

**EUROPEAN UNION PROGRAMME FOR
EMPLOYMENT
AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY
PROGRESS**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS VP/2010/012

**ESTABLISHMENT OF 3-YEAR
FRAMEWORK PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS
WITH EU-LEVEL NGO NETWORKS**

IN THE AREAS OF

**SOCIAL INCLUSION,
NON-DISCRIMINATION,
GENDER EQUALITY,
THE INTEGRATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES,
AND THE REPRESENTATION OF THE ROMA**

Period covered: 01.01.2011 – 31.12.2013

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FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY
- PROGRESS
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I. INTRODUCTION: THE COMMUNITY PROGRAMME PROGRESS

PROGRESS¹ is the EU's employment and social solidarity programme, set up to provide financial support for the attainment of the European Union's objectives in employment, social affairs and equal opportunities as set out in the Social Agenda². The realisation of the Social Agenda relies on a combination of instruments comprising EU legislation, the implementation of open methods of coordination in various policy fields and financial incentives such as the European Social Fund.

The PROGRESS mission is to strengthen the EU's contribution in support of Member States' commitments and efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. To this effect, PROGRESS will be instrumental in:

- Providing analysis and policy advice on PROGRESS policy areas;
- Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in PROGRESS policy areas;
- Promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and
- Relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

More specifically, PROGRESS supports:

- The implementation of the European Employment Strategy (section 1);
- The implementation of the open method of coordination in the field of social protection and inclusion (section 2);
- The improvement of the working environment and conditions including health and safety at work and reconciling work and family life (section 3);
- The effective implementation of the principle of non-discrimination and promotion of its mainstreaming in all EU policies (section 4);

¹ Decision No 1672/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity — Progress, JO L 315 of 15.11.2006

² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Renewed social agenda: Opportunities, access and solidarity in 21st century Europe COM/2008/0412 final of 02.07.2008.

- The effective implementation of the principle of gender equality and promotion of its mainstreaming in all EU policies (section 5).

The present call for Call for proposals is issued in the context of the implementation of the 2010 annual work plan which can be consulted at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=658&langId=en>.

II. PURPOSE OF THE CALL

Article 2.1.6 of the Decision establishing the PROGRESS Programme sets out among its general objectives "to boost the capacity of key European level networks to promote, support and further develop Community policies and objectives, where applicable".

Among its activities, Article 9.1.c of the Decision foresees "*the support for the running costs of those key European level networks whose activities are linked to the implementation of the objectives of the Programme*".

Non-governmental organizations have an important contribution to make towards affecting and/or accompanying change in employment and social policies and legislation. Making a difference requires a sustained, cohesive coalition capable of mobilizing and analyzing information, making that information available to key actors and mobilizing many sources of influence. Non-governmental organizations are in a central position to influence policy in the European Union and in the Member states through their national members. Influence is gained through the increased expertise and information which are important to policy formulation and implementation.

European networks have a key role to play in representing, promoting and defending the rights and interests of their constituencies at Union level, by virtue of their position as the European Union's main contacts in the implementation of policies. The strength of European networks lies in their capacity to gather and mobilize relevant members from different Member States into an open forum of discussion or exchange of expertise and experience able to inform and influence policy-making, as well as relaying EU action vis-à-vis network members. They also contribute to affecting change through the setting-up of coalitions. By concluding alliances with relevant institutions or actors, European networks can contribute to make other actors, also involved in employment and social issues, acknowledge problems and be accountable to commitments they have made.

Similarly, it is now acknowledged that the ever-growing complexity and diversity of work and the multi-level governance in the social field requires professional, competent and motivated organizations, including their staff members, to secure quality and a maximization of results. It is therefore fundamentally important to support the improvement of the organizational management of these organizations which will in turn increase their legitimacy, professionalism, transparency and public accountability.

In order to comply with the above-mentioned requirements, the Commission publishes the present Call for proposals with a view to selecting – on the basis of a triennial strategic plan – EU-level NGO networks to work with the Commission and receive Union support on a stable and regular basis for the period 2011-2013.

The Union support is not intended for specific projects, but to cover the costs inherent in the functioning of a European NGO network over a period that is equivalent to its accounting period.

Such support will be provided through the conclusion of a framework partnership agreement,

based on the provisions of Article 108 of the Financial Regulation³ and Article 163 of the Implementing Rules⁴, establishing 3-year cooperation with the Commission for the period 2011-2013.

The Commission intends to conclude framework partnerships with key actors in the areas of promoting social inclusion; combating discrimination; promoting gender equality; integrating persons with disabilities; and representing the Roma.

Specific agreement for an annual operating grant could then be signed in a second stage with those organizations with which the Commission concluded a framework partnership agreement. Concluding the specific agreement for an annual operating grant will be subject to the Commission's assessment of the organization's annual work program and corresponding detailed budget (see Point III below) and to the availability of budgetary credits.

Participating countries

Participating countries under the PROGRESS Programme are: the EU-27 Member States; the EFTA/EEA countries (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein); the candidate countries associated to the EU (Turkey, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), as well as Serbia.

For the purpose of this call, the participation of the western Balkan countries included in the stabilization and association process (Albania; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Montenegro; Kosovo) is subject to the condition of the entry into force of the respective individual Memoranda of Understanding, setting the conditions and concrete modalities of this participation. At the time of publishing this present call, no such Memoranda of Understanding has been signed with these countries.

