



# Union Civil Protection Mechanism

## Prevention and Preparedness Projects in Civil Protection and Marine Pollution

Call for proposals document

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**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations  
(ECHO)

ECHO A – Emergency Management  
**Unit A4 - Civil Protection Policy**

## Union Civil Protection Mechanism

### Prevention and Preparedness in Civil Protection and Marine Pollution

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

EU Member States are facing a wide range of disasters every year, including floods, forest fires, earthquakes and various technological, radiological and environmental accidents. A first EU-wide overview of the risks faced by Member States was published by the Commission in April 2014<sup>1</sup>.

Disaster prevention and preparedness are therefore important elements of the European Civil Protection cooperation. This Call for proposals will help to fund activities aimed at closer cooperation in prevention, preparedness and awareness-raising in civil protection and marine pollution<sup>2</sup>. It covers any type of disaster (i.e. floods, earthquakes, fires, pandemics, CBRN, etc.).

The legal framework for this call is the Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism<sup>3</sup> ("UCPM"), and the Commission Implementing Decision<sup>4</sup>.

The objective of the UCPM is to strengthen the cooperation between the Union and the Member States and to facilitate coordination in the field of civil protection in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing, preparing for and responding to natural and man-made disasters. In doing so, the Mechanism supports the efforts of Participating States to protect primarily people, but also the environment and property, including cultural heritage, against all kinds of natural and man-made disasters, including the consequences of acts of terrorism, technological, radiological or environmental disasters, marine pollution and acute health emergencies, occurring inside and outside the Union. In the case of the consequences of acts of terrorism or radiological disasters, the Mechanism covers only preparedness and response actions.

The legal framework, specifically Article 28 of the UCPM Decision, provides for the possibility that certain third countries may benefit from EU funding, including under this Call for proposals. A complete list of those countries is provided under

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<sup>1</sup> SWD(2014) 134 final, 8.4.2014

<sup>2</sup> Actions falling under Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002 establishing a European Maritime Safety Agency are not covered by this call.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L347, 20.12.2013, p. 924.

<sup>4</sup> Implementing Decision of 16.10.2014 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism and repealing Decisions 2004/277/EC, Euratom and 2007/606/EC, Euratom (C(2014)7489 final): OJ L320, 6.11.2014, p. 1–45.

## **2. PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS OF THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

Under the present Call for Proposals funding may be awarded to projects in 2 separate policy areas: **Prevention** and **Preparedness**, each with its respective specific objectives, priorities and available budget.

There is also a general section applicable both to prevention and preparedness projects which outlines the admissibility requirements, the eligibility criteria, the exclusion criteria and the selection and award criteria.

### **2.1 PREVENTION**

The term prevention refers to any action aimed at reducing risks or mitigating adverse consequences of disasters for people, the environment and property, including cultural heritage.<sup>5</sup>

The UCPM aims at achieving a higher level of protection and resilience against disasters by preventing or reducing their potential effects, by fostering a culture of prevention and by improving cooperation among civil protection actors as well as with other relevant services.

To enhance prevention, the UCPM focuses on improving the knowledge base, promoting risk assessments and risk management planning as well as risk management capability assessments. Prevention is also linked to other policy fields, such as climate change adaptation.

#### **Objectives**

Support and complement the efforts of Member States in the field of disaster prevention, focusing on areas where cooperation provides added value and complement existing cooperation frameworks/instruments provided by relevant EU macro-regional strategies.

Support the IPA II beneficiaries and the European Neighbourhood Policy countries in the field of disaster prevention and improve their cooperation with the Mechanism and its Participating States.

### **PREVENTION PRIORITIES**

#### **1. Projects focusing on improving urban resilience by addressing cascade effects and the resilience of urban infrastructure.**

- Actions supporting increase of knowledge of cascade effects in urban areas that would result in new innovative and effective approaches to improve urban resilience;
- Actions promoting raising awareness (risk-informed cities, risk communication with people centred approach, resilient communities);

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<sup>5</sup> Art. 4(4) of Decision 1313/2013.

- Actions promoting innovative approaches to increase the resilience of urban infrastructures, including critical infrastructure.

**2. Projects with the objective of implementing multi-hazard assessments of risks, risk management capabilities assessments, risk management planning and risk awareness campaigns, with a particular focus on cross-border and regional dimensions.**

- Replicable actions supporting knowledge based improvements in methodologies on risk assessments with particular focus on multi-hazard assessment;
- Actions promoting exchange of good practices and experiences within the framework of an integrated approach to risk awareness and crisis communication;
- Actions promoting integration of risk assessments and risk management capability assessments into risk management planning;
- Exchanges of best practices in the area of risk management capabilities assessment.

