



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

Moldova's National Platform

Moldova's National Platform for the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum was established at The National Conference on the 25th of March 2011. The meeting was attended by more than 30 representatives of Civil Society Organisations representing all 4 platforms - participants of Civil Society Forums that were held in Brussels and Berlin but also by a number of other interested organisations.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration who presented their view of the CSOs involvement in the EaP and the role of CSOs in the Moldova's negotiations of the association agreement. It is important to mention and record their willingness to accept the participation of the CSOs in the official platforms of the EaP.

The meeting discussed the issue of membership of the National Platform. After short discussions, it was decided that because the National Platform is seen as a discussion forum/site of the interested CSOs, the National Platform should be open for all CSOs interested in participating.

This is aligned with the goals of the Eastern Partnership and Moldova's European aspirations. The only limitation imposed is that only CSOs who have been registered for at least 2 years and are currently active could join the National Platform.

The main priorities of the CSOs within the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) were discussed at the meeting. The National Platform is based on principles of the Eastern Partnership and the main points of the platform focus on:

Strategic aims and priorities of Civil Society

Within the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum the main goals and priorities are as follows:

- ✓ to become a viable participant in full Eastern Partnership initiative, to establish concrete mechanisms that would allow civil society from the six partner and European countries to participate in implementing the principles of the Eastern Partnership;
- ✓ to substantially influence the development direction of the interaction between partner countries and the EU as well as future Eastern Partnership initiatives;

- ✓ to use the Eastern Partnership initiative to develop and strengthen civil society in partner countries by including them in decision-making mechanisms at interstate level and establish a coherent network for cooperation between civil society organizations in partner countries and the EU.

A special role of civil society in partner countries would imply that:

- ✓ its presence is not only pragmatic, but also as an active force that would influence decision making at various levels;
- ✓ it would play an important role in the process of implementation of social and political reforms of the partner countries;
- ✓ it ensures wide publicity and public participation in processes of the Eastern Partnership;

CSF should contribute to the objectives of the EaP by:

- ✓ Improving the governmental programme of the Eastern Partnership by providing the civil society vision, namely the promotion of civil society recommendations on evaluation, monitoring of the activities of the Eastern Partnership, including at ministerial level and the multilateral platforms;
- ✓ Promoting the dialogue between civil society organizations, organizing networks, sharing experience and best practices with other groups (social partners, think tanks, NGOs, etc) for the proper implementation of the principles of the Eastern Partnership;
- ✓ Exchange of experience in European integration process with partner countries;
- ✓ Promoting a permanent channel for including the vision and recommendations of civil society in the Eastern Partnership process;
- ✓ Facilitate relations with European Union structures;
- ✓ Strengthening through the Civil Society Forum the civil society and dialogue with authorities in the partner countries;
- ✓ Increasing capacities of civil society Organizations in European partnership countries through contacts with the EU institutions and other international networks.

In 2012 Moldova's National Platform continued to monitor implementation of commitments of Moldova's Government within the EaP Initiative.

On February 8 a Consultative meeting on the Eastern Partnership Roadmap was organized with the participation of over 30 members of National Platform and other interested civil society organizations. HE Ambassador Dirk Schuebel opened and participated in the discussion. As a result of the of the constructive dialogue, the following comments on the Roadmap have been put out by the Moldova's National Platform:

- The general structure and content of the roadmap (concept) is good but it is important to have possibility to comment the roadmap itself but this is not envisaged. It was a request to make available roadmap at least 1-2 weeks before approval on 25 April.
- The development of different partner countries is different and how this will be taken into consideration in the roadmap?
- Targets, outputs and timelines for different partner countries should be indicated separately
- More attention to be paid to the "environment"
- Role of civil society should be clearly defined in the roadmap

- Instruments and support for civil society and not only for governments

During the May – June months the National Platform of Moldova was the catalyst uniting National Platforms from partner countries in the development of the project proposal seeking funding in order to strengthen the National Platforms and Working Groups of the EaP Civil Society Forum. In October it was announced that the project proposal submitted to Civil Society Facility was successful and awarded. This will guarantee that our work with civil society organizations will be continued and will have an important financial backing from the European Commission.

On the 9th of October, Moldova's National Platform met to discuss the DCFTA. Amongst the participants to the consultations, the European Delegation participated along with representatives from different Ministries of Moldova that are involved in negotiations. Civil society organizations, members of Moldova's National Platform, expressed their opinion regarding the negotiation process on DCFTA. The main concerns relate to the fact that improvements can still be made on the transparency of the negotiations.

On the 14th of November, civil society organisations that were selected to participate in the CSF in Stockholm met to discuss issues related to their upcoming meeting. The main discussions were focused on how to improve the impact of such a Forum on the cooperation between National Platforms and the respective activities within the countries.

Also on the 14th of November, the Coordinator of Moldova's National Platform was invited to attend a meeting and discuss about the next priorities for assistance for Moldova for the 2014-2020 period with a team of EU negotiators.

On the 16th of November, the National Coordinator and Co-Coordinator of Working Group 4 met with Euronest Bureau at the Parliament of Republic of Moldova and informed them on the development of civil society, in general, and the National Platform, in particular.