

Security Challenges of the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood

28-29 July 2016

Betsy's hotel, Makashvili St., 32-34
Tbilisi, Georgia

Concept

The conference “Security Challenges of the EU’s Eastern Neighbourhood” is the event of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum organised by the EaP CSF Georgian National Platform and Liberal Academy Tbilisi with support from the European Commission. The conference will build upon the recommendations produced as a result of the EaP CSF event *Kyiv Security Perspectives - Towards a Security Agenda for the Eastern Partnership* that took place in 2015 in Kyiv. The conference will present the findings of the research conducted by the EaP CSF members, in particular the project *Security Alert on the EU’s Eastern Doorstep* that is in the process of developing an overview of security challenges within the EaP region and their connection to domestic development trends.

The Eastern Partnership countries face considerable security challenges. This is primarily demonstrated by unresolved territorial conflicts, as well as their internal tensions. Russia’s aggressive actions in the region, from attempts to change the foreign policy choices of the EaP countries, to excessive interference in the domestic political processes and explicit usage of complex methods of influence, cannot be neglected. For the EU, the region has become an area of instability and uncertainty: increased hostilities in disputed territories, political crises and stalled transitions, growing influence of radical Islam in Azerbaijan and some regions of Georgia, and potential security challenges to the South Caucasus region stemming from a crisis in Russia-Turkey relations.

Objectives

The event will provide a platform for the EaP countries’ civil society organisations, experts, and policy-makers to identify solutions to the key security threats (soft and hard power) for the EaP countries. The event will seek to develop recommendations for the EU and NATO to stabilize the region, as well as to identify the measures that can be taken by the civil society.

Participants

The Conference will gather 60 representatives of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum from 6 EaP countries, EaP Government representatives, security experts from the EU and EaP countries and representatives of the EU institutions.

Language

The conference will be held in Russian and English with interpretation in plenary and without interpretation in parallel workshops.

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Agenda

Thursday, 28 July

08:30 - 09:00 Registration (Welcome coffee)

09:00 - 09:30 Welcome

Speakers: **Lasha Tughushi**, National Coordinator of the EaP CSF Georgian National Platform
Kakha Gogolashvili, Chairman of Georgian National Platform, Director of EU Studies at Rondeli Foundation
Janos Herman, Head of the European Union Delegation to Georgia
Krzysztof Bobinski, Co-chair of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum

09:30 - 11.00 **Panel discussion: Between the EU, NATO and Russia's security strategies**

The panel will look at the strategic documents of the EU, NATO and Russia that have an influence on the EaP countries' security and development, in particular the European Agenda on Security, the new EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy, the EU communication on countering hybrid threats, the EU cybersecurity strategy, NATO strategic concept, and Russia's strategic documents. The panel will identify opportunities that these strategic frameworks provide and identify ways of mitigating the threats.

Moderator: **Kakha Gogolashvili**, Chairman of Georgian National Platform, Director of EU Studies at Rondeli Foundation

Panellists: **Tengiz Pkhaladze**, Advisor to the President of Georgia for the Foreign Affairs
Haykak Arshamyan, Yerevan Press Club
Taras Mykhalnuik, Open Ukraine Foundation
Madalina Dobrescu, European Neighbourhood Policy Chair, College of Europe

11.00 - 11.30 Coffee break

11.30 - 13.00 **Panel discussion: Security challenges facing NATO, the EU and the EaP**

The panel will assess the security challenges facing NATO, the European Union, and the Eastern Partnership countries and offer concrete recommendations. The panel will assess the results of the NATO Summit and how it affects the future of Georgia and Ukraine, as well as other EaP countries.

Moderator: **Jan Pieklo**, PAUCI Foundation

Panellists: **Hans-Jürgen Zahorka**, Chief Editor, European Union Foreign Affairs Journal, former MEP
Tamar Pataraiia, Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development

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Hanna Shelest, Ukraine Analytica
Dusan Fischer, Slovak Foreign Policy Association

13:00 - 14:00 Lunch

14:00 - 15:30 **Parallel panel 1: Russian soft power in EaP countries: challenges and responses**

The panel will provide an overview of the soft power mechanisms used by external actors in 6 EaP countries. The panel will focus on influences on media, political organizations, civil society and minority groups.

Moderator: **Mikayel Zolyan**, Regional Studies Center
Panellists: **Mikhas Yanchuk**, Belarusian Association of Journalists
Lasha Tughushi, National Coordinator of the EaP CSF Georgian National Platform
Jakub Kalensky, EEAS East StratCom Task Force
Ivan Sukhij, media expert

14:00 - 15:30 **Parallel panel 2: Trade and financing as mechanisms of influence in the EaP**

This panel will look at the use of economic power, trade, financing of pressure groups and fringe political parties, access to energy, and corruption, as a method of influence on the EaP countries.

Moderator: **Dovile Sukyte**, Eastern Europe Studies Centre (EESC)
Panellists: **Iurii Vdovenko**, Center for Cross-Border Cooperation
Sabit Bagirov, Entrepreneurship Development Foundation
Viorel Chivriga, IDIS Viitorul

15:30 - 15:50 Coffee break

15:50 - 17:30 **Panel discussion: Frameworks and mechanisms for bringing peace to the EaP region**

The panel will focus on the existing frameworks and mechanisms for ensuring peace in the region and how they can be better utilized.

Moderator: **Krzysztof Bobinski**, Co-chair of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum
Panellists: **Ketevan Tsikhelashvili**, First Deputy State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality
Nouneh Sarkissian, Media Initiatives Center
Ion Manole, PromoLex Association
Hennadiy Maksak, Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”

18:30 - 20:00 Networking dinner with members of the EaP CSF Georgian National Platform



Friday, 29 July

08:30 - 09:00 Registration

09:00 - 10:30 Panel discussion: Civil society actors working to improve the security of the region

The panel will identify the areas in which the civil society should be engaged to ensure the better security and development of the region.

Moderator: **Ulads Vialichka**, Co-chair of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum

Panellists: **Avaz Hasanov**, Humanitarian Research Publish Union

Jan Pieklo, PAUCI Foundation

Andrei Paratnikau, Belarus Security Blog

Daniela Irrera, Associate Professor of Political Science and International Relations, University of Catania; EU Centre of Excellence, University of Alberta

10:30 - 10:40 Coffee break

10:40 - 12:30 Three Parallel working groups will develop concrete recommendations on the topics below:

1) Mitigating the threats of Russian soft power in the EaP; moderated by: **Mikayel Zolyan/Mikhas Yanchuk**

2) Trade and financing as mechanisms of external influence in the EaP; moderated by: **Dovile Sukyte/Iurii Vdovenko**

3) International frameworks and mechanisms for bringing peace to the EaP and the involvement of civil society; moderated by: **Krzysztof Bobinski/Ion Manole**

12:30 - 13:30 Reporting back from the parallel sessions and closing of the conference

Moderator: **Kakha Gogolashvili**, Chairman of Georgian National Platform, Director of EU Studies at Rondeli Foundation

Rapporteurs: Working group 1 Moderator

Working group 2 Moderator

Working group 3 Moderator

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch

Departures

