

22 October 2025

Joint civil society statement on participation on environment, energy and decarbonisation in the Berlin Process

On the occasion of the Leaders' Summit in London on 22 October, we, the undersigned civil society organisations, would like to provide our feedback on the inclusion of civil society in the Berlin Process, both in 2025 and more generally, to inform the organisation of future events.

We welcome that the British Council's overriding aim this year has been to provide a space for open and inclusive dialogue, to ensure that the voice of civil society is heard within the broader Berlin Process. And the organization of a series of in-country workshops in Belgrade, Tirana, Podgorica, Sarajevo, Skopje, and Pristina to inform the [Civil Society and Think Tank Forum Policy Recommendations](#) was also welcome.

Nevertheless, despite these efforts, numerous relevant and active civil society organisations were still not included in the process, or were invited only to participate in the Civil Society and Think Tank Forum on 22–23 September 2025, which happened after the Policy Recommendations had already been finalised.¹

The in-country workshops reportedly gathered over 70 civil society representatives to identify key priorities across six thematic areas.² However, it is not clear how the participants were selected. 'Over 70' might sound like an impressive number, but spread across six countries and six topics, it amounts to just two representatives per country, per topic.

The Civil Society and Think Tank Forum could in principle have made up for this, but as the Policy Recommendations had already been finalised beforehand, and could not be amended to reflect the outcomes of the Forum, the event was not meaningful. And again, it was not clear how the participants and NGO speakers on panels were selected.

In addition, the logistical information needed improvement. It was not clear in the invitations whether travel costs could be covered, and invitations were sent out only three and a half weeks before the event. Considering the 2-3 day time commitment and cross-border travel needed in a period with numerous other events, this excluded some potential participants.

Overall, our impression is that the format of developing CSO Policy Recommendations and holding a Civil Society and Think Tank Forum has become rather stale and may serve to marginalise civil society more than including it.

Simply producing Recommendations every year and only having a rapporteur presenting them at the Leaders' Summit does not allow for a real exchange of opinions or ensure that the region's governments take the Recommendations into account in their decision-making.

We would therefore like to recommend the following:

¹ Many of the issues raised at the Civil Society Forum were included in the [Conference Report](#), but dispersing them across different documents further decreases the chance of them being widely read.

² Common Regional Market and Growth; Gender and Diversity; Reconciliation and Dealing with the Past; Environment, Energy and Decarbonisation; Security; and Good Governance.

CSOs should be invited to and involved in thematic Berlin Process events rather than holding a separate Civil Society and Think Tank Forum.

Joint CSO Policy Recommendations may serve a role to collect input from a wider group than just those who attend events, but the process must be more open:

- It should be clearer how the rapporteurs are chosen;
- If the drafts are developed by working groups, an open call to join the groups needs to be circulated, to allow all relevant CSOs a chance to participate;
- The draft Policy Recommendations must be circulated among a wider group of CSOs for comments and suggestions. These CSOs must also be free to forward them to other relevant groups. At least two to three weeks should be allowed for comments, as well as time to check additions and amendments with the CSOs proposing them;
- The final draft Policy Recommendations for each theme should be circulated for explicit sign-ons by individual organisations working on those issues – it cannot be presumed that they represent all of civil society;

If in-country workshops or meetings are held, the invitations need to be widely circulated to relevant groups, with an open registration process. The same goes if a regional Civil Society Forum is held.

If participant selection needs to be done, the criteria should be clear and transparent, based on the relevance of the organisations' work and their status as active non-profits. The organisers should consider asking several CSOs for recommendations on who to proactively invite.

If a Civil Society Forum is held, it needs to be done *before* the Policy Recommendations are finalised, with adequate time to incorporate the conclusions into the Recommendations.

Relatively equal representation of CSO representatives should be ensured irrespective of what shape regional events take, including by circulating invitations at least two months prior to the event and clarifying whether travel costs can be covered. The organisers should consider asking several CSOs for recommendations for panellists to represent civil society.

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35. Kosova Democratic Institute

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36. Kosovo Advocacy and Development Centre - KADC

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37. Let's Do It Kosova

Kosovo



38. Network for Youth Activism of Montenegro

Montenegro



39. NGO Active Zone

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40. NGO Center for Civil Values

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41. NGO Center for New Initiatives

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42. NGO Center for the Affirmation of the Roma and Egyptian Community – “CAREP”

Montenegro



43. NGO Dunav BNS

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44. NGO Eco-team

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45. NGO Education for the future Aurora

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46. NGO Ekvitas - Aequitas

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47. NU Organizacija KOD Montenegro



48. Organic Agriculture and Environment Association Albania



49. “Organic Bee Clinic” Serbia



50. Organizata për Mbrojtjen e Ambientit “Kaça” Kosovo



51. Organization for Political Ecology Polekol Serbia



52. Ozon Space NGO Kosovo



53. Podrinjski anti korupcijski tim PAKT Serbia



54. REC Reconciliation Empowering Communities Kosovo



55. Regional Action Lab (Re-ACT Lab) Regional/Kosovo



56. The Balkan Forum Kosovo



57. Udruga Dinarica, Mostar Bosnia and Herzegovina



58. Udruženje “KVIR FRONT” Serbia



59. Udruženje za podršku osobama ometenim u razvoju NAŠA KUĆA Serbia



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65. Vojvodina Environmental Movement Serbia



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67. Za Suboticu svim srcem Serbia



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