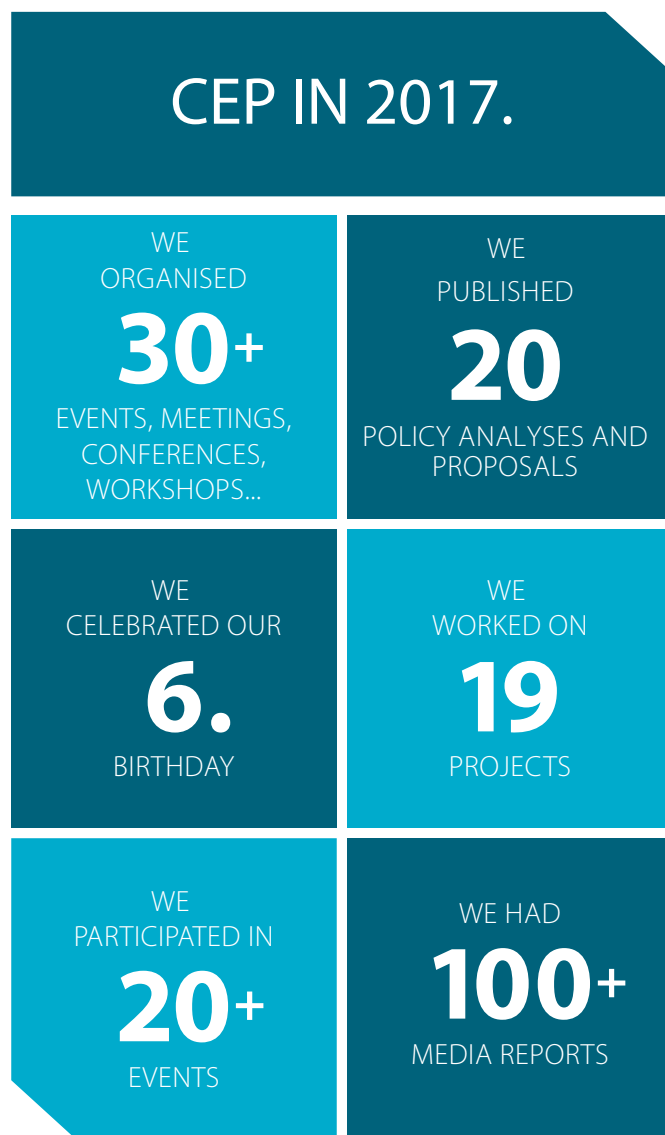
CEP's participation and contributions to policy making processes in Serbia further increased in the past year. Our members took part in the Working Group for development of the new Action Plan for the Imple-

mentation of the PAR Strategy, for the period 2018-2020. Our publications were widely distributed, and our policy recommendations discussed in Belgrade and increasingly also in Brussels. Our publications are now regularly cited in the European Parliaments and the Council's think tank digests ("What Think Tanks are Thinking" and "Think Tank Review"). CEP's experts were invited to contribute with their experience to numerous domestic and international conferences and workshops, while the events CEP organised were attended by many high-level Government officials, policy makers, diplomatic core and other relevant stakeholders. We took part in the Trieste Summit (part of the Berlin Process), through active engagement in the Civil Society Forum, and by the end of 2017 received the invitation to contribute to the planning and implementation of the European Think Tank Summit in Berlin, as a precursor of CEP's entry into the [Global Go to Think Tank Report ranking](#) (which was published on 30 January 2018).

In 2017, CEP continued to offer its expertise to media for publishing and broadcasting, using tools such as press releases, writing columns or articles for print media, giving interviews, scheduling TV or print interviews or broadcasting video-statements of CEP representatives. Several CEP representatives appeared on numerous occasions in discussion rooms, TV debates and news shows, either presenting research results or reacting to current events in the sphere of public policy and EU integration.

CEP experts have thus become a true reference point for a number of respectable Serbian media and news agencies, who regularly cover our work and come to us for comments. CEP's base of followers on Facebook and Twitter is continuously growing (1,700 new followers on Facebook and 600 on Twitter), and we have increased substantive interaction and commenting.

