



Annual Activities Report 2017

GEORGIA NATIONAL PLATFORM REPORT

THE KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Cooperation with officials and key stakeholders such as the President of Georgia, the speaker of the Georgian Parliament, and the First Deputy State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration
- Participation of the GNP in conferences and events such as Europe's Day 2017 and the conference "Georgia's European Way"
- Adoption of a long term strategy for the GNP will allow the GNP to structure and strengthen its long-term activities
- Two recommendations suggested by the EaP CSF Georgian National Platform were taken into consideration in the new document of the Constitution (e.g the right of each individual to access and freely use of internet).

Strategic objectives of the EaP CSF GNP:

- To monitor and advocate for the implementation of Georgia's AA obligations on national and EU levels through supporting dialogue between public authorities and private sector and civil society
- To communicate the importance of Georgia's European Integration efforts to the wider public
- To ensure the EaP NP's effective functioning for the achievement of its mission and objectives.

The EaP CSF Georgian National Platform conducted 15 Working Group and 9 Coordination Council meetings during the period from January to October 2017. The EU-Georgia Civil Society Platform (CSP) meeting took place on 2 August, 2017. The Platform is one of the bodies set up within the framework of the Association Agreement between the European Union and Georgia.

All key events were attended by the representatives of governmental authorities, leading officials and policy-makers.

ACTIVITIES OF THE PLATFORM IN 2017

Annual Assembly of the GNP

The 8th General Meeting of the EaP CSF GNP was held on 28th of February, 2017. The assembly was attended by 108 representatives of GNP.

Chairman of Georgian National Platform - Mr. Kakhaber Gogolashvili, first deputy state Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration - Mr. Archil Karaulashvili, chairwoman of European Integration Committee of the Parliament of Georgia - Ms. Tamar Khulordava, and Ms. Dominika Skubida, International Aid/Cooperation Officer for Civil Society and Democracy, Delegation of the European Union to Georgia delivered a speech at the meeting.



Mr. Karaulashvili stressed the importance of Memorandum of Cooperation concluded between Georgian National Platform and Government of Georgia and expressed readiness to actively cooperate with Georgian civil society, in order to make best use of their expertise. He emphasized achievements made by Georgia on its European Integration way and expressed his support of the

unanimous decision of EU Council regarding visa free travel for Georgian citizens. As stated by Mr. Archil, non-governmental sector made a huge contribution along with the Government of Georgia (GoG) to achieve it.

During the meeting election of Platform chairman, coordinators for Working Groups (WGs) and Civil Society Platform elections was held. According to the voting results, President of Europe Foundation, Ms. Ketevan Vashakidze was elected as chairwoman of Georgian National Platform. Newly elected chair expressed her readiness to, in cooperation with platform member organizations, maintain results achieved by the Platform as of today and consolidate its strong sides, also to increase the existing possibilities and eliminate challenges Platform is facing today.

Regional Activities

In the framework of the EU-supported project "Enhancing capacity and effectiveness of Georgian National Platform" various information meetings and public lectures have been conducted by four regional representations of Georgian National Platform.

On February 23, 2017, regional representation of Georgian National Platform in Imereti, Local Democracy Agency with active cooperation of the GNP secretariat organized a Coordination Council regional meeting in Kutaisi.

Invited guests were the first deputy Ministry of the European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Georgia, Mr. Archil Karaulashvili, Governor of Imereti, Givi Tchitchinadze and his administration members. The meeting was attended by the Chairman of Georgian National Platform Mr. Kakhaber Gogolashvili, director of EU supported project "Enhancing Capacity and Effectiveness of Georgian National Platform" Mr. Lasha Tughushi, members of Coordination Council, executive director of the Local Democracy Agency (LDA Georgia), Ms. Nino Khukhua and coordinator of the Eastern Partnership countries at the ALDA - Nino Tvaltvaдзе. Two Representatives of EU Monitoring Mission Field Office in Zugdidi (EUMM), regional CSOs operating in Kutaisi and Zugdidi, as well as media representatives participated in the meeting.

At the end of the meeting, the Memorandum of Cooperation was signed by Imereti Governor, Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Georgian National Platform and LDA Georgia. The MoC aims to collaborate with the Imereti governor and the civil society in the EU integration process.



On March 31, 2017 Local Democracy Agency – Georgia (ALDA) with the partnership of Kutaisi Akaki Tsereteli University conducted informational meeting with the students on EU Visa free regulations. Members of LDA Georgia youth club „Youth for Europe“ were actively involved in the organizational process and mobilized the students.

