

Eastern Partnership

Platform 1 "Democracy, Good governance and Stability"

CORE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PROGRAMME 2012-2013

Based on the core objectives set out in the Work Programme 2009-11 and taking account of the outcome of the Warsaw Summit, the participants of Eastern Partnership Platform 1 adopt the following core objectives and Work Programme for 2012-13 in accordance with the General Guidelines and Rules of Procedure of the Eastern Partnership Multilateral Platforms.

CORE OBJECTIVES

The core objectives will be pursued in particular through the expert panels and Flagship initiatives as well as through cooperation with European Parliament (EP), Committee of the Regions (CoR), Council of Europe (CoE), OSCE and OECD.

Democratic Governance

- Support to reforms in the areas of electoral standards, regulation of the media, Ombudsmen, the fight against corruption, transparent management of public goods and public administration reform.
- Training and networking of local authorities, with a view to strengthening administrative capacities of local authorities and promoting local government reform. This will be carried out in cooperation with the Committee of the Regions under the Conference for Regional and Local Authorities of the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP).
- Conducting possible peer reviews in relevant areas covered by CoE Conventions, modelled on the Commission's cooperation with the OECD under SIGMA.

Justice, Freedom and Security

- Support for partners' efforts to establish integrated border management systems, including cooperation on border control and border demarcation where appropriate.
- Exchanges of views, best practices, training and networking of experts on mobility, including conditions for secure and well-managed mobility, bearing in mind the goal of visa-free travel in due course, based on visa facilitation and readmission agreements as a first step.
- Support for partners' efforts to strengthen asylum and migration systems and stronger dialogue on such issues between the Eastern partners and the EU, as well as between the Eastern partners themselves.
- Multilateral cooperation in the judicial and police fields, including further work towards fully independent judiciary, and cooperation in the specific fields of law

enforcement, combating organised crime, including drug crime, coordinated drugs strategies, cybercrime, trafficking in human beings and strengthening customs administrations.

Security and Stability

- The pooling of information and resources to facilitate prevention of, preparedness for, and response to natural and man-made disasters, including a close link with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.
- Contacts among Civil Society Organisations, including the CSF, to improve their capacity for advocacy and promote confidence building in areas of conflict,
- Cooperation on specific CFSP and CSDP issues, including the participation of partner countries in CSDP missions and exercises, and coordination of diplomatic activities. Involvement of partner countries in consultations and training concerning CSDP operations should be enhanced. Security-related early warning systems should be enhanced, with particular focus on conflict areas. Closer cooperation on arms export practices and non-proliferation could also be envisaged.

It is noted that, within these objectives, participants recommend to focus the work of the platform on the specific added value of the Eastern Partnership, reflecting the common interest of the participants, taking into account work undertaken in the framework of the bilateral Neighbourhood Policy Action Plans or equivalent documents with the partner countries or other complementary initiatives.

1. WORK PROGRAMME 2012-2013

The participants of Platform 1 agree to focus on the following priority areas during the period 2012-2013:

- Democracy and Human Rights
- Public Administration Reform
- Fight against Corruption
- Electoral Standards
- Integrated Border Management
- Improved functioning of the Judiciary
- Migration and Asylum
- Cooperation among law enforcement agencies
- Fight against Cybercrime
- Prevention of, preparedness for, and response to natural and man-made disasters
- CFSP and CSDP cooperation

In addition, the Platform participants welcome the ongoing cooperation between the EEAS, the European Commission and the Council of Europe under the CoE Facility which contributes to achieving the core objectives of the Platform.

Platform participants also welcome the initiatives of the EU Member States in cooperation with partner countries in various expert Panels based inter alia on their transition experience and best practices. In this regard, Platform participants agree to continue providing the necessary expertise and cooperate closely on their activities.

On the basis of activities carried out under the Work Programme, experience thus gathered, and of new proposals, within the core objectives of the Platform, the Work Programme can be reviewed and adapted, as appropriate, on the occasion of future Platform meetings.

Initiatives of the Platform should include close cooperation with relevant EU agencies.

