



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Public awareness campaigns on the consequences of using services provided by the victims of trafficking

BH5045/G/2023/1

Project	EU/CoE Horizontal Facility III Strengthening anti-trafficking action in North Macedonia (HF29)
Awarding entity	COUNCIL OF EUROPE Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity Anti-trafficking Division - Co-operation Unit
Funding	Total of 30,000.00 EUR
Duration	Projects shall be implemented by 16 September 2024. Reporting requirements shall be completed by 14 November 2024.
Estimated starting date	20 November 2023
Issuance date	05 October 2023
Deadline for applications	26 October 2023

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APPENDICES:

- Appendix I - Application Form
- Appendix II - Provisional budget (Template)
- Appendix III - Template Grant Agreement (for information only)

HOW TO APPLY?

- Complete and sign the **Application Form** (See **Appendix I**)
- Attach a provisional budget (using the template reproduced in **Appendix II**)
- Attach the other supporting documents:
 - Portfolio of the legal entity that is applying for the grant;
 - CV (s) of the proposed team to implement the grant (s);
 - Registration certificate and the current situation from the Central registry;
 - Authorisation of the legal representative to act on behalf of the applicant;
 - Bank statement confirming the existence of the bank account in the name of the applicant;
 - Sample work from a public campaign;
 - Statute/ bylaws of the applicant;
 - Any additional information regarding implemented projects relevant to the call.
- Send these documents in electronic form (Word .and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: HF.THB.skopje@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: Grant – based public campaign against human trafficking
- Applications must be received before 26 October 2023 (at 23.59 CET).

I. INTRODUCTION

This call for proposals is launched within the framework of the European Union and Council of Europe joint programmatic framework “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye III”. Its “Strengthening Anti-Trafficking Action in North Macedonia” will co-fund **two (2) national/local project aimed at raising awareness of private sector (night bars, restaurants, construction and agriculture companies, farms, etc), chambers of commerce, employers’ associations, trade unions, relevant state and local institutions and the general public** on consequences of knowingly using services of victims of trafficking in human beings, by organising a national or regional public campaign in North Macedonia.

Article 19 of the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings requires the ratifying states to criminalise the use of services of the trafficking victims, when used knowingly. National authority should make sure that people know that, if they are knowingly using services provided by the victims of trafficking, or ought to have known that services are provided by the victims of trafficking, will face sanctions.

In North Macedonia, articles 418-a (3) and 418-d (3) of the Criminal Code criminalise the use of services provided by the trafficking victims, if the user knew, or ought to have known that the provider is a trafficking victim, or enables another to procure services of the trafficking victim for sexual, or other type of exploitation. The crime is punishable with an imprisonment between 6 months and 5 years for using services of an adult victim, whereas for the child victim the sentence is an imprisonment of at least 8 years.

The public call for proposals shall **provide the grants to legal entities**, which can play an important role in raising awareness about this topic. The public call is open to the **following applicants (possible grantees): 1. public media, 2. chambers of commerce, 3. trade unions and 4. employers’ associations.**

Note that **1. chambers of commerce, 2. employers’ associations and 3. trade unions can appear in a double role under this public call:** 1. As a grantee (apply and receive a grant under this public call), and 2. As a possible a target group (a beneficiary) of the grant-based public awareness campaign under this public call.

The grantee’s project should be conceptualised as a preventive measure for curbing demand of services of the trafficking victims in North Macedonia for the purpose of labour, or sexual exploitation. **The aim is to contribute to a heightened awareness about the criminalisation of the use of labour or sexual services of the trafficking victim when the person/legal entity knew or ought to have known that they were provided by the trafficking victim.**

Each proposed awareness-raising project should **carry out an impact assessment following the project implementation.** The projects shall aim to produce **an added value to the Council of Europe’s efforts in this domain.**

Each of the two successful project proposals will receive **a grant not exceeding 15,000 EUR** for the implementation of the project – the awareness raising campaign.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT

The EU/Council of Europe co-operation programme “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye III” aims to contribute to an increased compliance of the beneficiaries with the Council of Europe standards and the EU *acquis* in the areas of rule of law, democracy and human rights through the Council of Europe unique position to offer a highly interconnected system between standard-setting, monitoring and technical assistance in these key areas.

The anti-trafficking action in North Macedonia has been part of all EU/CoE Horizontal Instrument III for the Western Balkans and Türkiye and builds on its achievements in its phases I and II. The purpose of the action is

to support the authorities in the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings, in particular the country-specific recommendations provided by the Group of Expert on Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA). This anti-trafficking action contributes towards strengthening the institutional capacities of relevant institutions to prevent human trafficking, to protect victims of trafficking, as well as to develop and strengthen national antitrafficking partnerships necessary to address specific forms of exploitation (labour trafficking, child trafficking). The action focuses on the following areas of intervention: *i*) Strengthened criminal-law response to trafficking in human beings through capacity building and research; and *ii*) Strengthened mechanisms and procedures for victims of human trafficking to access legal remedies and compensation.

