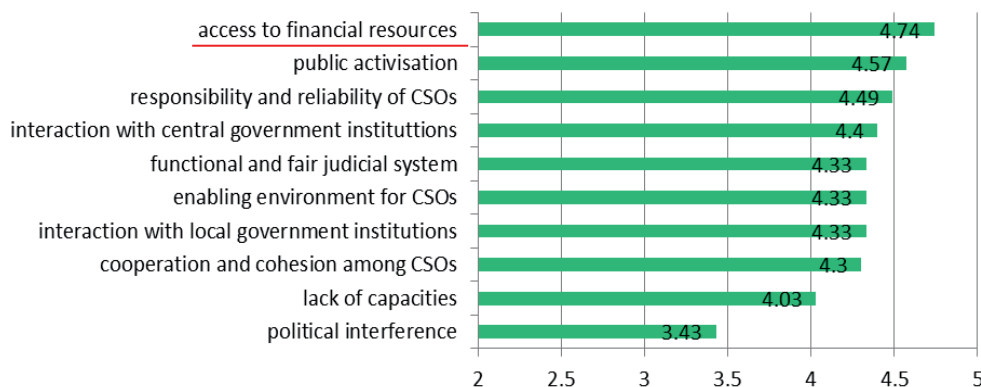


Albanian CSOs' in the EU membership negotiation process

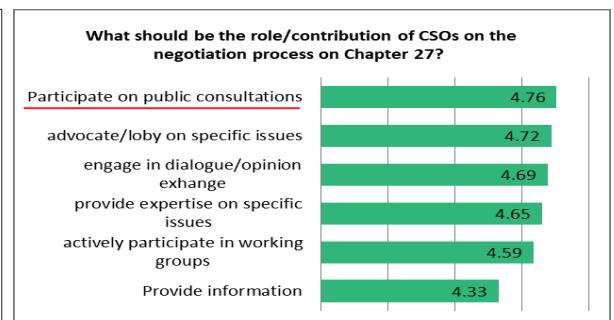
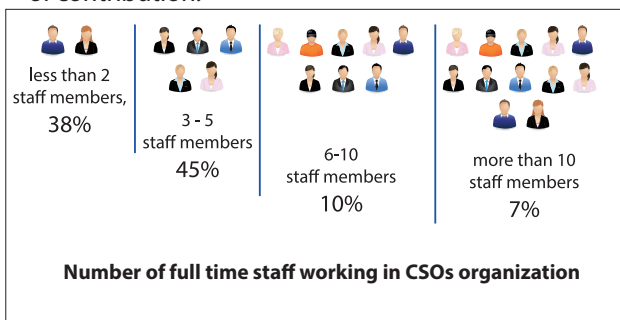
It is largely accepted and experienced that the Chapter 27 of the EU membership negotiations is among the most challenging ones, both on achieving standards of the environmental qualities and management and its financial burden. Water and waste management, nature and biodiversity protection and compliance to requirements for public information and participation into decision making processes are examples in Chapter 27 showing the importance of the integration of a cohesive civil society in assuring the quality and success of the EU- Albania membership negotiations process.

CSOs in Albania are facing a number of challenges. However, some challenges have scored higher in importance including access to financial resources, public activation and responsibility and reliability of CSOs. Although the number of NGOs has increased in the recent years, the scene is dominated by small NGOs.

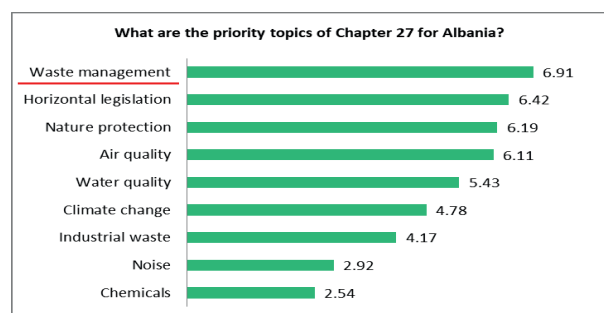
Key challenges CSOs are facing in Albania?



