

Press Release

Brussels, 19 March 2026

KMOP joined policymakers, civil society leaders, and practitioners at the European Parliament for the final event of the Civic Champions project on 19 March 2026, titled “Navigating Civic Space in an Age of Geopolitical and Social Upheaval.” The event focused on the growing challenges facing civic space across Europe and the need to strengthen democratic resilience at EU level.

Hosted by Georgios Georgiou, MEP, the discussion brought together representatives from European institutions, civil society organisations, and project partners to examine key threats to democratic participation, including foreign interference, disinformation, polarisation, and shrinking civic freedoms.

Representing KMOP, Rania El Ampasy presented findings from the Civic Champions project, highlighting the operational challenges faced by civil society organisations and the importance of developing coordinated responses to protect civic space. The session also introduced policy recommendations and the project’s proposed Early Warning Mechanism, designed to help identify and respond to democratic backsliding across Europe.

The high-level panel discussion emphasised the essential role of civil society in upholding democratic values, promoting social cohesion, and countering disinformation. Speakers called for stronger institutional support, enhanced cross-sector collaboration, and sustained investment in civic infrastructure.

The event concluded with a networking session aimed at strengthening partnerships and cooperation among organisations working to reinforce civic resilience across Europe.

The Civic Champions project, co-funded by the European Union, is implemented by the Center for the Study of Democracy, KMOP, CESIE, and CARDET. The project aims to strengthen democratic values and civic participation in Southern Europe, by empowering civil society actors to address and reverse the shrinking civic space phenomenon.

* * *



The event formed part of [CivicChampions](#), an EU funded initiative working to strengthen civic participation and protect civic space through evidence-based monitoring, capacity-building, and policy engagement in Bulgaria, Italy, Greece and Cyprus.

The project is coordinated by [CSD](#), in partnership with [CESIE](#), [KMOP](#) and [CARDET](#).



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Education and Culture Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.