

Preparing a Feasibility Study on the Creation of a Civil Society Fund for the Eastern Partnership Countries of the European Union

Objectives

The project aims to prepare a feasibility study on the potential of an inter-governmental fund for the Eastern Partnership countries of the European Union (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) to promote intra-regional civil society cooperation. The paper will assess the needs, determine the conditions of establishing a fund, offer alternative solutions, and serve as a means to engage and guide decision-makers of the involved countries.

Background

While the target countries differ in many aspects, they share a considerable heritage from the Soviet era and therefore have the common roots of problems that affect their society and economy. To tackle the challenges (e.g. corruption, insufficient participation of citizens, poverty), regional cooperation and strengthening of civil society are essential. The region holds a strategic importance for the Visegrad Group (V4) countries which can contribute to its prosperity by sharing their experience and know-how on approved methods of cooperation. It is also the essential interest of the entire EU to foster stability and democracy in its Eastern neighborhood.

Project Description

A task force group of distinguished experts of the field will be established to work on the feasibility study. A wider audience of local stakeholders and professionals will be involved to discuss the draft of the paper in order to amend it with further insights of those affected. The final version of the study will be presented at the next Eastern Partnership Summit, with the aim of encouraging the governments of the Eastern Partnership countries to take the initiative of creating the Fund.