III. THE FRAMEWORK PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

The conclusion of framework partnership agreements will help to forge strong relations with a number of key EU NGO networks, offering a more stable and structured environment which will be in the interests of the Commission and of the selected organizations.

The decision to favour a multi-year contractual period also reflects the very nature of employment, social affairs and equal opportunities initiatives whose impact is only visible in the medium to long term.

Partnerships are implemented by two legal instruments: framework partnership agreements and a specific agreement for an annual operating grant.

- Firstly, the framework partnership agreement will set out the conditions governing grants to partners for carrying out activities, on the basis of a triennial strategic plan. This first-level agreement does not constitute an obligation for the Commission to conclude a specific agreement for an annual operating grant.

Framework partnership agreements define the respective roles and responsibilities of the Commission and the networks in implementing the partnership. They present the common objectives agreed by the networks and the Commission; the type of activities envisaged;

³ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) N° 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities, OJ L 248, 16.09.2002, p.1. modified by Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) N° 1995/2006 of 13 December 2006, OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p.1

⁴ Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) N° 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002, laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation, OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p.1, modified by Commission Regulations 1261/2005 of 20 July 2005, OJ L 201, 2.8.2005, p.3, 1248/2006 of 7 August 2006, OJ L 227 19.8.2006, p.3, and 478/2007 of 23 April 2007, OJ L 111, 28.04.2007, p. 13

the procedure for concluding a specific agreement for an annual operating grant; the general rights and the obligations of each party under the specific agreements.

- Secondly, the Commission will invite all organizations with whom framework partnership agreement have been signed, to provide a detailed annual work program and the corresponding detailed budget in order to conclude a specific agreement for an annual **operating grant** (see also point XI below). Please note that concluding the specific agreement for an annual operating grant is subject to the Commission's assessment of the detailed annual work program and the corresponding detailed budget, as well as to the availability of budgetary credits.

IV. AREAS OF ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK PARTNERSHIPS

Applicants must choose one of these areas:

- **Area 1:** European level networks in the area of promoting social inclusion
- **Area 2:** European level networks in the area of combating discrimination
- **Area 3:** European level networks in the area of promoting gender equality
- **Area 4:** European level networks in the area of integrating persons with disabilities
- **Area 5:** European level networks in the area of representing the Roma

Please note that, according to Article 111 of the Financial Regulation⁵, one organization can not receive more than one running cost subsidy per budgetary year by Commission services.

V. THE THREE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN (2011-2013)

The Three-year strategic plan shall include elements common to all the five areas and aspects more specifically related to the chosen area.

Applicants will find below information regarding both the content and the structure of the strategic plan.

V.1. Content of the strategic plan

V.1.1 Elements common to all areas

The integrated nature of PROGRESS offers avenues to improved policy coherence through cross-cutting work. The three-year strategic plan will thus reflect this integrated nature while, at the same time, take count of the specificities of each respective area covered by the call.

This implies the identification of concrete grounds for working collaboration with other EU-level networks active in other areas. This also means that the following cross-cutting elements will have to be included and integrated in the triennial strategic plan the European networks are committed to implement with Union support.

⁵ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) N° 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities, OJ L 248, 16.09.2002, p.1. modified by Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) N° 1995/2006 of 13 December 2006, OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p.1

- A. Improving the organizational capacity and management of European networks
- B. Voicing the concerns and expectations of (1) people exposed to social exclusion, discrimination and gender inequality; or (2) organizations providing services to people exposed to social exclusion, discrimination and gender inequality; and formulating them to influence policy making at EU and national levels
- C. Reinforcing the advocacy and campaigning skills of the European partner organization and those of its national members to advance, support and further develop EU objectives and priorities at EU and national level
- D. Better integrating cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender, poverty, disability and non-discrimination) in the day-to-day work of the European partner organization

A. Improving the organizational capacity and management of European networks

This relates to the envisaged improvement of the organizational management of the networks to perform more efficiently and effectively, and would comprise, at least, the following priority fields:

1. Staff policy of the organization: a complete staff strategy should be designed, including the salary policy and the human resource and career development, the process of equipping individuals with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively. The European Commission also encourages the partner organization to promote equal employment opportunities for all its staff and team. This entails that the partner organization shall foster an appropriate mix of people, whatever their ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion, age, and ability.
2. Organizational development, the elaboration of management structures, processes and procedures within the organization as well as between and with national members (in particular by reinforcing their capacity); management of relationship with other organizations and sectors (public, private and community).
3. Financial independence, aiming to decrease financial dependency on Union funding, in particular through the exploration of alternative sources of financing. The plan should outline the strategy envisaged to achieve this.

This will mainly be done through the

- Development of structured contacts leading to the membership of new member associations from EU-27 Member States and PROGRESS participating countries. European-level organizations must ensure solid membership and promote and strengthen exchanges among their members.
- Development and dissemination of tools (training sessions or materials) with the view of equipping member organizations with the necessary skills and competences.
- Diversification of contacts and partnership with the view of decreasing financial dependence on the Union and increasing the level of participation of other organizations from different sectors (public or private).

B. Voicing the concerns and expectations of (1) people exposed to social exclusion, discrimination and gender inequality; or (2) organizations providing services to people exposed to social exclusion, discrimination and gender inequality; and formulating them to influence policy making at EU and national levels

The second element relates to the role the networks can play in facilitating an effective

flow of information between its membership base and the Union. The Union can strengthen its capacity to design more appropriate and effective policies, by being informed through the networks of public attitudes and views, including from those groups which tend to be less easy to access.