In light of the increasing intensity of its communication efforts and media presence, CEP's communications team was strengthened by hiring an **Events and Communication Assistant**, who took over the responsibility for social media and website administration and content creation.



In 2017, CEP had more than 100 interviews, announcements and comments in online and written media; our experts provided inputs 10 times on radio shows and 13 times on TV (mostly Radio Television of Serbia, N1, B92 or local televisions) in 2017.

In 2017 CEP participated in the establishment of a new platform – the **Platform for Monitoring the Implementation of the Economic Reform Programme (ERP) and Employment and Social Policy Reform Programme (ESRP)**, signed on 19 September 2017. CEP was, thus, one of the four CSOs/coordinators who signed this Platform. The objective of the Platform is to establish effective dialogue between Government of the Republic of Serbia and the civil society about the implementation of key reform measures for the Republic of Serbia's economic and social development, contained in the relevant areas of the ERP and the ESRP. We remained active and committed to other networks and platforms which we lead or take part in, especially the **WeBER Platform** for public administration reform, the **National Convention on the European Union**, and the regional think tank network **Think for Europe Network (TEN)**, through which we channel

most of our flourishing regional and international cooperation.

Our cooperation with European think tanks was further boosted in 2017. While friendly relations and frequent contacts were established with several Brussels-based think tanks, including Bruegel, our most significant partner in the EU remained **European Policy Centre – EPC**, Brussels. In addition, in 2017 we started cooperation with four prominent Central European think tanks from the Visegrad countries (Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Poland).

The following sections of the report present in more detail the main content achievements within the four programme areas of CEP's work, as well as some additional horizontal results.

CEP presented a study: *Towards a Smart Staff Retention Policy for the Sustainable EU Integration of Serbia*.  
Pictured: Tanja Miščević, Head of the Negotiating Team for the Accession of the Republic of Serbia to the EU,



# II. CEP'S RESEARCH, PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMATIC ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017



## Programme Area 1 “Good Governance”

The Good Governance programme area continues to be the largest and the most developed programme area of CEP. CEP remained a lead think tank in the area of public administration reform (PAR), with ever growing influence and recognition in the related topics.

In 2017, this programme area was continually developed through the implementation of numerous research, advocacy, training and communication activities. Programmatic focus was placed on the implementation of ongoing multi-annual projects, but also on other in-year initiatives, as well as on the deepening of existing partnerships relevant for this area. The highlights of the Good Governance programme area in 2017, in terms of results achieved can be divided into four areas, as in 2016: 1) milestone projects

that accelerated in the reporting year – Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform (WeBER) and Partnership for Good Governance; 2) cooperation with SIGMA (joint initiative of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the EU); 3) implementation of the United Kingdom’s (UK) assistance to Serbia through the Good Governance Fund (GGF); 4) other publishing and advocacy initiatives.



Activities of the WeBER project (implemented since December 2015) yielded noteworthy results in 2017 in several areas. Firstly, **the Regional WeBER Platform** became more widely recognised as a credible CSO platform for dialogue on public administration reform related policy issues across the Western Balkans. As the first regional CSO consultation platform for PAR in the Western Balkans, gathering 22 member-CSOs from the 6 Western Balkan countries and additional 109 CSOs in its country-level National Working Groups on PAR (NWGs), the Platform succeeded in including civil society in consultations on PAR through various fora. On several occasions in 2017, the Platform members were invited to and involved in high-level events and panels. Prominent examples include **Open days** of the Regional School of Public Administration (Brussels, June 2017), **Better Regulation Working Group Meeting** of the Regional Cooperation Council (Sarajevo, September 2017), **Danube Governance Forum** of the BACID programme (Vienna, December 2017) and meetings of the **Special Groups on PAR** (PAR SG) in all Western Balkan countries, held in the frameworks of the Stabilisation and Association process of these countries.

