**Terms of Reference**

**Expert in Project Evaluation and Monitoring**

**To assist in the evaluation of the project**

**Title of the Project: Regional Youth Compact for Europe**

# Background Information

Regional Youth Compact for Europe is a three-year project that aims to empower CSOs, particularly youth organizations in the Western Balkans and Turkey to more effectively participate in policy design and in monitoring the process of EU integration. The RYCE is funded by the European Union as part of the Civil Society Facility and Media Programme for the years 2016-2017, Consolidating Regional Thematic Networks of Civil Society Organizations (***EuropeAid/154870/DH/ACT/Multi – Consolidating Regional Thematic Networks of Civil Society Organisations.)*** ***G***rant No. ***2018/395387.***

The project start date was April 20,2018 and the previewed end date is April 20, 2021. Request for no-cost extension until Julz 30,2021 was timely filed with the EC.

Fourteen organizations from the WB, EU and Turkey (Center for Democracy Foundation from Serbia, ALDA from France, CRTA from Serbia Belgrade, Youth Act Center from Albania and SODEM from Turkey with 9 Local Democracy Agencies from the WB, constituting Balkan Network for Local Democracy),  are working together on various activities aiming to strengthen the capacity of CSOs and youth organizations to monitor the implementation of public policies, to engage in evidence based advocacy through a structured civil dialogue with the focus on good governance, the rule of law, economic governance, employment and social policy reform. A combined set of awareness raising, capacity building and regional networking activities are aimed to strengthen the impact of CSOs in the reform process towards the EU integration.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project Partners (Consortium Structure)** | **Country** |
| CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY FOUNDATION, LEAD APPLICANT | Serbia |
| UG AGENCIJA LOKALNE DEMOKRATIJE PRIJEDOR | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| CENTAR LOKALNE DEMOKRATIJE LDA | Serbia |
| CRTA | Serbia |
| LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCY OF KOSOVO | Kosovo (under UNCHR 1244/99) |
| LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCY ALBANIA | Albania |
| YOUTH ACT CENTER | Albania |
| LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCY | Serbia |
| ASSOCIAZIONE PER L'AMBASCIATA DELLA DEMOCRAZIA LOCALE A ZAVIDOVICE ONLUS | Italy |
| AGENCIJA LOKALNE DEMOKRATIJE ZAVIDOVICI | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| AGENCIJA LOKALNE DEMOKRATIJE MOSTAR | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| ASSOCIATION DES AGENCES DE LA DEMOCRATIE LOCALE | France |
| ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC MUNICIPALITIES | Turkey |
| LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCY MONTENEGRO | Montenegro |
| ASSOCIATION OF THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCIES - SKOPJE | The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |

# Context of the Project

## Rationale

Youth in the Western Balkans are faced with similar challenges, such as high youth unemployment rates, low wages, low living standard, low approach to formal and non-formal education. As Eurostat data shows, the percentage of youths that are not in education, employment, or training is two times as high as in EU-28 countries, seeing no perspective in their countries of origin youth seek opportunities outside their borders. Research reveals that the people in the WB are more often faced with gender and minority discrimination. They are living in an ever more polluted environment without any clear signs of future improvement.

In their briefing titled “Youth challenges and opportunities in the Western Balkans”, the European Parliament describes youth situation in the WB region with the words “Deeply entrenched regional stereotypes, a lack of awareness of other cultures, demographic changes and a youth 'brain drain' are some of the pieces that make up this complex regional puzzle. Raising awareness about these challenges and the need for timely solutions is therefore crucial. The EU has been encouraging dialogue on the future of youth in the region through a number of projects and initiatives…” such as Regional Youth Compact for Europe.

Young people are an important resource for the future of the Western Balkans. On one side, young people are important part of every society and in this region, youth has a special advantage which reflects in the fact that young people can be a key factor for a building partnerships and bridging gaps in the Western Balkans. Young people themselves do not carry the burden of the past that has made series of conflicts in the region. That presents an added value resource that must be used for building peace based on mutual respect and trust. Regional cooperation is important for economic growth, intercultural exchange, building trustworthy institutions and democratic society and creating an environment that will entice youth to stay in this region.

In the WB there is especially a lack of youth participation in the processes of policy creation, especially on the local level where inclusion of all stakeholders is required most. Participation of young people is a key for the improvement of their being. One of the main goals in the RYCE project is to include more young people to engage themselves in addressing youth related problems and policies` priorities at the local level.

