CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

FOR THE PROVISION OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY EXPERT MONITORING SERVICES

2024/Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement, CEPA-CIVIL SOCIETY EXPERT-MONITORING/1

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| Project ► | Support to CEPA monitoring, implementation, and communicationENI/2023/442-873 |
| Organisation and buying entity ► | GOPA PACE, on behalf of the European Union Delegation to Armenia |
|  Type of contract ► | Individual service contract and/or subcontracting of Junior Non-Key Experts (JNKEs) |
| Duration ► | Until 28 February 2025 |
| Expected starting date ► | 01 November 2024 |
| Call Notice Issuance date ► | 01 September 2024 |
| Deadline for applications ► | 23 September 2024 |

1. **Introduction**

The “Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement” (CEPA) between Armenia and the EU, was signed in 2017 and entered into force in 2021. The agreement aims to strengthen democracy, the rule of law, and human rights in Armenia. It also focuses on economic modernization and growth, enhancing trade relations, and fostering sustainable development. The agreement encourages reforms in governance, anti-corruption measures, judicial independence, and public administration. It also promotes civil society engagement and political dialogue. CEPA covers various sectors such as energy, transport, environment, and climate change. It seeks to enhance cooperation in these areas through shared standards, practices, and innovation. A crucial aspect of CEPA is its emphasis on human rights, ensuring that Armenia aligns with international human rights standards and promotes fundamental freedoms.

In the implementation and promotion of the (CEPA), the Government of Armenia and the European Union Delegation in Armenia (EUD) receive technical assistance through the multifaceted technical assistance project *'Support to CEPA monitoring, implementation, and communication*" from April 2023, implemented by GOPA PACE.

The 48-month technical assistance supports the Government of Armenia in its reform process related to CEPA implementation, monitoring, strategic and EUD general communications, and Civil Society Support as Component 3 of the project. Project Component 3 is sub-divided into 3 Sub-Components:

* Sub-Component 3.1 – Support to strengthen Civil Society's monitoring of CEPA, policy analysis, and advocacy;
* Sub-Component 3.2 – Support to CEPA Civil Society Platform in providing access and utilizing wider civil society resources and
* Sub-Component 3.3 – Support to strengthen Civil Society's strategic communication and resilience to disinformation and manipulation;

with several specific activities that address the needs and priorities of the Civil Society sector in Armenia concerning CEPA monitoring.

The monitoring of the progress of CEPA implementation by Civil Society Experts is of paramount importance, specifically in the times when the Government of Armenia is in the process of the CEPA Roadmap development and designing its monitoring instruments and tools.

The Civil Society of Armenia has conducted monitoring of the CEPA implementation in several occasions and also under the CEPA Civil Society Platform support. Here are some links to those monitoring reports:

<https://www.osf.am/reports/european-dimension-reports>,

<https://eu-armenia.am>

<https://cepacso.am/hy/publication/7>

The implementation of the CEPA should be in line with the principles of democracy, accountability and transparent governance, human rights protection and inclusivity. Ultimately, it should aim to translate the European standards outlined in the CEPA into reality for Armenia, thereby improving the standard of living for every citizen.

This presents a valuable opportunity to establish stable cooperation among all stakeholders, including the Civil Society, the CEPA Civil Society Platform and Government institutions for a more active and constructive dialogue․ This initiative will also create new opportunities to involve existing resources within the Civil Society to support more result oriented CEPA implementation monitoring.

To provide efficient continuous support in the Civil Society monitoring of CEPA, the above-mentioned Technical Assistance project in agreement with the EUD seeks to contract reliable and qualified Civil Society monitoring experts.

1. **Background, objectives and scope**

Overall, CEPA represents a comprehensive framework for Armenia’s partnership with the EU, focusing on political, economic, and social dimensions to support Armenia’s development and modernization efforts. The quality of the implementation of the CEPA is seen as a high priority both by the EU and the Armenian Government as well as by the civil society. In this context, the implementation of the CEPA should focus more on real and qualitative outcomes. It should be in line with the principles of democracy, accountability and transparent governance, human rights protection and inclusivity, as well as the CEPA implementation entails tangible, measurable outcomes.

This call is the first one for an expression of interest for the CEPA Civil society independent experts monitoring for the period 2024-2027[[1]](#footnote-1). This can and should become an important resource - not only for the expert community - but also for helping the Government of Armenia and the general public to understand the quality of ongoing reforms, progress, achievements and challenges.

