



Arbeitsgemeinschaft Europäischer Grenzregionen (AGEG)
Asociación de Regiones Fronterizas Europeas (ARFE)
Association des régions frontalières européennes (ARFE)
Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)
Comunità di lavoro delle regioni europee di confine (AGEG)
Europæiske grænseregioners Arbejdsfællesskab (AGEG)
Wergemeenschap van Europese grensgebieden (WVEG)
Associação das Regiões Fronteiriças Europeias (ARFE)
Σύνδεσμος Ευρωπαϊκών Συνοριακών Περιφερειών (ΣΕΣΠ)
Stowarzyszenie Europejskich Regionów Granicznych (SERG)
Ассоциация Европейских Приграничных Регионов (АЕПР)



Main Office	AGEG c/o EUREGIO	Enscheder Str. 362	D-48599 Gronau (Germany)
Projects' Office	AEBR c/o WeWork	Neue Schönhauserstraße 3-5	D-10178 Berlin (Germany)
AEBR Antenna in the EU	Office of Extremadura in Brussels	Av. De Cortenbergh 87-89	B-1000 Brussels (Belgium)
AEBR Info Centre in the Balkans	Institute for International and CBC	Terazije 14/14	11000 Belgrade (Serbia)
AEBR Info Centre in Ukraine	Univ. Simon Kuznets (KhNUE)	pr. Lenina, 9a	61001 Kharkiv (Ukraine)



Call for expressions of interest – Experts in cross-border legal and administrative obstacles,

in the framework the pilot initiative *b-solutions*

(Grant Agreement CCI 2017CE160AT082, CCI 2020CE160AT014)

Published on b-solutions' website and on the European Commission's online platform "Boosting EU Border Regions" on 17 June 2020

1. Background information

b-solutions is an initiative to tackle legal and administrative border obstacles/difficulties along EU internal borders. It is promoted by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) and managed by the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR). The project stems from the Communication *Boosting growth and cohesion in EU border regions*, adopted by the Commission on 20 September 2017.

The aim of the initiative is to identify and promote sustainable methods of resolving border obstacles of a legal and/or administrative nature along EU internal land borders.

First launched in 2017 and planned for 24 months, the action has been extended until 14 December 2021. Two calls for proposals to select cases presenting border obstacles and searching for solutions to overcome them have been launched in 2018 and 2019, and two more will follow in 2020 and 2021.

43 instances have been selected and implemented: 10 Pilot Actions to implement solutions and 33 Advice Cases¹, examples of border obstacles which received consultancy by legal experts. With the upcoming calls for proposals, AEBR aims to

¹ Detailed information on each pilot action and advice case divided in thematic areas can be found [here](#).

select further 50 border hurdles (maximum) of a legal and/or administrative nature along EU internal land borders.

The selected cases will receive legal consultation on the obstacle subject of the application. Experts with sound knowledge of legal and cross-border cooperation matters will help define the identified obstacles in a clear and systematic way, and propose possible solutions to them by outlining the legal framework from which to proceed.

The experts to consult the successful cases of the next two calls for proposals are intended to be selected through the present call for expressions of interest.

2 Contracting authority

Association of the European Border Regions (AEBR)

Registered Association according to the German Law

Entity registration number at the Local Court of Coesfeld (Germany): VR 5420

Enscheder Strasse, 362, D- 48599 Gronau

VAT number: DE240400131

3 Application procedure

The objective of this call for expressions of interest is to set up a list of legal and cross-border cooperation experts to provide advice on the successful cases to be selected in the framework of the third and fourth calls for proposals of the initiative *b-solutions*.

Expressions of interest should be submitted via an online form, accessible here: <https://www.b-solutionsproject.com/experts-apply>

Deadline: 30 June 2021.

It should be noted that the selection and allocation of the experts to provide advice in the course of the third call for proposals is expected to start in summer 2020. Applicants are therefore encouraged to submit expressions of interest in the earliest phase of the project.

Please note that the inclusion on the list entails no obligation by the contracting authority concerning the conclusion of contracts.

A list of the required documents is reported under point 4 of the present call for expressions of interest.

