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**Guideline on Consultations with Civil Society Organisations  
and Other Stakeholders in the Framework of the  
EU – Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Bodies**

**February 2018**  
**Prishtina**

## Table of Content

INTRODUCTION .....	3
1. Legal Basis .....	3
2. Guiding Principles .....	5
3. Preparatory Process .....	6
4. Conduction of Consultations: Framework, Inputs and Procedure .....	7
4.1. Consultation Framework .....	7
4.2. Inputs of Consultations .....	8
4.3. Consultation Methodology and Procedure .....	9
<i>Annex: Public Call for Registration of Civil Society Organisations and Other Stakeholders for the Consultation Mechanism in the Framework of the EU – Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Bodies</i> .....	14

## INTRODUCTION

Participation of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and other stakeholders in implementation of the EU – Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) is vital for their better understanding and awareness and of the wider public on this process and the impact of reforms on the society, as well as to create room for their contribution in its implementation and to maximize its potential for the country's overall development. Differently from other Southeast European countries in the SAA phase, Kosovo is embarking on participation of CSOs and other stakeholders in implementation of EU accession reforms already at this stage, with a view to gradually enhance their participation in this reform process in parallel with the advancement of the accession process towards full EU membership.

The SAA, in its Preamble, underlines development of civil society as part of the overall democratization and as inseparable to strengthening of democracy and the rule of law. Furthermore, given that, pursuant to Article 1, paragraph (2a), one of the aims of the SAA is supporting Kosovo in strengthening democracy and the rule of law, cooperation between CSOs and the public sector in the process of development and implementation of public policies related to the SAA is crucial. This specific relationship of cooperation between civil society and government is aimed at establishing a consultative mechanism to ensure that the views of CSOs and other actors are adequately reflected within the work of the joint EU – Kosovo stabilisation and association bodies (SABs) (created by the SAA), with a view to developing a participatory approach to implementation of reforms required by the SAA.

Therefore, the Ministry of European Integration (MEI), as the institution legally mandated to coordinate implementation of the SAA on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, has developed a framework on consultations with CSOs and other stakeholders within the framework of SABs. As a mechanism aimed at reflecting their positions and role in implementation of reforms required under the SAA, this framework is also designed to meeting the requirements of the domestic legal framework defining responsibilities of Kosovo institutions within the SABs, as well as those of the domestic legal framework regulating public consultations in public policy-making processes and access to public documents. This consultation framework is designed *to allow room to evolve* as the EU integration process takes deeper effects and assumes a more advanced formal status, therefore enabling the relationship, interaction, trust and capacities of partners from both sides in the process (public institutions and CSOs and other stakeholders) to grow and strengthen to bear future challenges of the EU accession process.

To this end, the present Guideline lays out the approach to consultation with CSOs and other stakeholders in the framework of SABs. It consists of four sections. The first one describes the legal basis, while the second one the guiding principles governing this consultation framework. The third section describes the preparatory steps that will be followed for creating this consultation mechanism. The last section lays out in detail the procedural steps that will be followed for conducting consultations in the framework of each SAB, including timeframes and institutional responsibilities.

This Guideline was developed in consultation with a selected number of CSOs and other stakeholders that are more active in the European integration process. Two workshops with them were organized as part of this process. We also drew on the experience of the Republic of Croatia, financially supported by the Federal Republic of Germany, through the *Support to the European Integration Process of Kosovo* Project implemented by GIZ Kosovo.

### 1. Legal Basis

The legal framework establishing the basis for consultations with CSOs and other stakeholders in the framework of functioning of the SABs consists of the following main acts:

- Law No. 03-L-215 on Access to Public Documents;

- Regulation No. 13/2016 on Functioning and Representation of Government Institutions of the Republic of Kosovo in the Stabilisation and Association Structures;
- Regulation No. 05/2016 on Minimum Standards for Public Consultation Process; and
- Rules of Procedure of the Stabilisation and Association Council.

The **Law on Access to Public Documents** provides for the right of CSOs and other stakeholders to have access to official documents maintained, drawn or received by public institutions. In the context of exchange of information related to implementation of the SAA and functioning of the joint EU – Kosovo bodies created thereby, Articles 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this Law provide for more concrete legal basis for creation of new bodies and/or procedures allowing for regular exchange of information and views between public institutions and CSOs and other stakeholders.

In addition, **Regulation on Minimum Standards for Public Consultation Process** regulates minimum standards, principles and procedures of public consultations between public authorities, stakeholders and the wider public in legislative and public policy drafting processes.

The **Regulation on Functioning and Representation of Government Institutions of the Republic of Kosovo in the Stabilisation and Association Structures** provides further normative basis as to the role of CSOs and other stakeholders in the process of implementation of SAA and functioning of the joint EU – Kosovo decision-making bodies in charge of monitoring and overseeing its implementation. It obliges the Government to cooperate with CSOs and other stakeholders in three phases: preparing the meetings, supporting implementation of reforms agreed thereby and monitoring their implementation. Firstly, the Regulation obliges the relevant public institutions to include CSOs and other stakeholders in the *preparation of materials for meetings* of the SA Committee (Art. 14.5), and of Subcommittees and Special Groups (Art. 18.6). Secondly, the regulation obliges the relevant public institutions to ensure involvement of CSOs and other stakeholders, in line with the applicable law, *in implementation of conclusions of meetings* of all SABs: SA Council (Art. 9.9), SA Committee (Art. 15.9) and Subcommittees and Special Groups (Art. 19.9). Lastly, this regulation obliges the relevant government bodies to provide CSOs, media and other stakeholders and the wider public *access to the minutes and/or conclusions and other relevant documents* resulting from meetings of SABs: SA Council (Art. 9.8), SA Committee (Art. 15.8) and of the Subcommittees and Special Groups (Art. 19.8).

The legal basis elaborated above, to be made operational through the present Guideline, gives CSOs and other stakeholders the systemic opportunity to contribute to reforms required by the SAA from an early stage of their prioritization and planning, namely prior to the drafting of agendas and other materials of SABs. Furthermore, CSOs and other stakeholders is hereby given the opportunity to contribute to implementation of SAA reforms by expressing their opinions and providing inputs and advice within a timely framework that should largely contribute to tangible results on the work of SABs.

The **Stabilisation and Association Agreement** itself, particularly the Preamble, underlines, among other requirements, Kosovo's commitment to political, economic and institutional stabilization, which is also achieved through the development of civil society and overall democratization. In other words, strengthening of civil society, as part of the overall process of democratization, is an inseparable part of strengthening democracy and establishing the rule of law.

**Rules of Procedure (RoP) of the Stabilisation and Association Council** is relevant for consultations with CSOs and other stakeholders in the framework of SABs for it sets out procedures and processes for functioning of these bodies, including all preparatory and follow-up processes, as well as institutional responsibilities for specific tasks and timeframes for carrying them out. It provides for the conduct of regular and extraordinary meetings of each SAB and regulates other aspects of their overall operation in the context of performance of their functions set out by the SAA. The RoP also determines the composition and duties of each SAB: its Article 3 stipulates that the intended composition of the delegation of each Party

to the *SA Council* meetings is agreed prior to the respective meeting, and that it may also invite other persons in order to provide information on particular subjects. Furthermore, Article 12 stipulates that the *SA Committee* is "...composed of representatives of the European Union on the one hand, and of Kosovo on the other, normally at senior civil servant level."

Lastly, according to Annex II of the Decision establishing *Subcommittees and Special Groups* (Decision No. 1/2016, of 25 November 2016, of the EU – Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Committee creating subcommittees and special groups), they are composed of representatives of the European Commission, the European External Action Service (in the case of the SG on Normalisation), on one hand, and of Kosovo, on the other. As Subcommittees and SGs derive from the Committee, the representatives' composition equally applies, namely at the senior civil servant level. To discuss particular subjects of interest, if both parties so agree, the subcommittees and the special groups may invite experts to their meetings to provide the specific information requested.

According to the RoP (Art. 6 and Art. 5 of the Annex), meetings of SABs *shall not be public*, unless otherwise decided.

## **2. Guiding Principles**

Cooperation between the Government and the CSOs in the process of SAA implementation and monitoring shall be mainly based on the principles of trust and transparency, effectiveness and efficiency, and those of credibility and expertise. Such a cooperation is also guided by the principles enshrined in the Regulation No. 05/2016 on Minimum Standards for Public Consultation Process. This shall, notwithstanding the essence of open and transparent cooperation between the parties, not preclude both parties from applying the non-disclosure principle, as needed, due to sensitiveness of issues at stake.

### ***Trust and Transparency***

Cooperation between public institutions and CSOs and other stakeholders in the SAA-related processes shall be based on a good faith and spirit of mutual trust during its entire duration. Both parties shall take sufficient care that their involvement do not include any activity that could in any way, intentionally or unintentionally, produce negative consequences for any of the stakeholders to efficiently carry out activities, obligations and duties for implementation of reforms for the fulfilment of obligations deriving from the SAA. Having in mind the specific and sensitive nature of communication and work of both parties involved in the work of SABs, as well as the need for confidentiality of certain aspects of this work, an additional effort shall be made to enable successful and efficient conclusion of these processes.

Transparency of the work of SABs shall be ensured in accordance to provisions of the Regulation No. 13/2016 and other legal provisions and that shall, among others, include both involvement of CSOs and other stakeholders in the consultation framework and in terms of the access of these actors and of the wider public to the minutes and/or conclusions and other relevant materials of SABs. This principle shall also be applied in line with the Regulation No. 05/2016, including its Article 17.

### ***Effectiveness and Efficiency***

Application of the principle of transparency in cooperation between public institutions and CSOs and other stakeholders shall be balanced with the principles of effectiveness and efficiency of the work of SABs in achieving a direct impact to outputs of that process. This is recognized with the increase of the level of sharing of information between stakeholders, the level of quality of data and documents created in this process, as well as of the level of benefits for public institutions from advices, analysis, opinions and remarks coming from CSOs and other stakeholders. This should lead to increased effectiveness of the work of SABs and of the quality of outputs of the entire SAA implementation process.

