

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
FOR THE SELECTION OF MEMBERS OF
THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE ON PARTNERSHIP

1. Objective

The European Commission calls for applications with a view to selecting additional members to the European Community of Practice on Partnership (ECoPP). The aim is to ensure a more balanced geographical representation and more diversity of its members.

Members of the ECoPP are (1) authorities from Member States, i.e. managing authorities and coordinating bodies, and (2) partners, i.e. regional, local, urban and other public authorities, economic and social partners, relevant bodies representing civil society, and research organisations and universities.¹ The ECoPP currently consists of 159 members representing the above categories. With this call, the membership of the community could be increased to 200 members. This particular call is targeted at “partners” in the ECoPP,

As partners from some Member States are currently underrepresented, this call particularly prioritises applications from the following Member States: **Cyprus, Denmark, Greece, Croatia, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, and Malta**. In addition, some *types of partners* are underrepresented. This call therefore also prioritises applications from **urban authorities, economic and social partners, research organisations and universities**, as well as **European umbrella organisations representing the categories above**.

At the same time, applications from organisations representing Member States and interests that are already represented through the existing membership may be assessed favourably provided that the overall balance in the group membership is safeguarded.

2. Background

The partnership principle is one of the fundamental principles of cohesion policy. It ensures the participation of different partners, be it social, economic and civil society partners or regional and local authorities. We have collectively strengthened this principle in the last programming period by adopting the European code of conduct on partnership (ECCP) through the Commission Delegated Regulation 240/2014 that continues to apply during the 2021-2027 period.

In order to further improve the quality of partnership across Europe and promote the exchange of good practices – in view of Article 18 of the aforementioned Delegated Regulation – Directorate-General (DG) Regional and Urban Policy, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, DG for Migration and Home Affairs and DG for Agriculture and Rural Development set up the European

¹ Additional representatives of Member States’ authorities (coordinating bodies and managing authorities) in charge of the management of EU funds will be nominated through the Permanent Representations to the EU of the respective Member States.

community of practice on partnership (further referred to as ECoPP or “the group”) which has been operating since April 2022.

The group’s tasks are to:

- (a) facilitate exchange of experience with regard to partnership;
- (b) stimulate capacity building;
- (c) disseminate relevant outcomes, in particular good practices and innovative approaches;
- (d) review the application and functioning of the European code of conduct on partnership and prepare proposals for its possible update.

Features of the Group

2.1. COMPOSITION

The ECoPP currently consists of 159 members. Members are:

(a) Member States' authorities in charge of the management of EU funds (cohesion policy coordinating bodies, managing authorities of shared management funds, including cross-border programmes), and

(b) partners, i.e. public entities and organisations referred to in Article 8 of the Common Provisions Regulation² (Regulation (EU) 2021/1060) (CPR), i.e.:

- (a) regional, local, urban and other public authorities;
- (b) economic and social partners;
- (c) relevant bodies representing civil society, such as environmental partners, non-governmental organisations, and bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, fundamental rights, rights of persons with disabilities, gender equality and non-discrimination;
- (d) research organisations and universities.

² Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy. PE/47/2021/INIT , OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, p. 159–706, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R1060&qid=1686730674411>

Member States' authorities and other public entities nominate their representatives and are responsible for ensuring that their representatives provide a high level of expertise in the field of partnership.

Similarly, organisations of partners each nominate one representative and are responsible for ensuring that their representatives provide a high level of expertise.

2.2. APPOINTMENT

Members will be appointed by the Director-General of DG Regional and Urban Policy. Applicants must comply with the requirements referred to in chapter 4 of this call.

Members will be appointed for the duration of the group, i.e. until the end of 2027. They remain in office until replaced / until the end of their term of office.

Registration in the Transparency Register³ is required for organisations to be appointed.

Members who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the group's deliberations, who, in the opinion of DG Regional and Urban Policy, do not comply with the conditions set out in Article 339 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union or who resign, shall no longer be invited to participate in meetings of the group and may be replaced for the remainder of their term of office.

2.3 RULES OF ENGAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF THE GROUP

The group is chaired by representatives of all Directorates-General under the CPR participating in the ECoPP.

The group acts at the request of its chairperson with the agreement of the Commission.

In principle, the group shall meet at least once per year in person and/or online to discuss matters related to the tasks of the group. DG Regional and Urban Policy, provides secretarial services, in agreement with DG Employment and Social Affairs unit G.1 (European Social Fund+).

