

## **CIVIL SOCIETY AWARD**

### **BY EASTERN PARTNERSHIP CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM**

#### ***Celebrating the defenders of democratic values***

##### ***Description***

Since 2018, the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) has presented its Civil Society Award to celebrate the outstanding and courageous work of organisations from the Eastern Partnership region who are on a daily basis defending core democratic values, advancing democratic reform, contributing to the political, economic and social development of their countries, and helping people and communities in vulnerable situations.

Civil society organisations in the Eastern Partnership countries are key drivers of reform and vocal defenders of democratic values. Even when facing unfavourable, challenging and often repressive conditions, they do not give up and work tirelessly for the benefit of their communities and for the common good.

In times of conflict, war, democratic crackdown, or worldwide health crisis, civil society has mobilised people in defence of democracy, fundamental rights, and freedoms, and supported vulnerable communities and the economy.

In times of democratic reform, civil society has proved to be an essential counterpart for the government, holding it to account and ensuring an inclusive reform process.

The Civil Society Award honours and celebrates the courage, commitment, and contribution that civil society organisations show on a daily basis to defend and strengthen democracy, freedom, justice and dignity for all people in the countries of the Eastern Partnership.

***Previous awardees***

**2018 – Davit Petrosyan (Armenia)** – *for his courageous and instrumental leadership in mobilising youth and students in the context of Armenia’s 2018 street protests, eventually leading to the Velvet Revolution.*

**2019 – PromoLex (Moldova)** – *for their outstanding and courageous work in the field of the political, economic and social development of their countries and defending core democratic values.*

**2020 – Belarusian Civil Society (Belarus)** – *for its essential help to the victims of the repressions during the 2020 authoritarian repression in Belarus. The award was symbolically received by Andrej Stryzhak, BYHelp.*

**2022 – Ukrainian Civil Society (Ukraine)** – *for their extraordinary mobilisation in support of the war effort, providing humanitarian aid, and alleviating suffering while continuing to support democratic reforms.*

**2023 - Belarusian Association of Journalists (Belarus)** – *for their resolute commitment to independent journalism in Belarus, integrity in the defence of media freedom, democracy, and human rights even while faced with the harshest of oppressions.*

**2024 - Journalism Resource Centre (Georgia)** - *for their persistent work to counter disinformation and contribution to a free, fair and independent media in Georgia amidst the crackdown in the context of the Foreign Agent Law.*

## **Selection**

*The EaP CSF Civil Society Award is given to a civil society organisation to recognise its outstanding work in the EaP region. The achievements of the nominee could be but are not limited to, promoting European integration, reform facilitation and democratic transformation, strengthening civil society's capacity and resilience and contributing to an enabling environment for civil society, defending democratic values and human rights. Nominations of organisations active in more than one EaP country are especially welcomed. The organisations of EaP CSF Steering Committee members are automatically excluded from the selection process due to conflict of interest.*

## **Eligibility**

To be nominated to receive the EaP CSF Civil Society Award, an organisation must fulfil the following criteria:

1. Be a member organisation of the EaP CSF;
2. Be a non-partisan organisation, with an excellent reputation;
3. The activities that warrant its nomination for the award should have taken place in the calendar year preceding the award (November 2024-November 2025 for the 2025 Award).

## **Process**

The selection process follows the following step:

1. A call for nominations is shared among the EaP CSF members.
2. The EaP CSF Secretariat checks the nominations received, does the necessary checks and reverts to the organisations submitting the original nominations to ask for further details if needed. The Secretariat then proceeds to share the nominations with the Steering Committee.
3. Steering Committee members review the nominations and after a joint discussion (online or offline) decide by a simple majority vote who should obtain the award.