

**TRIALOG Study**

**A Decade of EU13  
Civil Society Participation in  
European Humanitarian Actions**

**August 2014**

# TRIALOG

TRIALOG is a project to strengthen civil society organisations (CSOs) in the enlarged EU for active engagement in global development.

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## Acronyms:

**CONCORD** – European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development

**CSO** – Civil society organisation

**DCI** – Development Cooperation Instrument

**DEAR** – Development Education and Awareness Raising

**DG** – Directorate-General of the European Commission

**EC** – European Commission

**ECHO** – Directorate General of the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, formerly the European Community Humanitarian Office

**EIDHR** – European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights

**EU** – European Union

**EU13** – Member States that joined the EU in 2004 (Cyprus – CY, Czech Republic – CZ, Estonia – EE, Hungary – HU, Latvia – LV, Lithuania – LT, Malta – MT, Poland – PL, Slovakia – SK, and Slovenia – SI), in 2007 (Bulgaria – BG and Romania – RO) and in 2013 (Croatia – HR)

**EU15** – Member States that joined the EU before 2004

**FPA** – Framework Partnership Agreement

**HIP** – Humanitarian Implementation Plan

**NGO** – Non-governmental organisation

## Foreword

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the 2004 ‘big bang’ enlargement when ten new Member States joined the European Union (EU) and took on new roles and responsibilities. A decade later, the anniversary gives us an excellent opportunity to take stock of where we are and what we have achieved.

The people involved in the TRIALOG project have worked tirelessly for the past 14 years supporting development civil society organisations (CSOs) in the newer Member States of the EU to be active at the European level. As well as providing training, opportunities for networking and information sharing and policy support, part of TRIALOG’s mission has been to ensure CSOs from the so-called EU13 can access European Commission (EC) funding for development related projects. At times this has involved advocating towards the EU institutions for more favourable conditions for CSOs from this region; at other times it has meant providing training on project cycle management and EC project proposal writing.

Our partners in the EU13 run numerous development cooperation projects in neighbouring countries and beyond, including in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Some partners also engage in humanitarian work across the world. What this study addresses, however, is how engaged EU13 CSOs are in implementing humanitarian actions through the available European level funding schemes. TRIALOG provides essential timely information about EC funding opportunities, as well a “Partner Search” online tool, but this is the first time an overview has been put together about the extent to which EU13 CSOs implement humanitarian assistance as part of European programmes.

The prompting for this study came from questions that were posed to TRIALOG from our partners and external development stakeholders, even Member State representatives. They all wanted to know whether we had an overview of the success of EU13 applications for EC funding. Did we know how many organisations had benefited? Could we see the value of our training and support? Should the European institutions be going further to encourage EU13 involvement?

We have attempted to answer these questions, and this study is the third in a series of three. The first focused on NSA-LA Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) grants and the second looked at involvement in European development cooperation, by studying the data published by the European Commission, talking to our partners and analysing the results.

We hope you consider our findings interesting and enriching.

**Rebecca Steel-Jasińska,**  
**TRIALOG Project Manager**

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# 1. Introduction

The present study is the last in a series analysing the success of civil society organisations (CSOs<sup>1</sup>) from the newer EU Member States (EU13<sup>2</sup>) in participating in European Commission (EC) funding programmes. It succeeds a first analysis of European development education and awareness raising (DEAR) grants<sup>3</sup>, as well as a second study about the participation of EU13 CSOs in the implementation of EU development cooperation projects in third countries<sup>4</sup>. The purpose of this third study is to analyse the success of EU13 CSOs in securing European humanitarian funding for actions implemented outside the European Union. The study takes a long-term view, from 2004 onwards, and analyses funding awarded to EU13 CSOs during the time their countries were members of the EU.

The legal basis for European humanitarian aid is in the Lisbon Treaty and its financing instruments are specified in the Humanitarian Aid Council Regulation (1996). The EC and the EU Member States provide around 50% of the global funding for emergency relief, making the EU one of the largest humanitarian donors<sup>5</sup>. The Commission's European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) was created in 1992 and in 2004 ECHO became the Directorate-General (DG) for Humanitarian Aid. Since 2010, civil protection has been added to its mandate; however, this study focuses exclusively on ECHO's activities in the humanitarian field.

DG ECHO manages the provision and coordination of European humanitarian assistance. For the 2007-2013 period, EUR 5.6 billion was allocated to the humanitarian aid instrument – additional amounts from the EU Emergency Aid Reserve have regularly

been added to this initial budget to deal with emergencies and crises<sup>6</sup>.

ECHO provides needs-based relief and protection to populations affected by natural disasters, man-made crises, as well as protracted and complex emergencies. ECHO also conducts 'forgotten' crisis assessments to identify and allocate funding to such crises. EU humanitarian aid covers areas such as: food, shelter, healthcare, water and sanitation.

