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**Evaluation of the deliberative process within the project
“Building democratic participation in the City of Mostar”**

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The Evaluation Report

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**SOCIAL
TERRAIN⁺**

GEOtest

PREFACE

The evaluation was carried out by the external evaluation expert Dragiša Mijačić on behalf of the consortium led by the Social Terrain and GEOTest that was contracted by the Council of Europe. The expert wishes to thank the project staff from the Congress and the CoE supporting the evaluation process, as well as to all interviewed interlocutors for sharing their insights and views on cooperation within this project intervention.

The evaluation mission was carried out from October to December 2021.

***Disclaimer:** The views and comments expressed in the evaluation are the responsibility of the evaluation expert, and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of any other party, including the Congress, the CoE, the Social Terrain, GEOTest, the Councillors and authorities of the City of Mostar, the project stakeholders, or beneficiaries.*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBM	Confidence Building Measures
CoE	Council of Europe
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease from 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Coordination
EQ	Evaluation Question
EU	European Union
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
RGM	Reflection Group of Mostar
ToR	Terms of Reference

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The evaluation report provides with findings, conclusions and recommendations that arose from the assessment of the project “**Building democratic participation in the City of Mostar**”, implemented by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress) with support of the Council of Europe Office in Sarajevo. The project aimed to create opportunities for citizens to engage in deliberative process and increase their influence in local decision-making process, as well as to strengthen the capacities of local stakeholders in democratic governance. The evaluation was carried out externally by Dragiša Mijačić, contracted by the Social Terrain/GEOtest, from October to December 2021.

KEY FINDINGS

Relevance

The evaluation confirms high relevance of the project intervention. It has been relevant to the application of the main principles of the European Charter for Local Self-Government and its Additional Protocol on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority. The project has been also relevant to the Action plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021, especially to its priorities related to local democracy. Relevance is tangible in promoting the concept of deliberative democracy, helping the elected representatives foster innovative approaches in deliberation and involvement of citizens in policy creation. The Mostar Citizens’ Assembly presents a model of a best practice that supports the CoE efforts in enhancing democracy, especially in elaborating benefits of deliberative democracy and citizens’ involvement in decision making. With this project, the CoE and the Congress advanced their portfolio in implementing the deliberative concept of the Citizens’ Assembly in transitional countries and young democracies. The project results are also for strategic positioning of the CoE among the international actors that are interested in or have already engaged in this kind of deliberative processes. This project implementation was also relevant to the promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities. The evaluation also confirms the relevance of the intervention to the needs of project beneficiaries and key stakeholders.

Effectiveness

The evaluation endorses success in achieving outputs and outcomes of the project intervention. The project managed to achieve intermediate and immediate outcomes, and outputs defined in the design of the action. Active participation of citizens in the format of the Citizens’ Assembly, where local matters were thoroughly discussed and presented in a form of policy recommendations to the City Authorities, is among the most important accomplishments of the project actions. The citizens embraced the opportunity to discuss important issues about the city and, through increased communication with the City Council and the City Administration, to propose solutions for achieving tangible results in cleaning the city. The Citizens’ Assembly presented a good model of unity of all citizens regardless of ethnic background, and their strong commitment to work for the benefit of the city. The deliberative process organised by the project action was highly welcomed as well as useful and needed for advancing democracy in Mostar.

Technical expertise of the Congress/CoE, as well as their ability to mobilise external expertise in the deliberative processes were crucial for the successful preparation of the methodology and a proper facilitation and guidance of the Citizens' Assembly. Good reputation and credibility of the CoE/Congress among key stakeholders in Mostar was also one of the decisive factors for success. High commitment of the project team to work actively with the key stakeholders and project beneficiaries was also an important factor in successful achievement of the project results. The success is even bigger having in mind that the project was implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic when social distancing measures were applied, and physical meetings were restrained or prohibited. The project managed to create a high level of ownership among key stakeholders and project beneficiaries, especially the ones from the City Council and the members of the Citizens' Assembly, which was also an essential factor that positively influenced the achievement of main outcomes. The most important unplanned result was the development and adoption of the Action Plan for implementation of the Citizens' Assembly recommendations, which is also the most tangible result of the project actions. The webpage of the deliberation process was also an important tool for successful implementation of the action. It is important to note that the project achieved very good presence in media despite limited resources allocated to the communication activities.

Efficiency

The project achieved high level of efficiency, especially in given circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic and the local political conditions in the City of Mostar. The project was well managed, timely and without delays. Financial resources were used appropriately. High efficiency of the project team was recognised by the target groups and beneficiaries, which is also reflected by receiving a high mark (4.5 out of 5) during the online survey.

Risks and external factors were monitored properly, including the COVID-19 pandemic. The project team found a way to implement activities during the COVID-19 pandemic without negatively affecting the participants, and without major delays. The solution was found through proper planning and preparation of activities, organising hybrid events, and applying mitigation measures. There was also a lot of strategizing, monitoring of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Government measures, as well as adjusting to the real time conditions. Different scenarios were prepared for the work of the Citizens' Assembly, including work in smaller groups, combining physical presence with hybrid events and other solutions. Analysing all those aspects achieved results in complex circumstances. It is concluded that the project presents a model of best practice of the implementation of the action in the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sustainability

The project created good prospects of sustainability, reflected in the MoU signed between the Mayor of the City of Mostar and the Head of the CoE Office in Sarajevo, and in unanimous decision of the City Councillors to adopt the Action Plan for implementation of the Citizens'

Assembly recommendations. The sustainability ground was prepared in the early months of the project implementation through a number of meetings between the Congress and representatives of all political parties and continued after the elections with the newly elected City Councillors. These meetings were used to present the project and the concept of deliberation through the Citizens' Assembly and resulted in the signature of the MoU between the Mayor of the City of Mostar and the Head of the CoE Office in Sarajevo. Another important aspect of sustainability was the active involvement of the City Councillors in the project actions. Their commitment later led to the preparation and adoption of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Citizens' Assembly recommendations, which is the key result of the project.

Sustainability of the action is dependent on the future commitment of the City of Mostar, its administration and political representatives, yet also from the CoE and the Congress and their commitment to promote and utilise results achieved by the intervention. Sustainability of the results is also dependent on future activities of the CoE and the Congress in Mostar since further support is needed.

Sustainability of the results from the Mostar deliberation case needs to be secured through institutional knowledge of the CoE/Congress. It is also necessary to promote the project results at the European level, in different geographies yet also among the international organisations and development agencies. The concept of the Citizens' Assembly is rather new and there is a need for promotion of practical examples, especially the successful ones, such as the case of Mostar.

CONCLUSIONS

The project "Building democratic participation in the City of Mostar" has been successfully implemented despite challenging political circumstances in the City, and the irruption of an unprecedented pandemic that followed the intervention from the beginning to the end. The project was implemented by the Congress with the support of the CoE Office in Sarajevo and funded by the extrabudgetary support received by the Government of Norway.

The City of Mostar was in a deadlock for many years since the local elections were not held for two terms. Representative democracy was in a deep crisis, and the level of citizens' trust in local decision makers and the City Administration was low. There was a great demand to have an intervention that would stimulate the democratic processes in the city, including citizens' participation in decision making, and this project served that need in the best possible way.

The project focused on the application of the deliberative process in Mostar in a form of a Citizens' Assembly, which resulted in the definition of 32 recommendations to the City officials divided into 5 thematic areas. These recommendations were used as a base for the Action, which was later adopted by the Mostar City Council on the session held on 16

November 2021. The preparation and adoption of the Action Plan happened beyond the expected outputs and gave a good sustainability prospect that the Citizens' Assembly recommendations would be implemented in the future.

The Citizens' Assembly of Mostar is a case of successful deliberation and as such it should be promoted as a model of best practice. The Congress/CoE has competitive advantage in this field, reflected also in successful implementation of this project, therefore the knowledge and results collected through the Mostar deliberation process should be used for attracting extrabudgetary funds for similar interventions.

Based on the findings and conclusions, the evaluation derives the following recommendations:

- Recommendation #1:** The Citizens' Assembly deliberation process in Mostar should be properly documented in a form of a case study or a practical manual and widely promoted by the CoE/Congress at the European level yet also at different geographies and tiers of government (national, regional, local).
- Recommendation #2:** In the second Citizens' Assembly that is foreseen by the new Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025 to be organised in the City of Mostar, more emphasis should be given in empowering women and youth to take more active role in the work of the Citizens' Assembly and especially in presenting the results of the deliberation in front of the City Council.
- Recommendation #3:** The CoE/Congress should use methodology and experience of the deliberative model of democracy through the Citizens' Assembly that was developed in the City of Mostar project for fundraising extrabudgetary support from international and bilateral agencies.
- Recommendation #4:** The CoE/Congress should continue their presence in Mostar, either through the follow-up intervention or by frequent observation missions.
- Recommendation #5:** Best practices on the modality of the project implementation in complex political circumstances, challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic should be prepared and promoted internally within the CoE and the Congress, and be preserved as institutional knowledge.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress) has been implementing the project “**Building democratic participation in the City of Mostar**”, with the financial support received from the Government of Norway. The project aimed to create opportunities for citizens to engage in deliberative process and increase their influence in local decision-making process, as well as to strengthen the capacities of local stakeholders in democratic governance. The project was implemented by the Congress, in partnership with the City of Mostar from February 2020 to December 2021.

To assess the quality of achievements of the project against the expected results and intermediate outcome, the Council of Europe (CoE) launched an external evaluation which is the subject of this report. The evaluation was carried out following the CoE’s Evaluation Policy¹ as a primary guide. It provides learning conclusions and recommendations that can be utilised in designing forthcoming interventions of the Congress, as well as for the follow-up intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina.² The main users of the evaluation are the CoE, the Congress and the City of Mostar as the main project partner.

The evaluation focused on assessing the deliberative process in Mostar against the following criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Human rights and gender equality aspects were included in the assessment through the evaluation questions and assessment criteria.

The assignment was awarded to the Social Terrain consortium, and it was carried out by Dragiša Mijačić, an Evaluation Expert contracted and managed by GEOTest within this consortium. The evaluation was undertaken from 1st October 2021 until 17th December 2021.