Cooperation between public institutions and CSOs and other stakeholders in the SAA-related processes shall also be based on mutual efforts to contribute to efficient fulfilment of all obligations deriving from the SAA and that should be fulfilled by all bodies in charge of its implementation. It is therefore important that all communication from both sides (public institutions and CSOs and other stakeholders), including the exchange of documents and information necessary for SABs' functioning, be organized in a timely and efficient manner. These documents shall be organized in the most efficient and the least time-consuming way in order to provide efficient exchange of information that will lead to clear and timely decisions of the SABs. Moreover, consultations, in terms of timing, structure and organization, shall be conducted in such a way as to provide the most efficient use of time and space. Another aim of this process is to provide the most tangible and productive results that will increase the efficiency of SABs' work. In that spirit, all stakeholders shall sustain from acts that might lead to any kind of obstruction of the efficiency of the functioning of SABs.

All activities related to involvement of CSOs and other stakeholders in the work of SABs shall be based on rationalization and principles of cost-effectiveness. Following that intention, all meetings within the consultative process shall take place in the country, using the existing facilities of public institutions and CSOs and other stakeholders involved, thus with no additional budget implications. Along the same lines, documents and other materials shall be exchanged in electronic version.

### ***Credibility and Expertise***

Cooperation between public institutions and CSOs and other stakeholders in the SAA-related processes shall also be based on credible track record and expertise. This is essential for successful implementation of reforms for the fulfilment of SAA obligations. It is also a crucial precondition for successful communication between public institutions and CSOs and other stakeholders in the process of cooperation within the setup created by the SAA. This is due to the high level of expert-based content of the SAA, including the legal framework, specific policy-related content, as well as the structure and nature of all activities needed within the SAA implementation process. In that sense, a significant level of expertise and credibility is essential for both parties (public institutions and CSOs and other stakeholders) in order to achieve mutual understanding and a desirable level of consensus on the ways, methods and goals that will be necessary for drawing on benefits for Kosovo society within the SAA implementation process.

## **3. Preparatory Process**

### ***Identification of Stakeholders***

Identification of stakeholders for the consultation mechanism set out by the present Guideline shall be conducted through a *public call* as a formal procedure. In addition, given specific positions of certain stakeholders (chambers of commerce, trade unions and unions of employers, universities and research institutes, etc.), other tools, such as direct meetings and other existing sources (e.g. CiviKos database; Kosovo Assembly database, etc.), will also be used, as needed.

### ***Public Call***

In accordance with above mentioned, registration of CSOs and other stakeholders for the consultation process shall be carried out through a simple formal procedure, namely a Public Call. This call shall be conducted by MEI, on behalf of the Government, and will consist of three phases: (1) launching/publication of the public call; (2) receipt of registration forms/requests; and (3) notification of entities registered.

The Public Call shall be published in daily newspapers, as well as the MEI official webpage and those of a number of CSOs, and also shared through social networking sites. It, together with the registration form,

includes details on registration of each stakeholder to become part of consultation mechanism for each SAB they are interested in following, as well as selection criteria and procedural timeframe. Each individual stakeholder organisation interested to be part of consultations shall submit individual requests/filled-in registration forms for one or more SAB within their respective scope, within an optimal deadline as per Government's practice for similar processes. The *Public Call* and the *Registration Form* are part of the present Guideline (Annex).

Following the expiration of the deadline set for submitting of the registration requests, MEI will compile the *List of Stakeholders for the SAB Consultation Mechanism*, and conclude the process, ***no later than fifteen (15) working days*** after expiration of the deadline set for submission of the registration requests. Within this timeframe, MIE will publish results of the public call, namely the *List of Stakeholders for the SAB Consultation Mechanism* in its official webpage, and also notify each registered entity via email, officially inviting them to become part of this consultation mechanism.

#### 4. Conduction of Consultations: Framework, Inputs and Procedures

##### 4.1. Consultation Framework

The consultation process between public institutions and CSOs and other stakeholders within SABs' framework shall be conducted through the framework of thematic meetings.

Thematic meetings shall:

- Bring together representatives of public institutions involved in SABs and representatives of CSOs and other stakeholders (legal entities dealing with public interest affairs, encompassing NGOs, academic institutions [universities, research institutes, etc.], think tanks, trade unions, business associations, consumer protection organisations and other organisations, professional associations, etc.);
- Serve as cooperation forums consisting of members of SABs (including chairs and secretaries) and representatives of CSOs and other stakeholders;
- Operate in a policy-oriented manner by defining problems and proposing options to solve them, providing data relevant to the problems and analysing alternatives;
- Focus on delivering information that is understandable and relevant to the work of SABs;
- Take place regularly, following the annual calendar of SABs' work, thus providing stakeholders with the overview of work undertaken by the SABs;
- Be institutionally organized by the relevant public institutions in charge of relevant SABs, in line with Regulation No. 13/2016 and SAC RoP.

