

EaP CSF ARMENIAN NATIONAL PLATFORM

STATEMENT

On the Misuse of EU Grants

May 10, 2017

Armenian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum expresses its deep concern over the criminal cases – already completed or still in the phase of investigation – related to the facts of corruption and fraud within the EU-funded projects. We welcome the steps taken by the EU Delegation to Armenia, aimed at detecting crimes and violations of law.

International organizations, and in particular the European Union as Armenia's largest assistance donor, provide extremely valuable support in the implementation of various reforms in the country. Civil society organizations also contribute to the effective and consistent execution of these reforms.

Unfortunately, the cases of dishonest and irresponsible treatment to allocated funds cast a shadow on the tremendous work carried out both by the European Union and the CSOs. And certain circles, not interested in the progress in deeper relations between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union, use these cases for defaming the Armenian civil society, the European Union and EU-Armenia cooperation.

As an association of non-governmental organizations that values the cooperation of Armenia and EU as unconditional priority, EaP CSF Armenian National Platform strongly supports full investigation of specific cases of violations of law, fair and impartial trial and the application of appropriate legal measures against the perpetrators.

At the same time, we believe that the European Union should be more consistent in its approaches towards the issues related to the effective spending of financial aid provided both to the state and non-governmental institutions, as well as the activities and the set of values of potential beneficiaries. In particular, we are convinced that there is an urgent need for implementation of monitoring by independent and competent NGOs on all the funded projects. Great attention should be paid to the transparency in the organization of grant competitions and in the events organized by the grantees. In our opinion, when determining the winners of such competitions, it is necessary to pay particular attention to the “biography” of applicants and the commitment towards their mission in the previous activities. Not taking into consideration all this reduces the efficiency of implemented programmes, slows down the efforts of civil society as an engine of reforms and, as shown by the ongoing investigation, may increase the risks of corruption.

In its turn, EaP CSF Armenian National Platform pledges to self-critically evaluate its role in shaping a healthy atmosphere within the Armenian civil society. We are ready to exert maximum efforts to prevent manifestations of such unscrupulous and irresponsible attitude by the member organizations of the Platform. We are open for cooperation in all these areas and determined to contribute to further analysis and elimination of the problems resulting in the misuse of the funds allocated by the European Union.