

## Annual Activities Report 2018

### ARMENIAN NATIONAL PLATFORM REPORT

#### THE KEY FOCUS AREAS:

- **EU-Armenia Civil Society Roadmap:** meetings and discussions were held both with the RA Government representatives and the EU Delegation to Armenia and EU missions representatives.
- **CEPA implementation:** the ANP established cooperation with the newly formed interagency commission between Armenia and the European Union (chaired by RA Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan) on coordinating the implementation of Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA).
- **Local Self-Government Reforms (LSG):** through the ANP meetings and statements, the problems related to the LSG reform were reachable to broader public and the ANP recommendations on administrative territorial reforms were sent to the Government for consideration.
- **Law on non-governmental organizations:** ANP organized meetings where legal experts were presenting to the ANP members the necessary steps to be made by them in the light of new NGO legislation.
- **Strengthening of the member organizations:** meetings were organized to present to the ANP members the new funding and partnership opportunities.
- **EaP CSF internal reform:** peculiarities of the reform were discussed by the ANP members so that the opinions could be communicated to the Steering Committee of the CSF, and so that the Platform was prepared to the planned changes.

#### MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Establishment of preliminary format for dialogue/consultations with the new Government, in particular regarding the ANP cooperation with the interagency commission on CEPA implementation.
- Regular operation of the ANP Secretariat despite absence of operational funding. Among the results can be mentioned the engagement of more regional CSOs in the activities of the Armenian National Platform, as well as wider introduction of membership fees which is unprecedented for the EaP CSF.
- Active participation of ANP representatives in the discussion and voting on the EaP CSF internal reform.

## ACTIVITIES OF THE PLATFORM IN 2018:

### Meetings, assemblies, consultations of the Armenian National Platform

**EaP CSF Armenian National Platform Annual Assembly** held in Yerevan on November 28, 2017 with 57 participants. Main topics covered:

- Summary of the ANP activities for 2017 and the planning of forthcoming actions.
- Presentation of “Commitment to Constructive Dialogue”, made by Karen Zadoyan, President of Armenian Lawyers’ Association.
- Presentation of the results of the CSF 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Assembly in Tallinn by Haykuhi Harutyunyan, Member of CSF Steering Committee, President of “Protection of Rights without Borders” NGO.
- Presentation of Annual reports by ANP WG2 Coordinator Karen Chilingaryan and ANP WG4 Coordinator Grigor Yeritsyan. Heriknaz Harutyunyan, Executive Director of the EaP CSF ANP Secretariat, presented a report on CSF ANP Secretariat activities.
- Presentation of the [decision](#) on the appeal filed to the EaP CSF ANP Ethics Council by Pink Armenia NGO.

The remaining part of the Assembly was dedicated to the sessions of the ANP Working Groups, during which elections of WG coordinators were held.

- Abraham Artashesyan, Vice-Chairman of Communities Finance Officers Association, was elected as Working Group 1 coordinator.
- Karen Chilingaryan, President of the Consumers Consulting Center NGO, was re-elected as Working Group 2 coordinator.
- Amalia Hambartsumyan, President of “Khazer” Ecological and Cultural NGO, was elected as Working Group 3 coordinator.
- Grigor Yeritsyan, President of “Armenian Progressive Youth” NGO, was re-elected as WG4 coordinator.
- Naira Arakelyan, President of Armavir Development Center, was re-elected as Working Group 5 coordinator.

The event was attended by H.E. Mr. Piotr Antoni Switalski, Ambassador, Head of the EU Delegation to Armenia, who spoke about the EU-Armenia bilateral relations, Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and the importance of the role of civil society in the monitoring of the reforms process.



**EaP CSF Armenian National Platform Delegates Assembly** held in Yerevan at Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) office on December 13, 2017 with 52 participants. Main topics covered:

- Presentation of Bridge for CSOs three-year Programme funded by the European Union and implemented by Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) in partnership with Eurasia Partnership Foundation.
- Issues regarding the CSO-related legislation and law enforcement practice (re-registration of CSOs, volunteering, etc.).
- Current activities of the CSF Armenian National Platform.
- Applications for temporary membership to ANP Delegates' Assembly, candidatures for the ANP Ethics Council.



