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**CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR NATIONAL GRANTS
for addressing migrant smuggling prevention and/or the protection
of smuggled migrants**

**Security for Human Beings and Borders – Combating Smuggling of Migrants
in the Western Balkans**

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BACKGROUND

The Western Balkans (WB) continued to be a transit route for irregular migrants trying to reach Western Europe from Turkey. Despite a significant decrease in the number of irregular migrants arriving at the EU's external borders since the migration crisis in 2015, the migration pressure in the Western Balkans remains high, as does smuggling and the demand for facilitation services.¹ For example, during the first ten months of 2020, detections on the Western Balkan routes were 122% higher compared to the same period in 2019 indicating continued significant movements in the region and beyond.² The authorities of some of the countries in the region have implemented measures such as strengthening border controls, which have had an effect on the migratory routes, hindering movements throughout the region. At the same time, these measures primarily appear to slow down or divert migratory movements, instead of preventing or deterring them altogether. Irregular migrants usually try to cross borders multiple times and many eventually succeed. Another side-effect of these measures is that they increase the demand for facilitation services.³ In the Western Balkans as an active transit area, migrants staying for a longer period of time (particularly those with an unregulated status), difficulties crossing state borders, and an increase in the price of smuggling certainly represent circumstances that increase migrants' risk factors and expose them to various forms of abuse, violence or exploitation, especially the most vulnerable among them (women, children, unaccompanied minors). Although deaths along the WB route are relatively rare, they do occur. Smuggling of migrants is continuously among the main topics in EU Progress Reports for WB countries.

The number of migrants who entered Serbia in 2020 was 25.093,⁴ but only 2,830 registered their intention to seek asylum and a total of 144 people applied for asylum.⁵ Subsidiary protection was granted to 12 persons and refugee status has got 17 persons.⁶ In the previous year Serbian police filed 134 criminal charges against 179 persons suspected of smuggling, out of which 164 persons were convicted.⁷

PURPOSE OF THE CALL

This action is launched within the project "Security for Human Beings and Borders -Combating Smuggling of Migrants in the Western Balkans" that was developed as a regional response of 7 CSOs affiliated in the Balkan Refugees and Migration Council (BRMC): Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC), Belgrade Centre for Human Rights (BCHR), Civic Alliance from Montenegro (GAMN), Civil Rights Program Kosovo* (CRP/K), Group 484, Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA) and Vaša prava Bosnia and Herzegovina (VP BiH), as well as Danish Refugee Council (DRC) to the burning common problem along the Western Balkans Migration Route

¹ Frontex, "Risk Analysis for 2020," Frontex, 2020, <https://frontex.europa.eu/publications/frontex-releases-risk-analysis-for-2020-vpOTZ7> (accessed on February 4, 2021).

² EPRS, European Parliament, *Understanding EU action against migrant smuggling*, January 2021, PE 659.450, European Union: EPRS.

³ Europol, Frontex, & EASO, *Tackling Migrant Smuggling in the Western Balkans*, January 2020.

⁴ Serbia December 2020 snapshot (UNHCR), available at:

<https://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/UNHCR%20Serbia%20statistical%20snapshot%20DECEMBER%202020.pdf>.

⁵ Belgrade Centre for Human Rights: Right on Asylum in the Republic of Serbia 2020, p.15. available at:

<http://www.bgcentar.org.rs/bgcentar/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Pravo-na-azil-u-Srbiji-2020.pdf>.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 19.

⁷ Available at: <http://www.mup.gov.rs/wps/portal/sr/aktuelno/aktivnosti/632cda93-a05d-4507-a4c4-5d7deced0346>.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICIJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.



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– smuggling of migrants. The project is funded by European Union within the scope of Civil Society Facility and Media Programme 2018-2019 under the lot “Enhancing CSOs’ engagement in protection sensitive migration management”.

a. Objectives (*See Guidelines for the applicants Section 2*)

The **overall objective** is contribution to the EU approximation process by establishing protective sensitive migration management in WB with fine balance between security and border protection of the countries and respect human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants.

Three specific objectives will be pursued:

- (a) to support CSOs in conducting activities for prevention of migrant smuggling;
- (b) to support CSOs in providing effective protection services to smuggled migrants;
- (c) to support CSOs in engaging to advocacy activities for migrant's rights.

b. Target groups (*See Guidelines for the applicants Section 2*)

1. Migrants, particularly smuggled migrants;
2. Vulnerable groups of migrants (e.g. women, children, persons with disabilities, the elderly, unaccompanied and separated migrant children, victims of torture, etc.);
3. State and local institutions;
4. Media;
5. Local citizens and municipalities.

c. Scope of activities

The applicants are invited to propose activities they assess as relevant to the objectives of the Call.

Examples of the activities (*See Guidelines for the applicants Section 4 – Types of activity*):

- activities aiming to deliver concrete public services responding to the needs of smuggled migrants, including legal aid, psychosocial support, healthcare, etc.;
- activities supporting adequate attention to gender issues in the migration-related contexts;
- media campaigns, production of news and relevant information tools (leaflets etc.);
- activities strengthening the watchdog role of CSOs in the implementation of relevant policies and reforms;
- policy monitoring and publication of relevant monitoring reports;
- research and analysis of relevant media content;
- activities that promote implementation of relevant laws and regulations;
- activities that support discussion between different stakeholders and/or consultation with stakeholders, including establishment of dialogue with political parties or local legislative bodies;
- activities that promote cooperation and exchange between different local communities and self-governments, related to protection of migrants;
- other activities enhancing protection-sensitive migration management.



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RULES FOR CALL FOR PROPOSALS (*See Guidelines for the applicants, Section 4.*)

Eligibility of applicants

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

- be a legal person registered before 1 March 2019;
- be established in the Republic of Serbia;
- be non-profit-making;
- civil society organization;
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action.

Geographic coverage. Proposed activities must take place in the territory of the Republic of Serbia.

Duration of the proposed activities. The applicant should foresee all project activities to be completed in **six (6) months** from the date of contracting.

Number of grants. **Up to four** national projects will be supported. Each organisation can submit only one application.

Size of funds. For each project **from 3.500,00 EUR to 5,000,00 EUR.**

INFO SESSION (*See Guidelines for the applicants, Section 5.*)

Info session on the selection process regarding the implementation, financial monitoring of the project and reporting will be organized online on 11 May 2021 at 13:00 All interested parties can apply for participating in Info session by 10 May 2021.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURE (*See Guidelines for the applicants, Section 5*)

The application must be submitted on the provided application forms, in the English or Serbian language and must be completed in full according to the given instructions in the Guidelines for applicants.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: 31 May 2021

CONTACT:

Project proposals, applications for info session, as well as all questions and requests for any clarifications should be sent to e-mail: goran@bgcentar.org.rs

Registration for the info-session can be submitted by <https://forms.gle/qwHHmVPhBCvFrX5f9> as well.