



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

Belarusian National Platform Advocates Conditional Accession of Belarus to the European Higher Education Area

“Higher education is the field where the civil society could have a real chance to influence Belarusian government”

Andrei Yahorau, EaP CSF Co-chair



The conditional participation of Belarus in the Bologna Process is a success for the civil society in the country. For the first time the admission of a candidate country was based on the condition of significantly reforming the higher education system in line with European standards. This was possible due to the **coordinated efforts of the EU and EaP CSF Belarusian National Platform**.

The **National Platform’s Alternative Report** played an important role in the deliberations on whether to bring Belarus into the Bologna process. As a result, **Bologna Process Roadmap for Belarus** was adopted with the input from the civil society provides the benchmarks allowing for effective monitoring of the progress in the higher education reforms.



Given that the Belarusian civil society has a unique chance to actively influence the process by taking up the **watchdog role** and **mobilizing broad public support for reforms**, all relevant stakeholders should get involved in the Bologna Process in order to fully make use of this opportunity. In particular, the **inclusion of the Belarusian National Platform in BFUG’s (Bologna Follow-up Group) Advisory Group on Belarus** that will oversight the roadmap implementation should be considered.

The Belarusian National Platform’s representatives carried out successful advocacy meetings in Brussels in October 2015, debating with the key stakeholders in the emerging Advisory Group on Belarus.

The outputs of their independent monitoring process are widely acknowledged and further activity in scrutinizing the first stage of the implementation process is expected. Further lobbying of the Advisory Group on Belarus will focus on facilitating the inclusive debate on this important issue.