Regarding the last discussion forum, CEP as the WeBER Platform coordinator launched the initiative for the involvement of CSOs in the work of the PAR Special Group for Serbia, the venue for dialogue between the EU and the national authorities relevant for PAR. The initiative resulted in holding a preliminary, consultative meeting of the Serbian consortium of the WeBER Platform with the representatives of the DG NEAR and

the EU Delegation to the Republic of Serbia, prior to the official PAR SG meeting. The purpose of this initiative was to render the dialogue within the PAR SG more participatory and more open. Led by this example, the WeBER Platform consortia in other countries managed to participate in same or similarly formatted consultative events that fed into the discussions of the PAR SGs. Ultimately, as a result there has been an increase in the understanding and appreciation by the EU and national officials that involvement of CSOs in this regard should continue in the future.

To further promote the opening up of PAR related policy dialogue between the EU and the national governments, WeBER produced a policy brief and organised a high-level advocacy event in Brussels (joint event with the EPC, Brussels), in October 2017. The policy brief made the case for a more forceful and more structured approach towards the involvement of civil society in the work of PAR SGs in all countries aspiring to join the EU. The panel discussion “Public administration reform and EU enlargement – The Balkan civil society perspective” was held in October 2017 in Brussels. The high-level panel assessed the role of civil society in PAR in the Balkans, as well as the importance of openness and transparency of the policy dialogue on PAR at all levels.

In 2017, two regional WeBER Platform meetings were held (June 2017 through video conference, and in November 2017 in Skopje) as well as meetings of the NWGs in each country. Participation of state representatives from WB countries in charge of PAR, project associates (Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), and Regional School for Public Administration (ReSPA), SIGMA/OECD, and media, was ensured for the third Platform meeting in Skopje. NWG membership was active in 2017 owing to the provision of training opportunities on the topic of public policy monitoring, and membership kept increasing in all countries throughout the year, as the open call for joining was kept open.

Moreover, **multi-media presentations** developed within WeBER, aiming at familiarising a wider, non-expert public with PAR process in the WB and role of the EU, received highly positive reactions on the social media, but also within the expert community (SIGMA, ReSPA, and DG NEAR in the first place). As a result, these multi-media products were also shared on the

SIGMA website. Also, in 2017 another milestone in WeBER was achieved as 33 small projects were supported across the WB as part of the **Small Grant Facility for civil society monitoring of PAR at local level**. The results of the whole facility will be available in 2018. **PAR Resource Centre**, a regional database of reports and analyses of civil society organisations from Western Balkan countries for different PAR areas, was developed in 2017 and by the end of the year it contained over 150 searchable items authored by CSOs from all WB countries. In December 2017, the **regional PAR Scoreboard** was developed and made public, currently presenting the results of SIGMA assessments for 2017. **PAR monitoring** performed within WeBER has started in 2017 and is currently ongoing. Full results will be published in 2018, while gradual publishing of individual indicator results started in December 2017 via the project website [www.par-monitor.org/results](http://www.par-monitor.org/results).



**PARTnershiPS**

The second milestone project within the Good Governance program area, “Partnership for Public Administration Reform and Public Services in Serbia – PARTnerships”, implemented in cooperation with European Movement Serbia (lead partner), further advanced CEP’s research agenda in the good governance area. CEP, as the coordinator of the research component of the project, took a leading role in developing the research methodology, collecting data and analysing the processes and practices through which three targeted service delivery policies are developed. In 2017 CEP researchers produced two policy briefs within the project as policy advocacy tools. The highlight during the reporting period was the implementation of the nation-wide campaign “ME in the spotlight!” with the aim to include citizens in the process of PAR. The campaign enabled the collection of stories/testimonies of citizens about their experience with the three groups of public services covered by the project (health, internal affairs and education) through an interactive web-portal [www.mojauprava.rs](http://www.mojauprava.rs) and a large number of local actions and manifestations in 17 cities/municipalities. Research results and final products are available [here](#).

