

Science for democracy

‘Science for democracy’ is a seven-day project of the Center for Interdisciplinary Polish Studies of the European University Viadrina for ten young scientists from six EaP countries. The project aims at developing of existing participants’ skills and takes place from 6th to 12th December 2015 in Berlin and Frankfurt (Oder).

During the project the young scientists will visit various think tanks (e.g. German Institute for International and Security Affairs, German Council on Foreign Relations DGAP, political foundations, Evangelical Academy Berlin, European Academy Berlin) and other scientific institutions that are either occupied with consulting for the state institutions or with activities regarding the development of civil society.

Participants will get to know how democracy works in Germany using the example of self-administration, civic engagement and volunteering, public consultations or referendum. They will discuss which solutions can be implemented in their countries and which obstacles are in place. Possible solution approaches will be developed and analyzed in mixed scientific teams. The participants will be also mentored by one mentor for two participants to make use of the newly established contacts and to disseminate the knowledge learnt after the end of the project.

[> Photo coverage](#)



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The program is supported by the German Federal Foreign Office program ‘Strengthening cooperation with civil society in the Eastern Partnership countries’.

Participants

Diana Benchechi, PhD, born in 1978, is an Associate Professor at the University of Chisinau. Her research interests include military conflicts, conflict resolution and other issues related to international relations. She is about to open one of the first university-based think-tanks in Moldova. The aim of the think-tank will be providing decision-makers with excellent research-based analysis and policy recommendation concerning Moldavian foreign and domestic policy. The focus of this think-tank would be on conflict resolution. She is additionally involved in work of a youth organization International Centre for Cooperation in Education and Research in Moldova and is searching for German partners. In this context, she is also interested in the issue of civic engagement and civic participation in public policy more generally.

Angela Bochi is a Senior Economist at the International Center for Policy Studies. Working there, she has realized multiple projects at the intersection of academia and politics. She worked on topics as diverse as participatory dialogue among Ukrainian regions, quality of reforms in Ukraine and their intersectoral impact, hidden triggers of economic growth in Visegrad countries and Ukraine, etc. Besides, she is a head of the NGO “Foundation for Youth Initiative”. She would like to use the knowledge she acquired in the framework of the project “Science for democracy” to improve the quality of governance in Ukraine.

Diana Cucos, PhD, born in 1979, is a researcher at the Institute of Legal and Political Research of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova and a lecturer in international law at Moldova University of European Studies. In 2007, she was a trainee at the Directorate-General for External Relations of the European Commission. Her main areas of interest are international law, human rights and migration. She focuses in her academic work on the issue of labor migrants and their vulnerable legal situation. Recently, she had a post-doc fellowship at the University of Essex and in this context she is currently working on an article on the EU's recent political challenges.

Svetlana Dekina, PhD, born in 1982, teaches at the National Polytechnic University in Odessa (Ukraine). She is the head of the Odessa Regional Council of Young Scientists that unites 2500 young scientists from all universities and research institutions in the Odessa region. In the framework of the Council she promotes science among young people by organizing events such as “Science Slam Odessa”. She is interested in the issue of participation of NGOs in policy development, in NGOs-government relations and in fund-raising for NGOs.

Mkhitar Hayrapetyan, born in 1990, is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Oriental Studies at the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia. He is a member of the political party “Civil Contract” and a vice-president and board member in the Association of Young Politicians. Besides, he is a vice-president and board member at the Euphrates Middle East Research Center and a project manager and board member at the ArmActive. He equally contributes to the turkological portal allTurkey.am. As a young politician, Mkhitar is particularly interested in learning structures and practices of German democracy.

Natia Kaldani, born in 1988, worked as a program coordinator at the USAID Good Governance Program and as a program assistant at the Center for Strategic Research and Development, both in Georgia. She also volunteered at the Brot für die Welt in Berlin and did an internship at the Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She has an academic background in security studies, diplomacy and international politics. Within the area of democracy building, she is particularly interested in the issue of good governance. She acquired various skills in the domain of civil servants education and public administration reform, but is looking forward to learn more about those issues from the German experience.

