

**Civil Trust Building project welcomes candidate status of Serbia
(press release)**

The European Council has granted candidate status to Serbia at its meeting on 1-2 March 2012 which paves the way to start negotiations for EU membership.

We, as partners of the Civil Trust Building project aiming to raise public awareness and understanding of enlargement in EU member states would like to congratulate the political leaders on their decision and the positive steps taken by Serbia to reach candidate status.

We think that this positive development reaffirms the commitment of societies of the Western Balkans to European integration in general and the prospect of European Union membership in particular.

We believe that the European Union is a key player in shaping the democratic development of the countries of the Western Balkans. With the non-conventional tools of civil society we as partners of the Civil Trust Building project are ready to actively contribute to this process which will hopefully result in their becoming members of the European Union.

European House, Hungary – project coordinator
Association of Local Democracy Agencies, France
The World of NGOs, Austria
Local Democracy Agency Zavidovici, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Centre for Peace and Non-violence Osijek, Croatia
ARCI, Italy
Local Democracy Agency, Kosovo
Community Development Institute Tetovo, Macedonia
Local Democracy Agency Montenegro, Montenegro
Pro Democracy Association, Romania
Association of Local Democracy Agencies, Serbia
Local Democracy Agency Central and Southern Serbia, Serbia
Slovak Foreign Policy Association, Slovakia
Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs, Slovenia

20 March 2012