



This Programme is funded by the European Union



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Project Title:	Regional Forum for the Promotion and Monitoring Progress of the Implementation of Istanbul Convention in six Western Balkan countries and Turkey - <i>under the Programme "Ending Violence against Women: Implementing Norms, Changing Minds"</i>
Scope:	Regional: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo ¹ and Serbia - and Turkey.
Purpose:	Selection of qualified implementing partner for the Programme
Duration:	August 2017 – February 2018 (tentatively)
Contract Type:	Project Cooperation Agreement

Deadline for submissions: 20 July 2017

The UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECARO) is inviting women civil society organizations (CSOs) and women CSOs networks and platforms promoting women's rights and gender equality to submit a call for proposals **to hold a Regional Forum for the Promotion and Monitoring Progress of the Implementation of Istanbul Convention in six Western Balkan countries and Turkey - to contribute to the implementation of the Programme *Ending Discrimination and Violence against Women: Implementing Norms, Changing Minds*** funded by the European Union. The Programme aims at ending discrimination and violence against women, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged groups of women, in six Western Balkans countries – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Serbia - and Turkey. The programme is anchored in the normative frameworks of the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) and the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (also known as Istanbul Convention), and in alignment with the European Union (EU) accession standards on gender equality. The Regional Forum will assess progress and address, research and make recommendations from a regional perspective on law reforms and policy reform related to eliminating violence against women, and provision of support services.

Terms of Reference

¹ All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this document shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

I. Background

Opened for signature in Istanbul in May 2011, the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) is the first legally-binding instrument in Europe in this field, and in terms of scope is the most far reaching international treaty to tackle this serious violation of human rights. It aims at zero tolerance for such violence and is a major step forward in making Europe and beyond a safer place, free of gender-based violence. By accepting the Istanbul Convention, governments are obliged to change their laws, introduce practical measures and allocate resources to effectively prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.

The Istanbul Convention codifies established standards, jurisprudence and developments at international level, as well as best practices at national level, thereby lending them more weight and ensuring their wider application. Drawing in particular on the framework of measures of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and case law developed by the CEDAW Committee, it is firmly based on the premise that violence against women cannot be eradicated without investing in gender equality and that in turn, only real gender equality and a change in attitudes can truly prevent such violence.

The Istanbul Convention requires sanctioning by states and obliges states to prevent offences, protect victims, prosecute perpetrators and have integrated policies (through criminal and civil law provisions, improved service delivery, resource allocation, and cultural transformation measures).

Build on the momentum created by the Istanbul Convention, UN Women launched the three-year Programme Implementing norms, changing minds (February 2017- January 2020) aimed at ending gender based discrimination and violence against women, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged groups of women, in six Western Balkans countries – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo (under UN Security Council Resolution 1244) and Serbia-, and Turkey.

Funded by the European Commission (EC) within the Instrument for Pre- Accession Assistance (IPA) II, the Programme is aligned with the European Union (EU) accession standards to achieve equality between women and men. The EU accession process is a pivotal opportunity to advocate more effectively for women’s rights and gender equality, with the European Parliament Resolution of 21 May 2013 addressing women's rights in the Balkan accession countries (2012/2255(INI), and the European Parliament’s Evaluation on Beijing + 20 highlighting a number of areas to be dealt with through more effective policy and implementation measures. These commitments have been reaffirmed by the EC in the Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey have ratified the Istanbul Convention, while the FYR Macedonia is a signatory. In Kosovo (under UN Security Council Resolution 1244) there is a solid base for monitoring commitments on gender equality and ending violence against women under the Law on Gender Equality, the Law on Crime Victim Compensation No. 05/L-036, and the National Strategy on Protection from Domestic Violence and Action Plan 2016-2020.

The Programme “*Implementing Norms, Changing Minds*” will assess and improve the implementation of the Convention through, inter alia, supporting women’s civil society organizations (CSO), women CSO’s networks, and platforms working at national and regional levels:

- 1) To create an enabling legislative and policy environment in line with international standards on eliminating violence against women and all forms of discrimination;
- 2) To promote favorable social norms and attitudes to promote gender equality and prevent discrimination of and violence against women; and
- 3) To empower women and girls (including those from disadvantaged groups) who have experienced discrimination or violence to advocate for and use available, accessible and quality services.

II. Objective of UN Women's support

In this context, UN Women is issuing a Call for Proposals (CfP) to select a responsible party to establish a Regional Forum for the Promotion and Monitoring Progress of the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW in six Western Balkan countries and Turkey.

The overall objective of the Regional Forum is to take stock of implementation of Istanbul Convention provisions and standards and CEDAW, so as to push this agenda forward by developing concrete proposals for action at national and regional levels, and fostering spaces for interaction between women civil society organizations, concerned institutions at a regional level, national governments and mechanisms for gender equality, based on concrete and practical experiences of Istanbul Convention monitoring.

The Regional Forum is intended to consolidate, build upon knowledge and practices, and inspire commitment for collegial action among national governments and gender equality mechanisms for enhanced engagement with civil society actors and related regional institutions.

