

Call for Applications to Participate in a Regional Civil Society Networking Event

Equal Rights & Independent Media (ERIM), a French-based organisation, is launching an open call for civil society organisations (CSOs) from Armenia, Moldova, and Ukraine to participate in a regional networking and peer learning event:

Across Borders, Across Experiences: A Regional Peer Learning & Exchange Event

Chişinău, Republic of Moldova | May 5–7, 2026

The event will bring together representatives of civil society organisations working on key social and democratic issues to exchange experiences, strengthen regional cooperation, and explore opportunities for joint collaborations.

CONTEXT

The present call for application is launched by ERIM within the framework of its project Democracy in Eastern Partnership (DEAP) funded by the European Union.

ERIM (Equal Rights and Independent Media) is a not-for-profit organisation based in Lyon, France. Our mission is to promote human rights, strengthen independent media and civil society, develop and maintain democratic, fair and sustainable societies where people enjoy equal rights, have access to independent information and are empowered to build the society they want to live in.

- **Democracy in Eastern Partnership (DEAP)** project aims to promote inclusive, resilient and democratic societies in the Eastern Partnership region by strengthening the capacities of civil society and grassroots organisations, supporting research and policy analysis, and organising cultural and networking events to promote the work of human rights defenders. It is funded by the European Union and implemented by ERIM.

OBJECTIVES

The regional networking event aims to provide a space for civil society organisations from Armenia, Moldova, and Ukraine to connect, exchange knowledge, and develop partnerships addressing shared social and democratic challenges.

Over the course of three days, participants will take part in discussions, peer-to-peer activities, and networking sessions designed to encourage dialogue and cooperation among organisations working in similar fields.

Specifically, the event seeks to:

- Facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices among CSOs in the region;
- Strengthen regional cooperation and solidarity among CSOs working on democratic and social issues;
- Encourage dialogue on common challenges and innovative responses developed by civil society actors;
- Support the development of joint partnerships and new collaborative initiatives.

The event is conceived as an interactive and collaborative space rather than a traditional conference, encouraging participants to actively contribute to discussions and jointly explore opportunities for cooperation.

Following the event, ERIM will launch a dedicated **call for joint initiatives**, open exclusively to participating organisations. Selected projects may receive financial support of up to €15,000 per initiative to further develop partnerships and ideas initiated during the networking event.

FOCUS OF THE EVENT: Civic Space and Inclusive Dialogue

Across the EaP, civil society organisations operate in increasingly complex environments shaped by polarised public debates, disinformation, and growing challenges in maintaining constructive public dialogue. In this context, many organisations face difficulties in communicating their work effectively, reaching audiences beyond established activist circles, and fostering dialogue with diverse communities.

At the same time, civil society actors play a vital role in promoting inclusive societies and ensuring that the perspectives of underrepresented or vulnerable groups, including women, LGBTQIA+ communities, ethnic minorities, and communities affected by conflict or displacement, are reflected in public conversations. Strengthening civic space and supporting inclusive dialogue are therefore essential for enabling CSOs to continue their work and build stronger connections with the communities they serve.

This event will provide a space for CSOs from Armenia, Moldova, and Ukraine to exchange experiences, discuss shared challenges, and explore collaborative approaches to strengthening civic space and promoting inclusive dialogue across the region.

ERIM is particularly seeking representatives from organisations whose work relates to one or more of the following areas:

- Protection and strengthening of civic space.
- Promoting inclusive dialogue around human rights and equality.



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- Countering disinformation and polarised public discourse through community-based initiatives (e.g. media literacy activities, community dialogues, public awareness campaigns etc)
- Advancing the rights and visibility of underrepresented or vulnerable groups, including women, LGBTQIA+ communities, and ethnic minorities.
- Working at the grassroots level and building stronger connections between civil society organisations and local communities.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for participation in the event, applicants must:

- Represent a registered civil society organisation (CSO) based in Armenia, Moldova, or Ukraine.
- The organisation's work must align with at least one of the thematic areas outlined above
- Have at least two years of relevant experience implementing activities related to these thematic areas.
- Nominate a participant who is directly involved in the organisation's programmes or projects related to the thematic focus of the event.
- Ensure that the nominated participant has sufficient English proficiency
- Be available to attend the full in-person event in Chişinău on May 5-7, 2026 (arrival day May 4, 2026).

The following entities are not eligible to participate:

- Political parties or party-affiliated organisations
- For-profit entities
- Religious organisations
- Public institutions

In addition, organisations that participated in ERIM's event "From Voices to Action" held in Moldova in 2025 are not eligible to apply.

SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS

Eligible applications will be assessed based on the following considerations:

- The organisation's motivation to engage in regional networking and cooperation, including interest in developing future collaborative initiatives.
- The relevance of the organisation's work to the thematic focus of the event.



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- Relevance of the nominated participant's role within the organisation to the thematic focus of the event.
- The organisation's experience working with local communities or grassroots actors related to the event themes.

ERIM will select between up to 10 participants per country, one representative per organization. In cases where applications receive the same score, priority will be given to CSOs working in the regions and at the community level, particularly those based outside capital cities.

KEY DETAILS

- **Dates:** Arrival on May 4; sessions from May 5 to May 7, 2026
- **Location:** Chişinău, Moldova
- **Format:** In-person
- **Language:** English (no interpretation available)
- Travel, accommodation, and meals will be fully covered by the organizers.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Cross-border networking and hands-on collaboration
- Informal meetups, and a cultural program
- Space to pitch and co-develop ideas for future joint projects
- Following the event, eligibility to apply for and participate in the selection process of follow-up funding (up to €15,000 per joint initiative)

HOW TO APPLY

Please fill out the application form by **6th of April, 2026 (6PM, Central European Time)** by using this [LINK](#).

Please note that applications received after the deadline won't be accepted. Selected participants will be notified by 17th of April.