

UNDERSTANDING CHANGING CIVIC SPACE

Zoom round table

28. October 2020 at 10.00

[Registration Link - 1ka](#)

30 years after the fall of the Berlin wall and a period of "democratic euphoria" we talk about "democracy in crisis". This takes the shape of democratic erosion, one element of which is the reduced space for civil society organisations (CSO) in many countries of global South and North. This undermines the 2030 Agenda by compromising the cross-cutting sustainable development goals. Such practices of systematic assault on civic space are entailing various forms - from limiting access to internet, to excluding 'foreign' agents from advocacy work and by campaigns against CSO legitimacy, credibility and legal environment. New polarisation sees traditional civil society excluded in many countries governed by populist and/or conservative regimes, while they favour their own forms of civil society. That all also has a big impact on development cooperation practices and the ability to conduct international cooperation in times of need under the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, there are many possibilities to adapt but also respond to the changing civic space itself. How to explore, understand and act upon the ongoing trend to create a more open and enabling civic space? What are the experiences in various European Union member states? How can CSOs, based on human rights approach, work together to counter the trend of closing? How we can maintain working cooperation's with partner organisations in adverse environments? How can all stakeholders contribute to a movement to reclaim civic space?

Round table participants:

- Martin Ronceray, European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), co-author of a study "Claiming back civic space - Towards approaches fit for the 2020s?"
- Daniel Kaba, director of Slovak NGDO platform Ambrela (TBC)
- Bálint Hamvas, a board member of HAND and executive director of Foundation for Africa and
- Elena Terzi, People in Need, Czech NGDO, a member of FoRS - Czech Forum for Development Cooperation (TBC)

Moderator:

- Albin Keuc, director of SLOGA, the Slovenian NGO platform for development, global education and humanitarian aid

The round table will be held on October 28th 2020 on Zoom from 10.00 to 11.45. Please, register by using this [Registration Link - 1ka](#). Roundtable will be held in English.

The study "Claiming back civic space - Towards approaches fit for the 2020s?" is available [here](#).

The target groups of the round table are primarily CONCORD platforms and their member organizations from Central and Eastern Europe, other CSOs and their initiatives in the region and public officials from development cooperation, global education and humanitarian aid.

