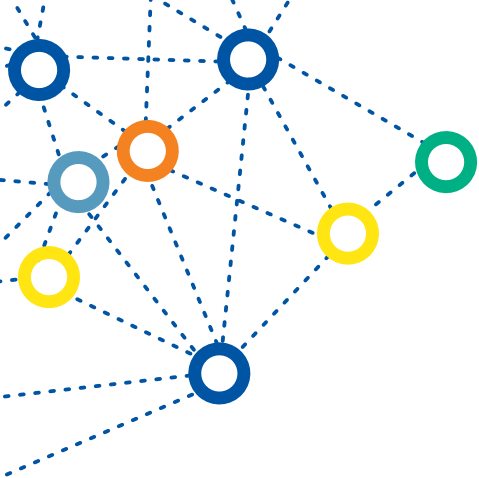




EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

Civil Society Forum

# EaP CSF 2017 IN A SNAPSHOT

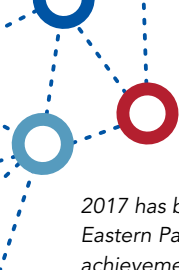


*This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union and National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the EaP CSF and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union and NED.*



**National Endowment  
for Democracy**

*Supporting freedom around the world*



# Letter from the Co-chairs

2017 has been an eventful year for the Eastern Partnership (EaP) bringing about both achievements and setbacks in the reform process of the EaP countries. On 1 September, the Association Agreement between the European Union (EU) and **Ukraine** fully entered into force, paving the way for the structural reforms in the areas of democracy, human rights, rule of law, good governance, trade and sustainable development.

Another EU promise was delivered on when, in the framework of the Visa Liberalisation Dialogues, **Georgia** and Ukraine were granted visa-free regime for a short-term travel to the EU in March and June 2017 respectively.

Initialling of the EU-**Armenia** Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement in March 2017 presents a valuable opportunity to bring the EU-Armenia relationship to a new level. The civil society should be given its rightful place in the dialogue between the EU and Armenia and reform implementations.

Despite the progress in the negotiations over a new agreement with the EU, the situation with human rights in **Azerbaijan** has been deteriorating. The scope of 'caviar diplomacy' involving PACE members has been further exposed while the persecution of human rights activists and journalists continued.

Following the demonstrations that took place throughout the country in the first half of the year, the EU has reaffirmed its policy of 'critical engagement' towards **Belarus**. The EaP CSF Steering Committee expressed its deep concerns over the pressure on the civil society and arbitrary detentions following the protests. The government continues applying the death penalty, with one person executed and three sentenced to death in 2017.

In reaction to two draft laws passed by the **Moldovan** Parliament and aimed to reform the electoral system Moldovan civil society issued

a number of appeals and organised public protests.

**Security** concerns in both the EaP countries and the EU are on the rise. Even after the stabilisation of the frontline in the Donbas region, the fighting continues while the diplomatic negotiations do not seem to go further. The EaP region remains the primary battleground for the **Russian propaganda** efforts. The EU's Centre of Excellence for countering hybrid threats was launched, while both the EaP countries and EU Member States work on securing their cyberspace.

**Media freedom** has been undermined in a number of the EaP countries: the kidnapping of Afghan Mukhtarli in Tbilisi, as well as the raid of the Ukrainska Pravda offices by the Ukrainian State Security Service demonstrate the rising pressure on journalists throughout the region. During the EaP Media Conference in Kyiv, the EU has reaffirmed its commitment to support free media in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood.

The situation with human rights and freedom of speech in **Crimea** is becoming more and more problematic, while the civil society is under pressure due to arbitrary detentions and persecution. The 2016 **EaP CSF Pavel Sheremet Award** Winner Mykola Semena has been accused of violating Russia's territorial integrity and handed down a 2.5-year suspended sentence with a 3-year ban on journalistic activity.

Ahead of the **5th Eastern Partnership Summit** in Brussels, the [EaP Civil Society Conference](#) and [9th EaP CSF Annual Assembly](#) organised jointly with the Estonian Presidency of the EU is of special importance since, as stated in the **EaP 20 Deliverables for 2020** working document, civil society should be engaged in the implementation of the deliverables in a more structured manner. In the run up to the Summit,

the EaP CSF produced a detailed **Policy Brief** commenting on the working document and analysing the feasibility, ambitiousness, appropriateness, risks and differentiation of 13 key deliverables.

In comparison with the Summit Declaration, the **Civil Society Declaration** to be adopted in Tallinn will be more critical and demanding vis-a-vis the EaP governments, more modest in assessing the results of the past two years after the Riga Summit, at the same time urging for a more ambitious offer to the partner countries.

The declaration will reiterate the strengthened and crosscutting role of the civil society in achieving the goals of the Eastern Partnership and underline the importance of **enabling environment for civil society** allowing it to perform its functions and engage in the reform agenda bringing tangible results for people.

Civil society believes in the European future of the EaP countries, based on shared values, rule of law and respect for **democratic principles and public accountability**.

