



we  
LAUNCH EVENT

EAP INDEX 2023 UNWRAPPED:  
REFORM PULSE AND EMERGING TRENDS IN THE EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD

Online [[Link for registration](#)]  
Thursday, 8 February 2024, 10:00 – 12:10 CET

### Concept

2022 and 2023 have arguably been among the most significant years in the history of the Eastern Partnership policy. These two eventful years saw both the tragedy of wars and humanitarian crisis, and unprecedented solidarity among people and civil society. These were also the years in which several Eastern Partnership countries got closer to the EU – to various degrees and through different formats - than ever before.

**Against this backdrop, the new Eastern Partnership Index 2023 edition tells the compelling story of resilience in the face of war and collaboration in spite of challenging geopolitical dynamics in the Eastern Partnership region.**

Two years into Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine this February, the EaP Index findings highly resonate with the overarching theme of the war and its spillover effects across all the six EaP countries. While the war shows the fragile nature of peace in the region, it also confirms the robustness of the Eastern Partnership as a 'training ground' for EaP countries with EU aspirations, and the resilience of independent civil society.

**Under these circumstances, over the reporting period of two years (2022 and 2023), the EaP Index takes stock of emerging policy trends and reforms in critical governance areas across all six EaP countries and translates them into practical insights and concrete policy recommendations.** They are uniquely backed up by data analysis, research, and validation mechanisms – all carefully curated by local civil society.

With its scores, rankings, and comparative historical data, the Index offers an informed starting point to delve into the specificity of each EaP country reform track-record and across several key thematic areas ranging from state accountability and human rights protection mechanisms to transport and energy security. Moreover, to fill a well-known gap into the existing literature, gender has been streamlined across all Index' thematic areas of analysis.

The launch event “**EaP Index 2023 unwrapped: Reform pulse and emerging trends in the Eastern Neighbourhood**” aims to discuss the results of the EaP Index, its global findings, conclusions, and policy recommendations.

The 2023 edition of the Index ranks **Moldova** 1st and **Ukraine** 2nd, showcasing remarkable strides in meeting EU reform goals despite the war, its pervasive ripple effects across all aspects of the society, and an overall geopolitically challenging regional landscape.

Despite being granted EU candidate status in November 2023, for **Georgia** (ranked 3rd), the Index' results reflect a significant downwards drift in the state of good governance and rule of law twinned with widespread political polarisation.

**Armenia's** stable 4th ranking reflects some signs of reform stasis and potential democratic backsliding. Although not a surprise for anyone, but rather a reconfirmation of their increasingly autocratic regime and use of weaponised legalism, **Azerbaijan** (ranked 5th) and **Belarus** (ranked 6th) remain the laggards on the Index' scorecard.





*What does the EaP Index 2023 edition tell us about Georgia's, Moldova's, and Ukraine's ability to fulfil the EU enlargement obligations?*

*In light of the European Council's conclusions from October 2023 which call for stronger EU-Armenia relations, how can we interpret Armenia's overall score in the EaP Index?*

*In the context of stronger authoritarianism and shrinking space for any independent voices, how can the EU better support the independent civil society and media in Azerbaijan and Belarus?*

*Why surging weaponised legalism in the EaP region is a matter of concern for all?*

Join us as we unwrap the results of the **EaP Index 2023** and get equipped with a compass for navigating the complex terrain of governance and reform in the Eastern Neighbourhood. Register now to be part of this discussion: [Link for registration](#)

**Date:** 8 February 2024, 10:00 – 12:10 CET

**Format:** Zoom webinar

## Agenda

10:00 – 10:10 CET	<b>Welcome remarks, Ana Otilia Nutu and Irina Sukhi, Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum</b>
10:10 – 10:20 CET	<b>Reflections on the EaP Index 2023 global findings, Kerry Longhurst (Collegium Civitas), EaP Index Executive Editor</b>
10:20 – 11:20 CET	<b>Exchange with EaP Index Experts: Reform pulse and emerging trends in the Eastern Neighbourhood</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Hasmik Harutyunian</b> (Protection of Rights without Borders), Armenia [expert: Independent Judiciary]</li><li>• <b>Hamida Giyasbayli</b> (independent journalist), Azerbaijan [expert: Independent Media]</li><li>• <b>Enira Bronitskaya</b> (Human Constanta), Belarus [expert: Equal opportunities and Non-Discrimination]</li><li>• <b>Tamar Khidasheli</b> (Democracy Research Institute, Georgia) [expert: Human Rights Protection Mechanisms]</li><li>• <b>Veaceslav Berbeca</b> (CMI), Moldova [expert: Public Administration]</li><li>• <b>Dmytro Khutkyy</b> (e-Governance Academy/ University of Tartu (Estonia), Ukraine [expert: Democratic Rights, Elections and Political Pluralism]</li></ul> Moderator: <b>Alexandra Sabou</b> , Advocacy and EaP Index Manager, EaP CSF
11:20 – 11:40	<b>Impressions and reflections from the EU institutions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Dirk Schuebel</b>, European External Action Service (EEAS), EU Special Envoy for the Eastern Partnership</li><li>• <b>Radica Nusdorfer</b>, European Commission, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), Head of Sector, Rule of Law, Governance and Security</li></ul>
11:40 – 12:10	<b>Moderated Q&amp;A session with the audience</b>