The call aims to provide representatives of the Armenian civil society, and individual and independent experts an opportunity to monitor the progress of implementation of the CEPA in specific fields in Armenia. This involves observing the impact, effectiveness and degree of changes in specific fields implemented within the framework of the CEPA. Additionally, the call seeks to identify the opportunities that the CEPA provides for introducing reforms in specific areas. The independent monitoring by Civil Society experts will help to understand the problems that exist for implementing reforms in certain areas and will communicate these problems to the decision-makers and responsible institutions.

Current 2024 Call seeks individual Civil Society experts to monitor the progress of the implementation of the CEPA in specific fields, in particular:

* observing the impact, effectiveness and degree of changes in specific fields implemented within the CEPA framework;
* identifying the opportunities that CEPA provides for introducing reforms in specific areas within its framework;
* provide opinions and advice on specific issues related to CEPA implementation.

Tasks may include monitoring reports and advice of all types (such as policy papers, policy briefs, and CEPA indicator-related recommendations etc.) – as per detailed Expert ToR and its Deliverables enclosed as Annex 3 to this Call.

Applying for this Call is a mandatory prerequisite for being contracted by us to work as an expert in CEPA monitoring.

By replying to this call and signing the contract if selected, you agree to perform the assignments to the highest professional standards and in compliance with the:

* Conditions set out in this call and
* Expert Terms of Reference (ToR) – enclosed as Annex 3 to this Call
1. **Timetable and deadlines**

This call for expression of interest is open until September 23, 2024.

The monitoring is expected to last for 4 months – from November 2024 until the end of February 2025.

1. **Eligible profiles**

We are looking for Civil Society experts with a high level of expertise and professional experience in the fields of EU action and policy, specifically in the fields of CEPA, as per the detailed Expert ToR – enclosed as Annex 3 to this Call.

Very good language skills in Armenian and English are mandatory.

1. **Exclusion criteria**

Civil servants and other staff currently employed by the public administration, any governmental agencies of the Republic of Armenia, or persons who previously worked or were contracted by the Armenian state institutions within the last six months before the application deadline, are not eligible to apply. Civil Society Experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities defined by the Expert Terms of Reference.

1. **Procedure**

Applications must be submitted in English language. Each application must include a CV per template enclosed with this Call[[2]](#footnote-2) and a signed privacy statement as well as a Monitoring essay based on the instructions and format provided with this call[[3]](#footnote-3).

The applicant shall submit one application for one selected topic only.

Selection of the Civil Society Experts will be done through the evaluation of submitted applications. The main criteria for the evaluation are going to be the strength of the submitted CVs and demonstrated experience as well as a clear and targeted formulation of the Monitoring Essay.

Ideally, all 10 fields of interest of CEPA should be equally represented, however, selection will be done according to the applications received.

The applicants will need to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the relevant field, the current state of reforms and relevant provisions of the CEPA agreement as well as European regulations related to the field.

The provided template for the essay with highlighted structure will enable the applicants to follow the proposed methodology of providing coherent and concise information about the subject matter.

After the selection of the most suitable profiles is finalised, formal endorsement by the EUD and signature of the service Contract with the GOPA PACE will follow, and this is expected to be formalised by the end of October 2024. We expect each selected applicant monitoring mission will last for 40 working days (WDs).

Selected Civil Society Experts will sign a contract and will be paid an all-inclusive expert daily fee that will be agreed in the contracting stage after the selection process is finalized with GOPA PACE.

Additional expenses such as transportation costs within Armenia, advocacy costs, presentation and publication of policy paper etc., as well as any other necessary justifiable expenses that the selected Civil Society Experts can have during the mission implementation, will be financed from the project incidental expenditure (IE) and will require prior agreement and approval of the EUD as a contracting authority. This will be in advance communicated and regulated by the project Team of experts and the GOPA PACE backstopping team.

1. **Other conditions – supplementary information**

An online information session will be organised for interested and potential applicants on September 17, 2024, at 17.00. To register for the online information session kindly send an email to mushegh.yekmalyan@gopa-pace.com, and/or davit.amiryan@gopa-pace.com.

Questions regarding this specific Call shall be sent in **at the latest one week before the information session**, in English, and shall be exclusively sent to the email addresses mentioned above.

**8. Application procedure**

All documents must be sent to GOPA PACE **electronically.** Electronic copies shall be sent only to the following email address: CEPA\_Armenia@gopa-pace.com with reference no. **2024/CEPA-CIVIL SOCIETY EXPERT-MONITORING/01** in the subject field. Expressions of Interest submitted to another e-mail account will be excluded from the procedure.

The deadline for the submission of expression of interest is **23 September 2024 by 23:59 CET**.

1. The second Call of the same nature will be published in the summer of 2025 and potentially a 3rd one in the summer of 2026 if the project resources will allow. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Additionally, the submitted CV should include links to the applicant's previous similar monitoring experience or listed publications. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See Annex 6 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)