We reiterate the importance of the **multilateral dimension** of the Eastern Partnership allowing for the beneficial exchange and experience transfer not only between individual partners and the EU, but also among the EaP countries, creating stronger links and strengthening their resilience. We can clearly see its benefits for the civil society successfully working together on regional challenges and often developing consolidated positions, supporting each other in difficult times and changing the EaP societies and their lives for the better.

Finally, the Eastern Partnership is a part of the solution to the challenges the EU is facing and it should not be shifted to the back burner of the EU policy agenda.



**Hennadiy Maksak**  
Co-chair of the EaP CSF  
Steering Committee



**Dovilė Šukytė**  
Co-chair of the EaP CSF  
Steering Committee



# EaP CSF in Numbers Overview 2017

## Advocacy and policy advice



> **100** issues raised with EU officials, including through the **Policy Brief** on the 20 EaP Deliverables for 2020



> **50** EaP CSF participants took part in  
> **30** official Eastern Partnership platforms, panels and other EaP meetings



> **20** occasions on which the EaP CSF was consulted by the EU institutions



**3** EaP Ministerial meetings where the EaP CSF representatives addressed the EU and EaP Ministers



**1** Monitoring Mission on the civil society, media and human rights situation in Belarus

## Re-granting



**15** Projects



**292.525** Total Budget



> **50** CSOs involved

## Events



> **15** events organized on the regional level



> **800** participants in total



> **300** attendees at the joint 9th EaP CSF Annual Assembly & EaP Civil Society Conference

## Communications



≈ **12000** followers on Facebook



> **1500** followers on Twitter



> **50** mentions in the media

## Armenia: Re-establishing dialogue with the government and initiating the EU-Armenia Cooperation Group

Since early 2017, regular consultations between the Armenian National Platform and high-level officials on the priorities of EU-Armenia cooperation and the role of civil society in the process have been re-established. Representatives of the executive and legislative branches of government actively take part in the thematic discussions on all dimensions of the reform process organised by the National Platform.

The civil society discussed the EU-Armenia Partnership Priorities for 2017-2020 with MFA. In October, the kick-off meeting of the EU-Armenia Civil Society Cooperation Group took place aiming to raise the advocacy capacity of the Armenian civil society and in particular of the Armenian National Platform in promoting the reforms agenda.



In light of the EU-Armenia negotiations on a new framework agreement and the further initialling of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA), the National Platform has been working on establishing the EU-Armenia Civil Society Cooperation Group.

*The principal objective of the initiative was establishing a more consistent cooperation between the EU CSOs and their Armenian counterparts.*

The idea was implemented within the project lead by the Eurasia Partnership Foundation in the framework of the EaP CSF Re-Granting Scheme. As part of the process, the experience of EU-associated partner countries in setting up bilateral civil society platforms was analysed. Based on the project's study, the Armenian National Platform further developed the mission of the bilateral cooperation group.

*"We see a crucial role of EU CSOs in promoting cooperation with Armenia among the EU Members States and international institutions, as well as in support in advocating for the civil society's view on EU-Armenia relations in the EU institutions and before the Armenian government."*

**Boris Navasardian,**  
EaP CSF Armenia Country Facilitator

The next step in the process is the establishment of the EU-Armenia Civil Society Platform in line with the CEPA and based on the outcomes of the EaP CSF re-granting scheme project and the expertise of the Armenian National Platform.



## Azerbaijan: Promoting Human Rights and Enabling Environment for Civil Society

Azerbaijan has adopted and enforced laws and regulations that severely restrict, rather than foster, a vibrant civil society. It has eliminated independent media, imprisoned, and otherwise sought to silence the independent journalists, critics, and political activists who are essential to any kind of civil society envisaged in the Eastern Partnership. In 2017, the government continued crackdown on civil society has coincided with negotiations on the new, enhanced bilateral agreement between the EU and Azerbaijan.



For this reason, the situation in Azerbaijan has been a long-standing focus of the EaP CSF activities. In the course of the year, the EaP CSF implemented a series of advocacy activities, including meetings with stakeholders, public events, closed briefings and public statements. The EaP CSF also joined forces with other civil society organisations and networks working on the issue in order to support the civil society in the country and lobby the EU institutions to reflect the relevant human rights concerns in their policy approach towards Azerbaijan.

In context of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev's visit to Brussels, a joint [NGO open letter](#) highlighted the continued human rights violations in Azerbaijan, including the detention of activists and journalists, and severe restrictions imposed on civil society organisations and their access to funding.

The signatories addressed the crucial role of the EU in insisting on clear human rights improvements in Azerbaijan needed before negotiating a partnership agreement with Azerbaijan's government.

The EaP CSF addressed two open letters on the allegation of corruption within The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe PACE to the

stakeholders: [on launching external, independent, and impartial investigation into allegations of corruption and other violations of the PACE code of conduct in connection with its work on Azerbaijan](#) and [on the scheduled vote of no confidence in the PACE President](#).

The Steering Committee also highlighted several cases of political prisoners, including the prominent blogger [Mehman Huseynov](#). The EaP CSF Steering Committee welcomed the European Parliament resolution on the case of the journalist [Afgan Mukhtarli](#) and called for further attention to his situation.

The imprisoned Azerbaijani journalist Afgan Mukhtarli became the winner of this year's EaP CSF Pavel Sheremet Journalism Award. The EaP CSF Steering Committee has decided that Mr Mukhtarli has demonstrated extraordinary courage in journalism and outstanding achievement in the cause of freedom of speech in the Eastern Partnership region in 2017.



*"Raising human rights issues and writing about ill-treatment of imprisoned human rights defenders and activists, Afgan Mukhtarli has shown the importance of solidarity towards those who dare to speak up and are paying a price for it."*

**Dovilė Šukytė, Co-chair of the EaP CSF Steering Committee, Acting Director of the Eastern Europe Studies Centre**

Mr Mukhtarli exhibited fearlessness working in the face of ongoing harassment by the government and taking on sensitive hard-hitting subjects despite the risks to his own safety and freedom. He provided invaluable investigative journalism to his fellow Azerbaijanis through exposing high-level corruption and conflicts of interest among officials.

*"The abduction of Afgan Mukhtarli in Georgia and his sentencing to a lengthy pre-trial detention on politically motivated and arbitrary charges of smuggling and illegal border crossing, as well as the subsequent rejection of his appeal is an appalling violation of freedom of expression."*

**Hennadiy Maksak, Co-chair of the EaP CSF Steering Committee, Head of the Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism"**

At the end of August, the court extended Mukhtarli's pre-trial detention until the end of October. The EaP CSF strongly believes the Pavel Sheremet award will serve not only as a recognition of bravery in an extremely challenging profession, but also as a gesture of solidarity with both Mr Mukhtarli, and the entire Azerbaijani independent civil society continuing its work in a climate of fear and repression.

## Belarus: Monitoring the civil society, media and human rights situation

Following the wave of severe repressions and mass human rights abuses against peaceful protests in response to the so-called 'social parasite' tax by the Belarusian authorities in spring 2017, the EaP CSF deployed a Monitoring Mission on the civil society, media and human rights situation in Belarus to develop a set of recommendations to the EU, Belarusian authorities and civil society.

*The monitors underlined the need for systemic democratisation, human rights progress, and conditionality in the EU-Belarus partnership agenda.*

The Mission prepared a report with recommendations to the major stakeholders in the EU-Belarus dialogue. The recommendations to the EU highlighted the importance of a partnership strategy based on the conditionality approach, where political and economic reforms are interdependent and civil society is engaged as an institutional partner. Moreover, the Mission called on the EU to systematically raise the fundamental freedoms during the meetings of the EU-Belarus Coordination Group

and ensure that they are at the core of the future Partnership Priorities. In the same vein, the Mission appealed to the Belarusian government authorities, demanding the release and rehabilitation of all detained activists, as well as the repeal of Decree No. 3, which was adopted against the backdrop of the recent rapprochement with the EU.

*"The Belarusian civil society continues working under the threat of persecution, since the authorities have preserved all repressive legal norms that can be applied at their discretion. In order to create an enabling environment and to respect human rights and civil liberties, stifling legal norms have to be abolished. Genuine dialogue in all policy areas should be possible between the civil society and the government."*

**Maria Golubeva, Head of the Mission**

*The protests in February-March 2017 were initially triggered by the adoption of Decree No. 3 "On preventing social dependency" imposing a tax on unemployed people. It was declared unconstitutional and inconsistent with the ILO Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, of which Belarus is a signatory. The major demand of the protest was the repeal of this regulation, however it quickly grew in scope and participation, expanding throughout the whole country and leading to the detention of around 900 people by Belarusian authorities.*

*"Belarus is in dire need for real liberalisation since the whole process after August 2015 largely represents the imitation of reforms rather than a systemic effort. The government must realise that in order to avoid deeper political, social and economic crises in the near future the civil society, political parties and enterprises should be able to operate in a free environment."*

**Mikayel Hovhannisyanyan, Key Expert of the Mission**

The Mission members held several advocacy meetings with the representatives of the European Parliament and European Commission during the visit to Brussels delivering to them the main recommendations from the Mission's report.



To ensure that the human rights in Belarus and other EaP countries remain high in the EU foreign policy agenda, first-hand information on rapid developments in the EaP countries is provided speedily to policy-makers, and the National Platforms and the broader civil society have another instrument to advocate with their authorities, the EaP CSF has committed to adopt the mechanism of monitoring missions as a regular working tool.



## Georgia: Contributing to the Process of Constitutional Amendments

The EaP CSF Georgian National Platform (GE NP) took an active part in the 8-month discussions on the proposed amendments to the Georgian Constitution, first presented in the Parliament on 22 April 2017.

