



## CALL FOR OFFERS

### Desk research on the Western Balkans Summits part of the Berlin Process

#### Terms of Reference

September 2021

**Deadline for applications:** 10 October 2021

**Expected start date for this consultancy:** 15 October 2021

**Completion date:** 15 November 2021

**Number of days for this consultancy:** maximum 10 days

#### About the Balkan Forum

The Balkan Forum (The BF) is a regional, multisector platform that works to advance cross-border dialogue and create a shared regional vision and agenda for cooperative action in the Balkan region based on economic integration, prosperity, and sustainable peace. We highlight good practices of regional cooperation to policy discussions and promote existing efforts to connect grassroots initiatives, knowledge, and successes to the decision-making levels that are responsible for policymaking and regional and/or EU integration. Together with our partners we focus our efforts on filling gaps and mobilizing action; facilitating consensus building and dialogue; and building political will for policy action on regional cooperation initiatives.

The BF has been contributing to Berlin Process summits since 2014, including together with the members of the [Civil Society Platform for Democracy and Human Rights](#) established in 2018 ahead of the London summit. CSP is a self-organizing platform of currently 35 CSO actors from the six WB countries who share the values and aspirations for their countries/region, and who are committed to assume greater responsibility for monitoring Berlin Process agendas and holding our governments accountable for implementing recommendations from the Berlin Process Summits and meeting EU integration criteria.

The organization and functioning of the CSP, and the common position built on important issues since the London Summit, including on the Berlin Process and Annual Summits, serve as a model - and a clear demonstration of our commitment - to advancing dialogue, reconciliation, and accountability in our region. Since its establishment our coordinated action resulted in:

- Contribution to WB Summits in London (2018) and Poznań (2019), including through a [Common Position](#), and a joint [Manifesto](#) which was a direct outcome from the regional conference organised by The BF in Tirana (March 2019): '[Civil Society Contribution in Berlin Process and EU Integration: A Positive Agenda Focused on Action](#)';
- A [joint CSO statement on COVID-19](#), (April 2020), by 39 CSOs in the WB region;
- [Joint-research](#) published in September 2020, which aims to establish a baseline that helps the CSP and other actors to monitor the progress made by the WB countries as part of the Berlin Process;
- A [letter](#) on 26 November 2020 by the Commissioner Varhelyi sent as a reply to CSP recommendations for the Sofia Summit;
- Contribution to Berlin Summit in 2021 through active participation in the think-tank and youth forums, and a [request](#) to the EU Member States and WB leaders to enable the freedom of movement for all the Western Balkan citizens.

## **1. Introduction**

The Balkan Forum is seeking to recruit a Civil Society Organization, an individual consultant or a team of consultants, to undertake an analysis of the progress made by the six Western Balkan (WB) countries towards implementing their pledges/commitments since the WB Summits of the Berlin Process held in Sofia, Bulgaria in 2020 and in Berlin, Germany in 2021.

The BF is undertaking this research with the aim of sharing the key findings and engaging in advocacy with actors involved in the Berlin Process.

## **2. Background:**

### ***Berlin Process and related Summits in Sofia and Berlin***

The Berlin Process launched in 2014, is an initiative aimed at stepping up regional cooperation in the Western Balkans and aiding the integration of these countries into the European Union (see <https://berlinprocess.info/about/>). So far, this framework has met in Berlin (2014), Vienna (2015), Paris (2016), Trieste (2017), London (2018), and Poznań (2019), Sofia (2020), and Berlin (2021).

## **3. Objective of the consultancy**

Expand on the initial research undertaken by The BF in July-August 2021 which looks into the progress and challenges by six countries of the WB since the Sofia Summit (2020), and Berlin Summit (2021), towards the pledges that governments have made. The consultant is expected to build on The BF's initial research (not published) by drawing on existing and available documents and the expertise of the consultant. The consultancy may include 7-10 semi-structured, Key Informant Interviews (KII), to be conducted online.

## **4. Role of the consultant – Expected results**

Enhance the initial research undertaken by the BF by conducting desk research (and 7-10 online interviews, as far as possible), and analyzing the progress since the Sofia and Berlin Summits. In view of the above consultant will undertake the following tasks:

- Collate existing sources of information and determine key progress areas, and related challenges (possibly for each of the six countries of the WB), towards implementing the pledges/commitments made by the WB leaders at Sofia and Berlin Summits;
- Outline the key actors involved in the Berlin Process, and their role.
- Outline conclusions and recommendations for civil society, governments of the six WB countries, and international actors involved in the Berlin Process (EU institutions, EU Member States, donors, diplomatic presence in WB countries).
- Identify existing research gaps on the Berlin Process to inform areas that require further analysis and review.

## **5. Deliverables**

Consultant will deliver:

- An enhanced research report of max. 15 pages, making visible the input provided which builds on the BF's initial research (not published).
- Consultant will also be available after the delivery of the above for purposes of clarification.

## 6. Consultancy period

The duration of the consultancy is a maximum of 10 days – between 15 October and 15 November 2021.

## 7. Required experience

Interested CSOs/consultants should have:

- Solid knowledge of the Berlin Process, key actors involved and their roles.
- Demonstrated research experience. Interested consultant(s) will be requested to share previous research/analysis that they have undertaken.
- Previous research on the Berlin Process and/or on the progress made by the countries of WB towards the pledges/commitments made will be considered an asset.
- Excellent knowledge of English language.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, sensitivity and attention to detail.
- Ability to deliver high quality work, within the agreed time-frame.

## 8. Interested applicants are requested to submit

- An offer which includes a gross cost estimate (number of days for the consultancy and daily fee), and a detailed plan for the required consultancy (i.e. activities and time-frames to deliver this consultancy).
- Curriculum Vitae for individual(s). A statement on relevant previous experience.
- At least one example of previous research/analysis undertaken by the consultant(s).

### Application procedure and selection criteria

Applications should be sent electronically to [info@thebalkanforum.org](mailto:info@thebalkanforum.org)

Applications that do not contain all the required documents under 8 above (**8. Interested applicants are requested to submit**) will not be considered.

The deadline for applications is 10 October 2021.

*We regret that only short-listed candidates will be contacted.*

Donor:

