

Reclaim Our Civil Space

www.civilspace.eu
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How do we get to a European Civil Society Strategy?

Description of the event:

The event intends to liaise between the networks of civil society organisations, the EU institutions and Donor States to jointly develop, promote and advocate for a detailed set of recommendations for a European civil society strategy and policy.

Description of the project:

“Reclaim our Civil Space!” builds on broadening the grassroots basis and constituency of civil society through training and mobilising activist groups and movements, facilitating cross-border cooperation and networking, and linking this to the European level by developing together the outlines of a comprehensive European civil society policy.

The project “Reclaim our Civil Space!” is implemented with 9 partners in 7 Central European countries and benefits from a 1,8 million € grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Regional Cooperation.

Event organised by: Civil Society Development Foundation, Romania

Venue: EFTA HOUSE (Avenue des Arts 19H, 1000 Brussels)



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June 28, 2022

9:00 – 9:15: Welcoming coffee

9:15 – 9:40

Welcome remarks on behalf of EEA & Norway Grants:

- ❖ Nora Mehsen, Sector Officer, Financial Mechanism Office (FMO)

Keynote Speaker:

- ❖ Cillian Lohan, Vice-President, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

9:40 – 11:00

PANEL I: *Connecting the dots on ongoing initiatives of the European Union institutions regarding EU civil society strategy.*

Fundamental rights, rule of law and European democracy among the main concerns of civil society in these times. How can EU institutions guarantee democratic, equal and inclusive societies and how do these institutions consider the opinion of civil society?

- ❖ Ingrid Bellander-Todino, Head of Unit Fundamental Rights Policy, DGJust, European Commission (*CERV programme opportunities - from the perspective of empowering CSOs in defending an enabling civic space*)
- ❖ Hanna Surmatz, Enabling Environment Manager, Philanthropy Europe Association (*Social Economy Action Plan (SEAP)*)
- ❖ Giada Negri, Research and Advocacy Coordinator, European Civic Forum (*ECF Report, EU Civil Society Strategy*)
- ❖ Filip Pazderski, Head of the Democracy and Civil Society Programme, Institute of Public Affairs Poland (*ECF Report on the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on fundamental rights and civic space, commissioned by EESC*)
- ❖ Natacha Kazatchkine, Head of Internal EU Policy, Open Society European Policy Institute (*the need of an EU Civil Society strategy*)

Moderator: Veronika Móra, Director, Ökotárs - Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation

11:00 – 11:30: Coffee break



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11:30 – 13:00

PANEL II: *What are the steps for a comprehensive EU Civil society strategy?*

There is a need for a proper policy framework on EU civil dialogue and an enabling environment for civil society. This discussion will focus on how to defend the civic space on the European level – both by civil society networks and EU institutions.

Introductory presentation of the proposal of the European Civil Society Strategy made by Veronika Móra, Director, Ökotárs - Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation

- ❖ Monika Ladmanová, Adviser to the Vice-President, Věra Jourová cabinet, European Commission (*European Commission perspective on the opportunities of having an EU Civil Society strategy*)
- ❖ Waltraud Heller, Programme Officer, Fundamental Rights Agency (*FRA Report, Protecting civic space in the EU - the way forward*)
- ❖ Sergey Lagodinsky, MEP, Greens (*EP proposal for European Association Statutes and how the proposal will safeguard civic space*)
- ❖ Victor Negrescu, MEP, S&D (*Results of the Conference on the Future of Europe - what role for civil society*)
- ❖ Alin Mituță, MEP, Renew, (*The follow up of the Conference on the Future of Europe*) (TBC)

Moderator: Ionuț Sibian, Director, CSDF Romania, Member of the EESC (European Economic and Social Committee)

13:00 – 13:30 Concluding remarks

- ❖ Ionuț Sibian, Director, CSDF Romania, Member of the EESC (European Economic and Social Committee)
- ❖ Giada Negri, Research and Advocacy Coordinator, European Civic Forum



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