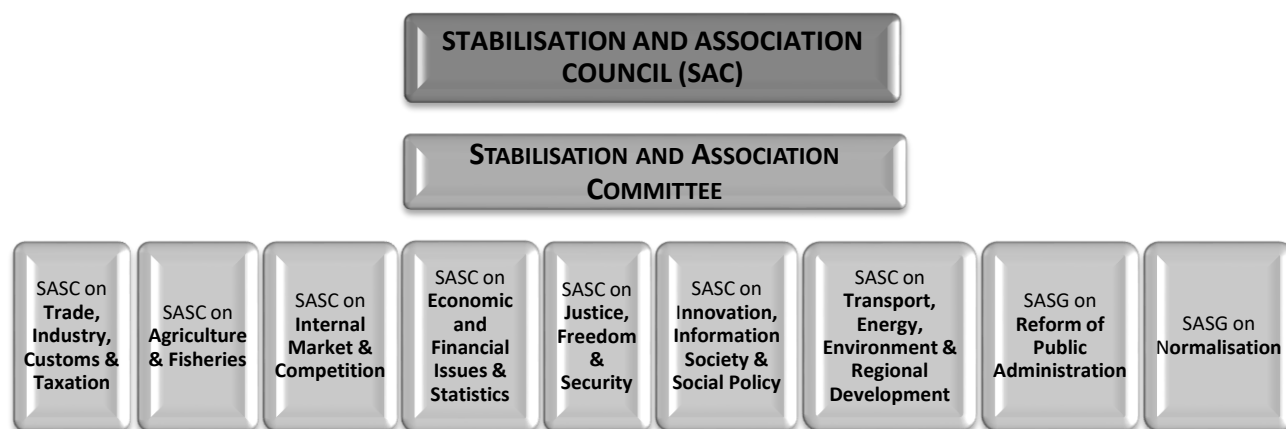


Figure 1: Overview of the EU – Kosovo stabilisation and association bodies

Receiving new information and data from CSOs and other stakeholders is useful for SABs to draw up a thorough substantive input for meetings with the EU as a signatory party to the SAA, as well as to inform them on outcomes of meetings and involve them in implementing specific follow-up actions implementing the reforms agreed, thus creating opportunities for further cooperation.

## 4.2. Inputs of Consultations

In order to allow the involvement of CSOs and other stakeholders in the SAA implementation process, the present Guideline creates a standing consultation mechanism between them and public institutions on EU integration reforms, thus allowing them to offer recommendations on specific policies and issues relevant for implementation of such reforms throughout their cycles (planning, implementation and monitoring). This consultation mechanism is made operational through two levels of involvement – *informative* and *consultative* – organized in *thematic meetings* around regular meetings of each SAB, taking place on annual basis. Such thematic consultation meetings allow information-sharing and consultation on implementation of *conclusions of the previous year's meetings of respective SABs*, as well as on *specific reforms discussed in their current year's meetings and agreed therein*. This consultation framework also takes into account the [EU Transparency Register](#) model, as set out by the [EU Better Regulation](#) framework on transparent process and the OECD [Background Document on Public Consultation](#).

This criterion of participation fulfils the requirement of the *Minimum Standards for Public Consultation Process*, in the sense that CSOs and other stakeholders have equal and adequate opportunities to voice their concerns and articulate their positions in implementation of reforms aimed at the fulfilment of SAA obligations.

The work within this consultation mechanism will focus on the following key aspects:

- Evaluating the progress made in implementation of reforms agreed with the EU and assessing the state of play (including identifying key challenges in implementing those reforms and tackling such challenges);
- Reflecting findings and recommendations of relevant policy research in the reports prepared for regular meetings of SABs;
- Discussing the potential role CSOs and other relevant stakeholders in providing support to implementation of reforms agreed with the EU in SABs' meetings, and ways of their involvement;
- Facilitating institutional transparency and public accountability by enabling the flow and exchange of information among relevant stakeholders on implementation of reforms agreed with the EU.

All contributions received from CSOs and other stakeholders during consultation meetings (data, feedback, comments, recommendations, suggestions, etc.) for each SAB will be heard and credibly examined by relevant public institutions. They will examine those – analytical or descriptive – inputs that are relevant, specific and directly related to implementation of reforms agreed by SABs and that can bring an added value to the fulfilment of SAA obligations.

## Levels of Cooperation

In accordance with the legal basis, general principles and overall framework of cooperation stipulated above, this Guideline recognizes two main levels in which CSOs and other stakeholders shall be included in the implementation and monitoring of the SAA. Among other legal documents, binding provisions of the Regulation No. 13/2016 (stipulated within the Para 8 of the Article 9 and Para 8 of the Article 15, Para 9 of the Article 9 and Para 9 of Article 15, Para 5. of the Article 14. and Para 6. of the Article 18) define more closely levels of cooperation between public institutions, on one hand, and CSOs and other stakeholders, on the other, in the SAA implementation process through SABs.



### Information-sharing

The first level of cooperation obliges the relevant public institutions to provide CSOs and other stakeholders access to the following information:

- Timetables of regular meetings of SABs;
- Topics and issues to be discussed in regular meetings of SABs;
- Conclusions/minutes of regular meetings of SABs, when applicable;
- Other relevant documents of SABs, as applicable and upon request, based on the legislation on functioning of SABs and other relevant legislation.

Within this level, prior and after the SABs' regular meetings relevant public institutions will provide information to CSOs and other stakeholders the necessary guidance needed to prepare for specific topics under discussion.

### Consultations

This consultation mechanism provides the CSOs and other stakeholders a formal, systemic channel to:

- Increase their influence in the EU integration process by utilizing their analyses, qualitative and quantitative data, opinions, recommendations, and other inputs in the development of working documents prepared for SAB meetings;
- Put forward their views and positions in setting the agenda of specific reforms for the fulfilment of SAA obligations;
- Increase their involvement in the EU integration process by contributing to implementation of reforms agreed in SAB meetings, through advice, recommendations, suggestions and opinions, in a timely framework that will produce tangible and concrete results to the fulfilment of SAA obligations; and
- Contribute to accountability, transparency and awareness of all relevant stakeholders and the wider public on implementation of reforms for the fulfilment of SAA obligations.

## **4.3. Consultation Methodology and Procedure**

The approach set out through the present Guideline requires creation of a formal forum with concrete action points and with participation of representatives by the stakeholders involved from all spheres (public institutions, on the one hand, and CSOs and other stakeholders, on the other). This consultation mechanism will bring together representatives of public institutions involved in SABs and CSOs and other stakeholders identified through the public call and other forms elaborated in Chapter 3 above.

The Secretariat of each SAB shall also serve as secretariats of thematic meetings within the framework of each SAB presented in the *Figure 1* above. Thematic consultation meetings shall be organized and facilitated jointly by Co-chairs, Deputy Co-chairs and Secretaries of respective SABs from the Kosovan side. Their duties and responsibilities are the following:

- To organize consultation meetings, including to provide the technical support needed;
- To prepare and distribute agendas and other materials to invitees to consultation meetings;
- To facilitate discussions during the consultation meetings;
- To prepare and distribute conclusions of consultation meetings;
- To maintain documentation and other information, and provide them to stakeholders involved in consultations, as needed, including for the purpose of facilitating monitoring of implementation of conclusions of SABs by them.

The list of topics/issues of the regular meetings of respective SABs, based on their agenda, shall be distributed to representatives of CSOs and other stakeholders that have attended the respective thematic consultation meeting.

Inputs provided by CSOs and other stakeholders may, as applicable, be incorporated in the final official submission to the respective SAB meeting. Where and when the input provided shall not be included, due to inability to check against the source or the differentiation between data, this shall be discussed in the respective thematic consultation meeting. The input provided may, as applicable, be included in the official document, with a disclaimer as to the data source and the method used.

Pursuant to the SAA, SAC Rules of Procedure and Regulation No. 13/2016, the present Guideline foresees consultation meetings with CSOs and other stakeholders in the framework of the following SABs:

- Stabilisation and Association *Committee*;
- Stabilisation and Association *Subcommittee on Trade, Industry, Customs and Taxation*;
- Stabilisation and Association *Subcommittee on Agriculture and Fisheries*;
- Stabilisation and Association *Subcommittee on Internal Market and Competition*;
- Stabilisation and Association *Subcommittee on Economic and Financial Issues & Statistics*;
- Stabilisation and Association *Subcommittee on Justice, Freedom and Security*;
- Stabilisation and Association *Subcommittee on Innovation, Information Society and Social Policy*;
- Stabilisation and Association *Subcommittee on Transport, Energy, Environment and Regional Development*;
- Stabilisation and Association *Special Group on Reform of Public Administration*; and
- Stabilisation and Association *Special Group on Normalisation*.

### ***Consultations in the Framework of the Stabilisation and Association Council***

As decided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is the institution in charge of the Stabilisation and Association Council, the present guideline does not foresee consultations within the framework of this SAB.

### ***Consultations in the Framework of the Stabilisation and Association Committee***

Pursuant to the Regulation No. 13/2016 (Art. 14.4., 15.8. and 15.9.), the Ministry of European Integration, in the capacity chairmanship of the Committee from Kosovo's side, shall conduct consultations with CSOs and other stakeholders registered for this SAB. This includes providing them access to conclusions/minutes of the regular meetings of the Committee and other relevant documents, as applicable, as well as being open to the possibility of cooperation with them in implementation of activities deriving from conclusions/minutes of regular meetings and facilitating such cooperation.

Within the framework of regular meetings of the Committee, two consultation meetings shall be convened. They will be attended by the members of the Committee and its Secretariat from Kosovo's side, as well as representatives of CSOs and other stakeholders registered for consultations in the framework of the Committee as per the preparatory process described under Chapter 3 above.

#### **First Consultation Meeting**

In order to provide CSOs and other stakeholders with relevant information, as well as to contribute to the quality of the consultations and exchange between them and public institutions, documents relevant for the work of the Committee shall be distributed in timely manner.

*Timeframe:*

- The first consultation meeting in the framework of the Committee shall be held *within fifteen (15) working days following the drafting of the preliminary agenda of its regular meeting*;
- Invitations for the first consultation meeting, together with the meeting agenda and other documentation, shall be sent out to invitees *no later than five (5) working days prior to the day of the first consultation meeting*.

The first consultation meeting in the framework for the Committee shall be held in the context of preparations for its regular meeting, focusing on:

- Discussing and receiving stakeholders' input on assessment of the state of play in the areas covered; and
- Discussing and receiving stakeholders' input on agenda points proposed.

*Documents to be distributed* in advance of the first consultation meeting in the framework for the Committee are the following:

- Conclusions of the previous regular meeting;
- Relevant sections of EU accession national planning documents (NPISAA, ERA, etc.);
- EC's annual Kosovo Report (relevant sections);
- Relevant reports on the state of play (NPISAA implementation reports, ERA implementation reports, inputs to the country report (relevant sections);
- Other documents (as needed/upon request).

### Second Consultation Meeting

In order to provide CSOs and other stakeholders with relevant information, as well as to contribute to the quality of the consultations and exchange between them and public institutions, documents relevant for the work of the Committee shall be distributed in timely manner.

