

ANNUAL REPORT # 2015

EUROPEAN
ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY



**SUPPORTING DEMOCRACY
IN THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD AND BEYOND**

Photo on the cover:
Mobile citizens' studio goes mainstream on National Egyptian TV
Photo Credit (PC): PMC Egypt

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD 4
INTRODUCTION 5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 6
2015 IN NUMBERS 8

CHAPTER 01

1. CONTEXT BASED APPROACH 9

1.1. TOWARDS DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES; CHALLENGING TRANSITIONS 13
 1.2. SHRINKING SPACE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY SUPPORT 20
 1.3. AUTHORITARIAN AND REPRESSIVE REGIMES 25
 1.4. CONFLICT ZONES 26

CHAPTER 02

2. LOOKING FOR RESULTS: EED'S ADDED VALUE FROM A COUNTRY PERSPECTIVE 30

2.1. MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA 30
 2.2. EASTERN PARTNERSHIP 34

CHAPTER 03

3. SPECIAL PROJECTS, POLICY DEBATES AND COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACY SUPPORTERS 37

3.1. BRINGING PLURALITY AND BALANCE TO THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE MEDIA SPACE 37
 3.2. PROVIDING EED PARTNERS A VOICE IN EU INSTITUTIONS AND FORA 39
 3.3. NEUTRAL BROKER FOR DEMOCRACY SUPPORT SYNERGIES 43
 3.4. "60 SECONDS OF DEMOCRACY" EED VIDEO CONTEST 45

CHAPTER 04

4. GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS 48

PC: Pal-Think for Strategic Studies



PC: PMC Egypt



PC: Association Nabad for Development



FOREWORD

In 2015, threats to democracy intensified across the Middle East, North Africa and the Eastern Partnership countries. With repression and disinformation on the rise, it is increasingly vital that we support actors pushing for democratic values. Such support is essential to help lay the foundations for a stable and peaceful environment around Europe.

Instability and the lack of democracy in the European neighbourhood have a direct impact on Europe. Terrorist attacks confirm that it is in Europe's own interest to contribute to a democratic, prosperous and peaceful social order. In Europe and around the globe, the European Endowment for Democracy (EED) is unequivocally committed to working with populations facing war, instability and armed repression.

Only governments that reflect the will of the people can sustainably deal with the economic, political and security challenges they face. A large number of governments around the world are clamping down on civil society, often using concerns over security as an excuse to repress civic and democracy activists. EED supports civic activists who act through democratic and non-violent means, who do not give up hope and who continue their struggle for freedom in dangerous and difficult environments.

After three years of work, EED has become an influential and respected democracy-support organisation. Its achievements are today widely recognised by other democracy-support actors. EED is now fulfilling its remit to provide flexible and responsive support to democracy actors in the European neighbourhood – in a way that complements and adds value to other EU democracy policies and programmes.

In the coming years, the European Union will face serious challenges, among them the ongoing refugee crisis. EED can and will play a key role by helping societies across the Middle East and North Africa, and in the Eastern Partnership countries, to push for legitimate and democratic governing structures that faithfully represent their citizens.

The gravity of challenges in the European neighbourhood means that the work of EED is needed more than ever.



Elmar Brok, Chair of EED's Board of Governors

Member of the European Parliament and Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee

INTRODUCTION

This 2015 Annual Report provides a comprehensive overview of EED's work in what was a challenging year for democracy activists in the European neighbourhood. The report explains the nature of our democracy work, provides examples of initiatives that we have supported and explains in detail the context of EED's work.

The report first considers EED's context-based approach, where democracy support is adapted to the changing political and legal environments of each country where we provide it. The report explains how EED operates in the context of challenging and fragile transitions; in places where the space for civil society and democracy support is narrowing; in authoritarian and repressive regimes; and in conflict zones. The report gives examples of our initiatives against institutionalised corruption, helping youth voter registration campaigns, and inspiring women to run for local government.

The second part of the report highlights how EED's support has added value to other European policies on a country-by-country basis. It details the support we have provided to countries in the Middle East and North Africa and in the region covered by the Eastern Partnership. This section explains how we tailor our support to the specificities of each national context.

Additionally, the report outlines some of the special projects that EED has undertaken and the more indirect support provided to our partners. Of particular significance, EED developed a feasibility study with recommendations on how to support independent Russian-language media initiatives; helped provide EED partners with an effective voice in Brussels and other EU capitals; supported key events on Democracy Day and Women's Day; and contributed to donor coordination and cooperation.

2015 was a year that presented grave challenges to those fighting for democracy. We are proud to have been able to support so many committed and brave activists during the year and look forward to working with many more in 2016.

We hope you will find the report illuminating and stimulating.



Jerzy Pomianowski, Executive Director
of the European Endowment for Democracy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The decisive momentum to create EED by the European Union came in 2011, in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. This was when European leaders finally understood that there was a need for a more flexible European funding mechanism to provide support to civic and political activists.

Five years on, the sobering reality is that many countries in the neighbourhood are beset by even more worrying political problems than in 2011. Facing persistent repression, activists today seek even stronger support and protection than five years ago. EED's operations are even more necessary, and demand for its help is higher than ever.

EED ensures that populations suffering war, instability and armed takeover are not neglected. It is determined that the mantra of the Arab Spring – that people need more democracy to ensure a stable future and no longer tolerate repression – should not be forgotten. EED amplifies citizens' voices and facilitates actions from people that keep the democratic struggle alive often in disturbingly harsh environments.

In repressive and difficult environments, EED has clearly demonstrated its added value relative to other European funding. In such places, EED has provided essential support to human rights defenders and civic activists unable to obtain support from many donors – whether due to restrictive legal environments, government repression, security concerns or political sensitivities.

In transitional environments, EED has played a vanguard role in supporting new pro-democracy actors and organisations, as well as civic activists who want to engage actively in politics. EED's flexibility has also allowed it to respond to emergency requests, often within a few days. EED provided such emergency support in 19 cases in 2015, in particular when governments moved to detain civic activists or journalists.

While EED has continued to focus on the eastern and southern dimensions of the European neighbourhood, in 2015 it cautiously extended its geographic mandate to include “neighbours of neighbours”, such as Central Asia, Russia, and the Sahel and Gulf countries.

EED has contributed to the pushback against Russia's disinformation warfare in the Eastern Partnership countries and beyond. EED played a lead role in bringing this issue to the top of the EU agenda with its landmark feasibility study, “Bringing Plurality and Balance to the Russian Language Media Space”.

After two full years of grant-making, EED has become a fully-fledged democracy-support organisation, and its achievements are now widely recognised. The European Parliament

assessed EED's work in its report on "the EU's new approach to human rights and democracy". Strongly supported across party lines, this report concludes that despite being a new organisation and possessing only modest resources, EED is a "flexible, dynamic and innovative way to support citizens fighting for democratic self-determination in their countries". The 2015 Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy also noted EED's important role in supporting civil society.

The number of European states contributing financially to EED increased to 18 from the initial 11 in 2013 – a robust vote of confidence in EED's work. Meanwhile, the European Commission has committed to continue providing EED with an operational budget for 2016–18.

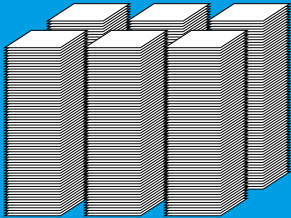
In 2015, EED provided over 114 grants in 19 countries. EED is successfully providing precisely what it was established for: flexible and responsive support to democracy actors which complements and adds value to existing EU democracy policies and programmes.

2015 IN NUMBERS

114 NEW FUNDED INITIATIVES
FROM 19 COUNTRIES



**19 x EMERGENCY
SUPPORT !**

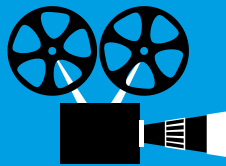


842
REQUESTS
FOR SUPPORT



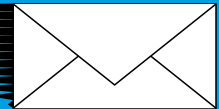
160+
EXPERTS CONSULTED FOR
RLMI FEASIBILITY STUDY

70 VIDEOS
60 SECONDS OF
DEMOCRACY



2400

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS



**MONITORING
112 VISITS**



100 000
UNIQUE VISITORS

16 CORE STAFF
FROM 14 COUNTRIES



**30 MEDIA
INTERVIEWS**



54 000 +



1 300 +



9 500 +
VIEWS

1. CONTEXT-BASED ADAPTATION TO CHANGING POLITICAL AND LEGAL ENVIRONMENTS

EED has been supporting societies struggling for democracy since it was set up three years ago. The range of countries in which EED works – in the Middle East, North Africa, the Eastern Partnership countries and beyond – presents a strikingly diverse set of environments and challenges.

Overlying that diversity, EED supports people and organisations that share a common conviction that citizens have the right to participate in political decision-making processes. They are united in the determination that their societies can and should become more democratic.

EED is demand-driven. It does not have a fixed vision of how to support democracy in a given country, but rather listens and responds to the ideas and thoughts of the people living in these countries. EED's priority is to support the needs of pro-democracy activists to enable them to become effective drivers of change and development.

EED grantees face difficulties that are specific to the legal and political situation in which they operate and which vary significantly from country to country. The local political context conditions the type of activities that pro-democracy organisations undertake and the tactics they think it is best to adopt.

EED applies a flexible approach, both in a programmatic sense and in its operational arrangements. This enables it to adapt to different environments, challenges and needs.

Though every country has its specificities, shared political traits and tendencies can be observed across the whole of the European neighbourhood. Similarities and variation are not neatly organised along an east-south divide. Today, Egypt probably has more in common politically with Azerbaijan than with Tunisia, for example.

Schematically, it can be said that EED and the grantees it supports operate in four broad types of political environment: transitional, restrictive, repressive and conflict situations. To add to the complexity, these categories overlap; countries may contain a shifting mix of these types of environment.

