



## PRESS RELEASE

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### New Educational Program for 120 CSOs:

For the first time in Armenia, an educational certification program aimed at developing the capacities of civil society organizations (CSOs) is being implemented at the American University of Armenia.

On 4 December, at 9 am, the training of the first group of CSO representative will kick off at the American University of Armenia. 15 CSO representatives from seven marzes of Armenia shall attend the training.

The new educational program will be implemented within the framework of the EU-funded "Commitment to Constructive Dialogue" project, which aims at making the voice of civil society heard at public discussions in Armenia.

120 CSO representatives from Yerevan and marzes will be trained on the issues of public policy development, monitoring of public budgets and public policies, coalition building and developing CSO-government constructive dialogue. Upon completion of the training course, CSO representatives will be awarded diplomas.

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.

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.

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