



NETWORK OF SECRETARIES GENERAL  
OF PARLIAMENT OF THE  
EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES

**TBILISI Memorandum Cooperation  
between Parliamentary Administrations  
of the Eastern Partnership Countries**

# **REPORT**

**2018 - 2019**



**Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,**

*Networking always matters. It can exist on regional and global levels. Although, we are very busy with daily routine in our Parliaments, we still find time and interest to cooperate and establish links. Why are we so interested in cooperation and networking? Possibly, because it serves as a platform for: information sharing, connections, promotion, credibility, joint efforts and new opportunities. All these are the positive aspects and provide strong arguments to establish and develop cooperation.*



*Cooperation among countries on multilateral and bilateral levels is practiced almost everywhere. This kind of cooperation can be found in every field. Established practice shows, that the success of the cooperation always depends on the parties. Having more committed and dedicated partners, finding common values and interests, can make fulfilment of planned goals and objectives more realistic.*

*At the end of September 2018, through the initiative of the Administration of the Parliament of Georgia and with the support of Secretaries General of Parliaments of the participating countries, for the first time in the history of the Eastern Partnership countries, a two-day Working Meeting of Secretaries General of six countries representing the Eastern Partnership Region, took place at the Parliament Palace in Tbilisi, Georgia.*

*The 'Tbilisi Memorandum', signed by the parties, established the Network of the Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries. The Document encourages parties to establish and deepen cooperation among Parliamentary Administrations' at all levels.*

*This publication shares an example of a successful story and the achievements, which are the results of regional cooperation among the Administrations of the Parliaments of the countries representing the Eastern Partnership Region. Report provides detailed information about the activities implemented within the framework of the 'Tbilisi Memorandum' in a term of one year, which have assured all parties and partners in the sustainability of our Network.*

*Information highlighted in the Annual Report justifies that the regional cooperation can provide parties with tangible benefits. Today, the members of the Network are proud of the first achievements and results and look forward to further developments with more optimism.*

*I would like to use this opportunity and express my highest appreciation to all colleagues, staffers, experts and partners for their trust and support of the Network and wish further success to the existing cooperation within the framework of the Network. Special gratitude should be extended to the main partners of the Network - the Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of loops and flourishes, representing the name Givi Mikanadze.

**Givi Mikanadze**

*Secretary General of the Parliament of Georgia*

*Chairman of the Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries*

*Member of the Executive Committee of the Association of the Secretaries General of Parliaments*



NETWORK OF SECRETARIES GENERAL  
OF PARLIAMENT OF THE  
EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES

**ANNUAL REPORT IS PREPARED BY APPARATUS OF THE PARLIAMENT OF GEORGIA, AS A CHAIRING COUNTRY OF THE NETWORK OF SECRETARIES GENERAL OF PARLIAMENT OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES.**

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საქართველოს პარლამენტი



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## BACKGROUND

### COOPERATION under the TBILISI MEMORANDUM

In September 2018, a new format of cooperation was established among the parliamentary administrations of the Eastern Partnership countries. The initiative has created an unprecedented Eastern Partnership platform within the parliamentary dimension to foster regional cooperation among partner countries and form the network of secretaries general and a professional community of parliamentary practitioners.



#### *“1. Objective*

*The objective of this Memorandum is to establish a network for cooperation and exchange of best practices between the Parties.*

#### *2. General Provisions*

*2.1 The Parties will strive to enhance their presence in thematic regional cooperation frameworks and further contribute to strengthening the partnership among themselves;*

*2.2 By signing the Tbilisi Memorandum, the Parties express their willingness to cooperate in areas related to promotion of successful regional cooperation, exchange of best practices and capacity building of their personnel.”*

**TBILISI Memorandum,  
25 September, 2018**

The inaugural meeting of the new cooperation was held on 24-25 September 2018, in Tbilisi, attended by the Secretaries General of all Eastern Partnership countries, including the Secretaries General of both chambers – the Council of the Republic and the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Republic of Belarus. In the framework of the meeting, the **TBILISI Memorandum** was signed by five Eastern Partnership countries to seal the good will and commitment to enhance regional cooperation on a multi-lateral level.

The **Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries** is the cornerstone of the TBILISI Memorandum format and represents a core decision-making platform for conducting regional cooperation. The Secretaries General meet regularly, in the format of Working Meetings, to discuss future prospects of cooperation and adopt consensus-based decisions.

In December 2018, in the framework of the 2nd Working Meeting of Secretaries General of Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries, held in Yerevan (Armenia), the YEREVAN Annex to the TBILISI Memorandum was signed, establishing the **Eastern Partnership Parliaments’ Research Network (EPPRN)** within the existing cooperation format.





From the very beginning, the regional cooperation established under the TBILISI Memorandum is actively supported by the **Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany**, the **German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)** and the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH**.

## NETWORK OF SECRETARIES GENERAL OF PARLIAMENT OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES



**Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries** is the main circle in the chain of cooperation under the TBILISI Memorandum. The Network consists of Secretaries General of the Parliament of Georgia, the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus, the Council of the Republic of the

National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Nevertheless, the representatives of the parliamentary administration of the Milli Mejlis complementarily participate in all capacity building and experience-sharing activities implemented under the TBILISI memorandum cooperation.

In December 2018, in the framework of the 2nd Working Meeting of Secretaries General of Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries, held on 6-7 December 2018, in Yerevan, **Georgia was elected as a Chairing Country** of the Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries for a one-year term, concluding on 1 October 2019.

## 1ST WORKING MEETING OF SECRETARIES GENERAL OF PARLIAMENTARY ADMINISTRATIONS OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES - 24-25 SEPTEMBER 2018, TBILISI, GEORGIA

The 1st Working Meeting, which served as an inaugural occasion for establishing the new regional cooperation format among parliamentary administrations of the Eastern Partnership countries, was attended by the Secretary General of the Parliament of **Georgia**, Mr. **Givi Mikanadze**, Chief of Staff-Secretary General National Assembly of the Republic of **Armenia**, Mr. **Ara Saghatelyan**, Secretary General of the Milli Mejlis of the Republic of **Azerbaijan**, Mr. **Safa Mirzayev**, Secretary General of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of **Belarus**, Mr. **Aleksander Slobodchuk**, Secretary General of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the





Republic of **Belarus**, Mrs. **Galina Yurkevich**, Secretary General the Parliament of the Republic of **Moldova**, Mrs. **Ala Popescu** and the Acting Secretary General of the Verkhovna Rada of **Ukraine**, Mr. **Petro Bodnar**.

In the framework of the meeting, the Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr. **Irakli Kobakhidze** addressed the Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership countries and stressed the importance of enhancing inter-parliamentary relations and regional cooperation on the level of parliamentary administrations. The secretary General of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr. **Givi Mikanadze** introduced the initiative of creating a new regional framework for strengthening cooperation and establishing the exclusive platform for parliamentary administrations of the Eastern Partnership countries to conduct joint capacity-building and experience-sharing activities. The attending Secretaries General overviewed the general practice of their parliamentary administrations and discussed further ways to enhance cooperation.

### MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **Memorandum of Understanding ('TBILISI Memorandum')** between the Apparatus of the Parliament of **Georgia**, the Staff of the National Assembly of the Republic of **Armenia**, the Secretariat of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of **Belarus**, the Secretariat of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of **Belarus**, the Secretariat of the Parliament of the Republic of **Moldova** and the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of **Ukraine**, signed on 25 September 2018;
- Secretary General of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr. **Givi Mikanadze**, proposed to have representatives of the parliamentary administration of the Milli Mejlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan complementarily invited to all capacity-building and experience-sharing activities/initiatives. The proposal was jointly approved by attending Secretaries General;
- First capacity-building activity, a week-long study course - **"Winter Academy: Research Work for Strong Parliaments"** to be held in February 2019, in Tbilisi, Georgia;
- **Seminar on Parliamentary Training and Communication** for Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern partnership Countries to be held in May 2019, in Batumi, Georgia;
- A weeklong study course – **"Summer Academy: Parliamentary Oversight"** to be held in June/July 2019, in Borjomi, Georgia.



The 1st Working Meeting of Secretaries General of Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries was complemented with the presence of the Deputy Director of the Bundestag of the Federal Republic of **Germany**, Professor **Ulrich Schöler**, the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara (Georgia), Mrs. **Maia Khajishvili**, representatives of the diplomatic missions of the respective countries in Georgia and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.



