

**EaP**  
beyond  
**2020**

7-10 DECEMBER 2020

## RENEWING COMMITMENTS TO RIGHTS, SECURITY, AND THE GREEN AGENDA



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### **12<sup>th</sup> Annual Assembly of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum**

## **EaP beyond 2020: renewing commitments to rights, security, and the green agenda**

**7-10 December 2020<sup>1</sup>**

*online*

Ahead of the Eastern Partnership Summit in early 2021, this flagship civil society event will bring together more than 300 CSOs and EaP and EU decision-makers to explore the contours of the EaP policy beyond 2020. Against the backdrop of the recently finished war in Nagorno-Karabakh, a severe political crisis in Belarus, and a number of important elections that have taken place in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, the event will focus on the new set of EaP deliverables for the period 2021-2025 and a true multi-stakeholder engagement in the frames of the EaP with the civil society at the core.

The European Green Deal is raising the bar for the EU and EaP countries alike for the new cycle, prompting us to discuss a number of issues: potential obstacles to better environmental protection and climate change mitigation in the EaP, effective participation of civil society in green reform processes and in addressing environmental challenges, and the support required to the region to implement the green agenda.

At the end of this year dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic - a crisis that will continue to affect the whole world for a substantial part of 2021 - we will look back at how the virus has affected CSOs' operations, what effects it will have on the implementation of the reform agenda in the key EaP policy areas, and how we can both prevent the slow-down in reform implementation, and ensure the reversal of the limitations to fundamental freedoms and rights imposed - often disproportionately - in response to the pandemic.

On top of COVID-19, the region's civil society has also responded to a number of other challenges in 2020. This event will touch on trends in citizens' self-organisation and mobilisation exploring how this newly-emerged enthusiasm can be supported to become a sustainable generator of societal changes in 2021 and beyond.

As in previous editions, the 2020 Annual Assembly will also celebrate the courage and inspiring achievements of civil society, presenting awards to activists who made an outstanding

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<sup>1</sup> All times are listed in CET

contribution to the political, economic and social development of their countries and to the defence of core democratic values, and to journalists having gone beyond the call of duty in the field of media freedom and freedom of expression.

## **Day 1 - Welcome and our achievements in 2020**

### **7 December, Monday**

14:00 - 14:20

#### **Welcome session**

*The outgoing Steering Committee Co-chairs will welcome the participants, and get the ball rolling on the week's discussions by outlining the most important developments for the Forum in 2020 and the ways forward.*

14:20 - 14:45

#### **What have we done in this turbulent year**

*2020 has been a challenging year, with the COVID-19 pandemic interfering in daily routines and drastically changing the Forum's operations. Yet, despite these changes, the EaP CSF has continued to successfully voice the civil society position on behalf of its members. In this session, we will look back at our main achievements during this difficult year, beginning with the presentation of the new Steering Committee of the Forum for the 2020-2021 cycle, to be followed by the screening of a video of the Forum's highlights in 2020.*

14:45 - 15:15

#### **Why can't Gender Equality wait?**

*With the adoption of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy, the Forum is taking a more structured approach to promoting gender equality across all its structures and operations. The aim of this session is to discuss pathways towards a more gender-fair Forum, starting from the highlights of the gender assessment exercise and continuing with the practical recommendations stemming from the Strategy.*

15:15 - 15:25

#### **Break**

15:25 - 16:30

#### **e-Reception / Meet & Mingle networking session**

*Bring your glass and let's recreate the sense of EaP CSF community virtually! The aim of this session is to provide a networking opportunity for EaP CSF members, allowing them to mingle and get to know one another. To facilitate informal discussions in smaller groups, several virtual "tables" will be available for the attendees of this session.*

## Day 2 - Focusing on new deliverables

**8 December, Tuesday**

09:00 - 09:15

### **The Day Today**

*A short introduction to the day*

9:15 – 10:15

### **Opening**

*Speakers:*

**Maia Sandu**, President-elect of the Republic of Moldova

**Olivér Várhelyi**, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement – via video address

**Michael Roth**, Minister of State for Europe, German Federal Foreign Office – via video address

**Andrei Yahorau**, EaP CSF Belarusian National Platform, Chairman of the Coordination Council

10:15 - 10:30

### **Break**

10:30-11:45

### **Panel Debate: Towards a truly multi-stakeholder endeavour - civil society and new EaP deliverables for 2021-2025**

*Learning from the implementation of the 20 Deliverables for 2020, the new set of EaP deliverables for the period 2021-2025 should provide clear language on individual commitments, define the responsibilities of each actor involved, and include good benchmarks for monitoring effective implementation, impact and accountability. Civil society has been advocating for greater empowerment of CSOs and other actors in the formulation and implementation of the new deliverables in order to turn the EaP policy into a truly multi stakeholder endeavour. Over the course of this panel discussion, the guest speakers will address a number of central questions. Where are we at, in the process of drafting the new EaP agenda? What are the upcoming milestones? How can we better enshrine the ‘more for more’ principle? What incentives for deepening cooperation and strengthening the regional approach will be there for the associated partners? What concrete ideas and key recommendations does civil society offer to ensure a bigger role for non-governmental partners in EaP policy implementation? How do the EU institutions and EaP governments plan to further empower civil society?*

