

PROCEDURE

on the Establishment of the Composition of Armenian CSOs and Foundations of the Civil Society Platform as stipulated by Article 366 of the EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Article 366 of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (hereinafter CEPA) concluded between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union on November 24, 2017 envisages the establishment of a Civil Society Platform (hereinafter CSP) composed of EU civil society including, inter alia, the representatives of the European Economic and Social Committee, and the civil society of Armenia, including, inter alia, the representatives of the Armenian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.
2. The current procedure outlines the functions of the Election Commission set up to manage the process of election of new members to the CSP from among the representatives of NGOs and foundations registered in the Republic of Armenia, as well as the organization of the activities of the Commission and procedures for nominating and electing candidates for CSP membership (hereinafter elections).
3. The Election Commission consists of five members: three of them shall be appointed by the Armenian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, one by Partnership for Open Society initiative and one by Constructive Dialogue Network of Armenian CSOs. The Commission shall select a president from among its members by a simple majority of votes.
4. A member of the Election Commission shall not act both as a candidate and as a voter in this process. The organization they represent may put forward another person in the capacity of a candidate and a voter.
5. A member of the Election Commission is to submit a declaration to the electing and delegating entity attesting that in the past 6 months they had not been employed by any state agency under an employment contract, nor had they provided any paid services to a public agency. They shall pledge that in the capacity of Election

Commission member they will not take on positions, nor will they render any paid services to a state agency.

6. First-degree relatives (father, mother, children, spouse, sibling) shall not be members of the Election Commission. Should such circumstance come to light, the Secretariat will suggest that the delegating union(s) substitute the delegate.
7. Following the election of candidates (hereinafter Candidates), nominated by CEPA CSP Armenian non-governmental organizations and foundations, the Election Commission shall compile and publish a list of eight persons representing non-governmental organizations and foundations registered and operating in the Republic of Armenia.
8. The Secretariat of Armenian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (hereinafter the Secretariat) shall provide legal and organizational assistance to the activities of the Election Commission.

2. FUNCTIONS OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION AND ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVITIES

9. The activity of the Election Commission is based on the principles of fairness, equality of conditions, transparency of procedures and publicity in the course of the election.
10. The Election Commission
 - 1) Organizes and carries out the election of the candidates;
 - 2) Approves the samples of the voting results and the protocols of the election results;
 - 3) Carries out a preliminary review to make sure the candidates meet the established requirements;
 - 4) Settles any other issues regarding the process of voting;
 - 5) Makes and publishes a list of 8 representatives of the winner CSOs and foundations, including the list of 4 substitute members;
 - 6) Settles any other issues pertaining to the activity of the Election Commission and left unaddressed by this procedure.
11. The session of the Election Commission is competent provided the attendance of more than the half of the members.

12. The decisions of the Election Commission are taken by open vote - by the majority of votes of the members present at the session.
13. The sessions of the Election Commission are audio and/or video recorded. Hard copy minutes are drawn up for each session of the Election Commission. Representatives of mass media and civil society organizations may be present at the elections in accordance with the procedure established by the Election Commission.

3. CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

14. The Election Commission shall be formed following the approval of the current procedure and its publication on the EaP CSF ANP website. Within five days after its formation the Secretariat shall make an announcement on the elections and publish it on the EaP CSF ANP official website and Facebook page. The announcement shall be circulated through a news outlet with circulation of more than 3,000 copies and its website, as well as, if possible, by other mass media.
15. The announcement shall include at the least the following data:
 - a. The requirements to the representatives of the Civil Society Platform stipulated by the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union;
 - b. The list of documents required to run as a candidate;
 - c. The conditions for holding the elections, including the maximum score for assessing the requirements put forward to the candidates, the maximum score distribution according to individual requirements subject to assessment, regulation of score calculation and assessment;
 - d. The deadline and place of submission of documents, including the e-mail address.
16. The maximum score for assessing the requirements to the candidates is 20.
17. The requirements to the candidates are as follows:
 - At least 3 years of active engagement in the field of integration into the EU and/or experience in one of the spheres set out by the CEPA, that yielded reports, studies, analysis, concepts etc. (a maximum of 5 points);
 - The capacity of the organization, including staff, funding, office premises, website, etc. (a maximum of 3 points);
 - Reputation and the ability to run efficient and constructive cooperation with a large number organizations (a maximum of 3 points);

