

Eastern Partnership

Platform 1 "Democracy, Good governance and Stability"

CORE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2017

The Work Programme (2014-2017) contributes to the goals of the Eastern Partnership, notably in the area of further political association. This Work Programme supports inter alia the objectives agreed in bilateral Action Plans or Association Agendas. This Work Programme should also reflect the priorities of the ENI Regional East multiannual indicative programme (2014-2017) once adopted.

In order to ensure better coherence, planning and implementation of the Work programme with the ENI Regional East indicative programme, its validity will run from 2014-2017 with a mid-term review after 2 years. EU Member States' work in cooperation with partner countries in various expert Panels based inter alia on their transition experience and best practices forms an important element of this Work Programme. In this regard, Platform participants agree to continue providing the necessary expertise and cooperate closely on their activities including through financial support, where appropriate.

On the basis of activities carried out under the Work Programme, experience thus gathered, and of new proposals, within the core objectives of the Platform, the Work Programme can be reviewed and adapted, as appropriate, on the occasion of future Platform meetings. Initiatives of the Platform should include close cooperation with relevant EU agencies.

Taking account of outcomes of the Prague, Warsaw and Vilnius Summits, the participants of Eastern Partnership Platform 1 adopt the following core objectives and Work Programme for 2014-17 in accordance with the General Guidelines and Rules of Procedure of the Eastern Partnership Multilateral Platforms.

CORE OBJECTIVES:

The core objectives will be pursued in particular through the expert panels and Flagship initiatives as well as through cooperation with European Parliament (EP), Committee of the Regions (CoR), Council of Europe (CoE), OSCE, OECD or any international organisation supporting the objectives of the Eastern Partnership.

The 2013 Joint ENP Communication: Working towards a Stronger Partnership including their annual progress reports on implementation; as well as bilateral Action Plans or Association Agendas confirm that the reforms in the following areas should continue to be of common interest to the Platform participants:

Democratic Governance

- Supporting reforms in the areas of electoral standards, freedom of expression, National Human Rights Institutions, children's rights, prevention and fight against corruption, transparent management of public goods, and public administration reform.

- Training and networking of local authorities, with a view to strengthening administrative capacities of local authorities and promoting local government reform and decentralisation. This will be carried out in cooperation with the Committee of the Regions under the Conference for Regional and Local Authorities of the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP).
- Conducting, where possible, peer reviews in relevant reform areas, modelled on existing the Commission's cooperation with the OECD under SIGMA.

Justice and Home Affairs

- Supporting partners' efforts to establish integrated border management systems, including cooperation on border control, border demarcation and trade facilitation where appropriate. Where appropriate, supporting convergence to European standards and draw on best practices from the EU Schengen acquis. EU encourages partner countries to assess the benefits of establishing shared border crossing points.
- Pursuing dialogue and cooperation in the framework of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM).
- Encouraging exchanges of views, best practices, training and networking of experts on mobility, including conditions for secure and well-managed mobility, bearing in mind the goal of visa-free travel in due course, based on visa facilitation and readmission agreements as a first step. Where applicable, draw on synergies provided by the projects and experience gathered through the Mobility Partnerships.
- Supporting partners' efforts to strengthen asylum and migration systems and continue the dialogue on all issues covered by the GAMM between the Eastern partners and the EU, as well as among the Eastern partners themselves.
- Multilateral cooperation in the justice sector with focus on reform of the judiciary, including further work towards independent and efficient judiciary, judicial cooperation and data protection.
- Cooperation in the field of police reform and specific fields of law enforcement, combating organised crime, including drug crime, coordinated drugs strategies, cybercrime, trafficking in human beings and strengthening customs administrations.

Security and Stability

- Pooling of information and resources to facilitate prevention of, preparedness for, and response to natural and man-made disasters, including a close link with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.
- Facilitating the capacity of Civil Society Organisations, including the CSF for advocacy and promoting confidence building in the field of conflict settlement.
- Cooperation on specific CFSP and CSDP issues, dialogue on CSDP developments, including facilitating participation of interested partner countries

in CSDP EU led missions and operations. Furthering involvement of partner countries in CSDP consultations, training and exercises, experience sharing and cooperation in the area of security sector reform.

WORK PROGRAMME 2014-2017

The participants of Platform 1 agree to focus on the following priority areas during the period 2014-2017 with a mid-term review:

Democratic Governance

Activity 1: Democracy and Human Rights

Specific area: Cooperation between Ombudsmen, strengthening the respect and implementation of European human rights standards, including children's rights and gender equality.

Means of implementation: Projects of EUMS and support to them.

Objective:

Contribute to the HR objectives of the bilateral Action Plans or Association Agendas by strengthening ombudsman institutions in EaP countries in order to improve their ability to contribute to the establishment of deep and sustainable democracy.

Promote best European standards and exchange of views on best practices regarding children's rights and gender equality.

