

**Call for Expression of Interest**

To establish a group of Georgian Municipalities to work on

mainstreaming human rights, gender equality and diversity and increasing the inclusion of underrepresented groups

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| **Project** | “Strengthening participatory democracy and human rights at local level in Georgia” |
| **Implementing entity** | **Council of Europe** |
| Congress of Local and Regional Authorities |
| **Duration of the Project** | 15 December 2020 **-** 31 December 2023 |
| **Estimated starting date of project activities for selected municipalities** | 09 December 2021 |
| **Deadline for applications** | 30 November 2021 |

Contents

[**I.** **INTRODUCTION** 3](#_Toc86934031)

[**II.** **BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT** 3](#_Toc86934032)

[**III.** **EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE** 4](#_Toc86934033)

[**1.** **Eligibility criteria** 4](#_Toc86934034)

[**2.** **Selection criteria** 4](#_Toc86934035)

[**IV.** **HOW TO APPLY?** 5](#_Toc86934036)

[**1.** **Documents to be submitted** 5](#_Toc86934037)

[**2.** **Additional information** 5](#_Toc86934038)

[**3.** **Deadline for submission of applications** 5](#_Toc86934039)

[**V.** **NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION AND ENROLLMENT IN THE PROJECT** 6](#_Toc86934040)

[**VI.** **INDICATIVE TIMETABLE** 6](#_Toc86934041)

1. **INTRODUCTION**

This call for expression of interest is launched in the framework of the Council of Europe Project “[Strengthening Participatory Democracy and Human Rights at Local Level in Georgia](https://www.coe.int/en/web/congress/georgia)”. The project is implemented by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the Directorate General of Democracy, Division Elections and Participatory Democracy, within the [Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia 2020-2023](https://rm.coe.int/ap-georgia-2020-2023-en/168098f179), with the financial contribution of the Government of Austria.

The objective of this call is to support a selected group of local authorities to improve the quality of local democracy through mainstreaming human rights in local decision-making and promoting human rights culture within the local public service. The call is prepared in co-ordination with the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG), main partner of all the activities listed below.

The call aims to establish a group of **maximum 15 municipalities** which will benefit from:

* Capacity development activities on the respect, protection, and realisation of human rights at local level tailored to the needs of the selected group
* Capacity development activities on data collection for evidence-based decision making at local level
* Participation in different roundtables and workshops, including national and international peer exchange and dialogue on human rights at local level.

The participation in this targeted group also includes the possibility to apply for tailored expert support and granting to implement local initiatives on human rights through a competitive selection. The **Call for proposals for local initiatives** will be launched in 2022, and up to 10 municipalities will be selected to receive additional tailored expert support and a grant up to up to 7500 euros.

1. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT**

The purpose of the Project “Strengthening Participatory Democracy and Human Rights at Local Level in Georgia” is to improve human rights protection and democratic public participation at local level, by strengthening institutional frameworks and by supporting local authorities and their national association in their efforts to protect and promote human rights, with a particular focus on gender equality and the elimination of discrimination.

In particular, it aims to support local authorities (i.e. local elected representatives and municipal staff) and the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG), to enhance their capacities to better respect, protect and fulfil human rights at local level and to strengthen the dialogue with national stakeholders and civil society to advocate human rights.

The project is implemented until 31st of December 2023.

Project partners include:

* National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG);
* Office of the Public Defender of Georgia;
* Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia;
* Civil Society Organizations working at local level;
* Representatives of the Government and the Parliament of Georgia.

The project aims to contribute to reaching the Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender equality), 10 (Reduced inequalities), 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) and 17 (Partnership for the goals) set by the United Nations in its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

1. **EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE**
2. **Eligibility criteria**

In order to be eligible to participate in the project, an applicant must be a local authority in Georgia from the following regions: Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, Kakheti, Imereti, Guria, Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti, and Tbilisi.

