



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

UKRAINE NATIONAL PLATFORM REPORT 2012

The Ukrainian national platform of the Civil Society Forum of the Eastern Partnership was established on January 29, 2011 at the founding conference in Kyiv, which adopted a memorandum of the platform establishment and elected the steering committee of the platform.

At that time, the national platform became an open site for community organisations (NGOs — non-governmental organizations) and their networks for the discussions, consultations, information activities in the implementation framework of the Eastern Partnership policy.

The national platform was an initiator of the preparation of Comments on Reports about the implementation of Neighbourhood Policy programmes, it also initiated and conducted consultations on the development of the roadmap Eastern Partnership, as well as the information events and conferences in the framework of the Working Groups of the Civil Society Forum of the Eastern Partnership, it participated in the work of the Eurovillage (during the Championship EURO 2012).

The national platform organized debates in the regions of Ukraine in the framework of Europe Days.

NGOs members of the National Platform were actively involved into the preparation of monitoring concerning the implementation of the agenda of preparation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, they carried out activities to ensure an independent monitoring of the parliamentary elections in 2012.

Experts that are representing NGOs — parties of the national platform participated in meetings of official panels of the Eastern Partnership, as well as in the international activities within the Eastern Partnership and in the ministerial meetings.

The Steering Committee of the Ukrainian national platform supported by the International Renaissance Foundation, carried out the project in support of the national platform working group activities, preparation of a number of statements and positions of UNP.

NGOs — members of the National Platform prepared the project proposals and they are implementing the projects supported by the Czech government initiatives about the support of the Working Groups projects of the 1st and 4th Civil Society Forum of the Eastern Partnership.

Steering Committee of the Ukrainian national platform of Forum drew up a draft of the national platform Charter (approved at the conference of the national platform on November 21, 2012) and the principles of the registration of members of the Ukrainian national platform.

Any NGO the scope of which includes issues of concern to the Eastern Partnership policy can volunteer to be registered.

Registration form and other information about the national platform is placed on the portal page, «European Space» <http://eu.prostir.ua/themes/EaP.html>.

The Ukrainian national platform on Facebook remains an active communication platform for members of the national platform and stakeholders.

During the period after the Civil Society Forum in Poznan Ukrainian national platform carried out the following activities:

Civil Society Forum «EU — Ukraine Summit 2011: public Dimension»

During the meeting of Ukrainian public activists with the presidents of the EU, European prospects of Ukraine were discussed, including the signing of the Association Agreement.

More than 90 representatives of Ukrainian civil society participated, journalists, EU President, EU ambassadors, diplomats and officials from the EU, representatives of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, generally more than 130 people.

The event had a very positive effect, especially for Ukrainian civil society, as it has demonstrated that the European Union respects the position and vision of Ukrainian NGOs, and also recognizes them as one of the parties of the dialogue between the EU and Ukraine.

The event provided an opportunity for the majority of those who were present to experience that the voice of the public is not a «voice crying in the wilderness» despite the fact that the President of Ukraine has no desire to hear us, EU officials not only pay attention to public opinion and declare their support, but are ready to act, that really proves that our activities are needed and overlooked, if not in Kiev, then at least in Brussels.

Forum participants handed the common position «Common values —common future» to the presidents of the EU.

Meetings of the 4 workgroups:

The meeting of the Working Group 4 «Contacts between people».

During the event, the issues of education, culture, youth and volunteers, as well as visas policy were discussed.

The planning of activities for the current year was made as well as the activities of primary importance were identified.

Two drafts were prepared basing on this meeting. One of them, concerning the recognition of non-formal education, is being implemented, another is pending.

The meeting of the Working Group 2, «Economic integration and convergence with EU policies».

During the meeting the issues of transport platform within the Eastern Partnership, the European Neighbourhood performance, the question of cross-border cooperation were discussed. The project is being prepared due to the results of the activities.

The meeting of the Working Group 3 «Environment, climate change and energy security».

The meeting of the Working Group 1 «Democracy, human rights, good governance and stability».