In the reporting period, CEP successfully implemented several projects from the **Good Governance Fund (GGF)** financed by the UK Government under the first programme area:

- a) Supporting implementation of non-discrimination legislation, aiming to advance implementation of non-discrimination legislation in Serbia through developing the evidence base for the implementation of anti-discrimination policy;
- b) Promoting public administration reform through modernisation of human resource management, with the aim to support professionalization and further modernisation of public administration in Serbia;
- c) Increasing citizen participation in policy making, project focused on improving the transparency and accountability of the Government in Serbia and increasing CSOs' and citizen involvement in the legislative process; and
- d) Human resource management in public administration, aiming to support implementation of the new policy framework for human resource management in Serbian administration.

The key beneficiary of these projects was the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, with which CEP established excellent cooperation, particularly at the technical level.

## Cooperation with OECD/SIGMA

In 2017, the CEP team continued to **successfully perform the role of the de facto local hub of expertise for SIGMA/OECD**. As a result of previous track record in the good governance programme area, CEP is recognised by SIGMA as the local partner for Serbia with high quality expertise in the PAR related areas covered by SIGMA Principles of Public Administration. Major tasks in 2017 included assisting SIGMA in implementing

monitoring missions of the public administration reform (PAR) in 2017, where CEP provided analysis, data collection and advice to SIGMA for the assessment of implementation of requirements for a well-functioning public administration, in the six core areas of reform defined by the **Principles of Public Administration**. CEP also continued to cooperate with SIGMA on the topic of managerial accountability within the state administration in Serbia, based on a previously produced in-depth policy study. The regional study on managerial accountability in WB, which is due to be published in 2018, was co-authored by the CEP Programme Director Milena Lazarevic. Moreover, cooperation with SIGMA was extended in 2017 to new topics, such as establishing of legal framework for service delivery through "one-stop-shops" and improving visualisation of the PAR Action Plan implementation reports in Serbia.

## OGP Independent Reporting Mechanism

CEP continues to perform the role of the research organisation under the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) within the **Open Government Partnership in (OGP) in Serbia**. In line with the new dynamics for the implementation of the Action Plan of the OGP, in 2017, CEP's researchers closely followed the OGP process in Serbia, conducted the necessary research activities and produced an independent one-year report on the Action Plan implementation. Publishing of the report is scheduled in Spring 2018 after the public consultation process is finalised.

Meeting of the Working Group of the National Convention on the EU for Chapter 1 and Chapter 3



In 2017, CEP published five policy products (2 studies and 3 briefs) in the first programme area and 5 blog articles.

The majority of published policy products dealt with civil servants' capacities and HRM in the Serbian public administration, which positioned CEP in the leading position among think tanks in Serbia and the region in this area of expertise. One of these policy products was the GIZ-supported research initiative which resulted in the policy study entitled "[Towards a Smart Staff Retention Policy for the Sustainable EU Integration of Serbia](#)," assessing and understanding the intensity and causes of staff turnover among civil servants performing tasks related to EU accession and pre-accession funds management, as well as factors of motivation and demotivation, and overall job satisfaction. CEP also implemented a research project funded by the French Embassy which aimed to identify the current state of play in the civil service system in the Serbian administration, with an emphasis on professionalisation and depoliticization of the highest management positions – appointed civil servants. The result was a study "[A Good Public Manager – What Profile of Senior Civil Servant Does Serbia Require?](#)"



## Programme Area 2 "Internal Market and Competitiveness"

CEP's landmark activity in the second programme area is its coordinating role in the [National Convention on the EU \(NCEU\)](#), as it was one of the co-founders of this CSO platform and since then member of its Programme Council. As a coordinator of the working groups in charge of negotiating chapters 1 (Free movement of goods), 28 (Consumer protection and health) and, as of 2017, Chapter 3 (Right of establishment and freedom to provide services), CEP organised three meetings, out of which two were meant to build internal capacities for monitoring and involvement in the accession negotiating process of the members of the three WGs. Beside coordinating the work of three NCEU WGs, CEP experts participated in and actively contributed to the work of other WGs, such as the one on Chapter 8 (Competition policy), and Chapter 20 (Enterprise and industrial policy).

