
CALL FOR TENDER – CONSULTANT FOR MAPPING THE PATIENT ORGANISATION SITUATION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

1. EPF – Background Information

The European Patients' Forum (EPF) is a European patient umbrella organisation. Our members are the backbone of our work: their perspective brings an irreplaceable added value to our policy and advocacy activities.

We currently represent 77 patient organisations, encompassing 19 countries and an estimated 150 million patients across Europe.

In its beginnings, EPF was a European Union-based organisation. The original raison d'être of EPF was, and still is, to act as an interlocutor with the EU institutions. Our European members, however, often would include patient organisations from the wider Europe within their membership. With the scope of EPF growing beyond the EU, we amended our Constitution, now allowing organisations based in **all of Europe** to become Full members.

Our ambition is to become a reference point for the EU, European organisations and other stakeholders such as World Health Organisation (WHO) Europe, healthcare professionals and health minded organisations seeking to co-create better health policy with patients and patients organisations. With our updated Constitution, this aims to include work towards a Wider Europe as a geographical continent rather than as a purely political entity.

The EPF Strategic Plan 2021-2026 indicates five strategic goals, one of which is the strengthening of patient groups across Europe. Together with our members and partners, we aim to support European patient communities and health stakeholders with education, resources, and expertise to help them in co-designing people-centred health policies and resilient health systems.

This includes our goal to strengthen patient groups in areas where we currently lack exhaustive information of the patient condition, the visibility of the regional patient organisations, and their relationship with the local governmental authorities. A more effective understanding of the system structure in Wider Europe would be vital in the positive future defining of regional patient organisations where the patient experience would be at the forefront, as per the EPF values.

2. Rationale, Purpose and Nature of Services

In Spring-Summer 2020, the EPF Membership, Governance and Capacity Building team undertook an exercise of mapping the current patient movement in the Western Balkans. The goal was to discover existing national coalitions of patients with chronic conditions, and to get a better understanding of the general patient movement, and its relationship with the local governments.

A careful examination with the support of our members, and the members of our members who are patient organisations within Wider Europe, led to limited outcomes. While there are numerous established and well-functioning disease-specific organisations working on national level in the area, there seems to be a general lack of national coalitions, representing numerous diseases within a country.

To obtain more exhaustive information on the patient movement in the Western Balkans, we are launching a call for tender for a Consultant to map in detail the Patient Organisation situation in the Western Balkans. The results of such a mapping exercise would allow EPF to get in closer contact with relevant contacts in the Western Balkans area and work towards its mission of representing the patient community in a geographical area where we currently do not offer our support to the full scale of our abilities.

The Consultant hired would have pre-existing knowledge of the patient landscape in the Western Balkans and have resources and capabilities to provide a detailed overview on the topic.

3. Methodology and Functionality

The methodology of the research is to be conducted in line with the local COVID-19 rules and regulations in times of the hiring and the beginning of the project. It is expected to consist primarily of:

- Desk research
- Field research (i.e. qualitative interviews with patients representatives active in the target area, surveys).

The overall aim of the research is to provide an overview of the patient movement (level of development, resources, possibilities to interact with key stakeholders) in each country of the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo). By providing this information to EPF, we would be able to make efforts towards strengthening patient organisations, enhancing their visibility and supporting their growth in the European health policy environment.

Supporting local patient organisations in positioning themselves as legitimate stakeholders in Europe would inevitably improve the lives of individual patients with chronic conditions, as well as patients' groups in general.

Specific objectives:

- Better understanding of the patient community in the Western Balkans.
- Strengthened links with organisations from other areas in Europe.
- Increased inclusion in EPF projects, advocacy, and capacity building programmes.
- Improved overall support of individual patients and the patient community in the area.
- Support national coalitions of patients or their establishment in the area.

4. Key Outcomes

Main Deliverable: Report of Information gathered and analysed.

The Consultant who would win the tender is expected to provide a report, written and presented in an accessible way on:

- Currently existing national coalitions of patient organisations in the Western Balkans, representing a variety of chronic conditions.
- The level of visibility of said national coalitions.
- Their relationship with the local governmental authorities.
- If a national coalition is not present in the targeted country, to identify key patients organisations, investigate why such an organisation does not exist and if there is interest/willingness to create one.
- The governmental authorities concerned with patients' rights and healthcare on local level.
- The structure of the local healthcare system.
- The level of transparency of both patient organisations and governmental organisations working in the area based on EPF Transparency Guidelines and Membership criteria.
- A detailed list of contacts (GDPR compliant) at local level of patient representatives, government representatives, and general contacts who are relevant to the patient community.
- Brief environmental/ historical analysis of the patient movement in each country and advise on how EPF could support patient advocacy in the area.

