



**BALKANS
ACT
NOW!**



Contracting Authority: Association for action against violence and trafficking in human beings-OPEN GATE

Title of the call

Civil society initiatives to analyse, independently monitor and influence policy creation and the decision-making processes on issues concerning human trafficking

Balkans Act Now (BAN – phase III)

Guidelines
for grant applicants

Deadline for submission of the application: May 17th, 2019, 17:00h

Reference call for proposals number: Europe Aid/ 154870/DH/ACT/Multi

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1. CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES TO ANALYSE, INDEPENDENTLY MONITOR AND INFLUENCE POLICY CREATION AND THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES ON ISSUES CONCERNING HUMAN TRAFFICKING-BALKANS ACT NOW (BAN – PHASE III)

1.1. BACKGROUND

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that human trafficking worldwide generates over 32 billion USD. Western Balkans (WB) is a source, destination and transit territory for human trafficking, and this applies to all countries participating in this project. WB region in its EU accession negotiation processes needs to respond to the judicial reform and fight against organized crime, specifically human trafficking. This needs to be done as well by enhancing and strengthening regional cooperation, improving capacities and influence of the civil society organisations (CSO) in debating and monitoring on human rights and rule of law.

Therefore Open Gate in partnership with the CSOs from Serbia, Bosna and Hercegovina, Montenegro, Netherlands and Albania is implementing 48 months project BALKANS ACT NOW (BAN – PHASE III) funded by the European Commission.

Phase III of BAN builds on the successes of the phases I and II (established strong regional network of CSO co-applicants; designed Balkans Declaration on the suppression of trafficking and exploitation of human beings; designed and tested regional Monitoring tool; various proposals on compensation mechanism for victims were developed, including a feasibility study on State Compensation Fund, as well as a model of the Law on Compensation Fund; awareness raising public campaigns were performed).

The proposed BAN III focuses on adoption and implementation of the Monitoring tool, its advocacy and promotion as well as enabling transparent and accountable monitoring of quality of services delivered to victims. Effective Monitoring tool implementation requires civil society sector that has capacity and capability to deliver quality inputs and hold governments to the account, hence the project addresses CSO strengthening, advocacy skills and networking. Institutionalised effective monitoring and involvement of CSOs are a precondition for enabling functioning of the office of National rapporteur or it's strengthening, as a key function in ensuring together EU accession triggers deeply rooted and irreversible positive changes in addressing human trafficking.

All WB co-applicants in this project are leaders in ant trafficking and fighting against organized crime in their countries. They are active actors in development of state's strategies and action plans, in influencing policy changes, in policy monitoring, in the same time providing direct support to victims. The project approach has a strong regional ownership and it focuses on specific intervention to build capacities of WB CSOs and their local partners to analyse, propose new solutions, monitor and report on the work of justice sector.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The **global objective** of this call for proposals and BAN III project is: To contribute to enhancing participatory democracies and the EU integration processes in North Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina by strengthening civil society impact on human trafficking victim's outcomes as well as CSO's capacity and capability to effectively dialogue with governments producing lasting change.

The key objective of this call is to expand the Balkan Act Now! Network, by involving other CSOs from North Macedonia in monitoring and advocacy actions on prevention of human trafficking and protection of victims.

The call of proposal is expected to contribute to CSO monitoring capacity and ensuring sufficiency of data on practical implementation of national law and policies related to human trafficking as well as enabling a pathway for CSOs to directly engage in national and regional activities.

Priority of the action is to support civil society initiatives to collect data, analyse and independently monitor the situation of human trafficking and specific cases by competently using the monitoring tool,¹ and influence policy.

It is expected CSO grantees to be involved in following BAN III activities

- Contribute to regional CSO anti-trafficking network through contributing to development and implementation of the Regional network 2019-2023 plan
- Contribute to building trust in CSOs by becoming a signatory of the accountability and transparency charter and by contributing to national advocacy campaigns

1.3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is **EUR 10 000**. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Size of grants

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following maximum amounts and percentages:

- Maximum amount: **5000 EUR**
- Maximum percentage: percentage of the total eligible costs of the action 100 % of the total eligible costs of the action

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this call, in conformity with the Practical Guide, which is applicable to the present call (available on the Internet at this address <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/frag/document.do?locale=en>).²

2.1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

(1) the actors:

- The **'lead applicant'**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form (2.1.1),
- if any, its **co-applicant(s) (where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as "*applicant(s)*")** (2.1.1),

¹ Monitoring tool can be accessed at: <https://lastrada.org.mk/mainarchive/monitoring%20handbook%20SRB-ENG.pdf>

- and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s). (2.1.2);
- (2) the actions:
- Actions for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.4);
- (3) the costs:
- types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.5).