In March regional representative of Georgian National Platform in Zugdidi, Association Merkuri organized an information meeting with the representatives of local NGOs. Current project ”Enhancing Capacity and Effectiveness of Georgian National Platform” supported by the European Commission was presented at the meeting. During the meeting representative of the association “Merkuri” made a brief presentation on “Reducing the violence in Samegrelo region”. Participants discussed the problem of violence in the region and possible ways how to respond the existing challenges.

On April 25, 2017 public lecture was held in the public school of village Zegduleti. The meeting was organized by the regional representation of Georgian National Platform in Gori, Association “Bridge of Friendship - Kartlosi”. The meeting addressed the EU Institutions, objectives related to the formation of Eastern Partnership program and its activity, developments that took place after August 2008, Georgian annexation and creeping occupation.

On April 4, 2017 the information meeting took place in the public school of village Ruisi. The meeting was organized by the regional representation of Georgian National Platform, Association “Bridge of Friendship – Kartlosi”.

Within the Europe Day 2017, an informative meeting was held in the Gori Culture and Youth Center on May 25, 2017. The meeting was organized by GNP regional representation in Gori, Association “Bridge of Friendship - Kartlosi”. The meeting addressed the EU Institutions, objectives related to the formation of Eastern Partnership and its activity, Georgian National Platform and the historical value of 26 May event, 1918 for Georgia. During the meeting, a special attention was paid to the visa-free movement within the EU and Schengen Zone.

On 28 July, regional representation of Georgian National Platform in Samtskhe-Javakheti region conducted an information meeting "Further steps on the way to Georgia's EU integration" at the regional office of the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies.

The main goal of the meeting was to discuss the most topical issues of the EU integration process. Visa free regime as one of the tangible achievement and further steps for more tight cooperation with the EU. The meeting was attended by local NGO representatives, media, students and other stakeholders.

STATEMENTS, POSITION PAPERS AND OPEN LETTERS OF THE GEORGIAN NATIONAL PLATFORM

EaP CSF GNP Statement on the results of negotiations between the Ministry of Energy of Georgia and Russian State-owned company Gazprom Export <http://eap-csf.ge/images/doc/gancxadeba/11%20statement.pdf>

EaP CSF GNP Appeal to the members of the State Constitutional Commission of Georgia, the Parliament of Georgia, and the Council on Gender Equality at the Parliament of Georgia <http://eap-csf.ge/images/doc/gancxadeba/0101010appeal%20of%20ngos%20eng.pdf>

EaP CSF GNP Statement on the so-called Presidential Elections and Referendum held in Tskinali Region <http://eap-csf.ge/images/doc/gancxadeba/statement%20%20regarding%20the%20so-called%20presidential%20elections%20and%20referendum%20held%20in%20tskinvali%20region.pdf>

EaP CSF GNP Address to the Parliament of Georgia http://eap-csf.ge/images/doc/gancxadeba/eng_mimartva_prezidentis%20kompetenciebi%20da%20archevis%20wesi.pdf

EaP CSF GNP Letter to Mr. Gianni Buquicchio, President of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe <http://eap-csf.ge/images/doc/gancxadeba/appeal%20of%20eap%20csf%20gnp%20to%20the%20venice%20commission.pdf>

EaP CSF GNP Statement on Afgan Mukhtarli, Azerbaijani journalist <http://eap-csf.ge/images/doc/gancxadeba/afgan%20mukhtarli%20azerbaijani%20journalist.pdf>

EaP CSF GNP Second Statement on Afgan Mukhtarli, Azerbaijani journalist <http://eap-csf.ge/images/doc/politics/platform%20statement%20on%20mukhtarli%20case.pdf>

EaP CSF GNP Appeal on abolishing the status of self-government in the 7 self-governing cities <http://eap-csf.ge/images/doc/politics/statement%20on%20self%20government.pdf>

EaP CSF GNP Appeal to the Government of Georgia regarding ensuring elimination of inconsistencies identified in the 2017 National Action Plan for the Implementation of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement http://eap-csf.ge/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=813%3Aappeal-of-the-eastern-partnership-civil-society-forum-georgian-national-platform-member-organizations-to-the-government-of-georgia-regarding-ensuring-elimination-of-inconsistencies-identified-in-the-2017-national-action-plan-for-the-implementation-of-t&catid=3%3Anews&Itemid=1428&lang=en-GB

EaP CSF GNP Statement regarding visit of the President the Russian Federation in the occupied region of Abkhazia <http://eap-csf.ge/images/doc/politics/eap%20csf%20georgian%20national%20platform%20statement%200%20eng.pdf>

MEETING WITH THE SPEAKER OF THE PARLIAMENT OF GEORGIA

On April 25, 2017 representatives of member organizations of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum - Georgian National Platform met the Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia. At the meeting, head of the State Constitutional Committee presented the new editorial draft of the Constitution and its working process.



