

**Invitation to submit expressions of interest  
in the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum**

The Eastern Partnership Summit in Prague on 7 May confirmed the European Commission proposal from December 2008 to establish, within the framework of this new initiative, the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) “to promote contacts among Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and facilitate their dialogue with public authorities” in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The summit invited the European Commission “to develop and propose modalities for the establishment of a Civil Society Forum of the Eastern Partnership”.

To ensure the transparency of the process leading to the establishment of the EaP CSF all interested parties were invited to provide their opinion via links on the web sites of European Commission/External Relations and of the EC Delegations in partner countries. The call was made under the title “*Invitation to contribute to an opinion on the Eastern Partnership Forum*”. The consultation process started at the end of March and was closed on April 25. Some 40 contributions were received, mainly from civil society organisations based in the EaP countries but also from several EU-based organisations. The European Economic and Social Committee, that was invited explicitly to participate in the EaP CSF, in a written opinion expressed its readiness “to play a key role in the organization” of the Forum.

Consulted parties favoured a comprehensive approach regarding participation in the activities of the EaP CSF, allowing for the participation of a wide range of CSOs: trade unions, employers' organisations, professional associations, NGOs, think-tanks, non-profit foundations, national and international CSOs/networks and other relevant Civil Society actors from EaP Partner Countries, but also from EU Member States and international organisations/networks.

**The European Commission is now inviting all interested parties to submit expressions of interest to participate in the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum or contribute to its successful work.**

**The submission of the expressions of interest is a necessary step in the selection process to participate in the EaP CSF. The participation itself will be decided at later stage following the transparent criteria, i.e.:**

- **Geographic origin/nationality** – a majority of CSF participants should come from the CSOs from EaP partner countries (and their number per each partner country should be balanced). However an important number of participants should also come from EU MS and international organisations/networks to allow for exchange of experience in the EU affairs/policies (as one of the main goals of the EaP is to bring Eastern partner countries closer to the EU). CSOs from third countries may also be invited;

- **Diversity and proportionality** – participants should represent all variety of civil society actors (grass roots organisations, trade unions, employers' organisations, professional associations, NGOs, think-tanks, non-profit foundations, national and international CSOs/networks and other relevant Civil Society actors). They should be able to contribute to all thematic aspects of the EaP i.e.: 1) Democracy, good governance and stability; 2) Economic integration and convergence with EU policies; 3) Environment, climate change & energy security; 4) Contacts between people;
- **Experience in the EU/ENP/EaP matters** (taking into account past and current activities and results achieved).

While applying the criteria listed above in the selection process the Commission will also take into account the specificity of each of the partner countries.

The participating organisations should be motivated by and willing to contribute to the objectives of the EaP.

Certain organisations may be willing and able to cover the expenses linked to their participation in the CSF but this will not be retained as a selection criterion.

Submissions of expressions of interest should be sent before 31 August 2009 to: [RELEX-D1-EAP-CIVIL-SOCIETY@ec.europa.eu](mailto:RELEX-D1-EAP-CIVIL-SOCIETY@ec.europa.eu).

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| <p><b>The European Commission, together with the EU Presidency and the EESC, intends to organise the launch of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum in mid-November 2009 during a conference in Brussels.</b></p> |
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Thank you in advance in your interest.

## **Personal data protection**

Expression of interest in the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum will involve the treatment by the Directorate General RELEX of personal data concerning the participant, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001.

By filing the above form, the applicant will be considered as having given his or her consent to the processing of these data in the context of this invitation.

These contact information might be later distributed among the participants of the EaP Civil Society Forum, unless invited participants object to the publication of their contact details.

With a view to the provisions of the said regulation, furthermore, the following should be noted:

*Identity of data controller:*

M. BRUMTER, DG RELEX I, European Commission, CHAR 15/107 B-1049 Brussels.

*Purpose of the processing operation:* all handling needed for the applicant's eventual participation at the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and drafting a global list of participants which might be distributed at the Forum.

*Right of access:* Applicants have a right to access their data.