The European organizations selected under this call should, on the one hand, use their network to provide the national authorities and the Commission with practical experience and evidence regarding the situation of the people they represent. On the other hand, they should also be able to articulate these facts and experience into more conceptual tools which could allow the Commission and national authorities to adapt their policy making in order to better meet society's needs.

This will mainly be done through the

- Development of strategies aiming at influencing policy making at EU level (targeted at EU institutions, social partners, media etc...) and development of strategies aiming at influencing the implementation of such policies at national level (*targeted at national, regional or local authorities, members of national parliaments, specialized press and media, national social partners, etc...*) notably in the context of the open methods of coordination in the fields of employment and social inclusion and protection and the effective implementation of EU law at national level when applicable.
- Feeding into Commission and national-level consultations by providing qualitative and quantitative information with a view to analyzing problems, identifying possible options and choosing the most suitable and effective policy responses.
- Participation of EU-level networks in events organized by the respective Presidencies of the European Union and by the Commission.

C. Reinforcing the advocacy and campaigning skills of the European partner organization and those of its national members to advance, support and further develop EU objectives and priorities at EU and national level

There is a clear need to ensure that member organizations and more generally the public is informed about the developments, achievements and impact of EU employment, social and equal opportunities policies in order to strengthen awareness and support.

Public engagement can help citizens understand the complex problems facing Europe and their implications and involve those who are normally excluded from policy debates. It would create momentum for change by building common understanding of the problems and possible solutions to address them.

This would comprise, for example, the following priority fields:

1. Reinforcing European networks' capacity to inform policy analysis and development at both European and national level.
2. Contributing to the implementation of European policies and legislation and promote mainstreaming of the concerns related to their main field of activity in all relevant policy areas and actions.

This will mainly be done through the

- Development of communication tools (*website, publications, or other means*) to inform people about EU policies and objectives developed in their concerned area, to raise public awareness and build bridges between the different policy levels and between relevant institutions or actors.

- Development of structured information flows between the European organization and its members.
- Organisation of training activities targeting national members to inform them about EU-level policy developments and to guide and advise them on how to promote these at national level.

D. Better integrating cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender, poverty, disability and non-discrimination) in the day-to-day work of the European partner organization

The PROGRESS Programme aims at **promoting gender mainstreaming** in all its five policy sections. Consequently, the partner organization will take the necessary steps to ensure that

- Gender equality issues are taken into account when relevant for the drafting of the proposal by paying attention to the situation and needs of women and men;
- Implementation of the requested tasks/proposed activities includes a gender perspective by considering systematically the women and men dimension;
- Performance monitoring includes the collection and gathering of data disaggregated by sex when needed;
- Its proposed team and/or staff respects the gender balance at all levels.

Equally, **needs of persons with disabilities** shall be duly acknowledged and met while implementing the proposed activities. This will in particular entail that where the partner organization organizes training sessions and conferences, issues publications or develops dedicated websites, people with disabilities will have equal access to the facilities or the services provided.

V.1.2 Aspects specific for each area

In addition to the priorities, outcomes and principles mentioned above, the activities carried out by partner organizations in their selected area should focus around the following:

AREA 1: EUROPEAN LEVEL NETWORKS ACTIVE IN PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION

Framework partnership agreements will be concluded with European-level networks of organizations involved in the area of tackling poverty and social exclusion and promoting social cohesion both at EU and national level.

The triennial strategic plans presented will have to fit with the Commission's objectives in this field, that is to say:

1. Support the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of initiatives undertaken in the context of the open method of coordination on social protection and social inclusion both at EU and national level as well as in respect of other aspects related to social cohesion in the main political EU driven processes.
2. Promote the social inclusion dimension in EU and national policies (mainstreaming approach).

Activities carried over the 3 years should in particular directly relate to the support of

national member organisations in their involvement in the implementation, at national level, of the main political EU driven processes.

3. Strengthen the capacity of national NGOs, including their knowledge of relevant EU matters.
4. Contribute to improving the knowledge and understanding as regards poverty and social exclusion both at EU and national level.
5. Act as an intermediary between various policy levels and various institutions or actors, including people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, who attempt to influence decisions in the fight against poverty and social exclusion.
6. Raise awareness, disseminate information and advocate policy changes within the major stakeholders but also the media and the European citizens in general.
7. Develop the business case for social inclusion across the EU.
EU-level NGO organisations should in particular encourage cooperation with other civil society and social partners' organisations both at EU and national level.

AREA 2: EUROPEAN LEVEL NETWORKS ACTIVE IN COMBATING DISCRIMINATION

Framework partnership agreements will be concluded with European organizations which have as their primary objectives and activities the representation, defence of and the facilitation of access to the rights of people potentially exposed to discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation. At least one organization for each of the 5 grounds of discrimination mentioned above will be selected as a result to the present call.

In addition, as mentioned in its Communication adopted in 2008 "Non-discrimination and equal opportunities: a renewed commitment"⁶, the Commission intends to develop its activities relating to multiple discrimination and will therefore also support smaller EU-level NGO networks representing intersectional groups (combining at least two of the discrimination grounds mentioned in Article 19 of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU⁷).

The triennial strategic plans presented will have to fit with the Commission's global objectives in this field, that is to say:

1. Support the development, implementation and monitoring of non-discrimination and equality policies and legislation at European and national levels.
2. Promote non-discrimination and equal opportunities in EU and national policies (mainstreaming approach).