Project partners include the National Commission for the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the State Labour Inspectorate, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, the Academy for Training of Judges and Prosecutors, the Public Prosecutor's Office, as well as civil society organisations.

III. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The indicative total available budget under this call for proposals is 30,000.00 EUR (thirty-thousand EUR). The Council of Europe intends to award 2 grants of a maximum amount of 15,000.00 EUR (fifteen-thousand EUR) each.

Subject to availability of funds and extension of the Project initial duration, the Council of Europe reserves the right not to award all available funds, and/or to redistribute the available funds in a different manner depending on the project proposals received and on the outcome of the call for proposals.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

1. General objective

The grant will fund 2 projects designed to organise a public awareness campaign on the consequences of knowingly using services of victims of trafficking throughout the entire territory of the Republic of North Macedonia, or in one or more regions prone to trafficking for the purpose of labour or sexual exploitation.

Each proposed awareness-raising project should target at least 150 persons on the entire state territory, or in a region(s) prone to trafficking for labour or sexual exploitation.

The grants will fund projects designed to raise awareness among the private sector, state and local institutions, employers' associations, chambers of commerce, trade unions and the general public. Such awareness raising campaigns might target, for example, procurement services in the institutions and private sector, those responsible to regulate the supply chains, or owners of night bars, restaurants, farms, etc. The above-mentioned list for the awareness raising campaigns is not exhaustive.

2. Means of action

Projects may include specifically tailored plans and activities aiming at organising a public awareness campaign, such as:

- Development of communication materials and relevant content (promotional materials such as posters, leaflets, videos, billboards, etc.);
- Presentations, panel discussions, outreach micro-promotion activities;
- Press kits, press conferences, press releases and media stories;
- Publication on web sites, social media campaigns, web interactive pages;
- Artistic outputs (e.g., a theatre play, a video campaign, poems, cartoons, exhibitions, a music concert and other artistic expression);

- A public outreach to private companies (organisation of public meetings, distribution of informative materials); and
- Any other means of action compatible with the aims and values of the Council of Europe.

Please note that the project proposal should provide a brief overview of the baseline and should carry out an assessment of the awareness-raising activity. To this end, the project should explain the foreseen methodology for such an assessment in respect of the proposed means of action.

Where a Grantee belongs to the category of local¹ civil servant or other public administration staff under the third phase of the Horizontal Facility, he or she must be in the position to confirm that:

- he/she has not been involved in the Action design or that the institution for which he/she works will not be a beneficiary thereof;
- he/she is not in a situation of a conflict of interests or a potential conflict of interest in relation to this procedure and understands that a conflict of interests may arise, in particular, from economic interests, political or national affinities, emotional or family ties or any other type of shared relationship or interest;
- he/she can obtain authorisation from his/her employer to carry out this secondary activity
- the performance of his/her obligations under the potentially awarded Grant Agreement goes beyond the scope of his/her regular official duties;
- confirmation from his/her employer that national/local legislation does not prohibit civil servants or other public administration staff from undertaking secondary activities will be obtained;
- the Grantee will implement the Action as a secondary activity, on a temporary and short-term basis outside his/her regular working hours and/or has been granted leave of absence for this purpose by his/her employer.

Where a Grantee procures the consultancy services of a natural person in connection with a part of the Action or assigns the performance of a part of the Action to an individual within the Grantee organisation and that natural person is a local civil servant or other public administration staff under the third phase of the Horizontal Facility, the Grantee must confirm that neither the signatory of the service contract, nor if relevant the organisation he/she represents, are in a situation of a conflict of interests or a potential conflict of interest in relation to this procedure; the signatory and if relevant the organisation have been notified and understand that a conflict of interests may arise, in particular, from economic interests, political or national affinities, emotional or family ties or any other type of shared relationship or interest.

The Grantee must undertake to verify and provide the Council of Europe with the necessary supporting documents confirming that this individual belonging to the category of civil servant or other public administration staff under the third phase of the Horizontal Facility:

- a) has obtained authorisation of his/her public employer to carry out this secondary activity
- b) the performance of his/her obligations under this Agreement goes beyond the scope of his/her regular official duties
- c) undertakes this secondary activity on a temporary and short-term basis and that it will be performed outside his/her working hours or when he/she is on leave of absence from his/her official public duties
- d) obtained the confirmation from his/her employer that national/local legislation does not prohibit civil servants or other public administration staff from undertaking secondary activities
- e) is not in a situation of conflict of interests as described above
- f) has not been involved in the Action design or that the public institution for which he/she works will not be a beneficiary thereof unless foreseen otherwise by the Horizontal Facility Description of Action.