**3. Pilot and demonstration projects aiming to gather, record and share disaster loss data at all levels of government, taking into account loss data guidance prepared by the EU expert group on disaster damage loss data<sup>6</sup> and Sendai Framework indicators.**

Projects should be complementary and take stock of and build upon prior achievements in the field, including disaster risk reduction actions. Please check the prevention and preparedness projects' database: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection-europe/selected-projects\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection-europe/selected-projects_en)

**TYPE OF ACTIVITIES WHICH CAN BE FINANCED UNDER THIS CALL**

- Projects aimed at studying, designing, developing, testing and implementing new prevention or disaster risk management approaches, or at evaluating and/or improving existing ones;
- Projects aimed at studying, designing, developing, testing and implementing innovative approaches, techniques and tools to link prevention measures to preparedness and response needs and to integrate disaster risk management considerations into planning and other policies;

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<sup>6</sup> [http://drr.jrc.ec.europa.eu/Portals/0/Loss/JRC\\_guidelines\\_loss\\_data\\_recording\\_v10.pdf](http://drr.jrc.ec.europa.eu/Portals/0/Loss/JRC_guidelines_loss_data_recording_v10.pdf)

- Projects aimed at developing general principles and guidelines relating to hazards with potentially serious impact on human, environmental and economic situations;
- Projects in the area of prevention and risk management aimed at concrete improvements and innovation thanks to transnational cooperation;
- Projects aiming at identifying best practices and/or transferring them in other countries and regions.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

- Enhancement of cooperation, exchange of good practices and support for capacity building in prevention actions outlined in Chapter 2 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU (including risk assessment, risk management planning, risk prevention measures).
- Improved knowledge base on disaster risks and disaster prevention policies, and raising awareness of disaster prevention, including at urban level, which would also contribute to better understanding of and adapting to the future impacts of climate change;
- Improved links between relevant actors and policies throughout the disaster management cycle (prevention – preparedness – response - recovery);
- Improved cross border and macro regional cooperation in disaster prevention (this may include city-to-city cooperation);
- EU contribution to implementation of the Sendai international Framework for disaster risk reduction. <http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework>

For more information about EU disaster risk management policies:

- [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/disaster\\_risk\\_management\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/disaster_risk_management_en.pdf)
- [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/prevention-preparedness\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/prevention-preparedness_en.pdf)

For more information about EU financed projects:

- <http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection-europe/selected-projects>

## BUDGET AVAILABLE

The total budget for the co-financing of prevention projects:

- A) Internal budget item: EUR 2 800 000** for projects benefitting Participating States in the UCPM.
- B) External budget item: EUR 1 400 000** for projects benefitting countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy and IPA II beneficiaries, not yet participating in the UCPM.

Applicants have to choose under which budget item to apply and indicate this clearly in their project proposal.

The EU co-funding rate amounts to 75 % of total eligible costs, with a maximum EU contribution of EUR 800 000, whereby the EU contributes to the eligible cost of each beneficiary at a 75% rate.

The beneficiaries need to guarantee that the remaining 25% of the total eligible cost come from sources other than the EU grant, whereby each beneficiary must guarantee that 25% of its eligible cost is funded from sources other than the Union.

The Commission reserves the right not to grant the entire budget available.

## **2.2 PREPAREDNESS**

The term preparedness means a state of readiness and capability of human and material means, structures, communities and organisations enabling them to ensure an effective rapid response to a disaster, obtained as a result of action taken in advance.<sup>7</sup>

Preparedness is essential in the management of disasters - being well prepared can save lives and reduce the impact of disasters. In order to enhance European civil protection preparedness, this Call will fund primarily preparedness projects which build on the Decision No 1313/2013/EU.

The UCPM is intended to improve the level of preparedness of civil protection systems, their personnel and population. When natural or man-made disasters strike a country, within the European Union or outside, the Mechanism allows for the necessary operational resources to be mobilised to assist and provide a prompt response.

As such, a project may very well be used to develop new concepts or models within the framework of the UCPM training programmes, or to identify ways of increasing efficiency with regard to deployment and/or plans for deployment of operational assets and modules to disaster stricken areas. This could include the establishment and/or development of multi-national modules. Such a project could also be used to develop new and more efficient ways of conducting UCPM exercises, of drawing up lessons following disasters, of planning emergency operations, etc.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Improve the preparedness of the UCPM to respond to disaster risks.

Develop cooperation across countries on challenges in the field of civil protection and/or marine pollution and enhance the awareness of professionals and volunteers.

Complement existing cooperation frameworks/instruments provided by relevant EU macro-regional strategies.

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<sup>7</sup> Art. 4(3) of Decision 1313/2013.

Support a closer partnership between the UCPM and IPA II beneficiaries and countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

## **PREPAREDNESS PRIORITIES**

### **1. Actions, other than those mentioned in 2.8 (certification and adaptation) aimed at further developing the preparedness aspects of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, inter alia through:**

- the development of new response capacities (e.g. projects leading to the creation of multinational response capacities, the development and testing of niche capacities or innovative technologies and methodologies, the design of new expert teams, developing virtual pools of relief and shelter items).
- better planning of operations (e.g. studies linking existing risk assessments to operational planning and preparedness under the European Emergency Response Capacity and the European Medical Corps),
- enhanced quality and interoperability of response capacities (e.g. projects leading to the development of new quality and interoperability guidance, common methodologies, the design of new training courses for the European Emergency Response Capacity or the European Medical Corps, the development of tools for response capacities, implementation of recommendations from the EERC certification process). These activities will be undertaken on a pilot basis and their results will be presented to relevant working groups and the Civil Protection Committee to inform debate on more structural solutions.