1.2 OBJECTIVE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the main component and output of the project, the deliberative process in a form of a Citizens’ Assembly, against the expected results and intermediate outcome which are defined in the project document.³

The objective of the evaluation was to assess the main output of the project, the deliberative process in a form of a Citizens’ Assembly. In particular, the specific objectives of the evaluation were:

¹ Council of Europe (November 2019), ‘*Council of Europe Evaluation Policy*’, <https://rm.coe.int/evaluation-policy-en-pdf/16809e7f91>

² Council of Europe (November 2019), ‘*Council of Europe Evaluation Policy*’, p12 <https://rm.coe.int/evaluation-policy-en-pdf/16809e7f91>

³ List of reference documents is provided in the Annex 3

1. Evaluate the relevance and the effectiveness of the approach undertaken by the Congress to increase the participation of citizens in local decision-making through organising a deliberative process in a form of a Citizens' Assembly.
2. Evaluate the overall efficiency of the project management.
3. Assess the sustainability of project deliverables, as well as the implementation of activities related to the deliberative process.
4. Recommend possible lines of action and further activities for future assistance, long-standing sustainability and improved project methodology.

The focus of the evaluation was to assess the intermediate outcome of the project “Citizens participate in the discussion on local matters and formulate proposals for local decision makers”, and its immediate outcome which was set as: “Local authorities, citizens and their organisations are equipped with and use new tools for building consensus”. The assessment focused on activities directly related to those two outcomes, concerning the development of the methodology, the implementation of the deliberative process, and formulation of proposals by citizens. The evaluation aimed to make a distinction between changes that are directly attributable to project activities (immediate outcomes), such as changes in perceptions, understandings, knowledge, skills, relations and changes in practices, processes or performance, among others; and (intermediate outcomes) that are expected to occur beyond the project intervention.

Timewise, the evaluation considered activities undertaken during the whole implementation period, namely between February 2020 and December 2021.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The assignment was carried out based on the methodology presented in the Evaluation Matrix and discussed with the CoE/Congress. The methodology was designed in line with the standard OECD/DAC criteria,⁴ and the CoE's Evaluation Policy.⁵

The evaluation phases included the following:

- The organisation of the evaluation methodology. Undertaking discussion on EQs, decomposing them into the sub-questions, and design of assessment criteria, indicators and methodological approach for each EQ and sub-question;
- Data collection of available quantitative and qualitative information from primary and secondary sources (document research and interview) to enable EQs and sub-questions to be answered;

⁴ Available at <https://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>, last access on 18 November 2021.

⁵ Council of Europe (November 2019), ‘Council of Europe Evaluation Policy’, <https://rm.coe.int/cm-2018-159-evaluation-policy-final/1680a426a2>, last access on 18 November 2021.

- The analysis of the information to assess the effects of the intervention in the context of key EQs (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability);
- Make the final analysis based on the synthesis of findings formulating the answers to EQs, draw conclusions on the success of the intervention, and draft recommendations for future interventions based on the best practices and lessons learnt.

The **participatory approach** was applied as a guiding principle, which involved interviews with interlocutors from the CoE/Congress project team, key stakeholders, and project beneficiaries during the evaluation process. Gathering information and experience from them was essentially important for the evaluation assignment. In that regard, a set of quantitative and qualitative methodological tools was used (individual and group interviews, survey, document mapping and analysis of primary and secondary documents) that enabled collecting experience, knowledge, best practices and lessons learned relevant to the evaluation. In total, during the evaluation 17 interviews with 19 different interlocutors were organised, some of them by using online platforms, while the others were held during the field mission to Mostar, organised in mid-November 2021.

The evaluation was organised around the objectives and scope defined by the ToR, in line with the EQs⁶, following procedures defined in the CoE Evaluation Policy and the OECD/DAC criteria. Data collection methods were based on the following instruments:

- Identification and collection of project reports, publications and documents produced by the CoE/Congress project team during the implementation;
- Identification and collection of other relevant CoE publications and action plans, as well as documents of the City of Mostar that are relevant to the topic of the evaluation;
- Semi-structured individual and/or group interviews with the core and project staff from the CoE/Congress, the Congress members, as well as with other key stakeholders, external experts engaged in project implementation and project beneficiaries;⁷
- Online Survey that was distributed to the project beneficiaries from Mostar (the City Council members, members of the Citizens' Assembly, experts, and others).⁸

In the synthesis phase, findings were thoroughly analysed, which lead to drawing and elaboration of conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations.

⁶ The Evaluation Matrix presented in Annex 2 gives a detailed overview of the proposed set of EQs and sub-questions, the judgement criteria that will be used to supplement any existing indicators of achievement, as well as the sources of information and methodology that will be used when answering EQs.

⁷ List of interviewees is given in the Annex 4

⁸ Results of the Survey in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian is given in the Annex 5

1.4 LIMITATIONS

There were no major obstacles during the evaluation mission. The COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge in terms of organising meetings in Mostar, yet the field interviews were managed to be held by keeping distance, wearing masks and without threat for all involved.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Mostar is a peculiar case in Europe, since local elections were not organised since 2008, meaning that the city was not administrated by elected representatives since 2012. To advocate for a sustainable solution to restore local democracy in the City of Mostar, in line with the European Charter of Local Self-Government,⁹ in 2017 the Congress created a Reflection Group of Mostar (RGM)¹⁰. Based on RGM's recommendation, this project was designed. The project design also followed the Recommendation 442 (2019) on Local and Regional Democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina¹¹ as well as the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in the case Baralija vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹² The project is also in line with the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021.¹³

The project "**Building Democratic Participation in the City of Mostar**" was designed with the goal to contribute to increasing citizens' influence on local governance through three key components which aimed to (1) engage citizens in the deliberative process, (2) develop the skills and knowledge of local stakeholders in democratic approaches, and (3) support the discussion on representative democracy and electoral systems in view of holding local elections in Mostar. Having in mind that the local elections were held in Mostar in late December 2020, the third component of the project was abandoned, thus the focus was on the implementation of the first two components.

The evaluation focused only on the first component, which aimed to develop and test a new innovative method of deliberative democracy in the form of a Citizens' Assembly. The Citizens' Assembly brought together a representative group of randomly selected citizens who deliberated upon and made recommendations on the specific topic that was recognised as a common priority for Mostar. The topic was selected through the application of a complex methodology that included wide consultation with citizens, local authorities and the civil society organisations. The selected topic is related to cleanliness and maintenance of public spaces in Mostar.

The project activities included the organisation of a successful deliberative process, the engagement of international and local experts for designing the methodology and for

⁹ Bosnia and Herzegovina signed and ratified the European Charter of Local Self-Government in 2002.

¹⁰ More information about the Reflection Group on Mostar is available at the CoE website, available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/congress/reflection-group-on-mostar>, last access on 18 November 2021.

¹¹ More on the Recommendation 442 (2019) on Local and Regional Democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina is available at <https://rm.coe.int/recommendation-442-2019-en-local-and-regional-democracy-in-bosnia-and-168098ab40>, last access on 18 November 2021.

¹² More on the European Court of Human Rights in the case Baralija vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina is available at [https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/fre#%7B%22itemid%22:\[%22002-12638%22\]%7D](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/fre#%7B%22itemid%22:[%22002-12638%22]%7D), last access on 18 November 2021.

¹³ The Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021 is available at <https://rm.coe.int/bih-action-plan-2018-2021-en/16808b7563>, last access on 18 November 2021.

facilitation through all phases of the Citizens' Assembly work, as well as communication with the local authorities, the City Councillors, civil society and universities, and the public.

The project was implemented by the Congress, in partnership with the City of Mostar from February 2020 to December 2021 (23 months in total) with a total budget of EUR 500,000, financed by the Government of Norway.

3 KEY FINDINGS

Key findings are organised around EQs and sub-questions that were given in the Evaluation Matrix (Annex 2).

3.1 RELEVANCE

EQ1. To what extent has the intervention been relevant to the mandate of the Council of Europe (CoE) and the priority areas of the Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021 (Action Plan)?

The evaluation confirms high relevance of the project intervention, both to the CoE mandate and to the Action plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021. Further elaboration of the findings is given in the answers to the sub-questions.

Sub-question 1.1: Are there any achievements of the intervention that contribute to the CoE mandate? What causes qualify them as relevant to the CoE mandate?

The project intervention has high relevance to the application of the main principles of the European Charter for Local Self-Government¹⁴ and its Additional Protocol on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority.¹⁵ The project results contributed to preservation of the core principles of the CoE and the Congress in Bosnia and Herzegovina and beyond, giving a practical example of how to address the necessity for preserving the right on local elections and local representation, as well as citizen participation in decision making, especially in a complex political, transitional, multi-ethnic and post-conflict setting. The project strategically approached those issues and managed to achieve results that are highly relevant to be presented as a case study at the level of the CoE and the Congress.

The project has strategic importance to the CoE and the Congress, it is highly relevant to their efforts to promote the concept of deliberative democracy and help the elected representatives by innovative approaches in deliberation and involvement of citizens in policy creation. The project in Mostar is the only project implemented by the Congress and the CoE that focus on the deliberative democracy; therefore its success is very important for future work in this area. The importance of innovative approaches in citizens participation in decision making was recognised by the 2021 Annual Report of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe,¹⁶ which gave a good base for utilisation of the concept of the Citizens' Assembly by the Congress and the CoE among the elected representatives, especially at the local and regional level, supporting their efforts to use deliberation in policy development.

¹⁴ European Charter for Local Self-Government (ETS No. 122), available at <https://rm.coe.int/168007a088>, last access on 18 November 2021.

¹⁵ Additional Protocol on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority (CETS No.207), available at <https://rm.coe.int/168008482a>, last access on 18 November 2021.

¹⁶ Secretary General of the Council of Europe, "State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law - a democratic renewal for Europe", available at <https://edoc.coe.int/en/annual-activity-report/9506-a-democratic-renewal-for-europe-annual-report-by-the-secretary-general.html>, last access on 3 December 2021.

The Mostar Citizens' Assembly presents a model of a best practice that supports the CoE efforts in enhancing democracy, especially in elaborating benefits of deliberative democracy and citizens' involvement in decision making. One of the core goals of the CoE mandate is to work on advancing democracy in its member states, working on consolidation of democratic practices. In that regard, an innovative approach of citizens' involvement in decision making is among key priorities of the CoE. The whole concept of deliberative democracy is rather fresh, under development and prone to testing in real life circumstances. This is especially true with the concept of the Citizens' Assembly, which is still a novelty across the CoE member states. Therefore, the Mostar example has a strategic importance for the CoE in promoting the concept of the Citizens' Assembly as a tool that increases the quality of representative democracy through deliberation.