On March 7, 2018, upon initiative of the RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a **meeting of the deputy minister Karen Nazaryan and his colleague Ara Margaryan with the Executive Body and Secretariat of the EaP CSF Armenian National Platform** was held at the RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The main topic of the discussion was the implementation of EU-Armenia CEPA and civil society engagement in it.

On June 5, 2018, in collaboration with Communities Finance Officers Association, the EaP CSF Armenian National Platform (ANP) held a **conference on “Administrative reforms and the development of local self-government sphere in Armenia”**. The conference was attended by many experts, more than 50 members of stakeholder CSOs, and Government representatives. As a result of the discussion, on June 18, 2018 ANP released a statement expressing the position of Armenian National Platform and also presenting specific recommendations to the RA Government on the future progress of administrative territorial reforms.

**EaP CSF Armenian National Platform General Assembly** with 63 participants to elect the delegates to the 10<sup>th</sup> EaP Civil Society Forum Annual Assembly to be held in Tbilisi in December. Preparation of the shortlist through secret ballot. Yerevan, June 19, 2018.

**EaP CSF Armenian National Platform Assembly** held in Yerevan on September 28, 2018 with 37 participants. Main topics covered:

- EU-Armenia Civil Society Roadmap.
- Review of applications for temporary membership to ANP Delegates' Assembly and voting.

- Presentation of the final list of Armenian delegates to the CSF 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Assembly in Tbilisi.

On October 2, 2018 EaP CSF Armenian National Platform NGOs representatives (around 35 participants) met at the RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the RA **Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vice-Ministers and representatives of Government agencies** to discuss the activities of the RA Government and civil society with regard to the EU-Armenia relations. A particular focus was on the following topics:

- EU-Armenia Civil Society Roadmap.
- CEPA implementation.
- Discussion on the formation of thematic/sectorial joint working/consultative groups composed of the civil society experts and interagency commission representatives.

### Statements, position papers of the Armenian National Platform

EaP CSF ANP Statement on “Local Self-Government Reforms in Armenia”. June 18, 2018. <https://eaparmenianews.wordpress.com/2018/06/22/%D5%A9%D5%B8%D5%B2%D5%A1%D6%80%D5%AF%D5%B8%D6%82%D5%B4-287/>

EaP CSF ANP Statement on the RA new Government priorities. June 1, 2018 <https://eaparmenianews.wordpress.com/2018/06/01/%D5%A9%D5%B8%D5%B2%D5%A1%D6%80%D5%AF%D5%B8%D6%82%D5%B4-286/>

EaP CSF Armenian National Platform Executive Body and Secretariat on the temporary inactivity of the ANP and its Secretariat. March 20, 2018 <https://eaparmenianews.wordpress.com/2018/03/20/issue-285/>

EaP CSF ANP Statement on the Draft Law “On the Structure and Activities of the Government”. March 4, 2018. <https://eaparmenianews.wordpress.com/2018/03/04/issue-284/>  
EaP CSF Armenian National Platform expressed its solidarity with the Statement on the draft law “On the Structure and Activities of the Government” adopted by a number of journalistic organizations on March 1, 2018.

EaP CSF ANP Statement on the incident at the February 13, 2018 session of Yerevan Council of Elders. February 16, 2018. <https://eaparmenianews.wordpress.com/2018/02/19/issue-283/>

Establishment of Dialogue between the RA Government and Civil Society”. January 23, 2018 <https://eaparmenianews.wordpress.com/2018/01/23/%D5%A9%D5%B8%D5%B2%D5%A1%D6%80%D5%AF%D5%B8%D6%82%D5%B4-280/>

## ADVOCACY:

### Number of issues/topics raised by the NP in the country

- **With country decision-makers:** Snap Parliamentary Elections; CEPA implementation and EU-Armenia Civil Society Roadmap, RA Electoral Code amendments and local self-government reforms.
- **With the broader public:** Civic engagement in local self-governance, CSO-related legislation amendments and RA new draft Electoral Code.
- **With the EU/EU Delegation/EU institutions and EU MS:** EU-Armenia Civil Society Roadmap, perspectives on new financial support for the proper operation of the EaP CSF Armenian National Platform.

