



**ARMENIAN  
NATIONAL PLATFORM**

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

# **Armenian National Platform of the EaP Civil Society Forum**

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

November 2020

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## **1. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**1.1.**According to the Organization Principles of the EaP CSF Armenian National Platform, The Armenian National Platform (hereafter: “ANP”) of the Eastern Partnership (hereafter: “EaP”) Civil Society Forum (hereinafter: “CSF” or “Forum”) is a voluntary association of the Armenian civil society organizations (hereafter: “CSO”) formed in conformity with the mission and principles of the EaP CSF. The ANP members make utmost efforts to realize the EaP goals in Armenia as well as in the entire region. The ANP aims at implementing EaP projects, harmonizing the solutions of the country’s domestic problems with the EU standards, ensuring participation and awareness of all segments of general public and carrying out democratic reforms consistently.

### **1.2. Purpose of the Code**

The ANP Code of Ethics (hereafter: the Code of Ethics) is one of the EaP CSF ANP crucial documents that sets the fundamental values and principles, ethical norms aimed at adhering to the rules of ethical conduct and principles of behavior, managing conflicts of interest, regulating relations related to the activities of the ANP external activities, violation of the Code of Ethics, responsibility, including termination of membership to the EaP CSF ANP.

### **1.3.The application of the Code of Ethics according to circle of individuals**

The Code of Ethics applies to all the EaP CSF ANP members, including but not limited to:

- a. ANP member CSOs
- b. ANP Executive Body
- c. ANP Country Facilitator
- d. ANP Working Groups and Subgroups and their coordinators
- e. ANP Ethics Council

## 2. FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

2.1. The Code of Ethics is based on the ten core values of the EaP CSF Code of Ethics adopted in November 2018, which are shared by the members, bodies and staff of the ANP. These values are:

- a. Promotion of human rights and social justice;
- b. Respect for the dignity of individuals;
- c. Transparency and accountability;
- d. Good governance;
- e. Promotion of diversity and inclusiveness;
- f. Promotion of gender equality and equity;
- g. Promotion of people's empowerment, democratic ownership and participation;
- h. Promotion of environmental sustainability;
- i. Opposition to corruption and other illegalities or improprieties
- j. Commitment to realising positive sustainable change.

## 3. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

3.1. The fundamental principles of the EaP CSF ANP are:

- 3.1.1. **Public trust.** Trust in the EaP CSF ANP by the public, government and local self-government bodies, the media, donors, and other external stakeholders is of paramount importance. To develop and maintain trust, members shall exhibit general public accountability and transparency, and be honest in the information that they make available to external stakeholders.

- 3.1.2. Loyalty.** Members of the EaP CSF ANP have a duty of loyalty to the organisation. In particular, members of the ANP Steering Committee and other decision-making bodies shall further the interests of the EaP CSF ANP rather than the CSOs they represent.
- 3.1.3. Independence.** The EaP CSF ANP members shall not be part of, or controlled by, government agencies, ideology or religion organizations. In particular, the ANP members may not seek or accept instructions from any government or local self-government bodies or their certain sub-divisions.
- 3.1.4. Impartiality.** Members shall exercise impartiality in undertaking EaP CSF or ANP-related decisions and activities. They shall not be influenced by past, current or prospective relationships, whether professional, personal or financial, with any government, institution or person. The ANP members shall refrain from accepting gifts or favours from outside sources that can be seen as affecting their impartiality.
- 3.1.5. Discretion.** The ANP members shall not disclose any confidential information related to the EaP CSF activities. Members shall also ensure that any confidential documents or data in their possession are properly safeguarded. Information sent by the EaP CSF ANP which are intended for the use in the course of work or is an internal document of the ANP, is considered to be confidential and shall not be made public.
- 3.1.6. Non-profit principles.** Fundamental to the very character of a civil society organisation is that it be not-for-profit, non-governmental, independent, self-governing and voluntary. The income of the EaP CSF ANP is not to benefit the ANP members except for the provision of reasonable compensation for expenses incurred in providing services to the ANP.

#### **4. RULES OF ETHICS FOR THE EAP CSF ANP MEMBERS**

##### **4.1. Respect, tact and courtesy**

- 4.1.1. To contribute to the increase of public respect and trust in the ANP through their behavior, avoid actions or inactions that may hinder the activities of the ANP, discredit the reputation of the ANP, harm third parties.
- 4.1.2. To be tolerant and to respect the dignity of a person, regardless of his/her nationality, race, sex, language, religion, political or other views, social origin, official position, property or other social status.
- 4.1.3. Refrain from making statements or taking actions that although not being offensive in nature, may be perceived as such by a sensible observer;
- 4.1.4. To be guided by the good faith, anti-corruption, justice and humanitarian principles, to be honest and fair in relations with members, CSOs, state and local self-government bodies, media and other partners, to act within the rules of ethics, publicly and transparently in the framework of the promotion of public interest.
- 4.1.5. Not to disclose any confidential information, except as provided by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia or with the permission of the competent authority. For the purposes of the current Code, the following is considered to be publication of information constituting confidential information - publication or dissemination of such information orally or in writing through media, e-mail or otherwise, disclosure to a third party/ies, directly or indirectly enabling a third party to obtain such information, that is, allowing, not obstructing, or enabling it through a breach of the protection order set by the ANP internal legal acts.
- 4.1.6. The ANP encourages freedom of speech and opinion in its work.

