

Azerbaijan National Platform Report for 2012

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Justice, 2750 NGOs obtained state registration on April 01, 2002 in Azerbaijan. The calculations indicate that average annual turnover of registered NGOs is estimated 11 thousand 636 AZN in 2011.

The structural analysis of NGOs' budget expenditures for 2011 shows that 30 % of them are engaged in science, education and awareness areas, 11% in children and youths, 7 % in tourism and culture, 6 % in human rights, 6 % in social problems, 5 % in Mass Media, 5 % in health and health care of population, 4 % in support of NGOs' activities, 4 % in ecological and protection of nature, 3 % in women's issues, 3 % in refugee and IDP's issues, 3 % in international cooperation, 3 % in local self-governance, 2 % in economic development, 2 % in agriculture, 2 % in combat against corruption, 1 % in organization of charity activities.

CSOs are involved in diverse directions in Azerbaijan and concurrently they provide active public support to euro integration processes. Given this, Azerbaijan ANCEI was established in 2006 and its duties are: achieving mobilization of civil society in integration processes of Azerbaijan into EU and active participation of civil society in decision-making, implementation and monitoring concerning European Integration. Azerbaijan National Committee for European Integration (ANCEI) was established by well-known experts in the field an initiative of the Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation-Azerbaijan. ANCEI, a group of civil society leaders, highlighted a number of shortcomings in Azerbaijan's implementation of the democracy and human rights agenda of the European Neighborhood Policy Action Plan. After announcement of Eastern Partnership Program in 2009 CSOs of Azerbaijan started actively engage in Civil Society Forum.

The National Platform of for Azerbaijan under the Civil Society Forum within Eastern Partnership Program was established in November 2009. Currently the National Assembly has 45 members. Member NGOs work in one of the following directions: Democracy and human rights (1), economic integration and convergence (2), energy security and environment (3) and people to people (4). The supreme management body of the National Platform is General Assembly and the execution body is Board of Governance. The Board of Governance consists of 4 coordinators (one coordinator from each direction) and a coordinator of the National Platform.

The Management Board of National Platform and its active members are regularly attending to discussions with initiative of EU delegation in Baku. Thus, Roadmap of the Eastern Partnership for 2012-2013 document presented to members of National Platform on February 08, 2012. The members of National Platform are involved as working group level in discussion of this document in conformity to broad areas under Bilateral track (A. Political Association and Economic Integration, B. Enhanced Mobility in a Secure Environment and C. Sector Cooperation), and 6 broad areas under the Multilateral track of Roadmap (A. Democracy, good governance and stability, B. Economic integration and convergence with

EU policies, C. Energy security, D. Contacts between people, E. Interactions with other stakeholders, F. Others).

On April, 2-3 2012, the meeting of the Euronest Parliament Assembly was held in Baku, Krzysztof Bobiński and Gubad Ibadoglu Bayramov, the members of Steering Committee participated in the Euronest plenary and committee meetings on behalf of the SC, where the CSF received welcome support from Commissioner Štefan Füle and Werner Schulz MEP (Green, Germany), in particular in encouraging EU delegations to bring together the CSF national platforms with the national authorities – in line with the CSF recommendations to the Eastern Partnership roadmap.

On April, 4-5 2012, Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Steering Committee meeting, held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The members of National Platform was invited for consultation on the future EU policy on "Civil Society Organisations in development cooperation" on May 04, 2012.

On May 17, 2012, the 1st Civil Society Forum on “Civil Society in Azerbaijan: National Agenda for Changes” was held in Baku. The National Agenda was presented in the event which was prepared on the base of suggestions for development and enhancement of the civil society in Azerbaijan. The National Agenda includes issues related to registration and activities of NGOs and recommendations on inclusive decision making process with public participation about taxation and other policies targeted civil society.

On May 31, 2012, there was presentation of AZE ENP progress report at EU delegation in Baku Office. During presentation the EU Delegation presented the main conclusions of the document as well as gave the opportunity to the civil society organizations to gather and discuss on this matter.

Furthermore, the members of National Platform met with Mr Miroslav Lajčák, Managing Director Europe and Central Asia, European External Action Service and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, and Mr John Kjaer, Head of Unit For Eastern Partnership Countries and EU Chief Negotiator for the Association Agreement with Azerbaijan on June 07, 2012. During the meeting the parties exchanged views on the recent developments in the country.

In addition, the members of National Platform met with H.E. Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, the President of the European Council on July 05 2012, and he delivered speech at the State University of Languages as well as joined to discussions.

On July 06, 2012, the elections to the 4th Civil Society Forum, within the Eastern Partnership Program, was held. According to the information of election committee, record number of NGOs-111 NGOs and youth organizations applied for the elections. 35 of 38 National Platform member NGOs participated at the elections and made the first short list.

On 20-21 September, an international conference on preparation of youth participation model in the “Eastern Partnership” was held in Baku, Azerbaijan. The event was organized by the

“Young Democratic Reformers ” Public Union and the support of Youth Foundation Azerbaijan.

Representatives of state bodies and international organisations, members of Azerbaijan’s delegation to the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, and other parliamentarians held discussions on the preparation of youth participation model in the “Eastern Partnership”.

On October 09, 2012 the members of National Platform received an invitation to attend stakeholders’ consultation in order to provide their contribution for next edition of ENP Progress prepared by European Union and they provided their feedbacks on this document.

On October 11, 2012, Public Forum on the Situation of Political Freedoms during the EaP in Azerbaijan was held in Baku on 11 October 2012 by the Election Monitoring and Democracy Studies Center , member of National Platform. In the first part of the forum, participants discussed the "EU's Eastern Partnership Policy priorities on provision of political freedoms" . During second part of the forum. participants discussed the "Expected impacts of the 16 October 2013 presidential elections on relations between Azerbaijan and Europe and opportunities for improving election practice". Representatives from the government of Azerbaijan, civil society, the international community, embassies and mass-media attended the forum.

For more information please see www.eap-csf.az