### Issues raised by the NP which have had an influence at the national level

- In the country: The ANP recommendations regarding the cooperation within the framework of newly established interagency commission between Armenia and the European Union (chaired by RA Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan) on coordinating the implementation of Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) were considered and agreements were reached on continuing the cooperation in this format.
- At the EU level: The Steering Committee and the Secretariat of the ANP communicated to the EU several ideas addressing the role of the Platform and civil society at large in the CEP implementation, including the process of formation of effective bilateral civil society platform.

### Number of occasions on which the NP was consulted by the EU delegation

On several occasions a number of ANP members participated in the workshops organized by the EU Delegation to Armenia on the following topics:

1. Current political situation in Armenia (3 times)
2. EU Roadmap for Civil Society Engagement in Armenia 2018-2020 (2 times)
3. CEPA provisions for a Civil Society Platform (3 times).

### Number of cases when recommendations were taken on board by the EU institutions/EU Delegation

None (or the cases remained unknown).

## GENERAL INFO ABOUT THE NP AND WGs

### Membership:

EaP CSF Armenian National Platform kept receiving new membership requests within the reporting period. Due to the ANP promotion meetings in regions in September-October 2017, a number of regional active CSOs applied for ANP within the reporting period membership. 12 new CSOs joined the ANP, out of which 7 were regional. The heads of 11 of these 12 are women. The total number of the ANP member CSOs is 260 as of November 7, 2018.

### Adoption of new regulations:

Amendments were made to the CSF ANP Secretariat status regarding the membership criteria. According to the changes made, any ANP member CSO, which has never been a CSF delegate, can become Secretariat member if it gets more than half of the votes from the ANP Secretariat members.

### Efforts made to increased visibility and better public perception of the NP and Forum in your country:

The ANP statements were published on a number of Armenian news portals:

<https://168.am/2018/06/01/960815.html>

<https://168.am/2018/06/01/960815.html>

<http://orer.eu/hy/%D5%A1%D5%AC%D5%A3-%D6%84%D5%A1%D5%B2%D5%A1%D6%84%D5%A1%D6%81%D5%AB%D5%A1%D5%AF%D5%A1%D5%B6-%D5%B0%D5%A1%D5%BD%D5%A1%D6%80%D5%A1%D5%AF%D5%B8%D6%82%D5%A9%D5%B5%D5%A1%D5%B6-%D6%86%D5%B8%D6%80%D5%B8/>

<https://www.a1plus.am/1622414.html>

<https://lrahos.com/2018/03/21/88609/>

Due to the absence of resources the ANP newsletter was not issued regularly and it was impossible to organize any specific events and issue publications increasing ANP/CSF visibility. However, the ANP Facebook page remained relatively active and more people subscribed to the page. Also ANP and CSF statements were widely spread through efficient communication channels of the Platform.

## SELF-EVALUATION OF NP ACTIVITIES

The EaP CSF Armenian National Platform Secretariat, in spite of the termination of its two-year operational grant from the European Union, and absence of resources, continued to ensure effective working environment for the Armenian National Platform working groups, made necessary arrangements for meeting venues, provided translation, dissemination of all necessary materials, and resolved various communication issues, which allowed for proper functioning of the ANP bodies – the Steering committee, Working Groups and Subgroups. With the Secretariat membership fees and members' in-kind contribution it was possible to organize 4 ANP General Assemblies, which resolved the issues of the engagement of ANP with several crucial areas in the country, the election of CSF Annual Assembly delegates and the continuity of the ANP operation. The fact that many regional CSOs joined the ANP can also be considered a success.

Among the success of the ANP there was the reestablishment of constructive dialogue with the Government which was almost frozen since U-turn of RA in 2013. ANP Secretariat managed to raise funding for the journalistic exchange with German partners on the issues related to the EaP, contribution of Germany to it and current political developments in Armenia.

The main obstacle for the lack of activity of the Armenian National Platform is the absence of financing since October 2017. In this period when major political changes took place in Armenia and there is a real chance of carrying out reforms and having proper civil society supervision and experts' involvement, for the ANP it is hard even to hold a regular assembly to discuss a number of urgent issues.