

Invitation to Policy Hub on Financial accountability of civil society organisations: Towards increased cooperation with EU institutions?

Thursday, 1 October 2015, 10:30 -13:00 hours
Meeting Room: A7F387, Altiero Spinelli Building

This Policy Hub will discuss the complex EU legal framework on the regulation of the financial accountability of civil society organisations (CSOs) and the main obstacles limiting the efforts of EU institutions to tackle any financial mismanagement of the third sector. On this subject, the Members' Research Service has published an In-depth Analysis entitled [Financial accountability of civil society organisations – Improving cooperation with EU institutions](#) (May 2015).

10:30	<i>Introduction</i>
10:45	<i>Financial accountability of civil society organisations in Europe</i> Gianluca SGUEO , Policy Analyst, Budgetary Policies Unit, Members' Research Service, European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS)
11:00	<i>Tentative Lessons from Financial Crisis: Civil Society and the Consequences of Austerity</i> Jamal SHANIN , Senior Researcher in European Governance, Institute for European Studies, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Assistant Professor in European Studies, University of Amsterdam
11:20	David FERREIRA , Administrative and Financial Director, European Youth Forum
11:40	Questions and Answers

The issue

Over recent decades, civil society organisations (CSOs) – a term used to capture all forms of collective organisation outside the government and business sectors – have grown in both number and impact on policy-making, both at EU and national levels. In consequence, CSOs have come under pressure to demonstrate that they use any public resources allocated to them in an efficient, accountable and transparent manner.

A number of proposals to address this have been discussed over the years. However, only a few proposals have been translated into law; and even fewer of these, after being implemented, seem to have offered an effective solution to the issue of financial accountability of the third sector. The debate between scholars, institutions and practitioners is ongoing. In the meantime, the third sector at the European level remains regulated by a combination of European norms, quasi-legal tools, and self-

regulatory initiatives.

This Policy Hub will be an occasion to reflect on these issues, to discuss the main obstacles limiting efforts to tackle cases of financial mismanagement by CSOs (such as the absence of clear legal definitions at EU level, opacity of the information available on CSOs through EU databases, and excessive bureaucracy) and to discuss possible solutions.

The concept

Policy Hubs are informal fora for dialogue and debate among experts within the European Parliament and other EU institutions, as well as the wider think tank and academic communities, on current EU policies and issues. To facilitate broad participation and to encourage open exchanges, the meetings are short and held under the Chatham House rule. Policy Hubs are open to all staff working on the subject, including staff from the political groups and MEPs' Assistants, as well as invited representatives of the think tank community and academia.

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