### **2. Actions aimed at increasing the countries' preparedness for receiving international assistance in the context of the EU Host Nation Support Guidelines**

### **3. Enhancing cooperation between civil protection and humanitarian aid actors**

### **4. Actions aimed at enhancing the cooperation with enlargement IPA II beneficiaries and Neighbourhood countries through a closer cooperation with the UCPM and its Participating States. (Only for external budget line proposals)**

Projects should be complementary and should take stock of achievements of relevant activities undertaken at European level using Union funds.

Please check the prevention and preparedness projects' database: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection-europe/selected-projects\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection-europe/selected-projects_en)

## **EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND RESULTS**

The EU response capacity is enhanced through a better pooling of teams, assets and expertise.

Additional response capacities are made available to the European Emergency Response Capacity and the European Medical Corps.

Plans are developed to increase the efficiency of disaster response.

The quality and interoperability of EU response capacities are improved.

Approaches to meet specific civil protection and marine pollution needs and/or challenges at regional and cross border level are assessed, tested and evaluated.

The preparedness of IPA II beneficiaries not participating in the Mechanism or European Neighbourhood Policy country is increased through a closer cooperation with the UCPM and its Participating States.

## **TYPE OF ACTIVITIES WHICH CAN BE FINANCED UNDER THIS CALL**

Cooperation projects and studies, which may include small scale exercises and training aimed at specific complementary improvements and innovation.

For more information about EU disaster risk management:

- [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/prevention-preparedness\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/prevention-preparedness_en.pdf)
- [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/disaster\\_risk\\_management\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/disaster_risk_management_en.pdf)

For more information about EU financed projects:

- <http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection-europe/selected-projects>

## **BUDGET AVAILABLE**

The total budget for the co-financing of preparedness projects:

**A) Internal budget item: EUR 2 900 000** for projects benefitting Participating States of the UCPM.

**B) External budget item: EUR 1 500 000** for projects benefitting countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy and IPA II beneficiaries, not yet participating in the UCPM.

Applicants have to choose under which budget item to apply and indicate this clearly in their project proposal.

The EU co-funding rate amounts to 75 % of total eligible costs, with a maximum EU contribution of EUR 800 000, whereby the EU contributes to the eligible cost of each beneficiary at a 75% rate.

The beneficiaries need to guarantee that the remaining 25% of the total eligible cost come from sources other than the EU grant, whereby each beneficiary must guarantee that 25% of its eligible cost is funded from sources other than the Union.

The Commission reserves the right not to grant the entire budget available.



### 3. TIMETABLE

	Stages	Date and time or indicative period
a)	Publication of the call	8/03/2017
b)	Deadline for submitting applications	11/05/2017 – 17:00 CET
c)	Evaluation period	May-June 2017
d)	Information to applicants	July-September 2017
e)	Signature of Grant Agreement	September/November 2017
f)	Starting date of the actions	1 January 2018

### 4. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applications must be sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in section 3.

Applications must be submitted using the Electronic Submission System of the Participant Portal originally developed for the Horizon 2020 Research programmes.

Applications must be submitted using the standard Submission Form Part A and Part B. They must include all the mandatory information and annexes and be accompanied by the Forecast Budget Calculation and (if applicable) the Audit Report<sup>8</sup> Annexes.

In principle, project proposals may be submitted in any official language of the European Union. However, for reasons of efficiency, the Commission would strongly encourage the applicants to submit their proposal in English.

Projects cannot be scheduled to last more than 24 months.<sup>9</sup> Applications for projects scheduled to run for a longer period will be rejected.

Failure to comply with these requirements will lead to the rejection of the application.

### 5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA<sup>10</sup>

#### 5.1. Eligible applicants<sup>11</sup> and applications

In order to be eligible for a grant, the applicants must be:

- a) legal persons; applications from natural persons are not eligible;

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<sup>8</sup> If the share of a grant requested by an organisation (applicant or co-applicant) exceeds EUR 750 000, this organisation must also provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying its accounts for the last closed financial year.

<sup>9</sup> The project duration may be extended during its implementation for duly justified reasons subject to the Commission's approval via an amendment to the Grant Agreement.

<sup>10</sup> Art. 131 FR, 201 RAP.

<sup>11</sup> The eligibility criteria formulated in Commission notice Nr.2013/C-205/05 (OJEU C-205 of 19/07/2013, pp. 9-11) shall apply for all actions under this Call for proposals including with respect to third parties referred to in article 137 of the EU's Financial Regulation.

