



## The Institute of Public Affairs' recommendations for Civil Society Forum of Eastern Partnership

### 1. Forum's Activity

1.1. The Forum should have the possibility to **present opinions** on European Commission's and Member States' activities in the area of Eastern Partnership as well as to conduct continuous **monitoring** of their implementation.

1.2 The Forum **should develop concrete proposals** on the level of working groups corresponding to the platforms of Eastern Partnership (EaP). These proposals should then be considered at the meetings of those platforms and ministerial meetings. Working groups should afterwards be informed whether their suggestions were included.

### 2. Communication:

2.1 Through its Secretariat, the Forum should provide up-to-date information about its activities to partner organisations and general public. **Well administrated web-site** should be established to meet this aim. It should include information on the participants of the Forum, including the mandatory profile and activities of a given organisation and the contact person representing it. The web-site should also include materials developed during meetings of the Forum, with the possibility of submitting comments by people and organisations, that did not participate in the meeting.

2.2 A tool directly linked to the Forum web-site should be a **newsletter**. Its recipients would not only be the participants of the Forum but also other organisations and people interested, both from EU and EaP states. The newsletter should inform on current decisions connected to the EaP in the governmental and non-governmental areas, grant competitions, important projects etc. If the interest in the newsletter is high and its thematic range wide, it could be divided into thematic groups to let the recipients decide on which information to receive. It must be decided how the newsletter language issue will be resolved.

2.3 Forum's participants should decide whether **electronic forum** should be established as an additional form of communication between them (given that the meetings are to take place once a year). This electronic forum could enable on-going discussions on current decisions and proposals.



2.4. The Forum should be involved in the works of other European thematic networks, in particular those that deal with the issue of building civil society (for example European Civic Forum).

### 3. Support for organizations from the EaP countries

3.1 The EaP partner organizations should receive institutional capacity building support by **participating in workshops** on grant proposal writing, writing policy papers, advocacy campaigns and others.

3.2. **Third sector employee exchange/twinning programmes** should be developed for organizations from EU and EaP countries. People from Eastern partner organizations could learn how similar institutions work in the EU during few weeks' internships in an EU based organization similar to their mother organization. At the same time, employees from EU based NGOs could widen their knowledge on EaP countries through secondment to EaP country organizations. Establishing new contacts between employees from NGOs on both sides would be another advantage.

### 4. Financial issues

4.1 A fund supporting organizations' participation in the Forum should be established. It should come from the EaP budget and other sources (national budgets, private funders).

4.2 Grant competitions should be organized, allowing cooperation between NGOs from EU and EaP countries. They should be organized in cooperation with local organizations or networks to make it bottom-up process rather than a centralized one. Two ways of awarding grants should be used for the participants of the Forum:

- **structural grants** should be awarded to co-finance activities of NGOs (in particular Think tanks). The model of EACEA operating grants under Europe for Citizens Programme could be used as a model;

- **project grants** should be awarded for concrete actions realized by particular organizations.

4.3 The Forum should fund independent policy research but also finance joint conferences, researchers exchange and study visits.

4.4 Projects based on partnerships between NGOs from different EU and EaP countries.

5.5 An access to co-financing should be allowed for NGOs from EaP countries but also from those EU Member States that are still in the process of development. It must be taken into



account that non-governmental sector in new Member States has experience in democratic transformation that can be transferred to Eastern partners. It, however, does not have stable financing and it is not as developed as in the old EU Member Countries.

## 5. Thematic scope for multilateral platforms

5.1 While implementing the priorities of each platform, both NGOs and the Forum should undertake three kinds of activities:

(a) monitoring the implementation of EaP projects, including publishing interim reports on that issue (watchdog organizations)

(b) conducting policy research and analysis as well as formulating recommendations (think tanks)

(c) implementation activities – delegating tasks to NGO sector whenever possible. An example of these actions can be a volunteer programme.

5.2 A priority for the Forum's activity in **Democracy, good governance, stability working group** should be the monitoring of the results of EaP programmes aimed at improving the functioning of public administration and fighting corruption. NGOs should also monitor the implementation of various EU financial instruments such as the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. Monitoring the activities of EU diplomacy related to the so called frozen conflicts should be another priority.

5.3 Priority for the **working group on Economic integration and convergence with EU policies** should be the development of adequate social protection mechanisms in EaP partner countries in line with European standards.

5.4 Priority for **Energy Security working group** should be the promotion of interdependence between energy security and climate change policies as well as raising the awareness of these problems in the societies of EaP countries.

5.5 Priority for **People to people platform** should be the elaboration of concrete projects aimed at civil society development and communication between citizens of the EU and EaP countries, for example concentrate on promotion of the idea of volunteering. It would be also crucial to monitor visa policy liberalization policies, starting from the negotiations and implementation of visa agreements between the EU and the EaP countries, for instance the between the EU and Ukraine.