



EaP CSF Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Online, 15 & 17 November 2021

Monday, 15 November, 15h30 – 16h30 CET

SC members present (7/13): Irina Sukhy, Sofia Strive, Goda Neverauskaite, Shahla Ismayil, Lousineh Hakobyan, Otilia Nutu, Tatiana Poshevalova

SC members absent (6/13): Sintija Bernava, Ruslan Havryliuk, Makysm Koriavets, Yurii Vdovenko, Adrian Lupusor, Natia Kuprashvili

Secretariat Staff present: Iustina Haroianu, Mihai Damascan, Calum Thomson

--

Acknowledgement of resignation of the Director of the Secretariat, Natalia Yerashevich

EaP CSF Steering Committee Co-chair, Sofia Strive opened the meeting and thanked the SC members for their availability for the meeting. The quorum of seven (7/13) Steering Committee members present was established. The first point on the agenda, the resignation of the Director of the Secretariat, Natalia Yerashevich, was unanimously acknowledged by the present members of the SC. Her last day in the office was October 1, 2021.

--

Appointment of the new Director of the EaP CSF Steering Committee Secretariat

The next item focused on the recruitment process and the results of this process to select the new Director of the EaP CSF SC Secretariat, supported by the appointed SC Task Force (SC TF) and respective members of the Secretariat. The recruitment process began with the launch of the ToR and the Secretariat received 41 applicants. Eight were selected for first round interviews on the basis of a scoring matrix, three of them were then called for a second interview and a final candidate was chosen after a joint evaluation by the SC TF. The name of the chosen candidate is to be treated confidentially, respecting the selected candidate's request. Following the appointment by the Steering Committee, the contract will be prepared and sent to the selected candidate.

- The Steering Committee highlighted the legal aspects related to the appointment of the new Director which would involve, among others:
 - Receiving specialised legal support;
 - Updating the files of the EaP CSF with Moniteur Belge (the Belgian registry of NGOs) in line with the latest changes in the management of the organisation, namely the appointment of the Director as the daily administrator and legal representative of the Forum.



As the candidate, Ms Ana Furtuna, has accepted the offer of the organisation, the position of the Director is to be filled as of March 16, 2022.

The SC has acknowledged the selection processes and agreed to follow-up with the preparation of the contract for the new Director of the Secretariat.

After acknowledging quorum necessary for decision-making processes in the Forum (7/13 SC members) and the presence of 7 SC members, the Co-chair invited the Steering Committee to vote on the appointment of Ms Ana Furtuna as Director of EaP CSF SC Secretariat.

All the SC members present in the meeting (7/13) agreed with the appointment of Ana Furtuna as the Director of the EaP CSF SC Secretariat. She is appointed as the daily administrator and legal representative of the organisation starting March 16, 2022, for unlimited period of time.

--

Acknowledgement of the resignation of the Interim Director of the Secretariat, Vera Pachta from her temporary role

The EaP CSF Steering Committee acknowledged that the Interim Director of the Secretariat, Vera Pachta, is resigning from her temporary role on March 15, 2022, and as of March 16, 2022, will retake her permanent position as Advocacy Manager at the EaP CSF SC Secretariat.

--

Acknowledgement of the departure of the Co-Chair of the SC, Sofia Strive

The EaP CSF Steering Committee acknowledged that the Co-Chair of the SC, Sofia Strive is stepping down as Co-Chair and as WG1 Coordinator after three years of service, as she is leaving her position at the Swedish CSO, Forum CIV. Sofia Strive's mandate as Co-Chair will end as of December 31, 2021.

--

Acknowledgement that Mikayel Hovhannisyan will join the SC as of January 1st 2022, until the end of current SC mandate

The EaP CSF Steering Committee acknowledged that Mikayel Hovhannisyan, duly elected WG1 Coordinator, will join the EaP CSF Steering Committee as of January 1, 2022 and will also participate in the delegate selection in this last period of the mandate of the current Steering Committee.

--

Acknowledgement that the SC will have to elect a new EU Co-Chair during the first meeting of the SC with Mikayel Hovhannisyan

The SC agreed that the appointment of the new EU Co-Chair will be held over the next EaP CSF Steering Committee meeting in January/February 2022.

--

Acknowledgement of the interim period of the newly elected WG1 EU Coordinator

The EaP CSF Steering Committee agreed that elections to fill in the position of the EaP CSF WG1 EU Coordinator in order to replace Sofia Strive will be held. The newly elected WG1 EU Coordinator will serve until the end of the current mandate, i.e. June 2022 the latest. This temporary mandate **is not** to be counted as a full mandate and thus the elected Coordinator will be eligible to serve two full terms in the Steering Committee shall he or she be elected for this role in the future.

