**CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR NATIONAL GRANTS**

 **for enhancing access to social and economic rights of vulnerable groups of foreigners in Albania**

**Inclusion of FOreigners in WB – accesS To social and Economic Rights (FOSTER)**

Albanian Helsinki Committee

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**BACKGROUND**

In the EU reports, the situation in the Western Balkan countries is still marked with significant shortcomings in fulfilling the key political criteria. The region is in early stage of preparation of freedom of movement of workers and access to the labor market. But although the institutional and legislative frameworks for the protection and promotion of human rights and freedoms and protection against discrimination are developed and mostly aligned with the EU legislation, in practice, ensuring equal opportunities, especially for foreigners and marginalized groups, remains challenging. Economic plan for investment in the Western Balkans 2021-2027 EU aims to foster regional cooperation and convergence with the EU and offers a path for a successful regional economic integration that will ultimately speed up the process of EU integration. To achieve this, it is crucial inter alia to enhance overall social inclusion in the WB societies, including the inclusion of foreigners. The Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027 acknowledges that the challenge of integration and inclusion is particularly relevant for migrants. Furthermore, it emphasises that promoting integration and inclusion is strongly linked with the imperative of economic development.

The Presidency discussion paper on strengthening migration management system in the WB region (2020) has noted that integration and labour migration schemes are among the least supported areas of engagement and that for further improvement all aspects of migration capacities should be upgraded. With the launching of the Open Balkan initiative and strengthening of the Berlin Process, it is expected that migration movements within the region will intensify. Although the states are responsible to provide appropriate services, to a large extent the enjoyment of fundamental human rights of foreigners depends on CSOs assistance and support. In such a context, migration dynamics creates need for additional empowerment and upgrading of knowledge of CSOs. CSOs from across the WB region will be trained on creating functional systems that enable foreigners to access the fundamental rights, including integration programs and community support. The action will strengthen the capacities of the CSOs and national human rights institutions (NHRI) to contribute in policymaking, promotion and protection of human rights of foreigners and their inclusion into sustainable social and economic development of the WB region. CSOs will be empowered with knowledge and skills in developing and implementation national and regional projects and advocacy materials to improve the social and economic rights of vulnerable foreigners.

Regarding the situation at the national level, during the year of 2022 in the Republic of Albania, the total number of temporary residence permits was 18,151 (from which 13,296 originate from European countries, 2,641 from Asian countries, 694 from African countries, 1,454 from the American continents and 66 from the Australian continent). Out of a total number of temporary residence permits, 7,930 were issued for the employment reasons, 4,333 for family reunion, 717 for studying, 3,258 for humanitarian reasons and 1,913 for other reasons.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Purpose of the Call**

This action is launched within the project “Inclusion of FOreigners in WB – accesS To social and Economic Rights (FOSTER)” that was developed as a regional response of 7 CSOs affiliated in the Balkan Refugees and Migration Council (BRMC)[[2]](#footnote-2) and Danish Refugee Council (DRC) to address common migration-related challenges in the Western Balkan region, with the focus on fundamental human rights of different vulnerable groups of migrants and foreigners, particularly their access to social and economic rights. The project is funded by European Union within the scope of EU Civil Society Facility and Media Programme in favour of the Western Balkans and Turkey for 2021-2023 (IPA III) under the lot “Human Rights, Anti-discrimination and Inter-Cultural Dialogue”.

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

The **overall objective** is fully protected and promoted fundamental rights of foreigners within the WB region, according to the EU standards, with special focus on economic and social rights of vulnerable foreigners.

The **specific objective is** strengthened capacities of the CSOs and human rights institutions to contribute to relevant policymaking, promote and protect fundamental rights of vulnerable foreigners and their inclusion into sustainable social and economic development in the WB region.

1. **Target groups** *(See Guidelines for the applicants Section 2)*
2. Vulnerable groups of foreigners, such as regular and irregular migrants, refugees, victims of different crimes, and other vulnerable persons among foreigners in the WB countries;
3. State and local institutions;
4. Media;
5. Local citizens and municipalities.
6. **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)*:

* workshops, seminars and other training and mentoring actions, particularly including those aimed at supporting relevant internal capacity development (of the applicant organisations);
* activities aiming to deliver concrete services responding to the needs of vulnerable foreigners and/or other relevant target groups, including legal aid, psychosocial support, healthcare, etc.;
* activities promoting social inclusion, gender issues, inter-cultural and/or inter-religious literacy and dialogue;
* activities aimed at fighting discrimination and/or cooperation with relevant independent bodies;
* public awareness and communication campaigns;
* media campaigns, production of news and relevant information tools (leaflets etc.);
* education and training, including of local media as target groups;
* activities strengthening the watchdog role of CSOs in the implementation of relevant policies and reforms;
* policy monitoring and publication of relevant monitoring reports;
* research, analysis and advocacy activities;
* 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 local self-governments, in support to the position of the foreigners in their communities;
* activities strengthening networking and coalition building, particularly through information sharing, experience exchange and joint advocacy;
* other activities enhancing the promotion and protection of fundamental rights and access to services.

**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 entity registered before 1 December 2023;
* be established in Albania;
* 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 Albania.

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. Up to **5,500.00 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 on January 12th, 2024. All interested parties can apply for participating in Info session by January 5th, 2024, through sending an email to office@ahc.org.al.

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

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

**DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS:** **20 January 2024**

**contact:**

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

1. INSTAT [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC), Belgrade Centre for Human Rights (BCHR), Civil Rights Program Kosovo\* (CRP/K), Group 484, Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA), Legal Centre Podgorica and Vaša prava Bosnia and Herzegovina (VP BiH). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)