The Regional Forum is expected to establish a formal mechanism for dialogue among women CSOs, national governments, regional institutions, and other key concerned stakeholders on how to improve the situation and comply with the Istanbul Convention, CEDAW and EU accession standards in the field of gender equality and ending violence against women across the region.

III. Scope of the Project

The outcome of the Regional Forum will contribute to the Programme Specific Objective 1: To create an enabling legislative and policy environment in line with international standards on eliminating violence against women and all forms of discrimination, and more specifically to Result 1.3: A regional dialogue and knowledge sharing mechanism on the implementation and monitoring of the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW among Governments, CSOs, and other concerned stakeholders is established and functional. The discussions and recommendations of the Regional Forum will inform the Programme outputs at country level.

The specific objectives of the Regional Forum are to:

- Take stock of progress and achievements of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey, since they ratified the Istanbul Convention (IC);
- Assess the situation and promote signature of the IC by FYR Macedonia;
- Take stock of progress and achievements of Kosovo (under UN Security Council Resolution 1244) in ending violence against women normative frameworks and service provision;
- Take stock of cooperation between national governments, civil society organizations, and regional institutions in monitoring IC implementation;

- Identify key challenges faced by national governments and civil society in the implementation and monitoring of the IC, and how cooperation between both could support them in addressing those challenges;
- Identify ways to enhance the capacity of civil society to engage and interact with national governments and regional institutions; and
- Share good practices, challenges, and lessons learnt regarding cooperation between civil society and national government, on the one hand, and with regional institutions on the other, on the implementation of gender equality agenda in the region.

In view of this, the Regional Forum will address questions, such as:

- How can the existing cooperation between women’s CSOs, governments, and other concerned stakeholders be enhanced for policy development and jointly monitoring implementation of Istanbul Convention and CEDAW?
- How can a formal dialogue and knowledge sharing mechanism on the implementation and monitoring of the Istanbul Convention be set-up and articulated?
- How can key concerned stakeholders improve joint efforts to tackle the challenges faced while implementing and monitoring the Istanbul Convention?

IV. Deliverables

It is expected that the responsible party will be able to produce, inter alia, the following:

- A concept paper for the Regional Fora, with a detailed agenda, including moderators, speakers, rapporteurs, background documentation, and presentations for a 1.5 day event in a location/venue to be determined in close cooperation with UN Women. Tentative date is end of November 2017.
- Format of the Fora: It will be interactive, with brief and informal presentations, and structured in panel discussions that would trigger discussions and debate. A moderator will oversee each session and facilitate the discussion, while the rapporteur will take notes and make a presentation at the last session on the key issues and recommendations. Experts from women’s CSOs will lead the wrap up sessions and make suggestions on specific issues to be discussed during the concluding session that will highlight key recommendations. The Forum will consist of opening and closing sessions and panel discussions. The description of each panel should include the objective, and the proposed panelists.
- Develop a detailed list of proposed participants (up to 70 people) detailing the justification for attending, their background on the Call for Proposals subject, and their potential contribution to the Fora. Participants will include, among others, representatives of women regional platforms and networks, national government representatives of the countries involved in the Programme, the Parliamentary Assembly, Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence, the Parliamentary Assembly’s General Rapporteur on Violence against Women, representative of the Council of Europe, other key regional institutions and representatives of marginalized groups?.
- Participation of representatives of women’s platforms/networks in the Regional Forum will be covered by the project proposal budget. It is expected that women’s CSOs/networks will account for 20 percent of the participants.
- A proposal for the formal mechanism is to be set up as an outcome of the Regional Fora. The mechanism’s objective is to engage in a reflection process on synergies at different levels

(government level, parliamentary level, civil society and regional institutions) to provide a platform for the exchange of experiences, know-how, and networking among participants.

- A situation analysis of where of the countries are in terms of monitoring against the GREVIO monitoring calendar for Istanbul Convention.

V. Duration of project

August 2017 – February 2018 (tentatively)

VI. Budget Request

The proposed intervention size and budget request will have to fall between a minimum indicative amount of EUR 40.000 and a maximum amount of EUR 60.000. All currency exchanges will be calculated using the UN Operational Exchange Rate as per the date of submission of proposal. For May 2017, UNORE is 1USD: 0.921

VII. Institutional Arrangement

The selected Organization will sign a Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with UN Women. A competitive selection process will take place to identify the potential Responsible Party. The CSO will be selected only if it has proven capacity to deliver the proposed activity. The CSO's capacity will be assessed by UN Women as per UN Women's rules and regulations.

VIII. Reporting

The selected partner will be the principal responsible party for the proposed project, but will work closely with UN Women during programme implementation. The partner will provide regular narrative and financial reports in line with UN Women guidelines and requirements.

All communications materials that would be produced under this agreement must acknowledge the support and seek approval of UN Women. Furthermore, they should be in line with the EU Communication and Visibility tools and the EU-UN joint visibility guidelines.