In addition to its main emergency response mandate, ECHO provides assistance to third countries to strengthen their own crisis response capacities. Building the resilience of populations to deal with the effects of shocks is becoming a central aim of humanitarian aid through the EU 'resilience agenda'<sup>7</sup> which also aims to better link relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD). Disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities are also part of ECHO's strategic planning on resilience. The EU Aid Volunteers initiative<sup>8</sup> established in 2014 contributes to strengthening the EU's capacity to respond to humanitarian crises, while enhancing the resilience of vulnerable communities in third countries.

ECHO does not implement humanitarian assistance itself; rather, it funds operations implemented by over 200 partner organisations, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs), international organisations, United Nations (UN) agencies and specialised agencies of EU Member States. European funding under the Humanitarian Aid Regulation takes the form of grants<sup>9</sup>. Grants are direct payments awarded by the EC to beneficiaries based on their participation in selection procedures<sup>10</sup>. As a general rule, grants require co-financing by the grant beneficiary, which means that the EC only contributes funds up to a certain percentage of the total cost of the project. However, a humanitarian action may be fully financed by DG ECHO if the action is urgent, there is no availability of other donors and the action is a priority for the Commission.

<sup>1</sup> CSOs include non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and in this study both terms will be used interchangeably.

<sup>2</sup> Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia

<sup>3</sup> TRIALOG, *A Decade of EU13 Civil Society Participation in European Development Education and Awareness Raising Projects*, 2014, Brussels, available at: <http://www.trialog.or.at/study-a-decade-of-eu13-csos-participation-in-eu-dear-projects>

<sup>4</sup> TRIALOG, *A Decade of EU13 Civil Society Participation in European Development Cooperation Projects*, 2014, Brussels, available at:

[http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/a decade of eu13 civil society participation in european development cooperation projects.pdf](http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/a%20decade%20of%20eu13%20civil%20society%20participation%20in%20european%20development%20cooperation%20projects.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> European Parliament, *Fact Sheets on the European Union – Humanitarian Aid*, Judit Barna, April 2014, available at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/displayFtu.html?ftuId=FTU\\_6.3.2.html](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/displayFtu.html?ftuId=FTU_6.3.2.html)

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> European Commission Communication, *The EU approach to resilience: Learning from food crises*, 2012, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/food-security/documents/20121003-comm\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/food-security/documents/20121003-comm_en.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Foreseen in the Lisbon Treaty as the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps

<sup>9</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1996:163:0001:0006:EN:PDF>

<sup>10</sup> European Commission, *Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions*, 2014, available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/>

To benefit from European humanitarian funding, an interested organisation needs to become a partner to ECHO through the signing of a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA). Once they sign the partnership agreement partners can submit project proposals in response to the published Humanitarian Implementing Plans (HIPs) approved by ECHO on a yearly basis. Grants are decided on the basis of the best proposals covering the needs of the most vulnerable.

The aim of this study is two-fold:

- taking stock of the EU13 CSOs' success in securing EC funding for humanitarian actions, and;
- contributing to understanding the reasons behind the EU13 CSOs' success in applying for these grants or potential obstacles that may hinder their access to EC humanitarian funding.

This should allow CSOs, national development CSO platforms, TRIALOG and other stakeholders to take further measures towards improving EU13 CSOs' access to EC funding, such as through more targeted training, but also advocacy towards the European institutions.

The study is structured in five parts: first, an introduction and the study methodology are presented; second, an overview of European Commission humanitarian funding is provided; third, the success of EU13 CSOs in securing grants under these programmes is analysed; fourth, a discussion is presented; and fifth, conclusions are drawn, leading to recommendations.

### 1.1. Methodology

The analysis was carried out based on two different datasets due to the difficulty of identifying centralised information necessary for the purpose of this study. DG ECHO's EDRIS database could not be used due to the lack of detail of the data presented in the database and required for the study.

The first dataset is based on the agreements for humanitarian aid awarded by ECHO and published on its website<sup>11</sup>. This dataset covers the 2004-2013 period and provides information related to the name and nationality of the beneficiary organisation, the type of organisations, the country of operations, the size of the grants awarded and the EC co-financing rate. The information related to the EC co-financing rate is, however, only available from 2005 to 2007. This dataset does not provide information related to the

total number and amount of grants awarded.

The second dataset is based on the financial statistics from ECHO's published annual reports available for the years 2004-2012<sup>12</sup>. It provides aggregated information with regards to the total amounts awarded by ECHO to non-governmental organisations for humanitarian operations, as well as the amounts awarded to individual organisations. However, it does not provide the number of grants awarded to each organisation.

Since information regarding whether the projects were implemented in partnership with other organisations was not available, the analysis provided in this study refers exclusively to grants awarded to organisations in the position of lead applicants. Additionally, only grants awarded to non-governmental organisations – identified in this study as CSOs – were counted, thus excluding grants awarded to international organisations, UN and Member States' specialised agencies. ECHO grants for humanitarian actions are exclusively available for CSOs registered in EU Member States and the European Economic Area, with headquarters either in the EU, in third countries where actions are implemented, or, exceptionally, in third donor countries.

