



PRESS RELEASE

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Yerevan

7 Capacity Building Trainings at CSO Incubators

CSO Incubators' groups have been formed in Armenia in the scope of the EU-funded "Commitment to Constructive Dialogue" Project. As of now, CSO incubators have been established in Yerevan City and Syunik, Gegharkunik, Lori and Shirak marzes.

In April seven trainings at incubators were held for 35 CSO representatives from different cities and other settlements of Armenia in April.

The mission of CSO incubators is to provide professional and technical support to Armenian CSOs to develop their capacities in the 9 target areas of the project.

The project experts conducted trainings in Yerevan, Gavar, Vanadzor, Kapan and Gyumri, on the following topics:

- EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA): Sectors, Structures, Participation of Civil Society
- Human Rights: RA Law on Equal Rights, Provisions Focusing on Persons with Disabilities
- Successful Experience of Coalition Building: CSO Anti-Corruption Coalition of Armenia
- Education Sector: Developing a New Strategic Approach to Enhance Communication between Secondary Vocational Education, Training and Labour Market
- Business Sector: Current SME Strategy: Existing Problems; New Strategy – Raising Efficiency and Actions
- Human Rights: RA Law on Human Rights Defender: The Powers of the Defender, Draft Law Providing for the New Right for Presenting "*amicus curiae*" to the Cassation and Constitutional Courts
- Ensuring Greater CSO Involvement in Local Growth Strategies and "Smart" Initiatives.

CSO incubators will be held in two stages. 35 CSOs selected from the CSOs that completed the certified CSO capacity building training at the American University of Armenia will participate in each phase. Upon completion of the CSO incubators, a total of 33 grants will be provided on a competitive basis. It is planned to provide 16-17 grants at each stage.

The "*Commitment to Constructive Dialogue*" project is implemented with the financial support of the European Union by a Consortium of civil society organisations, which are the Armenian Lawyers' Association (lead organisation), Agora Central Europe (NGO based in the Czech Republic), the Armenian Centre for Democratic Education-CIVITAS, the International Centre for Human Development, the SME Cooperation Association and the Union of Communities of Armenia.



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Delegation of the European Union to Armenia
Tel.: +37410 54 64 94

Armenian Lawyers' Association
Address: 7 Nalbandyan Str., Suite 2,
Yerevan, Armenian, 0010

Tel.: +37410 54 01 99
Fax: +37410 58 02 99

The European Commission is the EU's executive body. The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

The project aims to enhance the influence of civil society organisations (CSOs) and CSO coalitions/networks on public policies in Armenia. This will allow organisations that are already working in sectoral coalitions to access additional resources, new groups of civil society experts to come together and encourage place their causes on the local and national policy agenda, to identify common concerns and priorities and approach government bodies with constructive and strategic policy engagement initiatives.

The project will provide sub-grants to CSOs and CSO coalitions for developing public policies and bringing significant changes in the 9 target sectors selected within the project, including those of justice, education and business.

The **Armenian Lawyers' Association** (ALA) was established in 1995 with a mission to promote to the establishment of the rule of law, democracy and formation of the civil society in Armenia, where the people are aware of their rights and where their rights are protected. Before February 2016, ALA used to be called Armenian Young Lawyers Association.

Astghik Karapetyan

PR Coordinator

Tel.:540199,

E-mail:info@armla.am,

URL: <http://www.armla.am>, <http://ccd.armla.am>



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