2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))

Lead applicant

- (1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must :
- Be civil society entity local registered in North Macedonia
 - Be non-profit making that has been in operation for at least 3 years and for whom the grant will not present more than 40% of the 2017-2018 annual turnover
 - Have the reputation, capacity and capability to quality deliver proposed activities
 - Compliant with EU requirements placed on project partners within the project
 - Committed to combating human trafficking
- (2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in section 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide;

The grant application form ('declaration by the lead applicant'), the lead applicant must declare that the lead applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations. If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the Coordinator in Annex E3h1 (Special Conditions). The Coordinator is the main interlocutor of the Contracting Authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the action.

2.1.2. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made

Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not be **lower than 4 months nor exceed 12 months**.

Types of activities eligible:

- Actions aimed at monitoring of human trafficking cases and data collection
- Contribution to writing of monitoring reports
- Advocacy and promotion activities related to human trafficking
- Testing innovative approaches to transparency and advocacy
- National level networking focused on combating all forms of human trafficking

Location

Actions must take place in North Macedonia.

Visibility

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed or co-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 http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en).

Number of applications and grants per applicants / affiliated entities

The lead applicant may not submit more than one application(s) under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may not be awarded more than one grant(s) under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may not be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application at the same time.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be the co-applicant or affiliated entity in more than one application(s) under this call for proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be awarded more than one grant(s) under this call for proposals.

2.1.3. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included

Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'.

The reimbursement of eligible costs may be based on any or a combination of the following forms:

- actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies)
- one or more simplified cost options.

Simplified cost options may take the form of:

- **unit costs:** covering all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by reference to an amount per unit.
- **lump sums:** covering in global terms all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance.
- **flat-rate financing:** covering specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by applying a percentage fixed ex ante.

The amounts or rates have to be based on estimates using objective data such as statistical data or any other objective means or with reference to certified or auditable historical data of the applicants or the affiliated entity(ies). The methods used to determine the amounts or rates of unit costs, lump sums or flat-rates must comply with the criteria established in Annex K, and especially ensure that the costs correspond fairly to the actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies), are in line with their accounting practices, no profit is made and the costs are not already covered by other sources of funding (no double funding). Refer to Annex K for directions and a checklist of controls to assess the minimum necessary conditions that provide reasonable assurance for the acceptance of the proposed amounts.

Applicants proposing this form of reimbursement, must clearly indicate in worksheet no.1 of Annex B, each heading/item of eligible costs concerned by this type of financing, i.e. add the reference in capital letters to "UNIT COST" (per month/flight etc), "LUMPSUM", "FLAT RATE" in the Unit column. (see example in Annex K)

Additionally in Annex B, in the second column of worksheet no.2, "Justification of the estimated costs" per each of the corresponding budget item or heading applicants must:

- describe the information and methods used to establish the amounts of unit costs, lump sums and/or flat-rates, to which costs they refer, etc.
- clearly explain the formulas for calculation of the final eligible amount³
- identify the beneficiary who will use the simplified cost option (in case of affiliated entity, specify first the beneficiary), in order to verify the maximum amount per each beneficiary (which includes if applicable simplified cost options of its affiliated entity(ies))

At contracting phase, the Contracting Authority decides whether to accept the proposed amounts or rates on the basis of the provisional budget submitted by the applicants, by analysing factual data of grants carried out by the applicants or of similar actions and by performing checks established by Annex K.

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the grant contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the Contracting Authority Open Gate/La Strada to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant or the percentage of EU co-financing as a result of these corrections.

It is therefore in the applicants' interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the General Conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex G of the guidelines).

Contingency reserve

The budget may include a contingency reserve not exceeding 5 % of the estimated direct eligible costs. It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the Contracting Authority.

Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total must not exceed 7 % of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the Special Conditions of the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

If any of the applicants or affiliated entity(ies) is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

³ Examples:- for staff costs: number of hours or days of work * hourly or daily rate pre-set according to the category of personnel concerned;- for travel expenses: distance in km * pre-set cost of transport per km; number of days * daily allowance pre-set according to the country;- for specific costs arising from the organization of an event: number of participants at the event * pre-set total cost per participant etc.

Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind mean the provision of goods or services to beneficiaries or affiliated entities free of charge by a third party. As contributions in kind do not involve any expenditure for beneficiaries or affiliated entities, they are not eligible costs.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union (including through EDF) grant;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5 of the General Conditions of the standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- Credit to third parties.

2.2. HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

2.2.1. *Application forms*

Applicants must apply in English language. Applicant must submit filled **Applicant form**. With application documents, Applicants must send **following addition documentation** (scanned):

- Scanned copy of Registration of organization
- Scanned copy of Statute of organization
- Annual turnover statement for 2017 and 2018

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the grant application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

2.2.2. *Where and how to send applications*

Full applications (i.e. the full application form, the budget, the logical framework and the declaration by the lead applicant) must be submitted in a sealed envelope by private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) to the address below.

