



HOW DO WE SUPPORT CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE PHILIPPINES?

## THE EU ROADMAP FOR ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE PHILIPPINES (2025-2028)

### WHAT IS THE ROADMAP AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

The EU Roadmap for Engagement with Civil Society in the Philippines expresses the **European Union's firm and long-standing commitment to supporting a vibrant, independent, and pluralistic civil society**. This includes not only NGOs but also a **broader spectrum of civil actors** such as community-based organisations, academia, trade unions, business associations, and professional groups.

The Roadmap reflects the **Team Europe approach**, bringing together the EU Delegation and EU Member States active in the country to coordinate efforts, align priorities, and foster meaningful dialogue with civil society and other national stakeholders.

The Roadmap aligns with the **EU's core values**, and guides the collective engagement of the EU and its Member States — following a **Team Europe approach** — with civil society actors in the country. It reflects a shared ambition to promote more inclusive, participatory, and accountable governance, as well as to ensure that civil society actors can play their full role in policy dialogue, public service delivery, and societal development.

In a context where civil society continues to play a vital role in fostering inclusive development and governance, the Roadmap seeks to further **support a more conducive environment for civil society**. While civil society actors in the Philippines contribute significantly across a wide range of sectors, they also face various operational and institutional challenges. The EU, **in close partnership with national and local stakeholders**, is committed to supporting efforts that enhance civil society engagement, promote dialogue, and ensure that the space for participation remains open, constructive, and resilient.

The 2025–2028 Roadmap builds on lessons learned from previous years and introduces a **more structured and coordinated approach** to dialogue and engagement with civil society. It also places a stronger emphasis on the **inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups**, including women, Indigenous Peoples, youth, persons with disabilities, SOGIESC diversity collectives, and internally displaced populations.

*The EU and its Member States share a firm commitment to strengthening a vibrant and independent civil society, fostering inclusive and accountable governance for all.*

### THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN GLOBAL GATEWAY

The implementation of the Roadmap will be closely aligned with the EU's broader cooperation framework, particularly the **Global Gateway strategy**, which is the EU's offer for sustainable and trusted partnerships. In the Philippines, Global Gateway plays an increasingly important role in supporting investments in **green economy, digital transformation, and good governance** — three areas that are crucial to inclusive and sustainable development.

Within this context, **civil society is a key stakeholder**: both as a **partner in co-designing and delivering** initiatives that reach communities, and as a **constructive actor in promoting transparency, accountability, and social inclusion**. Engaging civil society in these transformative sectors helps ensure that investments are responsive to local needs, uphold rights, and foster shared ownership.



## WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES OF THE EU ROADMAP FOR CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE PHILIPPINES (2025–2028)?

### PRIORITY 1

**Promoting a deeper, broader and more inclusive** dialogue between Team Europe and a diverse range of civil society actors across the Philippines, with **some key actions include:**



1. **Institutionalising Civil Society Participation in Global Gateway Initiatives**, through systematic consultations being embedded in the design and implementation of Global Gateway projects.
2. **Annual EU–Philippines Civil Society Strategic Meeting** in rotating regions, enabling region-specific discussions on cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, and innovation. These will be complemented by multi-stakeholder actions with Team Europe, local authorities, and civil society.
3. **Expanding the Civil Society and Youth Sounding Boards**: These platforms will become more inclusive, involving grassroots, informal, and underrepresented actors.

### PRIORITY 2

**Promoting a more conducive environment for Civil Society, with a focus on the inclusion of women, youth, and vulnerable groups. Some key actions include:**



1. **Sustained Policy Dialogue on Civic Space** will be integrated into political and sector dialogues with national authorities, as well as in relevant subcommittees of the EU–Philippines Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.
2. **Support dialogue around legal frameworks**, preventing the misuse of legislation while strengthening access to legal support and human rights monitoring mechanisms.
3. **Advancing Transitional Justice and Reconciliation**, particularly in Mindanao, through initiatives that promote community-based conflict resolution and inclusive governance in fragile areas.

### PRIORITY 3

**Enhancing Civil Society Participation in Public Policy and Local Governance**, through stronger and more institutionalised participation of civil society in public policy processes, fostering inclusivity and transparency.



**Some key actions include:**

1. **Strengthening Partnerships with Local Authorities** through the development of participation frameworks, including guidelines and capacity development for inclusive governance.
2. **Empowering Youth and Marginalised Groups** for broader civic engagement in policy design and local decision-making.
3. **Fostering Innovation in Participation Tools** in support of civic participation, enabling open consultations, and improving the accessibility and transparency of governance processes.

### PRIORITY 4

**Strengthening the Capacity and Resilience of Civil Society**, with a strong focus on institutional strengthening, access to resources, and collaboration.



**Some key actions include:**

1. **Targeted Capacity Building** to civil society actors involved in Global Gateway sectors — for example, on circular economy innovation, digital governance, and environmental standards.
2. **Mapping and Understanding the Civil Society Ecosystem**, identifying formal and informal civil society, focusing on their thematic expertise, geographic reach, and engagement potential.
3. **Fostering Collaboration**, supporting CSO coalitions and sectoral platforms to strengthen collective advocacy and coordinated participation in national and local policy processes.
4. **Promoting Localisation and Sustainable Financing**, subgranting mechanisms and flexible funding modalities being expanded to reach grassroots and emerging organisations.