*Previously, two rounds of amendments were introduced into the Georgian Constitution in 2004 and 2010. Both of them strengthened the authority of either the President or the Parliament.*

- **Introducing proportional electoral system.**

*Georgian citizens vote under a mixed electoral system. In accordance with the new law, the seats in the Parliament would be distributed among political parties passing the 5% threshold, while the undistributed mandates would go to the political party with the highest number of votes in the elections.*

- **Revamping the procedure for electing the President.** *The President to be elected by a college of governmental officials, not through a popular ballot; the change will be enforced for the 2024 elections.*

In April-May 2017, the GE NP held meetings with the Speaker of the Georgian Parliament Irakli Kobakhidze to discuss the amendments. The Platform issued a statement, calling on the Parliament of Georgia to introduce proportional system in line with the principles of fair elections and proportional allocation of undistributed mandates, as well as a lower electoral threshold of 3%.

In its appeal to the Venice Commission, the GE NP highlighted the importance of bringing the procedure of mandate distribution in agreement with the principle of fair elections together with reducing the electoral threshold. A balanced electoral system based on the principles of proportionality, fairness & equality was mentioned as a priority for the country.

At the meeting with the President of Georgia, Giorgi Margvelashvili, the National Platform shared its position on the role and competencies of the President.

*"I welcome the opportunity to discuss the ongoing constitutional amendments with the civil society. The starting point of the reform is that the Constitution needs to be balanced. Any model maintaining a balance for a democratic society is acceptable. Given this context, I am ready to take the opinion of the civil society into consideration."*

**Giorgi Margvelashvili, President of Georgia**

Political pluralism, pluralistic democracy and diverse government institutions were the dominant themes of the GNP address to the Parliament. The National Platform called for the creation of a political environment where the state leader is elected through universal, equal and direct suffrage.



After months of political discussions on the amendments between the majority party and the opposition, Georgian civil society discussed the final draft of the reform with the President Margvelashvili.

*"The process is very complex and it involved a multitude of stakeholders with divergent opinions. However, reaching a consensus is in everybody's interests and the GE NP took an active stance in shaping the final decision."*

**Lasha Tugushi, Director of the Liberal Academy Tbilisi**

At the 3rd and final hearing the Georgian Parliament adopted the draft constitutional changes on 26 September with 117 out of 119 votes in favour, 2 against.

The **President** will no longer be elected through direct ballot but the college of 300 electors starting with 2023 elections. Next year's election, however, will follow the existing procedure. 2020 **Parliamentary elections** will be held under the current mixed electoral system; the threshold for entering the Parliament will be exceptionally reduced to 3% and parties will be allowed to form electoral blocs. From 2024, the Parliament will be elected under the fully proportional electoral system; electoral blocs will no longer be allowed and the 5% threshold will remain intact. Under the new law the provision, whereby the party that garners the largest number of votes also receives a disproportionately large share of unallocated mandates, will no longer apply. Instead, these mandates will be distributed among the parties that poll minimum 5% in strict proportion to the percentage of the vote they receive.



## Moldova: Opposing the Electoral System Change

*In March-April 2017, two draft laws on the modification of the electoral system were passed in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova: the first proposing the transition to a system of parliamentary elections based on single-member constituencies, and the second providing the introduction of a mixed electoral system. Despite the mandatory requirements of the Moldovan law, the debate on the two draft laws was introduced into the Parliament's agenda without any prior consultations with the Government or parliamentary committees. The laws cannot be substantially modified after their adoption, even if changes are recommended by the Venice Commission.*

Moldovan civil society strongly reacted to these laws on several occasions. In March, 18 CSOs issued and signed a public appeal to the Speaker of the Parliament Adrian Candu urging him to withdraw the draft law on the modification of the electoral system.

In the same vein, eight prominent human rights organizations called on the Parliament to modify the election process strictly in line with the recommendations of the Constitutional Court and the recommendations of national and international election monitoring missions.

Moldovan civil society condemned the proposed amendments in a declaration calling for observing the rule of law and democratic principles by the Parliament, they also addressed the international partners of Moldova. The declaration was initiated by the members of EaP CSF Working Group 1 (WG1) and signed by 24 CSOs.



*In support of this appeal, Transparency International Moldova conducted a study demonstrating how changing the electoral system under the current conditions would weaken Parliament's legitimacy, increase discrimination and corruption in the management of public funds and the role of the judiciary in the electoral process.*

Other public declarations stressed that the attack on civil society organisations is unacceptable and erodes trust in the authorities. Civil society further demanded the authorities to conduct a transparent employment competition in the National Agency for Solving Contestations and urged them to ensure the effectiveness of this institution.

Several active members of EaP CSF WG1 conducted studies on the eventual consequences of the laws adoption, addressing their expert opinions to the Venice Commission, organised round tables, participated in public debates in the Parliament, on TV and radio, organised flash mobs and protests in front of the Parliament supported by several opposition parties.

*"The initiative to change the election system cannot be improved – it needs to be withdrawn."*

**Lilia Carasciuc, Transparency International Moldova**

*The draft law received a negative evaluation by the Venice Commission. Moldova's development partners emphasised the need to withdraw this law. Despite the multiple warnings, the Parliament adopted the law in the final reading, thus ignoring the public opinion and the recommendations of international community to the detriment of democracy and advantage of the interest groups.*



## Ukraine: Providing Demand-Driven Expertise and Advocating for Closer Association with the EU

In 2017, the EaP CSF Ukrainian National Platform (UA NP) focused on the following topics: timely and adequate implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, strengthening the role of Ukraine within the Eastern Partnership, enhancing the EaP security component, deepening the cooperation between the EU and associated EaP voicing their aspirations for a closer integration with the EU.

