



Berlin Process
Civic Engagement in
Regional Cooperation



AN IMPACT JOURNEY:

SEE6 Civil Society's in the Common
Regional Market and Berlin Process

BACKGROUND

The Common Regional Market (CRM) and the Berlin Process have created an unprecedented framework for regional cooperation, as well as for economic integration, mobility, and gradual access of the South East Europe Six (SEE6) to the EU Single Market. Yet, while political commitments have multiplied, implementation on the ground has remained uneven, and weakly communicated.

The initiative “Channelling SEE6 Civil Society contribution to the Common Regional Market and Berlin Process” implemented by Cooperation and Development Institute (CDI) responded to a critical gap: regional agreements were signed and ratified advancing faster than public understanding, institutional coordination, and accountability mechanisms. Civil society engagement was fragmented, media literacy on CRM and CEFTA was low, and SEE6 citizens rarely experienced the concrete benefits of regional cooperation.

The initiative set out to change this dynamic by transforming complex regional commitments into monitored, debated, and actionable reforms.



Photo from the signing ceremony of three Mobility Agreements in Berlin, Germany | 3 November 2022
Photo source: ReporterI.net

AT A GLANCE

- 10+ policy, monitoring and assessment outputs
- 20+ national and regional events across all SEE6 capitals
- 600+ policymakers, CSOs, institutions, media and experts actively engaged in discussions
- 300,000+ people reached through media and digital channels

MONITORING



ENGAGEMENT



ADVOCACY



POLICY INFLUENCE



Tirana Roundtable:
Drivers of regional mobility in the Western Balkans: Free movement of people
21 May 2025

