

EaP CSF WG4 Report

Brussels, 27-28 March 2019



Summary

The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum's Working Group 4 "People to People" contacts took place on 27-28 March, 2019 in Brussels. With representatives from almost 30 CSOs from all 6 EaP countries and several EU member states, participants assessed from the perspective of the civil society the current state of play in the EaP region in the areas of Education, Culture, Youth and Mobility. In respective sub-groups civil society representatives from EaP and EU developed a series of recommendations for the EU stakeholders to take into account.

This summary provides you with an overview of the results of the Working Group 4 meeting.



Recommendations on Youth Policy



Ensure continued and enhanced involvement of the EaP youth into the European youth programs (Erasmus+, Solidarity Corps etc.), providing involvement of the grassroots civil society initiatives in the current and upcoming program period.



Stimulate the development of Innovation and digital skills in line with the education and employability.



The legislative status of strategies differs from case to case and from country to country. More support on development of youth strategies and legislation containing youth policies at the high priority by National Governments is needed



Strengthen the support of youth and female entrepreneurship, especially in rural areas by providing tax incentives for youth, female and social entrepreneurship.

Recommendations on Cultural Policy



Build and enable sustainable infrastructures promoting intercultural dialogue and the culture of peace, tolerance, multiculturalism and pluralism of the cultural diversity.



Create networks of cultural actor in the EaP and EU countries to enable sustainable exchange of best practices among different key players in this sphere.



Strengthen the role of cultural workers as mediators of change.



Set the priorities for collective history/memory and shared heritage between EaP and EU countries, tackling xenophobia and hate speech, diversity and inclusiveness.



Focus on smaller sized grants to reach out for the youth and cultural groups working on the ground, who have neither capacity nor necessity for bigger grants.



Concentrate more on regional exchange of cultural practice in order to consolidate and embed various communities across Europe.

Recommendations on Educational Policy



Develop mechanisms and tools for decentralization of the system of advanced training (in secondary education).



Create networks to enhance cooperation between EaP schools and encourage experience exchange e.g. via students visits.



Create mobile educational centers in rural regions, to grow and develop professional skills of pedagogical staff



Revise teaching methods e.g. use more simulation games, building scenarios, increase involvement of digital tools.



Involve more civil society actors working on educational topics into dialogue with stakeholders and decision makers.



Introduce a system of benefits for professional development of educational staff e.g. via voucher system. Moreover, the prestige of teacher as profession, should be increased. This can be achieved via supporting educational start-ups, reforming pedagogical universities, promoting education as one of the priorities of governmental agenda

Recommendations on Migration, Mobility and IBM +

Gender



Conduct the study/research regarding the needs of IDPs, Refugees and Asylum seekers. This study would analyse and compare the situations in EU member states and EaP countries and enables to assess the criteria for facilitating purposeful assistance for the affected target group of people. Special attention of the analysis should go to the analysis of existing laws and policies and elaboration on legal instruments to tackle the issue of migration.



It's mandatory to create the indicators of renewing the conflict in order to prevent the new flow of IDPs



Increase the priority of supporting women and girls affected by the conflict – supporting the creation of the Resolution 1325 action plan for the countries where it is not yet available and in the countries where it is currently available, supporting the localization of the above mentioned action plan.

Civil Society reports

+ in 2018, Armenia has become the fourth of the EU's Eastern Partner countries, after Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, to join the Creative Europe program

+ EU-Armenia Dialogue on Education has started. A new Law on Higher Education is being drafted by the Ministry of Education and will be hopefully passed by the end of the year. It is expected it will reflect more the reforms of Bologna system and Torino process. Civil Society is involved in the EU-Armenia Dialogue with their recommendations on Higher Educations.



? After the revolution, the government has started an optimization process, so the future of youth policy in the country is uncertain as there will no longer be a Ministry for Youth and Sports. The ministry of Culture has been merged with ministry of Education and Science.

— Civil society in Armenia is concerned that with the merge of the ministries and uncertain youth policy will result in a gap on youth strategy and programs at national and local level.

+ Frozen international funding cooperation are slowly being re-established

— Outdated educational system and marginalisation of cultural sphere remain one of the key challenges, according to civil society. The country is lacking modern technologies and teaching methods as well as qualified educational staff.



— Educational system is strongly dependent on Ministry of Education and executive power in general. Civil Society urges the authorities to provide educational institutions with more freedom and independence.

+ Belarus will hopefully be signing a visa readmission agreement soon.

— Civil society has still limited access to decision making in youth related matters. State authorities rely on monopoly of Belarusian State Youth Union (БPCM) leaving other youth CSOs with limited opportunities for engagement and barely any financial support.



— Culture appears to be a state-dominated field with poor involvement of civil society.

+ New pension reform introduced for legally employed under 40 years old

+ Establishment of the EaP's European School in Tbilisi. In the current academic year, 30 young people from EaP countries, came to study at this school



+ In the context of the public consultation of the Regulation on the validation of non-formal and informal education, government makes an effort to develop a validation system for learning outcomes in non-formal and informal contexts and intervened with a common position.

— Following the administrative reform the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Moldova was merged and its attributions were taken over by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MECR), there is currently no governmental entity, with the role of youth policy maker.



+ Ukraine celebrated the first anniversary of the visa-free regime with the EU and Schengen countries.

+ As of September 2018, Ukraine leads in the number of capacity-building applications and funded projects at post-secondary educational institutions.

— The Ukrainian Government has no general programs or strategies for youth employment, the only initiative from the Ministry of Youth and Sport being Pact for Youth in Ukraine 2020.