*Speakers:*

**Emine Dzaparova (tbc)**, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ukraine

**Petra Gombalova Kyslingerova**, Head of Division, Eastern Partnership, regional cooperation and OSCE, EEAS

**Vassilis Maragos**, Head of Unit Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and EaP, DG NEAR, European Commission

**Iulian Groza**, Director, Institute for European Policies and Reforms

*Moderator:* **Mikayel Hovhannisyan**, Program Director, Eurasia Partnership Foundation, EaP CSF Steering Committee Member

11:45 - 12:30 **Pavel Sheremet and Civil Society awards ceremony**

*The EaP CSF Pavel Sheremet Journalism Award and the EaP CSF Civil Society Award will be presented to the award winners. Following the ceremony, the award winners will be interviewed by the moderators.*

*Introduction:* **Ludmila Sheremet**, mother of Pavel Sheremet

*Awardees:* **Marina Zolotova**, Chief Editor, tut.by, Pavel Sheremet award 2020

**Andrej Stryzhak**, Coordinator, BYHelp Civil Society award 2020

*Moderators:* **Natia Kuprashvili**, Journalism Resource Center, EaP CSF Steering Committee Member, Georgia

**Adrian Lupusor (tbc)**, EaP CSF Steering Committee Member

12:30 - 13:30 **Break**

13:30 - 14:45 **Parallel country stakeholders meetings**

**Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia**

*CSOs from each EaP country and the EU member states will discuss the most pertinent issues for a given EaP country with representatives of the national authorities and the EU institutions.*

**Armenia: Post-conflict situation - response to political and humanitarian crisis**

*Speakers:* **Yeghishe Kirakosyan**, Representative of the Government of Armenia in the ECHR

**Dorota Dlouchy-Suliga**, Deputy Head of Division, EaP Bilateral relations, EEAS

**Vassilis Maragos**, Head of Unit Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and EaP, DG NEAR, European Commission

*Moderator:* **Mikayel Hovhannisyan**, Program Director, Eurasia Partnership Foundation, EaP CSF Steering Committee Member

## **Azerbaijan: Intersectoral dialogue perspectives in Azerbaijan in the changed context**

*Speakers:* **Hikmat Hajiyeu (tbc)**, Head of Foreign Policy Department at Presidential Administration

**Richard Tibbels**, Head of Division, EaP Bilateral, EEAS

**Jeroen Willems**, Deputy Head of Unit Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and EaP, DG NEAR, European Commission

*Moderator:* **Shahla Ismayill**, Chairperson, Women's Association for Rational Development, EaP CSF Steering Committee Member

## **Georgia: Developments in light of the parliamentary elections**

*Speakers:* **Irakli Kobakhidze (tbc)**, Executive Secretary and member of the Political Council of “Georgian Dream—Democratic Georgia”, Vice President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

**Mathieu Bousquet**, Head of Unit Georgia, Moldova, DG NEAR, European Commission

**Ciara O’Brien**, Team Leader for Relations with the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, EEAS

**Elene Nizharadze**, Executive director of International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED)

*Moderator:* **Lasha Tugushi**, Chair, EaP CSF Georgian National Platform

14:45 - 15:00 **Break**

15:00 - 16:00 **WG1, WG2 and WG5 parallel sessions**

*These internal sessions will focus on discussing decentralisation and local government in the EaP, the impact of COVID-19 on freedom of speech and media, SMEs’ digital transformation, and on labour migration, beginning with a presentation of the preliminary findings of the ongoing EaP CSF Policy Papers.*

16:00 - 16:15 **Break**

16:15 - 17:30 **WG1, WG2 and WG5 parallel sessions**

*These internal sessions will focus on the potential frameworks for monitoring the post-2020 deliverables. Participants will brainstorm on how civil society can monitor the concrete milestones for the deliverables falling under WG1, 2 and 5, reflecting on difficulties encountered during the monitoring of the 20 Deliverables for 2020, and on strategies to overcome them in the future.*

## Day 3 - Going green

### 9 December, Wednesday

9:00 - 9:15

#### **The Day Today**

*A short introduction to the day, explaining the various agenda blocks to participants by the event moderator.*