A decision on participation in these activities by *ad hoc* participants will be taken in accordance with the Prague Declaration (point 12) and the General Guidelines and Rules of Procedure of the Platforms

Democratic Governance

The Joint Communication “New response to a Changing Neighbourhood”, bilateral Action Plans and the European Commission's annual reports on their implementation suggest that the following themes should continue to be of common interest to the platform participants:

– Democracy and Human Rights

The focus areas selected in the field of Democracy and Human Rights are closely interlinked. Due to their horizontal nature they touch on many aspects of public life and it is therefore essential to concentrate work on those aspects where a multilateral approach can bring added-value to what is predominantly a bilateral EU - Partner State policy dialogue. In general this will mean that work in the frame of the Platform will emphasize the sharing of best practices and lessons learned by EU Member States and Eastern Partners in the implementation of reforms in the selected areas. Attention will be given to the exchange of best practices for Ombudsmen in the Eastern Partnership countries, based on experience and lessons learned from the Polish and French project on “Cooperation between Ombudsmen within Eastern Partnership, by co-organising in 2012-13 a conference as well as targeted seminars”.

Synergies will be equally sought with the EC financed project implemented by the CoE on promoting independent national non-judicial mechanisms for the protection of human rights, especially for the prevention of torture.

– Public Administration Reform

Further advances in setting up a professional and accountable civil service are key element for Eastern Partnership countries to advance in their political association and economic integration and help develop their national comprehensive reform strategies.

Keeping in mind the similarities and the differences of national public administrations and their backgrounds in the Eastern Partnership countries, the work in this field will specifically focus on six work areas such as civil and public service laws, statutes, rules

of recruitment; transparency, open government and data protection; e-government; relations between local and regional government; effective management of technical assistance; and improving the internal and external cooperation of administrations. The work of the Panel can be used as a forum for exchange of best practices on the implementation of Comprehensive Institution Building programmes. The Panel will also take account of complementary and reinforcing national programmes implemented by Member States in the area of PAR, such as the Eastern Partnership Academy of Public Administration in Warsaw and Estonian Centre of Eastern Partnership.

The Panel was launched in October 2011. The involvement of other bodies such as the Conference of Regional and Local Authorities of the Eastern Partnership and Civil Society Forum in specific areas of the work programme will be favourably considered.

– Fight against corruption

Cooperation with civil society in the implementation of national anti-corruption plans remains critical in all partner countries in order to fight corruption in both the public and private sectors. Enhanced vigilance is required in relation to transparency in public procurement in order to guarantee the accountability of public officials.

The Panel aims at promoting good governance and strengthening the capacities of the public administration and criminal justice sector to prevent and fight corruption and economic crime, in line with the CoE conventions and other international treaties.

The Panel on fight against corruption was launched in autumn 2010 and has been working in close cooperation with the Council of Europe. The work plan was approved in Tbilisi in May 2011. Good expert cooperation with CSF has been established in the panel.

– Electoral standards

The work in the area of electoral standards provides an opportunity to discuss the legal and practical obstacles to the implementation of the applicable European standards in the participating countries and to further adjust their respective policies in the areas of particular concern identified by the Council of Europe (CoE) monitoring mechanisms, the European Union (EU) progress reports and the beneficiary countries themselves.

The work in this field will continue to be primarily undertaken through the Council of Europe Facility which started in 2010. EU Member States will have the possibility to participate in these activities.

Justice Freedom and Security

– Integrated Border Management

The EaP Integrated Border Management Panel (IBM) has been meeting successfully twice a year since 2009. It is proposed that it continue to meet with the same frequency in 2012-2013, and that it continue to be held alternatively in the EU and in one Eastern partner. Where possible, each meeting of the panel will focus discussions on a limited number of topics of particular interest to participants with a view to improving coordinated border management, and will be combined with field trips to border management facilities on the ground. The Panel will also continue to monitor the implementation of the EaP Flagship Initiative Training (FIT) project and of pilot projects under the EaP IBM Flagship Initiative, including border infrastructure and equipment.

The EaP FIT programme will enter its second year of implementation in 2012. Trainings concern those topics identified in the 2010 EaP IBM preparatory study, also taking into account participants' feedback. Scheduled training activities for 2012 include data integration and sharing, detection of forged travel documents, risk analysis, detection and prevention of smuggling and protection of intellectual property rights. The programme is implemented by International Centre for Migration Policy Development and is expected to be completed on 31 December 2012.

The first two pilot projects are expected to enter implementation phase in 2012. These projects concern border infrastructure at Bavra on the Armenia-Georgia border and joint patrolling along the Ukraine-Belarus border. Other projects will be considered for funding based on the criteria discussed at the EaP IBM panel meeting in Tbilisi on 3 October 2011. Inter alia, due attention will continue to be paid to the "green border", which in most of the cases is the primary route for smuggling of goods as well as human beings. The amounts earmarked on the EU budget for new EaP IBM Flagship Initiative pilot projects are EUR 12 million in 2012 and EUR 25 million in 2013.