Targets to be achieved:

Enhance ombudsman institutions in EaP countries, encourage citizens of EaP countries to avail of their civic rights to use the institution.

Legislation and implementation are in conformity with European Human Rights standards, including with regard to children's rights and gender equality.

Activity 2: Public Administration Reform

Means of implementation: Panel on Public Administration reform and activities of EU MS

Objective:

1) General support to implementation of reforms agreed in bilateral Action Plans or Association Agendas through contributing to establishment of a professional, accountable and value based apolitical civil service.

2) Fostering approximation to best standards practised in the EU and contributing to increased efficiency of the public administration and policy making process by:

- promoting European standards and exchanging best practice at meetings of the Panel and expert seminars,

- boosting the capacity of civil servants by organising specific training courses,

- boosting the administrative capacity of regional and local authorities.
- promoting local government reform
- promoting E-governance

Targets to be achieved:

- More professional, efficient and more value based civil service
- An increase in the efficiency of implementing public administration legislation,
- Improved access to public services and the reduction of bureaucracy,
- Greater ability to absorb effectively EU assistance (thank to a well-functioning central administration),
- The provision of a better and more ethical service,
- Contribution to boosting the administrative capacity of regional and local authorities and increasing the effectiveness of decision making at regional and local level.

Activity 3: Fight against corruption

Means of implementation: Panel on Fight against Corruption; Cooperation with the CoE

Objective:

- 1) Support the implementation of bilateral objectives from the Action Plans or Association Agendas, including the relevant recommendations of the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), the European Commission recommendations in the context of the visa dialogue (where applicable), the recommendations of the review mechanism of the UN Convention against Corruption (where applicable), as well as other relevant anti-corruption monitoring mechanisms.
- 2) Promote good governance including open government and boost the capacity of public administration and the criminal justice sector to prevent and fight corruption and economic crime.
- 3) Review existing systems to fight corruption in EaP countries (legislative, policy and institutional framework, including enforcement structures) and share good practice with a view to increasing overall efficiency in reducing corruption.
- 4) Improve the skills of civil servants, civil society organisations and businesses dealing with anti-corruption issues.
- 5) Strengthen the cooperation between public authorities (at both central and local level), civil society organisations and the private sector in relation to the development, implementation and monitoring of effective anti-corruption policies.

Targets to be achieved:

-Efficient implementation of European and international standards on good governance and prevention of and fight against corruption in EaP countries.

-Sufficient capacity of public authorities (central and local levels), civil society organisations and businesses to monitor and implement effective anti-corruption policies and to prevent, monitor and fight economic crime.

Activity 4: Electoral standards

Means of implementation: Cooperation with the CoE

Objective:

Continuing to strengthen the objectives under the bilateral Action Plans or Association Agendas, notably regarding the respect for the democratic electoral standards based on recommendations of CoE's Venice Commission and OSCE/ODHIR.

Targets to be achieved:

Contribution to improved compliance with and awareness of European electoral standards in the EaP countries.

Justice and Home Affairs

Activity 5: Integrated Border Management

Means of implementation: Panel on Integrated Border Management, Flagship Initiative on Integrated Border management

Objective:

1) Contributes to bilateral reform benchmarks agreed in the bilateral Action Plans or Association Agendas, in particular to implementation of bilateral Visa Liberalisation Action Plans where applicable.

2) Stepping up operational cooperation, trainings and exchange of best practice between border and customs services in EaP countries, EU MS, EU agencies and international stakeholders on border-related issues. Expanding cooperation among Eastern Partners by drawing on regional cooperation models supported by EU expertise, as in the case of the EUBAM model.

3) Support to the establishment of the advanced training systems on specific issues in the EaP countries by boosting the training capacity of the partner countries' institutions and their ability to provide training for border and customs services.

4) Coordination with the Eastern Partnership Transport Panel on transport links with TEN-T.

5) Financial support to the implementation of IBM projects on the ground

6) Promoting the respect for human rights when securing the borders.

Targets to be achieved:

-Contribution to better coordination between border and customs services from EaP countries and EU member states and increase of operational cooperation, which will contribute to increasing security at borders of EaP countries, streamlining the flow of people and goods and enhancing the effectiveness of border management in EaP countries. Introduce modern practices for prevention and fights against corruption at border and customs services.

-Contribution to increased operational capacity of border and customs services through the provision of training courses.

-Increased training capacities of the respective EaP institutions.

-Enhancing the infrastructural, logistical and procedural/organizational capacities of the border and customs services, aimed at facilitating the flow of people and goods, in line with the IBM concept.

Activity 6: Improved functioning of the Judiciary

Means of implementation: Panel on improved functioning of the Judiciary, Cooperation with the CoE

Objective:

1) Contribute to bilateral reform benchmarks agreed in the bilateral Action Plans or Association Agendas.

2) Facilitate exchanges of information and best practice in the field of judiciary with a view to promoting adherence to European standards.