This chapter describes how EED adapts its support to the different types of environment and political contexts in which it operates.

MOROCCO

GOOGLE HANGOUTS AND ONLINE Q&A WITH THE PARLIAMENT

Moroccan citizens have few opportunities to take part in political debate or to influence governmental decisions and few of them know their representatives in the parliament. Moroccan MPs are not used to active interaction with their constituents. In response to these shortcomings, the civil society organisation SimSim-Participation Citoyenne created Nouabook (meaning “Your Parliament”). This initiative aims to get Moroccan citizens and their elected representatives in the parliament exchanging ideas and information, and making demands and suggestions. The website, Nouabook.ma, gets more people participating in the political decision-making process.

Abderrahim Amri, a Nouabook “ambassador” to the Souss-Massa region, explains why he got on board: “It is important to motivate young people and women to take part in political activities.” Another “ambassador”, Saidaa El Jadid, thinks Nouabook can help “augment public political awareness”. She acknowledges that “reaching parliamentarians and convincing them to take part remains a challenge” – which is why the project continues to be so necessary.

PHOTO 01

Nouabook moderated discussion

PC: Sim Sim Participation Citoyenne



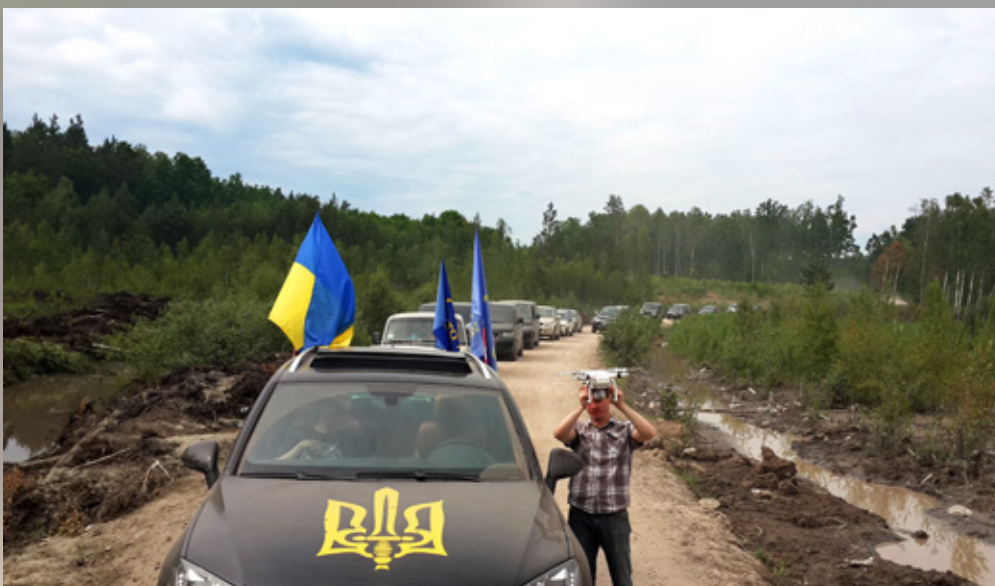
In 2015, almost 10 percent of MPs engaged with Nouabook and responded to citizens' questions, requests and criticism. Six MPs have participated in Nouabook-moderated Google Hangouts – online video discussions with their constituents.

“To root out bribery, efforts are needed from different sides: from the family, schools, educational boards, governmental institutes, political parties”, MP Oum El Banine Lahlou responded to a citizen's question on corruption. In her response, Lahlou alluded to the role that the new National Authority for Integrity and the Prevention and Combating of Bribery must play.

One citizen used Nouabook to complain about a damaged bridge in his town. Two days later, MP Adil Benhamza responded through the website: “I am pleased to inform you that I sent a letter today to request that the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Equipment, Transport and Logistics take care of the issue.” The first step towards resolving the problem had been taken. These exchanges help citizens link their community-level concerns to the need for a more responsive political system.

AUTOMAIDAN EXPOSES THE ‘AMBER PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC’

A civic movement founded to fight corruption during the early days of Euromaidan, Automaidan has been working to expose corruption cases and improve the rule of law in Ukraine. With the help of EED seed funding, Automaidan has been able to consolidate its regional network and start working more systematically on tackling corruption. One of its most successful endeavours is the exposure of a massive illegal amber-mining site in the Zhytomyr region – which it was able to do using equipment bought with EED support. The video material showing the illegal mining site, and its devastating impact on the surrounding nature, prompted President Petro Poroshenko to launch an investigation and crack down on the illegal trade. In August 2015, over 3,000 kg of illegally mined amber worth around €2.6 million was seized. The investigation was still ongoing at the end of 2015, but the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources had already stopped processing licences for amber mining.



Automaidan board member Sergiy Khadzhyrov highlighted the costs of these activities to the country: “Amber mining was not only illegal ... but also an ecological disaster.” The cost of illegal amber-mining is estimated at \$200–500 million annually. Since the exposure of the illegal amber-mining sites, Automaidan has also organised visits for journalists and

UKRAINE

PHOTO 02

Illegal mining discovered by Automaidan with EED funded equipment

PC: Automaidan

CHAPTER 01

Context based approach

activists to the region, which it dubbed the “Amber People’s Republic”. Their reports, pictures and videos revealed that criminal gangs were mining amber on an industrial scale. Local police were among the arrested culprits. “By helping us buy technical equipment and a quadcopter with camera, EED made these high-impact actions possible”, said Khadzynov. Another Automaidan board member, Oleksiy Grytsenko, highlighted the popular demand for more cases of corruption to be exposed. “Our actions also provide people with opportunities to organise themselves in different regions and become active”, he noted.

Automaidan activists believe that without constant pressure from civic organisations, law enforcement bodies would rarely make an effort to get to the bottom of corruption cases. This motivates Automaidan to continue fighting corruption and push for the closure of all illegal mining sites, a new law on amber mining and the punishment of all those involved, including state officials.

PHOTO 03

The place of illegal mining

PC: Automaidan



1.1. TOWARDS DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES; CHALLENGING TRANSITIONS

Some countries provide a generally non-restrictive environment, where EED grantees can typically work openly, without any direct repression or limits to their activities. In these countries, donors can also operate fairly freely, and are broadly welcomed by the government.

In such contexts, EED prioritises support for new actors and organisations, especially with a political focus. EED also provides core costs for organisations that move on to the phase of consolidating their development.

EED has supported a number of new organisations that emerged after revolutions. Examples include the new actors that emerged out of Euromaidan in Ukraine and received support from EED: the all-Ukrainian network of civic activists Nova Kraina (New Country) and the anti-corruption initiatives Automaidan and Svidomi (Conscientious). EED also supported pro-reform political initiatives such as Democratic Alliance and Syla Lyudei (People Power) in Ukraine to expand their regional outreach and mobilise public support for reforms.



PHOTO 04

EED meeting with its partners to discuss the European Neighbourhood Policy review

In Tunisia, the new Tunisian Institute for the Training of Elected Officials (TITEO) is helping strengthen the dialogue between MPs and citizens, with EED help. Solidar Tunisia has started monitoring and providing in-depth analysis of the country's legislative process.

A particular EED focus and added value has been to support these emerging organisations in regions and remote areas, where other donors have less presence.

CHAPTER 01

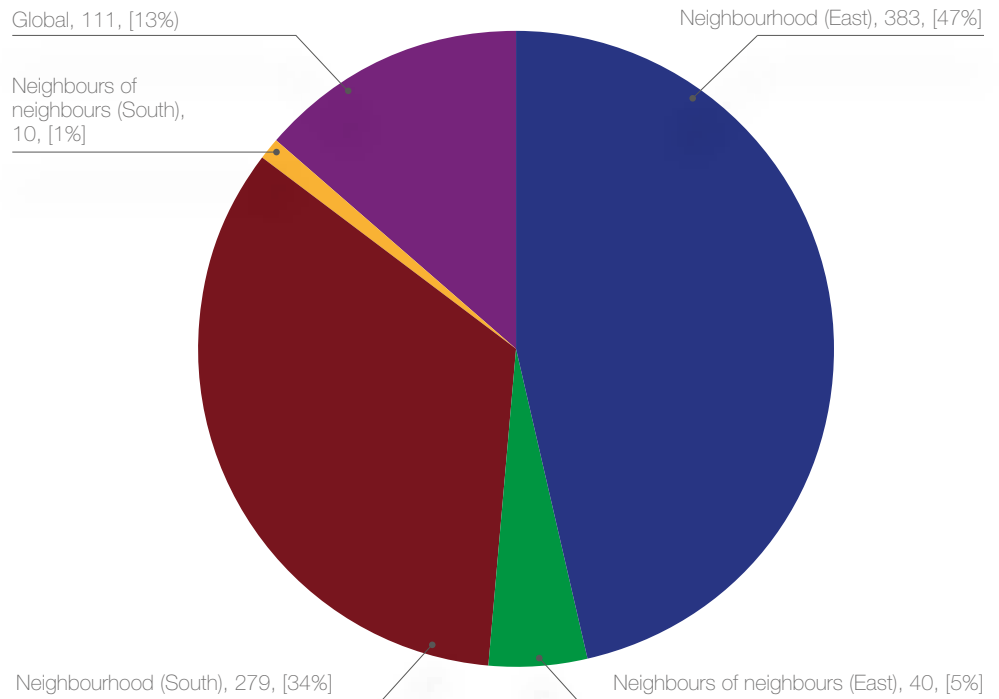
Context based approach

Socially or politically “sensitive themes” and minority issues also remain under-supported in these transitional societies. EED has tried to fill this gap, for example through initiatives on the protection of LGBTI and on ethnically discriminated peoples’ rights in some regions.