The main issues that were discussed during the meeting were: informing about the activities of CSF Eastern Partnership, the work of subgroups of freedom of Speech, anti-corruption activities, administrative and judicial reforms.

Also the following public events were held:

Press conference «The EU praised — Ukraine interprets»

Press conference of organizations and networks was devoted to the first comment concerning the annual report on Ukraine under the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2011.

During the press conference, the substance of the report on Ukraine under the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2011 was commented.

Information session: Lifelong Learning

During the event, two working rounds in three small groups were held: «human rights in education», «cultural policy and intercultural dialogue», «lifelong learning».

The following **position papers** of the National Platform on important issues of the agenda concerning the cooperation between Ukraine and the EU were prepared:

- Resolution of the Civil Society Forum «EU — Ukraine Summit 2011: public Dimension»
- Anti-corruption policy
- Border Management
- Visa regime
- The issue of energy infrastructure and
- Assessment of the parliamentary elections.

Ukrainian national platform made a **report reviewing the implementation of the Neighbourhood Policy** for 2011, as well as prepared and sent contributions to the Report for 2012.

At the **first Annual conference of the Ukrainian national platform** on November 21, 2012, the Statute was approved, the rotation of coordinators of the working groups was held, including the establishment of the working group 5.

More than 90 participating organizations of UNP from 125 registered (the event attendees of the platform were more than 150 civil society organizations) took part.

- First Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine, responsible for European integration;
- Ambassador, Head of the EU Delegation in Ukraine and
- Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on European Integration, Co-chairman of EURONEST.

Working Group № 2 «Economic integration and convergence with EU policies».

The session of the Working Group №2 took place in Chernihiv on March 19, 2012, where the participants determined the main items on the agenda for 2012:

1. Transport strategy
2. Regional Policy
3. Small and Medium Businesses

Due to the first issue the efforts in the group were directed towards drawing the local officials' attention into the development of road, rail and water transportation corridors as there is a decrease in traffic flows through Ukraine.

In particular, there were attempts to promote the recommendations of the project «The Support of integration of Ukraine into the Trans-European transport network».

The greatest progress has been made on the second area — regional policy. The proposal to focus the joint efforts on launching the cross-border cooperation projects between member countries of the Eastern Partnership was put forward.

At this stage, these proposals are reflected in the Programme of attraction of the foreign aid from the European Union for 2011-2013, including the implementation of projects by priority «Strengthening EU integration and regional cooperation» in the context of cross-border cooperation between the countries of the Eastern Partnership without the involvement of the countries of the European Union.

In support of the European programme of the International Renaissance Foundation, on November 8, 2012 there was a meeting of Ukrainian and Belarusian experts in the field of cross-border cooperation in Gomel (Belarus).

Within the expert discussion there were developed recommendations for the implementation of the territorial cooperation programs support of the Eastern Partnership in the target region of the Ukraine-Belarus in view of developed models in other border regions.

Within the third direction the activities of the projects East Invest, TAM BAS, SME Facility should be noted, that are aiming to exchange experiences with European colleagues concerning capacity building and raising of the competence of small and medium businesses.

Relevant issues for the Working Group number 2 are:

1. Participation in making plans of the Working Group number 2 of the Civil Society Forum of the Eastern Partnership.
2. Joining the Consultation Plans of Public Councils at the central executives.
3. Conducting joint activities with partners from other countries of the Eastern Partnership.

Working group 3 «Environment, Climate Change and Energy Security»

The Working Group 3 «Environment, Climate Change and Energy Security» (WG 3) of the National Platform of Civil Society Forum was created together with the National Platform in January 2011. WG 3 approved its **working priorities** related to monitoring of environmental and energy component of the EU-Ukraine Association Agenda, monitoring of implementation of the action plans for environmental and transport policy, access to environmental information and environmental policy.

In March, 2012, during the WG 3 Meeting group's **strategic objectives in environmental and energy directions** were set. They include raising the priority of environmental issues on the EU-Ukraine agenda and promoting the idea of introducing European rules into the energy sector of the EaP member countries and control over the implementation of Ukraine's obligations under the European Energy Community.