The RYCE’s approach is complementary with the 11 goals of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 goals, especially with Goal 9: Space and Participation for All and Goal 1: Connecting EU with Youth. The aim of first field of action, as formulated in the EU Youth Strategy, is that: "Young people’s participation in representative democracy and civil society at all levels and in society at large should be supported." One of the main indicators in this domain is: Young people's participation in political or community/environmentally-oriented NGOs. Young people's engagement in politics and participation in political initiatives aimed at improving something in their own local community (not formal membership, but, involvement in activities). Making EU values and policies more visible from a youth perspective is crucial – to educate young people about benefits that EU bring to them and whole society and to empower youngsters to implement and monitor the EU reforms. The advantages that the EU integration can bring to the WB countries must be better communicated to youth. The advantages of EU integration are most reflected in establishing the rule of law, good governance and ensuring the respect everybody’s social rights. Youth have to see a clear picture of importance of the EU transformational framework and potential and all the good it brings, for example the EU can be source of higher employment, a better future and travel opportunities. In this context, through RYCE young people are getting familiar with the process of their countries becoming closer to the EU (stabilization and association process, accession negotiations). In particular, the RYCE focuses on policies that are highly relevant for the youth – those enlisted in the Chapter 19 (Employment and social rights), Chapter 23 (Judiciary and fundamental rights) and 24 (Justice, freedom and security) as these Chapters that have tangible effects on the everyday lives of citizens and young people.

## Overall objective(s)

Contribute to empowerment of CSOs, particularly the youth organizations, in WB and Turkey, to more effectively participate in reforms relative to the EU accession negotiation process, to dialogue with governments and influence policy through consolidating platforms for regional cooperation, fostering participative culture and promoting active citizenship, accountability of government to citizens and society and nurturing common European identity.

## Specific objective(s):

1. Strengthen capacity of CSOs, incl. youth organizations, to monitor policies, engage in evidence-based advocacy through structured civil dialogue, focusing on good governance relative for the rule of law, economic governance, employment and social reform.
2. Increase the level of youth participation in structured civil dialogue and in other innovative mechanisms for influencing policy and decision making and implementation of reforms.
3. Widen the impact of CSOs social campaigning and advocacy on local/national level through expanded CSOs cooperation and exchange, coalitions and networking on regional and European level.
4. Consolidate the Balkan Network for Local Democracy as a regional cooperation/consultation platform engaging CSOs, youth and LAs in WB and Turkey;
5. Improve innovative and youth friendly communication/outreach activities aimed to bring together stakeholders with transformative role in EU integration process and bring about positive change at the local level.

## Target groups and Beneficiaries:

* TG1: CSOs & CSOs networks (“Network” members);
* TG2: Local/national/regional CSOs, incl. youth organizations from WB & Turkey;
* TG3: Local/regional authorities & LAs associations;
* TG4: EU based CSOs/networks/think tanks;
* TG5: local/national/regional media;
* *Beneficiaries:* Local/national governments; Existing civil dialogue structures; CSOs & regional youth organizations; Local communities in smaller municipalities and general public; EU based CSOs and networks; Reforms` stakeholders; EU based policy making institutions;

## Expected results:

1. **R1:** Improved capacities of CSOs for monitoring EU oriented reforms relative to rule of law, public administration reform, economic governance, employment and social reform; Increased number of local CSOs in structured civil dialogue for influencing policy;
2. **R2:** Youth organizations participation in structured civil dialogue and in other innovative mechanisms for influencing policy/reforms increased;
3. **R3:** Impact of CSOs campaigning & advocacy widened due to expanded regional cooperation and practice exchange, while coalitions and networks on regional and European level increased; Up-graded and consolidated regional consultation platform;
4. **R4:** Balkan Network for Local Democracy is consolidated and its capacities for advocacy, dialogue with governments and for influencing policy making are up-graded; **R5.** Raised awareness on EU oriented reforms’ benefits for citizens through conducted public campaigns on local, national and regional level

## Structure of Project Activities

Main project work packages which are implemented at local and regional level include capacity building, monitoring and advocacy, regional networking and exchange, public campaign and sub-granting programme for CSOs from the WB.

The Action comprises of 6 work packages. Each work package contains several activities. Some activities were reformatted due to pandemic of the Covid19 crisis.