- b) belong to one of the following categories: private entities, public entities, or international organisations as defined by Article 43 of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union ('Rules of Application').
- c) be established in one of the UCPM Participating States.
- d) for projects under the external budget item, be established in eligible third countries which are:
  - IPA II beneficiaries not participating in the mechanism: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo<sup>12</sup>;
  - European Neighbourhood Policy countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine;
  - Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

**Important:** eligible entities from third countries can participate in the implementation of projects under the **external budget item but cannot act as the Coordinator**. Therefore, applications submitted by third countries which are not Participating States to the Mechanism will be considered ineligible.

- e) be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project with other beneficiaries, i.e. not acting as an intermediary;
- f) notify their national competent authority (**applicable only to the lead applicant, coordinator of the consortium**) of their proposal in order to ensure consistency between activities financed at EU level and national civil protection and marine pollution policies. With the proposal, the coordinator must enclose supporting documents (Notification form signed by the competent authority) showing that the relevant national authority has been notified in writing before submitting the proposal to the Commission. **This does not apply to applicants which themselves are the national competent authority.**

To prove these eligibility requirements, Applicants and Co-applicants will have to provide the relevant information and upload necessary documents showing their legal status in the Beneficiary Register. The information needs to be provided before the submission deadline.

For the list of **national central civil protection authorities** appointed under the UCPM, see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/civil\\_protection/civil/vademecum/menu/5.html#nataut](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/civil_protection/civil/vademecum/menu/5.html#nataut)

<http://2.ipacivilprotection.eu/index.php/project-participants/participating-countries>

<http://euroeastcp.eu/en/partner-countries.html>

<http://www.euromedpprdsouth2.eu/en/30-contact/61-country-cp-cd/>

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<sup>12</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

Applicants submitting proposals related to marine pollution must notify their **national maritime authorities**. The list of the National Maritime Authorities is published here:

[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/National\\_Maritime\\_Authorities.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/National_Maritime_Authorities.pdf)

## 5.2. Eligibility conditions

To be eligible for the award of a grant under this Call, the proposed projects must comply with the following conditions:

Projects financed under **internal** budget item are designed and implemented by transnational partnerships involving a minimum of **three entities from three different Participating States**, one as lead consortium partner. International organisations can also take part in the partnership.

Branch offices/Offices of International Organisations are considered as single entities and cannot be lead consortium partner.

This means that as a minimum the partnership should include one of the following combinations:

- (a) 3 entities from Participating States,
- (b) 2 entities from Participating States + 1 International Organisation (Branch office/office of International Organisation from Participating States)
- (c) 1 entity from Participating States + 2 International Organisations (Branch offices/offices of International Organisations from Participating States)

Projects demonstrate that they are complementary to existing efforts in the beneficiary countries. The results of the project shall be relevant for the Participating States and the EU.

**Reminder: Only Participating States and International Organisations are eligible under the internal budget item.**

Projects financed under **external** budget item involve a minimum of **three entities from three different eligible countries**, including at least one IPA II beneficiary not participating in the Mechanism and/or European Neighbourhood Policy country as a primary beneficiary and an entity from at least one Participating State as a lead consortium partner. International organisations can also take part in the partnership.

Branch offices/offices of International Organisations are considered as single entities and cannot be lead consortium partner.

This means that as a minimum the partnership should include one of the following combinations:

- (a) 2 entities from Participating States + 1 entity from IPAII/ENP,
- (b) 1 entity from Participating States + 1 International Organisation (Branch office/office of International Organisation from Participating States/IPAII/ENP) + 1 entity from IPAII/ENP,
- (c) 1 entity from Participating States + 2 entities from IPAII/ENP

**Reminder: each Partnership must include at least one Participating State as the lead consortium partner.**

For proposals under the external budget item the benefits of the project have to be generated in one or several IPA II beneficiaries not participating in the UCPM or one or several European Neighbourhood Policy countries not participating in the UCPM. The results must also be relevant for the EU.

Activities must not have started prior to the date of submission of the grant application.

Union agencies can be neither Applicants nor Co-applicants.

Linked third parties (Affiliated entities<sup>13</sup>), i.e. entities that form a 'sole beneficiary' (i.e. where an entity is formed of several entities that satisfy the criteria for being awarded a grant, including where the entity is specifically established for the purpose of implementing an action to be financed by a grant); entities that have a link with the beneficiary, in particular a legal or capital link, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation.

### **5.3 Eligible activities**

Eligible activities are the ones set out under chapter 2 of this call for proposals.

**All actions and activities must be implemented by a Partnership of eligible entities (see Chapter 5.2).**

Projects must clearly demonstrate that they are **complementary** to the prevention and/or preparedness efforts already made in the relevant countries. Therefore, applicants are asked to describe these complementarities in the project proposal. (Part B of the Application Form)

**In addition, activities proposed under this call both in the frames of prevention and preparedness projects which are to be funded under the External budget item should be complementary to and should not overlap with activities financed through the European Neighbourhood Instrument and through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance.**

Furthermore, applicants are invited to take into account the results of previous national and EU projects and activities. In particular, they should not duplicate the projects financed under the UCPM Decision No 1313/2013/EU.

