



**EU Eastern Partnership Civil Society  
Forum  
Azerbaijani National Platform**

***Charter***

*Baku 2021*

## 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1. “The European Union Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Azerbaijani National Platform” (hereinafter referred to as the National Platform) is a voluntary public association of Azerbaijani civil society organizations (CSOs) participating in the European Union (EU) Eastern Partnership (EaP) Civil Society Forum (CSF).

1.2. The National Platform functions on the basis of the provisions enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Non-Governmental Organizations (Public Associations and Foundations)”, other normative legal acts of the Republic of Azerbaijan, international agreements to which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party, the Charter and other documents of the EU Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum related to the activities of the National Platforms and this Charter. The National Platform operates in accordance with the Code of Ethics adopted by the General Meeting of the National Platform.

1.3. The National Platform has the status of a juridical entity after state registration with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1.4. Once registered as a juridical entity, the National Platform can conclude contracts on its own behalf, acquire property and personal rights, have an office, and act as a plaintiff or defendant in court proceedings.

1.5. The National Platform can have an independent balance, seal, stamp and other requisites, open bank accounts and make transactions.

1.6. The National Platform has **the general status** and its activities cover the entire territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1.7. Legal address of the National Platform: Baku ...

## 2. OBJECTIVES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND SUBJECT OF ACTIVITY OF THE NATIONAL PLATFORM

2.1. The main objective of the National Platform is to ensure the effective participation of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in the development, implementation and monitoring of the EU Eastern Partnership policy.

2.2 . The responsibilities of the National Platform are:

2.2.1 Coordination the activities of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in the development, implementation and monitoring of the EU Eastern Partnership policy;

2.2.2. Coordination of the interaction of civil society with the relevant government bodies of the Republic of Azerbaijan in relation to the development and implementation of the EU Eastern Partnership policy;

2.2.3. Implementation of necessary measures to ensure the participation of Azerbaijani civil society organizations in the work of the EU Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum,

2.2.4. Expanding Azerbaijan's cooperation with the European Union, contributing to the development of bilateral relations;

2.2.5. Monitoring and evaluation of issues arising from the agreements signed between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the European Union;

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2.2.6. Strengthening diversity and pluralism in society by promoting fundamental human rights and freedoms and democratic values.

2.3. The National Platform carries out the following activities to fulfill the responsibilities provided for in this Charter:

2.3.1. Ensuring communication and cooperation with the bodies of the European Union Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum;

2.3.2. Conducting research and prepare proposals on the objectives of the EU Eastern Partnership Policy;

2.3.3. Submitting its position and recommendations in written to government bodies, EU institutions and other stakeholders;

2.3.4. Implementation of projects aimed at democratic development, protection of rights and freedoms and strengthening of civil society as a whole;

2.3.5 Public advocacy activities;

2.3.6. Organization of conferences, seminars, trainings and other events on cooperation with the European Union and areas covered by the Eastern Partnership Policy;

2.3.7. Study, promotion of positive foreign experience and exchange of practices related to the cooperation with the European Union, Eastern Partnership Policy and other areas of interest;

2.3.8. The National Platform can engage in other activities not prohibited by the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan, aimed at achieving the objectives of the organization.

2.4. The National Platform does not illegally interfere with the activities of state bodies and officials, does not allow actions contrary to the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan and does not go beyond the provisions of this Charter. The National Platform does not provide financial or other assistance to political parties.

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### **3. RIGHTS OF THE NATIONAL PLATFORM**

3.1. The National Platform has the following rights:

3.1.1. Free dissemination of information about the objective and activities;

3.1.2. Prepare proposals, opinions, recommendations and other documents on improving the program, concept, legislation on issues related to the subject of activity and submit to the relevant government bodies;

3.1.3. Publish and disseminate bulletins, scientific and popular literature and other materials on various issues, create websites;

3.1.3. Become a member of various organizations and maintain relations with international organizations, establish international relations in accordance with the legislation of the Azerbaijan Republic;

3.1.4. Establish branches and representative offices in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan and abroad;

3.1.5. Use other rights enshrined in the legislation of the Azerbaijan Republic.

#### 4. PARTICIPANTS OF THE NATIONAL PLATFORM

4.1. The participants of the National Platform are its founders, members and assistants. The legal status of the participants of the National Platform is regulated in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Non-Governmental Affairs (Public National Platforms and Foundations)” and other normative legal acts.