9:15 - 10:30

#### **Panel Debate: The European Green Deal and civil society's role in addressing environmental challenges**

*EaP roadmap obligations and EU assistance have provided solid support to the advancement of environmental protection and energy policy reform in the EaP countries. Looking ahead, the European Green Deal is now raising the bar for the EU and EaP countries alike for the new cycle - a very welcome and necessary development, but one which faces a number of obstacles. Indeed, the road to better environmental and climate change protection is paved with numerous potential roadblocks: delays in the adoption of primary or secondary legislation, faulty implementation, and weak institutions leading to weak enforcement, a lack of transparency, and insufficient consultation with civil society. What steps are necessary for the successful formulation and implementation of the European Green Deal in the EaP region? What obstacles remain to effective environmental and climate change protection and to the effective participation of civil society in the green transition, and how can they be removed? What support would be needed from the EU and the EaP governments?*

*Speakers:*

**Ina Coseru**, Director, National Environmental Centre, EaP CSF Steering Committee member

**Anna Mazmanyan**, Deputy Minister of Environment, Armenia

**Anthony Agotha**, Senior Diplomatic Expert, Cabinet of Frans Timmermans (TBC)

**Andrzej Januszewski**, Policy Officer for Ukraine, Directorate General for Environment/E1, European Commission

**Adonai Herrera Martinez**, Director, Environmental Funds, EBRD

*Moderator:*

**Ana Otilia Nutu**, Policy Analyst, Expert Forum, WG3 Coordinator

10:30 - 11:00

#### **Break**

11:00 - 12:00

#### **WG3/ WG4 parallel sessions (part 1)**

*These internal sessions will focus on the preliminary findings of the ongoing EaP CSF Policy Papers and the assessment of current EaP policy.*

12:00 - 14:00

#### **Break**

14:00 - 15:15

### **WG3/ WG4 sessions (part 2)**

*These internal sessions will focus on the post-2020 deliverables under the policy pillars related to WG3 and 4.*

15:15-15:30

### **Break**

15:30-16:30

### **Advocacy session (for delegates only - optional)**

*The aim of this session is to set the advocacy goals and advocacy change objectives for the Forum for the period 2021-2023 (the first half of the implementation of the new EaP roadmap) in an inclusive and cooperative manner, based on the policy discussions during the AA and beyond. Interested delegates are invited to co-create the advocacy goals that will determine Forum's advocacy activities for the next three years.*

16:30 - 17:30

### **Make your own session**

*The aim of this section is to provide EaP CSF members with a space to co-create their own sessions as side events to the Forum's Annual Assembly.*

*[17.30-18:30, Kyiv, Chisinau || 18.30-19:30, Minsk || 19:30 - 20:30, Baku, Tbilisi, Yerevan]*

### **Open Government Partnership and the EU4Integrity Action: Multistakeholder collaboration for open Government reforms**

*How do we sustain accountability and transparency of government institutions during shocks like COVID-19? How do we ensure that civic space is protected when public health priorities prevail? During this session the Open Government Partnership will share examples and experiences of civil society groups in using the OGP platform to advance ambitious open government reforms, including those aimed at addressing response, recovery, and rebuilding efforts from the pandemic.*

*Speakers:*

**Jeff Lovitt**, Chair, New Diplomacy

**Veronica Cretu**, Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Global Data Barometer

*Moderator:*

**Marina Mkhitarian**, Innovations Lab Lead at United Nations Development Programme

### **Corruption in Energy Sector and its Cost for Society**

*Corruption in energy sector is a universal and persistent disease in most developing energy dependent, EaP and some EU countries. In a moderated discussion with experts from Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, we will present the main findings and recommendations of a common project supported by Open Society Institute. We will discuss systemic patterns of energy corruption, illustrate them with country examples, and recommend the key leverages for its curbing.*

*Speakers:*                   **Sergiu Tofilat**, Community "WatchDog.MD"  
**Nuripa Mukanova**, Anticorruption Business Council of Kyrgyzstan  
**Martin Vladimirov**, Center for Study of Democracy of Bulgaria  
**David Chipashvili**, Green Alternative Georgia  
**Sergiy Balan**, DIXI Group Ukraine  
**Vahagn Khachaturyan**, Energy Expert, Armenia

*Moderator:*               **Murman Margvelashvili**, Director, World Experience for Georgia

#### **Day 4 - Building on civil society mobilisation and discussing security**

**10 December, Thursday**

9:00 - 9:15               **The Day Today**

*A short introduction to the day, explaining the various agenda blocks to participants by the event moderator.*

