

Conference

“Europe’s Unstable Eastern Neighborhood: What role for Civil Society?”

Václav Havel European Dialogue Conference

Auspices: MEP Pavel Svoboda, EPP Group
Organisers: Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the EU, Václav Havel Library, Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, Czech Centre Brussels, European Partnership for Democracy
Venue: Room 2Q2, European Parliament, Brussels
Date: 18th November 2015, 18:00 - 20:00

The conference “Europe’s Unstable Eastern Neighbourhood: What role for Civil Society?” aims to continue a debate about Europe and to contribute to a discussion in the context of European Neighbourhood Policy Review, especially with a focus to the importance of the engagement of civil society for democracy.

An active and self-confident civil society is one of the crucial prerequisites for any functioning democracy. Whereas in some states of the Eastern Partnership civil society is an important part of the reform efforts, in other countries it is perceived as a problematic by the government. This situation is being influenced by developments in Russia, where we witness steps aimed at limiting the freedoms and independence of civil society. At the same time, Russia, herself is facing many external and internal challenges and threats, engages in military action against Ukraine and her activities challenge European security and our values of democracy, pluralism and the right to make foreign policy choices.

Civil society is an important part of EU Neighbourhood Policy. The conference will aim to answer the following questions: What are the tendencies for civil society Eastern Partnership countries? What are Eastern partnership countries' needs and expectations from the EU and the Eastern Partnership? What should be the EU’s role vis-à-vis civil society in Eastern partnership countries? Is EU engagement efficient? What is the role of the EU, when faced with assertive Russian policies towards its neighbours?

To register for the event, please send an email to Kristina Pavelkova (pavelkova@czech.cz) with the following information:

Date of birth
ID type
ID/Passport number
Country of issue
Date of expiry

Programme

17.30 – 18.00	Registration
18.00 – 18.15	<p>Welcome and Opening remarks</p> <p>MEP Pavel Svoboda, Chairman of Committee on Legal Affairs, EPP Group</p> <p>H.E. Ambassador Martin Povejšil, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to European Union</p>
18.15 - 19.00	<p>Panel discussions</p> <p>Moderator: Jacques Rupnik, political scientist, Václav Havel Library Trustee</p> <p>Eastern Neighbourhood of the EU</p> <p>What is the development in political thinking in Eastern Partnership countries towards the EU? Is EU engagement in EaP efficient? What is the role of the EU, when faced with assertive Russian policies towards its neighbors? What are the tendencies for civil society Eastern Partnership countries?</p> <p>Volodymyr Ogrysko, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ukraine Ekaterine Tkeshelashvili, Former Minister for Reintegration, Georgia</p>
19.00 - 20.00	<p>European Neighbourhood Policy – state of the play</p> <p>What are the tendencies for civil society Eastern Partnership countries? What are Eastern partnership countries' needs and expectations from the EU and the Eastern Partnership especially for civil society? What should be the EU's role vis-à-vis civil society in the Eastern partnership countries?</p> <p>Rostislav Valvoda, Director of Prague Civil Society Center, Czech Republic Iryna Shvets, Civic Network OPORA, Ukraine Boris Navasardyan, Yerevan Press Club, Armenia</p>
20.00 – 21.00	Glass of wine