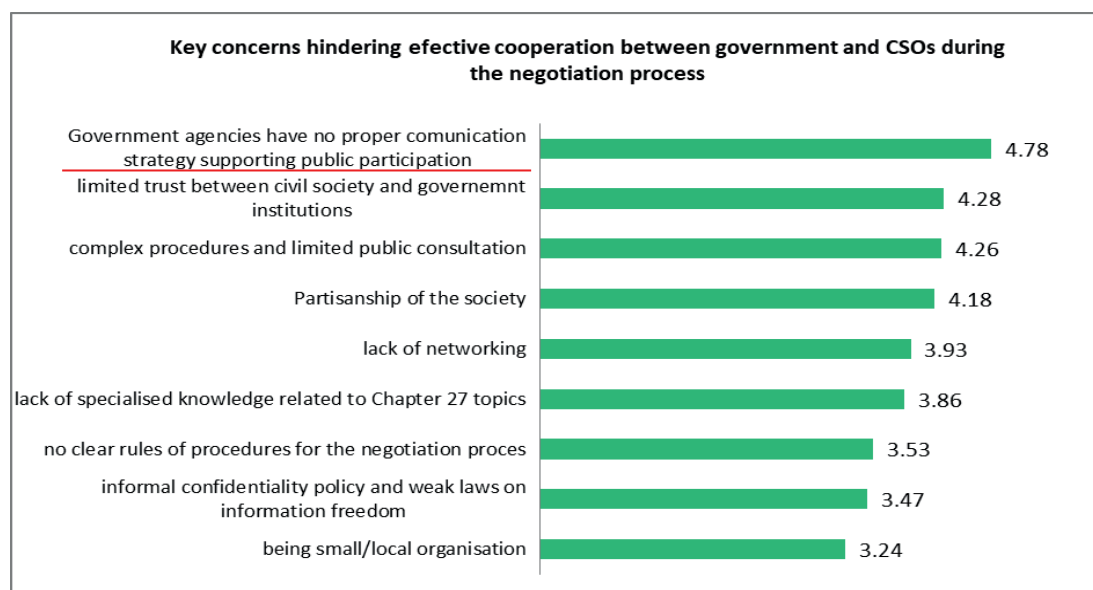
The role and contribution of CSOs to the EU membership negotiation process should be multifaceted and involve various techniques and methods. Results show that participation on public consultation, advocacy and lobbying on specific issues are considered as little more important than other methods of contribution.



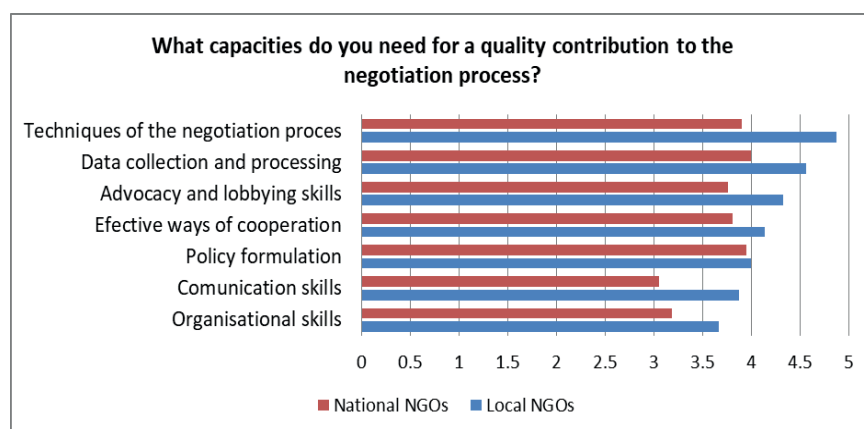
The responding NGOs consider that the top priority topics of Chapter 27 for Albania are waste management, horizontal legislation, nature protection and air quality. NGOs consider that issues related to noise and chemicals are not a priority for Albania.



Experience so far has shown that effective cooperation between government institutions and civil society organizations is hindered by a number of issues. The results of the questionnaire show that responding NGOs consider that the most relevant concern for an effective cooperation is **the lack of proper communication strategy from government institutions to support public participation**. NGOs consider that other relevant concerns that hinder effective cooperation with government institutions include limited trust between civil society and government institutions, complex procedures and limited public consultation as well as partisanship of the society.

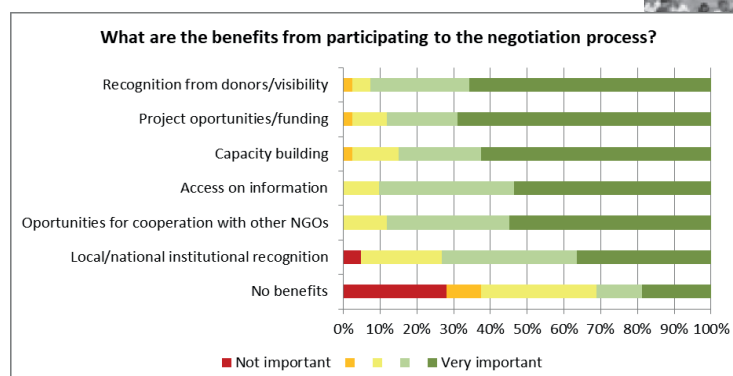


A quality contribution to the negotiation process requires NGOs to have stronger skills and specific knowledge, particularly on techniques of the negotiation process, data collection and processing (evidence-based advocacy), effective ways of cooperation, policy formulation as well as improved capacities on organization, communication, advocacy and lobbying.



All participating NGOs consider that the quality of their contribution on the EU membership negotiation process will improve significantly if they will cooperate with other organizations.

There are a number of benefits for NGOs participating to the EU membership negotiation process. Responding NGOs had difficulties in prioritizing benefits resulting in a very close ranking. However, the top benefits include recognition from donors and improved visibility, opportunities for developing projects and securing funding and capacity building.



Albanian CSOs are looking to improve their role and strengthen their influence on policy and decision making processes - the EU membership negotiation process is a perfect opportunity to show off and build capacities on these issues.

