

**Debating the Eastern Partnership -
A comparison of perspectives and expectations**

Background Discussion at Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)
Hiroshimastr. 28, 10785 Berlin, Room 1.02
17 November, 2010
12.00–3.00 p.m.

On 7 May, 2009 the inauguration of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) took place in Prague. Based on a Polish initiative, the EaP is the EU's latest policy approach towards its eastern neighbours, namely Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. In addition to the European Neighbourhood Policy's bilateral dimension, the EaP offers a multilateral dimension with four thematic platforms: First, democracy, good governance and stability; second, economic integration and convergence with EU policies; third, energy security; and finally, contacts between people. One of the EaP's innovations is the introduction of the Civil Society Forum (CSF) in order to promote contacts among civil society organizations and facilitate their dialogue with public authorities.

However, the EaP also has ramifications beyond the EU and its partner countries. What the EU considers as its eastern neighbourhood, Russia considers as its 'near abroad', hence a Russian sphere of influence. Therefore, even though Russia is not an addressee of the EaP, it clearly makes sense to include the Russian viewpoint in order to get a comprehensive perspective of the political environment in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

Today, one year after the inauguration of the EaP, it seems appropriate to review the initiative's strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, the FES office in Warsaw initiated a comparative country study analyzing the EaP's progress so far. Taking the partnership aspect of the EaP seriously, the comparative study is based on eight individual studies which analyze the EaP from the perspective of each of the six partner countries as well as the Russian Federation and the EU. The focal points are the different perceptions as well as the government engagement and the civil society response to the EaP in the respective countries.

On the occasion of the release of the comparative country study, we invite you to our background discussion with three of the authors, Grzegorz Gromadzki (Poland), Uladzimir Ulakhovich (Belarus), and Boris Navasardian (Armenia) and our guest from Russia, Sergej Utkin, on 17, November at FES headquarters in Berlin, Hiroshimastr. 28.

Programme

12.00 p.m.

Welcome and opening remarks:

Stephan Meuser, FES Berlin, Division for International Dialogue, Department of Central and Eastern Europe,

12.10 p.m.

Moderation:

Knut Dethlefsen, FES Warsaw, Head of Office

Inputs by:

Grzegorz Gromadzki (Poland), independent expert, Warsaw

Uladzimir Ulakhovich (Belarus), Director of the Center for International Research at the Belarusian State University, Minsk

Boris Navasardian (Armenia), President of the Yerevan Press Club and coordinator for the EaP Civil Society Forum for Armenia

Comment:

Sergej Utkin (Russia), Head of Section for Political Aspects of European Integration, Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow

1.15 p.m.

Open Discussion

2.15 p.m.

Conclusion:

Grzegorz Gromadzki (Poland), independent expert, Warsaw

A light meal is served.

The event will be held in English.

Contact and registration:

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I participate:

I do not participate: