



Latvian Presidency
of the Council of the
European Union



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
REPUBLIC OF LATVIA



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

draft, 19/05/2015

2nd Eastern Partnership Civil Society Conference 2015

EMPOWERING CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP: CURRENT CHALLENGES AND FUTURE SCENARIOS

2nd Eastern Partnership Civil Society Conference aims to empower civil society stakeholders from the EU and Eastern Partnership countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine. The Conference will enhance the role of civil society, exchange transformational experiences and best practices in order to facilitate trans-border cooperation on issues of social and political inclusion, accountable governance, stability and security, and sustainable development. Concrete recommendations on empowering civil society will be presented to the public and the Riga Eastern Partnership Summit in May 2015.

May 20 – 21, 2015

Venue: Bellevue Park Hotel Riga, 1 Slokas iela, LV-1048, Riga, Latvia

Working language: Latvian, English and Russian with simultaneous interpretation

Please note that only plenary sessions will have simultaneous English / Russian / Latvian translation. The main language of working groups will be English (individual translation into Russian and Latvian possible upon individual request).

Wi- Fi: ConferenceHalls Password: hotelbellevue

#EaPCSC



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP
Civil Society Forum

Wednesday, 20 May

09:00 – 09:15

EU Presidency Welcome and Opening Remarks of the Conference

(Main conference room)

Welcoming remarks by Prof Dr Andris Sprūds, Director, Latvian Institute of International Affairs

Opening address by H.E. Dr Laimdota Straujuma, Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia

09:15 – 11:00

SESSION 1: Civil Society as a Strategic Stakeholder in the Eastern Partnership *(45 min panellists – 45 min discussion)*

(Main conference room)

What is the state of play in the Eastern European Partners' relations with the EU and their main challenges on the road to reforms? What is the role of civil society in the national policies, regional relations and Eastern Partnership as a whole? And the main focus of the discussion – how do we improve civil society's capacity and engagement in the EaP?

This session will set the framework for the Conference, looking at the contribution from civil society to making Eastern Partnership a successful cooperation framework at different levels. The session will highlight also the positive role that civil society has played as an engine of analysis, monitoring and advocacy for sustained reforms.

Moderated by Krzysztof Bobinski, Co-Chair of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, Poland

Speakers:

- Sandra Kalniete, Member of European Parliament, Former Minister of the Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia
- Martin Hagström, Ambassador for the Eastern Partnership, Sweden
TBC
- Oleh Rybachuk, Former Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, Civil Society Activist, Ukraine
- Ales Bialiatski, Chairman of the Belarusian Human Rights Centre "Vyasna" and Vice President of the International Federation for



Human Rights, Belarus

- Juris Poikāns, Ambassador-at-Large for Eastern Partnership, Latvia

11:00 – 11:30

Coffee Break

11:30 – 13:00

SESSION 2: Towards a Shared Space of Peace and Prosperity: The Role of Civil Society (45 min panellists – 45 min discussion)

(Main conference room)

What is the role of civil society in promoting peace and stability, resolving conflicts and supporting reconciliation in the Eastern Neighbourhood? What are the main challenges on the societal level (such as insufficient transparency, lack of reliable information, corruption)? How do we deal with information security, reform of justice, police, prosecutors' office, etc.? How can civil society get engaged through formal and informal channels?

Moderated by Dr Andris Sprūds, Director of the Latvian Institute of International Affairs, Latvia

Speakers:

- Dr Kakha Gogolashvili, Director of EU Studies at the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies, Georgia
- Dr Olexiy Haran, Professor of Political Science and Founding Director of the Kyiv Mohyla University School of Political Analysis, Ukraine
- Christian Danielsson, Director General, European Commission, DG NEAR, Belgium
- Ian Bond, Director of Foreign Policy, Centre for European Reform, United Kingdom
- Dr Matthew Rojansky, Director, Kennan Institute, The United States of America

13:00 – 14:00

Buffet Lunch

(Restaurant and Event Plaza, Bellevue Park Hotel Riga, 1 Slokas iela, LV-1048, Riga)

14:00 – 16:30

Parallel Working Groups



Working Group Nr.1

Accountable Governance and Civil Society (*approx. 30 min panellists – 2 h discussion and work on recommendations. Each presentation 5-7 min*)

(*Meeting room: main conference room*)

The engagement of stakeholders of civil society identifying local realities and main challenges promoting transparency and accountability, budget monitoring involvement in implementation of the AAs and other EU-partner country agreements. The importance of exchange of best practices and cross border cooperation between EU and EaP countries boosting necessary changes in the governments' policies.

Moderated by Andris Gobiņš, President, European Movement – Latvia, Member, European Economic and Social Committee, Latvia

Speakers:

- Dr Lilia Carasciuc, Executive Director of Transparency International – Moldova
- Dr Stepan Grigoryan, Chairman of the Board, Analytical Centre on Globalization and Regional Cooperation (ACGRC), Armenia
- Jana Kobzova, Senior Programme Officer, European Endowment for Democracy, Belgium

Working Group Nr.2

Bearing the Costs of Economic Modernisation: Social Inclusion and Sustainable Business Environment in the Six Eastern European Partners (*approx. 30 min panellists – 2 h discussion and work on recommendations. Each presentation 5-7 min*)

(*Meeting room: "Berline"*)

The engagement of civil society stakeholders for boosting economic growth, and the development of business environment (incl. socially responsible entrepreneurship). Promoting the role of Civil Society in EaP for better regulations, economic Integration and convergence with EU Policies. Improving social security and social protection systems and intensifying the fight against poverty. Strengthening the influence and inclusion of people with fewer opportunities and special needs, promoting women's economic empowerment. Importance of cross border cooperation supporting sustainable growth as well finding a balance between economic and



environmental interests.