--

Approval of changes in Co-Chairs responsibilities

The SC approved and adopted the changes of the ‘*Description of Roles of the Steering Committee Members*’, regarding the Co-Chairs of the SC. The newly approved updated version is the following:

“IV. Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee elects two Co-Chairs among its members – one from the EaP countries and one from the EU member states. The Co-Chairs convene and chair the SC meetings, direct the debates, ensure observance of the Rules, put questions to the vote, maintain communication between the SC and the Secretariat’s Director, and facilitate decision-making processes in disputable cases.

They ensure that all the members of the SC perform their responsibilities as outlined above, and they initiate the termination of a SC member’s mandate where necessary. The Co-Chairs make sure that the conflict-of-interest prohibition principle is respected in the decision-making of the SC.

The Co-Chairs ensure that the performance of the SC is assessed by the members of General Assembly before each annual assembly.

In case of any disagreements or any cases defined as disputable by any Steering Committee member:

- *The Co-Chairs should add the respective disputable matter on the agenda of the upcoming SC meeting; if a decision is deemed urgent, then the Co-Chairs can request the organisation of an extraordinary session of the SC; the extraordinary session can be organised online to facilitate a timely reaction and solution;*



- *The respective SC member(s) shall present his/ her case in writing, presenting all the necessary details, and search for the decision of the SC on the respective matter;*
- *The whole SC is invited to deliberate on the disputable matter and take a decision in line with the regulations of the Forum and the procedures followed by the SC.”*

--

The three members of the Secretariat and the members of the Steering Committee agreed that the agenda items prepared for this meeting were all discussed and successfully addressed. The participants further agreed to come back on Wednesday, November 17, 2021, for the second scheduled session of this meeting of the SC.

Wednesday, 17 November, 11h30 – 12h30 CET

SC members present (8/13): Irina Sukhy, Sofia Strive, Goda Neverauskaite, Shahla Ismayil, Lousineh Hakobyan, Otilia Nutu, Tatiana Poshevalova, Sintija Bernava

SC members absent (5/13): Makysm Koriavets, Yurii Vdovenko, Adrian Lupusor, Natia Kuprashvili, Ruslan Havryliuk

Secretariat Staff present: Vera Rihackova Pachta, Calum Thomson, Laura Ponikelska, Kristina Pitalskaia, Erika Zimmer, Mihai Damascan

--

Annual Assembly 2021 – Rules of Procedure

The members of the Secretariat and the Steering Committee opened the meeting by introducing the main topic of discussion of this meeting, which was the Annual Assembly 2021.

From the Secretariat side, Vera Rihackova Pachta continued by giving a quick update over the registrations to the event and particular sessions. Furthermore, she also announced to the participants that the sessions will include two formats, namely, webinar and presentation. Vera Rihackova updated the SC that the pre-moderation of questions from the audience will not be technically possible this year due to the platform being used for the event and as there are several contentious issues in the EaP region this will have to be carefully monitored. In the webinar format, the participants of the Annual Assembly will be able to ask their questions via chat or Q&A box of the platform. She underlined this fact due to the precedential cases in the past.

After fruitful discussion, the SC and the Secretariat agreed that a guidance procedure will be developed ahead of the Annual Assembly 2021, which will seek to clarify the definition of hate speech and delineate the threshold of disrespectful comments, and the consequences of such behaviour. This guidance procedure will be prepared by the Secretariat in the coming days. Following its drafting, the SC will review the document.

--

Annual Assembly 2021 – Agenda Overview

From the Secretariat side, Vera Rihackova Pachtá, Laura Ponikelska and Kristina Pitalskaia presented to the SC the current status of the agenda of the Annual Assembly 2021.

--

Annual Assembly 2022 – Approval of Prague as location for Annual Assembly in 2022

Furthermore, the SC agreed and approved the organisation of the Annual Assembly 2022 in Prague, the Czech Republic as an in-person event, if the circumstances allow. The Secretariat also informed the SC that it will keep in touch with the 2022 Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU, and will update the SC with further developments around the organisation of the Assembly in 2022. The preliminary dates for the event are December 5-7, 2022 under the topic Resilient Civil Society and New European Solidarity.

--

The SC thanked the Secretariat for its diligence in the organisation of the AA 2021, and by closing the SC meeting, wished the Secretariat good luck with the finalisation procedures.