At the meeting, Speaker of the Parliament discussed the relevant amendments with the members of National Platform of Georgia article by article and in details. The mentioned amendments were developed during the meetings held in the format of working group and they were reflected in the new editorial draft.

Representatives of the Platform member organizations drew special attention to the important issues regarding the electoral system, human rights protection, record about the “family”, role of the president and more. They also expressed their own opinions and suggestions about the draft of the Constitution. The initiative was suggested Georgian National Platform will deliver its opinions to the Constitutional Committee in written form.

Two important recommendations suggested by the EaP CSF Georgian National Platform were taken into consideration in the new document of the Constitution (e.g the right of each individual to access and freely use of internet).

EUROPE DAY 2017

With the support of EU Delegation to Georgia, GNP had an opportunity to have an information corner at the event dedicated to Europe Day took place on May 7, at Rike Park. Main goal of the Georgian National Platform was to raise awareness on the role of the EU, Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Georgian National Platform, its activities and achievements.

The Delivery of the messages was carried out through the forms such as dissemination of communication products such as leaflets, banners, stickers, balloons and other promotional items. GNP managed to distribute publications (ENG, GEO) produced by the Platform, namely Monitoring Papers elaborated by the experts of GNP member organizations.

The presence of the EU visual identity elements such as the EU flag and disclaimer ensured at any publication in full compliance with the requirements stipulated in the Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union external actions.

It is noteworthy to mention that all information about the event was supported by relevant photos and uploaded on the web-site of Georgian National Platform www.eap-csf.ge and via social media.

MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT OF GEORGIA

On May 18, 2017 representatives of the Georgian National Platform member organizations conducted a meeting with the President of Georgia, Mr. Giorgi Margvelashvili. The meeting aimed at hearing positions from the President about the important issues of Constitution and share unified position of the Platform regarding the current processes.

“I welcome the opportunity to be able to discuss the ongoing constitutional amendments with you. The main starting point for, in terms of various models or functions, is that the Constitution needs to be balanced. Any model is acceptable, which maintains balance for a democratic society. Given this context, I am ready to listen to your views and visions” – the President of Georgia mentioned.



At the meeting, the Platform members have emphasized the following important issues: competencies of the President of Georgia, method of election of the President, issues of self-governance, selling land, labor safety, education, Articles 92 and 67 in the Constitution and other important issues.

The meeting was attended by Mr. Giorgi Abashishvili, the Head of the Administration of the President of Georgia, Mr. Davit Rakhviashvili, the Secretary of the National Security Council of Georgia and the advisers of the President .

Georgian National Platform issued a statement on the presidential election rules and competences.

SECTORIAL MEETINGS



Within the framework of the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) concluded by the Government of Georgia and the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Georgian National Platform on April 8 2016, the Office of the State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and the Georgian National Platform jointly organized sectorial meetings during

the year.

The first sectorial meeting was held on February 2, 2017 with the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia. Meeting aimed at discussing public policy paper "Accountability, Transparency and Management of State-Owned Enterprises in Georgia" developed by the member organizations of the Georgian National Platform member organizations Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) and "Institute for Development of Freedom of Information" (IDFI).

The meeting was attended by Mr. Archil Karaulashvili, First Deputy State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Mr. Mirian Chachava, First Deputy Head of the National Agency of State Property, Mr. Giorgi Kapanadze Acting Head of the analytical department of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, Mr. Giorgi Zgudadze Head of State Property Management Department and the representatives of Georgian National Platform member organizations. It is noteworthy to mention that the Ministry promised to prepare an official response to the proposals as well as recommendations suggested in the Policy Paper.

On 13 February, a second sectorial meeting took place with the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia at the State Chancellery. During the meeting the attendees discussed four Public Policy Papers developed by the experts of Georgian National Platform:



- Eliminating the Forest Energy Crisis by Sustainable Use of Biomass Elaborated by World Experience for Georgia (WEG), Caucasus Environmental NGO network (CENN)
- Improving the Evaluation of the Environmental Protection Monitoring System in Georgia and its Harmonization with EU Directives Elaborated by the Greens Movement of Georgia, Foundation "Caucasus Environment"
- The Role of Public Involvement in the Implementation of a Modern Approach to Waste Management at the Municipal Level Elaborated by Imereti Union of Science - "SPECTRI", International Business and Economic Development Centre
- Risk Disaster Management of the Duruji River through Innovative Measures Elaborated by Enterprise Innovation Development Center

The meeting was attended by Mr. Archil Karaulashvili, first Deputy State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Ms. Ekaterine Grigalava, Deputy Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia, Ms. Maia Bitadze, Deputy Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia, Mr. Kakha Gogolashvili, chairman of Georgian National Platform and representatives of GNP member organizations.