One other limitation of the data is that it does not provide disaggregated data by nationality allowing the identification of the step in the application process at which CSOs were unsuccessful. This makes it impossible to analyse how many project applications were submitted to the EC and what was the success rate for securing funding among EU13 CSOs.

The study takes a long-term view, analysing grants awarded to EU13 CSOs since 2004 for humanitarian operations. Despite the issues identified, data remains comparable and the analysis provides general tendencies which contribute to a better understanding of the EU13 CSOs' success in securing EC funding for humanitarian actions.

<sup>11</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/funding-evaluations/funding-for-humanitarian-aid/humanitarian-operations-agreements>

<sup>12</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/who/accountability/annual-reports>

## 2. Overview of European Commission humanitarian funding

### 2.1. ECHO Partnerships – the Framework Partnership Agreements

Relations between ECHO and its CSO partners are governed by the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) which sets the principles of partnership and aims to establish a long-term and stable cooperation mechanism. It defines the respective roles, rights and obligations of partners, and contains the legal provisions applicable to the humanitarian operations funded by DG ECHO.

The signature of the FPA is based on a selection procedure. Applicants must comply with eligibility and suitability criteria<sup>13</sup> established by the Humanitarian Aid Regulation. Eligibility criteria, concerning the legal status and the location, require organisations to be non-profit making, autonomous and registered for at least three years in an EU Member State or the European Economic Area, with headquarters in the EU, third countries of implementation or third donor countries. Suitability criteria cover four areas, including administrative capacity, financial management capacity, technical and logistical capacity, as well as experience and results. Some of the suitability criteria might restrict smaller organisations from EU13 (and also from other European countries) to qualify for an FPA. For instance, the organisation needs to have at least three full-time staff (unless it is a “niche organisation”); sound financial performance<sup>14</sup> certified by an external auditor; operational experience in the field of humanitarian aid in each year over the last three years, and the average humanitarian aid projects implemented by the organisation have to amount to a minimum of EUR 200,000 for each of the three years. Organisations who have implemented EU-funded projects in the past have increased chances in the selection procedure.

In contrast to the EC grants for development

<sup>13</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/partners/humanitarian\\_aid/fpa/2014/FPA\\_application\\_questionnaire\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/partners/humanitarian_aid/fpa/2014/FPA_application_questionnaire_en.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Demonstrated by annual statutory accounts for the last two financial years certified by approved external auditor; the organisation needs to have positive unrestricted net equity during the last certified annual statutory accounts.

education and awareness raising (DEAR), there are no preferential grant conditions for EU13 CSOs concerning European humanitarian funding. For example, for the DEAR grants awarded to EU13 CSOs, the EC provided higher co-financing, and EU13 CSOs could propose projects of a lower amount than normally required, while at the same time they had to prove fewer years of experience<sup>15</sup>.

The FPA also commits ECHO to supporting capacity building initiatives and other activities that aim to improve the quality of the humanitarian response of its partners, to enable them to respond quickly and efficiently to emergencies, in line with ECHO’s quality partnership principle.

### 2.2. ECHO funding procedures

DG ECHO adopts financing decisions that regulate the funding of individual actions proposed by partners. The type of financing decision to be used is determined by the following criteria: degree of urgency of the humanitarian response, nature of the humanitarian crisis, amount of the financing decision and duration of the humanitarian actions to be implemented. These include: Worldwide decisions, including DIPECHO decisions, and Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIPs); Primary Emergency decisions; Emergency decisions; and *ad hoc* decisions.

The financing decisions define: the objectives of the humanitarian interventions, the amount allocated, the implementation dates, the budget/management modalities, and the type of partners.

Generally, all DG ECHO FPA partners are considered as potential partners and are informed of the publication of a HIP, including the procedures chosen for submitting proposals. Depending on the needs identified, however, DG ECHO might decide to work with preselected partners. This is mentioned in the HIP as well as the name of the pre-selected partner and the reason for the pre-selection: i.e. urgent character of the activities, specific competence or other reasons.

The procedures for allocation of funds are presented through assessment rounds with partners. These rounds identify the sectors of interventions and the amounts allocated, in some cases, the partner pre-identified to submit a proposal, the date by which proposals should be received and the principles used for the assessment of proposals.

<sup>15</sup> Look at the analysis of the EC DEAR grants’ special conditions for EU13 CSOs in the TRIALOG DEAR study, page 7-8, available at: [http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/trialog\\_study\\_eu13\\_ec\\_dear\\_final.pdf](http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/trialog_study_eu13_ec_dear_final.pdf)

Partners might also be requested to provide their input on a specific crisis during consultative meetings in view of the preparation of HIPs.

Action proposals may be submitted to DG ECHO by the FPA partners either on the initiative of the organisation or following an invitation by the Commission. However, DG ECHO does not make a formal request for the submission of proposals before the publication of a HIP. Partners might be asked to submit a Letter of Intent in order to give DG ECHO a global view on how they expect to cover the identified needs, without having to draft a full Single Form. If the Letter of Intent is selected, the partner is invited to submit a Single Form which will provide the basis for the final assessment.