5. Participation in the Tendering Procedure

5.1 TENDER PROCESS

EPF reserves the right to conduct the tender process and select the successful tender. EPF is not bound contractually or in any way to a bidder to this request for tender until EPF and the successful winner have entered into a written contract.

5.2 DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED

The tender proposals should include:

- An outline of the approach that will be taken to establishing and delivering the project;
- The technology and methodology used to achieve the project;
- Details of the individual(s) who will lead, manage and deliver the project and details of their experience, formal qualification and knowledge of the patient landscape in the Western Balkans;
- Detailed costs;
- Timetable and quality gates for the project;
- Background material to demonstrate the previous experience and range of work of the consultant(s) and/or of the specific personnel proposed for the work; This can include descriptions and examples of previous relevant work;
- Proposal for data management to ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation;

- Contact details of two referees;
- A completed Declaration of Interest (DOI) to ensure lack of any conflict of interest. [Click here to access the declaration template.](#)
- Applicants must have excellent knowledge of the English language.

Document applications must be sent by **15th July 2021, 23:59 CET** to Desislava Ekzarova (desislava.ekzarova@eu-patient.eu). Please contact that email address if there are any queries regarding the call.

5.3 TENDER EVALUATION

Participation in this tendering procedure is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons fulfilling the above-mentioned eligibility criteria and language requirements. EPF may, at its discretion, extend the closing date and time of the tender.

The selection procedure will be based on the principles of equal treatment, fairness and transparency and on expertise (70%) and price (30%).

All applicants will receive acknowledgement of receipt of their tender and will be informed of the outcomes of the selection process within 14 days following the deadline date. EPF is not obliged to provide reasons for its decision to shortlist; accept or reject any particular tender.

Offers to the tender will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting
Proposed solution to our request based on requirements provided by EPF	35
Credibility and proven expertise in the Western Balkans	25
Project Planning	5
Proposed Data Management	5
Price	30

5.4 EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Candidates shall be excluded from participation in this procurement procedure if:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the EPF can justify;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the EPF or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
- f) following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Union's budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

5.5 SCHEDULE

The assignment shall start as from the date of signature of both contracting parties and shall be completed by **October 2021**.

Tender submission and schedule of the work are as follows:

Launch Tender	<i>EPF</i>	June 2021
Close of the Tender	<i>Applicant</i>	July 2021
Selection of the applicant	<i>EPF</i>	August 2021
Briefing Meeting and Contract Signature	<i>EPF and Applicant</i>	August 2021

6. Terms of Payment

Prices must be fixed amounts in Euro and will not be subject to revision. The amount of VAT should be shown separately on the invoice.

Costs incurred in preparing and submitting tenders are borne by the tenderers and cannot be reimbursed.

7. Quality issues

In delivering the service the tenderer shall ensure the highest quality standards of which EPF shall be the sole judge.

8. Confidentiality and conflict of interest

The Tenderer undertakes that they will not at any time, either before or after the termination of this service, use or disclose or communicate to any person confidential information relating to the affairs of EPF. This restriction shall continue to apply after the termination of the service without limit in point of time.

To ensure the independence of terms of their contract, the applicant tenderers will sign a DOI certifying that they have no conflict of interests in relation to the tasks to be undertaken and undertake to inform EPF's Head of Governance, Membership and Capacity Building should this status change.

9. Terms and conditions

EPF reserve the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, to advertise for new proposals, to abandon the need for services, and to cancel or amend this call for tender at any time prior to the execution of the written contract. EPF reserves the right to waive any formalities in the call for tender process. EPF may respond to questions or provide information from tenderers and is under no obligation to provide such responses or information to all other tenderers.

By submitting a proposal, the tenderer agrees that:

- EPF may copy the proposal for purposes of facilitating the evaluation of the proposal and agrees that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party.
- It will not bring any claim or have any cause of action against EPF based in any misunderstanding concerning the information provided or concerning EPF's failure, neglect or otherwise, to provide the bidder with pertinent information as intended by this call for tender.

The accomplishment of a tendering procedure imposes no obligation on the EPF to award the contract. Should the invitation to tender cover several items or lots, EPF reserves the right to award a contract for only some of them. EPF shall not be liable for any compensation with respect to applicants whose tenders have not been accepted. Nor shall it be so liable if it decides not to award the contract.

The estimated date for the signature of the contract will be in August 2021.

10. Contacting Persons and Contracting Authority

For more information, please contact:

- **Elena Balestra**, Head of Membership, Governance, and Capacity Building
elena.balestra@eu-patient.eu
- **Desislava Ekzarova**, Membership and Governance Officer
desislava.ekzarova@eu-patient.eu

Answers to questions will be sent to the question originator and published on [this website](#).

Contracting Authority:

European Patients' Forum (EPF)

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1040 Brussels – Belgium

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