*Timeframe:*

- The second consultation meeting in the framework of the Committee shall be held *within fifteen (15) working days following the finalization of conclusions of the regular meeting*;
- Invitations for the second consultation meeting, together with the meeting agenda and other documentation, shall be sent out to invitees *no later than five (5) working days prior to the day of the second consultation meeting*.

The second consultation meeting shall focus on discussing reforms assumed by Kosovo to be implemented and the role of CSOs and other stakeholders involved in consultations in supporting their implementation and monitoring this process, specifically the following:

- Presenting and discussing conclusions of the regular Committee meeting and the follow-up measures agreed thereby;
- Debriefing CSOs and other stakeholders on the outcome of their input from the first consultation meeting;
- Discussing the role of CSOs and other stakeholders in implementing conclusions of the regular Committee meeting.

*Documents to be shared* in advance of the second consultation meeting in the framework of the Committee are the following:

- Conclusions of the regular Committee meeting;
- Relevant sections of EU accession national planning documents (NPISAA, ERA, etc.);
- EC's annual Kosovo Report (relevant sections);
- Relevant reports on the state of play (NPISAA implementation reports, ERA implementation reports, inputs to EC's annual Kosovo Report (relevant sections);

- Other documents (as needed/upon request).

Both consultation meetings shall be organized according to the annual calendar of meetings of SABs agreed with the respective European Union institution.

*Responsibilities:*

- Responsible institution: Ministry of European Integration;
- Other participating institutions: relevant institutions involved in the work of the Committee, as per Regulation No. 13/2016.

***Consultations in the Framework of the Stabilisation and Association Subcommittees and Special Groups***

Pursuant to the Regulation No. 13/2016 (Art. 18.6., 19.8 and 19.9.), the Ministry of European Integration, Ministry of Public Administration and the Government institution in charge of dialogue with Serbia, respectively, in their capacity of chairmanship of respective Subcommittees and Special Groups from Kosovo's side, shall conduct consultations with CSOs and other stakeholders registered for the respective SABs. This includes providing them access to conclusions/ minutes of the regular meetings of the respective SABs and other relevant documents, as applicable, as well as being open to the possibility of cooperation with them in implementation of activities deriving from conclusions/minutes of regular SAB meetings, and facilitating such cooperation.

Within the framework of regular annual meetings of each Stabilisation and Association Subcommittee and Special Group, two consultation meetings shall be convened. They will be attended by the members of the respective Subcommittee / Special Group and its Secretariat from Kosovo's side, as well as representatives of CSOs and other stakeholders registered for consultations in the framework of each Subcommittee / Special Group as per the preparatory process described under the *Section 4.3* above.

*First Consultation Meeting*

In order to provide CSOs and other stakeholders with relevant information, as well as to contribute to the quality of the consultations and exchange between them and public institutions, documents relevant for the work of the respective Subcommittee / Special Group shall be distributed in timely manner.

*Timeframe:*

- The first consultation meeting in the framework of the respective Subcommittee / Special Group shall be held *within fifteen (15) working days following the drafting of the preliminary agenda of the regular meeting of the respective Subcommittee / Special Group*;
- Invitations for the first consultation meeting, together with the meeting agenda and other documentation, shall be sent out to invitees *no later than five (5) working days prior to the day of the first consultation meeting*.

*Second Consultation Meeting*

In order to provide CSOs and other stakeholders with relevant information, as well as to contribute to the quality of the consultations and exchange between them and public institutions, documents relevant for the work of the relevant Subcommittee / Special Group shall be distributed in timely manner.

*Timeframe:*

- The second consultation meeting in the framework of the respective Subcommittee / Special Group shall be held *within fifteen (15) working days following the drafting of the preliminary agenda of the regular meeting of the respective Subcommittee / Special Group*;

- Invitations for the second consultation meeting, together with the meeting agenda and other documentation, shall be sent out to invitees *no later than five (5) working days prior to the day of the second consultation meeting*.

The second consultation meeting shall focus on discussing reforms assumed by Kosovo to be implemented and the role of CSOs and other stakeholders selected in supporting their implementation and monitoring this process, specifically the following:

- Presenting and discussing conclusions of the regular meeting of the respective Subcommittee / Special Group and the follow-up measures agreed thereby;
- Debriefing CSOs and other stakeholders on the outcome of their input from the first consultation meeting within the framework of the respective Subcommittee / Special Group;
- Discussing the role of CSOs and other stakeholders in implementing conclusions of the regular meeting of the respective Subcommittee / Special Group;

*Documents to be shared* in advance of the second consultation meeting in the framework of the respective Subcommittee / Special Group are the following:

- Conclusions of the regular meeting of the respective Subcommittee / Special Group;
- Relevant sections of EU accession national planning documents (NPISAA, ERA, etc.);
- EC's annual Kosovo Report (relevant sections);
- Relevant reports on the state of play (NPISAA implementation reports, ERA implementation reports, inputs to EC's annual Kosovo Report (relevant sections);
- Other documents (as needed/upon request).

Both consultation meetings shall be organized according to the annual calendar of meetings of SABs agreed with the respective European Union institution.

*Responsibilities:*

- For Subcommittees
  - Responsible institution: Ministry of European Integration;
  - Other participating institutions: relevant institutions as per Regulation No. 13/2016.
- For Special Groups:
  - Responsible institutions: Ministry of Public Administration (for SG on PAR) and the Government institution in charge of dialogue with Serbia;
  - Other participating institutions: relevant institutions as per Regulation No. 13/2016.

