

## EEA Civil Society Fund Bulgaria – launch event

Sofia, 12 May 2026

Venue: [2020 Event Space](#)

The Small NDK (National Palace of Culture), 1 Bulgaria Blvd.

### AGENDA

*(Bulgarian, with interpretation into English)*

- 09:30 – 10:00 *Registration and coffee*
- 10:00 – 10:30 **Opening statements**
- Jon Erik Strömö, Director, Section for Central Europe and EEA Grants, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
  - Bergthor Magnússon, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland (TBC)
  - Velislava Delcheva, Ombudsman of the Republic of Bulgaria (TBC)
  - Georgi Stoytchev, Executive Director of Open Society Institute – Sofia
- 10:30 – 11:30 **Presentation of the Civil Society Fund in Bulgaria – mechanisms for support and modalities** – panel with the Fund Operator consortium partners, followed by discussion and Q&A
- Elitsa Markova, Open Society Institute – Sofia
  - Iliyana Nikolova, Workshop for Civic Initiatives Foundation
  - Sarah Perrine, Trust for Social Achievement (TBC)
  - Guri Idsø Viken, Frivillighet Norge
- 11:30 – 11:45 *Coffee break*
- 11:45 – 13:00 **Challenges and Opportunities thematic panel on civic space and information integrity**
- Moderator: Iliyana Nikolova, Workshop for Civil Initiatives Foundation
- Panellists:
- Waltrud Heller, EU Agency for Fundamental Rights  
Sotiris Laganopoulos, Financial Mechanism Office

**Civil  
Society Fund**

Karine Badr, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
Boyan Zahariev, Open Society Institute – Sofia  
Nikola Tulechki, Data for Good  
Ognyan Issaev, Trust for Social Achievement

Q&A

*13:00 – 14:00*

*Lunch*

*14:00 – 14:15*

**Updated Rule of Law checklist:** Tania Van Dijk, Legal Advisor, Venice Commission, Council of Europe

*14:15 – 15:30*

**Challenges and Opportunities thematic panel on rule of law and human rights**

Moderator: Bilyana Gyaurova-Wegertseder, Bulgarian Institute for Legal Initiatives

Panellists:

Adela Katchaounova, Bulgarian Helsinki Committee  
Andrey Yankulov, Caretaker Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice (TBC)  
Tania Van Dijk, Venice Commission, Council of Europe  
Yonko Grozev, Former judge at the European Court of Human Rights

Q&A

*15:30 – 16:30*

**Workshop** (Bulgarian language only)

**European Citizens' Initiative – Citizens Shaping EU**

Chair: Iliyana Nikolova, Workshop for Civic Initiatives Foundation

*16:30*

*End of day*