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TERMS OF REFERENCE

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Civil Rights Defenders is looking for expert/s in Albania to develop policy papers in the area of civic engagement and participation in political processes

GENERAL INFORMATION

Project:	I participate! My voice, my vote counts.
Country:	Albania
Type of contract:	Individual Contract
Deadline for application:	30 June 2020

BACKGROUND

The project "I participate! My voice, my vote counts" is funded by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and is implemented in Albania by Albanian Helsinki Committee, Civil Rights Defenders, and Institute for Political Studies.

Civil Rights Defenders (CRD) is a human rights organisation that defends people's civil and political rights on four continents. The organisation has worked with different human rights projects in the Western Balkans since 1995 and its overall goal is to improve people's access to freedom and justice through greater respect for their civil and political rights. Civil Rights Defenders has established its presence in Albania in 2013. Since then, the main focus of the country programme has been on the following areas: access to justice, freedom of expression and media freedoms and anti-discrimination regarding Roma, LGBTI+ and people with disabilities. The approach of Civil Rights Defenders entails facilitating and striving for co-ordination and coalition-building with other NGOs, media organisations, human rights organisations, and other civil society initiatives for the purpose of advancing human rights through research, policy development, advocacy and campaigning.

Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC) is the first non-profit organization established in the country in December 1990. Its mission is to promote and protect human rights and freedoms and strengthen of the rule of law in the country. AHC remains one of the most prominent organization for the protection and promotion of human rights in Albania, aiming at increasing the accountability, transparency, public participation and civic engagement in the decision-making processes of public authorities, giving priority at the areas such as education, health, housing, social services and the observation of the rights and freedoms of citizens in general, etc.

The Institute of Political Studies (ISP) was established in 2006, and since then has been focused on monitoring democratic processes and constitutional and independent institutions in Albania, on issues of political representation, electoral standards, integration and inter-Albanian issues. For several years the ISP has monitored the Albanian Parliament activity, political parties, electoral processes, EU negotiations and important reforms such as territorial reform, transparency programs with the right to information and judicial reform.

THE PROJECT

This project aims to strengthen civil society's capacity to promote, advocate and support democratic processes, integrity of elections and political transparency. Each of the objectives of the project corresponds to a specific need and aspect. The project partners have joined efforts in order to identify the areas where the intervention is needed mostly and the result is expressed in three areas as below:

1. Addressing the apathy and distrust level of the Albanian citizens by demanding a closer and regular engagement by them in the political processes
2. Tackling the political actors, addressing their closeness, lack of transparent procedures and overall lack of openness by addressing changes within the political bodies, such as the political parties and their composing bodies.
3. Supporting and strengthening capacities of NGOs to better understand, lobby, participate, and monitor the election process.

THE ASSIGNMENT

In order to increase the body of knowledge and provide reliable recommendations for the relevant stakeholders, Civil Rights Defenders is seeking to engage experts (researchers, policy analysts, activists etc.) to develop 3 policy papers that analyze and assess various aspects of the structures, policies and processes that enable and/or prevent citizens involvement in policy and decision-making process. The policy papers can analyse topics such as the levels of citizens engagement in political processes, particularly elections; reasons that prevent citizens to be more included and exercise their democratic rights; challenges that arise from policies and practices that prevent citizens participation in democratic processes; positive effects and benefits of society from increased participation of citizens in elections and other democratic processes; and strategies for citizens to directly seek accountability and serve as safeguards for democracy. The policy paper will provide recommendations for the relevant stakeholders aiming to improve the current situation.

The policy papers will be 10-15 pages long and will be based on analysis of primary and secondary data. In order to ensure quality and relevance, the Project Team will closely work and supervise with the expert in all stages of developing the policy papers and will support the expert in accessing and providing data as well as contacts of relevant experts that will be interviewed. Once finalized, the policy paper will be published in one publication in both Albanian and English language and disseminated in electronic version to all relevant stakeholders.

One expert will be assigned for each of the policy papers foreseen as below.

- **Policy paper 1:** Analysis of the legislative framework on the means of citizens' participation in decision-making in Albania;

▪ **Policy paper 2:** Attitude to civic engagement, consultation and monitoring democratic processes with a focus on media, CSOs and the impact of the state of natural disaster.

▪ **Policy paper 3:** Citizens' engagement in political processes, particularly elections and reasons that prevent citizens to be more included and exercise their democratic rights

The project team reserves the right to propose additional relevant topics and request deliverables not explicitly mentioned in the above list of expected service, but related to the objectives of the project and based on the recent developments of the situation in Albania (such as, but not limited to electoral reform developments and related topics)

DELIVERABLES

- Inception report that will include a detailed work plan, methodology description and proposed structure of the policy briefs
- Summary of the preliminary findings
- First draft of the policy paper for review and comments from the Project Team
- Final draft of the policy paper, including a set of recommendations for the relevant stakeholders

EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND TIMELINE

	Tentative dates (2020)
Selected applicants to be announced	6 July 2020
Experts meeting with the Project Team	10 July 2020
Desk research and data collection to start	11 July 2020
Inception report on the work plan and methodology	20 July 2020
First draft of the policy paper to be submitted for review	10 September 2020
Final draft of the policy paper to be submitted in Albania	30 September 2020

Payment

The payment will be done in one instalment after the submission of the final approved version of the policy paper. The fixed all inclusive gross fee for developing each policy paper is **1000 EUR**.

REQUIRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Eligibility

The applicant can be an individual or a team, including researchers, practitioners, activists etc.

Applicants who have experience in research and have conducted similar studies/papers on the similar topics as of the call, are preferred.

Qualifications

A bachelor degree in Law, Public Policy, Political Sciences, International Relations or related disciplines is required. A masters and/or PhD will be considered an advantage.

Competencies

- Proven track record of working in democratization, civic engagement and elections
- Strong analytical skills;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills;
- Excellent organizational skills and proven ability to deliver within deadlines;
- Ability to synthesize research and draw comprehensive conclusions and recommendations on the related subject;
- Writes clearly and convincingly, and is able to adapt the style and content to different audiences;
- Experience of working with supervisors and implementation of reviews.

Experience:

- At least 3 years of professional experience including but not limited to: civil society work, policy analysis and research related to democratic processes, elections, civic engagement etc.
- Excellent understanding of national and international legal/policy frameworks as well as institutions, mechanisms and processes relevant for the topics of policy papers

DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED

Interested applicants/teams are invited submit the following documents/information to be considered:

1. **A detailed letter of interest**, including a preference ranking of the topics provided by this call, and highlighting the relevant experience for the topics that the applicant is applying for. (maximum 2 pages)
2. **A timeline of activities, including deliverables**
3. **A detailed updated CV** (or CVs in the case of a team), demonstrating clearly that the applicant fulfils the required competencies and qualifications criteria
4. **Examples of previous similar work** (publications/policy papers/research reports etc.)

Interested candidates and/or teams should send their application at the following address: tirana.albania@civilrightsdefenders.org by **30 June 2020 the latest**.