The third sectorial meeting was held on 24 May, 2017 with Ministry of Energy of Georgia, which was jointly organized by the Office of State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and the Georgian National Platform.

The meeting was attended by Mr. Archil Karaulashvili, First Deputy State Minister of Georgia on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration; Mrs. Mariam Valishvili Deputy Minister of Energy of Georgia and the representatives of Georgian National Platform member organizations.

During the meeting, the Deputy Minister discussed the issues regarding the completion of the membership of the Energy Community, the consistent harmonization process to the EU energy acquis, the EU4Energy Action Plan, the Association Agreement and the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area Agreement. The attendees reviewed the public policy papers developed by the Georgian National Platform. At the end of the meeting the Ministry of Energy of Georgia expressed readiness for future cooperation.

TRAINING FOR GNP MEMBERS ORGANIZATIONS

In the framework of the current project Enhancing capacity and effectiveness of Georgian National Platform - two-day trainings was organized on May 30-31 and May 31 - June 1 in Tbilisi. The trainings covered the following topics: "Monitoring and Policy Making Process" and "Developing a Comprehensive Advocacy Campaign".

MEMORANDUM WITH THE INFORMATION CENTRE ON NATO AND THE EU

On 2 June, Memorandum of Cooperation was concluded among the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Georgian National Platform and Information Center on NATO and EU.

The document aims at supporting Georgia's integration process into the European Union, increasing knowledge and awareness of Georgian population with regards to the mentioned bodies by executing the relevant mutual projects.



The Memorandum of Cooperation was signed by Ms. Ketevan Vashakidze, the Chairwoman of the EaP CSF Georgian National Platform and Ms. Nino Bolkvadze, the director of Information Center on NATO and EU. The parties expressed their intention to deepen their cooperation and agreed to cooperate in compliance with the Memorandum and pronounced desire to assist each other as a partner organization in their development.

According to the MoC Georgian National Platform has an obligation to provide Information Center with the support necessary for implementing of the various projects, also providing with the materials published by the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Georgian National Platform.

GEORGIAN CONFERENCE “GORGIA’S EUROPEAN WAY”



On 13-14 July, Coordination Council of EaP CSF Georgian National Platform participated in the 14th International Conference “Georgia’s European Way – Ensuring Regional Stability”.

This year, the Conference draw particular attention to main topics of the European Agenda, including Europe’s security architecture today and new forms of cooperation between the EU and its associated partner countries, emphasizing the role of Georgia in ensuring regional stability.

The Conference welcomed the

representatives of the executive and legislative branches of the Government of Georgia, EU and Eastern Partnership Countries, Civil Society representatives, including members of the Georgian National Platform, researchers, media and business representatives.

Thematic session “AA and DCFTA: the future of Georgia” among other presenters included the Chairwoman of the Georgian National Platform and the President of Europe Foundation, Ms. Ketevan Vashakidze.

At the model discussion, the participants discussed the AA and DCFTA component and Association Agenda benefits and challenges, progress achieved and existing experience, mechanisms of coordination and monitoring; the role of the Parliament in monitoring the implementation, practice of cooperation with the civil society, future plans: new Association Agenda – priorities, expectations and future development.

STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

During the Coordination Council meeting held in April chairwoman of Georgian National Platform emphasized the importance of creation of long-term strategy (2-3 year) for Georgian National Platform and proposed to organize a meeting with participation of the Coordination Council and regional organizations to discuss the strategy document. The strategy document should also include the Platform’s communication strategy, messages to be distributed by the Platform and form of their dissemination.



On 7 July, the above mentioned meeting took place at Rooms Hotel with the support of Europe Foundation. The meeting was guided by experienced facilitator, who prepared strategy document based on the opinions expressed during the meeting.

An overwhelming majority of Coordination Council members approved the above mentioned document on October 4, 2017.

MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION

On 7 August, the Memorandum of Cooperation was concluded between the Administration of the State Representative, Governor of Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Georgian National Platform.

The document aims at enhancing the involvement of civil society in preparation and implementation of those decisions of the Region's public and local government structures that are linked with Georgia's duties assumed under AA related tasks.

The Memorandum also foresees establishment of new forms of cooperation, in the framework of the format the signatory parties will meet periodically and discuss issues of interest that are related to the goals of the Memorandum.

The MoC was signed by Ms. Ketevan Vashakidze, the chairwoman of Georgian National Platform, regional representative of GNP in Samegrelo region, the chair of Association Merkuri, Mrs. Nana Todua and deputy State Representative, Governor of Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Mr. Davit Kodua.