## 3. Analysis of EU13 CSOs as implementers of European humanitarian funding

### 3.1. Analysis of EU13 CSOs as a group

A very limited number of EU 13 CSOs have had a Framework Partnership Agreement with ECHO. Since 2003, DG ECHO has signed FPAs with 234 NGOs from 22 countries from the EU and Switzerland, Norway and Iceland. Among these, only ten CSOs from five EU13 countries have had an FPA with ECHO between 2003 and 2014 (Table 1, page 9). These include four Slovak CSOs, three Czech CSOs, one Polish CSO, one Slovenian and one Hungarian CSO. Out of all the CSOs that have signed FPAs with DG ECHO since 2003, 209 are based in EU15 countries (89%).

Also the success of EU13 CSOs in securing EC grants for humanitarian actions has been very limited. EU13 CSOs were awarded a total of 42 grants during the 2004-2013 period.<sup>16</sup> The 42 grants were awarded to five CSOs from four EU13 countries. Two of these grants were for projects with a total cost of more than

EUR 1,000,000. During 2004-2012, EU13 CSOs were awarded a total amount of EUR 14.7 million, representing 0.41% of the total amount awarded to NGOs for humanitarian operations over this period (Chart 1, page 10). EU13 CSOs were awarded an additional EUR 4,330,000 in 2013, which brings the total awarded to these organisations during 2004-2013 to EUR 19 million. The average amount per grant awarded to EU13 CSOs was EUR 460,000<sup>17</sup>. The average EC co-financing rate for the grants awarded to EU13 organisations, calculated on the basis of three years in which this information was published – from 2005 to 2007 – was 98.28%. The results of the analysis of the grants awarded to EU13 CSOs are summarised in Table 2 (on page 9).

When comparing these results to the EC grants for development education and awareness raising (DEAR), the success of EU13 CSOs in obtaining European humanitarian funding is still very low. For instance, over the same period EU13 CSOs were awarded 61 EC DEAR grants<sup>18</sup>. However, over the same period, EU13 CSOs received more grants for humanitarian actions (42) than for development cooperation projects under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), namely 30 grants<sup>19</sup>.

The amount awarded to EU13 CSOs by the EC during 2004-2013 for humanitarian actions is slightly higher than the amount obtained for development cooperation projects under the DCI and EIDHR over the same period – EUR 19 million and EUR 14 million, respectively. However the amount awarded to EU13 CSOs for DEAR projects is considerably higher – EUR 31.3 million.

In terms of the number of beneficiary organisations from the EU13 countries, from 2004 to 2013, only five EU13 CSOs could benefit from grants for humanitarian actions, whereas at least 19 CSOs obtained European funding for development cooperation projects, and 45 CSOs obtained EC DEAR grants.

<sup>16</sup> The results in this section are based on different datasets. The results regarding the number of grants awarded are based on the agreements for humanitarian aid awarded by ECHO during 2004-2013 and published on its website (first dataset). The results regarding the amount (EUR) awarded are based on DG ECHO's published annual reports and are only available for 2004-2012 (second dataset). Due to the utilisation of two different datasets, over the same period (2004-2012), the total amount awarded according to the first dataset does not correspond to the total amount awarded according to the second dataset. There is a difference of EUR 460,000 for the 2004-2012 period.

<sup>17</sup> This figure is based on the first dataset, since the second dataset does not provide the number of grants awarded and thus it is not possible to calculate the average.

<sup>18</sup> TRIALOG, *A Decade of EU13 Civil Society Participation in European Development Education and Awareness Raising Projects*, 2014, Brussels, available at: <http://www.trialog.or.at/study-a-decade-of-eu13-csos-participation-in-eu-dear-projects>

<sup>19</sup> TRIALOG, *A Decade of EU13 Civil Society Participation in European Development Cooperation Projects*, 2014, Brussels, available at: [http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/a\\_decade\\_of\\_eu13\\_civil\\_society\\_participation\\_in\\_european\\_development\\_cooperation\\_projects.pdf](http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/a_decade_of_eu13_civil_society_participation_in_european_development_cooperation_projects.pdf)



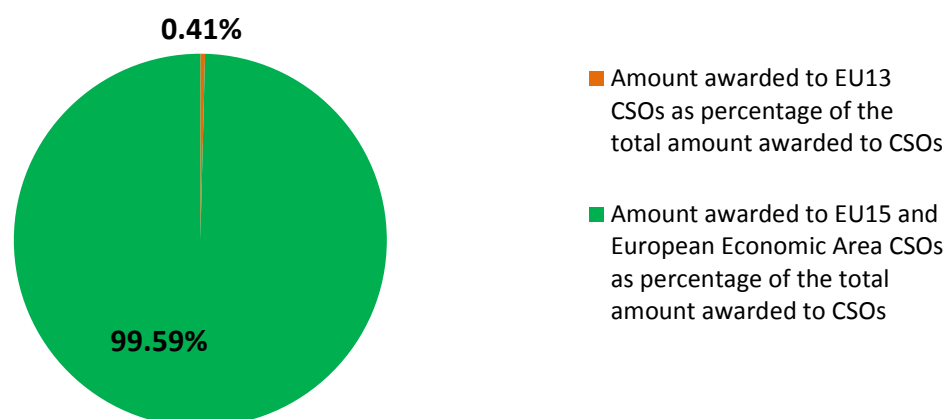
**Table 1. EU13 CSOs' Framework Partnership Agreement with ECHO, 2004-2013**