- The vision of providing consultative assistance to the state agencies in the implementation of CEPA (a maximum of 3 points);
 - The vision of monitoring the process of implementation of CEPA (a maximum of 3 points);
 - English proficiency: the applicant shall submit a document attesting to successful completion of higher education in English language as a proof of language proficiency, or else, the applicant shall stand a test with a qualified specialist selected by the Election Commission (a maximum of 3 points). The Committee may set minimum standards.
18. CSOs and foundations which are not trade unions or employers' unions and which have been engaged in one of the spheres set out by the CEPA throughout the past 3 years and published reports on their project activities are eligible to stand for election. Moreover, the members of such organizations, including the 75 percent of the members of executive bodies must not be employed by state agencies.
19. The representative of the organization aspiring to run in the elections (henceforth candidate) shall submit the documents required to run in the election (henceforth documents) as well as his contact information to the Election Commission through the Secretariat no later than 15 days after the announcement.
20. The documents submitted by the candidates shall include:
- The certificate of state registration and the charter of the nominating non-governmental organization or foundation, information on the organization's sectoral activities (organization profile);
 - The biography of the candidate;
 - The composition of the executive bodies of the nominating non-governmental organizations or foundations, with indication of the members employed by state agencies, if any;
 - A reference (from the NGO or foundation) on implementation of a project(s) under one of the spheres set out by CEPA in 2017-2020, and a report(s) based on their results in printed or electronic form, or an electronic link to it;
 - A reference (from the NGO or foundation) attesting to at least three years of experience in the process of European integration of Armenia;
 - The vision of providing consultative assistance to the state agencies in the implementation of CEPA summarized within one A4 page;
 - The vision of monitoring the process of implementation of CEPA set summarized within one A4 page;
 - A reference affirming the capacity of the organization (from of the NGO or foundation);

- A reference on efficient and constructive cooperation with 10 and more organizations in the last 3 years (from the NGO or foundation);
 - Declaration that the candidate had not been employed by a state agency upon a permanent employment contract or service delivery contract in the course of at least 6 prior months, nor do they intend to seek employment or render paid services to a state agency having been elected to the CSP.
21. The documents may be submitted in person or via email.
 22. The submission of documents is considered timely provided they had been received by the Secretariat by the deadline indicated in paragraph 19 of the current procedure.
 23. The receipt of the submitted documents is acknowledged within three days from submission to the email address provided by the candidate.
 24. Upon receipt of the documents, the Secretariat shall determine their completeness according to a respective list.
 25. Should the submitted documents be incomplete or non-compliant with the list of required documents, the candidate is notified by the Secretariat on the matter by email within three days.
 26. The candidate may amend the shortcomings in the submitted documents in the course of three days.
 27. Upon the study of the received documents, the Secretariat shall prepare and submit for the consideration of the Commission the list of the candidates and the respective documents within three days following the expiration of the period specified in paragraphs 19 or 26 of the Procedure. The Secretariat shall outline the shortcomings and the measures taken to eliminate them in accordance with the paragraphs 24 and 25 of the Procedure.
 28. The elections are held in two stages of which the first is to verify the completeness and compliance of the documents (henceforth document verification). The second stage shall be the voting which can take place online. The online voting is held in accordance with the procedure established by the Election Commission.
 29. In the stage of document verification the Commission shall check the completeness of the documents, their compliance with the list of required documents and, in the event of a reasonable suspicion, check the validity of the documents or the information. The validity of information and documents submitted by the candidates

shall be checked through the Secretariat. With a notification from the Commission the candidate may be given an opportunity to take part in the stage of document verification.

30. Taking into account the results of the measures undertaken under paragraph 26 of the Procedure, the Commission shall draw up a list of the representatives of organizations (henceforth candidates). The candidates shall be notified on the matter at the email addresses provided by them within three days from the creation of the list.
31. In the voting stage EaP CSF ANP member CSOs and foundations which are not employers' unions or trade unions shall have the right to vote. According to their charters, they shall confirm their intention to take part in the voting in writing, responding to a respective letter from the Secretariat within three days and submitting the filled in declaration of Appendix 1 attached to this Procedure. Authorized voting shall be allowed provided the submission of a power of attorney in accordance with the procedure set out by the RA Civil Code.
32. The NGOs and foundations that are not members of EaP CSF ANP, have been operating for over a year, have been able to ensure considerable results, and whose members have never been blemished by affiliation to any manifestation of corruption or government patronage, shall be given the right to vote upon the decision of the Commission provided that they submit a written application.
33. The Secretariat shall submit the summary of applications of EaP CSF ANP member and non-member organizations who have confirmed their participation in voting to the Commission within three days.
34. Upon the receipt of the documents provisioned by paragraph 29, the Election Commission shall publish the list of representatives entitled to vote and the candidates who have made it to the voting stage as well as the date, time and venue of the voting. The information shall be published in the most visible sections of the EaP CSF ANP and Election Commission member organizations.
35. The representatives of the organizations with a right to vote shall assess the candidates in accordance with the standards and procedure established by the current procedure and based on the requirements set out in paragraph 17. Voting is held according to the results of the assessment and the scores are confirmed as set forth by the requirements in paragraph 17.
36. The first 4 out of 8 candidates with the highest total score shall be included in the CEPA Civil Society Platform (main members), the other 4 shall be considered

