



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP Civil Society Forum

The Georgian National Platform of the EaP CSF reaches a new level of cooperation with the government



"Georgian government should work 25 hours a day to ensure that there are no omissions in the implementation of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan and Georgian citizens can travel to the EU without a visa".

Lasha Tugushi, Coordinator of the Georgian National Platform

The Georgian National Platform works with Georgian Government on implementation and monitoring of the Association Agreement based on the recently signed memorandum

On 13 November **David Bakradze**, on behalf of the Georgian government, and **Lasha Tugushi**, on behalf of the Georgian National Platform (GNP), signed the Memorandum of Cooperation. Based on shared European values, the Memorandum aims at strengthening cooperation between the executive branch of the government and the civil society in advancing the process of Georgia's European integration; namely, engaging the civil society organizations in the process of planning, implementation and monitoring of the Association Agreement Action Plans.

"By signing the Memorandum, we once again manifest our strong will to support and ensure maximum and effective engagement of the Civil Society", said the State Minister.

"I am proud that Georgia is a pioneer among EaP countries, which has engaged the civil society in the development and monitoring of the Association Agreement Action Plans; and I express my sincere gratitude for this fruitful cooperation"

David Bakradze, State Minister of Georgia



Continuous Dialogue with Decision-Makers

In 2015 the GNP Coordination Council conducted regular advocacy meetings with high level officials of the Georgian Government and the European Union, including ENP Commissioner **Johannes Hahn**, Chair of EU Integration Committee **Tinatin Khidasheli** and Mayor of Tbilisi **Davit Narmania**. Most of the events organised by GNP were attended by the high-level decision-makers. For instance, GNP working groups are actively engaged in the policy dialogue with the relevant line ministries and working group meetings are attended by their representatives.

In 2015 to facilitate policy and advocacy work on the country's AA/DCFTA implementation

GNP Recommendations Taken on Board by the Government

At the end of 2014 the Government of Georgia (GoG) launched consultations with the civil society on the Association Agreement National Action Plan. 12 member organizations provided their recommendations, which were presented to the GoG. On 15 January 2015, the Government of Georgia adopted the 2015 National Action Plan, having taken into consideration a number of important comments of the GNP. The GNP Chairman received a letter of gratitude from the State Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, in which the minister expressed his readiness to have a successful and productive cooperation with the GNP throughout the implementation process of the Association Agreement.

Visa Liberalisation

The GNP consistently advocated the reforms related to the visa liberalisation process throughout the year. On 4 July the GNP held a meeting in the Parliament of Georgia with the participation of parliamentarians and government representatives, including the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs **Gigi Gigiadze** who is the leading negotiator with the EU in the visa liberalisation process.

The joint work of the government and the GNP on the labour inspection system continues. Another focus of the discussion were the new Civil Service Law, drug policy and trafficking in human beings, preventing and fighting organised crime, terrorism and corruption, asylum and migration.

This meeting was followed by the discussion with the Minister of Foreign Affairs **Tamar Beruchashvili** of the visa liberalization action plan (VLAP) implementation on 17 July. It was emphasized that the cooperation with the civil society and its maximum involvement is crucial for the implementation of the VLAP and Association Agenda.

GNP Sits in the Parliament

Another illustration of the acceptance of the GNP as an important stake-holder in 2015 was the decision of the Georgian Parliament to host the GNP office in the building of the Georgian Parliament. This allows the GNP to further facilitate policy and advocacy work on the country's AA/DCFTA implementation.

Regional Visits/Seminars

Twenty information visits of the experts were organised to the following regions of Georgia: Kutaisi, Telavi, Batumi, Zugdidi, Akhalkalaki and IDPs centers in Shida Kartli region. The main goal of the regional meetings was to raise awareness about the Eastern Partnership, the importance of the Association Agreement, its positive and negative impacts, existing opportunities and possible challenges for the country.