

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



The conference

**“Strengthening Democracy and Local Governance in the Eastern Partnership countries:
Sharing the vision”**

10 – 11 July 2015, Tbilisi, Georgia

“Our generation's mission is to strengthen and make an important contribution in developing democratic local self-governments. In order to achieve that, I will spare no efforts”, said David Narmania, Mayor of Tbilisi, Head of delegation of Georgia to the Congress, during his opening speech at the first major regional Conference organised in Tbilisi, Georgia within the programme “Strengthening institutional frameworks for local governance” .

Mr Nodar Javakhishvili, Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia, emphasised the importance of the multiparty civic councils, established in Georgia after the 2014 elections, in improving local democracy in this country.

“The support to local governance is at the forefront of EU activities in Georgia. It is a key foundation for the economic and political development of any country in the region and our belief in the importance of local self-governance is belied by our actions in this area”, highlighted Mr Janos Herman, Ambassador of the European Union to Georgia in his opening speech.

The preliminary draft study on the roles and responsibilities of mayors and councillors in the Eastern Partnership countries and its findings were discussed during the course of the conference and debated between more than 100 participants. Involving the stakeholders from Eastern Partnership countries as an integral part of the process and the instrumental source of information, will result in drafting of a set of recommendations on how local elected representatives can improve democracy and define effective means to strengthen institutional frameworks for local governance.

“By gathering mayors, local councillors, their associations and non-governmental organisations, coming from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus – we intend to lay the foundation for a fruitful co-operation towards an enhanced local democracy in the region” said Ms Romanova, Vice-President of the Congress.

David Jikia, Mayor of Rustavi, President of NALAG, stressed the role of the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG) in consultation between local authorities and central government in Georgia, which is in line with the European Charter requirements.

One of the closing statements came from the participants. The Gamgebeli of Samtredia, Georgia, Mr Valeriane Potskhveria highlighted that the examples of good practice that were presented during thematic sessions, advices and exchanges between peer colleagues and experts, have the concrete practical value, which will enable participants to apply the lessons learned in their local communities.

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The conference “Strengthening Democracy and Local Governance in the Eastern Partnership countries: Sharing the vision” was organised by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe on 10 and 11 July 2015 in Tbilisi, Georgia in co-operation with the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG). It was organised within the programme “Strengthening institutional frameworks for local governance”, which is being implemented as part of the Programmatic Co-operation Framework 2015-2017 for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus.

Funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe, targeted co-operation activities aim at reinforcing the capacity of Eastern Partnership countries to put domestic reforms into effect in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe represents local and regional authorities and promotes grassroots democracy. It has two chambers, the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions, and brings together 324 full and 324 substitute members representing more than 200,000 European territorial communities.

For further information:

<http://eap-pcf-eu.coe.int>

<http://www.coe.int/t/congress>

[Speech of Nataliya Romanova \(English and Russian\)](#)

[Speech of David Narmania, Mayor of Tbilissi, Head of the delegation of Georgia to the Congress \(Georgian\)](#)