Organisation	Nationality	Amount of awarded grants by ECHO (EUR)	% of total amount to EU13 CSOs	Year of the FPA	FPA status
PEOPLE IN NEED (CLOVEK V TÍSNI OPS)	CZ	10,526,853	53,97%	2014	Active
POLISH HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATION (POLSKA AKCJA HUMANITARNA)	PL	6,984,367	35,81%	2014	Active
CARITAS (SDRUZENI CESKA KATHOLICA CHARITA)	CZ	1,763,600	9,04%	2014	Active
FOUNDATION TOGETHER (USTANOVA SKUPAJ - REGIONALNI CENTER ZA PSIHOSOCIALNO DOBROBI)	SI	184,717	0,95%	2008	Non-Active
PEOPLE IN PERIL (PIPA)	SK	45,000	0,23%	2014	Active
MAGNA DETI V NUDZI – MAGNADETI	SK	0	0	2014	Active
NADACIA HABITAT FOR HUMANITY INTERNATIONAL	SK	0	0	2014	Active
OBČANSKÉ SDRUŽENÍ ADRA	CZ	0	0	2008	Non-Active
MAGYAR ÖKUMENIKUS SEGÉLYSZERVEZET	HU	0	0	2008	Non-Active
KOMPLEXNA CENTRALNA ZACHRANNA SLUZBA	SK	0	0	2008	Non-Active

**Table 2. Grants awarded to EU13 CSOs for humanitarian actions by ECHO (2004-2013)**

Year	Total number of published grants awarded to EU13 CSOs	Amount awarded to EU13 CSOs (EUR)	Amount awarded to EU13 CSOs out of total to NGOs (%)	Average size of grants awarded to EU13 CSOs (EUR)	Average EC co-financing rate for EU13 CSOs (%)
2004	5	2,525,000	0.84%	367,000	Not published
2005	6	692,000	0.22%	312,000	100%
2006	4	1,379,000	0.41%	337,250	93.54%
2007	5	1,939,367	0.55%	387,873	100%
2008	4	1,189,698	0.31%	297,425	Not published
2009	4	1,269,488	0.34%	317,372	Not published
2010	5	1,812,909	0.35%	362,582	Not published
2011	3	2,257,075	0.43%	752,358	Not published
2012	2	1,650,000	0.32%	825,000	Not published
2013	4	Not published	Not published	1,082,500	Not published
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>10,118,537.00</b>	<b>0.38%</b>	<b>464,393</b>	<b>98.28%</b>

Chart 1. Amount awarded to CSOs for humanitarian operations during 2004-2012 by ECHO



Eleven DEAR grants, five grants for development cooperation projects and only two grants for humanitarian operations were awarded to EU13 CSOs for projects with a total cost of more than EUR 1,000,000.

On the other hand, the average sizes of the EC grants awarded to EU13 CSOs are comparable across the three categories of funding: EUR 500,000 for EC DEAR grants and EUR 460,000 for both European development cooperation projects, and humanitarian actions.

When it comes to the EC co-financing rate, data concerning grants for humanitarian actions was very scarce – only available for 2005, 2006 and 2007. However, based on the available data, the average EC co-financing rate for humanitarian projects was 98.28%. This is higher than the average EC co-financing rate for projects proposed by EU13 CSOs both in the area of DEAR (86.35%) and in the area of development cooperation (82.13%).

### 3.2. Analysis by nationality

The analysis provided in this sub-section is based on the agreements for humanitarian aid awarded by ECHO during 2004-2013 and published on its website (first dataset). Grants for humanitarian operations were awarded to CSOs in only four EU13 countries (Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia). According to the analysis of the available published information, no grants for humanitarian operations were awarded to Hungarian organisations, even though one organisation had an FPA, nor to Bulgarian, Cypriot, Croatian, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese or Romanian CSOs during 2004-2013. The lack of grants awarded to Croatian, but also to Bulgarian and Romanian CSOs, might be explained by the fact that their countries joined the EU more recently, in

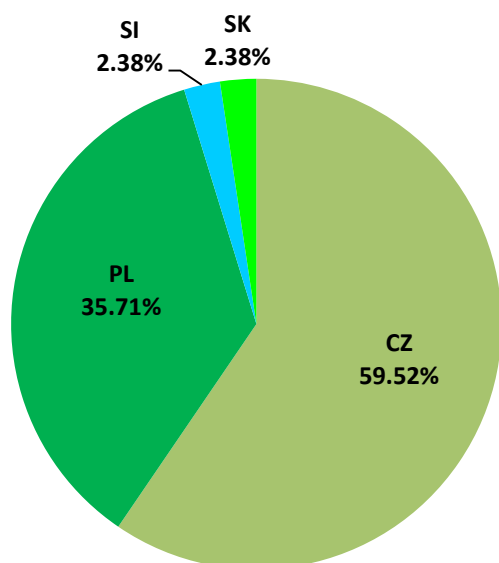
2013 and 2007, thus leaving CSOs with a shorter time to participate in European funding schemes for humanitarian actions.

