

INTRODUCTION

USAID is proud to present the 11th edition of the NGO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, covering developments in 2007.

In addition to separate reports on 29 countries, this year's Index includes two articles examining trends affecting NGO sustainability in the region. In "Laws on Volunteers and Volunteering in Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia," Catherine Shea and Katerina Hadzi-Miceva examine initiatives to enact Laws on Volunteers that address a number of issues critical to providing an enabling environment for volunteerism. By outlining the provisions of the laws already adopted and implemented in several countries in the region, this article helps fill the gap in knowledge on this topic and provides useful guidance that can inform future reform efforts in the region and elsewhere. In "GONGO Trends and Transformations," Kristie Evenson explores the rise of government-operated non-governmental organizations (GONGOs) in the region, most notably Eurasia, and its impact on the development of independent civil society.

The 2007 Index includes at the outset of each report a statistical summary showing this year's scores for each dimension, plus the overall score, as well as identification of the capital, population, and a summary of basic economic indicators. Reports include comparative information regarding prior years' dimension scores, encapsulated in easy-to-read charts. The Index further includes statistical appendices summarizing this year's dimension scores as well as scores for 1997-2007.

A publication of this type would not be possible without the contributions of many. Specific acknowledgements of the USAID field personnel and NGO implementers responsible for the Index appear on the following page. USAID would also like to thank the local NGOs who helped to organize expert group discussions and draft reports in many of the countries. We would further like to express our deepest gratitude to all of the local NGO experts, USAID partners, and international donors who participated in the expert group discussions in each country. Their knowledge, perceptions, ideas, observations, and contributions are the foundation upon which this Index is based.