4.2. Any non-governmental, non-profit organization, mass media, business associations, trade unions agreeing with the provisions of the Charter of the National Platform can become members of the National Platform. State and municipal bodies, political parties, religious organizations cannot be members of the National Platform.

4.3. Organisations wishing to become members should apply in writing to the Board of the National Platform. The application is considered taking into account the requirements of the "National Platform Membership Policy" adopted by the General Meeting of the National Platform. If 2/3 of the participants vote in favor, the organisation is considered a member of the National Platform.

4.3. Organisations wishing to become members of the National Platform shall apply to the Forum after the announcement by the Forum Secretariat of the application for the participation at the Annual Assembly of the EU Eastern Partnership Countries Civil Society Forum. Consideration of applications and election of new members are conducted in accordance with the rules adopted by the Forum. In this case, the principles and rules for the election of members provided for in the Charter of the EU Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum shall be taken into account. A representative of an organization whose application has been endorsed and whose participation in the Annual Assembly of the Forum has been confirmed shall obtain the status of a Representative of the National Platform at the Annual Assembly of the Forum for 2 years, and the organization shall become a member of the National Platform.

4.4. Members of the National Platform have equal rights.

4.5. Members of the National Platform have the following rights:

4.5.1. Elect and be elected to the elective bodies of the National Platform, the EU Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum;

4.5.2. Participate in the management of the National Platform in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan and this Charter;

4.5.3. Participate in the activities of the National Platform, make proposals in this regard;

4.5.4. Monitor the activities of the governing bodies of the National Platform, receive information on the activities of its elected bodies and officials;

4.5.5. Personally participate in the discussion of any issue related to its rights and responsibilities, provide explanations and submit a complaint to the relevant body of the National Platform and to the court.

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4.5.6. A member of the National Platform can represent and act on behalf of the National Platform only when authorized by the General Meeting of the National Platform and the Board.

4.6. The obligations of the members of the National Platform are as follows:

4.6.1. Comply with the requirements of the Charter and other internal documents of the National Platform;

4.6.2. Implement the decisions of the elected bodies of the National Platform;

4.6.3. Prevent any action that could damage the reputation of the National Platform.

4.7 Membership in the National Platform is terminated in the following cases:

4.7.1 Failure to attend the General Meeting of the National Platform twice in a row without good reason

4.7.2 In case of termination of the National Platform;

4.7.3 Voluntary withdrawal from the National Platform;

4.7.4 Expulsion from the membership of the National Platform;

4.8 When a member of the National Platform voluntarily withdraws from the National Platform, it shall submit a written application to the Board of the National Platform. The application is considered by the Board and a relevant decision is made.

4.9. Depending on the nature of the violation, disciplinary measures such as "warning", "reprimand" and "expulsion from the National Platform" are taken against members who violate the Charter and the Code of Ethics of the National Platform. The disciplinary measure is applied by the Control and Inspection Group of the National Platform;

4.10. Disciplinary action against a member of the National Platform can be appealed before the General Assembly and to court in accordance with the law.

4.11. The National Platform protects the rights and legitimate interests of its members at all levels.

4.12. There is no membership fee in the National Platform.

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## **5. MANAGEMENT OF THE NATIONAL PLATFORM**

5.1. The governing bodies of the National Platform are as follows:

5.1.1. General Meeting of Members of the National Platform

5.1.2. Control and Inspection Group of the National Platform

5.1.3. Working Groups of the National Platform

5.1.3. Advisor on Ethical Conduct

5.1.3. Board of the National Platform

5.1.4 Coordinator of the National Platform

5.2. The General Meeting is the supreme body of the National Platform and consists of representatives of the founding and member organisations of the National Platform. Assemblies of the General Meeting shall be held when necessary, but not less than once a year. The General Meeting is convened by the

Coordinator of the National Platform at the initiative of the executive body of the National Platform, one of the founders or one third of the members.

