EASTERN PARTNERSHIP
CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

Meeting of the Steering Committee

Minutes

14 - 15 July 2026

(online meeting)

Tuesday 14 July 2026

- **15.00 – 15.45 | SESSION 1. Presentation of the Steering Committee members; presentation of the candidates for the positions of Co-Chair**

Wednesday 15 July 2026

- **10.00 – 11.00 | SESSION 2. Introduction to duties as Steering Committee members**
- **11.00 – 12.00 | SESSION 3. EaP CSF operations, goals and priorities for 2026**
- **13.00 – 14.00 | SESSION 4. EaP Civil Society Summit 2026**

**all times are expressed in Central European Time*

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Tuesday 14 July 2026

- **15.00 – 15.45 | SESSION 1. Presentation of the Steering Committee members; presentation of the candidates for the positions of Co-Chair**

Steering Committee members present online (12): *Anastasia Pociumban, Anh Helge, Daniela Vidaicu, Ekaterine Tsimakuridze, Elen Manaseryan, Iryna Kuropas, Lasha Tughushi, Liliana Palihovici, Nataliya Andrusevych, Sabina Alakbarova, Samir Aliyev, Uladzimir Zuyeu.*

Steering Committee members absent (1): *Raisa Lång Velazco***.**

Secretariat Staff present (5): *Andrea Raimondi (Director), Pascal Willaumez (Membership and Governance Manager), Yana Brovdiy (Policy and Advocacy Manager), Irina Roman Enescu (Communications Manager), Anastasia Murzanovska (Senior Grants and Advocacy Officer).*

Discussion:

The Director of the Secretariat, Andrea Raimondi, opened the meeting and congratulated all Steering Committee members on their election. He then invited the Steering Committee members to briefly present themselves.

1. **Presentation of Steering Committee members**

- **Ms Elen Manaseryan** - National Facilitator of the Armenian National Platform,
- **Ms Sabina Alakbarova** - National Facilitator of the Azerbaijani National Platform,
- **Mr Uladzimir Zuyeu** - National Facilitator of the Belarusian National Platform,
- **Ms Ekaterine Tsimakuridze** - National Facilitator of the Georgian National Platform,
- **Ms Daniela Vidaicu** - National Facilitator of the Moldovan National Platform,
- **Ms Iryna Kuropas** - National Facilitator of the Ukrainian National Platform,
- **Mr Lasha Tughushi** - Coordinator for the Eastern Partnership of Working Group 1,
- **Mr Samir Aliyev** - Coordinator for the Eastern Partnership of Working Group 2,
- **Ms Anastasia Pociumban** - Coordinator for the EU of Working Group 2,
- **Ms Nataliya Andrusevych** - Coordinator for the Eastern Partnership of Working Group 3,
- **Ms Liliana Palihovici** - Coordinator for the Eastern Partnership of Working Group 4,
- **Ms Anh Helge** - Coordinator for the EU of Working Group 5.

2. **Presentation of the candidates for the positions of Co-Chair**

Andrea Raimondi invited the candidates for the positions of Co-Chair of the Steering Committee to present their candidacies.

Candidates for the Eastern Partnership:

- **Mr Lasha Tughushi**, European Initiative - Liberal Academy Tbilisi, Georgia,
- **Ms Liliana Palihovici**, Institutum Virtutes Civilis, Republic of Moldova.

Candidate for the EU:

- **Ms Anh Helge**, Olof Palme International Center, Sweden.

OUTCOME:

The Secretariat launched the online election for the positions of Co-Chair of the Steering Committee for the Eastern Partnership and for the EU through the online platform 'ElectionRunner'. The vote was launched at 16.00 (CEST) of Tuesday 14 July and remained open until 09.00 (CEST) of Wednesday 15 July.

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP
CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

