

# ARMENIA

## NATIONAL PLATFORM IN FOCUS: 2013-2014



In the period of 2013-2014 the Armenian national platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum has actively engaged in the promotion of the EU-Armenia cooperation and contributed to increasing the transparency of the elections in the country. It has also improved its own structure by establishing the secretariat and the ethics council and increased the number of its members from 145 up to 188.

### FOSTERING COOPERATION BETWEEN AUTHORITIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Since 2013 the Armenian national platform has worked on establishing a sustainable format of dialogue around the reform agenda between the Armenian authorities and the civil society. The platform has managed the initiation of such format with 22 state officials representing various sectors of the Government and experts from the Armenian national platform member organizations, who were meant to exchange information and jointly work on specific issues of the reform provision.

Despite the fact that this process was frozen after the decision to join the Eurasian Economic Union on September 2013, the cooperation of authorities and the civil society persisted in the areas of justice and defense.

Being highly interested in the establishment and implementation of a sustainable regulatory field for an effective operation of the Civil Society Organizations in Armenia, the national platform provided a mediation platform for the development of the Concept on the Development of Civil Society Organizations. The members have actively engaged in the discussions and advocated on the reform of the regulatory field for the NGO sector, which resulted in formation of the Public Council, which openly consults with the civil society on all legislative initiatives.

In spring 2013 the Armenian National Platform coordinated a Civil Society Forum election observation mission of the presidential elections in Armenia. Eight civil society experts of the civil society forums from outside Armenia took part in the mission. As the result of the mission, the statement of the Steering Committee and a report by the platform on the elections were developed and published.



### OPPOSING THE CUSTOMS UNION ACCESSION

The Armenian national platform has efficiently reacted to the announcement of the President Serzh Sargsian about Armenia's intention to join the Customs Union by developing the strategy paper on possible frameworks of EU-Armenia future cooperation. Other related activities, such as public awareness campaigns, the monitoring of democratic reforms in the country and mapping the outcomes of the projects implemented by the civil society organizations with EU assistance were implemented in order to promote and Armenian EU integration.

The platform has also directed its efforts at bringing together the pro-European political forces of Armenia after the drastic change of the foreign policy course by the Armenian government towards the Customs Union. As a result "European Choice" initiative was launched in May 2014, as a platform for representatives of political entities, civil society organizations and broader public to promote European movement in Armenian politics and agenda of reforms in the context of EU-Armenia cooperation.