

***EU Civil Resilience Mechanism***

*Call for in-kind support to civil society*

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| ***GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS*** |

***Reference No: IPA/2019/413-168/EUCRM***

***Apply at*** [***www.EU4CR.mk***](http://www.EU4CR.mk/) ***by***

**15th November 2022 at 17:00 (local time)**

objectives of the call

The EU Civil Resilience Mechanism **(CRM)** is an in-kind support programme for civil society organisations launched under the EU funded project: Technical Assistance for improving the enabling environment for Civil Society Organisations in the Republic of North Macedonia.

The main objective of this Programme is contributing towards enhanced space and capacities of civil society for efficiently addressing the key reform priorities in their communities needed for further democratisation of the society. Through this support the CSOs should create stronger links with citizens by engaging them in decision and policy making with public authorities, and in ensuring a respect for the rule of law and good governance, fundamental rights and international standards, social and greener economy and other activities important for the interests of citizens and improving their living conditions.

Moreover, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative impact on the economic and social spheres increased the existing vulnerabilities of the society.  In this context, the CRM Mechanism is important for **expending the EU partnerships with grass-root civil society organisations in North Macedonia** in further strengthening the local communities for maintaining the social cohesion, and the policy dialogue for shaping the socio-economic recovery toward a more equitable, gender responsive and environmental-friendly society.

In this respect, **the CRM mechanism shall serve to enable grass-root civil society organisations to undertake efficient and effective actions** to promptly respond to real needs in their communities and strengthen the citizens’ resilience during frequent social changes, but also informing the citizens, objectively and promptly, on the EU accession process and related sector reforms in the country and their real impact on citizens’ daily lives.

**Objectives/Lots of the Call:**

**The proposed actions must address at least one of the five objectives/lots listed below in order for an application to be considered eligible:**

Objective/Lot 1: To enable CSOs for legal and policy creation and implementation, and for reinforcing advocacy and watchdog role.

Objective/Lot 2: To enhance CSOs for increasing sectorial networking, dialogue, and cooperation with public institutions (central and local) and business community.

Objective/Lot 3: To support CSOs in promoting and enhancing democracy and human rights with rights-based actions.

Objective/Lot 4: To improve the visibility of the work of CSOs and strengthen their communication with their constituencies and sectorial stakeholders.

Objective/Lot 5: To foster networking and exchange of good practices among CSOs in the country and with IPA/EU based CSOs (create citizens’ initiatives and platforms and/or participate in European umbrella organisations for structural cooperation).

1. Financial allocation

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for in-kind support is 900,000 EUR.

During the first round of application, in-kind support of up to 600,000 EUR will be awarded

**Indicative allocation of in-kind support by lot:**

Lot 1: **To enable CSOs for legal and policy creation and implementation, and for reinforcing advocacy and watchdog role**.

Amount for Objective 1: EUR 180,000

Lot 2: **To enhance CSOs for increasing sectorial networking, dialogue, and cooperation with public institutions (central and local) and business community**

 Amount for Objective 2: EUR 180,000

Lot 3: **To support CSOs in promoting and enhancing democracy and human rights with rights-based actions**

 Amount for Objective 3: EUR 180,000

Lot 4: **To improve the visibility of the work of CSOs and strengthen their communication with their constituencies and sectorial stakeholders.**

 Amount for Objective 4: EUR 180,000

Lot 5: **To foster networking and exchange of good practices among CSOs in the country and with IPA/EU based CSOs.**

 Amount for Objective 5: EUR 180,000

If the allocation indicated for specific lot cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to other lots.

Size of in-kind support

Any support requested under this call for in-kind support may be equal to or lower than 20,000 EUR.

All costs for eligible activities under selected applications will be 100% covered.

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| ***Note:*** *The EU Civil Resilience Mechanism is not a grant scheme,**but an in-kind support programme. Thus, payments will be made by the contracting authority directly to the suppliers and service providers. Except for action team compensations and communication costs, the contracting authority will make no other money transfers directly to the civil society organisations selected for the support.*  |

2. Eligibility Criteria

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, related to:

1. the applicants
2. the actions
3. the costs

***2.1 Eligibility of applicants***

In order to be eligible for the in-kind support the applicant must:

* be a legal person **and**
* be non-profit-making **and**
* be a non-governmental organisation **and**
* be established in the Republic of North Macedonia in line with the [Law on Associations and Foundations](https://rcgo.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Zakon-za-zdruzhenija-i-fondacii.pdf)[[1]](#footnote-1) **and**
* be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action, not acting as an intermediary **and**
* be with an annual turnover of up to 50,000 EUR in the last year*.*

***2.2. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made***

*Definition*

An action is composed of a set of activities.

*Duration*

The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than3 months with a maximum implementation period until 31st August 2023.

*Action objectives/Lots of the Call for in-kind support*

The proposed action must clearly address at least **one** of the five objectives/lots listed below in order for an applicant to be considered eligible. Although the proposed action may address issues from more than one objective, **it must clearly belong to one of the objectives/lots enumerate below**.