Wednesday 15 July 2026

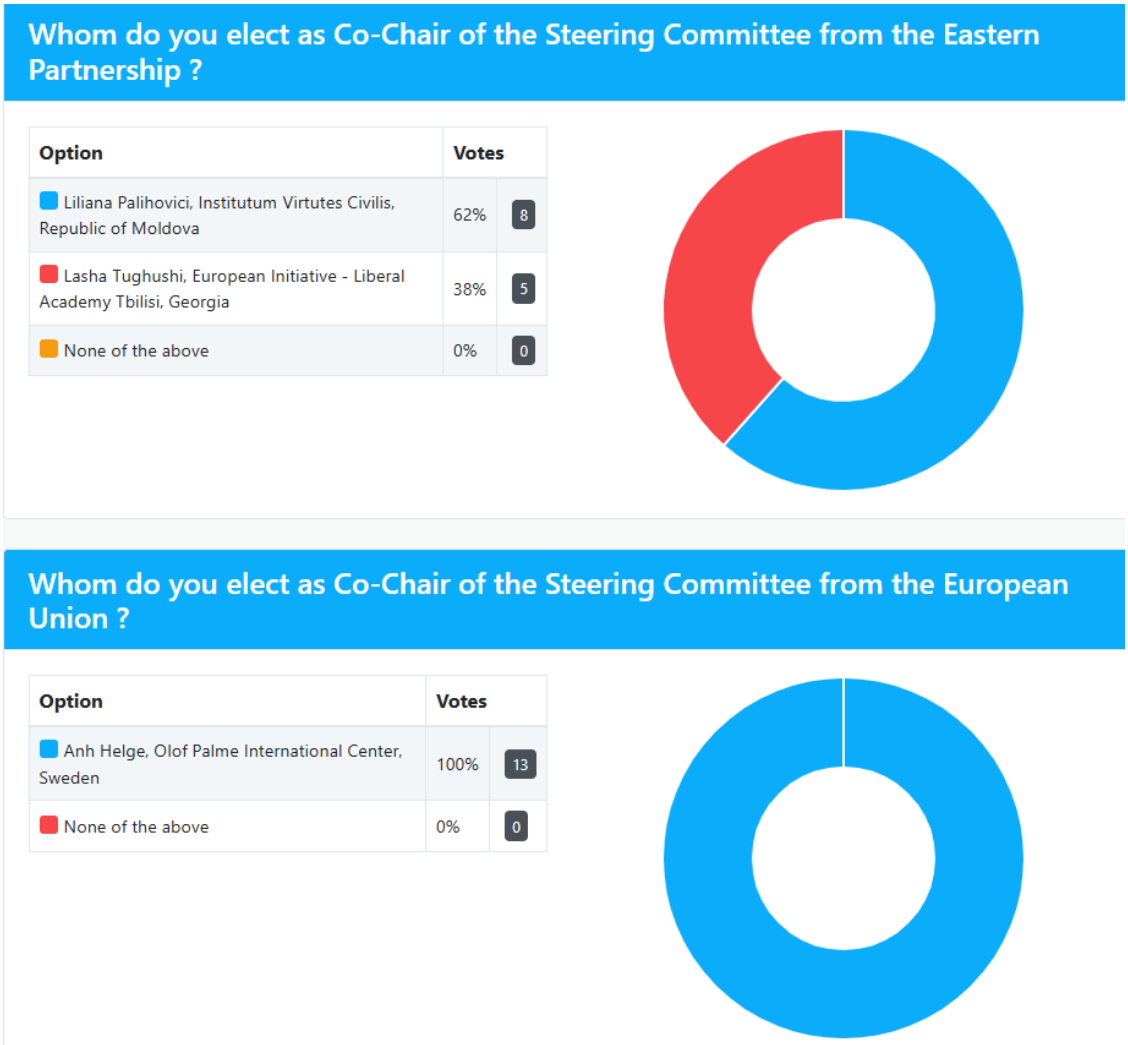
- **10.00 – 11.00 | SESSION 2. Introduction to duties as Steering Committee members**

Steering Committee members present online (13): *Anastasia Pociumban, Anh Helge, Daniela Vidaicu, Ekaterine Tsimakuridze, Elen Manaseryan, Iryna Kuropas, Lasha Tughushi, Liliana Palihovici, Nataliya Andrusevych, Raisa Lång Velazco, Sabina Alakbarova, Samir Aliyev, Uladzimir Zuyeu.*

Secretariat Staff present (6): *Andrea Raimondi (Director), Pascal Willaumez (Membership and Governance Manager), Yana Brovdiy (Policy and Advocacy Manager), Alexandra Sabou (Advocacy and EaP Index Manager), Irina Roman Enescu (Communications Manager), Anastasia Murzanovska (Senior Grants and Advocacy Officer).*

Discussion:

Andrea Raimondi welcomed the participants and introduced the results following the closing of the election for the Steering Committee Co-Chairs: https://vote.electionrunner.com/election/3pjlQ/results



Andrea Raimondi congratulated the elected Co-Chairs, who briefly intervened:

- **Ms Liliana Palihovici,** Institutum Virtutes Civilis, Republic of Moldova, Co-Chair representing the Eastern Partnership,
- **Ms Anh Helge,** Olof Palme International Center, Sweden, Co-Chair representing the European Union.

Pascal Willaumez presented the legal responsibilities of the Steering Committee members under Belgian law and the decision-making process in both the Steering Committee and Board of the Association.

The procedures and functioning of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) are rooted in two main documents:

- The Articles of Association of the AISBL 'The Secretariat of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum', which regulates the procedures for the EaP CSF Secretariat – the legal entity,
- The Statute of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, which regulates the procedures for the Forum.

The following statutory provisions enshrine the responsibilities:

a. As members of the Steering Committee of the Forum, as per *Article 7.3. Steering Committee responsibilities* of the EaP CSF Statute,
b. As members of the Board of the Association, as per *Article 24. Powers* of the Articles of the Association,
c. As members of the General Assembly of the Association, as per *Article 16. Powers* of the Articles of the Association.