Activities carried out over the 3-years should in particular support national member organisations in their involvement, at national level, in main political EU driven processes such as the employment and social inclusion strategies.

3. Strengthen the capacity of national NGOs and their knowledge of relevant EU matters.

⁶ COM(2008) 420

⁷ Namely: sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

4. Improve the knowledge and understanding of discriminatory and inequality phenomena in Member States and at EU level (including on multiple discrimination).
5. Contribute to raising the awareness of practitioners on effective legal protection against discrimination on the basis of the two EU directives⁸ and make international fundamental rights requirements better known and respected.
6. Raise public awareness about the rights to non-discrimination and the benefits of diversity.

AREA 3: EUROPEAN LEVEL NETWORKS ACTIVE IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

Framework partnership agreements will be concluded with European organizations which have as their primary objectives and activities the representation and defence of the rights and interests of women and the promotion of equality between women and men.

The triennial strategic plans presented will have to fit with the Commission's global objectives in this field that is to say:

1. Support the development, implementation and monitoring of gender equality policies and legislation at EU and national levels, including the Commission's Women's Charter⁹ and its future strategy for equality between women and men¹⁰.
2. Promote gender equality concerns in EU and national policies (mainstreaming approach).

Activities carried over the 3 years should relate to supporting national member organizations' involvement, at national level, in the promotion of the gender equality aspects of the main political EU-driven processes, such as in the areas of employment, social inclusion and social protection, education, research, etc.

3. Strengthen the capacity of national NGOs and their knowledge of relevant EU matters.
4. Improve the knowledge and understanding of discriminatory and gender inequality phenomena in Member States (including multiple discrimination).
5. Contribute to an effective legal protection against discrimination on the basis of the various EU-directives implementing the principle of equal treatment between women and men¹¹ and make international commitments on gender equality and women's rights better known and respected (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; Cairo Programme of Action, the Millennium Development Goals, etc).

⁸ The Racial Equality Directive 2000/43/EC and the Employment Equality Directive 2000/78/EC.

⁹ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=726&furtherNews=yes>

¹⁰ The Commission intends to adopt a new strategy for equality between women and men for the next five years in 2010, following its current Roadmap for equality between women and men for the 2006-2010 period: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=422&langId=en>. The areas of priority for the new strategy will be largely similar to those of the Women's Charter.

¹¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=639&langId=en>

6. Raise public awareness and disseminate information about women's rights, the rights to gender equality and their benefits to society.
7. Promote the business case for gender equality across the EU.
EU-level NGO organisations should in particular encourage the cooperation between their national members and social partners' organisations at national level.

AREA 4: EUROPEAN LEVEL NETWORKS ACTIVE IN INTEGRATING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES INTO SOCIETY

Framework partnership agreements will be concluded with European organizations which have as their primary objectives to represent the interests of persons with disabilities at Union level as well as organizations active in promoting equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and enjoyment of their rights.

The triennial strategic plans presented will have to fit with the Commission's objectives in this field that is to say:

1. Supporting the development, implementation and monitoring of European and national policies and legislation in the area of disabilities
2. Contributing to the implementation of the EU disability strategy and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
3. Contributing to include different aspects of disability matters into EU and national policies (mainstreaming approach), particularly in the areas employment, education, social inclusion, health, human rights, development cooperation, etc.
4. Contributing to the development of specific policies relevant to disabilities in the areas of accessibility, independent living, deinstitutionalisation, etc.
5. Promoting the involvement of the national member organisations in the implementation of the EU disability strategy and of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
6. Equipping member organisations with the necessary skills and competences to promote the interests of people with disabilities and the full enjoyment of their rights, in particular enhancing equality of opportunities for people with disabilities, and combating discrimination on the basis of disability
7. Extending the coverage of the network to the 27 Member States.
8. Developing information tools (website, publications, or other means) to inform about EU policies and objectives in the disability field, increasing the network capacity and raising public awareness.
9. Activities carried out over the three years should in particular directly relate to the support of national member organisations in their involvement in the implementation, at national level, of main political EU driven processes.

10. Develop the business case for disability across the EU. EU-level NGO organisations should in particular encourage the cooperation between their national members and social partners' organisations at national level as well as with industry and business.

AREA 5: EUROPEAN LEVEL NETWORK ACTIVE IN REPRESENTING THE ROMA

A framework partnership agreement will be concluded with one European organization which has as its primary objectives and activities the representation of Roma people, the defence of and the facilitation of access to their rights and the fight against their social exclusion and discrimination which they face.

The Union support should help to reinforce the capacity of the selected network to promote equal treatment and combat discrimination against Roma people. It should support interaction between Roma civil society and the EU institutions, as well as national authorities and other stakeholders involved in the implementation of non-discrimination legislation and policies. It should also support policy development and implementation by providing up-to-date and reliable information concerning the situation of Roma in the EU and candidate countries.

Activities carried out during the 3-year framework partnership agreement will have to support the involvement of national member organizations in the implementation of the 10 Common Basic Principles of Roma Inclusion (annexed to the June 2009 EPSCO Council of Ministers Conclusions)¹².

V.2 Structure of the Three-year Strategic Plan

Applicants must present a 3-year strategic plan. A Strategic Plan Template is attached in the electronic application form SWIM. For the submission of the request for subsidy under the present Call for proposals, applicants will complete the attached template. More detailed information on the proposed objectives and related activities will be requested from organizations with which framework partnership agreements have been signed – this will take place in a second stage of assessment together with the submission of the annual work program and corresponding detailed budget.

