

Black Sea NGO Forum, the 15th edition

„ The Black Sea Region under Pressure. From Multiple Crisis to Sustainable and Democratic Development”

21 - 22 November 2022, Sheraton Bucharest Hotel

Bucharest, hybrid format

Draft Agenda

Day I – 21 November

9:00 – 9:30 | **Registration of participants**

9:30 – 9:40 | **Opening and Keynote Speech**

Mr. Bogdan Aurescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, Government of Romania (TBC)

9:40 – 11:00 | **Regional Reconstruction through Partnerships: From a Post-Pandemic and Post-War Context to Robust Partnerships for Democratic Development**

Concept: In this session, we intend to address the multiple partnerships between actors present in the Black Sea region and the meaningful engagement of civil society in consolidating such partnerships. The development and promotion of democracy are impossible without NGOs' active involvement. Civil society is an important element of cooperation in different thematic areas, being a reliable partner for government agencies and private sector representatives. Moreover, representatives of NGOs supported through advocacy actions and information campaigns the diplomatic efforts of the leaders of the states that submitted requests for accession to the European Union (Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia. In most of the participant countries of the Black Sea NGO Forum, civil society supports regional integration processes and intervenes with services that the central and local authorities cannot offer to citizens during the pandemic or during the war.

Objectives:

- To highlight the contribution of civil society to meaningful democracy and democratic development that create benefits for people;
- To present ways of engaging in intersectoral partnerships with the government, private sector, civil society, and other citizens in addressing local needs through the best solution;
- To present best practices from the EU and the Black Sea Region in implementing reforms and policies that lead to the democratization of societies;
- To highlight the key challenges to democratization in the region.

Moderator: Mr. Sergiu Panainte, Interim Director, Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation, a project of German Marshall Fund

Speakers:

Mr Dimitrios Tryantaphyllou, Director, Center for International and European Studies (CIES), Kadir Has University

Ms Oana Popescu Zamfir, Director, Global Focus (TBC)



Ms Svitlana Kuts, Director, Institute of Professional Fundraising
Ms Gayane Mkrtchyan, Program Director, Eurasia Partnership Foundation
Ms Marija Vishinova, Communication Officer, Balkan Civil Society Development Network

11:00 - 11:30 | **Coffee break**

11:30 - 13:00 | **The future of cooperation in the Black Sea region. How does the crisis in Ukraine change the policies of the European Union and other regional actors?**

Concept: This session aims to discuss the future of cooperation in the Black Sea region and how the Ukrainian crisis is changing the priorities included in the Black Sea Synergy. Russia's war against Ukraine has considerably changed the agenda of European priorities, including for the Black Sea region. Decisions and policies will change, and the actors with interests in the Black Sea region must be prepared for new, innovative, and effective approaches that have sustainable development in the foreground. In this context we find it extremely important for civil society to have a voice and to articulate solutions and joint activities to address the challenges encountered in the Region.

Objectives:

- To reflect on a European Union policy for the Black Sea Region and the vision of different EU institutions to promote further cooperation in the region;
- To highlight the strategy adopted by other regional stakeholders active in the region (BSEC, civil society actors, etc.);
- To identify other relevant regional discussion platforms in the Black Sea region.

Moderator: **Mr Ștefan Cibian**, President, the Romanian NGDO Platform – FOND

Speakers:

Ms Daniela Grigore Gîțman, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Romania (TBC)

H.E. Amb. Lazăr Comănescu, Secretary General, Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (TBC)

H.E. Amb. Alexandru Micula, Ambassador of Romania in Ukraine (TBC)

Ms Daniela Maria Dobre, General Director of Romanian Agency for International Development Cooperation – RoAid (TBC)

Mr Eduard Auer, Head of Division EURCA.1 (Eastern Partnership regional, regional programmes, OSCE), European External Action Service (TBC)

Ms Alexandra-Maria Bocse, State Counselor, Romanian Presidency (TBC)

13:00 -14:00 | **Lunch and networking**

14:00 – 15:30 | **The New European Union Innovation Agenda. Priorities for 2021 – 2027**

Concept: In July 2022, the European Commission adopted the New European Union Innovation Agenda. The document will contribute to position EU as an actor of innovation. Also, the new dedicated EU Program for innovation and research “Innovative Europe” aims to contribute to implementing the Horizon Europe Strategic Plan. This session aims to present the New European Union Innovation Agenda and the “Innovative Europe” perspectives and the strategic elements in promoting Sustainable Development Goals and boosting the EU's competitiveness and growth in a changing world.

Objectives:

- To highlight the new priorities in innovation and research in the Horizon Europe Programme and energy transition;
- To identify the profile of the actors that can contribute to the implementation of the strategic outcomes of the EU innovation program;
- To present the opportunities for the stakeholders from the Black Sea region community – civil society actors, academia, research institutions;
- To reflect on how new technologies and digitalization can address the most pressing societal challenges.