Members of the WG 3 took an active part in **preparing positions on European Commission Report on the Implementation of the ENP in Ukraine in 2010 and 2011**, where they expressed their views on the European Commission assessment of the ENP implementation in the field of environmental protection and energy. At the invitation of the European Commission, members of the WG 3 prepared **inputs to the European Commission Report on the Implementation of the ENP in Ukraine in 2011 and 2012**, which provided information and expressed concerns about the major issues in the field of environmental protection and energy.

The WG 3 prepared the **Position on the Energy Infrastructure Development in the Framework of the Eastern Partnership** and the **Position on the Draft Energy Strategy of Ukraine until 2030**.

The WG 3 prepared **proposals for the Eastern Partnership Roadmap (multilateral and bilateral dimension)**, which were partially taken into account during the preparation of the final documents. Proposals were related to effective instruments of environmental policy, compliance with international agreements, the proper implementation of the national environmental policy, administrative reform, energy efficiency and so on.

In 2012, the Working Group 3 began **implementation of initiative to monitor the environmental component of the EU-Ukraine Association Agenda**. The idea of joint monitoring of the Working Group 3 arose at the WG 3 Meeting in March 2012, On October 12, 2012 there was held an expert seminar in Lviv «Methodology of Monitoring the Component of the EU-Ukraine Association Agenda», where consultations on choosing the methodology for implementation of monitoring initiative took place. The project on monitoring based on the proposals of the WG 3 members was developed and submitted for funding consideration to International Renaissance Foundation.

Members of the WG 3 of the National Platform actively participate **in events and activities in the framework of the EaP Civil Society Forum**, which provides connection of the WG 3 with the WG 3 of the whole Civil Society Forum. Also they actively participate in the **development, implementation and monitoring of environmental and energy policy of Ukraine**, initiate and participate in initiatives to **monitor the EaP Flagship Initiative on Good Environmental Governance, Index of European integration and EaP Energy Security Index**.

WG 4 «Contacts between people»

WG 4 meeting 2012

The group met at 8th of March and set priorities for the year 2012 in sphere of education, culture, youth and visa liberalization. The priorities for sub-working groups for the year 2012 have been set:

- In the sphere of culture: to encourage the best practices exchange and to update the action plans for cultural policy;
- In the sphere of youth: to elaborate tools and to encourage youth exchanges with the focus on social inclusion;
- In the sphere of education: to facilitate the recognition of non-formal education and long-life learning;
- In the sphere of visa liberalization: to promote public monitoring of visa issue procedures, and to advocate the visa friendly conditions for EVS volunteers in the country.

During this year the WG 4 launched several initiatives according to the priorities mentioned above.

Public event in European Village

At the 8th of June the public event within the activities in the European Village under «Democracy, Human Rights & Civil Society» days had been organized by the WG4. The facilitated discussion was aimed to raise awareness on the human rights education incl. human rights approach to the school curricula, long-life learning and non-formal education and intercultural dialogue within the cultural policy.

Social and political preconditions for recognition of non-formal education

The project launched in September 2012 is aimed to analyze the experience of non-formal education in Ukraine, to elaborate policy paper on recognition and to organize the tool-fair on NFE by involving main actors, NGO's and policy makers. The expert meeting on elaboration of policy paper had been organized on 14-15th of October.

Promoting cultural standards and best practices in the sphere of culture

A new initiative on developing tools for introducing European standards into national cultural policy framework with the focus on culture and democracy and culture and long-life learning is prepared and planned to be launched at the beginning of 2013.

Advocating visa friendly conditions for EVS volunteers

There are serious obstacles for implementing Eastern European Window for «Youth in Action» Programme in Ukraine. The members of WG4 are working on advocating better visa conditions for participants of European Voluntary Service in order to secure the sustainability of the projects and enabling long-term volunteering in the country.

There are 42 organizations registered for participation in WG 4 «Contacts between people».