The Commission attaches great importance to the monitoring of the performance of the organizations. It is important to ensure that appropriate monitoring systems are in place within the partner organizations and that the Commission is in a position to follow-up the performance of the organizations.

V.3 Triennial budgetary estimation

Applications must include a budgetary estimation for the three-year period, the template for which is attached in the electronic application form SWIM. This budgetary estimation has a twofold purpose.

Firstly, the estimated budget for a framework partnership agreement (for running cost subsidies) should provide information on the estimated income and expenditure related to the 3-year strategic plan, presented in Euro. Partner organizations established in countries outside the Euro zone should be aware that they fully carry any exchange rate risk.

¹² <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=2808&langId=en>

Secondly, the applicant organization should as well provide the Commission with a 3 year overview of its global income and expenditure.

The organizations should therefore fill in both pages of the triennial budgetary estimation form ("Estimated budget for a framework partnership agreement" and "Global estimated triennial budget of the applicant organization").

However, as a specific agreement for an annual operating grant will be only concluded at a later stage, after the signature of the framework partnership agreement with selected networks, at this stage no further details concerning the way in which single item figures are calculated are necessary (*see also point XI below*).

VI EXCLUSION AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

VI.1 Regarding the applicant organization

Financial contributions may be awarded to a **European-level organization**,

- a) which is in conformity with the conditions listed in Articles 93(1), 94 and 96(2)(a) of the Financial Regulation.
- b) which is a properly constituted and registered legal entity established in one of the PROGRESS participating countries for at least three years (see check list of documents to be provided).
- c) which is non-governmental, non-profit-making, and independent of industry, commercial and business or other conflicting interests, whose members are mainly non-profit organisations.
- d) whose mission falls under the objectives and scope of the priorities established under each relevant section of the call.
- e) whose main purpose is to contribute to promoting greater social inclusion and strengthening social protection, or promoting the principles of non-discrimination, gender equality, the integration of people with disabilities in Europe or the representation of Roma.
- f) which has national member organisations in at least fifteen Member States of the European Union¹³.
- g) which is mandated by its members, through a Management Board or other administrative forum, to represent these members at the EU level and to be responsible for the activities of the network.
- h) which has a sound administrative and financial management structure.
- i) which will not pursue general objectives directly or indirectly contrary to the policies of the European Union or be associated with disreputable projects or images.
- j) which has provided the Commission with satisfactory accounts of their membership, internal rules and sources of funding.

¹³ At the time of submitting the proposal in response to the present call.

VI.2 Regarding the proposal

The proposal must comply with the procedure for submission of proposals, be complete and duly signed (by a legal representative) and include all the requested supporting documentation.

VII SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria will enable the Commission to assess the financial and operational capacity of the applicant organization to complete the proposed triennial work program.

VII.1 Financial capacity

The applicant must:

- attach a copy of the organisation's annual full accounts for the two last financial years preceding the submission of the application when accounts were closed.
- specify the contribution made by donors other than by the Union including the members.
- attach an external audit report produced by an approved auditor certifying the accounts for the two last financial years available and giving an assessment of the applicant organization's financial viability.

VII.2 Operational capacity

The following information must be enclosed in support of the application:

- the organization's organizational structure: capacity of staff, budget control and financial management, a description of the roles and responsibilities of each staff member, the curricula vitae of senior staff members as well as a list of the members of the management board;
- any references relating to participation in actions financed by the Union, conclusion of grant agreements and/or contracts with the Commission or other international organisations and Member States over the last 3 years.

VIII. AWARD CRITERIA

Applications from European level organisations which satisfy the above eligibility and selection criteria will then be assessed according to the following award criteria:

VIII.1 Quality of the proposal

The quality will be judged by the extent to which the triennial strategy:

- is in line with the objectives set out in the Decision creating PROGRESS.
- corresponds to Union policy objectives in one or more of the fields covered by the call. A clear link should be made with the most recent Union strategic documents.

- is clear, realistic and detailed, in particular as regards the definition of the objectives and their suitability for achieving the desired results and this, in a 3 year perspective.
- explains its potential impact on Union and national policy-shaping and implementation of legislation and policies.
- proves its potential to voice the public's concerns from different regions of Europe and to promote them in all Union and national policies.
- includes awareness raising/training activities targeting national members to disseminate the results of the European organisation's work.
- comprises appropriate means for monitoring and evaluating the activities of the organisation.

VIII.2 Effective and efficient organization of work

The effective and efficient organisation of work will be judged by the extent to which the applicant:

- Outlines its relations with its national members, including arrangements to ensure involvement of member organisations in policy development and policy statements, goal-orientation and planning practices, reporting methods.
- Demonstrates its ability to interact with external actors, including key institutions, other NGO networks and relevant constituents when designing and implementing each activity envisaged.
- Shows the organisation's ability to encourage cooperation and membership in PROGRESS participating countries¹⁴.
- Demonstrates its ability to make its achievements in advancing EU objectives and priorities visible and transferable.

IX PROVISIONAL CALENDAR FOR THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| • DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS: | 28th May 2010 |
| • DECISION ON AWARD OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS | Oct/Nov 2010 |
| • CONCLUSION OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS | Oct/Nov 2010 |

The Commission will register proposals, which have been submitted electronically and on a hard copy **by the 28th of May 2010** (postmark will serve as proof).