Moderator: **Mr Victor Guzun**, International Negotiations Lecturer, former public servant and Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova to Estonia

Speakers:

Mr Sebastian Burduja, Minister, Minister of Research, Innovation, and Digitalization in the Government of Romania (TBC)

Mr Andras Inotai, Head of Unit for Innovation Policy and Access to Finance, European Commission, DG Research & Innovation (TBC)

Mr Dinu Țurcanu, Vice-Rector for Digitalization, Technical University of Moldova

Ms. Pinar Uygurer, Project Manager, Institute of Marine Sciences, METU, and Black Sea CONNECT and BRIDGE-BS (TBC)

Ms Bianca Muntean, Co-Founder& Coordonator, Transilvania Digital Innovation Hub

15:30 -16:00 | **Coffee break**

16:00 - 17:00 | **The Black Sea NGO Forum Reform: A Strategic Approach to the New Regional Context**

Concept: This session will be dedicated to consultations with the Black Sea NGO Forum participants regarding the need to adapt the content of the Strategic Frameworks adopted in Istanbul (2019) to the new contextual realities in the Black Sea region: pandemic, the war against Ukraine, regional conflicts, economic crises. Thus, the participants will be consulted and invited to present suggestions and proposals for reforming the Black Sea NGO Forum. Later, these suggestions and recommendations will be analyzed and transformed into

concrete proposals for strengthening the Strategic Framework by the executive team and members of the Board of Directors, Advisory Group and National Focal Points Network.

Objectives:

- To organize an open debate with the participation of the beneficiaries of the Black Sea NGO Forum to collect proposals and suggestions for amending the Strategic Framework;
- To consult the participants of the Forum regarding the strategic priorities of the Forum, taking into account the political, security, and economic context of the Black Sea region and the transformations of policies dedicated to regulating civil society in different countries in the region.

Facilitator: Ms Cristina Rigman, Strategist & Experience Designer

Day II – 22 November

9:00 - 09:30 | **Registration of participants**

09:30 – 11:00 | **The Ukrainian Crisis and its Impact on Civil Society Development in the Black Sea region. The Sub-Granting Scheme of the Black Sea NGO Forum and SOS Ukraine Campaign**

Concept: This session aims to discuss the involvement of the **civil society organisations part of the Black Sea NGO Forum** in activities/projects/initiatives supporting humanitarian assistance for the Ukrainian refugees abroad, in Romania, the Republic of Moldova, and other countries, partners of FOND, with an active presence at the BSNNGOF. Also, we aim to highlight the importance of capacity-building actions for Ukrainian NGOs that continue to act within their local communities, supporting civilians by providing them with the necessary assistance and services for covering their basic needs.

Objectives:

- To highlight the medium and long-term effects of the refugee crisis and its impact on the actors involved in the humanitarian assistance mechanisms;
- To present models of support for civil society in Ukraine, such as the SOS Ukraine campaign;
- To present the contribution of the Black Sea NGO Forum in addressing the refugee crisis in Ukraine - results obtained by the beneficiaries of the Sub Granting scheme
- To highlight models of good practices generated by public-private partnerships.

Moderator: Ms Natalia Budescu, Director, Association for Cross Border Cooperation "Lower Danube Euroregion"

Speakers:

Mr Christian D. Renson, Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Officer, UNHCR Representation in Romania (TBC)

Ms Mădălina Turza, State Advisor and Strategic Coordinator of Humanitarian Assistance to Refugees, the Prime Minister Chancellery (TBC)

Ms Mariana Ianachevici, Chief Executive Officer, The Association for Child and Family Empowerment „AVE Copiii”

Ms Nadija Afanasieva, Executive Director, Ukrainian Institute for International Politics (online, via ZOOM)



Ms Natusa Aphkhazava, Director of Batumi Branch/Legal Expert, Civil Society Institute Georgia
Ms Iris Alexe, Director, Novapolis Association
Ms Camelia Crişan, Chief Executive Officer, Bistriţa Progress Foundation
Mr Petru Russu, Public Affairs Manager, Heineken Romania (TBC)

11:00 -11:30 | **Coffee break**

11:30 -13:00 | **Side event 1: Social Entrepreneurship – a pillar for sustainable development in the Black Sea Region**

Concept: This side event is dedicated to discussions about the importance of Social Entrepreneurship and what could be the solutions for developing the social economy in the medium term in the Black Sea region. Social entrepreneurship is not only a generator of jobs but also a field that allows solving a wide spectrum of social problems. In January 2021, the Toledo Declaration on the social and solidarity economy was adopted. The Declaration was supported by most of the European Union member states. This side event will be organized by CSOs participating in the works of the Black Sea NGO Forum, which promotes the development of social entrepreneurship both nationally and regionally.

Objectives:

- To present the latest policies, trends, strategies and know-how in social entrepreneurship;
- To discuss the level of legislative debates in different states from the Black Sea region;
- To highlight the relevance of the cooperation among the organizations supporting social entrepreneurship development in the Black Sea Region.

Moderator: **Ms Ana Murray**, Country Director, Ashoka Romania

Speakers:

Ms Elena Vasiliu, Communications and Marketing Expert, ADV Romania Group
Ms Anahit Ghazanchyan, President/CEO, Development Principles NGO, Armenia
Ms Elena Nofit, Communication Manager, Contact Center, the Republic of Moldova
Mr Alin Apostu, Project Manager, Romanian Business Leaders
Ms Alexis Eremia, Co-founder and Managing Director, Impact Hub Vienna (TBC)

13:00 - 14:00 | **Lunch and networking**

14:00 – 15:00 | **Side Event 2: Donor Café Session – session with donor organization representatives**

Objectives:

- ✓ *Highlighting the existing opportunities for the development of the civil society sector.*
- ✓ *Promoting projects of interest for regional cooperation.*
- ✓ *Providing a practical interaction space for donors and beneficiaries of funding programs.*



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Facilitator: Anca Ciuca, President, Foundation for Democratic Changes, Vice-President of the NGDO Platform (FOND) (TBC)

Donor organizations (TBC):

Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation, a project of German Marshall Fund

European Endowment for Democracy

National Endowment for Democracy

European Commission

USAID

Romanian Agency for International Development

Civil Society Development Foundation

15:00 – 15:15 | **Coffee break**

15:15 – 17:00 | **Networking space**



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