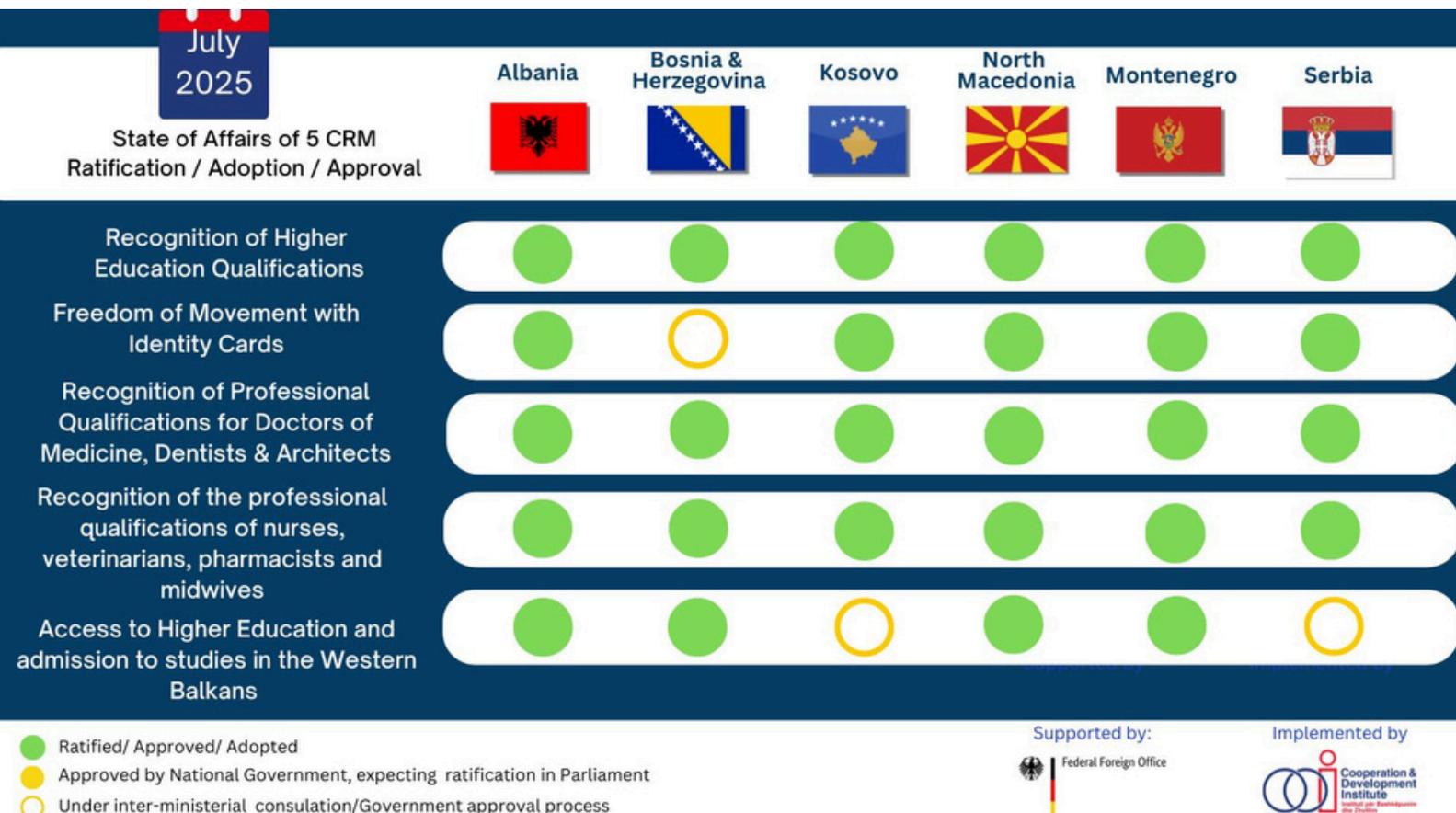
TURNING MONITORING INTO ACCOUNTABILITY

Through continuous monitoring of CRM Mobility Agreements and of CEFTA Agreements, the initiative translated technical progress into accessible, real-time information for institutions, civil society, media and citizens.

Tracking Progress with the CRM Semaphore

The CRM Semaphore became the region's most consulted public monitoring instrument, providing clear snapshots of ratification, adoption and implementation status of Mobility Agreements across all six countries.

- Real-time **updates** following institutional decisions;
- **Referenced** by RCC, CEFTA, EU Delegations and Member State diplomats;
- Used by journalists and experts as a **trusted source**.



From Data to Dialogue to Accountability

Monitoring alone does not create change: active engagement and policy dialogue does. The initiative used Semaphore insights to fuel structured, high-level conversations that moved agreements from closed-door negotiations into the public policy debate space:

- **CRM Week 2024 & Mobility Days 2025:** A cycle of national and regional events that translated Berlin Process summit commitments into local knowledge, local debates and policy learning.
- **Tirana Connectivity Forum 2024 & 2025:** the CDI-organised flagship platform brought together over 300 policymakers, CSOs, and business leaders to shape the integration agenda and increase the visibility of CRM.
- **Direct Policy Input:** Civil society provided consolidated feedback on the **CRM2 Action Plan** and contributed to parliamentary oversight via bodies like the Albanian National Council for European Integration.
- **High-Level Advocacy:** Side events at forums like the **Munich Security Conference 2025** elevated the SEE6 as a strategic partner in EU-level discussions on security and connectivity in the region.
- **Media Amplification:** 87 **media appearances** across 62 outlets in the SEE6 made complex agreements accessible, building public awareness and reinforcing accountability.

Civil society has become more closely involved in core processes, supported by data, engaged through structured dialogue, and increasingly recognised as a relevant partner in monitoring, public debate, and reform design.



Roundtable on Common Regional Market: from Technical Preparation to Implementation
Tirana Connectivity Forum 2023

TAKEAWAYS & THE WAY AHEAD

The initiative's experience indicates that when properly supported, informed and engaged civil society can contribute to a more effective implementation of regional agreements.

Key lessons:

- Monitoring builds trust. When progress is visible, accountability follows.
- Civil society isn't just a watchdog, it's a partner in reform.
- Regional integration only works when it is communicated, debated, and owned by citizens.

Sustaining momentum:

Governments and institutions should formalize civil society's role as a structured contributor to monitoring bodies and policy dialogue. Regional initiatives should be aligned with the Berlin Process and the EU enlargement framework to avoid institutional fragmentation and ensure coherence with accession objectives.

The EU can reinforce this approach by further linking financial support to transparency and accountability requirements. It can facilitate and encourage an earlier and more systematic participation of Western Balkan partners in EU programs across different policy areas with an accelerated time-plan, and ensuring that participatory governance standards under instruments such as the Growth Plan are inclusive, transparent, and operationally effective.

Ultimately, progress toward EU membership in the SEE6 will depend on the extent to which integration is translated from formal commitments into tangible practices. This requires improved access to data, structured public dialogue, and durable partnerships capable of turning policy frameworks and agreements into measurable benefits for citizens and businesses across the region.

All of the above needs sufficient financial resources and properly tailored support mechanisms.





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This document is produced in the frame of "Channeling SEE6 Civil Society contribution to the Common Regional Market and Berlin Process" initiative, implemented by Cooperation and Development Initiative, in partnership with the German Federal Foreign Office.

The views and opinions expressed therein are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not reflect necessarily the positions of the German Federal Foreign Office



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