

## Programmatic Cooperation Framework for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus



### CIVIL PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING IN THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP REGION

The closing meeting of the regional project “Civil Participation in Political Decision-Making in the Eastern Partnership Region” funded within the ‘Programmatic Cooperation Framework’ (PCF) will take place in Strasbourg on 21 and 22 February 2017. The Advisory Committee of the project will also have its final meeting.

The participants - representatives of the public authorities and of NGOs from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, as well as international experts – will look into practices showcasing effective mechanisms for interaction and consultation between the authorities and civil society, thus finalising the extensive research, analysis and exchange of experience completed under the project. Together with the Advisory Committee, the participants will then evaluate the implementation of the project and its outcome. At the end, they will discuss recommendations for further work aimed at promoting genuine civil participation in decision-making through regional cooperation. In the longer term, these efforts should help strengthen participatory democracy and democratic security in the region.

The project started in December 2015 and will end in April 2017. Through intensive exchange of views and experience and the preparation of two regional studies, the project stimulates, on its modest scale, effective interaction between civil society and public authorities in the six Eastern Partnership countries. The participating representatives of the two groups of stakeholders recognise the importance of their ongoing dialogue and cooperation and work together for improving it and continuing it after the end of the project.

The project helped create an informal network at a regional level between governments and civil society. The network serves as a platform which allows the sharing of information, discussing significant policy issues and soliciting feedback which may serve as an incentive for those who are less enthusiastic concerning civil participation in decision-making. The participants themselves reiterated the importance of this kind of multi-stakeholder regional projects as exceptional opportunities for exchanging experience and good practices, and for seeking solutions for shared or similar problems. As all the Eastern Partnership countries have room for improvement in terms of inclusiveness of their societies, there is a clear need for continuing the work started under the PCF.