Sometimes more “mainstream” themes are also neglected due to donors’ focus on a few priority imperatives. In Lebanon, donors’ refugee support focuses on humanitarian issues, neglecting inter-community and socio-political tensions. EED provides support to groups that help tackle the challenges the country faces as a result of the high number of refugees. This support assists both Palestinian refugees, who have been in the country for a long time, and Syrian refugees, who have arrived recently. For example, EED supports training for young Palestinians from northern Lebanon to take part in decision-making in the Baddawi refugee camp.

CHART 01

Requests for support in 2015 by region



CARAVAN ACROSS LEBANON TO REDUCE REFUGEE TENSIONS

With over one million registered refugees in Lebanon having crossed the border from Syria in the past three years, both the refugee and host communities are facing social



LEBANON

PHOTO 05

Rehearsal of Arab Puppet Theatre Foundation

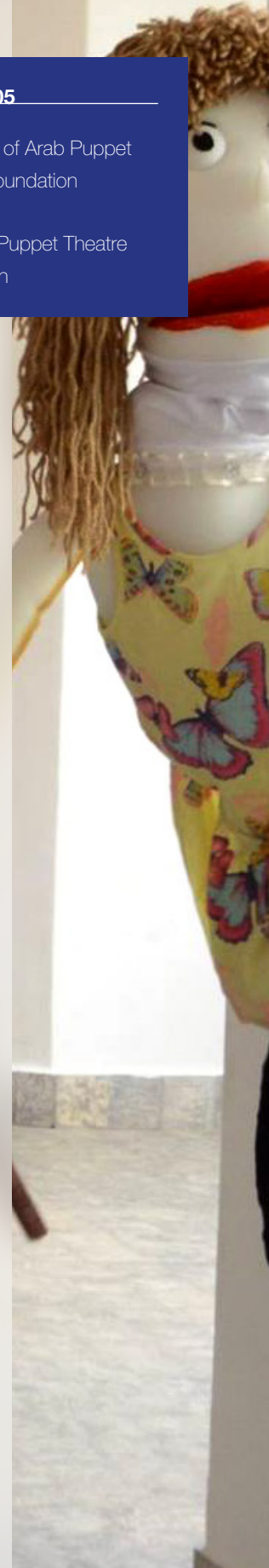
PC: Arab Puppet Theatre Foundation

challenges. A number of local and international organisations are working hard to address the crisis, but room remains for innovative approaches to promote social cohesion among the different communities. The Arab Puppet Theatre Foundation decided to take action to promote solidarity and reduce tension through dialogue and puppet theatre.

The theatre is touring Lebanon, tackling some of the political and social issues prevalent between Syrians, Palestinians and Lebanese through interactive puppet performances. The theatre's caravan engaged citizens with over 20 performances in both urban and rural areas in six months.

"One Thousand and One Titanics" tells the story of a skinny boy who is desperate to leave his home. He even considers boarding one of those ships full of immigrants, ships that carry misery and despair. The performance does not judge the situation, but simply portrays the boy's perspective, and invites the audience to imagine and witness the events. The show inspires "people from different backgrounds and nationalities to think about the causes that force young people to emigrate", theatre director Mahmoud al-Hourani commented.

Over 8,000 students in 17 UNRWA schools in Beirut, Mount Lebanon and Beqaa have already watched "From Every Garden a Rose". This puppet performance covers various



topics: preserving Palestinian heritage, integrating Palestinian refugees coming from Syria and Lebanon, and encouraging young people to remain in school.

Al-Hourani is convinced of the power of puppets: “Puppet theatre uses a metaphoric language that can reach others without limits”, he explains. “We believe simplicity is the key to reach people.” With simple tools and stories, the theatre touches Syrians, Palestinians and Lebanese alike, and addresses the political and social tensions that affect their daily lives. Puppetry serves to educate, raise awareness and enable dialogue among communities.

MOLDOVA

MOLDOVAN MEDIA BREAKING BANK SCANDAL

Moldova has been scandalised by the “theft of the century”. A corrupt political elite was exposed as having regularly stolen money from the banks, taking a total of \$1 billion, 12 percent of the country's GDP. This was unacceptable for Moldovan citizens, who were already weary of their politicians' penchant for corruption. In a “spirit that we need to speak out – to hold the government to account”, in the words of a protester, Moldovans from across the country began camping in front of government buildings on 6 September 2015.

One of the demands of the “Dignity City”, as the protesters called the biggest protest since independence, was the resignation of the national bank's governor, Dorin Dragutanu. This demand was finally met on 21 September, almost 10 months after the scandal broke.

Two journalists recall the dramatic investigation. A reporter from EED-supported Newsmaker, the most reputable Russian-language news website in Moldova, describes the days before the November 2014 parliamentary elections: “On Friday night, after I first heard about [possible illegal bank activities], I called my sources and three confirmed the information. We decided to publish a story Saturday morning – one day before the elections.” The same day, Mold-Street.com also published their story.

Mold-Street, a news website launched with EED support, and journalist Ion Preasca also decided that the “public needed to know”. Both media agreed to publish their first findings about bank theft on the same day, but without coordinating the content.

Newsmaker and Mold-Street were also the first media to refer to “the billion” that had been stolen. Before, Newsmaker also uncovered the government's secret decision to allocate the equivalent of one third of its entire budget to “financial stability”, in response to the missing billion. A Newsmaker journalist describes how the discovery brought a bigger audience to the media, grateful for an explanation of the complex banking operations.

Mold-Street's Preasca describes how he uncovered the bank theft: “It was months-long. I worked with many different sources and people, whose trust I gained over time.” Trained



PHOTO 06

Moldovan National Bank

PC: rfi.ro

in investigative journalism, he said that maintaining a balanced and honest rapport with multiple sources was the key to his investigation.

An independent media expert summarises: “Newsmaker and Mold-Street have been very active in covering the Moldovan bank scandal – in an objective way. Other media were partisan towards or against some actors”, says Nadine Gogu, director of the Independent Journalism Centre in Moldova.

MILLIONS WATCH ‘REGISTER TO VOTE’ VIDEO IN MOROCCO

Over five million people have watched the “Mantsayadch” YouTube video, which calls on young Moroccans to register to vote. A joint venture between NGO Marocains Pluriels and Hit Radio engaged several Moroccan pop and rap stars – Ahmed Soultan, Dizzy Dros, DJ Van, Manal BK, Muslim & Shayfeen – to compose, record and film a song about the importance of voting. The video went viral. It was part of a nationwide citizen campaign that included public debates, street actions and student outreach encouraging democratic participation.



“EED’s support for the ‘Mantsayadch’ campaign was essential, as no other institution had started their planning process for activities linked to the 2015 election at that time”, said Younes Boumehdi from Hit Radio, describing how EED’s swift action was crucial.

The campaign’s success led Moroccan authorities to open the doors for more citizens to register, first by extending the voter registration deadline by two months, then by better equipping local registration offices and finally by setting up the country’s first online voter registration form. 240,000 new young voters registered to vote.

Ahead of September’s local elections, “Mantsayadch” used jingles, radio alert messages and more street activities to inspire Moroccans to vote.

MOROCCO

PHOTO 07

Mantsayadch

PC: qgprod.com

ARMENIA

REFERENDUM SPURS CREATIVITY AMONG ARMENIA'S CIVIL SOCIETY

The Armenian government's decision to hold a referendum on 6 December 2015 to amend the country's constitution took most by surprise. With only three months' notice, and over 250 amendments proposed by a working group specially appointed by the president one day after joining the Eurasian Economic Union, civil society had little time to prepare.

Among the major changes proposed – and later passed – were Armenia's transformation into a parliamentary system, which would also translate into fewer chances for Armenians to take part in decision-making processes. Pro-democracy activists noted with concern that the protection of human rights would be weaker.

EED was able to play an essential role by providing emergency support to these initiatives when other donors, including the EU, were unable to respond due to the short timeframe. In late August, EED received around 12 requests for support, of which five were funded either fully or partially.

PHOTO 08

Cartoons depicting the Armenian Referendum. The politician in the picture says: "There won't be any more elections, so we won't bother you again" while the priest is praying for them to rest in peace. (The cartoon refers to the names of deceased persons on the voting lists).

PC: Medialab.am



While the eventual outcome was not what many pro-democracy activists had hoped for (official results show 63.4 percent voted in favour), the referendum proved the huge potential and creativity within Armenia's civil society.

No Pasaran, a group of young intellectuals, was one of the first on the scene. They led a lively campaign on social media using dance and artistic photographic portraits, as well as holding seminars and debates in an attempt to examine the positions of those in favour and those against the changes proposed.

The Citizen Observer Initiative, a coalition of four NGOs, in cooperation with 24 partners across the country, managed to mobilise around 1,000 Armenians to observe the vote in a quarter of all precincts in Armenia's largest ever domestic observation effort.

"Our belief was that an effective observation of the referendum was the only way for the people to take ownership of their future and prevent falsifications and monopolisation of the power within the hands of Sargsyan and the ruling Republican Party of Armenia", said Sona Ayvazyan, deputy director of Transparency International Anticorruption Center.

Political cartoons spread through social media by Medialab.am – dubbed "the Armenian Charlie Hebdo" by the Minister of Education – captured Armenians' imagination and were picked up by the Guardian and other news resources outside the country. A series of animated films by the Union of Informed Citizens were broadcast by six regional TV channels and screened by No Pasaran during rallies.

Finally, sociological research by the APR Group among 1,300 Armenians underlined how little Armenians understood the proposed reforms. The survey, which showed that around half of Armenians distrusted the referendum process, was quoted in over 50 media in Armenia and abroad.