3) Share experience in reforming the judiciary in line with European standards. Particular attention will be paid to issues such as independence, integrity of the judiciary (ethics code, immunities, accountability, disciplinary measures), training on human rights, reform of prosecution.

4) Foster implementation of a coherent sector-wide reform.

5) Encourage EaP countries to introduce European law-inspired tools into their legislation including support for the application of ICT in court system.

6) Support partners' efforts to ensure personal data protection in line with European standards.

Targets to be achieved:

- Ensure that all judicial systems meet the European standards in order to achieve an independent, efficient, impartial, accountable and effective judiciary and equal access to justice.
- Identified obstacles to implementing European standards on judicial reform and develop recommendations to address these obstacles.

Activity 7: Asylum and Migration

Means of implementation: Panel on Asylum and Migration

Objective:

- 1) Contributing to meeting the agreed reforms in bilateral Action Plans and Association Agendas.
- 2) Assisting to effectively implementation of readmission and visa facilitation agreements.
- 3) Pursuing dialogue and cooperation in the framework of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM). Facilitating the approximation of standards by stepping up dialogue and exchanging best practice between the relevant authorities in EaP countries, EU MS and international stakeholders.

Targets to be achieved:

- Improved asylum and migration systems of EaP countries, in line with best practices and European and international standards.

Activity 8: Fight against cybercrime

Means of implementation: Cooperation with the CoE.

Objective:

- 1) Support the reform process in EaP countries by facilitating approximation to EU and CoE standards based on Budapest Convention.
- 2) Boost the capacity of criminal justice authorities to cooperate effectively against cybercrime by assisting EaP countries in defining strategic priorities regarding cybercrime and developing tools for action against cybercrime.

Targets to be achieved:

- Contribution to strengthening EaP countries' capacity to implement action against cybercrime.
- Strategic priorities regarding cybercrime are defined.

-Presentation of the Cybercrime Situation Report.

-Increased participation of EaP countries in international cybercrime work.

Activity 9: Cooperation among law enforcement agencies

Means of implementation: Eastern Partnership Police programme, Panel on Integrated Border management

Objective:

1) Promote and enable the transfer of European standards for cooperation among law enforcement agencies in EaP countries. Help introduce operationally modern investigation tools such as Joint Investigation Teams. Encourage the creation of common databases and criteria for registering crimes.

2) Step up police cooperation on Eastern Partnership's priorities, notably organised crime, drugs, trafficking in human beings, weapons trafficking and high-level corruption also in line with the objectives agreed in bilateral Association Agendas.

3) Establish a cooperation network among law enforcement agencies from EU MS and EaP countries, as well as with EU agencies.

4) Support partners' efforts to ensure personal data protection in the area of law enforcement activities in line with European standards.

Targets to be achieved:

-Increased practical cooperation between EU police, including Europol and EaP law enforcement agencies.

-Increased knowledge and exchange of good practice among partner agencies.

-Increased effectiveness of EaP police, in particular on cross-border criminal investigations in conjunction with respective border and customs agencies.

- Consolidated capacities for risk assessment in law enforcement agencies in different sectors of the home affairs field, such as integrated border management, migration and asylum, law enforcement cooperation, fighting organised and cyber crime.

Security and Stability

Activity 10: Prevention of, preparedness for, and response to natural and man-made disasters (PPRD)

Means of implementation: Flagship Initiative on PPRD

Objective:

- 1) Develop partner countries' civil protection capacity for prevention, preparedness and response.
- 2) Bring partner countries closer to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

Targets to be achieved:

-Finalisation and implementation of the Electronic Regional Risk Atlas as well as further recommendations for improving the capacities of EaP countries for prevention, preparedness and response.

-Contribution to boosting the legislative, administrative and operational capacity for prevention, preparedness and response based on the gap analysis done in 2013.

-Partner countries are well informed about and able to effectively collaborate with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. ERC (EU Emergency Response Centre) information activities organised in all EaP countries.

Activity 11: CFSP and CSDP cooperation

Means of implementation: Panel on Common Security and Defence Policy

Objective:

- 1) Dialogue on political and practical aspects of participation by interested partner countries in EU CSDP missions and operations, experience sharing on engagement in international crisis management and peacekeeping activities, and development of national capabilities for those purposes, as well as on overall security sector reforms.
- 2) Facilitating implementation of the bilateral Framework Participation Agreements.
- 3) Supports the agreed objectives set out in the bilateral Action Plans or Association Agendas.

Targets to be achieved:

-Enhanced cooperation on international security issues, CFSP and CSDP.

-Increased preparedness for potential participation in EU CSDP missions and operations (through establishing legal framework - FPAs, through dialogue and training activities).

-Increased involvement of the interested EaP countries in the EU CSDP missions and operations.

-Improved situation in the Security Sector of the EaP countries based on good governance.