

**Community Foundations and Social Capital:
A Vehicle for Philanthropy Development in Western Balkans**

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Abstract

Various negative social and political factors in transitional societies in Western Balkans and the prolonged effects of economic crisis have been detrimental to social capital, and especially to social trust and civic engagement. Consequently, civil society organizations have become detached from their constituents in their pursuit of the common good, resulting in a decline of philanthropic values and practices. This research paper discusses the premise that community foundations can play an important role in restoring the community's social capital for the purpose of philanthropy development. The premise was examined by means of an analysis of practices of community foundations and philanthropic organizations in the United States, United Kingdom, Western Balkans countries and Czech Republic. Based on conversations, program seminars, and the research undertaken by the author during the Emerging Leaders International Fellows Program, the paper provides foundations and philanthropic organizations in Western Balkans with recommendations for using social capital for the purpose of philanthropy development.

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