Address for hand delivery and by private courier service:

Association for action against violence and trafficking in human beings- Open Gate

Str. Sava Kovacevic 1a, 1000 Skopje, North Macedonia.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Applications must be submitted in **one original copies in A4 size**, each bound. The full application form, budget and logical framework must also be supplied in **electronic format (CD- Rom or USB stick)** in a separate and single file (i.e. the full application must not be split into several different files). The electronic file must contain exactly the same application as the paper version.

On the surface of the envelope it has to be stated

“DO NOT OPEN “

In the subject, it has to be stated the following: Project proposal under the call: Civil society initiatives to analyse, independently monitor and influence policy creation and the decision-making processes on issues concerning human trafficking

2.2.3. Deadline for submission of applications

The deadline for the submission of applications is **May, 17th, 2019** the deadline for receipt is at **17:00 hour local time** as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt. Any application submitted after the deadline will automatically be rejected.

2.2.4. Further information about applications

In case of additional information required, question may be send by e-mail to lastrada@lastrada.org.mk **no later than 6th of May 2019 with email subject „Questions on the BAN III sub-grant“**

The Contracting Authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on web said www.lastrada.org.mk

Evaluation and selection of applications

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Open Gate with the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS

During the opening and administrative check the following will be assessed:

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in open: **section 7 of Part B** of the grant application form. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

(1) STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION

Scoring:

The evaluation grid is divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity	20
1.1 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient experience of project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient technical expertise? (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)	5
1.3 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient management capacity? (Including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
2. Relevance of the action	30
1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals?*	5x2**
1.2 How relevant to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies) or region(s) is the proposal (including synergy with other EU initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5
1.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the action	20
3.1 Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
3.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action? Is any evaluation planned?	5
3.4 Is the co-applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5

4. Sustainability of the action	15
4.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
4.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (Including scope for replication, extension and information sharing.)	5
4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable?: -financially (<i>how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?</i>) - institutionally (<i>will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the action? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action?</i>) - at policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods, etc?</i>))- environmentally (if applicable) (<i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i>)	5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	15
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	/ 5
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	/ 10
Maximum total score	100

Only Applicants with a **score of at least 70** will be considered for funding.

2.3. NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

2.3.1. *Content of the decision*

The applicants will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision.

2.3.2. *Indicative timetable*

	DATE	TIME
Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the Contracting Authority	15 May 2019	17.00h
Deadline for submission of the applications	17 May 2019	17.00h
Publishing the list of selected applicants on www.lastrada.org.mk Notification of award (after the eligibility check)	24 May 2019	-

Contract signature	31 May 2019	-
Note*: this schedule may be changed during the call for applications procedure. In case of that, updated version will be posted on the Open Gate web said lastrada@lastrada.org.mk		

2.4. CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AFTER THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, the beneficiary (ies) will be offered a contract based on the standard grant contract (see Annex G of these guidelines). By signing the application form (Annex A of these guidelines), the applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract. Where the Coordinator is an organisation whose pillars have been positively assessed, it will sign a PA Grant Agreement based on the PAGO DA template. In this case references to provisions of the standard grant contract and its annexes shall not apply. References in these guidelines to the grant contract shall be understood as references to the relevant provisions of the PA Grant Agreement.

Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the action requires the beneficiary (ies) and its affiliated entity(ies) (if any) to award procurement contracts, those contracts must be awarded in accordance with Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

3. LIST OF ANNEXES

NOTE THAT ALL ANNEXES MUST BE ADAPTED AS FORESEEN TO THE CALL AND PUBLISHED TOGETHER WITH THE GUIDELINES

DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

- Annex A: Grant Application Form (Word format)
- Annex B: Budget (Excel format)
- Annex C: Logical Framework (Excel format)
- Annex D: Legal Entity Sheet⁴
- Annex E: Financial identification form

DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION⁵

Annex G: Standard Grant Contract

- Annex II: general conditions
- Annex IV: contract award rules
- Annex V: standard request for payment
- Annex VI: model narrative and financial report

Annex H: Daily allowance rates (Per diem), available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-procurement-contracts/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag/diems_en

Annex J: Information on the tax regime applicable to grant contracts signed under the call.

⁴ Only applicable where the European Commission will make the payments under the contracts to be signed.

⁵ These documents should also be published by the Contracting Authority.

Annex K: [Guidelines and Checklist for assessing Budget and Simplified cost options.](#)

Useful links:

Project Cycle Management Guidelines

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines-vol-1_en

The implementation of grant contracts

A Users' Guide

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/companion/document.do?nodeNumber=19&locale=en>

Financial Toolkit

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/procedures-beneficiary-countries-and-partners/financial-management-toolkit_en Please note: The toolkit is not part of the grant contract and has no legal value. It merely provides general guidance and may in some details differ from the signed grant contract. In order to ensure compliance with their contractual obligations beneficiaries should not exclusively rely on the toolkit but always consult their individual contract documents.

* * *