With this project, the CoE and the Congress advanced their portfolio in implementing the deliberative concept of the Citizens' Assembly in transitional countries and young democracies such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This project successfully organised the Citizens' Assembly in the ethnically divided City of Mostar, in complex political circumstances that were characterised by the lack of local elections, representing hence a highly valuable experience that could and should be utilised at the level of the CoE, especially through the future work of the Congress. Moreover, the Mostar case is among a few positive examples of the successful deliberation in the South-East Europe and almost the first successful Citizens' Assembly organised at the local level. Having all this in mind, the relevance of this project and its results has a strategic importance for the CoE in the mandate to promote democracy in transitional and post-conflict countries.

The project results are also relevant for strategic positioning of the CoE among the international actors that are interested in or have already engaged in this kind of deliberative processes. Utilisation of the Citizens' Assembly methodology has been growing in the recent years and this concept was not only used by local, regional, and national authorities yet also by international organisations (including the European Union) in the context of aid development and financial assistance to the third countries. The experience collected through this project is highly relevant to position the CoE as a centre of excellence in application of the Citizens' Assembly concept in transitional countries. For instance, the European Union has launched a process on creating the Citizens' Assembly in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the national level, where the deliberation would focus on topics related to the constitutional changes and functionality of the country. That initiative certainly could benefit by learning from experiences collected through the implementation of the project in Mostar.

This project was also important in supporting the CoE efforts to internationalise the question of local democracy in the City of Mostar. The project was designed on the ground of the work of RGM, established by the Congress in 2017 together with the European Committee of the Regions, that launched an advocacy campaign at the local and European level with the aim to overcome obstacles for holding local elections in the City of Mostar and

restore democracy at the local level. This project is the main outcome of RGM, thus its successful implementation and achieved results give credibility both to RGM and the CoE and the Congress.

The project implementation was a model of best practice in reaching gender equality and equal opportunities, which is relevant to the CoE mission goals in this regard. The project took special care that all societal groups (including gender, ethnic origin, and people with disabilities) were equally represented in the activities related to the Citizens' Assembly, especially in selecting citizens for representation in the Assembly. There are not many successful examples of fostering such an approach in policy dialogue in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially not at the local level, which gives additional acknowledgement to the mandate of the CoE and the Congress. Despite good selection and representation, the CoE and the Congress could put still some more emphasis and encouragement for women participation, especially in their communication with the City authorities. There is a need for empowerment of women (and youth) in decision making and such deliberative initiatives present good opportunities to promote changes in that regard.

Sub-question 1.2: Are there any achievements of the intervention that might contribute to the Action Plan? What causes qualify them as relevant to the Action Plan?

The project intervention has been relevant to the Action plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021 in all its phases, from the design, through the implementation, and to the achieved results. The project proposal was designed to be relevant to the Action plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021, especially concerning the objectives and activities related to democracy's pillar of cooperation. The CoE and the Congress widely recognised and reported on issues related to the lack of local elections in Mostar, and this intervention was designed and implemented to address the most urgent needs in that regard. In this respect, the project design and the achieved results fall among key interventions in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the democracy pillar, since it addressed the most pressuring issue related to the preservation of the right to representative democracy at the local level in the country.

The project was relevant to the Action Plan priority related to local democracy, including "intentions to strengthen capacities of local authorities to deliver public services at local level".¹⁷ The project is also in line with the aim to "enhance inter-ethnic dialogue between policy makers, young leaders and other social groups at the level of local communities, especially those located at the entity boundaries".¹⁸ Nevertheless, **there is no direct connection between the project objectives, the results and the expected outcomes listed in the Action Plan.** Namely, the project might be assigned to the "Objective 2.3.1 Strengthening Democratic Governance and Fostering Innovation" and its measure on

¹⁷ The Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021, page 19.

¹⁸ Ibid, page 19.

promoting good governance through local self-government reform,¹⁹ yet there is no strong correlation between them and the deliberative processes that were launched in the City of Mostar. When it comes to the expected outcome assigned to this priority measure, the project is relevant to the second one stated as “Capacities of local government units strengthened to support establishment of modern human resources management practices, **improved civil participation**, and co-operation between municipalities”.²⁰

To some extent, the project relevance might also be assigned to the objective 2.3.2 Promoting Participation and Diversity and its measure on the Confidence Building Measures (CBM)²¹, where (among others) the focus is on young people “whose energy and open-mindedness presents a unique reconciliation resource to Bosnia and Herzegovina”.²² In that regard, the project is (somewhat) relevant to the expected outcomes related to CBM, including the role of women and youth in the reconciliation process and their involvement in dialogue and co-operation at the political level.

Sub-question 1.3: To what extent have the project design and achieved results been proven to be appropriate for the needs of (both direct and indirect) beneficiaries?

The project is relevant to the needs of project beneficiaries and key stakeholders. It was designed to restore democracy and increase trust of citizens in local authorities in the complex political circumstances of the City of Mostar, where local elections were not organised from 2008 until 2020. In those conditions, it was not only important to restore representative democracy yet also to foster direct involvement of citizens in decision making, which was secured through the Citizens’ Assembly organised within the framework of this project intervention. The relevance of the action has been reiterated by key stakeholders and project beneficiaries during the evaluation mission, through direct interviews during the field mission in Mostar²³ and by analysing secondary sources such as video streaming from the City Council Session of the City of Mostar or media reports.

To some extent the project relevance was confirmed by the results of the Survey.²⁴ According to the survey results (see graphic bellow), 64% of respondents claim high relevance of the project activities to the situation and needs of the citizens of Mostar. In the comments, respondents elaborated that project activities empowered citizens to express their views, attitudes, and concrete proposals on pressing issues in the City of Mostar.

¹⁹ Ibid, page 20.

²⁰ Ibid, page 21.

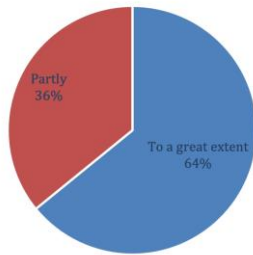
²¹ Ibid, page 22.

²² Ibid, page 22.

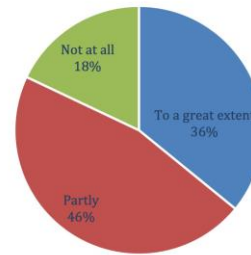
²³ List of interviewed interlocutors is available in the Annex 4 (see below).

²⁴ The Survey was sent to key stakeholders and project beneficiaries from Mostar. For the purpose of the report, the Survey questions were translated in English while results were presented only in local language. See the Annex 5 (see below).

To what extent are the project activities relevant to the situation and needs of the citizens of Mostar?



To what extent are the project results in accordance with the needs of the citizens of Mostar?



Source: The Survey results, Question #4 and Question #5, see the Annex 5

Nevertheless, key concerns of respondents were regarding the implementation of recommendations provided by the Citizens' Assembly as well as on the sustainability of the deliberation concept developed through this project. Therefore, it is not surprising that relevance of the project results scored lower, where 36% respondents claim high relevance, 46% claim partial and 18% of them claim no relevance whatsoever. Low relevance of the project results was claimed by few members of the Citizens' Assembly and citizens of Mostar who expressed lack of optimism that the City Administration would implement the recommendations and solve communal issues that were highlighted by the Citizens' Assembly.

3.2 EFFECTIVENESS

EQ2. What achievements have been made by this intervention?

The evaluation endorses success in achieving outputs and outcomes of the project intervention. Further elaboration of the findings is given in the answers to the sub-questions.

Sub-question 2.1: What are the achievements of the intervention vis-à-vis to outputs, intermediate and immediate outcomes, their indicators, and targets?

The project managed to achieve intermediate and immediate outputs and outcomes defined in the design of the action. The logical structure of the project included one intermediate and three immediate outcomes. The evaluation confirms there is enough evidence to claim achievement of both, intermediate and immediate outcomes.

The deliberation process included sending letters to 5,000 citizens of Mostar, asking them to apply for participation in the Citizens' Assembly. The received applications were carefully analysed, and the final number of participants was randomly selected by using several criteria including gender, age, education background, place of residence (including urban/rural) and ethnic background, among other factors. The selection was also made ensuring gender equality and equal opportunities principles. At the end, 48 participants were selected to join the Citizens' Assembly.

The deliberation process also included wide consultation with the citizens on the topics, which started with the online survey in which 1,068 citizens submitted 1,826 proposals for discussion, later reduced to 20 prospective topics for deliberation. During the workshop with civil society organisations and academia these 20 topics were reduced to six, and during the workshop with the City Councillors these six topics were reduced to three. The final topic reflected in a question “How can the City of Mostar improve the cleanliness of public space and make it more pleasant?” was decided through a Survey on which 250 people submitted their vote.

The work of the Citizens’ Assembly was organised in July 2021, during four consecutive weekends. **There was a high motivation and commitment from the participants to work on the Citizens’ Assembly, which resulted in the definition of 32 recommendations to the City officials divided into 5 thematic areas.** The City Councillors later used these policy recommendations to formulate the Action Plan for their implementation, which was submitted to the City Council and unanimously adopted by all Councillors in the Council Session held on 16 November 2021. The preparation and adoption of the Action Plan happened beyond the expected outputs and gave a good sustainability prospect that the Citizens’ Assembly recommendation will be implemented in the future.

Nevertheless, **it is still too early to claim that the practice of citizens participation in policy debate on local matters created through this intervention will be institutionalised or repeated on other thematic issues.** The local support in further organisation of the Citizens’ Assembly is foreseen in the Action Plan that was approved by the City Council, yet this activity will not be probable without further assistance provided by the CoE/Congress. The evaluation also confirms that the understanding of the Citizens’ Assembly concept is often mixed by key stakeholders and beneficiaries, which also indicates a necessity for further support by the CoE/Congress.

It is also important to mention that **future citizens participation in decision making highly depends on the support received by local political actors.** Such encouragement has been secured due to the active involvement of the CoE/Congress in Mostar, yet achieved results are still premature and require their further engagement. The evaluation also showed a need for further elaboration of political benefits from deliberation processes at the local level.

The project was effective in achieving immediate outcomes and their respective outputs. Subject of this evaluation was the first immediate outcome which focused on development and utilisation of the innovative tools for deliberation, including advancing capacities of local authorities, citizens, and civil society organisations. The project managed to develop an appropriate methodological tool for the deliberation process in Mostar, adjusted to the local conditions and needs of beneficiaries. Following the adequate methodology, the project implementation led to favourable achievements of the deliberation, in which citizens engaged in the Citizens’ Assembly worked together in formulating policy proposals and recommendations that were submitted to the decision makers.