1. ***Project Management***

1.1.Project Management Team – regular meetings of the consortium members are organized and exchange tools created;

1.2.Regional Thematic Network Forum: The Forum will be organized to plan, monitor and evaluate local and regional activities and will be held three times along the implementation period. It will consist of 32 members - members of the Project Management Team (14), Members of the Regional Youth Working Group (8), up to 10 CSOs and youth organizations from the WB countries

***(2) Capacity Building of the Network Members***

2.1. Trainings for the members of the Network “*Sharing Experience - Expanding the Network`s Thematic Working Programme*” (Novi Sad and Mostar): empowering network members for monitoring implementation of reforms in the context of EU integration and accession processes;

2.2. Study visit to NCEU (Belgrade, Serbia); two-day visit to NCEU structures and working groups related to rule of law, fight against corruption, economic development and employment;

2.3. Workshop for Regional Youth Working Group: 3 events to be organized in Mostar, Prishtina and Knjazevac, for total 60 young activists from WB

* *Theme for Workshop I*: Rule of law and fundamental rights – why is it important for the youth and how youth can contribute to monitor reforms in these fields
* *Theme for Workshop II*: Education and Employment: Labour Market Reforms; Social Cohesion; Youth and future of work;
* *Theme for Workshop II*I: Good Governance and Public Administration Reform from Youth Perspective: local, national and regional perspective

2.4. Western Balkans *Politeia* Summer School – two five-day courses to be organized for young activists for total 50 participants;

***(3) Monitoring and Advocacy,***

3.1. Survey on CSOs participation in policy design & monitoring of implementation reforms;

3.2. Desk Analysis on Youth Transformational Potential in EU Integration Processes;

3.3. Open Local Assemblies/Councils - My City - Youth City - to be organized in 11 cities, with envisaged cooperation of schools and local governments, businesses and CSOs.

***(4) Regional Networking and Exchange programme***

4.1. Community multi stakeholders` platforms – to be implemented locally in 11 cities, through cooperation with local governments, businesses, media with aim to improve involvement of youth organizations and CSOs in local decision-making process

4.2. Local Youth Workshops “Regional Youth Compact for Europe – We are Europeans” – to be organized locally in 11 cities – total 660 youngster to participate, connect and exchange;

4.3. Youth Regional Compact for Europe Network: starting event for the Network resulting from previous activities gathering 50 participants from youth organizations in the Western Balkans. Planned venue: Prishtina;

4.4. Annual Conferences: 3 high profile events with participation of key stakeholders, to be organized in Tirana, Novi Sad and Belgrade;

4.5. Internship program for Youth: an opportunity for young people in the region to learn, by spending one month on the internship program, exchange their concepts and assist in searching and establishing innovative, young friendly, forms and content of communication, leading to increased youth participation in civil initiatives, policy design and in structured dialogue; Selected interns will be allocated to one of the hosting organization within one-month internship program;

***(5) Sub-granting Programme*** – up to 13 small grants to be allocated to youth organizations in WB for the amount of 3,000 EUR.

***(6) Public Campaign.***

6/1 Creation of visual identity of the Action and communication strategy;

6/2 Production of promotional material

6/3 Promotional activities;

6/4 Video production;

6/5 Direct action with citizens

One of the main activities in the third project year is Sub-granting programme (Work Package V- Activity Sub-Granting) named GRANT SUPPORT YOUTH FUND “WE HAVE A SAY” for local youth organizations. This Activity is based on the long-lasting experience of co-applicants in providing support to civil society organizations and in empowering youth for democracy and human rights. It follows the line of series of other activities organized along the RYCE project since 2018 and implemented by the project partners. It particularly follows the project aim to empower the youth in the Western Balkans with knowledge and practical insights in implementing actions that would lead to improved knowledge and understanding of reforms in the field of rule of law, good governance, employment and social policy which is relevant for the youth of the Western Balkans.

# Objective, Purpose and Expected Results of the Assignment

## Overall objective of the Assignment

To undertake the evaluation of the project Regional Youth Compact for Europe, from April 18 2018 to June 20, 2021, implemented by Center for Democracy Foundation and project partners (beneficiaries) as enlisted in Section 1. And to make recommendations that might improve design and implementation of similar projects in future.

## Expected Results

Evaluator will carry out the project evaluation in accordance with EU procedures and standards and submit the report. The report will be used by the partners.

## Scope of the Assignment

#### General

Evaluator is bound by a Declaration of Impartiality and Confidentiality to be signed before starting the evaluation. If the evaluator finds there might be a situation of conflict of interests, he/she must inform the Center for Democracy Foundation immediately. Strict confidentiality is required from the evaluator involved in the implementation of this evaluation.

The purpose of the evaluation is:

* To assess the overall performance in the context of project objectives and outcomes set out in the project documents
* To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the project
* To analyse critically the implementation the implementation and management arrangements of projects
* To assess the progress towards achievement of the outcomes
* To list and document lessons concerning project design, implementation and management.