5.3. The powers of the General Assembly shall include, but are not limited to:

5.3.1. Adoption and amendment of the Charter of the National Platform;

5.3.2. Determination of the principles of formation and use of the property of the National Platform;

5.3.3. Establishment of executive bodies of the National Platform and early termination of their powers;

5.3.4. Participation of the National Platform in other organizations;

5.3.5. Determination of the main directions of the activities of National Platform;

5.3.6. Election of the Coordinator, Board, Control and Inspection Group and Advisor on Ethical Conduct of the National Platform and approval of their annual reports;

5.3.7. Reorganization and liquidation of the National Platform;

5.3.8. Exercising other powers provided for in this Charter.

5.3.9. The founders and members of the National Platform shall be notified of the place and time of the General Meeting at least 2 weeks in advance. A meeting of the General Meeting is in session if more than half of the members are present. Decisions shall be made by a simple majority of votes of the participants, except as provided in this Charter.

5.3.10 A written minutes of the meeting shall be recorded at the General Meeting. The minutes shall be signed by the Coordinator and Secretary of the meeting and shall be accessible to all members of the National Platform.

5.3.11. The Control and Inspection Group of the National Platform monitors compliance with the requirements of the Charter and other internal documents of the National Platform, the use of funds in accordance with the objectives of the National Platform, imposes disciplinary sanctions on members of the National Platform in cases and in the manner prescribed by this Charter.

5.3.12. The Control and Inspection Group is elected by the General Meeting of the National Platform for a term of 2 years. The number of members of the Control and Inspection Group is determined by the General Meeting.

5.3.13. The activities of the Control and Inspection Group are regulated by the Regulation adopted by the General Meeting.

5.4. The Working Groups of the National Platform are institutional units formed in order to exchange experiences and increase opportunities for joint action in accordance with the main areas of activity and specialization. The Working Groups are formed at the General Meeting of the National Platform in line with the structure of the EU Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum in the following 5 areas:

- WG 1 - Democracy, human rights, good governance and stability
- WG 2 - Economic integration, rapprochement with EU policy
- WG 3 - Environment, climate change and energy security
- WG 4 - Communication between people
- WG 5 - Social and labor policy and social dialogue

If necessary, new Working Groups may be established by the General Meeting.

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5.4.1. The decision to be represented in the working groups is made by the organization wishing to become a member of the National Platform in accordance with its area of specialisation and is mentioned in its application for representation in the elections to the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Civil Society Forum. After being elected a representative of the Forum, it continues to work as a representative of the organization in this group as a member of the National Platform.

5.4.2. An organization that is a member of the National Platform can change its representation in the Working Groups only with the consent of the Board. For this purpose, the organization should submit an application to the Board.

5.4.3. The activities of the Working Groups are led by Coordinators. Coordinators are elected by a simple majority of votes at the Working Group meetings for a term of two years.

5.4.5. Working Group Coordinators represent the respective Working Group and the National Platform in the relevant Working Group of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

5.5. The Advisor on Ethical Conduct oversees that the activities of the National Platform and its individual members follow the Code of Ethics adopted by the National Platform.

5.5.1. The Advisor on Ethical Conduct is elected by the General Meeting of the National Platform for a term of 2 years.

5.5.2. In carrying out its responsibilities under this Charter, the Advisor on Ethical Conduct uses methods that exclude interference with the activities of the National Platform, observes meetings and other events, examines adopted documents, conducts anonymous interviews with members, receives complaints confidentially, and provides a mechanism for their consideration.

5.5.3. The Advisor on Ethical Conduct shall register only the cases of violation of the requirements of the Code of Ethics and inform the Control and Inspection Group and the Board about these cases.

5.5.4. The decision on disciplinary action for violation of the Code of Ethics is made by the Control and Inspection Group upon consultation with Advisor on Ethical Conduct and the Board.

5.5.5. If the resolution of the dispute over the violation of the Code of Ethics is not possible within the National Platform, the Advisor on Ethical Conduct and the counterparty can apply to the Control and Inspection Group of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

5.5.6. The Advisor on Ethical Conduct takes appropriate measures to ensure that members of the National Platform are aware of the Code of Ethics and that the Code of Ethics is accessible.