– Improved functioning of the Judiciary

Regarding judicial reform, work of the Panel will support objectives set out in the bilateral dimension to secure greater judicial independence, effectiveness and impartiality. The panel will work in close coordination with Council of Europe Facility project on Enhancing Judicial Reform.

The Terms of Reference for the Panel were established and agreed by the Platform 1 in 2010. The Panel will facilitate the exchange of information and best practices on effective delivery of justice with the view of promoting adherence to international standards, in particular those formulated in relevant Council of Europe and UN conventions, promoting strategic and comprehensive approach, as well as participation of civil society.

The Panel will equally serve as a forum of sharing experience in reforming the judiciary and adjusting its action to the aspirations of society, as regards in particular transparency in the delivery of justice, adherence to human rights principles, the independence of magistrates, the self-administration of the judiciary, adequate case management and delegation of non-core tasks.

Activities will particularly aim at improving the profession of judges:

- Establishment of independence of magistrates (insulation from political interference).
- Improvement of the accountability of judges (protection against corruption).
- Training for judges on human rights issues, including ECHR jurisprudence.

– Asylum and Migration

Bringing the Soderkoping process under the aegis of the Eastern Partnership will allow for the enhancement of dialogue and cooperation on the broader migration agenda with view of helping to achieve the objectives of Warsaw Summit.

Migration flows become more and more complex, requiring targeted responses. The capacity to address the challenges in an appropriate way in line with international standards and best practices is a prerequisite for further increasing mutual trust, without which opportunities for mobility remain limited. Cooperation and dialogue towards the approximation of standards will be at the core of the EaP Panel on Migration and Asylum.

The overall objective of the Panel will be to strengthen asylum and migration systems of Eastern Partners and advance the dialogue on migration and asylum issues between the Eastern partners and the EU, as well as amongst the Eastern partners. In this context, cooperation among institutions involved in border control and migration control should be taken into account.

The multilateral cooperation in the area of migration will also seek to enhance the bilateral track (visa dialogues, Mobility Partnerships, cooperation with relevant agencies).

– Cooperation among law enforcement agencies

The initiative within the platform should support further cooperation among law enforcement agencies, and in particular the police, on issues related to cross-border crime between Eastern Partnership and EU countries, and among the Eastern Partnership countries themselves. Work in this field should focus on promoting EU standards for cooperation among law enforcement agencies; enhancing police cooperation on drug trafficking and human trafficking; and improving exchange of information and experience in combating cross-border crime.

– Fight against cybercrime

The EU and Eastern partners are conscious that their security is more and more interwoven, especially in the area of cybercrime.

The work within the Platform will contribute to supporting the reform processes in the six partner countries through facilitating approximation to the European Union and the Council of Europe standards.

The work in this field will continue to be primarily undertaken through the Council of Europe Facility which started in 2010. EU Member States will have the possibility to participate in these activities.

Security and Stability

– Prevention of, preparedness for, and response to natural and man-made disasters

The Flagship Initiative has started running in the beginning of 2011 with a total duration of 48 months and a budget of EUR 6 M. The inception period has been completed and the work programme has been discussed and endorsed by the Steering Committee in July 2011. Activities include a review of existing resources and available mechanisms working on disaster prevention, preparedness and response in EaP countries and the preparation of an Electronic Regional Risk Atlas, prevention-aimed awareness raising campaign for stakeholders in general. Capacity building, study visits and exchanges of experts involved in disaster management, as well as technical assistance missions in response to specific demands by the countries' authorities will also be deployed. Further activities include a full-scale simulation exercise and trainings for civil protection experts similar to those established in the framework of the EU CP Mechanism.

A second phase, with a similar budget, is also envisaged to build on the results of the ongoing project.

– CFSP and CSDP cooperation

Stronger dialogue, including through a thematic panel, and cooperation on international security issues will be sought with interested partners, including with a view to their possible participation in EU led civilian missions and military operations.

Possibilities for consultations and training activities as well as possibilities of participation of interested partners in EU led civilian missions and military operations, including political, legal and practical aspects of this issue, will be studied. Proposals will be developed for consultations on facilitation of bilateral EU assistance to interested partners in conducting security sector reform taking into account relevant activities of other international organizations.