substitute members. The principle of gender representation is to be ensured pertaining both main and substitute members. At least one person of the opposite sex is to be represented in both the main and substitute groups. To this end, the Commission shall replace the person with the lowest total score among both main and substitute members of the same sex by a person with the highest total score of the other sex. To this end, the Commission shall replace the person with the lowest total score among both main and substitute members of the same sex by a person with the highest total score of the other sex. In case of such replacement the member removed from the main composition shall pass to the group of substitutes. The ensurance of gender representation in the substitute group is carried out according to the procedure envisaged for the main group. The vacancy of a member removed from the group of substitutes is filled by the Election Commission with the representative of the other sex with the highest score from among the candidates.

37. An exception to the principle of gender representation shall be allowed if the Commission should bring forward weighty arguments or point out exceptional circumstances attesting to the impossibility of maintaining gender representation.
38. The Commission shall hold a vote in order to include one or more of the representatives of the organizations that received equal points as a result of the voting in the list of candidates of the CEPA CSP Armenian non-governmental organizations and foundations with the exception of the cases when the possible results of the vote may violate the principle of gender representation. In this case, each member present at the Commission session shall vote "yes" in favor of one or more of the elected participants by open voting. In case of equality of votes, additional voting shall be held in accordance with the procedure specified in this paragraph. Based on the voting results one or more of the selected participants who received the most "yes" votes shall be included in the list.
39. The procedure shall not allow for first-degree relatives (father, mother, children, spouse, siblings) to run in the capacity of candidates to CSP and substitute members. Should such a circumstance come to be, preference shall be given to the related candidate with the maximum vote.
40. Minutes shall be drawn up on the results of the voting, including the summary of the election results made by the Election Commission.
41. The Election Commission shall publish within three days following the preparation of the list of elected main and substitute members on the websites of EaP CSF ANP and its partners, observing the provisions of the current procedure.

42. Should the main members of the CEPA Civil Society Platform be rendered incapable of fulfilling their duties, they are replaced by the substitute members, according to the sequence of maximum score and compliance with gender representation principle.
43. The members of the CEPA CSP, including the substitutes, shall be elected for a two-year term.

4. CONDUCT OF NEW ELECTIONS

44. The Election Commission declares the elections void and calls for new elections if:
- The number of candidates is less than eight;
 - The number of elected members is less than eight;
 - The number of participants in the voting is less than eight;
 - The principle of gender representation has not been upheld, or there is no compelling reason not to uphold it;
 - Violations or shortcomings that may have affected the results of voting and/or elections have come to light;
 - There are other reasons that make the election of the candidates impossible;
 - The two-year term of office of the members of the CEPA Civil Society Platform, including the substitutes, has expired.
45. Should all main members of the CEPA Civil Society Platform be incapable of carrying out their duties and be replaced by substitute members (if there are no more substitute members), a new election of the 4 substitute members shall take place.
46. The Commission shall publish the statement on holding new elections within 7 days after having been notified on any of the reasons set out in paragraph 43 of the Procedure.
47. The new elections shall be held in accordance with the procedures established by the current document.

APPENDIX 1

STATEMENT

on the exclusion of conflict of interest, respect for human rights and active participation

By signing this statement, I, guarantee that I will not abuse my position as a member of the Armenia-EU Civil Society Platform, to serve the material interests of my organization or my immediate relatives.

I also affirm that I respect human rights and liberties without discrimination on the basis of nationality, race, religion, sex or sexual identity, political or other beliefs, social origin, position on property ladder, birthplace or other characteristics.

I guarantee that I will be involved in the activities of the Platform with necessary activeness, I will not miss the sessions, other events and meetings held by the Platform without good reason, I will ensure the maximum transparency of my work for the society.

Signee.....

Signature

REFERENCE

on the investment of the organization's resources, the exclusion of political affiliations and respect for human rights

..... organization whose member is involved in Armenia-European Union Civil Society Platform, guarantees that it will invest the necessary resources and capacity to ensure their full and uninterrupted work.

The organization guarantees that half and more than half of its members, including members of the executive bodies, are not employed by state agencies.

The organization also affirms that it respects human rights and liberties without discrimination on the grounds of nationality, race, religion, sex or sexual identity, political or other beliefs, social origin, position on property ladder, birthplace or other characteristics.

President

Signature