5.7. The Board of the National Platform consisting of the Coordinator of the National Platform and the Coordinators of the Working Groups is organized by the General Meeting. The term of office of the Board is 2 years.

5.8. The Board of the National Platform manages the current activities of the National Platform and has the following powers:

5.8.1. Discuss necessary issues related to the current activities of the National Platform;

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5.8.2. Open branches and representative offices of the National Platform, appoint its heads;

5.8.3. Make decisions on the National Platform's main capital, working capital and cash;

5.8.4. Exercise other powers that do not fall within the exclusive competence of the General Meeting.

5.8.5. Meetings of the Board of the National Platform are held when necessary, but not less than once a quarter. The time and agenda of the meetings of the Board shall be notified to its members at least 1 week in advance.

5.8.8. Meetings of the Board are valid if more than half of the members are present. Board meetings are chaired by the Coordinator of the National Platform. Decisions are made by a simple majority of votes of the participants.

5.9. The Coordinator of the National Platform:

5.9.1. Organizes the current activities of the National Platform.

5.9.2. Provides information exchange, dissemination of statements and information on events between the National Platform and the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and other governing bodies, and takes other necessary measures to coordinate the activities of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and the National Platform;

5.9.3. Together with the Board organizes the elections to determine the Representatives for the Annual Assembly of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum;

5.9.4. Prepares an annual report on the activities of the National Platform and submits it to the General Meeting of the National Platform and to the Secretariat of the Civil Society Forum;

5.9.5. Participates in the meetings of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum;

5.9.6. Ensures the implementation of work plans of the National Platform;

5.9.7. If necessary, in accordance with the directions of activity establishes expert groups and other bodies of the National Platform, organizes their work;

5.9.8. Adopts relevant decisions within its powers;

5.9.9. Represents the National Platform, concludes contracts and agreements on its behalf;

5.9.10. Resolves other issues not related to the powers of the General Meeting and the Board.

## **6. BRANCHES AND REPRESENTATIVE OFFICES OF THE NATIONAL PLATFORM**

6.1. The National Platform can establish branches and representative offices in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan and abroad.

6.2. The branch of the National Platform is organized outside its location and carries out part of its activity.

6.3. Representative offices of the National Platform is organized outside its location, represents and protects the interests of the National Platform.

6.4. Branches and representative offices of the National Platform are not legal entities, but receive shares in the property of the National Platform and operate in accordance with the Regulations approved by the General Meeting of the National Platform. The National Platform is responsible for the activities of the branches and representative offices.

6.5. Branches and representative offices operate within the authority given to it by the Board of the National Platform.

## **7. PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL PLATFORM AND ITS SOURCES OF FORMATION OF PROPERTY**

7.1. The property of the National Platform consists of buildings, installations, equipment, inventory, cash, securities and other property necessary for the material support of the activities provided for in this Charter.

7.2. The sources of money and other forms of financial resources of the National Platform are as follows:

7.2.1. Voluntary property fees and donations;

7.2.2. Receipts from sale of goods, provision of services and performance of work;

7.2.3. Income received as a result of using and selling its own property;

7.2.4. Grants;

7.2.5. Other sources not prohibited by the legislation.

7.3. The National Platform may carry out entrepreneurial activities only for the purpose of achieving its goals without dividing the income among the founders (members).

7.4. Rights on the property of the National Platform shall be exercised in accordance with the procedure established by this Charter.

7.5. The first financial year of the National Platform starts from the date of state registration in accordance with the legislation and ends on December 31 of the same year. The next fiscal years begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

## **8. TERMINATION OF THE NATIONAL PLATFORM**

8.1. The activity of the National Platform shall be terminated by its reorganization (merger, acquisition, division, separation, transformation) or its liquidation in accordance with the legislation in force.

8.5. After the reorganization of the National Platform, issues related to legal succession shall be resolved in accordance with the Civil Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

8.6. All property issues related to the liquidation of the National Platform shall be resolved in accordance with the Civil Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

## **9. PROCEDURE FOR AMENDMENTS AND ADDITIONS TO THE CHARTER**

9.1. Amendments and additions to this Charter may be made by a decision of 2/3 of the participants of the General Meeting of the National Platform.