In 2017, CEP was among the four organisations that sign the [Platform for Monitoring the Implementation of the Economic Reform Program \(ERP\) and the Employment and Social Policy Reform Program \(ESRP\) for the 2018 – 2020 period](#). The objective of the Platform is to establish effective dialogue between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and civil society in the Republic of Serbia about the implementation of key reform measures in Serbia's economic and social development, contained in the relevant areas of the ERP and the ESRP. Under the framework of this platform, 5 analytical reports, covering 4 priority structural reforms (PSR) and one cross-sectoral issue (point of single contact), were prepared and presented to relevant NCEU WGs and made available on CEP and NCEU websites: reports on PSR 1 – **Tax Administration** (area 3.1), on PSR 12 (PSR 15 under Draft ERP 2018-20) – **Improvement of the national quality infrastructure system** (area 3.6), on PSR 6 (PSR 7 under Draft ERP 2018-20) - **Enhancing the competitiveness of the**



**manufacturing industry** (area 3.3), on PSR 4 (PSR 14 under Draft ERP 2018-20) - **Development and improvement of national broadband communication infrastructure** (area 3.2), and report on **Single Point of Contact** – related to area 3.3 – Development of services sector (with reference to ERP PSR 9). Comments and conclusions were presented during ERP review public debate in December 2017.

## UK Good Governance Fund (GGF)

In the reporting period, CEP implemented one project from the **Good Governance Fund (GGF)** falling under the second programme area: a) Support to the simplification of administrative procedures to improve the business environment in Serbia aiming to improve the Serbian business environment by simplifying administrative procedures and contributing to the introduction of a single register of administrative procedures.



## Programme Area 3 “Regional Policy, Energy, Environment”

In 2017 CEP successfully established itself as an organisation active in the area of the environment, which was recognised in the donor community as well as in the civil sector. **Namely, 2017 marked an important breakthrough within this programme area.**

CEP improved its own capacities, as well as those of the wider civil society via continuation and the successful finalisation of the CSOnnect institutional grant (finalised in October 2017) under the CSOnnect programme, implemented by the Regional Environmental Centre (REC) and financially supported by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). Via the CSOnnect institutional grant CEP and other members of the Consortium (Ecological Centre Habitat, Ecological Movement of Odžaci, Local Ecological Centre of Smederevo and Business and Economy Centre) significantly contributed to the improvement of civil society participation in the

accession process concerning Negotiating Chapter 27.

By conducting thorough policy research on the financing of environmental protection at the local level, CEP and its partner organisations (especially the Ecological Centre Habitat) gained access to insights and information which are crucial for successful advocacy of evidence-based recommendations for the improvement of environmental financing policy in Serbia within the EU accession context.

During the year, CEP published four policy products (a study and three briefs) and four blog articles written by both CEP’s staff and external associates. The policy study and three briefs were widely shared and used within public administration, with the recommendations from the Minister of Environment himself.

All the policy products were developed under the realm of the REC grant and were focused on financing environment at the local level, namely the utilization of local environmental funds and public participation in this area. Along with this, four blog texts on environmental policy topics were published in 2017. These policy products enhanced CEP’s internal capacities in this area and thus made a solid foundation for CEP’s further involvement in this topic of growing interest among key policy makers and civil society actors in the country. Research results and final products are available [here](#).



Final Conference: Environmental Protection and the Road to EU Membership. Pictured: Srđan Majstorović, Chairman of CEP Governing Board, Tanja Mišević, Head of the Negotiating Team for the Accession of the Republic of Serbia to the EU, Joachim Waern, Deputy Head of Mission of Sweden to Serbia, Sem Fabrizi, Head of the EU Delegation to Serbia, Goran Trivan, Minister of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia, Radoslav Sretenović, President of the State Audit Institution (DRI) and Ruža Radović, Director of the Regional Environmental Center (REC) in Serbia.

At the same time, the capacities of the CSOs and the media were strengthened for effective participation in the EU accession process. At the [final conference](#), which gathered approximately 60 representatives of the public, the civil, and the private sector, results of the project were disseminated to key stakeholders, including the Minister of Environment who publicly commended the quality and relevance of the presented study. As a follow up to the conference, the Minister requested that 200 policy briefs on environmental financing be distributed to mayors across Serbia. Furthermore, the results of this research were later used by the Ministry for Environmental Protection and the State Audit Institution in the performance of their tasks and responsibilities.