Projects should be complementary and take stock of prior achievements in the field of prevention and preparedness, including disaster risks reduction actions, climate change adaptation achievements, or activities implemented under **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030**<sup>14</sup>, (among them actions co-financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, DG HOME Internal Security Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund, Life+, the ICT Policy Support Programme, the Seventh Research Framework Programme, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance and the European Neighbourhood Instrument).

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<sup>13</sup> Article 122 of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework>

Applicants must also take into account the results of projects supported by other European programmes, as appropriate.

For an overview of other calls and completed or on-going European projects and activities you can, for example, consult the following websites:

*Civil Protection:*

<http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection-europe/selected-projects>

<http://euroeastcp.eu/en/>

<http://euromedcp.eu/>

<http://2.ipacivilprotection.eu/>

*Regional Development:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/thefunds/access/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/access/index_en.cfm)

*Environment:*

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm>

*Home Affairs:*

<http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/>

## **Activities not covered by the present call**

The present call does not cover activities already covered by other specific calls for proposals or calls for tender, such as UCPM training courses, UCPM exercises and exchanges of experts. Therefore, activities whose sole purpose is (for example) the development of EU training courses or the UCPM exercises will not be eligible for financing under this call, but may apply under other specific calls, also published on the UCPM website of the European Commission:

<http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection> and on

<https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/ucpm/index.html>

## **6. EXCLUSION CRITERIA<sup>15</sup>**

Applicants will be excluded from participating in the Call for Proposals procedure and from the grant award if they are in any of the situations referred to in articles 131(4) of the EU Financial Regulation<sup>16</sup>, i.e. one of the following situations:

### **6.1. Exclusion from participation in the Call for Proposals**

Applicant entities will be excluded from participating in the Call for Proposals procedure if they are in any of the following situations:

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<sup>15</sup> Article 106 FR

<sup>16</sup> Regulation (EU, EURATOM) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ 2012 L298, p. 1).

(a) the economic operator is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business activities are suspended, or where it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations;

(b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the economic operator is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the law of the country in which it is established, with those of the country in which the contracting authority is located or those of the country of the performance of the contract;

(c) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the economic operator is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the economic operator belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:

(i) fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of selection criteria or in the performance of a contract;

(ii) entering into agreement with other economic operators with the aim of distorting competition;

(iii) violating intellectual property rights;

(iv) attempting to influence the decision-making process of the contracting authority during the procurement procedure;

(v) attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the procurement procedure;

(d) it has been established by a final judgment that the economic operator is guilty of any of the following:

(i) fraud, within the meaning of Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995 (1);

(ii) corruption, as defined in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997 (2), and in Article 2(1) of Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA (3), as well as corruption as defined in the law of the country where the contracting authority is located, the country in which the economic operator is established or the country of the performance of the contract;

(iii) participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2 of Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA (4);

(iv) money laundering or terrorist financing, as defined in Article 1 of Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (5);

(v) terrorist-related offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, as defined in Articles 1 and 3 of Council Framework Decision

2002/475/JHA (1), respectively, or inciting, aiding, abetting or attempting to commit such offences, as referred to in Article 4 of that Decision;

(vi) child labour or other forms of trafficking in human beings as defined in Article 2 of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council (2);

e) the economic operator has shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations in the performance of a contract financed by the budget, which has led to its early termination or to the application of liquidated damages or other contractual penalties, or which has been discovered following checks, audits or investigations by an authorising officer, OLAF or the Court of Auditors;

(f) it has been established by a final judgment or final administrative decision that the economic operator has committed an irregularity within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 (3).

Applicant entities will be excluded from participating in the Call for Proposals also in the following case:

(a) where a person who is a member of the administrative, management or supervisory body of the entity, or who has powers of representation, decision or control with regard to that entity, is in one or more of the situations referred to in points (c) to (f) listed above. Entities will also be excluded where a natural or legal person that assumes unlimited liability for the debts of that entity is in one or more of the situations referred to in points (a) or (b) mentioned above.

## **6.2. Rejection from the award procedure**

Applicants will not be awarded a grant if, in the course of the grant award procedure, they:

(a) are in an exclusion situation established in accordance with Article 106 of the Financial Regulation;

(b) have misrepresented the information required as a condition for participating in the grant award procedure or have failed to supply that information;

(c) have been previously involved in the preparation of grant award documents where this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise.

The same exclusion criteria apply to linked third parties.

Administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants, or linked third parties where applicable, that are guilty of misrepresentation.

The Applicant declares at application stage that all of the Partners gave their consent on their participation in the project and on the content of the proposal, the information contained in the proposal is correct and complete, the Partners are fully compliant with the exclusion and eligibility criteria set out herein and have the financial and operational capacity to carry out the proposed actions. Prior to signing the grant agreement, all of the applicants must also sign a dedicated declaration on their honour.

## 7. SELECTION CRITERIA

### 7.1. Financial capacity<sup>17</sup>

The verification of the financial capacity **shall not apply to** public bodies such as **national, regional and local authorities and International Organisations**.

Applicants and Co-applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and to participate in its funding. Organisations participating in several projects shall have sufficient financial capacity to implement multiple projects.