The project managed to achieve active participation of citizens in the Citizens' Assembly, which is also a respectable accomplishment. The Citizens' Assembly raised attention of the citizens of Mostar, who were eager to apply for participation in the project activities. Those who were selected to join the Citizens' Assembly were active in participation, discussion and problem solving. The Citizens' Assembly sessions were organised during the summer months over weekends, when availability of people is usually limited. The selected citizens were so enthusiastic to participate in the work of the Citizens' Assembly, even during weekends in the summer months. Absences were marginal, which is a clear sign of strong motivation among participants.

It is also important to mention that **small financial allowances for participation in the Citizens' Assembly were also good impetus for citizens to remain committed not to skip sessions.** Renumeration of participants in the Citizens' Assembly is a regular practice for deliberative processes, therefore the project just followed the general practices in that regard. Nevertheless, the findings confirm importance of this financial instrument in the organisation of deliberative processes.

The Survey collected opinions on the most important achievements. The provided answers vary from **admiring the opportunity given to the citizens to discuss important issues in the city and to propose solutions, through increased communication with the City Council and the City Administration, and better understanding of their work, to achieving tangible results in cleaning the city.** The Survey confirmed that the project **enhanced a sense of unity and strong commitment of all citizens, regardless of ethnic background, to work for the benefit of the city.** As a result of the project, the respondents highlighted **citizens' empowerment and their involvement in detecting problems in the city, as well as commitment of the City Councillors to adopt the recommendations.** In general, **the deliberative process achieved through the project was highly welcomed and considered as useful and needed** for advancing democracy in Mostar.

In the Survey, respondents marked the overall quality of the project results with 3.8 (out of 5). The rationale for this mark could be found in comments that the project was well implemented, and the quality of results was high, yet there is a general doubt in the City Authorities that they will stay committed to implement the Citizens' Assembly recommendations, and in finding the institutional modality to organise the Citizens' Assembly without support of the CoE. It is therefore not surprising that among respondents, participants in the Citizens' Assembly gave a lower mark (3.3) than the City Councillors (4.5), since the first were much more unconvinced towards the implementation of the recommendations than the latter.

Sub-question 2.2: What were the factors (both internal and external) that influenced achievement of outcomes from outputs?

Technical expertise of the Congress/CoE, as well as their ability to mobilise external expertise in this field were crucial for successful preparation of the methodology and proper facilitation and guidance of the Citizens' Assembly. Knowledge generated in the Congress and among its members present state-of-the-art in the deliberation processes. In that regard, the Congress has advantage on this topic compared to other international organisations or universities. Consequently, the Congress had the ability to mobilise necessary expertise, both internal and external, which was crucial for organising a successful deliberation through the Citizens' Assembly. In organising this successful deliberative process in Mostar, it was not only important to receive proper expertise for developing methodology and for the facilitation of discussions within the Citizens' Assembly, but also to provide real life examples from other cities and regions where the same methodology had been applied. Practical examples from other geographies were presented, and they were quite important and useful for understanding the concept of the Citizens' Assembly among project beneficiaries.

The good reputation and credibility of the CoE/Congress was one of the decisive factors for success of this intervention. The CoE/Congress have a good history of work and cooperation with the local stakeholders in Mostar, which was quite beneficial for the implementation of this intervention. The local actors were glad to witness an active involvement of the Congress, especially through the participation of prominent European politicians in the project activities. This created added value and a sense of pride with the fact that the Congress decided to implement the project in Mostar. They were especially proud of the fact that a successful Citizens' Assembly in the Southeast Europe was organised in Mostar. The good reputation of the CoE/Congress was also a decisive factor for the high involvement of key actors from Mostar across the political spectrum, as well as for unanimous voting for adopting the Action Plan for implementation of the recommendations at the City Council.

High commitment of the project team to work actively with the key stakeholders and project beneficiaries was also an important factor for the successful achievement of the project results. The project team was highly motivated to work closely with the target groups in Mostar and managed to develop a good professional relationship that led to the successful implementation of the project. The success is even bigger having in mind that the project was implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic, when social distancing measures were applied, and physical meetings were restrained or prohibited. Even in those complex circumstances, the project team found a way to create a positive energy among key stakeholders and actively involved them in the project action. **The survey results also recognised high commitment of the project team, giving them a high mark (4.5) for their work and cooperation.**

The high commitment of target groups was also an essential factor that influenced the achievement of outcomes from outputs. The project managed to create a high level of ownership among those involved, especially the ones from the City Council and the members of the Citizens' Assembly. The members of the Citizens' assembly were not only active in participating and discussing at the Assembly sessions, yet also in advocating for the

implementation of the recommendations. They created a group of representatives that participated at the City Council session and explained the work of the Citizens' assembly and the proposed recommendations. On the other hand, there was a high commitment from the City Councillors, coming both from the governing and opposition parties, who were eager to learn about the activities of the Citizens' Assembly and to work on developing the action plan to implement the recommendations. The project received support from the Mayor of Mostar as well, who signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the CoE on the implementation of the Citizens' Assembly and affirmatively spoke in public about the project. Civil society organisations were notably less active, although they were still involved through the work of the Oversight Team, as well as in narrowing down the topic of deliberation.

The webpage²⁵ of the deliberation process was a very important tool for the successful implementation of the action. There was a need to have a portal which would be used to communicate with the citizens of Mostar through all phases of deliberation. In that regard, it was developed a website <https://mostargradimo.ba/> where all information regarding the work of the Citizens' Assembly is published, including publications, media reports, and activity reports, among other items. The website was also a communication tool where the citizens could communicate with the project team and the members of the Citizens' Assembly. It is important to note that the project was officially presented at the CoE platforms such as the website of the Congress and the webpage of the CoE Office in Sarajevo, as it was required by the CoE Communication rules. Having a separate website that follows the deliberative process was a model of good practice in terms of flexibility in publishing and editing content and news of the Citizens' Assembly. This flexibility **enabled efficient and effective dissemination of information to the target groups and beneficiaries**, and therefore was beneficial to the project results.

Sub-question 2.3: Have there been any unplanned effects/results, both positive or negative? How did it reflect on outcomes, beneficiaries and target groups?

The most important unexpected result was the development and adoption of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Citizens' Assembly recommendations, which is also the most tangible result of the project actions. At the time of designing the proposal, there was no elected City Council thus the project could not foresee that the product of the deliberation would be adopted by the respective authorities. However, elections in Mostar were held in late 2020 and an opportunity was created to adopt the Citizens' assembly recommendations in the City Council. In this regard, it was especially important that MoU was signed between the Mayor and the Head of the Council of Europe Office in Sarajevo, and that the City's commitment for implementing the deliberative product of the Citizens' Assembly was determined. The City Councillors were also active in following the work of the Citizens' assembly, which was especially important when the recommendations were submitted to the City Council. To be implemented, those recommendations needed to be

²⁵ The website "Building Mostar" (Gradimo Mostar), available at <https://mostargradimo.ba/en/home/>, last access on 18 November 2021.

converted in a form of the Action plan which had to include measurable indicators, needed resources and timeframe, as required by responsible institutions. The City Council created a Working Group consisting of the Mayor, the President of the City Council, councillors from all political parties and representatives of the City Administration who jointly prepared the Action Plan for the implementation of the recommendations. This Working Group went through all recommendations and filled in the Action Plan with all necessary information. A few recommendations were not considered due to various reasons, some of them were referring to legal responsibilities and competencies of the upper tiers of the government, a few of them were already under implementation while completing some of them would require significant financial resources that are beyond fiscal capacity of the City of Mostar. **The preparation and adaptation of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Citizens' Assembly recommendations presents a model of best practice in the implementation of deliberative processes, and this model should be actively promoted in further activities of the Congress and the CoE.**

The Citizens' Assembly is a novelty in deliberative democracy and the concept should be carefully presented to target groups and beneficiaries. The evaluation noted a number of examples where different stakeholders misunderstood the concept of the Citizens' Assembly. Some of the interlocutors were referring that the Citizens' Assembly is under the ownership of the CoE, and as such it should be treated as an international organisation. Others claimed that the Citizens' Assembly should be a permanent body with the same competencies as the City Council. There were those who claimed that the Citizens' Assembly had more legitimacy than the City Council since its members were randomly selected, and they are not dependent on political parties. There were voices who proposed that the current Citizens' Assembly should be established as a non-governmental organisation. Others saw the Citizens' Assembly as a threat to representative democracy, and that as such it should not exist. Sometimes these misunderstandings are a product of different ambitions of those involved, including clearly raised political aspirations of some members of the Citizens' Assembly (which should not be seen as negative). Nevertheless, these statements clearly show a lack of understanding of the concept and its purpose, and this raises awareness on the fact that those processes should be carefully and clearly communicated with the target group.

With the limited resources applied to communication, the project achieved very good presence in media, which is also enlisted in the positive results of the intervention. The media attention was quite high throughout the project implementation. The focus of media was more on the events, activities of the CoE and the City officials related to the project, yet less on the work of the Citizens' Assembly. Communication with media was carried out by the project team since there were no resources to employ communication or public relations staff.

3.3 EFFICIENCY

EQ3. To what extent have the resources/inputs in terms of funds, expertise and time been converted economically to results?

The project achieved a high level of efficiency, especially under given circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic and the local political conditions in the City of Mostar. Further elaboration of the findings related to efficiency is given in the answers to the sub-questions.

Sub-question 3.1: To what extent have the applied resources and inputs (financial, physical and human) been adequate in terms of efficient and effective implementation of project activities?

The project was well managed, and resources were used appropriately. Regardless of the work of RGM, this intervention is a brand-new project with a fresh project team, which tends to cause some efficiency losses especially during the first months of the implementation. In such situations it is not unexpected to have delays in recruitment of the project team members, as it happened with this intervention as well. Nevertheless, the project entered smooth implementation when the Project Officer was employed at the Secretariat of the Congress (March 2020), which helped the Project Supervisor in finalising the inception period and setting up a good foundation for successful project implementation. The implementation received additional impetus with employment of the Project Officer at the Council of Europe Field Office in Sarajevo (July 2020), who came at the right moment when it was necessary to work directly with the key stakeholders and project beneficiaries in Mostar. Employment of Project Assistants was also adequate and timely (May and September 2021).

As noted earlier, the Survey results showed that **the project team received a high mark (4.5 out of 5) for their cooperation with target groups and beneficiaries.** This mark is even higher (4.8) in responses given by the City Councillors and the City Administration, which is a strong indication that **the project team have done an excellent job in the implementation of the project.**

The project was implemented timely, without delays. There were peaks in the implementation where workload pressure was high, yet the project team was highly committed to implement all activities timely. Having in mind the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation of such complex project action in a timely manner should be regarded as a great success.