CEP team also seized every available opportunity to improve its cooperation with the media in this area, by

including media as participants in events and by giving public statements and writing media materials. These activities together with active social networking and innovative communication tools (e.g. short multimedia presentation) increased the general awareness to CEP's efforts to improve Serbia's environmental policy.

Aforementioned activities considerably improved the perception of CEP as a credible partner and "honest broker" between various stakeholders with regard to environmental policy area within the accession context. This is an important improvement which may lead to the establishment of future partnerships **inter alia** with the civil service, CSOs and the media and the successful continuation of the CEP's work within the third programme area.

CEP further improved its cooperation with the local associations and municipalities of the Banat region through the project “The Banat Platform – Participation of Local Communities in Serbia’s EC Accession Process” (2016-2017) aiming to improve the capacities of Banat local communities concerning their participation in accession negotiations, in particular with regard to Negotiating Chapters 11, 12 and 27. In this regard, the Banat Platform (established in 2015 and led by the Ecological Centre Habitat) serves as a medium-level network between local communities in Banat and national institutions (public administration and NKEU). By providing its analytical and capacity-building expertise, CEP further increased its influence among local communities, confirmed the importance of its role regarding environmental policy area and continued to develop its presence within the rural and agriculture policy area. [A continuation of the cooperation between CEP and Banat local communities](#) is expected under third project dedicated to Banat Platform which officially commenced in November 2017.

Beside the aforementioned projects and the CSOconnect institutional grant, CEP representatives gave contributions to the development of biannual Serbia 2018 Progress report and participated in several workshops and conferences in Serbia and the region (Zagreb, Sarajevo) which further solidified its presence in the areas falling under this programme area.

Workshops and round tables where CEP representatives delivered lectures improved knowledge and understanding among different stakeholders (civil servants, local CSOs etc.) concerning the EU accession process and the role of local communities. Overall, all the aforementioned activities contributed to the development of CEP’s network of contacts at the national and local level, by establishing new contacts and strengthening the existing ones.

## UK Good Governance Fund (GGF)

In the reporting period, CEP participated in the implementation of one project from the GGF falling under the third programme area – “Support to simplification of administrative procedures aiming to improve the Serbian business environment by simplifying administrative procedures and contributing to the introduction of a single register of administrative procedures”.



## Programme Area 4 „Europe&Us”

In 2017, the Europe&Us program area continued to develop and grow. With three implemented projects, several project proposals and numerous initiatives in the pipeline, this program area promises to expand further in the following year.

### Research & Debates

In the previous year, CEP continued to raise public awareness and instigate expert discussions on under-researched topics related to Serbia’s EU accession process and its future place as a member of the EU. Among them, we examined Serbia’s diplomatic/lobbying capacities to represent its interests towards the Brussels stakeholders, in light of the more demanding upcoming accession phase. Concrete policy proposals were developed and presented before the Serbian and EU stakeholders, including the representatives of the Serbian government, the European Commission (EC) and the European Parliament (EP). With this research, CEP continued to advocate its longstanding position, which also lies at the core of its mission, on the necessity to ensure timely and thorough preparations for entry into the EU, if Serbia is to fully grasp membership benefits.

Panel Discussion: From the Estonian to the Bulgarian Presidency to the EU Council: New Impetus for Enlargement Policy?



In 2017, CEP published five policy products (2 studies and 3 briefs) in the fourth programme area, and 5 blog articles. These policy products and blog articles dealt with current EU issues and debates, and thus they were followed and read in the country, region and the EU by the relevant stakeholders. To exemplify, one of CEP's policy products in this programme area covered the topic of EU benchmarking within Chapter 23 and 24 in the EU negotiations with Serbia, while the other policy brief dealt with Serbia's administrative, financial and lobbying capacities in the context of Serbia's EU integration process.