3. Implementation period

The implementation period of the projects should start on 20 November 2023 (see indicative timetable under VIII. below) and shall not extend beyond 16 September 2024.

¹ For the purpose of this document, the term « local » designates consultants from one of the Horizontal Facility Beneficiaries region and Türkiye.

Reporting requirements shall be completed 14 November 2024 **at the latest**.

Projects completed prior to the date of submission of the applications will be automatically excluded. As regard projects started prior to the date of submission of the applications, or prior to the date of signature of the grant agreement, only those costs incurred after the date of submission of the grant application could be eligible (provided the agreement concerned so provides).

4. Target stakeholders

Projects should target in particular the following key stakeholders:

- Private sector (night clubs, restaurants, construction, agricultural and other companies, association of employers, chambers of commerce);
- Trade unions;
- State /public /local institutions;
- General public.

The above list is not exhaustive and projects may propose to target other relevant stakeholders, while keeping in mind the general objective of the Project.

5. Budgetary requirements

Project proposals shall be accompanied by a draft budget (See **Template Budget, in Appendix II**) amounting to a maximum of 15,000.00 EUR (fifteen-thousand EUR) per project proposal. The estimated budget must be consistent, accurate, clear, complete and cost-effective, in the light of the activities proposed.

Each Grantee shall also be required to contribute to the project either by way of its own resources or by contribution from third parties. Co-financing may take the form of financial or human resources, in-kind contributions or income generated by the action or project.

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

- Projects/actions proposed by association of employers, the public media, chambers of commerce and trade unions that have experience with implementation and awareness raising about the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights;
- Projects/actions aiming at protecting migrant workers from human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation;
- Projects/actions that address child trafficking.

7. The following types of action will not be considered:

- Projects/actions providing financial support to third parties (re-granting schemes);
- Projects/actions concerning only or mainly individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- Projects/actions supporting political parties.

8. Funding conditions:

The funds for each grant should in principle be distributed as follows:

- 80 % will be paid to the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium when the Grant Agreement between the Parties is signed;

- the balance will be paid to the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium based on actual expenditures incurred, and after the presentation and acceptance by the Council of Europe of the final narrative and financial reports for the Grant implementation.

9. Reporting requirements:

- **narrative reporting** requires a full narrative report on the use made of the grant and a copy of the register of the persons present during each of the activities, including names and signatures of participants;
- **financial reporting** requires in particular a statement in the currency in which the Grant Agreement will be concluded (EUR or local currency), in English, stating the payments made for the implementation of the activities, certified by the responsible financial officer of the Grantees, accompanied by “appropriate original supporting documents” (see below). The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask for summary translations of invoices into English. If for legal reasons the original documents must be retained by the Grantees, certified copies must be submitted with the financial statement.

“Appropriate original supporting documents” refers to signed contracts, invoices and acceptances of work (for all transactions), payment authorisation for all transactions should also be provided in case the Grantees use such practice, and reliable evidence of payment (authorised payment order and bank statement).

As regards round tables / conferences, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation of a programme indicating the title, dates, venue, and agenda of the event; the names of persons facilitating the event, a signed list of participants, the contracts with the owner of venue of the event (e.g. hotel) for the rent of premises, food and beverages of participants, invoices from the owner of the venue of the event for the above services, and a report on the results of the event (see narrative reporting above).

As regards consultancy services, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation of evidence of the outputs produced, contracts with experts and consultants containing a specific description of services to be carried out, invoices produced after the works have been performed and delivered (the specialities of the consultants shall correspond to the nature of activities for which they are contracted).

As regards travel fees / lodging of experts and participants, presenting “appropriate original supporting documents” requires presentation, where relevant, of contracts with a travel agency for travel fees and lodging, invoices of the travel agency indicating destinations, dates, ticket costs, and names of the travelling persons, a programme of the event indicating the names of the experts and signed lists of participants.

The above description is not comprehensive. Any doubt regarding the interpretation of the notion of “appropriate original supporting documents” should lead the Grantee or the Lead Grantee in case of a consortium to consult the Council of Europe.

V. HOW TO APPLY?

1. Documents to be submitted:

Each application shall contain:

- the completed and signed **Application Form** (See **Appendix I**);
- a provisional budget (using the template reproduced in **Appendix II**);
- the other supporting documents:
 - Portfolio of the legal entity that is applying for the grant;
 - CV (s) of the proposed team to implement the grant(s);
 - Registration certificate and the current situation from the Central registry;

- Authorisation of the legal representative to act on behalf of the applicant;
- Bank statement confirming the existence of the bank account in the name of the applicant;
- Sample work from a public campaign;
- Statute/ bylaws of the applicant;
- Any additional information regarding implemented projects relevant to the call.

Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

2. Questions

General information can be found on the website of the Council of Europe: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility/news> and <https://www.coe.int/en/web/skopje>.

Other questions regarding this specific call for proposals must be sent at the latest one week before the deadline for the submission of proposals, in English language, and shall be exclusively sent to the following address: HF.THB.skopje@coe.int, with the following reference in subject: **Questions: Grant – based public campaign against human trafficking**.

3. Deadline for submission

The application form, **completed and signed by all Grantees**, together with the supporting documents, must be submitted in electronic form (Word and/or PDF) to the following e-mail address: HF.THB.skopje@coe.int. Emails should contain the following reference in subject: **Grant – based public campaign against human trafficking**.

Applications must be received **before 26 October 2023 (at 23:59 CET)**. Applications received after the above-mentioned date will not be considered.

4. Change, alteration and modification of the application file

Any change in the format, or any alteration or modification of the original application file, will cause the immediate rejection of the application concerned.

VI. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The projects presented will be assessed by an Evaluation Committee composed of three (3) staff members of the Council of Europe.

The procedure shall be based on the underlying principles of grant award procedures, which are transparency, non-retroactivity, non-cumulative awards, not-for-profit, co-financing and non-discrimination, in accordance with [Rule 1374 of 16 December 2015 on the grant award procedures of the Council of Europe](#).

The applicants, and their projects, shall fulfil all of the following criteria:

1. Exclusion criteria:

Applicants shall be excluded from the grant award procedure where they or, in the case of legal persons, their owner(s) or executive officer(s):

- a) have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering, terrorist financing, terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, child labour or trafficking in human beings;

- b) 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;
 - c) have received a judgement with res judicata force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or constitutes a serious professional misconduct;
 - d) do not comply with their obligations as regards payment of social security contributions, taxes and dues, according to the statutory provisions of the country where they are established;
 - e) are an entity created to circumvent tax, social or other legal obligations (empty shell company), have ever created or are in the process of creation of such an entity;
 - f) have been involved in mismanagement of the Council of Europe funds or public funds;
1. are included in the lists of persons or entities subject to restrictive measures applied by the European Union (available at www.sanctionsmap.eu).

By signing the Application Form, applicants shall declare on their honour that they are not in any of the above-mentioned situations (See **Appendix I, Item 12**).

The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask applicants at a later stage to supply the following supporting documents:

- for the items set out in paragraphs a), b), c) and f), an extract from the record of convictions or failing that an equivalent document issued by the competent judicial or administrative authority of the country where the applicant is established, indicating that these requirements are met;
 - for the items set out in paragraph d), a certificate issued by the competent authority of the country of establishment;
1. for the items set out in paragraph e);
 1. for natural persons, a scanned copy of a valid photographic proof of identity (e.g. passport)
 2. for legal persons, an extract from the companies register or other official document proving ownership and control of the applicant.

2. Eligibility criteria:

In order to be eligible for a grant, an applicant must:

- be constituted as legal entity in Republic of North Macedonia;
- be entitled to carry out the activities described in its project proposal;
- have the capacity to organise public awareness raising activities and have been active for at least 2 years in the field;
- have sufficient financial capacity (stable and sufficient sources of funding) to maintain its activity throughout the period for which the grant is awarded and to participate by way of its own resources (including human resources or in-kind contributions);
- have sufficient operational and professional capacity, including staff, to carry out activities described in its project proposal to target at least 150 persons;
- have a bank account.

Multiple applications are not allowed and shall lead to the exclusion of all applications concerned.

3. Award criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- the relevance and added value of the project with regard to the objective of the call (30%)
- the extent to which the action meets the requirements of the call (30%);
- the quality, accuracy, clarity, completeness and cost-effectiveness of the application and the estimated budget (20%);
- the relevance of the experience of the applying organisation(s) and staff (20%).

VII. NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION AND SIGNATURE OF GRANT AGREEMENTS

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

The selected Grantees will be invited to sign a Grant Agreement (See Appendix III, for information only), formalising their legal commitments. **Potential applicants are strongly advised to read the draft contract, in particular its requirements in terms of payment and reporting.**

VIII. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Phases	Indicative timing
Publication of the call	5 October 2023
Deadline for submitting applications	26 October 2023 at 23.59 CET
Information to applicants on the results of the award procedure	16 November 2023
Signature of the grant agreements	17 November 2023
Implementation period	20 November 2023 – 16 September 2024

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