## 2ND WORKING MEETING OF SECRETARIES GENERAL OF PARLIAMENTARY ADMINISTRATIONS OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES – 6-7 DECEMBER 2018, YEREVAN, ARMENIA



The 2nd Working Meeting, held in Yerevan, was attended by the Chief of Staff-Secretary General National Assembly of the Republic of **Armenia**, Mr. **Ara Saghatelyan**, Secretary General of the Parliament of **Georgia**, Mr. **Givi Mikanadze**, Secretary General of the Parliament of the Republic of **Moldova**, Mrs. **Ala Popescu** and the Acting Secretary General of the Verkhovna Rada of **Ukraine**, Mr. **Petro Bodnar**.

In the framework of the meeting, the President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, Mr. **Ara Babloyan** welcomed the Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership countries. The Chief of Staff-Secretary General of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, Mr. **Ara Saghatelyan** talked about the importance of regional cooperation among parliamentary administrations of the Eastern Partnership region and expressed the commitment of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia to further maintain active involvement and contribution in developing a sustainable cooperation under the TBILISI Memorandum format. The Secretary General of the Parliament of Georgia, presented the proposal to create a sub-platform within the established regional framework solely dedicated to the parliamentary research activities; the proposal was jointly approved and further implemented by signing the **Annex to the TBILISI Memorandum ('YEREVAN Annex')**, establishing the **Eastern Partnership Parliaments' Research Network (EPPRN)** to conduct joint research and analytical activities and to facilitate the exchange of information among the signatory parties to the Memorandum. The Secretary General of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Mrs. **Ala Popescu**, stressed the importance of maintaining the research cooperation structured and proposed to jointly elaborate the EPPRN Regulation document, initially drafted by the Secretariat of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova.

### MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **YEREVAN Annex** to the TBILISI Memorandum, establishing the **Eastern Partnership Parliaments' Research Network (EPPRN)**, signed on 7 December 2018;
- **EPPRN Correspondents** assigned per signatory party to the Memorandum and the Annex;
- Draft **Regulation on Operation of the Eastern Partnership Parliaments Research Network (EPPRN)** accepted for joint elaboration by the respective EPPRN Correspondents and further adoption at the next Working Meeting of Secretaries General;
- **Georgia elected as a Chairing Country of the Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries**, for a one-year term, concluding on 1 October 2019;
- **3rd Working Meeting** of Secretaries General of Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries to be held in May 2019, in Lviv, Ukraine;
- **Joint address to the Ambassadors of the Federal Republic of Germany** to the Republic of Armenia,





Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, signed by the Secretaries General of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, the Parliament of Georgia, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova and the Acting Secretary General of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, in support to the extension of the project “Strengthening the Parliamentary Administration in the Eastern Partnership”, implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The 2nd Working Meeting of Secretaries General of Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries was complemented with the presence of H.E. Mr. **Bernhard Matthias Kiesler**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Republic of Armenia and representatives of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

### 3RD WORKING MEETING OF SECRETARIES GENERAL OF PARLIAMENTARY ADMINISTRATIONS OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES – 22-23 MAY 2019, LVIV, UKRAINE

The 3rd Working Meeting, held in Lviv, was attended by the Chief of Staff-Secretary General of the National Assembly of the Republic of **Armenia**, Mr. **Tigran Galstyan**, Secretary General of the Parliament of **Georgia**, Mr. **Givi Mikanadze**, the Acting Secretary General of the Verkhovna Rada of **Ukraine**, Mr. **Petro Bodnar** and a representative of the Secretariat of the Parliament of the Republic of **Moldova**.

In the framework of the meeting, Secretaries General overviewed the existing state of cooperation under the TBILISI Memorandum. The Chairman of the Meeting and the Secretary General of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr. **Givi Mikanadze**, talked about future activities to be implemented by the end of year 2019 and delivered information on cooperation prospects with the Sejm and the Senate of the Republic of Poland, Swedish Riksdag, the Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the Secretariat of the European Parliament and other international partners interested in establishing closer cooperation with the Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries. Project Manager for the GIZ-implemented project “Strengthening the Parliamentary Administration in the Eastern Partnership”, Ms. **Tamar Zodelava**, presented the results achieved during the “Winter Academy: Research Work for Strong Parliaments”, held on 10-16 February 2019, in Tbilisi, and the “Seminar on Parliamentary Training and Communication”, held on 5-9 May 2019, in Batumi, Georgia. National Coordinator for the Cooperation under the TBILISI Memorandum in the Apparatus of the Parliament of Georgia, Ms. **Ketevan Chemia**, presented the draft Guidelines for Facilitating Cooperation under the TBILISI Memorandum and the 2018-2019 Work Plan, as well as the website concept and the logo of the Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries. Head of Department of Computer Systems in the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Mr. **Oleksii Sydorenko**, presented the existing electronic services and resources in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine for ensuring better openness and accountability of the Ukrainian Parliament.





## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **Regulation on Operation of the Eastern Partnership Parliaments Research Network (EPPRN)** adopted by the joint decision of the attending Secretaries General and endorsed on 22 May 2019;
- Draft **Guidelines for Facilitating Cooperation under the TBILISI Memorandum** reviewed and scheduled for adoption at the next Working Meeting of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries;
- **Work Plan** for the second half of 2019 approved and endorsed;
- **Concept of the website** for the Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries approved;
- A week-long study course – “**Summer Academy: Parliamentary Oversight**” to be held on 30 June – 6 July 2019, in Borjomi, Georgia;
- **Annual Report** of the Cooperation under the TBILISI Memorandum to be prepared by the Chairing Country;
- Thematic **study visit** to be hosted by the Parliament of Georgia, in November 2019, on experience sharing regarding the Open Parliament, citizen engagement, accessibility, Parliamentary Training and Research Centers;
- **Working meeting** on launching a joint research project and the elaboration of the Research Methodology and Standards, to be held in Yerevan, preliminarily in November 2019;
- **Lviv Communiqué** addressing international partners and encouraging them to establish closer ties with the Network of Secretaries General of Parliaments of the Eastern Partnership Countries, signed by the Chief of Staff-Secretary General of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, Mr. Tigran Galstyan, Secretary General of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr. Givi Mikanadze and the Acting Secretary General of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Mr. Petro Bodnar.

The meeting was hosted by the **Lviv Regional Council** and was held at the premises of the Lviv Regional Administration. Head of the Lviv Regional Council, Mr. **Oleksandr Hanushchin** and representatives of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH also attended the occasion.

## EASTERN PARTNERSHIP PARLIAMENTS RESEARCH NETWORK (EPPRN)

In the framework of the 2nd Working Meeting of Secretaries General of Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries, held on 6-7 December 2018, in Yerevan, the YEREVAN Annex to the TBILISI Memorandum was signed, establishing the **Eastern Partnership Parliaments’ Research Network (EPPRN)** within the existing regional cooperation framework. The aim of the EPPRN platform is





*“The Parties agree to establish Eastern Partnership Parliaments Research Network (hereafter referred to as ‘EPPRN’) to conduct joint research and analytical activities and to facilitate the exchange of information among each other upon the relevant request.”*

**YEREVAN Annex,**  
7 December, 2018

to conduct joint research and analytical activities and to facilitate the exchange of information among signatory parties to the Memorandum. The signatory members of the EPPRN include parliamentary administrations of the Republic of **Armenia**, Republic of **Belarus**, **Georgia**, Republic of **Moldova** and **Ukraine**. Nevertheless, Milli Mejlis of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** equally participates in the activities of the Network.

The EPPRN has a similar format to the European Center for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD), however, it is equipped with a number of tailored characteristics for the Eastern Partnership countries, particularly: faster exchange of information through the regional

network via the assigned EPPRN correspondents (*average 1 week upon request*); easy to exchange and access the information (*ability for member countries to translate legislation either in English or Russian*); participation in the EPPRN gives Belarus, as a non-member country of the ECPRD, a possibility to receive information regarding the legislation of their interest from five countries of the region; mobile network of EPPRN provides opportunity to conduct comparative research activities on a regional level.

The EPPRN operates based on the jointly elaborated guideline document - the **Regulation on Operation of the Eastern Partnership Parliaments Research Network (EPPRN)**, which was adopted on 22 May 2019, at the 3rd Working Meeting of the Secretaries General of Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries, held in Lviv, Ukraine.

