

TERMS OF REFERENCE

For selecting 1 CSO from the Security Zone for implementing “Resilient CSOs + Responsible Budgeting = Accelerated AA implementation” Project

1. Brief project description

Donor: European Commission and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

Implementation period of the project: January 2023 – June 2025

Project total budget: EUR 1.1 million

Independent Think Tank Expert-Grup, as lead partner, in consortium with the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), Institutum Virtutes Civilis (IVC) and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Foundation started in January 2023 implementation of the project “Resilient CSOs + Responsible Budgeting = Accelerated AA implementation”, generically called “Civil Society for European Integration”.

The general objective of the project is to build and consolidate the capacities of civil society organisations (CSOs) to support the implementation of the conditionalities attached to Moldova’s accession process to the EU and the Association Agreement (AA), at the national and local levels.

Specific objectives:

1. Improve capacity, ensure resilience and enhance participation of CSOs in the budgetary monitoring and advocacy at the central and local level, with a priority focus on budget analysis in the context of AA implementation and Moldova’s accession process to the EU.
2. Enhance the capacity and involvement of the three CSOs' platforms (i) the Moldovan National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (ii) the EU-Moldova Civil Society Platform' and (iii) the Domestic Advisory Group on Trade and Sustainable Development, to provide cohesive support for the implementation of the AA and the conditionalities attached to Moldova’s accession process in the EU.

2. Objective of the assignment

The purpose of these Terms of References is to select, on a competitive process, **one CSOs from the Security Zone** that will implement the project’s activities. **The selected CSO will be the beneficiary of a sub-granting scheme of up to 20,000 EUR**, allocated throughout the project duration to finance all the activities that will contribute to the implementation of budget monitoring activities and reports preparation and publication. The grant will primarily cover salary, relevant administrative, and bank charges.

The beneficiary of the sub-granting scheme will follow five key objectives:

- monitoring the local budgets and budgetary allocations from the central level and development partners, with a special emphasis on local and regional infrastructure projects, social services, public services and other relevant projects related to the AA and Europeanization agenda;

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- monitoring, together with the central project team, the budgetary expenditures at the central level for projects and policies related to the Europeanization agenda, with a special emphasis on the following topics: justice sector and anti-corruption reform; labour and employment policies; social services; energy efficiency and renewable energy; public services; and human rights, including gender equality;
- participation, together with the central project team, in the dissemination and visibility activities at the local level;
- becoming local resource centres, capable of mobilizing other CSOs and civic activists at the local level for participatory budgeting and budgetary monitoring activities;
- participation in the activities of the CSOs platforms (mentioned above) by providing local/regional insights into position notes, events and advocacy activities of platforms.

3. Key activities to be conducted by the CSO

Activities to be implemented by selected CSO:

- The CSO will be responsible for drafting 2 budget expenditure monitoring reports: one at the local level and one at the central level. The CSO will select the topics taking into account its best knowledge of the local context and priorities, and in close coordination with the central project team experts. The methodology and implementation approach will follow the **Guidelines on civic participation in the budgetary process** developed in the framework of this project and available on euromonitor.md (available in Romania and Russian language). In the process of developing budget reports, the CSO will actively engage with the mentor (assigned by the central project team), who will provide practical guidance and mentorship to ensure the necessary quality, relevance and impact of these reports.
- The CSOs will conduct visibility and advocacy activities to promote the results of the independent budget monitoring reports they will develop. The visibility and advocacy activities will include at least one round table and one advocacy meeting per report.
- The CSO will engage in networking activities, ensuring an exchange of experience and lessons learned among other CSOs and, especially, between local (small) CSOs and central (well-established) CSOs.

4. Timeline of key activities

The activities will be implemented according to the following calendar:

- Drafting two independent budget expenditure tracking reports: August – March 2025;
- Conducting the visibility and awareness activities: August 2024 – April 2025;
- Engaging in networking activities, ensuring the exchange of experience and lessons learned among CSOs – throughout the project.

5. General and specific requirements from CSOs

General requirements:

- Non-governmental organization that is legally registered in the Republic of Moldova;
- Preference will be given to local CSOs that are actively working at the local/regional level;

- Independence from any political party or public authority;
- Ability to act according to the statute/regulation in the field of participatory budgeting;

Specific requirements:

- At least 3 years of experience in implementing projects/activities aimed at monitoring central/local budgets, mobilizing local communities and engaging with local public authorities;
- Previous experience in implementing grants, and sub-grants financed by the EU or other international development partners is considered an asset.

The key evaluation criteria will include, but will not be limited to: the experience in dealing with similar projects, capacity to mobilize local communities, including representatives from vulnerable groups, capacity to productively engage with local public authorities, reputation at the local level, political independence and integrity and willingness to work together and collaborate with the central project team.

6. How to apply

Interested CSOs are invited to submit their applications, that will include the following documents:

- a short motivation letter, indicating the reason for participation, and also the objectives and results that will be achieved following the use of the grant;
- a short description of the organization (1-2 pages);
- a proposed budget for project activities;
- the list of relevant project references (no limit);
- certificate of registration (excerpt from the State Register of Legal Entities issued no later than 12 months before the application submission date will be requested in case of contract signature);
- the activity report of the organization for the most recent year;
- the charter of the organization;
- financial reports for the last 3 years (balance sheets, profit and loss statement, etc.);
- the most recent audit report of the financial statements of the organization (if available).

The application should be presented in the Romanian or Russian language.