Daria Kirsyich, born in 1993, is a recent graduate of the University in Kriviyi Rih (Ukraine) and of the Polonia University in Czestochowa (Poland), where she studied international economics. In 2015, she did an internship at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in Strasbourg. She is a member of the NGO Conscious Communication Community, in which she promotes value-oriented type of leadership among young people. Apart from that, she took part in many other civil society initiatives in her native city Kriviyi Rih and aims to continue her engagement in the area of democracy building and promotion of civic values.

Tatyana Lipai, PhD, born in 1972, is a professor at the Minsk City Institute for Development of Education. Her main research interest is sociology of education. She published widely on this issue in Belarus, Russia, Poland, Germany and other countries and was a fellow at many universities abroad. She developed and participated in multiple projects in the domain of youth policy, social work, empowerment of women, inter-cultural and inter-religious education, human rights and others.

Gevorg Petrosyan, born in 1988, is a PhD candidate in history and oriental studies at the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia and president of the Euphrates Middle East Research Center. Besides, he is the founder and the editor-in-chief of the academic internet medium allTurkey.am specializing in turkology, and works at the analytical center "Analytic" as an expert on regional issues. He is also a member in the NGO "ArmActive". Gevorg has a great interest in the work of German thinktanks and would like to transfer German best practices to the Armenian terrain.

Valentyna Zasadko, PhD, born in 1982, is a Senior Researcher at the Regional Branch of the National Institute for Strategic Studies in Lviv, Ukraine. During several years she developed projects of reform for local governments in Ukraine in the framework of the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research. Besides, she is active in a Lviv-based NGO Center for Social and Economic Research "Initiative". In terms of theory, Valentyna is particularly interested in the interrelation between good governance and socioeconomic development. As concerns practical matters, she would like to learn patterns of civic participation in the policy-making.

Photo coverage: Science for Democracy, 6th - 12th December 2015, Berlin and Frankfurt/Oder



The project took off at and by the courtesy of the European Academy Berlin



The coordination team: (on the left) Magdalena Baier, Kamila Schöll-Mazurek, PhD and Ewa Dabrowska



Icebreaker session, introduction to the programme and expectation of the participants



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Weronika Priesmeyer-Tkocz, PhD presenting her workshop at the European Academy Berlin



Group work and presenting the results



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Meeting with Prof Gernot Wolfram at the German Federal Agency for Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung)



Meeting with Emilie Mansfeld, research assistant to the deputy Dirk Vöpel at the German Parliament (Bundestag)



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Tour of the Reichstag Dome



Meeting with Felix Mengel, Programme manager and Gustav Gressel, Visiting Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations



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Meeting with Reinhard Krumm, PhD, Head of Department Central and Eastern Europe at the Friedrich Ebert Foundation



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Meeting with Jakob Wöllenstein from the Department Central and Eastern Europe and Viola Neu, PhD, Head of Team Empirical Social Research at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation



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Participants and their mentors – walk along the East Side Gallery



Mentor Anastasia Vishnevskaya giving a speech on funding opportunities in Germany



Meeting with Carsten Wilms and Pamela Preusche from the Department Eastern Partnership and Russia at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs



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Meeting with Christian Franz, Co-founder of the CPC Analytics



Meeting with Monika Sus, PhD, Dahrendorf Post-doctoral Fellow at the Hertie School of Governance



Meeting with Geny Piotti, Head of the EU-Research Affairs at the European University Viadrina



Joint dinner with researchers from the project 'Knowledge is Power'



Joint dinner with researchers from the project 'Knowledge is Power'



Meeting with the rector of the European University Viadrina Prof Alexander Wöll and Prof Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast – head of the Center for Interdisciplinary Polish Studies (ZIP) at the European University Viadrina



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Panel discussion with Prof Dorota Piontek from the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan and Jakub Stauber from the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague



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Project evaluation and looking forward to the cooperation possibilities in the future



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Farewell dinner with invited guests: Cornelius Ochmann, Director of the Foundation for German-Polish Cooperation and Dietmar Stüdemann, former ambassador in Ukraine



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