Objective 1/Lot 1: To enable CSOs for legal and policy creation and implementation, and for reinforcing advocacy and watchdog role.

Objective 2 /Lot 2: To enhance CSOs for increasing sectorial networking, dialogue, and cooperation with public institutions (central and local) and business community.

Objective 3/Lot 3: To support CSOs in promoting and enhancing democracy and human rights with rights-based actions.

Objective 4/Lot 4: To improve the visibility of the work of CSOs and strengthen their communication with their constituencies and sectorial stakeholders.

Objective 5/Lot 5: To foster networking and exchange of good practices among CSOs in the country and with IPA/EU based CSOs (create citizens’ initiatives and platforms and/or participate in European umbrella organisations for structural cooperation).

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| **NOTE: Actions supported under the CRM must be of public benefit[[2]](#footnote-2) and designed using the rights-based approach[[3]](#footnote-3).**  |

*Location*

Actions must take place in the Republic of North Macedonia.

*Types of activity*

The following list of indicative activities may be supported under this mechanism**:**

* Organising or participating in local, regional, and national meetings, trainings, conferences, workshops, seminars, or similar events. Organising local level thematic activities and events.
* Organising advocacy/lobbying activities on local level through different thematic campaigns, public policy debates with relevant stakeholders and other activities for collection of evidence-based data for policy implementation on local community level.
* Organisational development activities for: strategic planning, internal good governance, fundraising, lobbying, advocacy, constituency building, or any other relevant topic.
* Activities for watch-dog and/or monitoring local government and public institutions’ policies.
* Activities for developing innovative (digital) tools which would stimulate good governance, participation, transparency and accountability.
* Organising volunteering activities in various fields in line with local needs.
* Organising activities to serve the citizens’ immediate needs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on vulnerable groups.
* Activities for mainstreaming gender equality, youth participation, environmental protection, inclusion of disadvantaged groups.
* Activities for cross-sectoral cooperation and establishing strategic partnerships including best practices sharing.
* Organising activities to address different community needs in relation to any of the thematic fields (see Annex A2) in cooperation with relevant stakeholders (local and central government, business community, educational institutions, local media).
* Activities for visibility and communication improvement of the CSOs’ work (e.g., web page and social media development, innovative digital tools, designing and implementing visibility/communication strategies, institutional identity development, different publications and other visibility materials).
* Activities for networking and cooperation in specific thematic fields (please see Annex A.2) with other CSOs/networks/sector platforms from the country/IPA region[[4]](#footnote-4)/EU[[5]](#footnote-5).
* Activities for cooperation with different EU institutions in respect to supporting the EU-access process of the country and having citizens better informed of the process (e.g. EU Commission, EU Parliament, different EC agencies, European Court of Human Rights).

**NOTE: The list of types of activity is not exhaustive**, **but only illustrative and appropriate activities that are not mentioned above will also be considered for support.**

*Particular value-added elements of the action*

Gender equality, youth participation, and environmental protection may be considered as value-added elements if mainstreamed in the proposed action. Inclusion of disadvantaged people/vulnerable groups, exchange of best practices and knowledge may also be considered as value-added elements. These value-added aspects are not obligatory, but strongly recommended to be included in the action as they will be considered in the assessment of the application.

Furthermore, the following value-added element is introduced and will be give weight in the evaluation process:

* Actions implemented in region(s) which is/are insufficiently covered by approved applications in the first round of application under this call for in-kind support.

*Visibility*

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed the action. As far as possible, actions that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union must incorporate information and communication activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions specified and published by the European Commission at:

https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/comm-visibility-requirements\_en)

*Number of applications per applicant*

The applicant may not submit more than one (1) applicationunder this Call for in-kind support.

However, in case the application is rejected in the first round of application, **the applicant may resubmit the application in the second round after absorbing the recommendations for improvement given by the CRM assessors**.

***2.3 Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included***

Only ‘eligible costs’ can be covered by the in-kind support. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below.

*Eligible costs*

1. **Action team compensation (maximum 20% of the total action budget; *public administration staff is not eligible for such compensation):***
* CSO staff directly working on implementation of the action
1. **Costs for max. 1 thematic expert (excluding on legal issues):**
* Expert fee for a specific thematic expertise explicitly needed for specific activities under the selected action, not relevant to legislative issues
1. **Costs for max. 1 expert for any legislative topic deemed and justified necessary for successful achievement of action activities:**
* Expert cost for a legislative expertise on a specific topic
1. **Costs for travel, accommodation and transportation:**
* Travel and transportation expenses
* Accommodation costs
* Subsistence allowances
1. **Costs for the organisation of/or participation in events:**
* Rental fees for venues, catering costs
* Translation and interpretation services
* Special requirements for events (if needed – e.g., stationary, ambulance, childcare, PCR tests)
* Public relations/communication and/or logistical and other costs related to event organisation
* Renting equipment and/or furniture for events (rental cost cannot exceed 1/3 of the purchasing value of the relevant equipment/furniture)
1. **Purchase of small equipment**, which must be directly linked to the activity of the action and justified. The purchase is **limited to 15% of the total cost of the action budget**. The type of category of equipment may be for administration of the action (laptop, printer, projector) but may also be another type of equipment for the specific nature of activities under the action. After full implementation of the action, the ownership of the equipment will be transferred to the CSO that has implemented the action.
2. **Communication costs** (telephone, internet) related to implementation of activities within the action period **cannot exceed 15 EUR/month/person implementing the action**.
3. **Costs for video production and post-production:**
* Film, documentary, video shooting (e.g., formatting, editing, voice-over), podcasts; translation and interpretation services; advertisement costs
1. **Action visibility costs for design, production or printing of visibility, communication, promotional materials and tools (e.g., brochures, posters, flyers, roll-up banners, folders, pens, website, social media tools):**
* Costs for design, printing, dissemination, translation services, advertisement costs
* Website costs (e.g., database, design, hosting, platform, other digital tools costs, etc.)
* Purchasing/subscription fees of digital tools for the action
* Design and management of digital/social media tools