The Commission will assess the proposals against the formal and then the award criteria listed under points VI – VII and VIII of the present call.

The Commission will inform each applicant of the final decision taken, including reasons for rejection or non-eligibility.

The selected organizations will receive two original copies of the framework partnership

¹⁴ The goal is to extend the coverage of the network to the EU-27 Member States and PROGRESS participating countries.

agreement for acceptance and signature. Both these copies must be sent back to the Commission, which will then return one of them once it has been signed by both parties.

Signature of the framework partnership agreements with the selected organizations should take place in October/November 2010. The framework partnerships will be concluded for a period of three years, for the period running from 1st January 2011 to 31st December 2013.

Signature of the framework partnership agreement by the parties shall not give rise to any obligation on the Commission to award an annual operating grant.

Signing a framework partnership agreement does not prevent a partner from participating in other Commission calls for proposals **for actions** outside the triennial strategic plan and related work programs.

X INDICATIVE MAXIMUM AMOUNT FOR THE 3-YEAR PERIOD

Financial support may be awarded towards the operating costs of the five types of European organizations indicated under point V.1.2 above. The indicative maximum amounts of Community funding made available for the period 2011 – 2013 are as follows:

Area 1: European level networks in the area of promoting social inclusion

27.000.000 €- The Commission intends to co-finance:

- around ten organizations under this Area.

Area 2: European level networks in the area of combating discrimination

13.800.000 €- The Commission intends to co-finance:

- at least one organization per ground of discrimination namely disability, age, race/ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion/belief, and
- approximately three organizations representing intersectional groups, combining at least two of the following grounds of discrimination: sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Area 3: European level networks in the area of promoting gender equality

4.200.000 €- The Commission intends to co-finance:

- approximately two or three organizations under this Area. .

Area 4: European level networks in the area of integrating persons with disabilities into society

3.600.000 €- The Commission intends to co-finance:

- around eight European-level organizations under this Area.

Area 5: European level networks in the area of representing the Roma

600.000 €- The Commission intends to co-finance:

- one European-level organization under this Area.

XI SPECIFIC AGREEMENT FOR AN ANNUAL OPERATING GRANT

XI.1 Specific agreement for an annual operating grant

Following the signature of the framework partnership agreement, the Commission will invite all organizations selected to provide an **annual work program** and the **corresponding detailed budget for one year**. Selected organizations will be provided at that stage with budgetary forms and any other material necessary for their proposal, including the criteria to be applied for the assessment of their annual work programme and corresponding detailed budget for one year in that second stage.

The Commission will then proceed to an assessment of these detailed proposals received from the selected organizations.

Specific agreements for an annual operating grant, based upon the triennial framework partnership agreement, will then be signed with successful organizations, subject to the availability of budgetary credits.

The specific agreement for an annual operating grant contains all the purely specific provisions governing the subject of the grant, since the general provisions are contained in the framework partnership agreement.

XI.2 Financing rate

Union co-financing: As a general rule, Union support under the PROGRESS Program does not exceed 80% of the total eligible costs. However, because the previous relevant Community action programmes often provided for Community support of up to 90% of eligible costs, the maximum percentage established for this call can in exceptional cases be up to 83% for the first year of co-funding. In addition, to all grants a "degressivity" rule will apply, which means that the percentage of Union support will each following year be reduced with at least one percent.

XII. GUIDE ON HOW THE ACTIVITIES SHALL BE CARRIED OUT

The PROGRESS Programme aims to promote gender mainstreaming in all its five policy sections and commissioned or supported activities. Consequently, the Beneficiary will take the necessary steps to ensure that:

- Gender equality issues are taken into account when relevant for the drafting of the technical offer/proposal by paying attention to the situation and needs of women and men;
- Implementation of the requested tasks/proposed activities includes a gender perspective by considering systematically the women and men dimension;
- Performance monitoring includes the collection and gathering of data disaggregated by sex when needed;
- Its proposed team and/or staff respects the gender balance at all levels.

Equally, needs of disabled people shall be duly acknowledged and met while executing the requested service/implementing the proposed activities. This will ensure in particular that where the Beneficiary organises training sessions and conferences, issues publications or develops dedicated websites, people with disabilities will have equal access to the facilities or

the services provided.

Finally, the Contracting Authority encourages the Beneficiary to promote equal employment opportunities for all its staff and team. This entails that the Beneficiary is encouraged to foster an appropriate mix of people, whatever their ethnic origin, religion, age, and ability.

The Beneficiary will be required to detail in its final activity report the steps and achievements made towards meeting these contractual requirements.

XIII. PUBLICITY AND INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with the General conditions, all beneficiaries are under the obligation to acknowledge that the present activity has received funding from the Union in all documents and media produced, in particular final delivered outputs, related reports, brochures, press releases, videos, software, etc, including at conferences or seminars. In the context of the Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – PROGRESS, the following formulation shall be used:

This (publication, conference, training session etc) is supported by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007-2013).

This programme is managed by the Directorate-General for Employment, social affairs and equal opportunities of the European Commission. It was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment and social affairs area, as set out in the Social Agenda, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy goals in these fields.