The grants awarded to EU13 CSOs were distributed unequally among the four nationalities both in terms of the number (Chart 2) and the corresponding amount of grants (Chart 3). Czech CSOs managed to obtain more than half of the number of grants (59%), and almost two thirds of the total amount awarded to EU13 CSOs (63%). The EC grants for humanitarian operations were awarded to five EU13 CSOs, out of which two Czech CSOs. One Czech organisation – People in Need – obtained almost 54% of the total amount awarded to EU13 CSOs during 2004-2013 (Table 1). The success of Czech CSOs may also be supported by the existence in the Czech Republic of a government-supported co-financing scheme for European Commission-funded projects (however, such schemes also exist in some other EU13 countries that were not so successful in applying for EC humanitarian assistance grants). Since 2005, the Czech Foreign Development Cooperation (FDC) programme – the so-called trilateral cooperation programme – has provided financial support for 80% of the projects implemented by Czech CSOs<sup>20</sup>. The programme arguably allowed Czech CSOs to apply for more funding than other CSOs from the EU13.

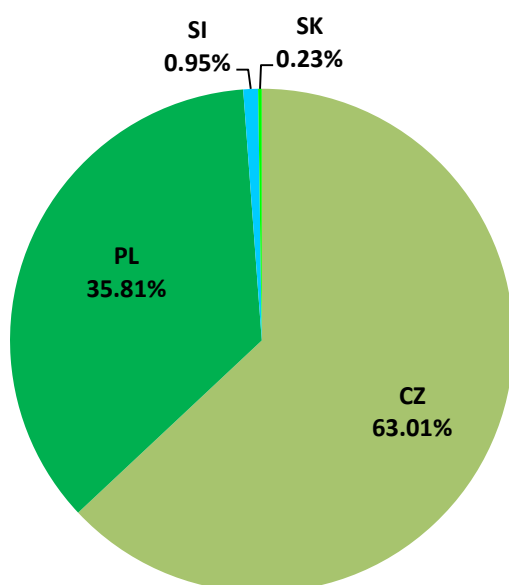
Out of the ten EU13 CSOs who have signed an FPA with DG ECHO since 2004, five organisations have not received any EC grants for humanitarian operations during the studied period and based on the data analysed.

<sup>20</sup> FoRS, *Survey on the Involvement of the Czech NGOs in the Financial Instruments of the European Commission under Heading 4* (In Czech), 2011, Prague, available at: [http://www.fors.cz/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/FoRS\\_pruzkum-financovani-EK\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.fors.cz/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/FoRS_pruzkum-financovani-EK_FINAL.pdf)

**Chart 2. Number of grants awarded by ECHO to EU13 CSOs for humanitarian actions by nationality (2004-2013)**



**Chart 3. Amount (EUR) awarded by ECHO to EU13 CSOs for humanitarian operations by nationality (2004-2013)**



## 4. Discussion

The success of EU13 CSOs in securing European grants for humanitarian actions has been very limited. Given the specificity of the procedure required to access EU humanitarian funding within DG ECHO – the two-step selection, including the signing of an FPA and the submission of proposals – the reasons for this

limited success must be analysed across these two dimensions.

Firstly, very few EU13 CSOs have signed an FPA with DG ECHO over the period since 2004 – only ten EU13 CSOs compared to 209 EU15 CSOs. It is interesting to note, however, that the EU13 CSOs that have signed the FPA come from five neighbouring countries – the four Visegrad countries – Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia – and Slovenia. Close links between CSOs from these countries could be one of the reasons for that. Secondly, among the EU13 CSOs that had an FPA, only half were able to secure EC grants for humanitarian actions and the number of grants obtained was limited. These two results seem to suggest that the obstacles for EU13 CSOs to accessing European humanitarian funding are two-fold: firstly, EU13 CSOs meet obstacles in becoming partners of ECHO through the signing of an FPA; secondly, EU13 CSOs are not successful in the competition for EC grants.

Some of the reasons for the limited number of EU13 CSOs that signed an FPA with DG ECHO might include: a lack of or limited information among the EU13 CSOs about the FPA requirement and selection procedure; limited contacts between EU13 CSOs and DG ECHO. Other obstacles might be related to the selection criteria for the FPA in view of becoming ECHO partners. Many EU13 CSOs might not meet some of the financial management criteria, as well as those related to past experience and results, i.e. having implemented humanitarian actions in each year over the last three years, with the average budget of projects amounting to EUR 200,000. A limited number of EU13 CSOs would be able to meet this latter requirement, which also implies having a strong presence in the countries where humanitarian actions are implemented. Indeed, one of the elements looked for by ECHO in CSO partners is their field presence and their contact with local communities.