4 Information and documents to be provided

Interested parties should provide their full contact details and indicate the specific fields of their interest among those listed under point 8.

The following files or documents should be submitted:

- a) Standard Application Form to be submitted via the online form accessible [here](#);

- b) Complete and updated curriculum vitae in English to be submitted in PDF format. The CV must include a clear reference to the applicant's language skills, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages²;
- c) Copy of the identity card / passport, and, if available, the VAT number;
- d) Document(s) providing evidence of the professional experience in the field of legal matter and/or cross-border cooperation as indicated at point 11 to be submitted in PDF format;
- e) Declaration of honour on exclusion criteria and award criteria signed and dated to be submitted in PDF format³.

The application form and instructions on submitting applications are available at: <https://www.b-solutionsproject.com/experts-apply>

Please note that, in case of selection, a legal entity form⁴ and a financial identification form⁵, completed and signed, will also need to be submitted before signing the contract.

The Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) reserves the right to request additional or updated documents and to review its assessment of the application file on the basis of submitted documents.

5 General description of the procedure

As a general rule, this call is open to natural and legal persons specialised in the matters covered by the subject of the present document.

Legal entities can indicate a maximum of 7 experts each and provide the information and documents required for each appointed natural person.

The contracting authority – the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) – will draw up a list of experts who meet the criteria set out in points 10 and 11. The list will constantly be updated until the closing of the present call for expressions of interest.

Whilst compiling the list, the contracting authority will assign experts to the tasks on the basis of the skills, experience, knowledge and languages necessary and in accordance with the principles of non-discrimination, equal treatment and absence of conflict of interests.

6 Protection of personal data

Processing the expression of interest involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as your name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).

² <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/resources/european-language-levels-cefr>

³ Template available at <https://www.b-solutionsproject.com/experts-apply>

⁴ Available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/legal-entities_en

⁵ Available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/financial-identification_en

Data are retained and guarded for a period of 10 years following the closure of the call for expressions of interest.

Unless indicated otherwise, replies to this notice and any personal data requested are required for evaluation purposes, following the procedure indicated above in point 5, and will be processed solely for those purposes by the contracting authority indicated in point 2, which is also acting as data controller, and by the promoter of the initiative, the European Commission's Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO).

Details concerning the processing of personal data are available in the privacy statement at: <https://www.aebr.eu/en/imprint-data-protection.php>.

7 Use of the list resulting from this notice

The list resulting from this notice will be used exclusively for the execution of the tasks described at point 8 of the present call and within the fields described under the same point.

8 Tasks to be performed by the experts and relative fields covered by the present call for expressions of interest

Tasks to be performed by the experts:

- Provision of legal consultation in order to define and document the identified obstacle(s), making clear reference to the legal dispositions that are causing it (them); and related
- Field visit to the premises of the institution submitting the assigned case;
- Coordination with the contact person for the assigned case(s);
- fulfilment of a final report, which should be completed by the end of the implementation period and should include, at least, the following chapters:
 - I. Description of the obstacle
 - II. Indication of the legal/administrative dispositions causing the obstacle
 - III. Description of a possible solution
 - IV. Pre-assessment of whether the case could be solved with the ECBM
 - V. Other relevant aspects to the case
 - VI. References and Appendix/Appendices if any
- Submission of the final report by the end of the implementation period to the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) via the following email address: b-solutions@aebr.eu;
- The final report must be written in English, unless agreed differently with the contracting authority.

List of thematic cross-border fields covered by the initiative *b-solutions* and by the present call for expressions of interest:

- a) Employment;
- a) Transport
- b) Health (including emergency services);

- c) Institutional Cooperation;
- d) Multilingualism;
- e) eGovernment;
- f) Information services;
- g) Evidence and data;

9 Place and time of delivery

The tasks may be carried out at the premises of the institution submitting the assigned case. A maximum of 5 working days within a period of three months and a half is foreseen to perform the task.

Experts should coordinate with the contact person at the assigned case(s) to schedule their field visits according to the reciprocal obligations.

The field visit should take place within the implementation period of the initiative. In particular:

- a) Approximately between mid-September 2020 and the end of January 2021 for the third call for proposals;
- b) Approximately between mid-March 2021 and the end of June 2021 for the fourth call for proposals.