The project evaluation did not have a mandate to assess the budget expenditures. Nevertheless, **from the efficiency point of view, the financial resources were well employed, there were no financial losses, the budget was executed according to the CoE rules and without delays.**

Sub-question 3.2: How were external factors and risks monitored, and what were the mitigation measures?

Risks and external factors were monitored properly. The major external risk was the COVID-19 pandemic, which is elaborated within the next sub-question. There were no other significant external factors that could jeopardise the project implementation. The local elections in Mostar were held during the implementation of the project, yet the results did not affect the action. Moreover, all political subjects in Mostar were supportive to the project action. The credit for the latter can be ascribed to the Congress and the CoE who have good reputation among politicians in Mostar, yet also to the Project Team who worked hard in developing good relationship, open communication and good cooperation with the key stakeholders and project beneficiaries.

Sub-question 3.3: Did COVID-19 pandemic influence the efficiency of the project management, and were there any other external factors which affected project delivery and results creating significant delays in implementation of activities?

The project presents a model of best practice of the implementation of the action in the conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. The project was launched at the time when an unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic started. As preventive measures, the majority of governments introduced lockdowns, restriction of movements and social distancing. Most of the organisations and institutions, including the CoE/Congress, applied “work from home” policy, restriction of travels and usage of digital and online tools for communication between the project staff and external partners, including experts, key stakeholders, target groups and project beneficiaries.

Since this was a new project, it was necessary to set a foundation for the proper implementation under very challenging circumstances. All work had to be done remotely. The project staff was working from home, it was not possible to organise project team meetings in person, at the office premises. For instance, the newly recruited Project Officer spent the first four months working from home, and only in July 2020 was able to move to Strasbourg to work at the Secretariat.

Nevertheless, **the project team found a way to implement activities without adversely affecting the participants, and without incurring major delays. The solution was based on proper planning and preparation of activities, organising hybrid events, and making alternative solutions for every possible situation.** Proper strategizing was essential, as well as monitoring of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Government measures, all in all adjusting to the real time conditions.

Appropriately, the project started with activities that focused on the development of methodology, which could be done remotely, in close cooperation with external experts engaged on this assignment. By this approach, the time was utilised in the best possible way since it happened during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Everything was ready to start with

activities on the Citizens' assembly, once the window or opportunity was created in July 2021, when it was possible to gather the members of the Citizens' assembly in person to discuss deliberatively.

The Project Team created different scenarios for the work of the Citizens' assembly, including work in smaller groups, combining physical presence with hybrid events and other solutions. The methodology was adjusted to have less than 50 members of the Citizens' assembly, which was a threshold determined by the Government for assembling people in one room. It is important to emphasise that reducing the number of participants in the Citizens' assembly did not affect its representativeness among different societal groups in terms of age, gender, education level or geography.

The modality of work in the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic was a clear success, especially for a new project action. This could not have been done without the strong commitment of the project team, yet the credit should also be given to the external experts, the Congress members, the staff of the CoE Field Office in Sarajevo and local stakeholders and beneficiaries from Mostar. In other words, it was a joint enterprise of all actors who were strongly driven with aspiration to successfully implement this project.

3.4 SUSTAINABILITY

EQ4. What is the likelihood that the benefits from the intervention will be maintained when the project ends? What are the most important factors?

The project created good prospects of sustainability, reflected in the MoU signed between the Mayor of the City of Mostar and the Head of the CoE Office in Sarajevo, and in unanimous decision of the City Councillors to adopt the Action Plan for the implementation of the Citizens' assembly recommendations. Further elaboration of the findings related to sustainability is given in the answers to the sub-questions.

Sub-question 4.1: To what extent the intervention created policy, institutional and financial instruments that will strengthen sustainability of the achieved benefits?

Different modalities for sustainability of the project results were gradually developed through several steps. The sustainability ground was prepared in early months of the project implementation through a number of meetings between the Congress and representatives of all political parties, which continued after the elections with the newly elected City Councillors. These meetings were used to present the project and the concept of deliberation through the Citizens' assembly. Among others, as an outcome of those efforts the MoU was signed between the Mayor of the City of Mostar and the Head of the CoE Office in Sarajevo. This document was very important in many segments, from securing the smooth implementation of the action, through developing strong cooperation and a sense of ownership among the City Councillors over the project action to commitment of the City of Mostar, to continue with the deliberation process after the project ending. The MoU provided

necessary impetus for political support to the project, which was very important for both, implementation, and sustainability.

The active involvement of the City Councillors was also important for creating conditions for sustainability. The City Councillors were involved in choosing the topic of deliberation and followed the work of the Citizens' Assembly. They were also involved in discussing with the members of the Citizens' Assembly during the deliberation. Nevertheless, for the sustainability prospect, the most important factor was the active involvement of the City Councillors in operationalising the recommendations provided by the Citizens' Assembly in a form of an Action Plan and its adoption in the City Council. Their commitment in this regard gives a good ground that sustainability of the results will be achieved.

By adopting the Action Plan for the implementation of the Citizens' assembly recommendations, the City Council committed itself to the results of the deliberative process. The Action Plan defined the actors that will be involved in the implementation of recommendations, the financial resources to invest and the timeline, which provide a sound basis for further monitoring of this document. There is a strong political commitment to work on the recommendations since they cover issues that are widely recognised as a priority by the citizens of Mostar.

Sub-question 4.2: What are the key considerations that influence sustainability of project benefits and continuation of the intervention in the future?

The sustainability of the action is dependent on the future commitment of the City of Mostar, its administration and political representatives, yet also on the CoE and the Congress and their commitment to promote and capitalise on the achieved results of the intervention. The local authorities of the City of Mostar promised to sustain the project results, yet it is still a question how genuine this commitment is, or whether it is conditioned by the expectation to receive further project support from the CoE. It is too early to make a firm judgement in this regard, although the adaptation of the Action Plan gives a good prospect of the sustainability, regardless of the nature of future cooperation between the City of Mostar and the CoE/Congress.

The sustainability of the results is highly dependent on future activities of the CoE and the Congress. On one hand, the results achieved in Mostar are still premature and their sustainability needs to be contained by further activities of the CoE/Congress in this city. The support might be in a form of a new project intervention, but also in a form of continuous monitoring missions to check on the results. In any case, the CoE/Congress should keep their presence in Mostar. **It doesn't mean the CoE/Congress should keep the ownership over the results of the deliberation; however, it should observe and support their implementation.** During the evaluation mission in Mostar, many interlocutors ascribe ownership of the Citizens' Assembly to the CoE/Congress. This was conceptually wrong, and it is obviously based on misconceptions on the concept and a wrong interpretation of the role

of the CoE/Congress. In the future activities, the CoE/Congress should be aware of this issue and prevent such conceptualisation of their role in supporting the City of Mostar.

The sustainability of the results from the Mostar deliberation case needs to be secured through institutional knowledge of the CoE/Congress. Thereunder, it is necessary for the CoE/Congress to properly document all phases of the deliberation process in Mostar, to clearly present the methodology for selection of participants and selection of topic for deliberation, facilitation and communication mechanisms, design of recommendations, as well as involvement of the City Councillors to prepare the Action plan and discuss about it at the City Council. The particularities of each of those phases are very important and should be properly documented and presented in a form of case study or a manual that can be utilised in internal or external communication, advocacy and promotional activities.

The sustainability of the project results needs to be secured by their promotion at the European level, in different geographies yet also among the international organisations and development agencies. The concept of the Citizens' Assembly is rather new and there is a need for promotion of practical examples, especially the successful ones such is the case of Mostar. It should also be mentioned that the Citizens' Assembly in Mostar is the only successful deliberation process that has been implemented in Southeast Europe, which should be recognised and widely promoted by the CoE/Congress.

CONCLUSIONS

The project “Building democratic participation in the City of Mostar” was successfully implemented despite challenging political circumstances in the City, and the irruption of an unprecedented pandemic that followed the intervention from the beginning to the end. The project was implemented by the Congress and funded by the extrabudgetary support received by the Government of Norway. The project was designed to follow results of the RGM work, and in line with the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021.

The project came to Mostar at the right moment. The City of Mostar was in a deadlock for many years since the local elections were not held for two terms. Representative democracy was in a deep crisis, and the level of citizens’ trust in local decision makers and the City Administration was low. There was a great demand to have an intervention that would stimulate the democratic processes in the city, including citizens’ participation in decision making, and this project served that need in the best possible way.

The relevance of the project remained high throughout the project implementation, which can be measured by the high level of participation of key stakeholders and project beneficiaries in the activities. During the project execution, the local elections were held in Mostar, and newly elected City Councillors showed great willingness and strong commitment to work together with the Congress to successfully implement the actions. The project remained highly relevant to the work of the CoE in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the work of the Congress at the European level.

The project implementation was challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic at the start of the intervention. Despite those extraordinary challenges, the project team found appropriate mechanisms to implement the action in an effective and efficient manner. Probably the biggest challenges were at the project launching, due to staff shortages and remote work, when it was necessary to set up the intervention in the proper way. It was also impossible to hold the project team meetings in person, while all communication was organised through the Internet and by using digital tools. Nevertheless, the project team managed to overcome all those constraints and to prepare the implementation methodology that worked very well to the end of the intervention. As a success factor, it is important to mention that the project implementation received a necessary boost by hiring the Project Officer that was based at the CoE office in Sarajevo, who was able to work with the stakeholders from Mostar daily. Additional staff support was received by the Project Assistants at the busiest times of project implementation, which was also an indication of good project management and deployment of resources.

The project focused on the application of the deliberative process in Mostar in a form of a Citizens’ Assembly. This specific form of deliberation is a novelty for Bosnia and Herzegovina and for the Southeast Europe. In that regard, it was very important to succeed with this project since it could present a model of best practice for other geographies and tiers

of government. The Congress has competitive advantage to work on this issue reflected in its good institutional memory, insightful knowledge of the Congress members on this issue yet also in an excellent capacity to mobilise necessary external expertise from universities and research institutions. A combination of the state-of-the-art expertise with the excellent project management procedures and skilful project team was a good recipe for success, which was later proved right during the project implementation.