Financial capacity check will be performed by the Research Executive Agency (REA). It will be assessed in line with the requirements of the Financial Regulation (EC) No 966/2012. The documents that will be requested when assessing the financial capacity include (1) the profit and loss account and (2) the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts were closed. For newly created entities the business plan may replace the above documents.

The financial documents must be uploaded in the Beneficiary Register when uploading the application package. If on the basis of the documents submitted, the Commission considers that financial capacity is not satisfactory, it may:

- request further information;
- propose an enhanced financial responsibility regime, *i.e.* joint and several responsibility without any ceiling per beneficiary;
- propose a Grant Agreement with a pre-financing paid in instalments;
- propose a Grant Agreement with a pre-financing covered by a bank guarantee;
- propose a Grant Agreement without pre-financing;
- reject the application.

Financial Capacity assessment **will not be carried out** if:

- Applicants are public bodies or international organisations;
- a requested grant is a low value grant (lower than or equal to EUR 60 000).

If the share of a grant requested by an organisation (Applicant or Co-applicant) exceeds EUR 750 000, this organisation must also provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying its accounts for the last closed financial year. This provision shall not apply to public bodies or to international organisations.

### PRE-FINANCING GUARANTEE<sup>18</sup>

In the event that the applicants' financial capacity is not satisfactory, a pre-financing guarantee for up to the same amount as the pre-financing may be requested in order to limit the financial risks linked to the pre-financing payment.

The financial guarantee, in euro, shall be provided by an approved bank or financial institution established in one of the Member State of the European Union. When the beneficiary is established in a third country, the authorising officer responsible may agree that a bank or financial institution established in that third country may provide the guarantee if he considers that the bank or

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<sup>17</sup> Art. 131, 132 FR, 202 RAP.

<sup>18</sup> Art. 134 FR, 206 RAP.



financial institution offers equivalent security and characteristics as those offered by a bank or financial institution established in a Member State. Amounts blocked in bank accounts shall not be accepted as financial guarantees.

The guarantee may be replaced by a joint and several guarantee by a third party or by a joint guarantee of the beneficiaries of a project who are parties to the same grant agreement

The guarantee shall be released as the pre-financing is gradually cleared against the payment of balances to the beneficiary, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the grant agreement.

### **Financial responsibility**

Within a multi-beneficiary grant, the operational and financial risks may be shared. In line with Article 28 of the Grant Agreement, the beneficiaries are jointly and severally liable up to the value of the contribution that the beneficiary held liable is entitled to receive. This contribution is to be indicated in the estimated budget breakdown.

Alternatively, if foreseen in the Grant Agreement, the beneficiaries may be held jointly and severally liable for any amount due to the Commission (including late payment interest) by any one of them, up to the maximum amount specified in Article 5.1 of the Grant Agreement (i.e. joint and several responsibilities without a ceiling per beneficiary).

Where the Commission exceptionally accepts the individual financial responsibility regime, the beneficiaries' financial responsibility is limited, for each beneficiary, to its own debt.

### **7.2. Operational capacity<sup>19</sup>**

Applicants and Co-applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action, including sufficient experience in managing EU/trans-national projects of a volume similar that of the proposed action and proportionate to the tasks assigned to them in the project proposal. This capacity shall be assessed based on the experience of the Applicants and each Co-applicant or, as an alternative, on the relevant experience of their directly involved employees.

As evidence, the following information must be provided in the Submission Form Part B of the proposal:

- general profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff primary responsible for managing and implementing the proposed action to be described under point 5.1.3,
- a description of the partnership in the context of the proposed action to be provided under point 5.1.1,
- the activity reports of the co-ordinator and each co-beneficiary for the year preceding the project submitted for Union funding including sufficiently detailed information which allows the Evaluation Committee to assess the operational capacity under point 5.1.5,

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<sup>19</sup> Art. 131 FR, 202 RAP.

- a list of actions/projects of the Applicant and Co-applicants that have been awarded funding from an EU institution or agency in the last 4 years under point 6.2.

The operational capacity assessment is not applicable to public bodies and international organisations.

## **8. AWARD CRITERIA<sup>20</sup>**

The eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of the following award criteria:

**Understanding:** clarity and consistency of rationale, objectives and planning. applications will be assessed on the extent to which they match the priorities and objectives as identified in this Call for Proposals (section 2 above) and in the relevant EU strategic and legislative context and on whether the expected impact will be significant on the selected priority(ies) (25 points).

**Methodology:** description of ways and means of implementing the project and producing the expected results (theoretical background, operating procedures, schedules, constraints, assumptions, risks). There are logical links between the identified problems, needs and solutions proposed (Logical Frame Concept). Feasibility of the project within the proposed time frame; (25 points).

**Cost effectiveness:** the proposed budget is sufficient for proper implementation and the project is designed so as to ensure the best value for money, also taking into account the expected results and deliverables; (25 points).

**European added value:** the expected results come from transnational work, serve the interest of a large number of participating states/eligible third countries and could be efficiently reproduced and/or transferred to other participating states/eligible third countries, regions or organisations. (25 points).