The exact site and dates of delivery will be mentioned on the contract's specifications.

The final report should be compiled by the expert within the implementation period.

10 Eligibility criteria relating to technical and professional capacity

Criterion 1: Relevant professional experience in the field of legal and administrative matters, with specific and proven knowledge of cross-border instances in one or more of the thematic fields listed in point 8;

- Threshold⁶: 5 years or more;
- Supporting evidence⁷: CV of the expert, provided according to the indications included at point 4;

Criterion 2: Ability to draft and communicate in English or one of the other working languages of the European Commission (French or German)⁸;

- Threshold: B2 - C1 level of English or one of the other working languages of the European Commission (French or German);
- Supporting evidence: CV of the expert, provided according to the indications included at point 4 or copy of language certificates, if in possess.

11 Awarding criteria relating to technical and professional capacity

⁶ Work experience in both the private and public sector will be taken into consideration. A Ph.D. or a master's degree cannot be considered as professional experience. The length of professional experience is determined relative to the month when the application is received.

⁷ Documents submitted as supporting evidence are subject to checks, audits and evaluations by the European Commission or by authorised auditors as part of the documentation of the project.

⁸ Please notice that report is expected to be written in English, unless agreed differently with the contracting authority.

Criterion 1: relevant experience in the field of legal consultation;

Criterion 2: relevant experience in the field of cross-border cooperation;

Criterion 3: advisory experience in the field of cross-border cooperation with specific regards to analysing obstacles;

Criterion 4: knowledge of a specific territory and of the languages therein spoken;

Criterion 5: relevant experience in the field of one or more of the thematic areas listed at point 8.

Criteria will be evaluated on the basis of the online application form and the CV provided by the experts participating in the present call according to the indications included at point 4.

To every criteria, a score on a scale from 0 to 5 will be assigned, where 0 indicates a completely insufficient relevance of the expert's previous experiences and 5, on the contrary, an excellent one.

To be included in the list of experts, the assessment of the 5 criteria listed above should lead to an overall score of at least 12,5 points, namely 50% of the total 25 cumulative points.

12 Exclusion criteria

Experts shall be excluded from participation 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 or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of res judicata;

(c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means;

(d) they are not in compliance with their 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 contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;

(e) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such an illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;

(f) they are subject to an administrative penalty for being guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in a procurement procedure or failing to supply information, or being declared to be in serious breach of their obligation under a contract covered by the budget;

(g) they have a conflict of interest in connection with the contract; a conflict of interest could arise in particular as a result of economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional ties or any other relevant connection or shared interest.

Experts shall provide a declaration on their honour stating that they are not in any of the situations of exclusion listed above. In case of doubt, applicants may be requested to provide supporting evidence of non-exclusion.

13 Conditions of remuneration and reimbursement of experts

Experts shall be remunerated with a lump sum corresponding to a maximum total of € 5,000 (VAT included) per assigned case, corresponding to working fees and travel and accommodation costs related to the field visit:

a) A fee of 600 Euros (VAT included) per working day, for a total of 5 days, applied in reason of the profile of the expert and in accordance to AEBR's practice for the expert's specific competence in evaluating the case assigned and drafting individual evaluation report;

b) A total of 590 Euros calculated for travel costs;

c) A total of 130 Euros per night (for 6 nights) and of 90 Euros per day (for 7 days) to cover accommodation and daily allowances (meals, local transports and other possible expenditures included).

A single final payment after delivery and approval of the report by the contracting authority will be made.

The total amount is calculated on the basis of the actual number of days spent at the premises of the institution that submitted the advice case assigned and upon agreement with the contracting authority.

14 Ex-post transparency

AEBR will keep an audit trail of the applications received, and will retain the CV and further documentation attached to the application of applicants, unless specifically requested to delete the information.

A list of experts who have concluded a contract following the procedure set out in the present call for expressions of interest may be published on the website of the initiative, on the online platform "Boosting EU Border Regions" used to disseminate information on the initiative, and on the outputs of the project.

15 Date of dispatch of notice

17 June 2020