The methodology for deliberation was prepared during the COVID-19 lockdown and it was ready for application when the conditions allowed the physical presence of participants in the same room. As an alternative, all sets of measures were designed to work from distance or in small groups, which indicates good monitoring of external factors and preparation of mitigation measures. The first part of the deliberation process included the selection of participants of the Citizens' Assembly, which was done through sending letters to citizens, assessing the applications and the selection based on a carefully designed criteria that included a wide range of factors such as geographic origin (urban/rural areas), gender, age, education, or ethnic background. Citizens were also consulted to propose prospective topics of deliberation, and their proposals were thoroughly discussed in a workshop with civil society organisations and academics, where the number of topics were reduced to six. In a workshop with the City Councillors, those six topics were reduced to three, while the final theme of deliberation was chosen by citizens who submitted their votes in an online survey. The selected deliberative topic was focusing on waste disposal and reflected in the question: "How can the City of Mostar improve the cleanliness of public space and make it more pleasant?". Although the applied methodology was complex and time consuming, it was inclusive, participative, and appropriate to the context of the City of Mostar. This led to high involvement of all beneficiaries and creation of their sense of ownership over the process and the achieved results, which was very important for both, efficiency and effectiveness of the project. Moreover, the preparation and adoption of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Citizens' Assembly recommendations happened beyond the expected outputs and gave a good sustainability prospect of the project intervention.

However, the reality sets in after the project implementation. Although the project achieved excellent results, it is necessary for the Congress/CoE to work further on their sustainability. The achieved results are still premature since the governance mechanisms for citizen participation in Mostar require further advancement. Mostar also needs support in other areas, such as the reform of public utilities and the city administration, among others. Through this project, the Congress/CoE developed good institutional relationship with the City of Mostar, which should be maintained in the future. The new intervention should be project based, designed to be a follow up on this intervention. If there are no extrabudgetary funds for a follow up intervention, the Congress should keep the good relationship with the City of Mostar through the observation missions, or by inviting the City officials to present the results of their deliberation at the European level.

The new CoE Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025 recognised the importance of the deliberation process in the City of Mostar and made a commitment to provide further support in implementing the recommendations stemming from the Citizens' Assembly. The Action Plan also expressed the commitment to work on organising the second Citizens' Assembly in Mostar and, by that, make the City of Mostar an inspiring example in the South-East Europe region when it comes to implementation of innovative democratic practices for increasing citizen participation in local decision-making. In addition, based on the Action Plan, the CoE will explore further possibilities for replicating the deliberative model of democracy developed in Mostar to other cities and municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The results achieved by this project should be properly incorporated in the Congress/CoE institutional knowledge. This requires an exercise to properly document all phases of the project interventions, lessons learned, best practices, factors of success and external factors. Many of these are already prepared by the project team and the expert reports (including this evaluation report as well), yet all these lessons learned should be properly synthesised.

There is also a need to bring the results achieved through this project at the European level. The Citizens' Assembly of Mostar is a case of successful deliberation and as such should be promoted as a model of best practice. Representatives of the City of Mostar should be involved in this promotion since, among others, it would give them a sense of pride that would be valuable for deepening their relationship with the Congress/CoE. The participation of the City authorities in the promotion of the Citizens' Assembly case at the European level might also have positive effects to further advancement of deliberative democracy in Mostar.

Although the evaluation did not focus on activities on other international and bilateral organisations regarding the deliberative processes, during the assignment it was discovered that some of them have been involved in those processes. Thus, the deliberation process in Mostar should be promoted to the international and bilateral agencies that are interested in supporting this type of citizens involvement in decision making. There is a rising interest in organising Citizens' Assemblies for testing the attitudes of citizens on politically sensitive issues. In transitional countries these processes are often supported by international and bilateral agencies, such as the European Union and many others. For instance, there is an EU-funded initiative to organise the Citizens' Assembly at the national level in Bosnia and Herzegovina that will discuss prospective changes to the Constitution. The Congress/CoE has competitive advantage in this field, reflected also in the successful implementation of this project, therefore the knowledge and results collected through the Mostar deliberation should be used for attracting extrabudgetary funds for similar interventions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the evaluation derives the following recommendations:

- Recommendation #1:** The Citizens' assembly deliberation process in Mostar should be properly documented in a form of a case study or a practical manual and widely promoted by the CoE/Congress at the European level and at different geographies and tiers of government (national, regional, local).
- Recommendation #2:** In the second Citizens' assembly that is foreseen by the new Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025 to be organised in the City of Mostar, more emphasis should be given in empowering women and youth to take on a more active role in the work of the Citizens' assembly and especially in presenting the results of the deliberation to the City Council.
- Recommendation #3:** The CoE/Congress should use methodology and experience of the deliberative model of democracy through the Citizens' assembly that was developed in the City of Mostar project for fundraising extrabudgetary support from international and bilateral agencies.
- Recommendation #4:** The CoE/Congress should continue their presence in Mostar, either through the follow-up intervention or by frequent observation missions.
- Recommendation #5:** Best practices on the modality of the project implementation in complex political circumstances, challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic should be prepared and promoted internally within the CoE and the Congress, and kept as institutional knowledge.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION CONSULTANT

ANNEX 2. EVALUATION MATRIX

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ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION CONSULTANT**TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE**

(Competitive bidding procedure / One-off Contract)

Purchase of consultancy services for the evaluation of the deliberative process within the project “Building democratic participation in the City of Mostar”**[Contract N° 8697/2020/09]**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe is currently implementing the project “Building democratic participation in the City of Mostar” within the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021. In this context, it is looking for a Provider to conduct the evaluation of the main component of the project – deliberative process organised in a form of a Citizens’ Assembly (see Section A of the Act of Engagement).

A. TENDER RULES

This tender procedure is a competitive bidding procedure. In accordance with Rule 1395 of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on the procurement procedures of the Council of Europe,²⁶ the Organisation shall invite to tender at least three potential providers for any purchase between €2,000 (or €5,000 for intellectual services) and €55,000 tax exclusive.

This specific tender procedure aims at concluding a **one-off contract** for the provision of deliverables described in the Act of Engagement (See attached). The amount of the object of present tender should not exceed 15,000 Euros for the whole duration of the Contract. A tender is considered valid for 120 calendar days as from the closing date for submission. The selection of tenderers will be made in the light of the criteria indicated below. All tenderers will be informed in writing of the outcome of the procedure.

The tenderer must be a legal person except consortia, having legal grounds to provide the respective services. International travels may occur under this assignment, but are conditioned by the current health crisis, potential restrictions and public health measures introduced in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In case that the travel occurs, the tenderer shall bear its full costs.

²⁶ The activities of the Council of Europe are governed by its [Statute](#) and its internal Regulations. Procurement is governed by the Financial Regulations of the Organisation and by [Rule 1395 of 20 June 2019 on the procurement procedures of the Council of Europe](#).

Tenders shall be submitted **by email only** (with attachments) to the email address indicated in the table below, with the following reference in subject: **Application: evaluation of the deliberative process 8697/2020/09**. Tenders addressed to another email address **will be rejected**.

The general information and contact details for this procedure are indicated on this page. You are invited to use the Council of Europe Contact details indicated below for any question you may have. **All questions shall be submitted at least 3 (three) working days before the deadline for submission of the tenders** and shall be exclusively addressed to the email address indicated below with the following reference in subject: **Application: evaluation of the deliberative process 8697/2020/09**.

Type of contract ▶	One-off contract
Duration ▶	Until complete execution of the obligations of the parties (see Article 2 of the Legal conditions as reproduced in the Act of Engagement)
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ▶	12 September 2021
Email for submission of tenders/offers ▶	congress.cooperation@coe.int
Email for questions ▶	congress.cooperation@coe.int
Expected starting date of execution ▶	01 October 2021

B. TERMS OF REFERENCE - Evaluation of the deliberative process organised in a form of a Citizens' Assembly

1. INTRODUCTION

The document in hand provides the terms of reference for an evaluation of the deliberative process organised in a form of a Citizens' Assembly, within the project "Building democratic participation in the City of Mostar".

The Terms of Reference provide background information about the project before describing the evaluation purpose, objectives and scope, evaluation criteria and questions and evaluation methodology.

2. EVALUATION BACKGROUND

Background of the project

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress) is currently implementing the project “Building democratic participation in the City of Mostar” within the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021. The project aims to create opportunities for citizens to engage in deliberative process and increase their influence in local decision-making process. In parallel, it strengthens the capacities of local stakeholders in democratic governance.

The project is rooted in the work of the **Reflection Group on Mostar**, established in 2017 with the goal to propose a sustainable solution for restoring democracy in the City, and follows on the [Recommendation 442 \(2019\)](#) on local and regional democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in the case [Baralija v. Bosnia and Herzegovina](#). The project builds upon the results of Congress co-operation activities carried out in Council of Europe member states since 2011 and is based on the needs and recommendations voiced by relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries.

The project is implemented in partnership with the City of Mostar from February 2020 to December 2021 with a total budget of EUR 500.000 thousand, financed by the Government of Norway.

Project activities include local and international expertise in the area of deliberative democracy, including development of the specifically tailored methodology of the deliberative process, as well as in capacity-development activities for the local councilors, peer-to-peer exchanges with the participation of members of the Congress, workshops and online events.²⁷

The main component of the project is the implementation of a deliberative process in a form of a Citizens’ Assembly. The Citizens’ Assembly brought together a representative group of 47 randomly selected citizens who deliberated upon and made recommendations on the cleanliness of the city and maintenance of public spaces in Mostar. This topic was proposed by citizens of Mostar and chosen after consultations with civil society and the city authorities.

The Assembly was organised on the basis of a transparent and inclusive process tailored for Mostar. It allowed citizens to be more engaged in local decision making, learn about the topic from relevant experts, exchange on experiences in other cities, and hear the views of local stakeholders and political representatives. This deliberative democracy approach is being increasingly used in Europe to improve the quality of local governance. Additional information on the Citizens’ Assembly can be found on the dedicated website: www.mostargradimo.ba/en

²⁷ Following the lockdown starting from March 2020 caused by the pandemic of COVID-19, most of the project activities were implemented on-line, except the Citizens’ Assembly which was conducted in person in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, from 10 to 31 July 2021.

3. EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purpose of the consultancy is to assess the main component and output of the project, the deliberative process in a form of a Citizens' Assembly, in comparison to the expected results and intermediate outcome, as defined in the project document. The evaluation which will be undertaken in line with the Council of Europe's Evaluation Policy²⁸, will provide learning conclusions so that its results can be fully utilised for the improvement of the design of new Congress projects. The evaluation will also serve in framing the implementation of a follow-up intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina.²⁹ The main users of the evaluation will be the Council of Europe project team (for the improved implementation of the new project), the Congress management (for the informed decision-making) and [the City of Mostar](#) as the main project partner. More specifically, the evaluation should assess the following criteria regarding the deliberative process³⁰: effectiveness, relevance, efficiency and sustainability.