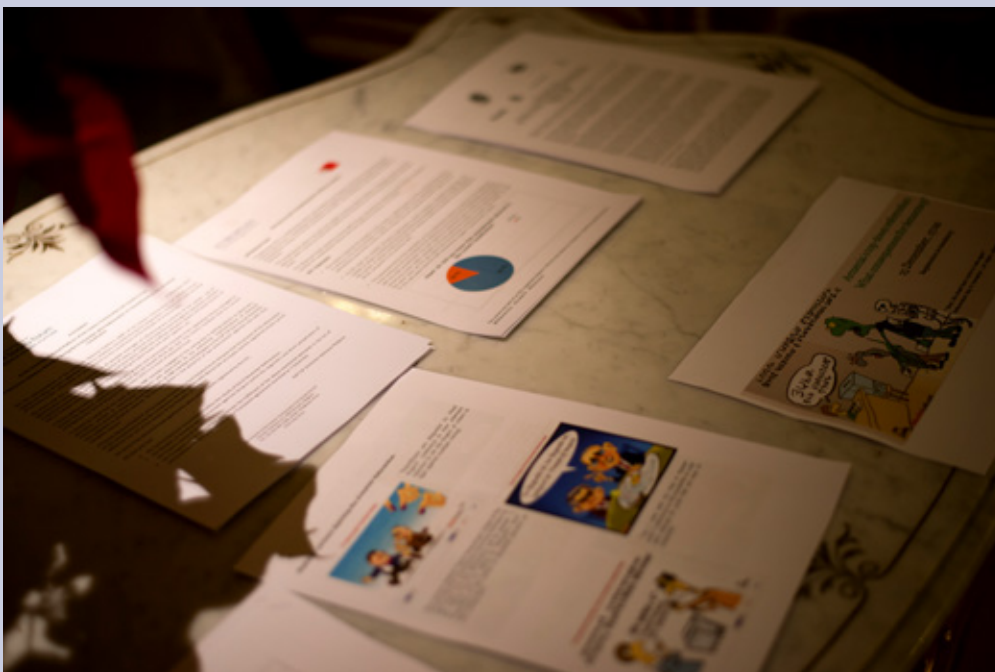


PHOTO 09

EED event following the Armenian Referendum

1.2. SHRINKING SPACE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY SUPPORT

Many EED grantees work in tight environments with an increasingly limited space for civil society. There are growing restrictions on those seeking democratic progress and also on donors who provide support to civil society – even in political systems that are not entirely authoritarian.

These environments often involve some level of open pluralism in governance, and there may not be one sole power that dominates the system. However, political competition is not far-reaching enough to ensure that the system functions in a democratic way. Most often, these countries exhibit no more than modest degrees of facade democracy.

In such contexts, EED grantees and other activists often face a powerful patronage system that links political power-holders and economic interests, and squeezes civil society or other independent actors out of the decision-making process.

Often, media falls victim to this control over power, as the government and the businesses that support pro-regime media curtail freedom of expression. Money, not votes, decides the outcome of legal and political debates. In countries such as Armenia, oligarchs' political power leads to restrictions on civic space and undercuts democratic mechanisms. Donors are increasingly pushed out of such countries, as administrative restrictions complicate their work.

EED engages in such restrictive environments by building citizens' capacities and independent voices. In Gagauzia, the autonomous region of Moldova, EED helped an independent journalist launch her own media after she was fired from the local TV channel for not being sufficiently favourable to the demands of politicians.

EED tries to help citizens even when this is politically sensitive. Activities that focus on the fight for human rights and against corruption are particularly important in such contexts. EED has supported an Armenian initiative that helps citizens challenge arbitrary traffic penalties. Armenians are also using cartoons to embody political messages. In Jordan as well, journalists are using satire and cartoons to extend limits to freedom of expression – with EED help.

These small-scale initiatives will not immediately change the way that political systems function, but they help expose how politics is conducted and in this way generate demand for change.

EED also supports initiatives that build the foundations for a more inclusive and participatory democracy. It supports projects that look to increase the inclusion of new groups and actors, such as the Arabic Federation for Democracy in Palestine, which works to increase women's participation in student elections.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT

In an emergency, EED can release funds within a few days. In difficult and repressive environments, there is sometimes a need for a rapid “emergency response” when governments detain and threaten activists.

In Armenia in May 2015, the government aggressively put down protests against an electricity price hike. An EED grantee responded by providing legal assistance to arrested activists. EED also helped media covering the protests by replacing destroyed equipment.

Thanks to EED emergency support, a popular Belarusian news website was able to quickly re-register in another country when its previous operational set-up could not continue due to legislative changes.

| Emergency July 2015 | | | | |
|--|--|-------------|-----|-------|
| (All Regions) (All Countries) | | | | |
| 7 proposals 174,918.00 euro Pending: 0 Approved: 7 Rejected: 0 | | | | |
| | Investigative Journalists NGO | EM-26-EA-AM | Me | Final |
| | | Priority: - | yes | YES |
| | Charitable Foundation to Support the Creation and Development of Public Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine | EM-28-EA-LA | Me | Final |
| | | Priority: - | yes | YES |
| | "Start Media" Ltd | EM-27-EA-AM | Me | Final |
| | | Priority: - | yes | YES |
| | Independent Journalists' Network NGO | EM-29-EA-AM | Me | Final |
| | | Priority: - | yes | YES |
| | Mouvement pour une Démocratie Paritaire | EM-30-SO-MA | Me | Final |
| | | Priority: - | yes | YES |
| | ICT4Dev - Mundiapolis University | EM-31-SO-MA | Me | Final |
| | | Priority: - | yes | YES |
| | 60 Seconds of Democracy – a Video Competition | EM-34-GL | Me | Final |
| | | Priority: - | yes | YES |

PHOTO 10

Executive Committee online emergency voting system

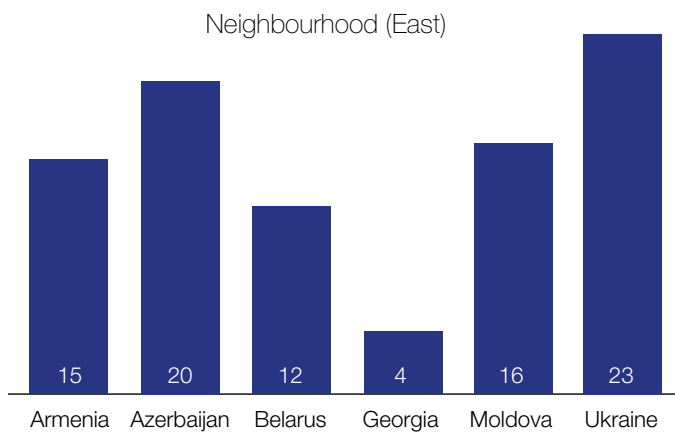
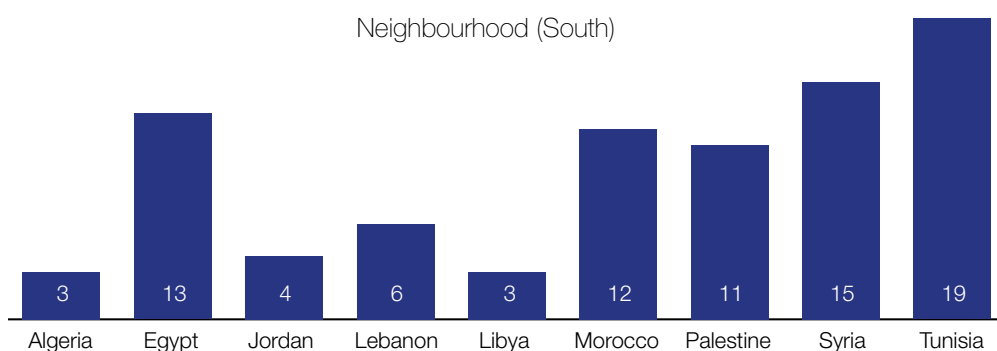


CHART 02

EED on-going initiatives in 2015



ARMENIA

PHOTO 11

Women's Development
Resource Center Foundation
(WDRC)

PC: WDRC

WOMEN INSPIRED TO RUN FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Armenia's Women's Development Resource Center Foundation, part of Syunik Women's Resource Center Network, encourages women to play a leading role in local and national government. The centre inspired a journalist reporting on its work, Irina Yolyan, to stand for election: "Thanks to the EED-supported initiative, I decided to run in the 2016 city council elections." Along with Yolyan, 30 other women plan to run for office.



EED helps the centre increase women's political participation. Yolyan says the initiative was a turning point for her personal and professional development. She was already an active citizen, covering a range of issues of democratic relevance, and the support she received helped her take one more step forward into politics.

"It is very important for me to help create equal opportunities and conditions for women", says Yolyan. Thanks to a strong and supportive team, she has "never refrained from covering corruption, legal and women's issues, as well as other shortcomings of regional and municipal authorities". National and leading regional TV channels broadcast her reports.

However, the political climate is a challenge in the Syunik province, home to the women's centre. The province is run by a governor widely seen as corrupt and criminal, and Yolyan has faced resistance from the authorities there. She describes how the governor publicly threatened her in a community meeting: "He said I would suffer for my work."

Armenia does not provide an enabling environment for female participation. The country ranks 103rd out of 142 countries in the Global Gender Gap Report. The network of local women's centres is working to improve the situation. Srbuhi Grigoryan, founder of one of the centres, is the only female member of her local government.

Yolyan says the centre has helped her “to provide transparent and impartial coverage despite the circumstances”. Many other local organisations have praised Yolyan’s work. The US embassy invited her on a study visit to the United States. The centre has also joined the European Association of Women Resource Centres to boost its campaigning for female civic participation.

POLITICAL SATIRE IN PALESTINE

Although young people aged between 15 and 29 represent nearly a third of the population in Palestine, they remain socially and politically marginalised. The Gaza-based Pal-Think for Strategic Studies runs a “Youth House Program of Diversity and Democratisation”, which serves as a “democracy incubator” and training centre for young Palestinians from different political and religious backgrounds. “Solidarity among Palestinian people is necessary to overcome our lack of resources”, believes Omar Shaban, Pal-Think’s director. He laments a lack of solidarity in Gaza: “The lack of partnership values and teamwork have created a social rift – in addition to the existing polarisation between Fatah and Hamas.”