1. **Selection criteria**

Applications will be assessed based on the letter of expression of interest (see below: documents to be submitted) against the following criteria:

* The relevance of local challenges and needs with regard to the objective of the project on improving the quality of local democracy through mainstreaming human rights in local decision-making and promoting a human rights culture within the local public administration;
* sufficient operational capacity and human resources, preferably with gender balanced staff of the City Hall, to engage further in protecting and promoting human rights at local level.

Further to the general objective, preference will be given to:

* Applications submitted by local authorities in high mountainous regions and remote areas;
* Application submitted by local authorities with at least 30% of members of the underrepresented sex in Sakrebulo;
* Applications submitted by local authorities with high proportion of minorities and other underrepresented groups.

The project will seek to ensure political pluralism and fair representation of women and men local elected representatives. Other elements which will be considered in the selection of the participants will be the diversity of the municipalities’ territorial scale, size, population, needs, etc.

1. **HOW TO APPLY?**
2. **Documents to be submitted**

The applicant municipality must send a **letter of expression of interest** which shall describe the motivation of the local authority for participating in the project and be **signed by the mayor**.

In particular, the letter should:

* Elaborate on concrete human rights challenges on the local authority territory   
  (i.e. inclusion of underrepresented groups, gender equality);
* Reflect on the institutional needs (i.e. capacity development) to address existing human rights and local democracy challenges;
* Be accompanied by the information sheet with the following information (see annex I):
  + Name of the local authority
  + Name and gender of the mayor
  + Number of women and men working in the City Hall
  + Territorial description (urban, rural, mountainous)
  + Demographics (number of inhabitants disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity and/or minority status);
* Be of maximum 2 (two) pages.

1. **Additional information**

General information about the project “Strengthening participatory democracy and human rights at the local level in Georgia” can be found on the website of the Council of Europe: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/congress/georgia>.

Any question, related to the Call should be submitted by 25 November 2021 (by midnight CET), in English or in Georgian, to the following e-mail address [georgia.localgov@coe.int](mailto:georgia.localgov@coe.int)

1. **Deadline for submission of applications**

The letter of motivation, together with the information sheet on the applicant local authority, must be submitted in electronic form (Word and/or PDF) in English or in Georgian to the following e-mail address: [georgia.localgov@coe.int](mailto:georgia.localgov@coe.int).

E-mails should contain the following reference in subject line: **Human rights local level\_Georgia \_Expression of interest\_Name of the municipality.**

Applications must be received **before 30 November (at midnight CET)**. Applications received after the abovementioned date will not be considered.

1. **NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION AND ENROLLMENT IN THE PROJECT**

On completion of the selection process, all applicants will be notified in writing of the final decision concerning their respective applications as well as on the next steps to be undertaken.

The selected applicants will be invited to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council of Europe.

1. **INDICATIVE TIMETABLE**

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| --- | --- |
| **Phases** | **Indicative timing** |
| **Publication of the call** | 4 November 2021 |
| **Deadline for submitting applications** | 30 November 2021 |
| **Information to applicants on the results of the application** | 3 December 2021 |
| **Signature of the Memorandum of Understanding** | 9 of December 2021 |
| **Implementation period** | 9 December 2021 – 31 December 2023 |



Annex I

**Information sheet**

Call for interest to establish a group of Georgian Municipalities to work on

mainstreaming human rights, gender equality and diversity and

increasing the inclusion of underrepresented groups

**Information sheet**

*To be attached to the motivation letter*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **General information** | |
| Local authority |  |
| Mayor |  |
| Female Male Other | |
| Total number of elected representatives in Sakrebulo |  |
| Percentage of elected representatives by gender in Sakrebulo |  |
| Percentage of City Hall staff by gender |  |
| **Territorial description** | |
| Territorial extension (in m2) |  |
| Type of territory (urban, rural, mountainous) |  |
| **Demographics** | |
| Total number of inhabitants |  |
| Percentages of population by gender |  |
| Percentages of population by age |  |
| Percentages of population by ethnicity |  |
| Percentages of population by religion |  |