It further deepened its relations with the government stakeholders and the EU Delegation providing its expert opinion. The Platform conducted a detailed analysis of the "20 EaP Deliverables for 2020" in relation to Ukraine and shared their expectations of the Association Agreement Progress Report.

The UA NP held a number of events. One of the most memorable ones was dedicated to the entry into force of the visa liberalisation for Ukraine. On 11 June - the first day of the visa free travel - the first "visa-free train" departed from Kyiv. Ukrainian officials, including the Vice-Prime-Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadze, and foreign diplomats came to congratulate the first passengers – experts, artists and civic activists who had been advocating for the visa-free regime for Ukraine for several years. In Poland, Ukraine's Ambassador Andriy Deshchytsia and representatives of local authorities met the delegation. The expert discussion on the significance of the visa-free travel for Ukraine, and the country's future crowned the campaign.

# EaP CSF in Numbers Re-granting Scheme 2017

The **EaP CSF Re-granting scheme** supports the projects of the EaP CSF members with a regional dimension that contribute to achieving its mission and facilitate the work of its five thematic Working Groups. Three calls for proposals have been implemented on the course of 2015-2017 with 48 projects benefiting from the scheme. The projects delivered substantial policy input, capacity building and trainings, as well as activities and campaigns focusing on the grassroots level connecting the civil society with the interest and needs of wider public in the EaP countries. The project results contributed to the policy implementation under the EaP multilateral roof, to the process of reforms in the EaP countries and to EaP CSF advocacy in Brussels, EU and EaP capitals.

## Overall re-granting budget

€ 810.000

Total funds available 2015-2017

€ 181.335

Total funds spent in 2015

€ 321.165

Total funds spent in 2016

€ 307.500

Total funds available in 2017

## Re-granting 2017



60 proposals submitted



52 eligible proposals



Multi-country projects



3 best projects to be awarded at the Annual Assembly

## Selected proposals



15 projects implemented



Implementation period: April - November 2017



Average duration 8 months

# Projects' Highlights

## Fostering Links between Think Tanks in the Eastern Partnership countries and the EU

In the framework of the project funded through the [EaP CSF Re-granting Scheme 2017](#), the project partners have been working on strengthening the connections between the Eastern Partnership and the EU think tanks to generate a maximum impact on their research, policymaking and advocacy effort in promoting European values across the EaP region.

Two months ahead of the Summit, around 60 international and local experts gathered for the Eastern Partnership Think Tank Forum in Chisinau. The event was organised by the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), Georgian Institute for Strategic Studies (GISS) and New Europe Center (former Institute of World Policy).

The discussions contributed to refining a set of policy recommendations for the EaP Summit, building up on the 20 EaP Deliverables for 2020 document.

*"We should commit to more ambitious deadlines and more concrete results to deliver to our citizens. Our priorities are decreasing roaming charges, supporting youth initiatives and mobility for civil society and media, SMEs and entrepreneurship, as well as enhanced communications and visibility for the EaP region."*

**Daniela Morari, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova**

It was stressed that the Civil Society Declaration should send a clearer political message, with the EU and partner countries recommitting to the EaP, while acknowledging its achievements, and recognising the European aspirations of the partners.



*"This year's Eastern Partnership Summit will build on the Riga Summit's strong engagement and commitment."*

**Ambassador Peter Michalko, Head of EU Delegation in Moldova**

In a similar vein, the EaP CSF Steering Committee members further stressed the need to reiterate the EaP's political ambitions and messages, often overlooked as a result of bureaucratisation, as well as the importance of strategic communication and visibility for the EaP region. Against this background, civil society should also take on a more proactive role, monitoring the policy and further promoting multilateral cooperation between countries.





*"While the multilateral dimension is the Eastern Partnership's added value, depoliticisation and constant compromising are its current challenges."*

**Ulad Vialichka, EaP CSF Steering Committee member**

The policy recommendations focused on the civil society's vision for the EaP Summit in Brussels and beyond. They will be presented to the stakeholders during the civil society event in Tallinn and the advocacy visit to Brussels.

## Enhancing the Role of Civil Society and SMEs in the Implementation of European Standards

The project implemented by the Center for Innovation and Policies (Moldova), Reforms Associates and the Security (Georgia) and Strategic Studies Group (Ukraine) engaged with the national standardisation bodies, namely the National Standards Body of Georgia, Institute for Standardization of Moldova and Ukrainian Agency for Standardization in the process of the field and desk-research for the elaboration of a comparative study on the European standardisation process in the context of the EU integration process. The standardisation bodies provided their input not only on the study itself, but also on the overall project approach.

*"It was a surprise for me to find so much openness on the part of the public institutions. It is clear that civil society support is needed in the field of standardisation."*

**Yaroslav Matychyk, Lead Researcher**

The project revealed that a cooperation framework between civil society and the national standardisation bodies in the EaP countries to facilitate the exchange of expertise and foster the convergence with the EU standards should be developed.