## ***Annex: Public Call for Registration of Civil Society Organisations and Other Stakeholders for the Consultation Mechanism in the Framework of the EU – Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Bodies***

Pursuant to the *Regulation No. 13/2016 on Functioning and Representation of Government Institutions of the Republic of Kosovo in the Stabilisation and Association Structures* and *Regulation No. 05/2016 on Minimum Standards for Public Consultation Process*, the Ministry for European Integration issues the following

### **PUBLIC CALL FOR REGISTRATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS FOR THE CONSULTATION MECHANISM IN THE FRAMEWORK OF EU – KOSOVO STABILISATION AND ASSOCIATION BODIES**

#### **I. Background**

The *Regulation No. 13/2016* obliges the Government to cooperate with CSOs and other stakeholders in the framework of SABs: in the preparation of SAB meetings, in supporting implementation of reforms agreed thereby and in monitoring their implementation. *Regulation 05/2016* sets out minimum standards, principles and procedures of public consultations between public authorities, stakeholders and the wider public in legislative and policy drafting processes.

Therefore, participation of CSOs and other stakeholders is vital for the overall understanding of the SAA, as well as for development and implementation of reforms and to ensure the latter's positive impact in the development of our society. By actively promoting the role of the CSOs and other stakeholders in the European integration process, this consultation mechanism opens the gateway for inclusion of CSOs and other stakeholders in the implementation of the SAA. The purpose of this consultation mechanism is to ensure that the views of CSOs and other stakeholders are adequately reflected within the work of the SABs, with a view to a participatory approach to implementation of reforms required by the SAA.

#### **II. Thematic Consultation Meetings**

Representatives of CSOs and other stakeholders are hereby invited to register for participation in regular consultation in the framework of one (1) or more SAB, by assigning one (1) representative to consultation meetings for each SAB of their interest.

Registration is open for consultation in the framework of the following SABs:

- *Stabilisation and Association Committee (the Committee)* (scope: all areas under the SAA);
- *Stabilisation and Association Subcommittees (SASC); and Stabilisation and Association Special Groups (SG):*
  - *SASC on Trade, Industry, Customs and Taxation* (scope: Industrial products; Commercial questions; Standardisation, metrology, accreditation, certification, conformity assessment, and market surveillance; Industrial cooperation; SMEs; Tourism; Customs; Taxation; Rules of origin; Mutual administrative assistance in customs matters);
  - *SASC on Agriculture and Fisheries* (scope: Agricultural products; Fisheries' products; Processed agricultural products; Wine; Protection of geographical indicators for agricultural and fisheries' products and foodstuffs rather than wine and spirits; Agriculture and the agro-industrial sector, veterinary and phytosanitary matters; Fisheries' cooperation);
  - *SASC on Internal Market and Competition* (scope: Right of establishment; Supply of services; Other questions related to Title IV of SAA; Approximation of legislation and law enforcement; Competition; Intellectual, industrial and commercial property; Public procurement; Banking, insurance and other financial services; Consumer protection);

- *SASC on Economic and Financial Issues and Statistics* (scope: Current payments and movement of capital; Economic policy; Statistical cooperation; Investment promotion and protection; Financial cooperation);
- *SASC on Justice, Freedom and Security* (scope: Reinforcement of institutions and the rule of law; Fundamental rights, including anti-discrimination and data protection; Judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters; Visa, border control, asylum and migration; Prevention and control of illegal immigration, readmission; Money laundering; Drugs; Combating terrorism; Preventing organised crime and other illegal activities);
- *SASC on Innovation, Information Society and Social Policy* (scope: Working conditions and equal opportunities; Social cooperation; Education and training; Cultural cooperation; Cooperation in the audiovisual field; Information society; Electronic communications networks and services; Information and communication; Research and technological development);
- *SASC on Transport, Energy, Environment and Regional Development* (scope: Transport; Energy; Environment; Climate change; Civil protection; Regional and local development);
- *SASG on Reform of Public Administration* (scope: Public administration reform); and
- *SASG on Normalisation* (scope: Visible and sustainable improvement of Kosovo's relations with Serbia, and effective cooperation with the EU's CSDP mission while in place).

### III. Registration Criteria and Eligibility

Each organisation requesting to register for this consultation mechanism is required to meet the following criteria:

- Be registered and operating in the territory of the Republic of Kosovo in line with the Law No. 04/L-57 on Freedom of Association in Nongovernmental Organisations in the Republic of Kosovo, or another law in force;
- Be active during at least one (1) year prior to the issuance of the present public call;
- Operate in at least one of the areas listed in section II of the present Call, above (provided for by the Statute/other relevant legal document of the organisation).

Eligibility restrictions:

- Each organisation requesting to register is for consultations in policy areas outside the scope of SABs outlined in section II above is not eligible to do so;
- Each organisation requesting to register may be represented by no more than one (1) person for one SAB. They may be represented by one (1) representative in more than one (1) SAB;
- Each organisation requesting to register may not be represented by persons running and/or elected in political office;
- Full-time employees of any public institution dealing with any of the policy areas listed under Section II of the present Call, above, are not eligible to represent an organisation requesting to register for this consultation mechanism;
- Each person is not eligible to represent more than one (1) requesting to register for this consultation mechanism.