**i Information on the Research Requests for the period of January – July 2019:**

#	Initiator Country	Topic of request
1	Armenia	Period of Custody in accordance to the Criminal Code
2	Armenia	Law on advertising limiting or totally forbidding advertisement of gambling, book-making, pool-selling, betting
3	Armenia	Recycling of Vegetable Oils
4	Azerbaijan	Legislation for foreign filmmaking - legal acts regulating the return of a certain part of foreign producers' costs for filmmaking (such as clothes, restaurants, hotels and other expenses)



5	Georgia	Land Policy
6	Georgia	Citizen Engagement
7	Georgia	The “occupants” who bought certain spaces in houses from dwellers and have not registered the immovable property under the current legislation
8	Georgia	Regulation against participation in and organization of the unlawful gatherings for resolving disputes ( <i>so called “street rumbles” or “showdowns”</i> )
9	Georgia	Regulation for Usury - is usury regulated by civil and/or criminal law?
10	Georgia	Citizens entry into the parliament building
11	Georgia	Property valuation and property valuers
12	Georgia	Electoral System
13	Ukraine	E-document Management System

## PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITIES

### CONFERENCE: “Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight in the Eastern Partnership Countries” – 14 November 2018, KYIV, UKRAINE

Over 100 participants, among them Secretaries General of the Parliaments of the Republic of **Armenia**, **Georgia**, **Ukraine**, representatives of Audit Offices and the parliamentary administrations of the Republic of **Azerbaijan**, the Republic of **Moldova**, **Germany** and the **United Kingdom**, gathered to discuss the enhanced role of the parliament in process of executing its oversight function. Secretaries General talked about the on-going reforms in their respective administrations and stressed the importance of capacity enhancement in terms of strengthening parliamentary







training and research directions, introducing e-learning components and innovative solutions to increase staff qualification and modernizing parliamentary infrastructure by adopting the Green and the Open Parliament concepts. Much attention was dedicated to strengthening cooperation with international partners on various bilateral and multilateral levels. The event also contributed to raising awareness among the main stakeholders and strengthening professional networks within and between the Eastern Partnership countries.

## WINTER ACADEMY: “Research Work for Strong Parliaments” for Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries – 10-16 February 2019, TBILISI, GEORGIA



**Parliament of Georgia** hosted a weeklong study course dedicated to strengthening parliamentary research capacity in the Eastern Partnership countries. Secretary General of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr. **Givi Mikanadze**, together with the newly appointed Secretary General-Chief of Staff of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, Mr. **Tigran Galstyan**, addressed participants of the first joint activity in the framework of the TBILISI

Memorandum regional cooperation. **15 representatives** of parliamentary administrations of all six Eastern Partnership countries went through the intensive peer-to-peer training programme mentored by the expert-practitioners from the **German Bundestag**. The course consisted of an overview of parliamentary research practice existing in the Eastern Partnership countries and gave trainees the opportunity to identify common characteristics and challenges facing research units in their national parliaments. German experts shared the research methodology and skills practiced in the Bundestag administration and delivered recommendations for further advancing parliamentary research work. The Programme including a group work using practical exercises and case studies targeted on improving participant research and analytical skills.



In the framework of the course, Head of the Legal Committee, MP, Mr. **Anri Okhanashvili** and the Chief of Staff of the First Deputy-Chairperson, Mrs. **Lana Chkhartishvili** met with the participants and shared their perspective on reforming the research unit in the Georgian Parliament.

WINTER ACADEMY: “Research Work for Strong Parliaments” for Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries was implemented with the support of the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH** project “Strengthening the Parliamentary Administration in the Eastern Partnership” financed by the Eastern Partnership Regional Fund for Public Administration Reform.



Experts:

Ms. **Andrea Kerstges**, Head of Department WD 2 Foreign, International, Economic Cooperation and Development, Defense, Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid, Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Dr. **Elisabeth Benterbusch**, Head of Department Health, Family, Seniors, Women and Youth, Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany.

### STUDY VISIT in German Bundestag for the Representatives of Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries – 24-30 March 2019, BERLIN, GERMANY

In 2016, the **German Bundestag** launched the initiative of organizing an annual study visit to Berlin for parliamentary staffers from EaP countries, with the aim to enhance inter-parliamentary ties and contribute to strengthening regional cooperation among the Eastern Partnership countries. Initially, the target group consisted of participants from the Armenian and Georgian Parliaments, with a complimentary invitation extended to Ukraine. As the initiative succeeded, invitation has been extended to representatives from all six Eastern Partnership countries. With the support of the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH**, every year two representatives per country visit Bundestag and receive first-hand information about the work of German Parliament, share experience and expand professional network. Since the signing of the TBILISI Memorandum in 2018, the annual study visit has become a part of the activities in the framework of the newly established regional cooperation.



