



News Summary – Issue 1 (07.03.2013)

Dear members, friends and supporters of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum,

We are pleased to announce the creation of an *ad hoc* communication format to respond to the increasing interest in the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum's activities: the **News Summary**. Along with the quarterly Newsletter, which remains the Forum's comprehensive dissemination channel, the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum News Summary is designed to briefly share news and updates of its activities and events on a regular basis. **Have a look at the first issue of the News Summary!**

News&Activities

- The **4th General Assembly** of the Forum will be held in Autumn 2013 in The Hague (Netherlands) following a proposal of a Forum member, The Hague-based Netherlands Helsinki Committee. Advancing towards the Assembly, the Forum has established a **Preparation Group** to generate proposals on the agenda and structure of the Assembly. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced that it will provide additional financial support to the Assembly. *We will keep you regularly updated with further details.*
- The Forum's Steering Committee and the Forum's Prague-based member organisation DEMAS, which acts as the contractor in the current EU-funded project of the Forum, have started in February **negotiations with the EU Delegation in Russia about a new potential contract**, provisionally planned to begin after the current contract ends in October 2013. The Steering Committee has requested member organisations to develop and send their **ideas for horizontal joint projects** to be incorporated in the project proposal.
- The new **policy brief** is devoted to the monitoring of EU-Russia relations: "[The EU and Russia with Different Agenda](#)", by Fraser Cameron (EU-Russia Centre).
- On behalf of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum Kristina Smolijaninovaite took part in a round-table discussion "**Russia-Germany-Schengen: on the way towards visa liberalisation**" that was organised by the civic initiative NO-VISA and the Association of German and Russian Economists "Dialogue e.V." on February 6, 2013 in Moscow. The workshop's participants dealt with the positive tendencies observed in the last two-three years between Russia and the EU/Schengen (*e.g.* more multiple visas are issued) and limitations particularly in regards to civil society cooperation. Among others Oliver Fixson, Head of the Legal and Consular Department from the Embassy of Germany in Moscow, Alexey Goralevsky, a publisher of the European Magazine and Stanislav Ogorodnikov, a lawyer from European Law Service, took part as experts in this event.
- In February the jury, comprised of some Steering Committee members and Working Groups coordinators, chose six young representatives from the CSF member organisations to participate in the Forum's [Youth Exchange Programme](#). Two young specialists are coming from the EU and four from Russia, involving 12 organisations from Italy, Poland, Germany and different Russian cities. Project ideas involve several work fields, including ecology, practical implementation of the right of public information, civic engagement, and communication.
- The Forum Steering Committee is running an **internal evaluation** of the Forum

activities. **Forum Members and Observers: please take your time to [answer 10 questions about the current state of the Forum and its future development](#).**

- The Forum has created a **Twitter** account to share its activities. Please follow us on [Twitter!](#) We invite you also to post your ideas and links at our [Facebook page!](#)

Upcoming events

- **“Video & Film for Awareness and Advocacy”, Prague, March 1-7 2013.** For details (only in Russian), <http://eu-russia-csf.org/proekty/sozдание-informacionno-prosvetitel'skikh-filmov-i-video.html?L=1>.
- **Visa workshop, Moscow, March 14-16 2013.** This is a semi-closed workshop organised by the Forum for experts dealing with the question of visa facilitation with the eventual prospect of contributing towards visa liberalisation between the EU and Russia. Five Experts with different professional background (law, politics, civil society) from Russia, Poland, Belgium and Germany, working in universities in Florence, Kaliningrad and Ghent as well as in NGOs, will meet in Moscow to start working on a policy paper. A goal of the policy paper is to offer recommendations and regulations for further visa facilitation between the EU and Russia, review the problems encountered by civil society actors and propose interim and medium-term solutions prior to an agreement on visa-free travel between the EU and Russia. For more information contact the project coordinator [Kristina Smolijaninovaite](#). Follow the visa group on [Facebook!](#)
- **Youth Exchange Programme Introductory Seminar, Moscow, 18-19 March 2013.** The first meeting with the Youth Exchange Programme participants will take place in Moscow at the Sakharov Centre. For more information please visit <http://eu-russia-csf.org/newsdetail/news-csf-single/article/592.html>.
- **Monitoring of the EU-Russia dialogue, London, 16 April 2013.** This is a public event organised in collaboration with the London-based Institute Chatman House. *We will keep you regularly updated with further details.*

If you are interested in becoming a member of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum, please fill in the [application form](#) and send it to info@eu-russia-csf.org together with a **short description** of your organisation.

With best wishes,

The Communication Team of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum

To unsubscribe to the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum News Summary, please contact us at info@eu-russia-csf.org.

EU-RUSSIA CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM / ГРАЖДАНСКИЙ ФОРУМ ЕС-РОССИЯ

Address (Secretariat): DEMAS – Association for Democracy Assistance and Human Rights, Pohorelec 6, 11800 Praha 1, Czech Republic

Website: www.eu-russia-csf.org **E-mail:** info@eu-russia-csf.org

Facebook: [EU-Russia Civil Society Forum / Гражданский Форум ЕС-Россия](#) **Twitter:** [@EU_Russia_CSF](#)

This project is supported by:



TRANSITION
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic



**National Endowment
for Democracy**
Supporting freedom around the world

Robert Bosch **Stiftung**

Disclaimer: this document has been produced with the financial assistance of our donors. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of our donor s.