09:15 - 10:45           **Panel Debate: Trends in civil society sector development and effectively addressing the challenges of 2021 and beyond**  
*2020 has been an eventful year for the EaP region, with civil society stepping up to the plate on many fronts: to mitigate the effects of COVID-19, to save lives, to monitor elections and bravely protest against stolen ones, to call out encroachments on fundamental freedoms and rights, and much more. What changes has the year brought to the civil society landscape, the way it mobilises, the level of trust it enjoys among the broader population and how it engages in the public sphere? What tendencies can we identify regarding citizens' self-organisation, and how can this mobilisation be effectively supported to lead to organisation and increased public participation? How can complementarities and synergies between old actors and new players be facilitated? And finally, what lessons from 2020 can we take into 2021 to be better equipped for upcoming challenges?*

*Speakers:*               **Yulia Mickevich**, member of Fem Group of the Coordination Council, ABF Belarus  
**Shahla Ismayil**, Chairperson, Women's Association for Rational Development, EaP CSF Steering Committee member  
**Vano Chkhikvadze**, EU Integration Programme Manager, Open Society Georgia Foundation



**Anna Westerholm**, Ambassador for the Eastern Partnership, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

**Nicolas Bouchet**, Senior Editor and Fellow, The German Marshall Fund of the United States

*Moderator:* **Orysia Lutsevych**, Research Fellow and manager of the Ukraine Forum, Chatham House

10:45 - 11:00 **Break**

11:00 -12:15 **Parallel country stakeholders meetings  
Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine**

*CSOs from each EaP country and the EU member states will discuss the most pertinent issues for a given EaP country with representatives of the national authorities and the EU institutions.*

**Belarus: Implications of the protracted political crisis on the civil society and how the external support to Belarus should look like**

*Speakers:* **Iryna Suhyy**, Board member of EcoDom

**Aleksandra Kuzmich**, Union of Belarusian Students

**Jeroen Willems**, Deputy Head of Unit Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and EaP, DG NEAR, European Commission

**Dorota Dlouchy**, Team Leader for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus, Eastern Partnership, regional cooperation and OSCE, EEAS

*Moderator:* **Nikolai Kvantaliani**, EaP CSF Steering Committee member

**Moldova: Civil Society as a building block of democracy in Moldova**

*Speakers:* **Peter Michalko (tbc)**, Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova

**Mathieu Bousquet**, Head of Unit Georgia, Moldova, DG NEAR, European Commission

**Daniela Vidaicu**, Programs' coordinator, Embassy of Sweden in Chisinau, Moldova

**Mihail Cotorobai (tbc)**, Ombudsman, Moldova

**Lilia Carasciuc**, Executive Director, Transparency International

**Veaceslav Tofan**, Executive Director, Amnesty International Moldova

*Moderator:* **Adrian Lupusor**, EaP CSF Steering Committee Member

## **Ukraine: How to make the European Green Deal a success story in Ukraine**

*Speakers:* **Oleksiy Ryabchyn**, Advisor to the Vice Prime Minister of European Integration

**Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze (tbc)**, Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Integration of Ukraine to the EU

**Marcus Lippold**, Team Leader Green Deal, Energy, Environment, Agriculture and Transport, Support Group for Ukraine (SGUA), European Commission

**Justyna Głodowska-Wernert**, Policy Officer, DG CLIMA, European Commission

**Olena Pavlenko**, DiXi Group, member of EaP CSF Working Group 3

*Moderator:* **Ruslan Havryliuk**, National Ecological Centre of Ukraine (NECU), WG3 Coordinator

12.15 - 14.00 **Break**

14.00 - 15.30 **Panel Debate: *Security challenges in the EaP region in 2020 and Beyond***

*2020 has represented a watershed moment for security in the EaP region. The developments in Belarus after the presidential elections and Russia's overbearing involvement in the country's affairs have raised its vulnerability and had an impact on neighbouring Ukraine. In the coming months Belarus will face further deep political and economic crises, with the Kremlin likely to exploit the situation to pursue its strategic goals and strengthen its position. Similarly, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and the manner in which hostilities ceased redesigned the security map of the Caucasus, with Russian military presence growing. What are the consequences of these developments? What are the major security challenges for the region in the upcoming year? What other external factors have to be considered in situational analyses? How will the new EaP roadmap respond to some of these challenges? How can the EU play a bigger role as the security provider in the region?*

*Speakers:* **Sanita Pavluta Deslandes (tbc)**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Latvia to the EU

**Katarina Mathernova**, Deputy Director General, DG NEAR, European Commission

**Luc Devigne**, Acting Managing Director, Russia, Eastern Partnership, Regional cooperation and OSCE, EEAS

**Hanna Shelest**, Editor-in-Chief, Ukraine Analytica, Ukraine

**Leila Alieva**, REES Affiliate, Oxford School for Global and Area Studies

**Benyamin Poghosyan**, Chair, Center for Political and Economic Strategic Studies

*Moderator:*

**Thomas de Waal**, Senior Fellow, Carnegie Europe

15:30 - 16:00

**Closing ceremony and next steps**