One of the training centre’s outputs is a series of social and political comedies and satires. “Institutions” is a satire on Gaza’s employment agency. It shows young Palestinians waiting in line, when a fight breaks out to be the first to register for available jobs. A newcomer discovers that the job on offer only pays 300 shekel (€71) a month. He exclaims: “All of this fight for only 300 shekel!” Yet he too then joins the fight and endless queue in order to register.

“Elections” is a comedy about political campaigning. It mocks both incompetent candidates who offer bribes for votes and the people who take them. The show calls on viewers to examine candidates’ qualifications before voting. “Be careful of candidates who eat their promises”, one character warns. “When they win, they do the opposite of what they promise.”

Through Youth House trainings, 25 Palestinian social-science graduates learnt how to ask pertinent questions in skilful ways and actively engage in political debates. Pal-Think runs its own public hearings and political question sessions to engage people in policymaking.

PALESTINE

PHOTO 12

Pal – Think activities

PC: Pal-Think for Strategic Studies

MOLDOVA

PHOTO 13

Gagauzmedia's founder, Ekaterina Jecova, in the media studio

Now familiar with some “democratic tools”, the young graduates can participate and practise their new skills. Pal-Think has trained over 104 young Palestinians on a range of democratic tools.

GAGAUZIA LAUNCHES ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

A team of eight journalists expanded and developed their own media outlet ahead of the March 2015 Bashkan (governor) elections in Moldova's autonomous region of Gagauzia. The reporters followed Ekaterina Jecova, an established TV reporter, when she left the local state channel after disagreements over its restrictive editorial line. “We shared the same vision that Gagauzia needs alternative sources of information”, her team states. So they founded GagauzMedia, with EED support. “We would not exist without EED”, Jecova says.



One of GagauzMedia's first productions was a political debate for the elections – held in the Gagauzian language. For the first time, voters were able to see and hear the candidates speaking their language. The debate was broadcast on local TV, and many viewers followed and commented on the political discussions via social media.

Jecova and her team are convinced that the endemic Euroscepticism of the region is caused by the “lack of access to the full story” about what the EU is doing in the region. Jecova says she wants to prevent citizens becoming “zombies under Russian propaganda”.

Russian disinformation is indeed rampant. The most popular Russian channel in Gagauzia failed to mention a key candidate of the governor's race, which confused voters and gave a strong advantage to the pro-Russian candidate. Another case of disinformation was when Gagauzian media noted that 17 Moldovan enterprises were given licences to export to Russia. Many of these companies did not even exist.

The channel's popularity is growing and counted 55,000 unique visitors by the end of 2015, a significant figure given that the population of Gagauzia is 155,000.

1.3. AUTHORITARIAN AND REPRESSIVE REGIMES

Around one third of the countries in which EED works have openly repressive regimes. Governments do not allow or actively obstruct civil society from engaging in political processes. Regime tactics range from civil society activities being restricted, to activists being harassed, arrested, imprisoned and in some cases tortured. Most donors have either been blacklisted or blocked from entering these countries by administrative and legal constraints.

EED was set up to provide flexible support to activists who operate in such difficult environments. It supports independent voices and works to preserve space for democratic engagement.

In the risky and challenging environments of Egypt and Azerbaijan, EED has helped civil society actors and human rights defenders continue their activities in the face of harsh restrictions.

In Belarus, with little prospect of significant democratic change in the short run, EED partners focus on listening to people and gaining citizens' trust that they can respond to everyday concerns.

In a small number of cases, when it is extremely challenging for civil society to operate inside a particular country, EED provides support to initiatives headquartered in exile. It encourages these initiatives to maintain a circle of partners and correspondents inside their home country, to work directly with and for citizens on the ground.



Johannes Hahn

@JHahnEU

#Yunus trial: “The sentences against acknowledged human rights activists Leyla and Arif **#Yunus** are totally unacceptable”.

07:36 - 14.08.2015

1.4. CONFLICT ZONES

In conflict zones, people push for democratic processes that are capable of addressing tensions and building the foundations for peace.

Supporting civil society in conflict environments entails particular challenges. Many donors are forced to close local offices and withdraw support due to security concerns. In many countries, the level of political stability and security is simply not sufficient to operate activities in support of democracy.

However, many activists show remarkable resilience and commitment to continue working for a better and more democratic society even in the midst of violence. In Kafranbel, a

PHOTO 14

Printed media published by
Kafranbel Media Center

PC: Kafranbel Media Center



small Syrian town liberated from the regime in 2012, EED supported centres that train journalists and lawyers. EED also provided emergency support a few days after the centre's leader was shot and wounded by radical Islamist militants. Furthermore, EED has supported a number of media initiatives in Syria, adding to the vibrant new media sector that emerged after the 2011 uprising.

In Donbas, a branch of Hromadske.TV was set up with EED assistance to provide another view of the conflict on the ground. Additionally, EED supports a number of groups that are now in exile from Crimea.

PROTECTING GRANTEES

EED takes a “no harm” approach that involves carrying out full due diligence and risk assessment before funding, and minimising the chance that support might backfire against partners and grantees. The security of EED grantees is always the priority, and all tools, procedures and requirements are adapted to suit their specific needs in this regard.



PHOTO 15

Poster of “Houses Without Doors” movie, presented at the Berlinale

SYRIA

BIDAYYAT: FILMS TO CONFRONT WAR

With the onset of the uprising, many Syrians took to the streets armed only with mobile phone cameras. They recorded what they saw and shared it with the world through social media – forcing the international community to bear witness to the regime’s violence and repression.

Bidayyat, a Syrian audiovisual organisation, has tapped into this creative energy and supports citizens to produce short films. Ali Atassi, journalist, filmmaker and director of Bidayyat, describes films as “acts of resistance” and the “emergency cinema” that has appeared in his country. He also feels the need to create an alternative media image of Syria: “We try to counter the mass media image of violence, Islamists and extremism. It is up to documentary cinema to shine the light on Syrian society’s dreams and suffering.”

“Houses Without Doors”, a film by Syrian-Armenian director Avo Kaprealian, portrays the experiences of one Armenian family on Aleppo’s frontline in Al Midan. The area gave shelter to persecuted Armenians 100 years ago and today to many displaced Syrians. From the balcony of his home, the director films his neighbourhood and family, interweaving his images with extracts from classical films – drawing parallels between the Armenian genocide and Syrians’ reality today. The film premiered at the Berlinale, the well-known European film festival, in February 2016.

The feature film “194”, due in spring 2016, describes the impact of war and siege on four friends in the Palestinian refugee camp of Yarmouk, near Damascus. They describe their dreams of promoting arts, non-violence and tolerance in an increasingly violent environment.

The short film “Siege” shows four other daily realities of the Yarmouk camp siege in April 2015. Sitting in an exploded bus, one resident describes his nostalgia for the simple forlorn activity of riding in overcrowded mini-vans: “Surrounded by 20 passengers in a bus that fits 10, but takes you anywhere, is so much better than the siege of an entire city full of death and barriers.” The film is the outcome of a virtual (Skype) film workshop with 12 young people living through the siege.

In “Where Am I”, the camera repeatedly stops and starts to give the impression of movement, a cinematic technique called “stop motion”. It portrays a small girl selling tissues in a Syrian street when an explosion occurs, which dramatically changes her life.

DONBAS HROMADSKO.TV REPORTING FROM EASTERN UKRAINE

Run by Donetsk and Luhansk journalists who had to flee their cities in the wake of the war in eastern Ukraine in 2014, the online Russian-language channel Donbas Hromadske.TV (Hromadske means “Public”) provides daily reports on developments in these regions, using a network of local correspondents. With offices in Kyiv, Kramatorsk and Slovyansk, its programme Donbas News attracts more than 30,000 daily visitors and has become one of the most-quoted sources on the Donbas conflict domestically and internationally.

Donbas Hromadske.TV follows the concept of “democratic media”, pursuing no commercial or propaganda goals but striving to become an integral part of democratic reform. It targets inhabitants of the occupied territories as well as those displaced from the region living in other parts of Ukraine; Ukrainian army officers and their families; and the general public. The main objective is to bring credible news about the situation in eastern Ukraine to domestic and international audiences.

“The most difficult part of our work is assuring that our team continues working. The majority of our journalists had to flee from the occupied regions to Slovyansk, Mariupol or Kyiv. They do not feel safe and are always uncertain about what tomorrow will bring”, says Oleksiy Matsuka, one of the founders of Donbas Hromadske.TV.

The security of journalists and team members working in the occupied territories is a top concern. Still, the team manages to report daily news, photos and videos from the region. It reaches its audiences through a combination of the Donbas Hromadske.TV website, its YouTube channel and the National Radio Company of Ukraine in the Donetsk region. The team also cooperates with Espresso.TV and the national channel of Hromadske.TV, which rebroadcasts their programmes. The weekly news digest A Talk with Donbas is the station’s most popular programme and can be watched online.

Ahead of the October local elections, Donbas Hromadske.TV organised the first-ever political debate in Slovyansk in cooperation with the local movement “Strong Communities of Donetsk Region”. Donbas Hromadske.TV is still in its start-up phase trying to find funds to function on a daily basis.

UKRAINE



PHOTO 16

Donbas Hromadske.TV
team at work

PC: Donbas Hromadske.TV

2. LOOKING FOR RESULTS: EED'S ADDED VALUE FROM A COUNTRY PERSPECTIVE

EED works in the European neighbourhood and beyond. In this chapter, EED's monitoring and evaluation efforts focus on presenting aggregated results from a country perspective.

2.1. MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

EGYPT

In Egypt, the space for civil society and respect for fundamental freedoms diminished in 2015. With many donors scaling down or completely stopping support to Egyptian civil society – especially since the introduction in November 2014 of a law inhibiting foreign support of local organisations – EED continues to engage with pro-democracy activists and youth groups.

