Sarajevo, 9 March 2022

Your Excellences,

Dear Madam/Sir,

**Subject: Invitation to an expression of interest for candidate entities to be entrusted with the implementation of the EU assistance in reference**

**Reference: IPA 2020 Annual Action support to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the sector of employment: “EU4EMPLOYMENT in Bosnia and Herzegovina”**

The European Union (EU) will support the sector of employment in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) through a programme with the overall objective to contribute to improving socio-economic situation and living conditions BiH. In specific terms, it is to increase employment opportunities for youth, rural women and vulnerable groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In that respect, the Delegation of the European Union to BiH, building on the suggestions of BiH’s authorities, is looking into possibilities for indirect management with eligible entities to implement parts of the 2014-2020 Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) foreseen for the country.

The financial rules applicable to the Union budget, specifically Financial Regulation (EU Euratom) No 2018/1046, Regulation (EU) No 231/2014, establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) and Regulation No 236/2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments financing external action, allow for a possibility for the Union's financial assistance to be implemented indirectly by entrusting budget implementing tasks to among others, international organisations as well as their agencies and Member States agencies.

Therefore, this request for expression of interest aims at identifying entities that could be later on invited to exploratory talks on a potential entrustment of the Union's budget implementation tasks (BIT) in respect to specific actions of the IPA 2020 Annual Action Programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina for EU Support to employment sector, “EU4EMPLOYMENT in Bosnia and Herzegovina”.

The foreseen part of the IPA 2020 Annual Action Programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina related to employment sector “EU4EMPLOYMENT in Bosnia and Herzegovina” (further referred as "Action") could be implemented by the Entrusted entity (with its implementing partner(s) and/or sub-delegate(s), if any) having the highest competences and specialisation in this given area and a proven track record in EU Member States, candidate and potential candidate countries.

Whilst the organisation, in expressing an interest to this consultation, does not commit itself, the European Commission reserves the right to take its final decision on the delegated actions upon its discretion.

Therefore, by this letter, we invite you to express your interest in the above procedure by submitting your reply as per the requirements specified in the enclosed Expression of Interest that is published at our website [www.europa.ba](http://www.europa.ba) today.

If interested, please submit itby email to the following e-mail address DELEGATION-BOSNIA-AND-HERZEGOVINA-EU4Employment@eeas.europa.eu **by Monday, 25 April 2022, 17:00hrs, CET, at latest.**

Any questions related to the Expression of Interest should be addressed to the EU Delegation via email to DELEGATION-BOSNIA-AND-HERZEGOVINA-EU4Employment@eeas.europa.eu **not later than Monday, 28 March 2022, 12:00hrs, CET.**

All replies to the questions received in the period since the publication of this Expression of interest (9 March 2022) until the above deadline, will be published at the website of the Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina, section "Tenders and funding", sub-section "EU Delegation tenders" under the link to this Expression of interest.

The organisations that would respond to this expression of interest will be assessed along a transparent set of criteria mentioned in the Expression of Interest. The best-placed entity will be invited to start negotiations, potentially leading to a Contribution Agreement. The selection would be made from responses to this notification.

The selection of the entities under indirect management should not to be compared with, and does not constitute, a full competitive procedure. However, the present Request for Expression of Interest with all potentially eligible/interested entities ensures a transparent selection process on objective grounds.

The potential Contribution Agreement signature is expected during 2022, following a negotiation procedure.

More information on the type of arrangements for managing the EU projects (referred to as ‘**management modes’**) is available on the EU website:

<https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-funding-and-procedures/how-do-we-offer-funding_en>

We look forward to receiving your reply.

Sincerely yours,

*E-Signed*

Stefano ELLERO

Head of Cooperation

*Encl. Expression of Interest with the Annexes*