The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

PROGRESS mission is to strengthen the EU contribution in support of Member States' commitment. PROGRESS will be instrumental in:

- *providing analysis and policy advice on PROGRESS policy areas;*
- *monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in PROGRESS policy areas;*
- *promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and*
- *relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large*

For more information see: <http://ec.europa.eu/progress>

For publications it is also necessary to include the following reference: "The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission"

With regard to publication and any communication plan linked to the present activity, the Beneficiary will insert the European Union logo and mention the European Commission as the Contracting Authority in every publication or related material developed under the present grant agreement.

XIV REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

PROGRESS is implemented through a results-based management - RBM. Managing for outcomes and results is about working to maximise results for European citizens. This includes:

- Identifying the most important results for European citizens;
- Managing these results, including setting out clearly the desired results, implementing plans based upon these results and learning about 'what works' in the process;
- Seizing opportunities to work together whenever this helps achieve the results.

The Strategic Framework, developed in collaboration with Member States and civil society organisations, sets out the intervention logic for Progress-related expenditure and defines PROGRESS' mandate and its long-term and immediate outcomes. It is supplemented by performance measures which serve to determine the extent to which PROGRESS has delivered the expected results. See in Annex the overview of PROGRESS performance measurement framework. For more information on the strategic framework, please visit PROGRESS website <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=659&langId=en>.

The Commission regularly monitors the effect of PROGRESS-supported or commissioned initiatives and considers how they contribute to PROGRESS outcomes as defined in the Strategic Framework. In this context, the Beneficiary will be asked to dedicatedly work in close cooperation with the Commission and/or persons authorised by it to define the expected contribution and the set of performance measures which this contribution will be assessed against. The Beneficiary will be asked to collect and report on its own performance to the Commission and/or persons authorised by it against a template which will be annexed to the grant agreement. In addition, the Beneficiary will make available to the Commission and/or persons authorised by it all documents or information that will allow PROGRESS performance measurement to be successfully completed and to give them the necessary rights of access.

XV PROCEDURE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

1) All the required documents as listed in the following check-list must be submitted via the Swim application

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do>

Instructions concerning the application form:

The application form is standardised for all calls published by DG EMPL. Due to the specificity of this call, which aims to select organisations in order to sign three-year framework partnership agreements, please note the following:

- Section A.3.2. "CV of the responsible person of the action": please note, as also specified in the text of the call, that you should send us the CV of all senior staff members.
- Section B.1. "Title": please disregard the reference to grant agreements and just include the following title: Three-year Strategic Plan 2011-2013.

- Section C.2.1. "Usual source of finance": please fill in the form for the last 2 financial years.
- Section C.3.1 "Previous Union grants": please inform us of both action grants and operating grants.
- Section D.1."Partners": please disregard the section, there is no need to fill it in.
- Annex E.2: "Letter of Commitment": please disregard the section, there is no need to fill it in.

and

2)

be sent to the address below **by the 28th of May 2010** (their submission date will be taken as the date of dispatch, as evidenced by the postmark or the express courier receipt date).

a) by post to the **following postal address:**

**European Commission
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
Unit G/1: Call for Proposals VP/2010/012 – application for Area 1-5 (one area to be chosen)
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium**

b) or by **express courier service** to the following **delivery address:**

**European Commission
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
Unit G1: Call for proposals VP/2010/012 – application for Area 1-5 (one area to be chosen)
Avenue du Bourget 1
B-1140 Brussels
Belgium**

Proposals may also be delivered personally against a signed and dated receipt to address (b) above, by 16h00 on the 28th of May 2010.

The reference of the call for proposals and the specific Area under which the proposal is submitted must be indicated on the envelope.

Failure to submit the application by post and via Swim application by the 28th of May 2010 to the Commission will render the application ineligible.

Complementary documents sent by fax will not be considered for evaluation unless requested by the European Commission. Any document sent after the deadline will not be accepted unless requested by the European Commission.

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that incomplete or unsigned forms, hand-written forms and those sent by fax or e-mail will not be taken into consideration.

3) Questions related to the current call

Questions concerning the present Call shall be addressed to the following mail-boxes:

Questions of general nature EMPL-PROGRESS-VP-2010-012@ec.europa.eu

Questions related to Action 1 EMPL-PROGRESS-VP-2010-012-Action1@ec.europa.eu

Questions related to Action 2 EMPL-PROGRESS-VP-2010-012-Action2@ec.europa.eu

Questions related to Action 3 EMPL-PROGRESS-VP-2010-012-Action3@ec.europa.eu

Questions related to Action 4 EMPL-PROGRESS-VP-2010-012-Action4@ec.europa.eu

Questions related to Action 5 EMPL-PROGRESS-VP-2010-012-Action5@ec.europa.eu

4.) Information session organized in Brussels

There will be an information session on the **26th of March 2010** at 10h00 organized by the Commission in Brussels at Avenue de Tervueren n° 41, 1040 (DG REGIO, CSM-2 building), meeting room on the 9th floor, room 146. Those interested in taking part (maximum one person per applicant organization) must send an email to the general functional mailbox as indicated above, **before** the **24th of March 2010**, indicating their name and the organization they represent. At the day of the meeting, they must have proper identification on them so as to pass security at the entrance. Travel costs to this meeting will not be reimbursed.