This last issue might also be one of the obstacles for EU13 CSOs who already have an FPA in obtaining funding for their proposals. In a previous TRIALOG study<sup>21</sup>, this lack of or limited presence of EU13 CSOs in third countries was considered as one of the main reasons impeding these organisations from proposing relevant and successful proposals for development cooperation projects. Given that there is a common

<sup>21</sup> TRIALOG, *A Decade of EU13 Civil Society Participation in European Development Cooperation Projects*, 2014, Brussels, available at: [http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/a\\_decade\\_of\\_eu13\\_civil\\_society\\_participation\\_in\\_european\\_development\\_cooperation\\_projects.pdf](http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/a_decade_of_eu13_civil_society_participation_in_european_development_cooperation_projects.pdf)

element of European humanitarian and development cooperation projects in that they are implemented in third countries, the lack of or limited presence of EU13 CSOs outside the European Union, in the countries of implementation, might also account for the limited success of these organisations in obtaining humanitarian funding.

Other obstacles for EU13 CSOs, notably for the smaller organisations, when it comes to the actual selection of proposals might include the size of the grants. The average size of grants awarded to EU13 CSOs for humanitarian actions was EUR 460,000. In a previous TRIALOG study, this was already identified as being difficult to manage by smaller and even medium-sized EU13 CSOs<sup>22</sup>. The EC co-financing rate, another reason for the limited participation of EU13 CSOs in EC funding schemes quoted in previous TRIALOG studies, seems not to have been an obstacle in the case of European humanitarian grants, since funds covered almost 100% of project costs. However, this information is based on the three years in which the EC co-financing rate was published – during 2005-2007 – and no recent data was available.

Another aspect that could be further explored and that could influence the success level of EU13 CSOs in implementing European humanitarian assistance projects is the level of EU13 CSO participation in consultative meetings organised by DG ECHO. Many details related to the implementation of European humanitarian assistance – including the allocation of funds – are often decided with the partners themselves through these consultative meetings.

Other reasons for the limited success of EU13 CSOs might include the limited number of these organisations that are specialised or work in the humanitarian field or these organisations' capacity to apply for and administer numerous projects.

Further research would be welcomed into the reasons for the limited number of FPAs between EU13 CSOs and ECHO, and small number of grants awarded to implement humanitarian action as well as additional suggestions for how to overcome these obstacles.

The increased involvement of EU13 CSOs in the implementation of European humanitarian funding would have certain benefits. Among the most important, it would allow CSOs from the newer EU Member States to increase their ownership of EU

humanitarian aid policies and implementation. This in turn would contribute to raising the awareness of the public in the EU13 countries about the roles of the EU and their own countries as humanitarian actors and donors. In the longer term this could mobilise public support in these countries for actions that express solidarity with third countries. Another positive aspect would be increasing the humanitarian expertise within the EU through allowing CSO experts from the EU13 countries to become involved in European humanitarian aid policy and implementation. At the same time, EU13 CSOs would bring their regional knowledge to the EU level.

## 5. Conclusions

This study analysed EU13 CSOs' success in securing European Commission grants for humanitarian operations during 2004-2013, during the time the EU13 countries were EU Member States. The results show that EU13 CSOs have been successfully awarded such grants in a very limited number of cases. EU13 CSOs received 42 grants and an amount corresponding to EUR 19 million. During 2004-2012, EU13 CSOs managed to obtain only 0.41% of the total funding for humanitarian operations awarded by DG ECHO to CSOs.

Among the successful organisations in the EU13, Czech CSOs obtained most of the grants (59%) and the highest amount (63%) of EC funding for humanitarian operations. They were followed by the single Polish CSO Polish Humanitarian Organisation that was awarded EC humanitarian funding (36% of the total amount awarded to EU13 CSOs). CSOs in only two other EU13 countries managed to obtain EC grants for humanitarian actions, namely one Slovenian and one Slovak, each with one grant. One Czech CSO – People in Need – managed to obtain almost 54% of the total amount awarded to EU13 CSOs.

This limited success is also due to the fact that only ten EU13 CSOs out of a total of 234 have had a Framework Partnership Agreement with DG ECHO since 2004, which is a mandatory condition for applying for EC humanitarian funding. This limited partnership between ECHO and CSOs from the newer EU Member States might be due to several reasons. These might include: the lack of awareness among EU13 CSOs about the FPA and EC grant award procedures; the selection conditions that can be restrictive to many EU13 CSOs to signing an FPA i.e. having implemented humanitarian actions each year

<sup>22</sup> TRIALOG, *A Decade of EU13 Civil Society Participation in European Development Education and Awareness Raising Projects*, 2014, Brussels, available at: <http://www.trialog.or.at/study-a-decade-of-eu13-csos-participation-in-eu-dear-projects>

over the last three years, and the average size of projects being EUR 200,000.