PHOTO 17

Mobile citizens' studio goes mainstream on National Egyptian TV

PC: PMC EGYPT



EED supports a range of activities from political advocacy to documenting human rights abuses, supporting freedom of expression and backing “champions of change”.

EED's support also responds to the needs of young Egyptian activists – including linking them with more established human rights organisations. Other initiatives support women fighting discrimination and help train candidates running for parliamentary elections. With its flexible measures, EED enables reformist groups to remain active, and helps preserve a space for political freedoms and critical voices in the face of increasingly brutal repression.

PALESTINE

A substantial number of donors and political foundations are active in Palestine. Many support conflict-prevention and peace-building initiatives, which often overlap with pro-democracy work. EED's main added value in Palestine is thus its flexibility to provide core, seed and bridge funding.

In 2015, EED supported nine initiatives in Palestine, working on youth, women's rights and political reconciliation. In East Jerusalem, the initiatives have helped Palestinian communities coordinate better to defend their rights vis-à-vis the local authorities.

In the West Bank, EED helped the Arabic Federation for Democracy get female students into student elections and councils. EED is bridging a funding gap of the Palestinian Center for Peace and Democracy, known for its participatory approach to female and youth empowerment.



European Endowment

@EEDemocracy

[#EEDemocracy](#) takes part in second EU-Arab Civil Society Dialogue to promote [#civilsociety](#) space. [@CONCORD_Europe](#) [@Solidar_EU](#)

07:51 - 16.11.2015

In Gaza, violence and limited access to the territory pose serious challenges to democracy support. Several months after the last war, the Awn Access to Justice Network resumed its legal aid, supporting over 86 women and carrying out public campaigns on civil rights, using radio spots and posters all over Gaza.

A priority for EED has been to focus on the requests for support from marginalised young Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The Dr Haider Abdel Shafi Center for Culture and Development, for example, was launched to facilitate national unity and active citizenship among young Palestinians – through artistic activities.

SYRIA

In the midst of Syria's war, EED is helping communities continue their peaceful struggle for democracy, and their incredibly brave resistance.

In 2015, EED supported 16 initiatives inside Syria, mostly in the regions under the control of opposition armed groups. In Eastern Ghouta, a rebel-held Damascus suburb that

witnessed a chemical attack in August 2013, EED is helping civil society to engage with and empower new local governance structures. In north-eastern multi-ethnic Al-Hasakah, EED's focus lies on reinforcing political pluralism and communal dialogue.

Other initiatives are strengthening the rule of law and free media. By monitoring newly established courts in opposition-held areas and insisting on civil (as opposed to religious) justice, initiatives are attempting to counter the appeal and power of radical groups. Another supported initiative involves a magazine inspiring women to engage in public policymaking – among other ways, through pharmacies.



European Endowment

@EEDemocracy

“We have war journalism, but we don’t have justice journalism” [@a2haid](#) on media coverage of [#Syria](#) [@DawlatyOrg](#)

10:23 - 14.12.2015

In April, EED invited four Syrian civil activists (two via Skype) to participate in a three-day programme, “Syria: 4 Years On”, which included meetings with the broader Brussels public and EU decision-makers.

Beyond supporting actors in insecure environments, EED is reinforcing nascent governing structures and small initiatives tailored to local needs. It is helping civil society survive and develop a political vision for a free and democratic post-war Syria.

TUNISIA

Among a large number of donors working in Tunisia's relatively benign political climate, EED has found its niche supporting new, grassroots pro-democracy initiatives. EED has supported projects outside the capital and in rural areas. EED is also helping civic activists keep a focus on the possible resurgence of non-democratic processes in this crucial period.

In 2015, EED supported over 20 initiatives in Tunisia. The majority focused on marginalised regions and people. Arselan facilitates young Tunisians in Sousse – scene of the country's biggest terrorist attack in 2015 – to be active in their city's development. Women in Beja have created an advocacy association, thanks to training provided by the local Association de Développement Intégré et Durable dans les zones rurales.

The Civil Pole for Human Rights and Development is encouraging women in southern

Medenine to participate in 2016 elections as voters, candidates and observers. On the island of Djerba, Association Citoyenneté et Libertés runs artistic events with youth groups to encourage their participation in local elections. Both Mass'Art for Alternative Culture and



European Endowment

@EEDemocracy

12 professionals from #MENA met #EEDemocracy to discuss activities in MENA&share experience on #civilsociety @UNAOC

03:33 - 6.11.2015



PHOTO 18

EED staff engaging with a grantee in Beja, northern Tunisia

Association Tahadi work with communities and young residents of poor Tunis suburbs through art.

Media are also being used to ensure that rural needs are taken into account in Tunisia's transition process. The associations of Citizen and Digital Culture, Alternative Media and the Munathara Initiative are developing local media and online youth debates, and representing local views to parliamentarians.

2.2. EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES

AZERBAIJAN

In a crackdown that began in summer 2014, numerous pro-democracy activists have been arrested in Azerbaijan. Those detained include EED grantees. The space for local civil society organisations and for their international support has dramatically closed. Azerbaijan's pro-democracy civil society finds itself cut off from international support, and many activists have been forced underground or into exile.

The initiatives that EED supports work on four themes: the rule of law and public accountability; space for critical thought and pluralism; innovative social activism; and advocacy for political prisoners. EED has worked with other donors to help Azeri partners find assistance for political prisoners and other forms of international support.

Some EED-supported initiatives in Azerbaijan have been put on hold, due to the imprisonment of the key partners or because the grantee decided to pause their activities due to security concerns.

Media is another strong theme in EED's support. Some organisations have been able to continue working and expand despite government repression. They work both in and outside Azerbaijan.

BELARUS

The repercussions of the conflict in neighbouring Ukraine have made the work of pro-democracy groups in Belarus more difficult. The government has vowed "not to allow a Maidan" in Belarus, and continues to hold a tight grip on civic activism. However, on the eve of the presidential elections, the government released remaining political prisoners after a long political campaign involving EED, among many others.

New movements and opposition figures are developing new forms of civic activity. Yet the political system continues to limit the space for independent voices and democratic alternatives to the status quo. In this closed space, EED is focusing on civil society start-ups and independent activism.

EED support has enabled activists to engage more with citizens in the regions outside of Minsk to address their everyday concerns. The aim is to inspire greater citizen participation beyond the established and familiar circle that constitutes the pro-democracy community. They are defending citizens' interests, launching local platforms for civic dialogue and advocating very practical areas of legislative reform.

MOLDOVA

Moldova suffered a highly volatile year. A corruption scandal that involved \$1 billion going missing from the banking system triggered the biggest protests since independence. Democratic reforms have stalled and political turmoil wracks the country.

In the autonomous region of Gagauzia, the March elections were dominated by geopolitically focused campaigns, resulting in the election of a pro-Kremlin Bashkan (governor). In Transnistria, the new “foreign agents law” has restricted freedoms for civic and media initiatives and pushed donors away. EED is responding by supporting innovative forms of activism, independent voices and political pluralism. Ahead of the June 2015 local elections, a user-friendly online “voter advice application” helped voters in four cities better understand and select their political preferences, based on policy proposals and accurate facts. Grants have also been provided to organisations active in Transnistria.

EED also supported a group of reformers to establish a think-tank – the Institute for European Politics and Reforms – that engages with grassroots communities, academia and the broader civil society to develop democratic-reform proposals and an alternative political vision for the country.



PHOTO 19

Moldovan, Romanian and EU flags sold during the 2015 protests in Chisinau

EED also supports media to report on issues that have immediate relevance for citizens in Moldova. Mold-Street, GagauzMedia and Newsmaker were created or continued to provide alternative views and information to state-led news sources.



UKRAINE

Ukraine has experienced significant political shifts since 2013. The transition process remains slow and stifled by old political structures, and is too limited to put in place deep democracy.

The 2014 Russian annexation of Crimea and the imposition of a de facto restrictive Russian legal environment for NGOs, combined with the outbreak of violent conflict in eastern Ukraine, have together severely inhibited international assistance to civic actors in these areas.

EED supported 14 initiatives in Ukraine in 2015. Around half received emergency support in response to very concrete and urgent needs, including in Crimea and Donbas, where EED has helped organisations sustain their activities on the ground or relocate to safer areas.

EED provided critical infrastructure support to newly emerged political and civic initiatives that have grown out of Euromaidan. Nova Kraina (New Country) mobilises public support for democratic reform. Across 20 cities, this all-Ukrainian civic platform gathers experts and government and business representatives to put forward reform proposals. Nova Kraina has co-organised a series of anti-corruption fora in Odessa, Kyiv and Kharkiv, uniting progressive civic organisations and political forces in a fight against corruption.

Other initiatives encourage citizen participation and communications. Tvoe Misto has run 36 online political discussions with over 1,000 live participants and 10,000 online viewers. The public and media campaign “Vision for Ukraine 2025” also focuses on devising reforms for Ukraine’s long-term development.

The Lessons of Freedom initiative works with 200 schools to develop and deepen students’ understanding of democracy in interactive ways. Svidomi (Conscientious) and Automaidan uncover and fight corruption in Kyiv and throughout the country. Most of these initiatives mobilise citizens’ support for political reforms through the wave of post-Maidan civic activism. EED also works with young citizens from Kremenchuk (central Ukraine) and anti-corruption activists in Odessa and Kharkiv.

EED has supported media in the Donbas area, enabling them to continue to cover news through local correspondents, which they share online and through satellite streaming. With EED support, Hromadske.TV, Ukraine’s first successful online TV channel, is expanding to cable and satellite networks, increasing its audiences to up to seven million additional viewers.

Beyond media, a Crimean Tatars Resource Centre was created in Kyiv. Finally, EED has enabled new political activists and initiatives such as Democratic Alliance and Syla Lyudei (People Power) to expand their outreach and mobilise public support for reforms. Individual political activists in eastern Ukraine also received support to continue and expand their activities at the local level.