In case no organisation submits registration request(s) for one (1) or more of the SABs (for policy areas listed under Section II of the present Call, above), the MEI may re-issue the Public Call. It may also re-issue it when needed to update the list of stakeholders for this consultation mechanism.

### IV. Mandate

The registered organisations and their representatives automatically become members of the consultation mechanism in the framework of EU – Kosovo stabilisation and association bodies for a period until the

present Guideline is abrogated by the Government. The mandate of a representative of an organisation registered for this consultation mechanism may cease prior to its expiration in cases of:

- Her/his resignation from this consultation mechanism;
- Her/his resignation from their position in the organisation they were registered to represent;
- Her/his failure to attend three (3) consultation meetings consecutively;
- Request of the organisation they represent to replace them with another representative.

For the vacancies occurred in the events listed under this section, MEI shall re-issue the present Public Call.

## **V. Registration Procedure and Documentation**

The registration procedure for this consultation mechanism endeavours to maintain the balance between *representativeness* (allowing all stakeholders to register for the SABs covering policy areas falling under their scope of mission), and *expertise* (setting minimum criteria to be fulfilled by both organisations and their representatives to this consultation mechanism).

Each organisation is required to submit the following documents:

- Completed Registration Form (Section VI of the present annex); and
- Certificate of Registration of the organisation.

Following receipt of registration requests, MEI will compile the *List of Organisations Registered for the Consultation Mechanism in the Framework of EU – Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Bodies* **no later than fifteen (15) working days after expiration of the deadline** set for the submission of registration requests. It will publish this list on its official webpage and will notify the respective organisations via email, thus officially inviting them to become part of this consultation mechanism.

The procedure described under this section shall be followed in cases of re-launching of this Public Call.

Please submit this Registration Form (**filled-in and signed**) **electronically** (to [mei@rks-gov.net](mailto:mei@rks-gov.net)) **or in hard copy – in person or via mail** (to MEI premises, Main Government Building, Floor VIII, Office 806, 10000 Prishtina, Kosovo) until **Friday, 9 March 2018, 16:00** local time.



## VI. Registration Form

Please fill in each item of this form fully and as requested. You are also required to submit a number of supporting documents attached to it. Please also read the *Guideline on Consultations with Civil Society Organisations and Other Stakeholders in the Framework of the EU – Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Bodies*.

Only complete Registration Forms, with the complete list of supporting documents requested, shall be taken into consideration. If needed, you might be contacted directly to provide data and/or documents required. Please note that misrepresentation and provision of false data is subject to criminal proceedings.

General information		
Name and abbreviation of the organisation:		
Official contact information (mailing address, webpage, phone number(s), email address):		
Date of formal establishment / date of registration:		
Registration number (as indicated in the registration certificate issued by Government authorities in charge):		
Head of the organisation (name, position, phone number, email address(es)):		
Specific information		
Area(s) of interest (by stabilisation and association bodies)		
<b>Stabilisation and Association Committee (the Committee)</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>  No <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If yes, please provide the following information:</i> <b>Appointee</b> Name: _____ Position: _____ Contact information (email and phone number): _____
<b>SA Subcommittee on Trade, Industry, Customs and Taxation</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>  No <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If yes, please provide the following information:</i> <b>Appointee</b> Name: _____ Position: _____ Contact info (email and phone number): _____
<b>SA Subcommittee on Agriculture and Fisheries</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>  No <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If yes, please provide the following information:</i> <b>Appointee</b> Name: _____ Position: _____ Contact information (email and phone number): _____
<b>SA Subcommittee on Internal Market and Competition</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>  No <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If yes, please provide the following information:</i> <b>Appointee</b> Name: _____ Position: _____ Contact information (email and phone number): _____

SA Subcommittee on <i>Economic and Financial Issues and Statistics</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If yes, please provide the following information:</i> <b>Appointee</b> Name: _____ Position: _____ Contact information (email and phone number): _____
SA Subcommittee on <i>Justice, Freedom and Security</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If yes, please provide the following information:</i> <b>Appointee</b> Name: _____ Position: _____ Contact information (email and phone number): _____
SA Subcommittee on <i>Innovation, Information Society and Social Policy</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If yes, please provide the following information:</i> <b>Appointee</b> Name: _____ Position: _____ Contact information (email and phone number): _____
SA Subcommittee on <i>Transport, Energy, Environment and Regional Development</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If yes, please provide the following information:</i> <b>Appointee</b> Name: _____ Position: _____ Contact information (email and phone number): _____
SA Special Group on <i>Reform of Public Administration</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If yes, please provide the following information:</i> <b>Appointee</b> Name: _____ Position: _____ Contact information (email and phone number): _____
SA Special Group on <i>Normalisation</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If yes, please provide the following information:</i> <b>Appointee</b> Name: _____ Position: _____ Contact information (email and phone number): _____

*I, the undersigned, on behalf of the organisation I lead, am aware that our participation in consultation mechanism in the framework of EU – Kosovo stabilisation and association bodies (established by the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, SAA), shall comply with principles of trust and transparency, effectiveness and efficiency, and credibility and expertise. All information obtained in this process shall be treated accordingly, and not published or used for other purposes without consent of the physical and/or legal entities in charge of leading the work of these institutional bodies.*

**Head of the Organisation:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Place: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_