Applications that pass the threshold of minimum 70 points will be considered for funding within the limits of the available budget.

## **9. IMPORTANT**

1. Choose just one; prevention **or** preparedness, **not both** as each has its specific priorities and budget.
2. Choose just one; internal budget item **or** external budget item.
3. The project must not receive any financial support under other EU financial instruments.
4. Proposals must fall within the scope of this call (see section2).
5. The EU financing rate can amount to a maximum of 75% and is to fall within the limits of the EU contribution (EUR 800 000 per proposal).
6. The beneficiaries need to make sure that the remaining 25 % of the total eligible cost come from sources other than the EU grant (*i.e.* from the

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<sup>20</sup> Art. 132 FR, 203 RAP.

financial contributions by the Beneficiaries, from income generated by the action, or from financial contributions from third parties). .

7. **Actions and activities must be implemented by a Partnership of eligible entities:**
  - a. Projects financed under the **internal budget** item are designed and implemented by transnational partnerships involving at least **three** entities from three different Participating States. International Organisations can also take part in the partnership.
  - b. Projects financed under **external budget** item involve a minimum of **three** entities from three different eligible countries, including, at least one IPA II beneficiary not participating in the UCPM and/or European Neighbourhood Policy country as a primary beneficiary, and an entity from at least one Participating State as the lead consortium partner. International Organisations can also take part in the partnership.
8. Projects demonstrate that they are complementary to existing prevention and preparedness efforts in the eligible countries.
9. The maximum initial duration of projects selected under this call **is 24 months**.
10. The exact calculation of the final amount of the grant will be done when the project has ended on the basis of relevant supporting documents.

## **10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS**

A Commission award decision, in which the Authorising Officer will take the final decision on the project proposals to be co-financed including the respective maximum financial amount and the rate of co-financing granted, does not represent a legal or financial commitment. The award of each grant is subject to the conclusion of a Grant Agreement in writing.

The coordinators of projects proposed for funding will be invited to engage in a grant agreement preparation process, which will be carried out via an online IT system (SYGMA). If successful, it will conclude with the signature of a Grant Agreement, drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding.

The Grant Agreement must be signed electronically first by the coordinator on behalf of the consortium and then by the European Commission. All co-beneficiaries must accede to the Grant Agreement by signing electronically the accession form to the grant.

Please note, that if international organisations are involved in the application, no other specific clauses applicable to international organisations than the ones already included in the Model Grant Agreement will be added.

Please note that the award of a grant does not establish any entitlement for subsequent years.

## **11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS**

### **11.1. General Principles**

- a) Non-cumulative award

An action may only receive one grant from the EU budget.

In no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget. To ensure this, applicants shall indicate the sources and amounts of Union funding received or applied for the same action or part of the action or for its functioning during the same financial year as well as any other funding received or applied for the same action (Submission Form Part B, section 6).

b) Non-retroactivity

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed. A grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only where the Applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the Grant Agreement is signed. In any case, costs eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application.

c) Co-financing

Co-financing means that the resources which are necessary to carry out the action may not be entirely provided by the EU grant.

Co-financing of the action may take the form of:

- the Beneficiary's own resources,
- income generated by the action,
- financial contributions from third parties.

d) Balanced budget

The Budget Estimate of the action is to be attached to the Application Form. It must have revenue and expenditure in balance and must be drawn up in euro.

Beneficiaries/linked third parties with general accounts in a currency other than the euro shall convert costs recorded in their accounts into euro at the average of the daily exchange rates published in the C series of Official Journal of the European Union, determined over the corresponding reporting period.<sup>21</sup> Where no daily euro exchange rate is published in the Official Journal of the European Union for the currency in question, conversion shall be made at the average of the monthly accounting rates established by the Commission and published on its [website](#), determined over the corresponding reporting period.

Beneficiaries/linked third parties with general accounts in euro shall convert costs incurred in another currency into euro according to their usual accounting practices.

Where the implementation of the action requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), the Beneficiary must award the contract to the bid offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interests and retaining the documentation for the event of an audit. Detailed information on subcontracting is provided in the Guide for Applicants.

e) Financial support to third parties

The applications may not envisage provision of financial support to third parties.

f) Non-profit rule

EU grants may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit within the framework of the action. Profit shall be defined as a surplus of the receipts over

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<sup>21</sup> For further guidance on exchange rate please consult the Guide for Applicants.

the eligible costs incurred by the Beneficiary, when the request is made for payment of the balance. In this respect, where a profit is made, the Commission shall be entitled to recover the percentage of the profit corresponding to the Union contribution to the eligible costs actually approved by the Commission.

### **11.2. Maximum amount requested**

1. The EU co-financing rate amounts to 75% of total eligible cost and is to fall within the limits of the EU contribution (EUR 800 000 per proposal). The EU contributes to the eligible cost of each beneficiary at a 75% rate.