On 24-30 March 2019, **12 representatives** of parliamentary administrations from the Republic of **Armenia**, the Republic of **Azerbaijan**, the Republic of **Belarus**, **Georgia**, the Republic of **Moldova** and **Ukraine** visited German Bundestag to receive deeper insight into the work of German Parliament, share experience in various thematic directions, including topics such as parliamentary oversight, passage of legislation, parliamentary and budget scrutiny, Committee work and the Committees of Inquiry, parliamentary research services, petitions, citizen engagement and parliamentary public relations. Meetings were organised with senior officials of Bundestag administration.

### SEMINAR on Parliamentary Training and Communication for Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries – 5-9 May 2019, BATUMI, GEORGIA

A three-day seminar, organized by the **Parliament of Georgia**, gathered **16 representatives** of parliamentary administrations from six Eastern Partnership countries, to share knowledge and expertise in the





fields of parliamentary capacity enhancement and public relations. The Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara (Georgia), Mr. **Davit Gabaidze** welcomed the participants in the coastline city of Batumi and expressed the commitment of the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara to maintain active involvement and support to regional cooperation under the TBILISI Memorandum initiative.



The Seminar format was dedicated to participant presentations of the practice in their respective national parliaments, followed by lively discussions on successes and shortcomings of the currently used approaches. Participants identified common challenges and explored joint solutions. A comparative analysis and expert advice was delivered by the expert-practitioners from the Seimas of the Republic of **Lithuania**.

Head of the Personnel Training and Professional Development Division, Mrs. **Tamar Omiadze**, talked about the on-going process of strengthening the Parliamentary Training Center at the Georgian Parliament and shared information on training modules, the In-house Trainers' and Mentors' Program and various innovative approaches in the process of adoption. In the closing remarks, the Secretary General of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr. **Givi Mikanadze** addressed the representatives of parliamentary administrations of the Eastern Partnership countries and stressed the importance of capacity building as one of the profound goals for the regional cooperation under the TBILISI Memorandum.

Seminar on Parliamentary Training and Communication was hosted by the **Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara (Georgia)**, in close cooperation with the Parliament of Georgia and the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH**.



*Experts:*

Ms. **Renata Blagnienė**, Head of Unit Information and Communication Department, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania.

Ms. **Justė Radzevičiūtė-laugalienė**, Head of Press Office of the Unit Information and Communication Department, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania.



## CONFERENCE - “Public Administration Reform in the Eastern Partnership Countries – Regional Cooperation for Successful Reforms” – 17 May 2019, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM



The year of 2019 marks the 10th year anniversary of the European Union’s Eastern Partnership initiative. The occasion was complemented by the conference- “Public Administration Reform in the Eastern Partnership Countries – Regional Cooperation for Successful Reforms”, organised in Brussels, by the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH**. The GIZ-supported initiatives were presented by the Georgian and Ukrainian delegates as the examples of successful cooperation.

The Secretary General of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr. **Givi Mikanadze** addressed the participants via a video address, delivering information on the successful initiative of regional cooperation between the parliamentary administrations of the Eastern Partnership countries in the framework of the TBILISI Memorandum. National Coordinator for the Cooperation under the TBILISI Memorandum in the Apparatus of the Parliament of Georgia, Ms. **Ketevan Chemia**, provided a deeper insight into the process of facilitating a structured and sustainable cooperation among partners, based on creating institutional memory and a strong sense of shared ownership. The Conference concluded with a Q&A Session with panel representatives of the **German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)**, the **Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR)**, the **European External Action Service (EEAS)**, the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development** and the **Support for Improvement in Governance and Management (OECD SIGMA)** initiative.