Human rights and gender equality aspects will be considered throughout the assessment of evaluation criteria and questions.

4. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The objective of the evaluation is to assess the main output of the project, the deliberative process in a form of a Citizens' Assembly.

In particular, the specific objectives of the evaluation are:

- 1) evaluate the relevance and the effectiveness of the approach undertaken by the Congress to increase the participation of citizens in local decision-making through organising a deliberative process in a form of a Citizens' Assembly.
- 2) evaluate the overall efficiency of the project management.
- 3) assess the sustainability of project deliverables, as well as the implementation of activities related to the deliberative process;
- 4) recommend possible lines of action and further activities for future assistance, long-standing sustainability, improved project methodology.

The focus of the evaluation should be the intermediate outcome of the project "Citizens' participate in the discussion on local matters and formulate proposals for local decision makers", and the immediate outcome "Local authorities, citizens and their organisations are

²⁸ Council of Europe (November 2019), 'Council of Europe Evaluation Policy', <https://rm.coe.int/evaluation-policy-en-pdf/16809e7f91>

²⁹ Council of Europe (November 2019), 'Council of Europe Evaluation Policy', p12 <https://rm.coe.int/evaluation-policy-en-pdf/16809e7f91>

³⁰ The coherence criterion is adapted from the OECD DAC evaluation criteria. See OECD, 'Evaluation Criteria' <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>. Effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, and sustainability are defined here and in the Council of Europe's Evaluation Policy, p21. Added value is specific to the Council of Europe and is defined in the latter document.

equipped with and use new tools for building consensus”, together with qualitative and/ or quantitative indicators that will be used to support assessment of each outcome. The valuation should focus on activities which are directly related to this outcome, which concern the development of the methodology for a deliberative process and the implementation of the deliberative process and formulation of proposals by citizens. A distinction should be made between (1) immediate outcomes i.e. changes that are directly attributable to project activities such as changes in perceptions, understandings, knowledge, skills, relations and (2) intermediate outcomes such as changes in practices, processes, performance, etc. that are expected to follow on from the immediate outcomes, but over which the project has less direct influence.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

The evaluation should focus on the following specific questions³¹ related to the intervention:

1. Relevance

To what extent has the intervention been relevant to the mandate of the Council of Europe and priority areas of the Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021?

2. Effectiveness

What achievements have been made by this intervention?

3. Efficiency

To what extent have the resources/inputs in terms of funds, expertise, time etc. been converted economically to results?

4. Sustainability

What is the likelihood that the benefits from the intervention will be maintained when the project ends? What are the most important factors?

6. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

1. APPROACH

The evaluation will be undertaken in line with the Council of Europe’s Evaluation Policy.³²

i. Data collection

It is expected that the evaluation will use a combination of the methods below to collect data. Tenderers are encouraged to consider the advantages and disadvantages of different data collection methods and their applicability to this evaluation, and they are encouraged to

³¹ Sub-questions should be developed by the service provider.

³² Council of Europe (November 2019), ‘Council of Europe Evaluation Policy’, <https://rm.coe.int/evaluation-policy-en-pdf/16809e7f91>

propose other innovative data collection methods, especially in view of the current health crisis, potential restrictions and public health measures introduced in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- Desk review of documents and other information (internal to the project and external);
- Individual and group interviews with a range of stakeholders, including:
 - Key actors directly involved in the design of the deliberative process, oversight, and implementation;
 - Civil society organisations;
 - Local authorities;
 - Relevant actors at the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities;
 - Institutions and organisation implementing or funding related projects;
 - Questionnaire (online survey) to be sent to all stakeholders involved in the deliberative process

ii. Data analysis

Qualitative data should be systematically analysed using a clearly documented process to facilitate identification of key themes and issues. This should result in a reference product (e.g. a spreadsheet or CSV file) that will be transferred to the Council of Europe at the end of the evaluation. All information concerning informants and/or source of information shall be anonymised.

It is expected that different types of **quantitative data** will be provided and/ or generated during the data collection phase. In most cases, spreadsheet analysis is likely to meet the requirements of the evaluation. However, some scenarios may require more advanced data processing and analysis techniques, for example to clean, convert, and combine data from different sources. Cleaned and processed raw quantitative data used in any analysis should be provided to the Council of Europe at the end of the evaluation. All information concerning informants and/or source of information shall be anonymised.

In addition to narrative analysis, key results of both qualitative and quantitative data analysis should be presented using clear and visually appealing charts and/or infographics.

iii. Development of the evaluation framework

The Service Provider should elaborate the evaluation matrix including the methodology in their offer.

DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables are required:

- a) Evaluation matrix (English) (deadline: 15 October 2021)
- b) Draft evaluation report (English and local language) (deadline: 15 November 2021)

- c) Online meeting with the Council of Europe Congress to discuss the draft evaluation report (deadline: 25 November 2021)
- d) Final evaluation report (English and local language) (deadline: 9 December 2021)
- e) Online presentation of the final evaluation report (English and local language) (deadline: 17 December 2021)
- f) Anonymised qualitative analysis reference product (see above under 6.2.ii – data analysis)
- g) Anonymised, cleaned and processed raw quantitative data used in any quantitative analysis (see above under 6.2.ii – data analysis)

The **Evaluation matrix** with defined evaluation questions and sub-questions according to the evaluation criteria (Annex 2):

The **evaluation report** will provide actionable operational and strategic recommendations to the Council of Europe, and other actors on sustaining and leveraging results of the process, and on follow-up actions. The evaluation report, which will also include lessons learned,³³ will be a maximum of 30 pages, excluding the summary and annexes. All documents referred to should be systematically referenced in footnotes and listed in an annex using the following format: Author/ creator (date), *'Title of the document or website'*, p1, URL. See Annex 3: Quality assurance checklist for evaluation reports for further details.

The evaluation report should be delivered to the Council of Europe in English and in local language. The final report shall take into account the comments made by the Council of Europe.

C. FEES

All tenderers are invited to fill in the **table of fees** as reproduced in **Section A of the Act of Engagement**. The total amount of the consultancy, object of the present tender, **shall not exceed 15,000 Euros** and applications with higher bids will result in the exclusion from the tender.

Tenderers **subject to VAT** shall also send a **quote (Pro Forma invoice)** on their letterhead including:

- the Service Provider's name and address;
- its VAT number;

³³ The OECD DAC defines lessons learned as *'Generalizations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programs, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact.'* See OECD (2002), *'Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management'*, p26 <http://www.oecd.org/development/peer-reviews/2754804.pdf>

- the full list of services to be provided;
- the fee per type of deliverables (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement, tax exclusive);
- the total amount per type of deliverables (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement, tax exclusive);
- the total amount (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement), tax exclusive, the applicable VAT rate, the amount of VAT and the amount VAT inclusive.

D. ASSESSMENT

Exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interests

(by signing the Act of Engagement,³⁴ you declare on your honour not being in any of the below situations)

Tenderers shall be excluded from participating in the tender procedure if they:

- have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering;
- are in a situation of bankruptcy, liquidation, termination of activity, insolvency or arrangement with creditors or any like situation arising from a procedure of the same kind, or are subject to a procedure of the same kind;
- have received a judgment with res judicata force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or serious professional misconduct;
- do not comply with their obligations as regards payment of social security contributions, taxes and dues, according to the statutory provisions of their country of incorporation, establishment or residence;
- are or are likely to be in a situation of conflict of interests.

Eligibility criteria apply to each proposed member of the evaluation team

- Excellent knowledge of international standards and practices in evaluation, qualitative and quantitative research methods, as well as in strategic analysis of evaluation results is required;
- Minimum five years of progressively responsible experience in project/programme evaluation evaluating projects implemented by international and/or non-profit organisations is required;
- Professional knowledge of English within the team is required; knowledge of the local language is a requirement for national evaluators;
- Experience in the areas of local democracy is required; experience in citizen engagement, public inclusion and deliberative democracy processes will be considered as an asset;
- Work experience in Bosnia and Herzegovina is an asset; previous work experience with the Council of Europe is appreciated. Knowledge of political and institutional setting in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the City of Mostar in particular is considered as an asset.

Award criteria

- Quality of the offer (80%), including:

³⁴ The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask tenderers, at a later stage, to supply an extract from the record of convictions or failing that an equivalent document issued by the competent judicial or administrative authority of the country of incorporation, indicating that the first three above listed exclusion criteria are met, and a certificate issued by the competent authority of the country of incorporation indicating that the fourth criterion is met.

- relevance and clarity of the methodology proposed (see below under F) – 50%;
- quality of the qualifications of the proposed team of evaluators and the relevance of their experience – 30%.
- Financial offer (20%).

The Council reserves the right to hold interviews with eligible tenderers.

E. NEGOTIATIONS

The Council reserves the right to hold negotiations with the bidders in accordance with Article 20 of Rule 1395.

F. DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED

Tenderers are invited to submit:

- A completed and signed copy of the Act of Engagement³⁵ (see attached)
- For tenderers subject to VAT only: a quote, describing their financial offer, in line with the requirements of section C of the Tender File (see above);
- Registration documents (scanned copy of the originals and if in language other than English, provide translation into English language);
- Introduction to the offeror, motivation for undertaking the assignment and understanding of the assignment (maximum one page);
- Proposed methodology, including approach and explanation of the role of each team member, implementation schedule and preliminary risk analysis table (maximum five pages). This should develop, rather than repeat, the contents of this Tender File.
- CVs of each member of the evaluation team highlighting experience in conducting similar tasks;
- Maximum three examples of previous works in English (assessments, analytical reports, etc.);
- Three relevant references (name, surname, phone number and e-mail);

All documents shall be submitted in English, failure to do so will result in the exclusion of the tender.

If any of the documents listed above are missing, the Council of Europe reserves the right to reject the tender.

³⁵ The Act of Engagement must be completed, signed, scanned in its entirety (i.e. including all the pages) and sent as a compiled document. For all scanned documents, .pdf files are preferred.

The Council reserves the right to reject a tender if the scanned documents are of such a quality that the documents cannot be read once printed.