The national standardisation bodies have benefitted from this project through establishing collaboration with CSOs and receiving their support in promoting the importance of the EU standards adoption for development and economic growth. The agencies hope to improve reaching out to the beneficiaries of the convergence process with the civil society's help.

*"We are very glad that CSOs support our endeavours in promoting the benefits of the EU standards and we would like to continue our cooperation. I believe that the guidelines developed within the project will have a wide applicability for other EaP countries."*

**Varvariuc Inga, Moldovan Institute for Standardisation**

## Promoting Smart Waste Management in the EaP Countries

The CSOs from Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova - Good Deeds, International Business and Economic Development Center, and National Environmental Center - focused on reducing



negative environmental impact of households with the help of capacity building, raising awareness and supporting networking and cooperation in the field of waste management.

The partners developed Smart Waste Management Guidelines for communities, conducted trainings with community managers and a round table on building the capacity of target groups in implementing the new Laws on Waste under the Association Agreements.

In Ukraine, 120 community association managers and waste management businesses took part in four one-day training sessions with the participation of the Municipal Utilities Department in three cities - Kyiv, Zhytomyr and Cherkassy.

*"I was very glad to learn about waste sorting techniques for our multi-storey building, places for selling raw materials, and communication with the local government."*

**Community association manager at a multi-storey building in Kyiv, Ukraine**

The workshops built up on the Smart Waste Management guidelines developed on the basis of the National Waste Management Strategy introduced in 2016 and entering into force next year. Furthermore, a concept for a waste management collaboration network and online platform was presented. The feedback on both the online and printed versions of the guidelines has been overwhelmingly positive.

As a result of the trainings and getting familiar with the Guidelines, the community managers organised separate waste collection in their buildings. Several issues related to the collaboration with the municipal government came up in the process of implementation, including providing containers for secondary raw materials and financing hazardous waste treatment in households.

*"Before this training I had no idea that I could sell my wastepaper to the recycling company!"*

**Community association manager at a multi-apartment building in Cherkassy, Ukraine**

In Georgia, 39 community association managers and 10 waste management companies benefited from three one-day training sessions in Batumi and Kutaisi, with the participation of the Ministry of European Integration. The new legislation on Waste Management was adopted in Georgia in the past years. Community managers learnt about new opportunities for sorting waste in their households in their daily life.

*"We would like to gain more experience in smart waste management for communities through staying in touch with our Ukrainian and Moldovan colleagues on social media."*

**Community Manager from Kutaisi, Georgia**

In Moldova, in cooperation with the Chisinau Municipal Council, the Moldovan project partner printed 4000 information posters for the local population on a new system for sorting municipal solid waste. To strengthen the capacity of Chisinau municipality's condominiums in waste sorting, five information seminars were organised in the five districts of the municipality. 15 heads of condominiums of Buiucani sector took part in the first seminar on 4 August. During the event, the author of the Law on Waste, Tatiana Tugui,



presented the new approaches in the field of waste management transposed into the national legislation based on the EU rules.

## Everybody Counts: Empowering Rural Youth

The project “Everybody Counts” implemented by Armenian Progressive Youth NGO in partnership with the Foundation for Advancement of Moldova and the Society Initiative Institute (Ukraine) focused on fostering the integration and participation of young people from rural and neglected urban areas, raising awareness of youth participation opportunities and providing them with training on job application, digital skills and mobility. To empower young people in rural communities, the project partners organised tailored trainings and capacity building activities on mobility opportunities, developing skills needed for the international work environment.

The dialogue with local authorities and respective ministries will start the process of better involvement of youth in the decision-making process and in the life of their local communities. The partners conducted meetings with the representatives of the Armenian Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs and Moldovan Ministry of Youth.

The Rural Youth Participation Handbook with policy recommendations to the stakeholders provides the ideas on further development of youth participation structures at the local and community levels in Armenia, Moldova and

Ukraine. More than 140 young people in Moldova and around 200 in Ukraine responded to the needs analysis questionnaire.

In Armenia, two practical trainings for young 46 participants were organised. The project has succeeded in establishing strong partnerships with the local CSOs and creating a network working towards a consortium that would implement a similar project for all the Armenian regions. Furthermore, a group of students have organized a peer-to-peer training on writing CVs and cover letters. As a result, three people were invited to an interview for the first time in their lives.



*“I wish I knew all this when writing my first CV. Now I understand why I was not shortlisted for the interview.”*

**Shushan Abovyan, workshop participant**

In Moldova, five career-counselling sessions with 72 participants attending were held. The Foundation for Advancement developed a training program in partnership with the Youth Bank's Network, managed by the East Europe Foundation. Both organisations, members of the Moldovan National Platform, managed to multiply the project results by expanding the geographical area covered by the training program. The young people attending the workshop were highly satisfied with the activities and repeatedly mentioned the importance and pertinence of the addressed topics. For instance, a young man who attended the workshop in Floresti, had to apply for a scholarship at take part in a study trip to Switzerland. During the





workshop, he benefited from the individual coaching, worked on his motivation letter, improved it and prepared all the documents required for submission in the selection process.