*Non-eligible costs*

* Honoraria for activists and compensation for public administration staff
* Actions/costs concerned with personal earnings and benefits
* Actions/costs concerned with profit making or commercial activities
* Scholarships
* Activities already funded by the EU or another donor
* Co-financing of EU and/or other donor funded projects
* Actions that are duplicate of another funded project
* Debts and debt service charges (interest)
* Costs incurred for activities implemented before the approval of the requested support
* Costs for office rental or purchase, office utilities or works, infrastructures and renovation and/or refurbishment of buildings
* Costs for supporting political parties and agendas
* Costs for religious activities

3. How to apply and the procedures to follow

To apply for this call for in-kind support the applicants need to fill in the application form (Annex A) including budget (Annex B) with budget justification.

Applicants must apply in English.

Only the application form with the proposed budget will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contains ALL relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

Hand-written application forms will not be accepted.

The application form must be submitted online via the web-site [www.EU4CR.mk](http://www.EU4CR.mk/) after completing the general online form.

Upon submission of an application form online, the applicant will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt.

**Please note that incomplete application forms may be rejected**. Applicants are advised to verify that their application form is completed by using the checklist for application forms (Annex A.3).

Potential applicants are strongly advised to check the implementation documents and procedures *before* requesting support in order to be properly informed about the application requirements. For this purpose, consult the Implementation Guidelines and its annexes (Annex C) accessible at [www.EU4CR.mk](http://www.EU4CR.mk/).

*Deadline for submission of application forms*

The deadline for application for this call for in-kind support is 15th November 2022 at 17:00 (local time).

*Further information*

Information sessions on this call for in-kind support will be organised in September-October 2022. The details about these information sessions will be published on [www.EU4CR.mk](http://www.EU4CR.mk/).

Questions may be sent by E-mail to the helpdesk at: crm-helpdesk@eu4cr.mk**.** All questions with answers will be published on [www.EU4CR.mk](http://www.EU4CR.mk/), under Frequently Asked Questions.

4. Evaluation and selection of applications

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the contracting authority with the assistance of assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria:

* If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in the assessment grid (Annex D), the application will be rejected on this sole basis.
* Based on the compliance criteria from the assessment grid (Annex D), the action will be assessed as recommended for support or not.

Eligibility verification will be performed on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority. It will by default only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available budget for this call for in-kind support. The following supporting documents in copy will be requested:

* The statute or articles of association of the applicant;
* The applicant’s current status issued by the Central Register of the Republic of North Macedonia;
* The applicant’s latest year-end accounts.

In case the potential applicant is not recommended for support, recommendations for improvement of the application form will be provided to the unsuccessful applicant who may choose to improve and resubmit the application form in the second round of application.

LIST OF ANNEXES

**DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED**

**Annex A:** **Application form (Word format)**

 A.1 – Indicative action plan for implementing the action

 А.2 – Thematic Fields

 A.3 - Checklist

**Annex B: Budget (Excel format)**

**DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION[[6]](#footnote-6)**

**Annex C: Implementation Guidelines**

**Annex D: Assessment Grid**

1. Law on Associations and Foundations (“Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia’ no. 52/10, 135/11 and 55/16). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ***Public benefit*** activity is an activity that is socially useful. Article 74 of the Law on Associations and Foundations lists actions/activities of public benefit. The Law is available here <https://rcgo.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Zakon-za-zdruzhenija-i-fondacii.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. ***Rights-based approach (RBA)*** is extensive in scope, encompassing fundamental social, economic, and cultural human rights and liberties, including animal and environmental rights. Rights-based action includes all the conducts and actions focused on the development of rights; from lobbying and advocacy, enabling the recognition of a right, to the provision of emergency action plans for people deprived of a right.RBA is based on the identification of ‘rights-holders’ and corresponding ‘duty-bearers’ in specific contexts, and the promotion of their capacities to claim their rights and fulfil their duties, respectively. More information can be found at <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%209489%202014%20INIT>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. **IPA countries** are Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Republic of North Macedonia, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey.

\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The list of **EU Members States** is as follows: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Sweden. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *These documents shall also be published by the contracting authority.* [↑](#footnote-ref-6)