In addition, CEP was engaged in analysing the complex topic of EU's role in promotion and enforcement of the rule of law in Serbia, in the framework of the wider regional project conducted together with TEN partners. Its findings and recommendations are primarily directed towards the EU stakeholders, with the aim of proposing ideas that might enhance effectiveness of the EU's conditionality mechanisms. The production of this research coincided with an intensified focus on the rule of law by the EU, both within the accession negotiations context as well as in the context of the EU's introspective debates on its role in the future functioning.

CEP also showed a proactive approach and initiative in addressing the burning issues in the framework of Serbia's EU integration process. It organised a public debate and published a discussion paper on the topic of transparency and inclusiveness in the EU accession process, where the relationship between state authorities and civil society has been analysed. CEP brought about concrete proposals addressed to all relevant actors – the state, the CSOs and the EU – on how to

overcome the difficulties in communication and interaction, for the sake of ensuring a more open, participatory and evidence-based EU accession process. Furthermore, CEP researchers continued to produce timely analyses on the pertinent topics of the given moment, such as the elections for the EP president, the celebration of the 60th anniversary of Rome Declaration, national elections within the EU countries, etc.

Finally, CEP's reputation of bringing EU debates to Serbia was particularly reinforced with the successful organisation of events addressing the priorities of the EU's ongoing Presidencies over the Council of the EU. These biannual events, organised in cooperation with the EU Info Centre, have become a matter of tradition in the previous year. Each time, CEP managed to secure the participation of the most senior representatives of the outgoing and incoming member states holding the EU presidency in Serbia (i.e. Ambassadors), the Head of the EU Delegation in Serbia and the Head of Serbia's Team for Accession Negotiations with the EU. These debates have greatly contributed to raising knowledge and awareness about the functions and roles of presiding EU member states and have proven to be an excellent platform for exchange and networking among stakeholders from different spheres (diplomatic corps, CSOs, academia, media, state administration). CEP will continue with the organisation of these events in 2018 as well.

A panel discussion *The Weakest Link? Civil society as effective scrutinizer of EU accession process- constraints and opportunities.*



## Building Partnerships

CEP continued to build partnerships and cooperation with organisations across Europe. In the framework of TEN, it implemented a [capacity building project](#) together with partners from the four countries of the 'Visegrad group' – CEU Center for Public Policy from Hungary, IDEA from Poland, EUROPEUM from the **Czech Republic** and Slovak Governance Institute from Slovakia. Furthermore, CEP established cooperation with Leiden University and Queen Mary University, with the aim of applying for joint projects. All of these partnerships have the potential to expand in the future, with the aim of reaching out towards the citizens and the expert public of the respective countries.

CEP continued to take an active and constructive part in the framework of NCEU. Besides coordination of the three NCEU WGs (described above in the second programme area), CEP researchers actively participated in the WGs for chapters 23, related to rule of law and judiciary and 24, related to security issues. These two negotiating chapters have a special status in the accession process (i.e. accession negotiations can be suspended in case of no progress in the areas covered by the two chapters), therefore CEP is particularly interested in bringing forward its issues of concern and in constructively participating in the group meetings.

## Participation in EU debates

CEP experts were invited as speakers and participants in numerous policy debates organised by relevant EU think tanks in 2017, such as 'Future Lab' organised by Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS); Annual Common Foreign and Security Policy Forum by German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP); European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, Vienna, etc.

All CEP policy products published in the abovementioned four programme areas can be accessed in English at the following links: [studies](#), [briefs](#), [insights](#), and [presents](#). CEP blog articles can be accessed [here](#). In addition to these initial policy products, in December 2017 CEP introduced new form of policy product - [Discussion paper](#).

## Horizontal projects and programmes

In this section projects and programmes that were implemented in 2017 of a horizontal nature and covered all CEP's programme areas are presented. In 2017, two of such projects were under implementation: the Organisational Development Grant and the Good Governance Programme (GGF).

### Organisational Development Grant

In 2017 CEP continued to benefit from the support of the Open Society Initiative for Europe (OSIFE) through the Organisational Development Grant (ODG). With the support of this grant CEP improved its capacities in all three areas that it covers: research, communications and governance. CEP is now a think tank which applies an extended scope of methodological approaches including application of advanced quantitative methods in its

writing, with its publications followed and read in Belgrade, the Western Balkans and in Brussels. As an outcome of all this, CEP has become a much better governed and managed organisation, and despite a rapid growth of the team, we have managed to maintain excellent working atmosphere and develop a very positive organisational culture.

