

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

**for the selection of organisations as members of the Structured Dialogue with European Structural and Investment Funds' partners group of experts (ESIF SD)**

**Deadline 14 September 2015**

1. By decision [C\(2014\) 4175](#), the Commission set up the [Structured Dialogue with European Structural and Investment Funds' partners group of experts \(ESIF SD\)](#).
2. A first call for applications was launched in July 2014 with a view to select and appoint organisations as members of the structured dialogue group of experts. 52 member organisations and 2 observers were selected and appointed following the call.
3. The Directorates-General for Regional and Urban Policy, for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, for Agriculture and Rural Development and for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, are now calling for applications with a view to complete the number of member organisations up to the maximum of 60.
4. Members receive no remuneration for their duties. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants in the activities of the group are reimbursed by the Commission in accordance with the provisions in force at the Commission within the limits of the available budgetary appropriations.
5. **The tasks of the group of experts are:**
  - (a) to support the work of the Commission as regards the development of cohesion policy, the policy of rural development, the Common Fisheries Policy and the integrated maritime policy in different areas of expertise e.g. partnership and multi-level governance, environment, gender, non-discrimination, employment, social inclusion, Roma issues, research and innovation or climate change in so far as they are based on Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 (the Common Provisions Regulation) and the Fund-specific Regulations for Cohesion Policy (Regulations (EU) No 1299/2013, No 1300/2013, No 1301/2013, No 1304/2013 and No 508/2014);
  - (b) to assist the Commission on questions relating to the implementation of support from the European Structural and Investment Funds in so far as they are based on the Common Provisions Regulation and the Fund-specific Regulations for Cohesion Policy and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund;
  - (c) to monitor the evolution of policy in the field of partnership and multi-level governance; and
  - (d) to bring about an exchange of experience and good practice in the field of partnership and multi-level governance.

### **Composition of the group of experts**

6. The group of experts consists of umbrella organisations which represent the partners at Union level referred to in article 5 of the Common Provisions Regulation with a specific interest in the European Structural and Investment Funds, i.e.:

(a) *Associations representing regional, local, urban and other public authorities:*

- Associations representing regional authorities, rural area authorities, local authorities and local authorities representing the largest cities and urban areas, whose competences are related to the planned use of the ESI Funds;
- Associations representing higher educational institutions, educational and training providers and research centres, having regard to the planned use of the ESI Funds;
- Associations representing other public authorities responsible for the application of horizontal principles, having regard to the planned use of the ESI Funds; and in particular the bodies for the promotion of equal treatment established in accordance with Directives 2000/43/EC, 2004/113/EC and 2006/54/EC.

(b) *Economic and social partners:*

- Social partners' organisations, in particular general cross-industry organisations and sectoral organisations, whose sectors are related to the planned use of the ESI Funds;
- Chambers of commerce and business associations representing the general interest of industries and branches, having regard to the planned use of the ESI Funds and with a view to ensuring a balanced representation of large, medium, small and microenterprises, as well as representatives of the social economy.

(c) *Bodies representing civil society, such as environmental partners, non-governmental organisations, and bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, gender equality and non-discrimination:*

- Bodies working in the areas related to the planned use of the ESI Funds and to the application of horizontal principles (such as equality between men and women and non-discrimination and sustainable development) based on their representativeness and taking into account geographic and thematic coverage, management capacity and expertise;
- Other organisations or groups which are significantly affected or likely to be significantly affected by the implementation of the ESI Funds, in particular the groups considered to be at risk of discrimination and social exclusion, or organisations representing the local action groups referred to in Article 34 of Regulation (EU) 1303/2013.

7. Organisations applying for membership shall fulfil the following **eligibility criteria**:

- The organisation must represent partners referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013;
- be registered in the Transparency Register ([http://europa.eu/transparency-register/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/transparency-register/index_en.htm));
- be an umbrella organisation established at European level;

- represent a significant proportion of stakeholder interest at EU level; and
- be established before 31 December 2014.

### **Submission of application for membership**

8. **Applications** must be completed in one of the working languages of the ESIF SD according to its Rules of Procedure i.e. English, French or German. Experts nominated by the organisations should be able to communicate in at least one of these three languages.

9. Please submit your completed applications through the online form **by 14 September 2015**.

### **Selection of member organisations**

10. The ESIF SD group of experts currently consists of 52 member organisations and 2 observers, selected and appointed following a call for experts launched in July 2014. The group is open to maximum 60 member organisations as this is considered to be an appropriate number for an effective dialogue. Each organisation will be able to nominate one representative and one alternate to the expert group.

11. The Commission will select member organisations up to the maximum of 60, for the remaining duration of the group's activity i.e. until 31 December 2020.

12. Assessment of applications and selection of member organisations will be carried out jointly by the Directorates-General for Regional and Urban Policy, for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, for Agriculture and Rural Development and for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries.

13. When selecting applications, the Commission will first assess fulfilment of the eligibility criteria. However, it will also take into consideration:

- the need to ensure balanced representation between and within the three different categories of partners, taking into account the specific tasks of the expert group and the type of expertise required;
- proven competence and experience at European level, in areas relevant to the tasks of the expert group;
- geographical coverage and representativeness of the umbrella organisations; and
- how the organisations have taken into account the need to ensure an appropriate gender balance.

12. The list of ESIF SD member organisations is published in the [Register of Commission expert groups](#) and will be updated to reflect the composition of the group following this call. Information on the results of the call for applications will be also published on InfoRegio<sup>1</sup> and the other 3 ESIF DG's webpages.

15. Personal data will be collected, processed and published in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 45/2001<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/index.cfm/en/policy/communication/structured-dialogue-with-partners](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index.cfm/en/policy/communication/structured-dialogue-with-partners)

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 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 (OJ L 8 of 12.1.2001, p. 1).

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16. For any further information please contact

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