

Call for expressions of interest for consultancy services: research, operational and strategic consultancy support for EaP CSF Working Group 2

Consultancy services: To provide EaP CSF Working Group 2 with research, operational and strategic support throughout its yearly activities that include Working Group meetings, participation in EaP Platform 2 meetings on Economic Development and Market Opportunities and associated panels, implementation of work plans, country and region-focused input collection.

Closing Date: Monday, 10 May 2021

1. Title of the contracts:

Working Group consultant for EaP CSF Working Group 2 (WG2)

Duration: May-December 2021; potentially can be extended for 2022 and 2023

2. About EaP CSF and EaP CSF Working Groups

The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (hereinafter EaP CSF or the Forum) is a community of non-governmental organisations established in 2009, with the support of the European Commission. EaP CSF is open to bona fide non-governmental organisations from the six partner states (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine), as well as to EU member states civil society organisations (CSOs) which share the objectives of the Forum and value cooperation.

Every two years, 160 CSOs (20 from each EaP National Platform (total 120), and a maximum of 40 EU CSOs) are selected to participate in the life of the Forum as EaP CSF delegates. They are organised in 5 Working Groups in alignment with the official Eastern Partnership architecture:

- Democracy, human rights, good governance and stability (WG1);
- Economic integration and convergence with EU policies (WG2);
- Environment, climate change and energy security (WG3);
- Contacts between people (WG4);
- Social and labour policies and social dialogue (WG5)

Each WG is managed by two coordinators, one representing EaP-based organisations and one representing EU-based organisations.

3. About EaP CSF Working Group 2

EaP CSF Working Group “Economic Integration & Convergence with EU Policies” (hereinafter WG2) provides expertise on a range of topics, including trade, convergence with EU policies and standards, harmonisation of digital markets, and structural economic reforms. WG2 also takes an active interest in the implementation of bilateral trade agreements signed between the EU and individual EaP countries – namely Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.

WG2 has a number of policy priorities which it seeks to further promote in the EaP’s agenda, including:

- Creating a favourable regulatory and economic environment for SMEs through the implementation of structural reforms;
- Addressing dysfunctionalities in the financial sector and gaps in access to finance for SMEs;
- Supporting the creation of job opportunities at national, regional, and local levels;
- Supporting equal employment opportunities for both men and women;
- Fostering the harmonisation of partner countries’ digital markets;
- Supporting easy and affordable access to the internet, namely in rural areas, through the development and implementation of broadband strategies;
- Promoting the participation of consumer protection organisations in developing, implementing and monitoring new national action plans;
- Mainstreaming the principles of sustainable development across all policy areas and introducing adequate responses to climate change;
- Supporting partner countries’ efforts to become members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

To find out more about EaP CSF WG2, its membership, projects and publications, please check <https://eap-csf.eu/working-group-two/>

4. Responsibilities of the WG2 consultant and indicative deliverables

The selected WG2 consultant will perform the following duties in agreement with the EaP CSF Secretariat and the two coordinators of WG2:

Technical/ research support

- Support WG2 with technical expertise on several thematic areas (i.e. economic development/ trade/ harmonisation of digital markets/ structural reforms);
- Follow the relevant policy/ political processes at the EU institutions level and identify those that have an implication for the EaP countries, and the thematic areas covered by WG2 (i.e. EU Digital Single Market Strategy, EU trade policy, EU industrial strategy, EU smart and mobility strategy, European Green Deal, etc.)
- Conduct desk research and collect input from members and from existing products of the Forum (i.e. re-granting projects, policy papers, statements) on dedicated topics at stake;

- Contribute to and review policy input drafted by WG2 members/ WG2 coordinators/ Secretariat staff.
- Provide a comparative regional analysis and perspective over given topics;
- Support the WG2 coordinators and the Secretariat in shaping the annual WG2 meeting agenda and the WG2 meeting during EaP CSF Annual Assembly;
- Design and draft written products such as i.e. WG2 meeting agenda, internal/ external event concepts and questions to speakers, research notes, policy briefs, statements, terms of reference, etc.
- Coordinate the collection of input from members for the Forum's participation in the EaP Platform 2 meetings on "Economic Development and market opportunities" and its respective Panels on: (1) Structural reforms, financial sector architecture, agriculture and SMEs; (2) Trade; (3) Harmonisation of Digital Markets.

The list of indicative deliverables includes:

- Detailed WG2 meeting concepts, agendas and reports;
- Desk-based and participatory research products (on a case-by-case basis);
- Suggestions for an improved participation of the WG2 in EaP Platform 2 meeting and its respective panels and other high-level meetings
- Written contributions to the overall operation of WG2 and its activities;

This is not an exhaustive list of responsibilities and deliverables. Both are subject to review on a regular basis, in agreement with the Consultant.

5. General qualifications of the consultant

- Postgraduate university degree (political science/ international relations/ development studies/ CSO management/ economics, etc.) with relevant thematic expertise and work experience;
- Proven expertise and experience in the field(s) of economic development/ trade/ digitalisation with a focus on the Eastern Partnership region;
- Good understanding of the EaP policy and of the role of civil society in shaping it;
- Sound knowledge of the functioning of the EU institutions and EU's foreign affairs, in particular towards EU's Eastern Neighbourhood and any related flagship initiatives or programmes;
- Good understanding of economic indicators and capacity to provide qualitative analysis on given topics;
- Good understanding of organizational structures operations and policies of non-governmental organisations and familiarity with EaP CSF processes and structures;
- Capacity to understand and assess the opportunities, challenges and limitations of structures such as EaP CSF Working Groups;
- Good desk and participatory research skills coupled with good drafting and reporting abilities;
- Good command of English (mandatory) and of Russian (desirable); knowledge of any other EaP and EU languages is appreciated;

- Ability to work independently and as a part of a team;
- Flexibility and ability to work under tight deadlines;
- Experience working with EaP CSF is a plus.

6. Duration and location of the assessment and estimated workload

Expected workload: between 2h/week and 20h/week, depending on the calendar of activities of WG2 and the agreed responsibilities with each consultant;

Duration of the assignment: until the end of 2021 (with possibility of extension in 2022 and 2023)

Location of the assignment: home-based

The current assignment does not involve travelling to the Eastern Partnership Countries.

7. Recruitment process

Qualified candidates are invited to apply by **10/05/2021, 23:59 CET** by sending the following documents to **applications@eap-csf.eu** (Subject line: **EaP CSF – WG2 consultant application**):

- CV (maximum 5 pages, in English)
- Motivation letter (maximum 1 page, in English, explaining why the candidate could be an asset for Working Group 2)
- Financial proposal (specifying expected hourly rate)

Only pre-selected candidates will be contacted for a brief interview that will take place in the second half of May 2021.

EaP CSF applies a fair and transparent recruitment process that will take into account both the expertise and skills of the applicants, as well as their financial proposal. For any additional information, please contact admin@eap-csf.eu.

8. References

For more information about EaP CSF Working Groups, please check: <https://eap-csf.eu/working-groups/>

For more information about the participation of EaP CSF in the EaP architecture meetings, please check: <https://eap-csf.eu/policy-dialogue/>