## SUMMER ACADEMY: “Parliamentary Oversight” for Parliamentary Administrations of the Eastern Partnership Countries – 30 June-6 July 2019, BORJOMI, GEORGIA

**15 representatives** of the parliamentary administrations of the Eastern Partnership countries attended a weeklong intensive study course “Summer Academy: Parliamentary Oversight”, initiated by the Parliament of Georgia in the framework of the regional cooperation under the TBILISI Memorandum. The course was entirely dedicated to in-depth understanding of the parliamentary oversight function on a theoretical and practical level. Participants presented



the parliamentary oversight practice existing in their national parliaments and shared their own perspective on further developing practical tools for better execution of the oversight function. The EU Member States experience and expert advice was delivered by the experts from the **Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania**, **Sejm of the Republic of Poland**, **Riigikogu of the Republic of Estonia** and the **Parliament of Georgia**.





Notably, “Summer Academy: Parliamentary Oversight” was the first activity in the framework of the TBILISI Memorandum, to have for the very first time, the Member of the Parliament of the member country present as an expert. The Chairman of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee, MP, Mr. **Kakha Kuchava** shared his experience on practical use of the Committee Inquiry and Post-Legislative Scrutiny, both regarded as crucial mechanisms for proper execution of the oversight function. Through a lively discussion, participants had an opportunity to obtain an MP perspective on the successful practice and challenges acquired in the process of parliamentary oversight; much attention was paid to the staff qualification enhancement for better assisting in day-to-day parliamentary business, increased accountability of the executive branch and overall oversight execution. The course format contained thematic discussions, Q&A expert sessions and practical exercises based on actual cases on national legislative agendas. Other topics included petitions and citizen engagement-related matters to emphasize the importance of steady communication in the broader context on an oversight execution.



Secretary General of the Parliament of Georgia, Mr. **Givi Mikanadze**, attended the closing ceremony of the “Summer Academy: Parliamentary Oversight” and talked about the importance of the regional cooperation in the framework of the TBILISI Memorandum, touched upon the achievements reached in a brief period of time and shared future plans for enhancing cooperation with the EU Member States and institutions. The “Summer Academy: Parliamentary Oversight” was organised in close cooperation with the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH**.



Experts:

Mr. **Kakha Kuchava**, Chairman of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee, Parliament of Georgia.

Ms. **Modesta Maldziene**, Adviser of the Office of the Committee on Audit, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania;

Ms. **Raimonda Dane**, Adviser of the Office of the Committee on Economics, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania;

Ms. **Kamila Groszkowska**, Expert for International Affairs in Sejm Research Bureau, Sejm of the Republic of Poland;

Mr. **Olev Aarma**, Former Head of Secretariat, EU Affairs Committee, Riigikogu of the Republic of Estonia;





## INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Beyond the establishment of the **Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries**, the **Eastern Partnership Parliaments' Research Network (EPPRN)** and thematic capacity enhancement activities, the created platform aims to raise awareness of regional approach to enhanced inter-parliamentary relations and attract diverse international partners and supporters.

*“To our strongest belief, the results achieved in a brief period of time carry bigger potential for future evolution on multilateral level, therefore, the Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries actively seeks to establish new partnerships and reach out to various international partners and supporters.”*

**Givi MIKANADZE**  
Secretary General,  
Parliament of Georgia

The Secretary General of the Parliament of Georgia and the Chairman of the Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries, Mr. **Givi Mikanadze**, has been intensively working with international partners on establishing cooperation with the Network. Cooperation talks have been successful with the administrations of the **Polish Sejm** and the **Senate**, the Secretariat of the **Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)**, the **Swedish Riksdag** and the **European Parliament**. Working visits of the Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership countries are scheduled to take place in Strasbourg (October 2019), in Stockholm (November 2019) and in Brussels (December 2019). Cooperation prospects, proposals for joint activities, supporting and strengthening the capacity of the Network are the main topics for the meetings planned.

Setting up a **joint website** about the **Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries** and the overall cooperation in the framework of the TBILISI Memorandum was agreed by the Secretaries General and supported by the German partners. The [www.eap-sg.net](http://www.eap-sg.net) is fully operational starting from September 2019. The website is launched in English and aims to provide thorough information about the Network activity. Member countries of the Network are given the opportunity to translate the web content in national languages and make the information accessible for the local society. A dynamic design was created for the **logotype** of the **Network of Secretaries General of Parliament of the Eastern Partnership Countries**, resembling a motion as a symbol of active cooperation between the member countries represented by respective national flags.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE, VISIT [WWW.EAP-SG.NET](http://WWW.EAP-SG.NET)

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