Evaluator shall assess relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of the project. All criteria should be rated using a six-point scale:

1 Highly unsatisfactory

2 Unsastisfactory

3 marginally unsastisfactory

4 Marginally satrisfactory

5 Satisfactory

6 Highly satisfactory

#### Specific Activities

In order to evaluate the project and produce the report, the evaluator shall

1. Review the project proposal and the subsequent modifications, and the submitted reports for Year I and Year II
2. Hold the initial meeting with the Project Coordinator to agree on specific design and methods for evaluation, as well as to prepare evaluation questions that will be used in the evaluation, given limitations of time and existing data.
3. Organization of interviews with key staff involved in the project implementation, from the Project Coordinator and 5 selected project partners (beneficiaries)
4. Develop survey in English to collect information from the relevant stakeholders (at least 5), including direct beneficiaries such as participants of the activities.
5. Prepare inception reports with evaluation matrix
6. Discuss the project with the members of the project team/ take note of their perceptions of accomplishments and potentials for further development. Objectively verifiable data should be collected whenever available, to supplement evidence obtained through interviews and discussions.
7. Incorporate received feedback into the Evaluation Report
8. Prepare the Evaluation Report (min 20 and max 30 pages and annexes)

The evaluator shall not evaluate the budget implementation.

The following set of information sources about the project will be made available to the evaluator:

* Project documents
* Annual reports for Year I and II
* Policy recommendations
* Key project products
* List of key contacts for interviews

# Logistics and Timing

## Location

Evaluator is to evaluate project implementation in Serbia, Northern Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Kosovo.\*

Meetings with project team members are to be organized online, while meetings with the project coordinator may be organized *in vivo* in accordance with the evaluator`s preference.

Evaluation does not include any displacement outside of Belgrade.

## Start date and period of implementation

It is expected that the evaluation will be completed with the following deliverables due:

* Work plan and evaluation matrix ad survey (questionnaires): May 30,2021
* Interviews and Draft Evaluation report and presentation to the project team: July 15, 2021
* Consultation with the project team: July 22, 2021

Number of working days: min 20 - max 25

Payments will be made in 2 instalments, upon billing by the evaluator and subject to quality review, clearance and acceptance by the CDF.

The criteria of utility, credibility and relevance will be used for assessing the quality of the evaluation report:

* The Evaluation report shall be written in English
* The Executive Summary is to be written as a short chapter, highlighting the evaluation mandate, approach, key findings, conclusions and recommendations.
* The information provided in the report has to be completed, well-structured and well-presented.
* The information in the report has to be reliable i.e. well documented and supported.
* Recommendations have to be concrete and implementable.
* National and regional perspective shall be taken into account.

# Requirements

## Qualifications

### Education:

A university degree in the social sciences, law or economics.

### Work experience:

Minimum 10 years of experience of relevant professional experience, preferably in civil society organizations or in national/international development context.

Previous experience in project evaluation methodologies:

Previous assignments in project management would be considered as an asset

### Knowledge:

* Knowledge of political situation in the Western Balkans
* Knowledge of youth related public policies in the Western Balkans
* Knowledge of EU enlargement process
* Knowledge of evaluation standards and norms
* Knowledge of monitoring and evaluation methodologies

### Skills and competencies:

* Excellent analytical skills
* Display ability to synthesize research and reach empirically based conclusions on related subject
* High quality of writing skills
* Proven capacity to produce reports
* Capacity to provide experienced advice on best practices
* Focuses on result for the client and responds positively to feedback
* Good application of Results-Based Management
* Good communication, coordination and facilitation skills
* Displays cultural, gender, religious, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability
* Demonstrates integrity by modelling ethical standards

### Personal qualifications:

Ability to deliver when working under pressure and within changing circumstances

Consistently approaches work with energy and a positive, constructive attitude

Excellent interpersonal skills

Evidence of ability to express ideas clearly, to work independently and in team

Ability to summarize and systematize complex information.

### Language:

Excellent knowledge of English, oral and written.

## Application Procedure

Qualified and interested candidates shall submit their applications via e-mail [info@centaronline.org](mailto:info@centaronline.org) with the subject **Application to Tender No. RYCE-EV 2021 within the deadline in the Call.**

Time-frame, Level of Effort, and Location

The Expert`s level of effort is previewed for an estimate of minimum 20 to maximum 25 days working days starting (for preparatory activities) from May 10, 2021. The assignment shall be completed by July 22, 2021 (all outputs approved by the CDF)

Remunerations

The daily fee shall be determined based on the expert’s experience within maximum rate allocated for this activity. The payment will be done in two instalments, following the submission of the necessary documents.

Reporting and Final Documentation

The Expert will be requested to deliver the following documents:

* CV in English
* *Invoice* (original and signed)
* *Signed report*

The above-mentioned documentation shall be delivered to the following contact person and address:

**Ms. Katarina Stojkovic**

**Financial Officer**

**Center for Democracy Foundation**

**Kraljice Natalije 70/II**

[katarina@centaronline.org](mailto:katarina@centaronline.org)