Moderated by Dr Kristiina Tõnnisson, Director of EuroCollege, University of Tartu, Estonia

Speakers:

- Dirk Schuebel, Head of the Eastern Partnership Bilateral Division, European External Action Service, Belgium
- Viktor Baramia, Senior Program Manager, Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Georgia

Working Group Nr. 3

Trans Border Cooperation and Experience Exchange in Central and Eastern Europe: EU states and the Six Eastern European Partners (approx. 30 min panellists – 2 h discussion and work on recommendations. Each presentation 5-7 min)

(Meeting room “Londona” and “Tallina”)

EU and non-EU Central and Eastern European States share common experience of rebuilding their states and societies after breakdown of the Soviet Communist bloc. Thus, cooperation within the region is vital so that the countries that have advanced more on the path of reforms can share their best practices and solutions, and support their neighbours, both directly and in the framework of the EU and other international organizations.

This panel will focus on ways to promote cross-border cooperation, including programmes and instruments; cross-border advocacy; most efficient methods for exchange of experience, etc.

Moderated by Balázs Jarábik, Associate Fellow at the Central European Policy Institute (CEPI), and Visiting Scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Slovakia

Speakers:

- Arseni Sivitski, Director, Centre for Strategic and Foreign Policy Studies of Belarus, Belarus
- Jan Pieklo, Executive Director, Polish-Ukrainian Cooperation Foundation (PAUCI), Poland
- Rodger Potocki, Senior Director for Europe, National Endowment for Democracy (NED), The United States of America



Working Group Nr. 4

Empowering Civil Society: The Role of Mobility (*approx. 30 min panellists – 2 h discussion and work on recommendations. Each presentation 5-7 min*)
(Meeting room "Rīga")

Transnational and domestic networks, contacts between people, simplified or abolished visa procedures are an important resource for civil society and society as a whole, especially in the Eastern Partnership region. Exchanges of experience and best practices, learning and educational processes can take place on a daily basis when the enabling conditions are in place and when deliberate efforts are made to promote them.

This panel will deal with the role and ways of improving cross-border and domestic mobility; education, including life-long and civic education and ties among students and educational institutions to promote exchanges of professionals and scientists, and contacts between people etc.

Moderated by Dr Hrant Kostanyan, Associate Research Fellow, CEPS Foreign Policy Unit, Belgium

Speakers:

- Grzegorz Gromadzki, Expert, Stefan Batory Foundation, Poland
- Fuad Hasanov, Director, Democracy Monitor, Azerbaijan
- Iryna Sushko, Head, Europe without Barriers, Ukraine

16:30 – 17:00

Coffee Break

17:00 – 18:30

Work on recommendations
(delegates from each working group)
(Meeting room "Rīga")

Thursday, 21 May

9:00 – 10:00

Report from Working Groups and from the 1st Eastern Partnership Media Conference. Reflections on Recommendations for Decision Makers to the Riga Eastern Partnership Summit



(Main conference room)

Moderated by Dr Mikayel Hovhannisyan, Program Manager, Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Armenia and Māris Cepurītis, Researcher, Centre for East European Policy Studies

10:00 – 11:30

**SESSION 3: Supporting Civil Society in the Neighbourhood:
Capacity, Instruments, Good Practice from the EU**

(45 min panellists – 45 min discussion)

(Main conference room)

In order to promote its sustainability and influence, civil society in the Neighbourhood needs constant support from abroad. The European Union as a whole, its Member States and organizations have put in place a complicated net of support instruments, but this should be reviewed and systematized. What are the best means to strengthen civil society's capacity? What are the pluses and minuses of the existing instruments, and how these should be complemented in order to better fit the needs of the partners? How exactly do we exchange best practice? How civil society from the Neighbourhood can best engage in developing the EU's policies?

Moderated by Mārtiņš Mūrnieks, Program Officer, Black Sea Trust, German Marshall Fund of the US, Romania

Speakers:

- Victor Chirila, Programs Director, Foreign Policy Association (APE), Moldova
- Andrei Yahorau Director, Centre for European transformation, Belarus
- Richard Youngs, Senior Associate in the Democracy and Rule of Law Program at Carnegie Europe, Belgium
- Karla Wursterova, Executive Director, International Visegrad Fund, Slovakia
- Bakhtiyar Aslanbayli, Senior Researcher and Lecturer at Baku State University, Azerbaijan

11:30 – 12:00

Coffee Break

12:00 – 13:30

**SESSION 4: Re-Vitalising the Neighbourhood and the Vision and
Tasks for the Eastern Partnership**

(Main conference room)

Presentation of the recommendations

Eastern Partnership is a work constantly in progress. What have we learned



over the past years, and how exactly should we proceed with the European Neighbourhood Policy review? What should be the main priorities for dealing with the Eastern European Partners, and specifically, how do we support civic activism and civic initiatives in the partner states? Do we need a new grand initiative, or changes of a more practical nature? This panel will provide a more general overview and a strategic look forward.

Moderated by Jeff Lovitt, Executive Director of PASOS, Czech Republic

Speakers:

- Dr Johannes Hahn, European Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
- H.E. Mr. Edgars Rinkēvičs, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Latvia
- H.E. Ms. Tamar Beruchashvili, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Georgia
- Richard Giragosian, Founding Director, Regional Studies Center, Armenia

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This conference is generously supported by