The Secretariat finally underlined the importance for the Steering Committee members to avoid conflict of interest, underlining that any Steering Committee member with a conflict of interest shall not participate in the discussion or decision of any matter involving the Association relating to that conflict of interest, as per *Article 31. Conflict of interests* of the Articles of the Association and *Article 7.6. Conflicts of interest* of the EaP CSF Statute.

Andrea Raimondi invited the staff of the Secretariat present at the meeting to briefly introduce themselves:

- **Ms Yana Brovdiy** (Policy and Advocacy Manager),
- **Ms Alexandra Sabou** (Advocacy and EaP Index Manager),
- **Ms Irina Roman Enescu** (Communications Manager),
- **Ms Anastasia Murzanovska** (Senior Grants and Advocacy Officer).

- **<u>11.00 – 12.00 | SESSION 3. EaP CSF operations, goals and priorities for 2026</u>**

Steering Committee members present online (13): *Anastasia Pociumban, Anh Helge, Daniela Vidaicu, Ekaterine Tsimakuridze, Elen Manaseryan, Iryna Kuropas, Lasha Tughushi, Liliana Palihovici, Nataliya Andrusevych, Raisa Lång Velazco, Sabina Alakbarova, Samir Aliyev, Uladzimir Zuyeu.*

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Discussion:

Andrea Raimondi introduced the Forum, the context within which it operates within the EU's Eastern Partnership, and its activities, and provided an overview of the current projects managed by the Secretariat, future targets and priorities.

The advocacy team of the Secretariat provided the following presentation:

1. **Upcoming advocacy plans**. The Secretariat launched the process of developing two-year Working Plans that define the priorities, activities, and policy engagement of each Forum's Working Group over the next two years. The Secretariat disseminated a survey among all Working Group members to gather inputs aimed at feeding the Working Plans. Additionally, the Secretariat will launch a call for proposals for two policy papers on subject matters relevant to the EU's Eastern Partnership.
2. **European Commission's newly established Civil Society Platform**. The Secretariat will apply for membership in the Civil Society Platform, the advisory and dialogue mechanism created under the EU Strategy for Civil Society. The Platform will bring together up to 30 leading civil society organisations for a three-year mandate to help shape the Commission's priorities, monitor the implementation of the Strategy, and provide structured input on issues such as democracy, the rule of law, fundamental rights, civic space, equality and media freedom.
3. **Eastern Partnership-related events**, including (i) the Conference of the Local and Regional Authorities for the Eastern Partnership, 14 September in Chişinău, Republic of Moldova; (ii) the Eastern Partnership Working Group for Gender Equality, 28-29 September in Stockholm, Sweden; (iii) the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, 16-18 November 2026 in Brussels, Belgium; and (iv) the Working Group on Research & Innovation under the EaP policy, 3-4 December 2026 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.
4. **Eastern Partnership Index**, the Forum's flagship product, data driven monitoring tool published every two years; preparations are ongoing for the 2027 edition, which will be the eleventh. The Index is structured in three core areas, with eighteen sub thematic areas. The Secretariat presented the calendar of preparations for the upcoming edition.

The advocacy team of the Secretariat provided further information on upcoming advocacy on Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ukraine.

- **13.00 – 14.00 | SESSION 4. EaP Civil Society Summit 2026**

Steering Committee members present online (13): *Anastasia Pociumban, Anh Helge, Daniela Vidaicu, Ekaterine Tsimakuridze, Elen Manaseryan, Iryna Kuropas, Lasha Tughushi, Liliana Palihovici, Nataliya Andrusevych, Raisa Lång Velazco, Sabina Alakbarova, Samir Aliyev, Uladzimir Zuyeu.*

Secretariat Staff present (6): *Andrea Raimondi (Director), Pascal Willaumez (Membership and Governance Manager), Yana Brovdiy (Policy and Advocacy Manager), Alexandra Sabou (Advocacy and EaP Index Manager), Irina Roman Enescu (Communications Manager), Anastasia Murzanovska (Senior Grants and Advocacy Officer).*

Discussion:

Yana Brovdiy introduced the Civil Society Summit and presented the draft programme of the EaP Civil Society Summit 2026, which will take place in Chişinău, Republic of Moldova, from 24 to 26 November 2026.

Andrea Raimondi underlined that the Secretariat is working to ensure an adequate level of co-funding for the EaP Civil Society Summit 2026, and that discussions with partners are ongoing.

Pascal Willaumez presented the procedure for the Civil Society Award 2026 and for the delegate-led sessions as part of the EaP Civil Society Summit 2026. For both applications, a call will be launched in mid-August.

The Co-Chairs thanked all participants and Secretariat colleagues for work done.

Andrea Raimondi thanked all participants and concluded the meeting.

- **END OF THE MEETING** -