### Good Governance Fund (GGF)

In 2017, CEP's experts continued to participate together with PwC Serbia, and in close cooperation with the British Embassy in Serbia, in the implementation of the Good Governance Programme (GGF) for Serbia, both as part of the Programme Management Unit (PMU), which identifies, scopes and prepares project proposals, and in the delivery of individual projects. The GGF is an initiative of the British Government designed to provide reform assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine.

In the scope of the GGF, CEP has implemented five projects that fall into CEP's first three programme areas and are described above.

### Cross-cutting topics

Besides continuous mainstreaming of gender in all its policy products as a cross-cutting issue, CEP put additional emphasis on gender related issues. This resulted in the development of a policy brief on Gender Parity and Decision-Making in the Serbian Public Administration, dealing with the gender disparity in decision-making within the public sector which is obliged to serve the entire population of a country and to reflect the diversity of the society.

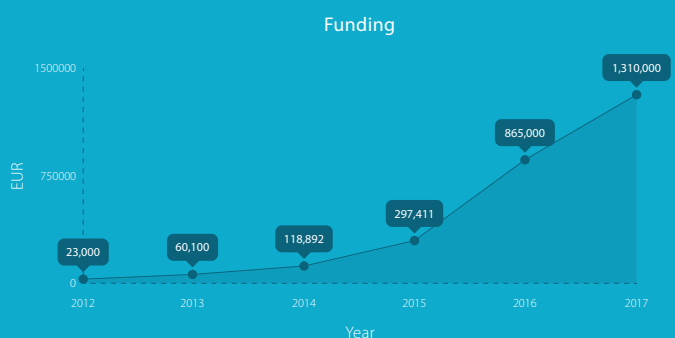
Furthermore, CEP supported the anti-discrimination policy in the country through a project funded by the UK Good Governance Fund "Strengthening human rights and reducing discrimination towards vulnerable groups through supporting implementation of anti-discrimination legislation" in 2017.

### Gender analysis of CEP public events in 2017

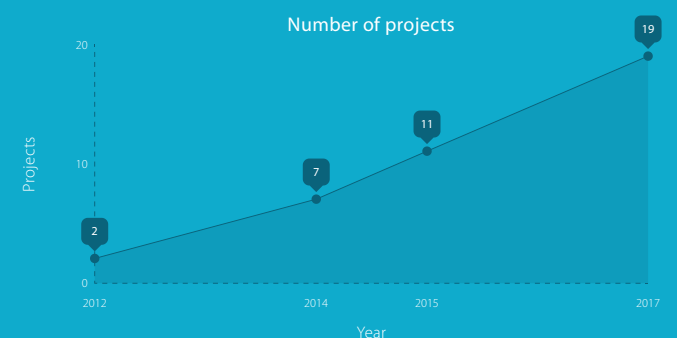


## III. FINANCIAL DATA AND FUNDING SOURCES

In 2017, CEP's annual turnover amounted 1,310,000.00 EUR which represents a significant increase compared to the previous year.



This is also reflected in a significantly higher number of projects implemented or initiated during 2017, as presented below.



## CEP's sources of funding in 2017 were the following:

- ✓ European Union through the Regional Civil Society Facility Programme
- ✓ Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- ✓ Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) through the CSOnnect programme
- ✓ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- ✓ U.K. Government through the Good Governance Fund (GGF)
- ✓ European Fund for the Balkans (EFB)
- ✓ Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of Serbia (SIPRU) and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
- ✓ International Visegrad Fund (IVF)
- ✓ Embassy of the Republic of France in Belgrade
- ✓ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
- ✓ Open Society Initiative for Europe (OSIFE)
- ✓ SIGMA (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management), a joint initiative of the OECD and the European Union

In 2017, similarly as in the previous years, CEP did not rely on funding from the Serbian government or from the domestic private sector.



