

Civil Society Forum Working Groups meetings – September/October 2010

Four CSF Working Groups (WGs) met in Brussels between 3 September and 8 October 2010. One of the aims of the meetings was to discuss the state of play of the implementation of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) and to plan upcoming activities, in particular the second meeting of the Civil Society Forum (18-19 November 2010).

During the meeting of WG 4 on **contacts between people** held on 3rd September 2010 the participants were informed about the last developments of the EaP Platform on contacts between people as well as about the funding opportunities for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) offered within the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). Other topics of discussion included plans for lobbying activities directed towards EaP Countries, EU Member States and the European Commission (EC). The group also held a discussion on a mechanism for effective communication and interaction among the participants. The meeting became a space of cooperation and the sharing of ideas in the fields of education and research, youth, mass media and culture.

The meeting of WG 3 on **environment, climate change and energy security** took place on 10th September. Its main objective was to present the developments in the field to date and draft a plan for future actions. Consequently, representatives of the EC presented the progress of the EaP Platform on energy security and the Environmental Panel as well as discussed with the participants the question of how the CSF can provide input to the work of the Platform. Furthermore, the participants elaborated a wide range of recommendations on energy and environment issues, which should be addressed within the EaP. The discussions also included the progress of the Flagship Initiative on Environmental Governance.

The WG 2 on **economic integration and convergence with EU policies** was held on 1st October 2010. Representatives of EaP Countries and EU Member States also participated in the meeting. Its main objective was to discuss the state of play of the EaP platform on economic integration and possible input from the CSF into its activities. EC representatives briefed participants on the Small and Medium-size Enterprises (SME) Flagship Initiative which has been designed to address the constraints that affect this sector in the Partner Countries. Another important issue discussed was the progress of the negotiations on creating a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). Additionally, the EC presented basis modalities of the Comprehensive Institution Building Programmes on the example of Ukraine.

The WG 1 on **democracy, human rights, good governance and stability** met on 7-8 October. The meeting was divided into five thematic sections: judiciary reform, public administration reform, fight against corruption, visa facilitation and media. The representatives of EaP Countries and EU Member States were invited to exchange views with CSOs on the practical aspects of the implementation of the EaP and a role for the

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Forum in this process. The discussions were aimed at drafting a plan for the future activities of the CSF as well as a list of subjects that should be raised during the Forum's meeting in November 2010. The participants were also informed by the representatives of the EC about the funding opportunities for CSOs under European financial instruments, including Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes implemented within the frameworks of the ENPI.

The meetings of the Civil Society Forum Working Groups created a vibrant platform for the exchange of opinions among the participants.