3. SPECIAL PROJECTS, POLICY DEBATES AND COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACY SUPPORTERS

3.1. BRINGING PLURALITY AND BALANCE TO THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE MEDIA SPACE

EED launched the feasibility study on “Russian-language media initiatives (RLMIs) in the Eastern Partnership and beyond” in January 2015 – an initiative commissioned and funded by the Dutch government, with an additional contribution from Latvia. The aim was to identify a range of practical solutions to support independent Russian-language media in the countries of the Eastern Partnership and beyond.



Anne Applebaum

@anneapplebaum

such a pleasure to be discussing Russian media today @EEDemocracy - a terrific institution (and a Polish initiative), unique in Brussels

07:32 - 25.06.2015

The final results of the feasibility study, entitled “Bringing Plurality and Balance to the Russian Language Media Space”, were announced at the EED Board of Governors meeting and at a meeting of states from the EU and beyond on 25 June in Brussels.

The report was received with considerable interest and described by one of the report’s reviewers as the most “comprehensive, intelligent and focused” on the topic to date. EED was commended for its excellent work and engagement by donors and experts.

The study was recognised by the EU and highlighted in EU policy documents. The “EEAS Action Plan on Strategic Communication”, presented to the General Affairs Council on 23 June, makes a reference to the feasibility study and calls for appropriate follow-up.

To mark the launch of the implementation of the study’s recommendations, Poland and the Netherlands convened a high-level donor coordination meeting on RLMIs, entitled “Free and Objective Journalism in the Russian Language Media Space”, on 10 September in Warsaw. Over 35 countries from Europe and beyond took stock of existing and possible donor commitments to address the deficit of plurality and free debate in the Russian-language media space.

The project increased EED's visibility in global and regional media more than any other single initiative that EED has undertaken. This spread awareness of EED's mission to a whole range of new communities, both practitioners and experts.



Carl Bildt

@carlbildt

Recommendations from @EEDemocracy on how to challenge Kremlin in the Russian media space. #RigaSummit #EaP

00:04 - 21.05.2015

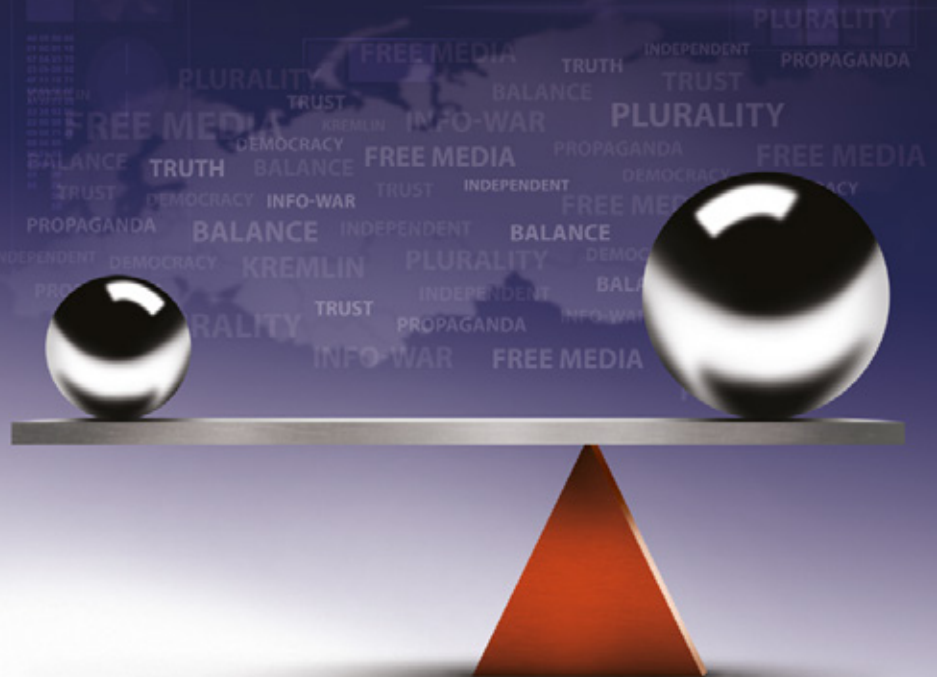
PHOTO 20

"Bringing Plurality And Balance To The Russian Language Media Space", cover

EUROPEAN ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

BRINGING PLURALITY AND BALANCE TO THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE MEDIA SPACE

FEASIBILITY STUDY ON RUSSIAN LANGUAGE MEDIA INITIATIVES (RLMIs) IN THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP AND BEYOND



3.2. PROVIDING EED PARTNERS WITH A VOICE IN EU INSTITUTIONS AND FORA

EED's premises in Brussels continue to serve as a "Democracy House" for the democracy-support community of practice. Partners and grantees from the Middle East, North Africa, the Eastern Partnership countries and beyond are regularly invited to share their local insights and experiences of democratic developments with EU decision-makers and the wider expert community. EED not only provides a channel for genuine grassroots feedback on the EU's democracy support and policies, but also builds its grantees' capacities in skills such as communications and grant writing.

Beyond Brussels, EED brings activists together in numerous international fora, such as the Council of Europe's World Forum for Democracy, Euronest, Prague's Forum 2000, Warsaw Dialogue for Democracy, and the Wrocław Global Forum.

3.2.1. WOMEN AND DEMOCRACY

Leading up to International Women's Day (8 March), EED invited eight female leaders it supports for a study visit and dialogues with members of the European Parliament (MEPs), EU civil society and other decision-makers, including the European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica. Working for democracy in Algeria, Armenia, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Moldova and Morocco, the women had the opportunity to exchange experiences and found many common challenges.

EED hosted a public dialogue with the leaders, moderated by MEP Elena Valenciano, Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights and a member of the EED Board. Valenciano



Neven Mimica

@MimicaEU

Women's equal participation in political process isn't only a human right, but crucial for inclusive and effective development [@EEDemocracy](#)

09:12 - 5.03.2015

commended the "remarkable women, fighting in a struggle that we all lead, in countries and environments which are much more difficult than in Europe".

The Algerian activist consistently insisted that the state of democracy in Algeria is weak, no

better than in Azerbaijan, Belarus or Egypt. She passionately described the both powerful and victimised women from the Algerian south: nearly one third are harassed in the workplace, yet they resist and protest against what they feel is wrong, including fracking for oil on their land. Her powerful speech in the European Parliament inspired a resolution on the state of democracy in Algeria several weeks later.



PHOTO 21

Tatsiana Karatkevich,
first female presidential
candidate in Belarus

PC: kommersant.ru

A NEW FACE IN BELARUSIAN POLITICS

In October 2015, Aleksandr Lukashenko was re-elected president of Belarus, having already held this office for 21 years. The opposition candidate was Tatsiana Karatkevich, the first female presidential candidate in Belarus. The new face of Belarusian politics, Karatkevich told her story at an EED event in Brussels one week after the polls closed. Although independent opinion polls indicated that she had the support of almost 18 percent of voters in the run-up to the election, she officially received 4.4 percent of the vote in a patently manipulated election.

Taking into account the political hurdles in her way, Karatkevich considers the outcome a success. "When we launched the campaign, I had a 2 percent rating. In the end, we did 'win' the best we could", Karatkevich said in an interview. Fighting for equality and better lives in Belarus, Karatkevich said: "I am a feminist, as I am for equal rights. The majority of people do not understand this word today. I will equally represent men and women who want changes."



European Endowment

@EEDemocracy

[#Belarus](#) opposition [@TKaratkevich](#) describes her political plans & ensures "next time we will gain the full support of society" [#EEDemocracy](#)

08:07 - 19.10.2015

Despite the repressive context and obstacles to free campaigning, the elections provided a modest window of opportunity to promote public debates. Belarusian civil society managed to use this window and involved 150,000 citizens in public policy discussions. Belarus is unfortunately still very far from having free and fair elections, but Karatkevich is an example of a courageous new political actor who is fighting to make her voice heard.

FOSTERING GENDER EQUALITY IN DEMOCRACY

A core focus of EED's work is seeking to ensure that women play a full role in the democratic process. EED funds female leaders, activists and organisations that address women's issues. EED also encourages gender mainstreaming in all the initiatives it supports.



PHOTO 22

Women painting murals in Lebanon to promote gender equality

PC: Association Nabad for Development

EED supports a growing number of women and initiatives involving women in democratic decision-making. These include support for new female local government candidates in Armenia, a new free media start-up led by a female journalist in Moldova (Gagauzia), female activists in Belarus, and female parliamentarians in Morocco engaging in an active dialogue with their citizens.

Ensuring a gender perspective in EED work and support remains a constant challenge, in particular in societies where women are marginalised from decision-making and politics. EED proactively advises applicants to enhance the gender component of their democracy initiatives.

3.2.2. CONTRIBUTION TO EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY REVIEW

In June, EED submitted its recommendations to the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Federica Mogherini, noted that "EED was closely involved in the ENP review and submitted very concrete and pertinent recommendations based on feedback from its grantees". EED's role in supporting civil society was explicitly mentioned in the final ENP review's conclusions.

EED channelled the input received through a survey of more than 100 grantees and from a workshop held with nine key partners from Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Ukraine. Half of the survey respondents agreed that EU support to democracy and human rights over the past four years was sufficient, and had led to visible improvements in legislation, people-to-people contacts, the political participation of young people and women, and the development of civil society organisations.

PHOTO 23

EED partners discussing the ENP Review



However, the EED survey also shed light on a number of local needs that ENP policies have failed to address. The EU is perceived as particularly weak in protecting civil society operating in restrictive environments. Representatives from ENP partner countries denounced the lack of EU strategy and engagement in conflict resolution and peace building. Most respondents from Lebanon, Libya and, to a lesser extent, Morocco and Tunisia had never heard of the ENP.