*"I think that civic education and youth empowerment is not only about volunteering, but also about learning and developing personal skills. Thanks to this workshop I learnt many things you cannot find online or in textbooks."*

**Workshop participant from Armenia**

130 participants benefitted from five capacity-building events in Ukraine. After a training session on opportunities for youth in L'viv, a group of young people teamed up to work on a project under the British Council program "Active Citizens". Their project focuses on community development, in particular the urban planning of their district in L'viv. The workshop helped one of the participants to develop her leadership skills - she joined the organisers of the Youth Day in L'viv, where she managed an event on youth development and a "Labyrinth theatre" performance.

*"Thanks to the trainings, I discovered new opportunities to be helpful to my society, but also to improve a number of skills useful for my future career. I have realised the value of the participation in the community activities."*

**Workshop participant from Ukraine**

## Social Dialogue Impact and Optimising Labour Migration in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine

The project partners suggested to link trade unions' agenda with migration realities in their countries, facilitating cooperation between trade unions in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine to increase the influence of social dialogue on the optimisation of labour migration.

Formulating the trade unions positions on migration has become the main project result. Furthermore, the establishment of connections between labour migrants from Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine helped to identify their opinion on the trade unions work in their countries to minimise the negative consequences of migration.



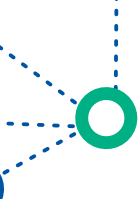
*"Labour migration needs a more effective management to be optimised through social dialogue. We need sustainable strategies to increase the benefits of labour migration."*

**Liliana Postan, Researcher of Labour Institute, Chisinau**

Valentina Butescu, a former chair of a trade union organisation who immigrated to Switzerland, took part in the Workshop on social dialogue in the field of labour migration in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine held in August in Chisinau.

*"In Switzerland, I find many social protection procedures and instruments, which also exist in Moldova, but do not work in an effective manner. I believe that trade unions should be more active in promoting social policies."*

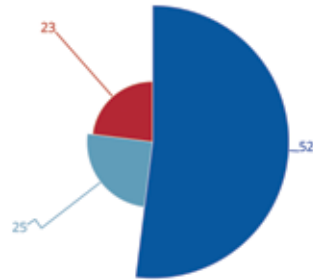
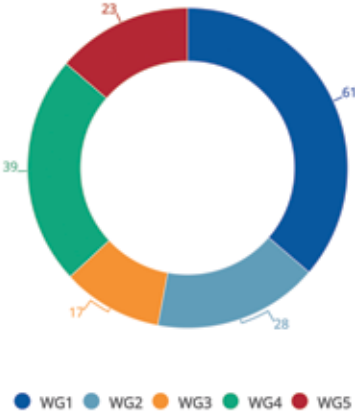
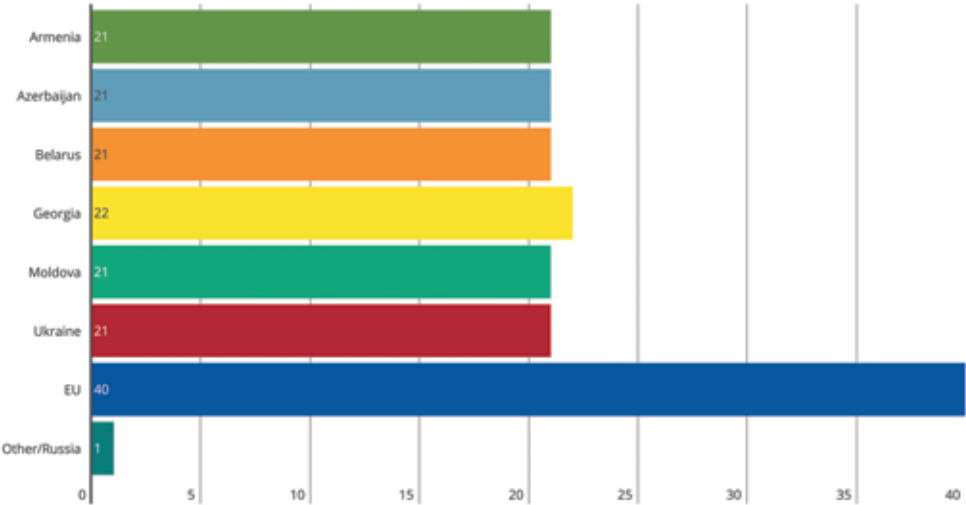
**Valentina Butescu, workshop participant**