2. The beneficiaries need to make sure that the remaining 25 % of the total eligible cost come from sources other than the EU grant (i.e. from the financial contributions by the Beneficiaries, from income generated by the action, or from financial contributions from third parties). Each beneficiary must make sure that 25% of its eligible cost is funded from sources other than the Union.

The Commission reserves the right to reduce the estimated costs in the Forecast Budget Calculation, if they are deemed as ineligible or excessive. The Commission thus also reserves the right to award a grant lower than the amount applied for.

No budget negotiation will take place after the Commission has adopted the award decision.

### **11.3. Payment arrangements**

A pre-financing payment corresponding to maximum 70% of the EU grant amount will be transferred to the Coordinator after the signature of the Grant Agreement by both parties and in accordance with its terms.

The Commission will establish the amount of the final payment to be made to the Coordinator on the basis of the calculation of the final grant amount. If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, the Beneficiaries will be required to reimburse the amount paid in excess by the Commission through a recovery order.

## **12. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS**

### **12.1. How to apply**

Proposals must be submitted by the deadline indicated in section 3 via the Electronic Submission System. The list of available calls can be found at the [calls for proposals page](#).

Before submitting a proposal both the Applicant and Co-applicants must be registered via the [Beneficiary Register](#) and obtain the 9-digit Participant Identification Code (PIC) (one for each applicant).

In submitting a proposal, the Applicant accepts the procedures and conditions as described in this Call for Proposals and in the documents to which it refers.

No modification of the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or for the

correction of clerical mistakes, the Commission may contact the Applicant for this purpose during the evaluation process<sup>22</sup>.

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the evaluation process.

## **12.2. Related documents:**

- Application form (Submission Form Part A and Part B)
- Compulsory annexes:
  - Forecast Budget Calculation,
  - Notification Form signed by the competent authority,
  - (if applicable) Audit Report<sup>23</sup>
- Model Grant Agreement with its annexes
- Guide for applicants

## **12.3. Applications for several projects**

The Applicant may submit more than one application under this call for proposals.

The Applicant may be awarded more than one grant under this call for proposals.

An organisation may participate as Applicant or co-applicant in several applications.

## **12.4. Several applications for the same project**

Only one application will be accepted and evaluated for any given project. In case there are several applications for the same project, the Applicant will be asked to clarify which application shall be evaluated.

An action may receive only one grant from the EU budget.

## **12.5. Contacts**

For questions on the online submission tools, please contact the [IT helpdesk](#) set-up for this purpose via the Participant Portal website.

Non-IT related questions shall be sent to the following email address: [ECHO-CP-P&P@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ECHO-CP-P&P@ec.europa.eu)

In order to ensure an efficient handling of any enquiry please indicate clearly the reference of this Call for Proposals.

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<sup>22</sup> Article 96 of the Financial Regulation

<sup>23</sup> If the share of a grant requested by an organisation (applicant or co-applicant) exceeds EUR 750 000, this organisation must also provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying its accounts for the last closed financial year.

Questions will be answered as soon as possible. Questions received later than 7 calendar days before the deadline for submitting applications will not be answered. In the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Commission cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants or actions or on the outcome of the Call for Proposals before the official announcement of results.

Applicants are advised to consult the Call's website regularly. The Commission will publish at this website any additional information relevant to the Call, such as responses to frequently asked questions (if appropriate) and the results of the selection procedure.

## **13. PUBLICITY**

### **13.1. By the Beneficiaries**

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used. Please refer to the Grant Agreement for more details.

### **13.2. By the Commission**

All information relating to grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on an internet site of the European Union institutions no later than the 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded. The Commission will publish the following information:

- name and address of the beneficiary,
- subject of the grant,
- amount awarded.

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the Beneficiary, the publication shall be waived if such disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harm the commercial interests of the beneficiaries.

## **14. DATA PROTECTION**

The reply to any call for proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CVs of individuals participating in the co-financed action). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested in order to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the Call for Proposal will be processed solely for that purpose by the Commission or third parties acting on behalf and under the responsibility of the Commission. Data subjects may be informed regarding further details of the processing operations, their rights and how they may be enforced by referring to the privacy statement published in the [Legal Notice page](#) of the Participant Portal.

Applicants are invited to check the relevant privacy statement at regular intervals so as to be duly informed on possible updates that may occur by the deadline for submission of their proposals or afterwards. Beneficiaries assume

the legal obligation to inform their staff on the relevant processing operations that are to be performed by the Research Executive Agency; in order to do so, they have to provide them with the privacy statements published by the Agency in the Participant Portal before transmitting their data to the Agency. Personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) of the European Commission provided for in Articles 105a and 108 of the EU Financial Regulation according to the applicable provisions.

## **15. MEANS OF REDRESS**

If, at any stage of the administrative treatment of grant applications, the persons or entities concerned consider that they have been affected by an instance of maladministration, they may, irrespective of any other means of redress, make a complaint to the European Ombudsman in accordance with Article 228(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and as provided by the Parliament Decision of 9 March 1994 on the regulations and general conditions governing the performance of the Ombudsman's duties published in Official Journal L 113 of 4 May 1994.