They also criticised several aspects of the ENP: its top-down approach; the lack of opportunity it affords for less visible organisations; and the fact that the different strands of

EU policies contradict each other. EED filtered these concerns into the ENP review.

EED recommended that the ENP should:

- Increase political engagement with civil society working in conflict areas, precisely where they are most needed and require the most support;
- Be stricter, more consistent and inclusive (involving civil society) in the verification of benchmarks and release of budget support funds;
- Make funding accessible to and sufficiently flexible for new grassroots pro-democracy groups, including in remote areas;
- Engage and consult more with a wider range of pro-democracy groups, including business, new movements and pro-democracy activists;
- Mainstream references to civil society and human rights in various communications and communicate these in a more direct and passionate way;
- Be more transparent about EU–partner country agreements, by publishing the texts as soon as possible, to avoid misinterpretations;
- Increase investments in education, culture and social media.



Jerzy Pomianowski

@j_pomianowski

[@EEDemocracy](#) recognised in ENP Review Communication to play important role in support to civil society [@JHahnEU](#) [@FedericaMog](#)

03:20 - 18.11.2015

3.3. NEUTRAL BROKER FOR DEMOCRACY-SUPPORT SYNERGIES

EED has established itself as an important actor in the international democracy-support community. An active host and regular participant in democracy-support debates, EED is also well placed to serve as a neutral broker that builds synergies between existing donors.

3.3.1. DONOR COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

EED regularly participates and organises donor coordination meetings, and is in regular contact with donors in all countries where it operates, ensuring active exchange and synergies.

Effective working relationships have been established with the European External Action Service, the European Commission and the European Parliament, including the relevant EU Delegations, as well as EU member state democracy-support organisations – all of which have referred projects to EED.

EED shares the insights and expertise it has gained through regular dialogues with past, present and future partners and its responses to funding proposals. EED's transatlantic democracy-support dialogue builds synergies between the EU and the United States, the two biggest democracy-support donors in the world.

EED also contributes to civil society consultations in the EU. For example, it provided joint and coordinated feedback to the EU's Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, together with the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD), the European Network of Political Foundations (ENoP) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA).

3.3.2 DEMOCRACY DAY AND OTHER JOINT EVENTS

EED's regular democracy-related discussions also enhance donor coordination and exchange related to experiences and lessons learnt in democratic transition.

For example, on the International Day of Democracy (15 September), EED hosted a joint debate with the European Parliament (EP), the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS), together with the EPD, ENoP and International IDEA.

Three speakers from the EP, Tunisia and Georgia publicly discussed how to transform digital democratic mobilisation into sustainable democratic processes, and ensure that public and civil society demands are effectively realised through the political system. A highlight of the discussion was the input from European Parliament Vice President Ulrike Lunacek, who focused on the role of personalities and parliaments in shaping democracies. She insisted that strong personalities, who can resist criticism yet are also able to work together to find solutions, are essential for effective and functioning parliaments.

EED invited Jaouhar Ben Mbarek, founder of the civil society network Doustourna, which mobilises its members to convey messages to political institutions. Ahead of the 2014 Tunisian referendum on the new constitution, EED supported this network to engage in the political campaigns. Mbarek witnessed how Tunisian civil society “took charge and contributed to the democratic transformation”. “Today, it is essential for civil society organisations to develop technical and political skills to match the country’s current reform needs”, he pointed out in the debate.

The debate’s moderator, Silvio Gonzato, the then-Director for Human Rights and Democracy at the EEAS, offered thoughts on how the many dimensions of democracy support need to be addressed simultaneously: long-term investment in citizens’ education, capacity building for civil society organisations to be active drivers for reforms, engagement of independent media and civic public campaigns, as well as facilitating parties and institutions to listen to their citizens’ expectations.

3.4. “60 SECONDS OF DEMOCRACY” EED VIDEO CONTEST

To celebrate Democracy Day, EED launched a video contest, “60 Seconds of Democracy”. As a result, EED received over 70 videos from 16 countries, all aiming to make democracy come to life through songs, theatrical performances, dancing and cooking. All participants were asked how they would use the prize, and how it could contribute to their “film activism”.

The video competition was the first outreach campaign beyond the European neighbourhood, and reached aspiring pro-democracy film-makers in Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritania and Russia, among other countries. Open to videos in French, Arabic and Russian, apart from English, the competition also aimed to reach beyond the “usual suspects” to the “unsupported” – those not part of the usual community of democracy support. Finally, it attempted to inspire a broader audience to understand the still often unclear notion of democracy.

Eight videos received a prize and nine more reached the final selection round.

The “**Grand vision**” went to “Democracy is equality before the law”, from Moldova. Ana, the author of the video, plans to invest the prize money in developing social activism among children: “This contest is a great opportunity to encourage parents to teach children about social activism.” She also hopes to film a series of mini-clips “that display social activism from early childhood at any age”.

CHAPTER 03

Special projects

PHOTO 24

"Democracy is equality before the law", Grand vision award



The **"Runner-up"** is a Palestinian video, "Democracy stems from her home". The producers from the Palestine Centre for Peace and Democracy intend to use the prize money for democracy youth projects: "We believe that in order to create change in the democratic scene in Palestine, we have to involve young people in the process, which is what we have been striving to do since our establishment in 1992."

PHOTO 25

"Democracy stems from her home", Runner up



Adrian's **"Song about Democracy"** won the **"Audience Award"**, with over 8,200 public votes. Filmed in Chisinau during September's "dignity" protests, it portrays the author singing in front of numerous symbolic locations. "If I win, I would like to record this song in a professional way. After that, I will compose and promote many social songs like 'Song about Democracy'", Adrian described his motivation.

PHOTO 26

"Song about Democracy",
winner of the Public Award



Five videos were awarded prizes for "Special Visions":

"Recipe for Democracy", Ukraine: Delicious Democracy award

"D for Democracy", Moldova: Best Super Hero Film

"Freedom of choice", Ukraine: Best Animated Film

"The abandoned flower", Morocco: Best Silent Movie

"What does Democracy mean to me?", Iraq: Most Personal Narrative

4. GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board is chaired by the head of the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, MEP Elmar Brok, and consists of 44 members: representatives of the 28 EU member states, Norway and Switzerland, the European External Action Service (EEAS), a representative designated by the European Commission, nine Members of the European Parliament, and three members elected as civil society experts.



Elmar BROK
Chair,
Member of the European Parliament



Sandra BREKA
Civil Society Expert



Andrzej GRZYB
Member of the European Parliament



Cristian Dan PREDA
Member of the European Parliament



Pavol DEMES
Civil Society Expert



Davor Ivo STIER
Member of the European Parliament



Pier Antonio PANZERI
Member of the European Parliament



Alexander Graf LAMBSDORFF
Member of the European Parliament



Lisbeth PILEGAARD
Civil Society Expert



Elena VALENCIANO MARTÍNEZ-OROZCO
Member of the European Parliament



Mark DEMESMAEKER
Member of the European Parliament



Reinhard BÜTIKOFER
Member of the European Parliament



Austria



Belgium



Bulgaria



Croatia



Cyprus



Czech Republic



Denmark



Estonia



Finland



France



Germany



Greece



Hungary



Ireland



Italy



Latvia



Lithuania



Luxembourg



Malta



Netherlands



Norway



Poland



Portugal



Romania



Slovakia



Slovenia



Spain



Sweden



Switzerland



United Kingdom



European Union

The Board meets every six months and is responsible for the mandate, mission and overall guidance of EED's operations and development. In 2015, Norway joined the Board of Governors following its contribution to EED's programmes.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee (ExCom) meets on average every two months to take funding decisions. For all emergency procedures, decisions are taken online. The ExCom consists of seven members who represent a variety of expertise, including those with strong expertise in civil society and foundation work, as well as EU member state representatives. It is chaired by the Vice President of the European Parliament, Alexander Graf Lambsdorff MEP.



Alexander Graf LAMBSDORFF

Chair,
Member of the European Parliament



Lisbeth PILEGAARD

Vice Chair, Civil Society Expert



Sandra BREKA

Civil Society Expert



Pavol DEMES

Civil Society Expert



Juan Jose ESCOBAR

Spain



Maria LIGOR

Romania



Jerzy POMIANOWSKI

Executive Director

EVALUATION

In 2015, an evaluation was carried out by independent evaluators from a Netherlands-based consulting company. This evaluation considered in detail both the work of EED as an organisation and the grants that EED provided.

The report recognised the achievements of EED to date, noting in its lead conclusion that "EED has become a relevant democracy-support actor that fills gaps, complements the work of other EU donors, and is responsive to the needs of (potential) grantees".

KEY CONSULTATIONS

Partnership with European institutions has been facilitated through regular consultations with the EEAS, the European Commission, the European Parliament and EU Delegations to increase awareness of EED and facilitate synergies between support programmes.

EED has continued outreach to its member states. This included consultations with Ministers of Foreign Affairs and their staff in 16 capitals. In line with EED statutes,

consultations have also been held with other international organisations, including the United Nations Development Programme, International IDEA and the Council of Europe.

OUR TEAM

EED's 16 core staff members have worked and lived extensively in countries of EED operations, including Egypt, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, Russia, Syria and Ukraine. They are nationals of

PHOTO 26

EED staff



14 countries: Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the United Kingdom, as well as Egypt, Lebanon and Moldova.

EED BUDGET IN 2015

18 European states who are members of the Board of Governors contribute to EED's programme budget, as does **Canada** through a special grant for Ukraine. The EED operations budget is covered by a European Commission grant. The total EED budget for 2015 reached €10 million.

FUNDING MEMBERS



KEEP IN TOUCH WITH US

Subscribe to our newsletter:

<https://www.democracyendowment.eu/subscribe>

Follow us on social media:

Facebook: [EuropeanEndowmentforDemocracy](#)

Twitter: [@EEDemocracy](#)

EUROPEAN
ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

2015



Funded by the European Union