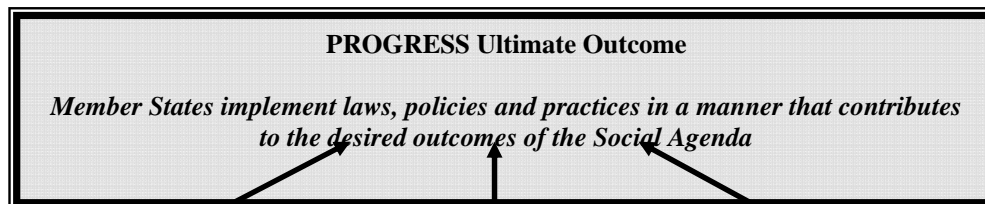
XVI. CHECK-LIST OF THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS TO ACCOMPANY YOUR APPLICATION

Please number the documents as shown and send in the following supporting documents **in triplicate (original + two copies or three copies where original is not required)**.

<i>Order</i>	<i>Document</i>	<i>Check</i>	<i>Download SWIM</i>
1	<u>Original cover letter</u> formally submitting the application for funding (please quote the call VP/2010/012) duly signed and dated by the legal representative of the applicant organization.		
2	<u>Original of the application form</u> – generated by the SWIM application dated and signed by the legal representative at the bottom of this part		YES
3	Original <u>declaration</u> - signed by the legal representative of the network on his/her honour that the organization is not in one of the situations listed in Article 93(1), 94 and 96(2)(a) of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities.		YES
4	Original <u>legal entity form</u> dully filled in and signed – along with the official statutes and official proof of existence (see item 5 below).		YES
5	The "Legal entity" form - should be returned together with: * a copy of any official document (e.g. official gazette, register of companies, etc.) showing the partner organization's name and address and the registration number given to it by the national authorities; * a copy of the VAT registration document if applicable and if the VAT number does not appear on the official document referred to above.		
6	Original of the <u>financial identification form</u> - to be signed and stamped by the bank and dated and signed by the account holder.		YES

- 7 Copy of the organisation's annual full accounts for the two last financial years preceding the submission of the application when accounts were closed. Please specify the contribution made by donors other than by the Union including the members.
- 8 Presentation of the accounts using the 'Restructured simplified accounting balance sheets and profit and loss accounts' form (available in the SWIM application form). **YES**
- 9 The most recent activity reports or annual reports or a list of the main activities carried out in the last two years.
- 10 The curricula vitae of senior staff members and list of members of the management board
- 11 Copy of the signed original audit report produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the two last financial years available and giving an assessment of the applicant organisation's financial viability
- 12 Original of the application form: "**Triennial strategic plan**". The legal representative must date and sign the form. **YES**
- 13 Original of the application form: "**Triennial budgetary estimation**". The legal representative must sign and date the form. **YES**

OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK



PROGRESS works towards its ultimate outcome by helping strengthen the EU’s support for Member States’ efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. PROGRESS seeks to contribute to (i) an **effective legal regime** in the EU in relation to the Social Agenda; (ii) **shared understanding** across the EU with regard to Social Agenda objectives; and (iii) **strong partnerships** working towards Social Agenda objectives.

In operational terms, support provided by PROGRESS facilitates (i) provision of analysis and policy advice; (ii) monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies; (iii) policy transfer, learning and support among Member States; and (iv) relaying to decision-makers the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

Legal Regime	Shared Understanding	Strong Partnerships
<p>Outcome:</p> <p><i>Compliance in Member States with EU law related to PROGRESS areas.</i></p>	<p>Outcome:</p> <p><i>Shared understanding and ownership among policy/decision-makers and stakeholders in Member States, and the Commission, of objectives related to PROGRESS policy areas.</i></p>	<p>Outcome:</p> <p><i>Effective partnerships with national and pan-European stakeholders in support of outcomes related to PROGRESS policy areas.</i></p>
<p>Performance Indicators</p> <hr/> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transposition rate of EU law on matters related to PROGRESS policy areas 2. Effectiveness of application in Member States of EU law on matters related to PROGRESS policy areas. 3. EU policies and legislation are grounded in thorough analysis of situation and responsive to conditions, needs and expectations in Member States in PROGRESS areas 4. Extent to which PROGRESS-supported policy advice feeds into the development and implementation of EU legislation and policies 5. Cross-cutting issues are addressed in PROGRESS policy sections 6. EU policies and legislation display a common underlying logic of intervention in relation to PROGRESS issues 7. Gender mainstreaming is systematically promoted in PROGRESS 	<p>Performance Indicators</p> <hr/> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attitudes of decision-makers, key stakeholders and general public regarding EU objectives in PROGRESS policy areas 2. Extent to which national policy discourses or priorities reflect EU objectives 3. Extent to which principles of good governance (including minimum standards on consultation) are respected in policy debate 4. Extent to which the outcomes of policy debates feed into the development of EU law and policy. 5. Greater awareness of policy-and decision-makers, social partners, NGOs, networks regarding their rights/obligations in relation to PROGRESS policy areas 6. Greater awareness of policy-and decision-makers, social partners, NGOs, networks regarding EU objectives and policies in relation to PROGRESS policy areas 	<p>Performance Indicators</p> <hr/> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Existence of common ground/consensus among policy and decision-makers and stakeholders on EU objectives and policies 2. Identification and involvement by the EU of key actors in a position to exert influence or change at EU and national levels 3. Effectiveness of partnerships in relation to outcomes related to PROGRESS policy areas. 4. Number of individuals served or reached by networks supported by PROGRESS. 5. Extent to which advocacy skills of PROGRESS-supported networks have improved 6. Satisfaction of EU and national authorities with the contribution of networks 7. Extent to which PROGRESS-supported networks take a cross-cutting approach