## **4.2. Conflict of interest**

- 4.2.1. The ANP has adopted a fair, impartial, objective approach to its decision-making process. In its activities, the ANP attaches importance to the management of conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest is a situation in

which a decision-maker, in the exercise of his/her powers, acts or makes a decision that can reasonably be construed as being driven by his/her personal interests or a person affiliated with him/her.

**4.2.2.** The ANP Executive Body member, the member of other decision-making bodies and the ANP member shall be guided in his/her decisions by the EaP CSF and the ANP mission, goals and interests, and not by corporate (the CSOs represented by the latter) and personal interests.

**4.2.3.** In case of discussion of an issue on the property or other interests of a member of the Executive Body, a member of other decision-making bodies and a member of the ANP or a person affiliated with him/her<sup>1</sup>, the given member shall not participate in the voting. The member of the ANP Executive Body, of the other decision-making bodies and the ANP member must identify all factual and possible conflict of interest situations, including any institutional or organizational interrelationships that may have or result in a conflict of interest.

**4.2.4.** In the event of a conflict of interest, the member shall notify the ANP Ethics Council in writing.

**4.2.5.** In the event of a conflict of interest, taking action or making a decision is considered a violation of the Code of Ethics.

### **4.3. EaP CSF ANP external activity and representation in relations with third parties**

#### **4.3.1. Political activity**

Representatives of CSOs selected as EaP CSF delegates shall not be affiliated with any political party or be in an official position in a party. The delegates shall not:

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<sup>1</sup> Within these rules, an affiliated person is the spouse of the decision-maker, the child of the decision-maker or of his/her spouse (including the adopted one), the parent (including the adopter), the sister, the brother.

- a. be a candidate in elections representing a political party and/or alliance of political parties;
- b. be appointed or elected in any political position;
- c. be a member of the leadership or a spokesperson of a political party.

If the points above are not respected, the competent body has the right to apply to the CSO to change its representative in the EaP CSF.

#### **4.3.2. Relationships with government and local self-government bodies**

**a. ANP objectives and independence.** The ANP cooperates with state and local self-government bodies, if that cooperation is aimed at achieving the goals of the ANP. This cooperation shall not endanger the independence of the ANP in any way.

**b. Appropriate and mutually beneficial.** The ANP seeks to dialogue and cooperate with state and local self-government bodies when such cooperation is appropriate and mutually beneficial, and could increase the ANP effectiveness in dealing with issues and priorities on its agenda.

**c. Mission-led.** The ANP shall not enter into partnership with state and local self-government bodies solely to promote the sustainability or competitive advantages of the ANP regardless of the extent to which that partnership contributes to the achievement of the mission's objectives.

#### **4.3.3. Statements and publications**

The ANP members shall refrain from making verbal or written public statements that are incompatible with the ANP Statute and the undertaken commitments. Personal positions shall not be presented as the ANP positions.

#### **4.3.4. Financial activities and solicitations**

**a. Funding and their use.** The ANP does not fund projects that are considered to be a replica of similar projects being implemented (completed). It is prohibited to use ANP

funding for purposes or activities that conflict with the ANP's pre-approved projects and (or) project activities.

**b. Information materials.** All information and promotional materials, solicitations must accurately, clearly and objectively reflect the EaP CSF and ANP mission and projects. The ANP regularly takes measures to ensure the latter. The information materials and solicitations should accurately reflect the procedure for using the funds expected from the EaP CSF and ANP according to the planned actions. Solicitations shall include a commitment to take action that the organization is able to fulfil. Applicants should refrain from providing exaggerated or omitted information about essential facts that may be false or misleading in nature.

**c. Funding principles.** The allocation of funds shall be implemented solely for the purpose of achieving the goals of the EaP CSF and ANP mission. The funding process should be free of sponsorship, mediation, coercion, inappropriate conduct, unreasonable rewards, and personal acquisition.

**d. Grant commitment.** In case of being awarded a grant, the ANP, assuming legal responsibility for the proper implementation of the grant project, carries out the project activities in accordance with the terms and conditions of the signed agreement.

## 5. REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF ETHICS

**5.1.** If an ANP member becomes aware of facts (or indications of such facts) of inclining (forcing) to commit a violation of the Code of Ethics exercised by other members and (or) third parties, he/she must report it immediately to the Ethics Council.

**5.2.** The ANP is committed to ensuring that a member who has in good faith reported a breach of the Code of Ethics or suspected of such breaches is protected from persecution and (or) any other form of discrimination by the person against whom the complaint is submitted.

**5.3.** The individual has the right to remain anonymous when reporting misconduct.

## **6. RESPONSIBILITY**

- 6.1.**The compliance with the Code of Ethics is mandatory for the individuals mentioned in Paragraph 1.3 of the current Code.
- 6.2.**The oversight of the observance of the Code of Ethics is exercised by the ANP Ethics Council in accordance with the ANP regulations.
- 6.3.**The decision to terminate the functions of an ANP member shall be made by the ANP Ethics Council based on the conclusion of the Ethics Council in accordance with the ANP Statute.

## **7. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS**

- 7.1.**The Code of Ethics enters into force upon approval by the CSF Armenian Members' General Assembly (ANP Assembly).
- 7.2.**Amendments and supplements to the Code of Ethics are made by the ANP Assembly.
- 7.3.**Comments on the Code of Ethics and (or) clarifications are provided by the Ethics Council on its own initiative, upon the appeal by other ANP bodies or stakeholders.
- 7.4.**The Code of Ethics cannot contradict the EaP CSF Code of Ethics. In case of contradiction, the rules of ethics of the EaP CSF shall prevail.