Given that out of the ten EU13 CSOs with an FPA only five were able to secure EC grants for humanitarian actions during 2004-2013, it is likely that these organisations also encounter difficulties in obtaining funding for their proposals. EU13 CSOs' limited presence in the countries of implementation of humanitarian actions, limited capacity to apply for and manage numerous projects and limited participation in ECHO consultative meetings by EU13 CSOs cover some of the reasons that prevent them from proposing relevant projects.

Some positive aspects of increased participation of EU13 CSOs in the implementation of European humanitarian aid might include their increased ownership of EU humanitarian aid policies and implementation. This could contribute to raising the awareness of the public in the EU13 countries and mobilising support for this type of actions in third countries. Other positive aspects would be increasing the pool of humanitarian experts at the EU level, while benefiting from the EU13 CSOs' regional expertise.

### **5.1. Recommendations**

- EC to encourage and open up opportunities for EU13 CSOs to partner with EU15 and other European CSOs and implement joint humanitarian actions in third countries e.g. through junior partner schemes with more experienced CSOs.
- ECHO and other stakeholders to increase awareness among the EU13 CSOs about Framework Partnership Agreements and the procedure to obtain one.
- ECHO to encourage the access of EU13 CSOs to the Commission's scheme for capacity building for humanitarian operations, given that it does not require organisations to have an FPA.
- ECHO to improve the accessibility of its data, including providing disaggregated information about the number of grant applications and grant allocations.
- Different stakeholders, including civil society, European institutions and national governments to have a multi-stakeholder dialogue on the role and participation of EU13 CSOs in implementing European humanitarian actions with the view to finding solutions to the current extremely low involvement of EU13 CSOs in these activities.
- Humanitarian stakeholders to work together to build the capacity of EU13 CSOs to get more involved in the implementation of European humanitarian actions.

## Annex 1 – List of EU13 CSOs beneficiaries of European humanitarian funding, 2004-2013

No.	Year	Beneficiary	Nationality	Action location	Amount awarded (EUR)
1	2004	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	Russia	345,000.00
2	2004	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	Russia	400,000.00
3	2004	People in Need	CZ	Russia	90,000.00
4	2004	People in Need	CZ	Russia	400,000.00
5	2004	People in Need	CZ	Afghanistan	600,000.00
6	2005	People in Need	CZ	Russia	490,000.00
7	2005	People in Need	CZ	Russia	90,000.00
8	2005	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	Russia	400,000.00
9	2005	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	Russia	400,000.00
10	2005	Caritas - Czech Republic	CZ	Russia	292,000.00
11	2005	Caritas - Czech Republic	CZ	Russia	200,000.00
12	2006	People in Need	CZ	Afghanistan	327,000.00
13	2006	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	Russia	450,000.00
14	2006	Caritas - Czech Republic	CZ	Russia	285,000.00
15	2006	Caritas - Czech Republic	CZ	Russia	287,000.00
16	2007	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	Occupied Palestinian Territory	599,280.00
17	2007	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	Occupied Palestinian Territory	130,000.00
18	2007	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	Russia	215,087.00
19	2007	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	Russia	450,000.00
20	2007	People in Need	CZ	Afghanistan	545,000.00
21	2008	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	Occupied Palestinian Territory	290,000.00
22	2008	People in Need	CZ	Afghanistan	339,190.00
23	2008	People in Need	CZ	Afghanistan	240,508.00
24	2008	Caritas - Czech Republic	CZ	Russia	320,000.00
25	2009	People in Need	CZ	Afghanistan	395,347.00
26	2009	People in Need	CZ	Afghanistan	699,141.00
27	2009	Caritas - Czech Republic	CZ	Not published	130,000.00
28	2009	People in Peril Association	SK	Not published	45,000.00
29	2010	Caritas - Czech Republic	CZ	Mongolia	249,600.00
30	2010	People in Need	CZ	Afghanistan	451,439.00
31	2010	People in Need	CZ	Democratic Republic of Congo	552,153.00
32	2010	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	South Sudan	375,000.00
33	2010	Ustanova SKUPAJ-Regionalni center za psihosocialno	SI	NEUTRALZONE	184,717.00

		dobrobit			
34	2011	People in Need	CZ	Democratic Republic of Congo	600,000.00
35	2011	People in Need	CZ	Afghanistan	1,257,075.00
36	2011	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	South Sudan	400,000.00
37	2012	People in Need	CZ	Democratic Republic of Congo	600,000.00
38	2012	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	South Sudan	1,050,000.00
39	2013	People in Need	CZ	Democratic Republic of Congo	750,000.00
40	2013	People in Need	CZ	Syria	2,100,000.00
41	2013	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	Somalia	800,000.00
42	2013	Polish Humanitarian Action	PL	South Sudan	680,000.00