Members should be prepared to attend meetings systematically, contribute actively to discussions in the group, be involved in preparatory work ahead of meetings, examine and provide comments on documents under discussion, and act, as appropriate, as 'rapporteurs' on an *ad hoc* basis.

As a general rule, working documents will be drafted in English and meetings will be conducted in English as well.

The group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus.

In agreement with the involved Directorates-General, the group may, by simple majority of its members, decide that deliberations shall be public.

³ EU Transparency Register : <https://ec.europa.eu/transparencyregister/public/homePage.do>

Participants in the activities of the group and sub-groups shall not be remunerated for the services they offer. However, travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants in the activities of the group and sub-groups are reimbursed by the Commission. Reimbursements are made in accordance with the provisions in force within the Commission and within the limits of the available appropriations allocated to the Commission departments under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.

The members of the group, as well as invited experts and observers, are subject to the obligation of professional secrecy, which by virtue of the Treaties and the rules implementing them applies to all members of the institutions and their staff.

The Commission may invite experts with specific expertise with respect to a subject matter on the agenda to take part in the work of the group or sub-groups on an ad hoc basis.

The European Parliament, Committee of the Regions, and the European Economic and Social Committee are invited to the proceedings as observers. Public entities appointed as observers shall nominate their representatives. Observers and their representatives may be permitted by the chair to take part in the discussions of the group and provide expertise.

The ECoPP has set up sub-groups for the purpose of examining specific issues. Sub-groups shall report to the plenary group.

2.4. TRANSPARENCY

Personal data shall be collected, processed and published in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 2018/1725.

3. Application procedure

Interested partners, i.e. organisations and regional, local, urban and other public authorities as defined in point 2.1, in particular from Member States from which partners are currently underrepresented, i.e. Cyprus, Denmark, Greece, Croatia, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, and Malta, are invited to submit their applications to the European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy by e-mail to the following e-mail address: EC-ECOPP@ec.europa.eu

Applications must be completed in English.

An application will be deemed admissible only if it is sent by the deadline and includes the documents referred to below. All documents submitted by applicants should be duly filled in, legible, signed and numbered sequentially.

Supporting documents

Each application shall include the following documents:

- a short cover letter (1 page max.) explaining the applicant's motivation for answering this call and stating what contribution the applicant could make to the group;
- a classification form duly filled in specifying the member category for which the application is made (Annex I);

- a selection criteria form duly filled in documenting how the applicant fulfils the selection criteria listed in chapter 4 of this call (Annex II).

For individuals indicated by public entities/organisations as their representatives, a *curriculum vitae* (CV) shall also be provided, preferably not exceeding three pages. It is recommended that the CVs shall be submitted in the European format (<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>).

Additional supporting documents (e.g. publications) may be requested at a later stage.

Deadline for application

The duly signed applications must be sent by **1st September 2023** at the latest.

- Applications shall be sent by e-mail to the following e-mail address: EC-ECOPP@ec.europa.eu The date of the e-mail will be the date of sending.

4. Selection criteria

To fulfil the objective of this call as stipulated above in point 1, i.e., to ensure a balanced representation between and within the categories of partners and geographical coverage, the Commission will take the following criteria into account when assessing applications:

- Relevant competence and experience of the representatives of the organisations/public entities, including at local, regional and national level, in areas relevant to the tasks of the group, in particular in participating in monitoring committee(s) or other steering/governing or advisory bodies of EU-funded programmes, including community-led initiatives.
- Sufficient knowledge of the English language (B2 or equivalent level) of the proposed representative allowing active participation in the discussions.

5. Selection procedure

The selection procedure shall consist of an assessment of the applications performed by the Commission against the objectives of this call and the selection criteria listed in chapter 4, followed by the establishment of a list of the most fitting applicants, and concluded by the appointment of the members of the group.

When defining the composition of the group, the Commission aims at ensuring, as far as possible, a high level of expertise, as well as a balanced representation of the Member States, of relevant know how and areas of interest, while taking into account the specific tasks of the group, the type of expertise required, as well as the relevance of the applications received.

For any further information please contact: *EC-ECOPP@ec.europa.eu*

ANNEXES:

- Annex I: Classification form
- Annex II: Selection criteria form

– Annex III: Privacy statement