ANNEX 2: EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question	Sub-Question	Measure(s) / Indicator(s)	Data Collection Instrument(s)	Data Source(s)	Data Analysis	Evaluator(s) Responsible
Relevance	To what extent has the intervention been relevant to the mandate of the Council of Europe (CoE) and priority areas of the Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021 (Action Plan)?	<p>Are there any achievements of the intervention that might contribute to the CoE mandate? What causes qualify them as relevant to the CoE mandate?</p> <p>Are there any achievements of the intervention that might contribute to the Action Plan? What causes qualify them as relevant to the Action Plan?</p> <p>To what extent have the project design and the achieved results been proven to be appropriate for the needs of (both direct and indirect) beneficiaries?</p>	<p>Examples of achievements relevant to the CoE mandate; Factors of relevance to the CoE mandate identified and well explained;</p> <p>Examples of achievements relevant to the Action Plan; Factors of relevance to the Action Plan identified and well explained;</p> <p>Attitudes of beneficiaries towards relevance of the project intervention, their willingness to participate in the action and ownership over achieved results;</p>	A mixture of document mapping, interviews and online surveys.	<p>Desk review of CoE official documents;</p> <p>Interview notes with CoE staff and the project team;</p> <p>Interview notes with key stakeholders and project beneficiaries;</p> <p>Survey results with stakeholders and project beneficiaries.</p>	A set of quantitative and qualitative analytical tools and triangulation of findings	Dragisa Mijacic
Effectiveness	What achievements have been made by this intervention?	<p>What are the achievements of the intervention vis-à-vis to outputs, intermediate and immediate outcomes, their indicators and targets?</p> <p>What were the factors (both internal and external) that influenced achievement of outcomes from outputs? To what extent the project team</p>	<p>Project outputs and outcomes have been achieved to some extent, vis-à-vis their performance indicators and targets;</p> <p>Dynamics of interaction between outputs and outcomes explained, including external factors. Potential best practices and lessons learned identified and elaborated in detail.</p>	<p>A mixture of document mapping, analysis, interviews and online surveys.</p> <p>Internet search of media outlets,</p>	<p>Desk review of the Project Documents;</p> <p>Interview notes with the project team and CoE staff;</p> <p>Interview notes with key stakeholders and project beneficiaries;</p>	A set of quantitative and qualitative analytical tools and triangulation of findings	Dragisa Mijacic

		<p>monitored external risks and applied mitigation measures?</p> <p>Have there been any unplanned effects/results, both positive or negative? How did they reflect to outcomes, beneficiaries and target groups?</p>	<p>Examples of unplanned effects/results achieved by the intervention, and their influence (both positive and negative) on outputs and outcomes;</p> <p>Factors contributing to the generation of unintended results, whether those were intentional or non-intentional identified and well explained;</p>	<p>relevant CSO reports, the City of Mostar Website and other relevant secondary sources.</p>	<p>Survey results with stakeholders and project beneficiaries.</p> <p>Relevant publications from external institutions;</p> <p>Media outlets and external websites</p>		
Efficiency	<p>To what extent have the resources/inputs in terms of funds, expertise, time etc. been converted economically to results?</p>	<p>To what extent have the applied resources and inputs (financial, physical and human) been adequate in terms of efficient and effective implementation of project activities?</p> <p>How external factors and risks were monitored, and what were the mitigation measures?</p> <p>Did COVID-19 pandemic influence the efficiency of the project management, and were there any other external factors which affected project delivery and results creating significant</p>	<p>Evidence of cost-effective use of resources, including management procedures, external and internal communication lines and other factors identified and well explained; Budgetary performance, percentage of expenditures comparing to the financial plan; Allocation of human power comparing to the planned workload;</p> <p>Evidence of instruments for assessing external and internal risks during the project implementation, and management responses;</p> <p>Delivery of activities comparing to the action plan; Factors contributing to delays of project activities assessed and elaborated;</p>	<p>A mixture of document mapping, analysis, interviews and online surveys.</p>	<p>Desk review of the Project Documents;</p> <p>Interview notes with the project team and CoE staff;</p> <p>Interview notes with key stakeholders and project beneficiaries;</p> <p>Survey results with stakeholders and project beneficiaries.</p>	<p>A set of quantitative and qualitative analytical tools and triangulation of findings</p>	<p>Dragisa Mijacic</p>

		delays in the implementation of activities?					
Sustainability	<p>What is the likelihood that the benefits from the intervention will be maintained when the project ends?</p> <p>What are the most important factors?</p>	<p>To what extent the intervention created policy, institutional and financial instruments that will strengthen sustainability of the achieved benefits?</p> <p>What are the key considerations that influence sustainability of project benefits and continuation of the intervention in the future?</p>	<p>Examples of mechanisms created by the project that secure sustainability of the achieved benefits; Examples of procedures and/or instruments created by the City of Mostar with the aim to secure sustainability prospects;</p> <p>Factors for securing the benefits and continuation of the intervention identified and well explained;</p>	<p>A mixture of document mapping, analysis, interviews and online surveys.</p>	<p>Desk review of the Project Documents;</p> <p>Interview notes with the CoE staff and the project;</p> <p>Interview notes with the officials from the City of Mostar, other key stakeholders and project beneficiaries;</p> <p>Review of official documentation from the City of Mostar;</p> <p>Survey results with stakeholders and project beneficiaries.</p>	<p>A set of quantitative and qualitative analytical tools and triangulation of findings</p>	<p>Dragisa Mijacic</p>

ANNEX 3. LIST OF REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Type of Document	Name of Document
1. Project Documents and reports	Project Description Document
	Overall Project Budget
	Memorandum of Co-operation with the City of Mostar
	List of Contacts
	Media Reports
2. The Citizens' Assembly	Methodological description of the selection of the topic
	Survey on citizens' perceptions and attitudes on deliberative democracy
	Report on the online survey for the selection of the topic (containing also the example of the questionnaire and the invitation letter)
	Methodology for the topic selection workshops and the two agendas
	Methodological description of the random selection process
	Report on the dissemination of the invitation letters to randomly selected households and on the final voting on the topic of the Assembly
	Rulebook on the Citizens' Assembly (English and local version)
	Information sheet on the Citizens' Assembly
	Agenda of the Citizens' Assembly
	Recommendations from the Citizens' Assembly (English and local version)
Action plan for implementation of the recommendations from the Citizens' Assembly (local version)	
3. CoE Documents	Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021
	Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025
	2021 Report by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe: "State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law - a Democratic Renewal for Europe"
	Progress Review and Final Evaluation of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021
	CoE Evaluation Guidelines
	Quality Assurance Checklist for Evaluation Reports
	Recommendation 442 (2019)_EN_Local and regional democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina
4. Online Documents and websites	The Statute of the City of Mostar (in local language)
	The Mostar Agreement (in local language)
	https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/home
	https://mostargradimo.ba/en/

ANNEX 4. LIST OF INTERVIEWED PEOPLE

During the evaluation there were 17 interviews organised with 19 interlocutors. The list of interviewees is given below in the table.

#	Name and Surname	Organisation
1	Marité Moras	Council of Europe/the Congress
2	Natalija Milović	Council of Europe/the Congress
3	Damjan Jugović	Council of Europe/Office in Sarajevo
4	Bojana Urumova	Council of Europe/Office in Sarajevo
5	Karl-Heinz Lambertz	Member of the Congress
6	Renate Zikmund	Council of Europe/The Congress
7	Steward Dickson	Member of the Congress
8	Ana Buljubašić	Faculty of Science and Education, University of Mostar
9	Arman Zalihić	City Council of Mostar (SDP BiH)
10	Adil Šuta	City Council of Mostar (SDA)
11	Radmila Komadina	Advisor of the City of Mostar
12	Haris Nazdraić	City Council of Mostar (DF BiH)
13	Rebeka Kotlo	Faculty of Law, Džemal Bijedić University
14	Sabina Memić	City Administration of Mostar, Higher independent officer for relations with NGO and religion communities
15	Edin Rahimić	Member of the Citizens' Assembly
16	Izedin Demirović	Member of the Citizens' Assembly
17	Josip Milas	Member of the Citizens' Assembly
18	Damir Kapidžić	External Expert
19	Mirna Dabić Davidović	External Expert

ANNEX 5. THE SURVEY DESIGN AND RESULTS

The survey is designed with the aim of collecting necessary views and insights from a broad range of key stakeholders and direct beneficiaries. It was generated on SurveyMonkey and distributed to key stakeholders and project beneficiaries.

1. Type of beneficiary:

- Representative of authorities in the City of Mostar
- City administration of Mostar
- Representative of local political party
- Representative of public authorities at higher level (Canton, Federation, Republic)
- Representative of the civil society and media
- Representative of the University
- Representative of the Citizens' Assembly of Mostar
- Expert hired on the project the Citizen of Mostar
- Something else, please write: _____

2. To what extent are you familiar with the project "Building democratic participation in the City of Mostar"

- To a great extent
- Partly
- Not at all

3. If you participated in project activities, please name them: _____

4. To what extent are the project activities relevant to the situation and needs of the citizens of Mostar?

- To a great extent
- Partly
- Not at all

Please explain: _____

5. To what extent are the project results in accordance with the needs of the citizens of Mostar?

- To a great extent
- Partly
- Not at all

Please explain: _____

6. What are the most significant results the project has achieved?

7. Are you familiar with the activities related to the work of the Citizens' Assembly of Mostar?

- To a great extent
- Partly
- Not at all

Please explain: _____

8. What are the biggest achievements of the Citizens' Assembly of Mostar?

9. If you think that there were any shortcomings in the work of the Citizens' Assembly of Mostar, please write them down. What could be done differently next time?

10. To what extent do you think that the recommendations proposed by the Citizens' Assembly to the City of Mostar will be implemented?

- To a great extent
- Partly
- Not at all

Please explain: _____

11. What needs to be done to implement the recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly?

12. Do you think that it is necessary to continue working on the institutionalization of the Citizens' Assembly as an advisory body to the Mostar City Hall?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

13. If you think it is necessary, who should work on institutionalisation the most

- Citizens' Assemblies
- Mayor's Office
- City Hall
- Political parties
- Civil society and university
- Council of Europe
- Somebody else, please write: _____

14. On a 1 (insufficient) to 5 (excellent) scale, how do you rate cooperation with the Council of Europe's project team:

1 2 3 4 5

15. If you have compliments or complaints about the work of the project team, please write here: _____

16. On a 1 (insufficient) to 5 (excellent) scale, how do you rate project implementation and achieved results:

1 2 3 4 5

17. If you have something else to say about the project, the results achieved or a proposal for future activities, please add here:

A summary of the survey results in local language is attached as PDF to this report.