

## **Call for experts to coordinate the recruitment of research teams to develop nine policy papers on the effects of COVID-19 in the Eastern Partnership countries**

[The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum](#) is looking for experts/teams of experts to coordinate the recruitment of research teams to develop nine policy papers on the effects of COVID-19 on the selected sectors in the Eastern Partnership countries. The task that can be split among a number of experts will include the elaboration of the TORs for the recruitment of maximum 9 research teams (late August-early September), participation in the selection of research teams (mid to late September) and providing further detailisation of the TORs for the selected research teams (early October). The expression of interests partially covering the outlined scope of work will be considered. A number of experts will be recruited to complete this task in full.

### **Background**

The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) is a community of nongovernmental 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 state CSOs which share the objectives of the Forum and are willing to work with EaP NGOs to further promote and develop them.

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, EaP CSF aims to contribute to shaping the public policies in the EaP region, using the potential for change offered by the crisis. In the course of the upcoming months (September 2020 - February 2021), EaP CSF will produce a series of policy papers assessing the impact of COVID-19 on the following thematic areas identified as a priority by the Working Groups (WG) of the Forum:

- **Decentralisation and local government in the EaP countries (WG1)**
- **Freedom of speech and media in the COVID-19 context (WG1)**
- **SMEs digital transformation in the EaP countries in COVID-19 times: challenges and digital solutions (WG2)**
- **Waste and water management and transition to circular economy (WG3)**
- **COVID-19 effects on transport (WG3)**
- **Digital literacy in EaP countries (WG4)**
- **Access to online and offline education in EaP countries (WG4)**
- **Impact of COVID-19 on labour migration from EaP countries to the EU (WG5)**
- **Framework policy paper integrating the findings emerging from the above-mentioned policy papers that will serve as an umbrella for the series of eight policy papers**

The papers will:

- Analyse how the crisis affected certain policy areas identifying threats and opportunities for the medium and long-term
- Assess the implementation of specific EaP 2020 deliverables identified as priorities in each policy paper;
- Demonstrate policy-driven solutions and recommendations (development of mitigation and adaptation strategies will be an essential part of the papers);
- Provide a comparative regional perspective and identify lessons learned from both the EaP and the EU;
- Be based on consultations with EaP CSF membership;
- Be peer-reviewed.

Although each policy paper will have a specific thematic focus, they will fit under one broad common vision and will be produced under one umbrella as part of an EaP CSF series.

The primary target audience of the papers are EaP governments and EU decision-makers; secondary - civil society, academia and broader audience. (for more details regarding each topic, see *Annex 2*).

### **Duties, responsibilities and expected results**

The selected expert/s will elaborate specific Terms of Reference for the recruitment of research teams that will develop the policy papers' series (Task 1). They will participate in the selection of research teams for a selected number of policy papers (Task 2). The experts can select a certain number of selection processes that they have the expertise to participate in. The experts will provide further detailisation of the TORs for the selected research teams (Task 3). The experts should identify for which topics they possess relevant expertise to work with the selected team on the detailisation of the TORs. The selected experts will work closely with the EaP CSF Secretariat and with a dedicated Steering Committee Task Force.

Depending on his/ her expertise and availability (clearly expressed in the application for this call), the expert(s) should be involved in at least two Tasks.

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Indicative number of days</b>
<b>Task 1. Elaboration of the detailed TORs for the recruitment of 9 research teams</b>	The expert will elaborate one detailed TORs (including the general methodology and key structure of the policy papers series) that will allow to recruit qualified research teams to produce 9 policy papers and for the research teams to understand the complexity of the research assignment	4 working days

	<p>and the required amount of effort. The expert will also elaborate the following :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Required knowledge, qualifications and experience for the research teams as well as selection criteria for recruiting research teams;</li> <li>- Methodological framework for producing the series of policy papers and possible research methods;</li> <li>- Coordinated and concerted timeline with common milestones to be achieved collectively by the research teams.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Task 2. Organisation of the selection process of the research teams for a selected number of policy papers and participation in the selection process of a selected number of policy papers</b></p>	<p>In his/her expression of interest the expert will identify the policy papers for which s/he has the expertise to sit on the selection committee and organise the selection process with participation of one member of the EaP CSF Steering Committee and one member of the Secretariat.</p>	<p>1 working day for selection process for each of the 9 policy paper - 9 working days in total</p>
<p><b>Task 3. Refinement of pre-research details with selected research teams</b></p>	<p>After the selection of the research teams, the expert/s based on the discussions with the research teams and the EaP CSF will provide further details on the research topic to be explored by the teams that will ensure the delivery of the quality policy paper in correspondence with the expectations of the EaP CSF and fitting the overall series.</p>	<p>1,5 working days per topic - 13,5 working days in total</p>

### Qualifications

- Postgraduate university degree or equivalent with relevant work experience in relevant discipline (International Relations, Political Science, Sociology, etc.), preferably with a focus on the Eastern Partnership region;
- Good understanding of the peculiarities of the Eastern Partnership policy;
- Extensive research experience;
- Experience in designing Terms of Reference, ideally for the recruitment of research experts;
- Excellent written communications skills in English;
- Ability to work remotely and across teams located in different countries;
- Flexibility and ability to work under tight deadlines.

## Indicative timeline

1. Recruitment phase:
  - Launch of the call for applications for experts: 1/08/2020
  - Period for questions about the assignment: until 28/08/2020. The Secretariat is available to provide clarification to the published TORs during this period.
  - Applications deadline: 1/09/2020. Applications will be considered on the rolling basis and the positions may be filled before the deadline.
  - Selection and signature of the contract with the expert(s): by 3/09/2020
2. Discussion of the expert with EaP CSF Secretariat and Task Force to contextualise the assignment and understand the scope of work: by 8/09/2020
3. First draft of the TORs: by 16/09/2020
4. Comments by Secretariat and Task Force by 18/09//2020
5. Final draft of the Terms of Reference: by 20/09/2020
6. Selection of the research teams: first half of October
7. Refinement pre-research details: end of October

**Expected workload:** The workload depends on the number of Tasks and the number of selection processes the expert will be contributing to. The total workload for the assignment will not exceed 27 days.

**Location of the assignment:** home-based

## Conflict of interest policy

The selected experts/ team of experts (and the organisations they are associated with) coordinating this recruitment process will not be eligible to apply to participate in the research teams that will elaborate the nine policy papers analysing the impact of COVID-19 in the Eastern Partnership countries.

## Application procedure

Qualified candidates are invited to apply by **1 September 2020** by sending the following documents to [applications@eap-csf.eu](mailto:applications@eap-csf.eu) (Subject line: EaP CSF – COVID19 policy papers expert)

- CV (maximum 2 pages, in English)
- Motivation letter (maximum 1 page, in English) in which the candidate mentions his/ her qualifications for the assignment and which included the financial proposal (specifying daily amount and the number of hours the expert is available for)
- The filled in table (*Annex 1*) clearly stating the tasks (1,2,3) and the research topics (9 in total) for which the expert is applying.

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](mailto:admin@eap-csf.eu).