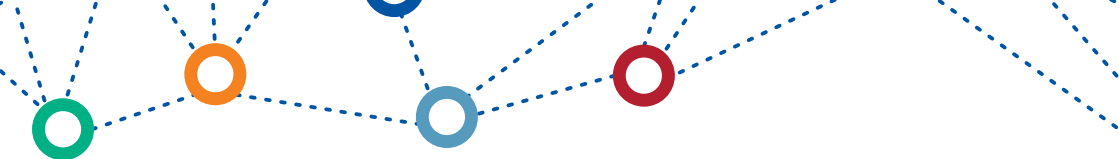
# EaP CSF in Numbers

## Annual Assembly and EaP Civil Society Conference

### Attendees per country and WG

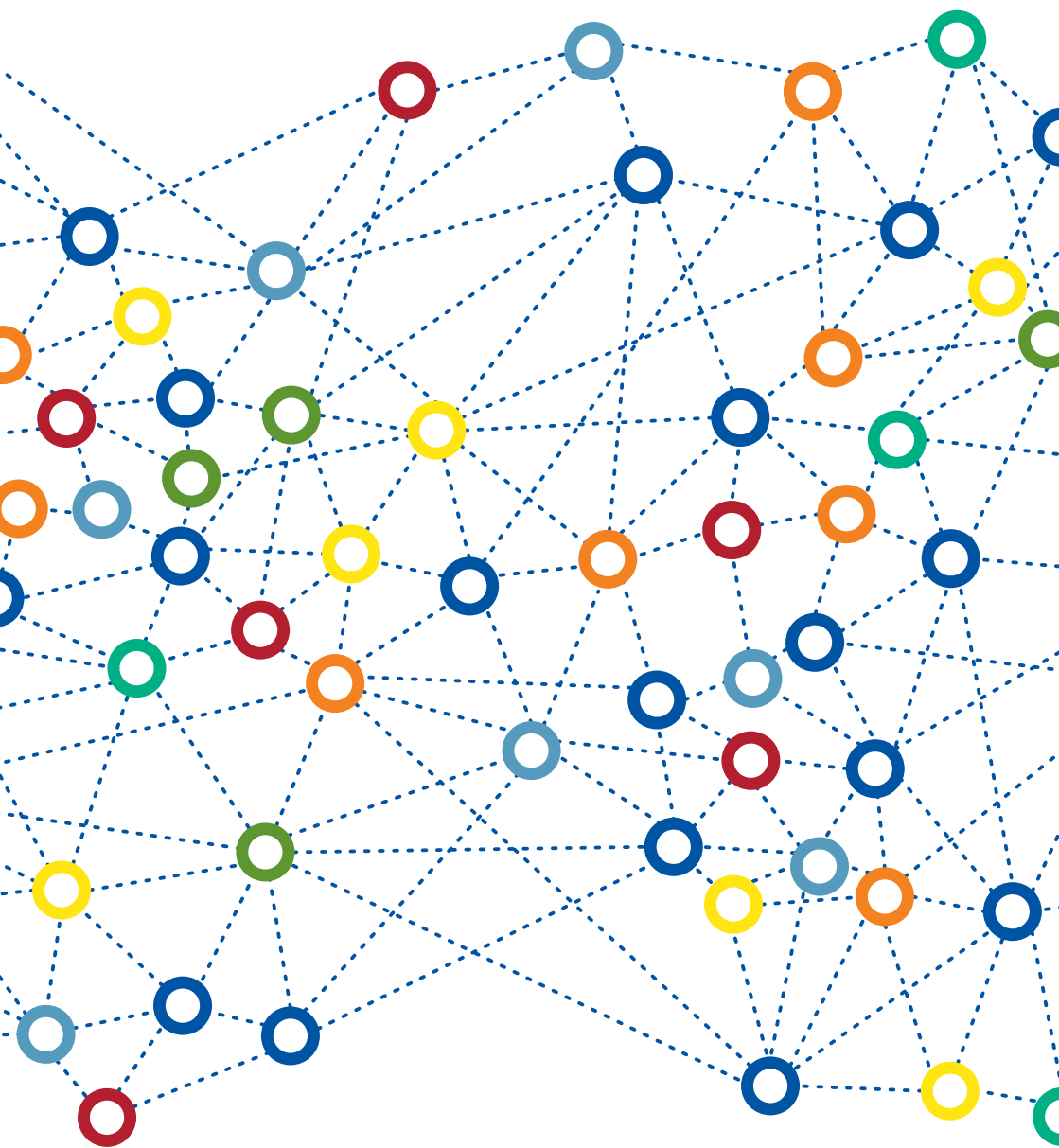


● Participated previously ● Did not participate in 2016  
● Never participated previously



In 2017, for the first time the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Conference—a biennial event conducted in conjunction with the Eastern Partnership Summit—and the EaP CSF Annual Assembly are held as one event. The objective is to reflect on the important role played by civil society organisations within the Eastern Partnership countries while identifying ways in which civil society and government can cooperate better in delivering effective results to the citizens of the region. Those results are supposed to be in keeping with the concrete set of the 20 EaP 2020 Deliverables.

The event is particularly important given that it takes place just a month before the Brussels Summit, which in November will bring together Heads of State and Government from the EU Member States and partner countries alike. The participants will adopt the Civil Society Declaration to the Summit, a collaborative document that will identify major obstacles to further democratic development within the EaP countries and to the smooth implementation of the 2020 Deliverables while offering specific recommendations on how governments and civil society organisations can work together to overcome them.



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP  
Civil Society Forum