

28/05/2010

**Invitation to submit expressions of interest
to participate in the second meeting of the Eastern Partnership Civil
Society Forum (Berlin 18-19 November 2010)**

The Eastern Partnership Summit in Prague on 7 May confirmed the European Commission proposal from December 2008 to establish 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”.

In the course of 2009 the European Commission consulted the modalities of the Forum with all interested stakeholders. The consulted parties favoured a comprehensive approach allowing for the participation of a wide range of CSOs: trade unions, employers' organisations, professional associations, NGOs, think-tanks, nonprofit 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 first EaP CSF took place on 16-17 November 2009 and gathered more than 200 CSOs. During the Forum participants elected the CSF Steering Committee and tasked it with the responsibility of developing a procedure for selection of the participants for the next Forum. The CSF Steering Committee elaborated the procedure which can be found below. The procedure will be applied in the process of selection of the participants to the second meeting of the EaP CSF which will be held on 18-19 November in Berlin. Although the Forum will be organized by the European Commission and co-hosted by the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs, all decisions regarding the aims of the meeting and its agenda will be taken on the basis of proposals worked out by the CSF Steering Committee.

Hence, the European Commission is now inviting all interested parties to submit expressions of interest to participate in the second meeting of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum. The submission of the expressions of interest is a necessary step in the selection process to participate in the EaP CSF meeting on 18-19 November 2010. The application form prepared by the CSF Steering Committee can be found [here](#)

Submissions of expressions of interest should be sent before 2 July 2010 to:
RELEX-EAP-CIVIL-SOCIETY@ec.europa.eu.

28/05/2010

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Due to the budgetary constraints, the Commission will be able to fund the travel and hotel stay during the Forum only for the CSOs from EaP countries. **It will not be possible for the EC to cover any expenses of the CSOs from EU Member State, international organisations, networks or from a third country.**

THE PROCEDURE FOR THE SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS TO THE SECOND MEETING OF THE EAP CSF:

The Civil Society Forum is open to 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. A limited number of CSOs from third countries could participate in the EaP CSF also.

All CSOs fitting within the above description are eligible to apply for participation, irrespective of their participation in the previous meeting.

The selection of the participants to the EaP CSF 2010 will be carried out by the CSF Steering Committee in cooperation with the EC representatives. The selection procedure will be twofold:

I. Preparation of two shortlists:

(1) By EaP Country Facilitators elected by the CSF in 2009 and supported by EaP national platforms, where they exist. In the case of CSOs from EU Member States and international organisations/networks as well as CSOs from third countries, the shortlist is prepared by three EU representatives elected by the CSF in 2009.

(2) By the thematic working group's coordinators elected by the CSF in 2009.

Shortlists are prepared on the basis of the following criteria:

28/05/2010

- Diversity of spheres of activity (it is crucial to assure the involvement of all the major components of civil society and at the same time to assure the adequate representation for each of the thematic working groups and subgroups).
- Involvement in ENP/EaP-related matters.

II. Final decision is made by the CSF Steering Committee members in consultation with EC representatives on the basis of the following criteria:

- Diversity of spheres of activity (it is crucial to assure the involvement of all the major components of civil society and at the same time to assure the adequate representation for each of the thematic working groups and subgroups).
- Involvement in ENP/EaP-related matters.
- Nationality (min 10% participants from each EaP country and min 25% from the EU). Up to 10 participants from the third countries may be invited as guests (without voting rights).
- Participation in the previous Forum (min 40% of the new participants and max 60% of those who participated in CSF meeting in 2009).

The final list of CSOs invited to participate to the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum prepared by the CSF Steering Committee will be approved by the European Commission, *inter alia* because the Commission will cover the costs of participation for some CSOs.