

MAJALAT Research:
The dynamics of Civil Society in the Southern Mediterranean Region:
Terms of reference for 6 research consultants

The MAJALAT Consortium is looking to recruit 6 research consultants to research the dynamics of Civil Society in the Southern Mediterranean Region.

1. Description and context of the project

This past year, the COVID-19 health crisis and the measures taken by the various governments to address it have had a great impact on human rights and the work of civil society. This crisis has revealed many dysfunctions in the systems in place, including access to economic and social rights, and has exacerbated problems related to human security, including the issue of digital security. This crisis has also highlighted the precariousness of populations in vulnerable situations (women victims of violence, migrants, human rights defenders, people with disabilities, sexual minorities, etc.).

On the other hand, the EU has recently redefined its partnership with the Southern Mediterranean region. All these considerations have a direct impact on some of the recommendations addressed by civil society actors in the framework of MAJALAT to the EU and to national governments in the region. In order to deepen certain aspects of the work already done, the MAJALAT Consortium intends to publish 6 researches respectively on the 6 themes of the project (Governance and Rule of Law, Migration, Climate Justice, Security and the Fight against Violence, Economic and Social Dialogue, Youth). Gender will be mainstreamed in all the themes. The research will reflect the European Commission's Joint Communication on the renewed partnership with the Southern Neighborhood and its direct impact on these themes. The Consortium will select key recommendations to be further explored and put into perspective with the analysis of the work of the actors for the different themes. Subsequently, a researcher will be recruited. The researcher will be offered a 15-day contract. Final contributions will be expected by May 24. **The publication of the research will take place on May 31, 2021.**

1.1 The MAJALAT Consortium

MAJALAT is an initiative that aims to create and promote a space for meetings and constructive dialogue between Euro-Mediterranean civil society and the EU. Through an annual cycle of meetings at national, regional and European levels, and the establishment of tools and virtual spaces, the project aims to mobilize civil society organizations (CSOs), trade unions, social movements, youth organizations, etc., to actively engage in a structured regional dialogue with the European institutions in the framework of the South Mediterranean Civil Forum organized annually in Brussels. Carried and implemented by civil society for civil society, the project is designed as a bottom-up, inclusive, and participatory process.

Each year, civil society organizations will meet to discuss and exchange around central themes (good governance and rule of law, economic development and social dialogue, migration, security and the fight against violence, social justice and climate), in the relations between the European Union and the countries of the region. Based on experiences from the field, the results of these discussions will feed the process of structured political dialogue with the European Union. As the interface of the project, the digital platform aims to encourage and facilitate the participation of a maximum number of civil society organizations and interested citizens - in particular young people and women - in the dialogue with the relevant authorities on the major social and political challenges of the Southern Mediterranean region and on the relations between the European Union and this region. The digital platform provides information on the project's activities and the priority themes addressed. Relayed on the social networks Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Youtube, it is also a dynamic space of interaction for debate with experts and for online learning (interactive course modules, videos, real-time broadcasting of meetings etc.).

* Majalat means "spaces, opportunities, fields and areas"

The Majalat project was initiated and implemented by six civil society networks of the Euro-Mediterranean region: the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), The Arab Trade Union Confederation (ATUC), The Alternatives Forum Morocco (FMAS), The Euromed Rights network, the Euromed France network and the European network SOLIDAR.

2. Description of the short-term mission

2.1 General objective

Through this research, MAJALAT will be supported in the reflection and access to information on EU policies, to Euro-Mediterranean civil society organizations. This research aims to deepen, for each theme, one or more key recommendation(s) and provide an analysis of the current dynamics concerning the studied aspect. It should consider the impact of the COVID-19 as well as the renewal of the partnership between the EU and the Euro-Mediterranean region. The research and recommendations will reflect the impact that the European Commission's Joint Communication on this renewed partnership has on MAJALAT's 6 thematic. Based on the results of this research, 3 national roundtables will be organized around the policy recommendations of MAJALAT, with the support of a local expert. The objective of these national roundtables will be to involve national policy makers in the work of the structured dialogue with the European Union. It is proposed to organize these roundtables in three countries: Morocco, Tunisia, and Lebanon. The "civil society" focal points in the European Union delegations will be invited to participate in the debates.

At the beginning of the mission, a working meeting will be organized between the members of the MAJALAT consortium in charge of each of the project's themes with the MAJALAT project director and the respective thematic experts, in order to jointly delimit the work axes and to determine the provisional planning of the mission. This research will be validated by the MAJALAT consortium. The deliverables will be the thematic research in each of the work areas:

Good Governance and the Rule of Law: In the Southern Neighbors, governance and the rule of law are particularly weak. This weakness is particularly pronounced in areas such as transparency, civil liberties, media freedom, participation and political accountability. As a result, overall government accountability is weak and public sector service delivery does not meet the expectations of civil society and citizens. Good governance and the rule of law are, however, at the heart of the EU's relations with the Southern Neighborhood countries. As governance and the rule of law are complex and multifaceted concepts, for this research MAJALAT will focus on:

- Human Rights Defenders and launching a country study in the region to collect existing data from different sources on the critical situations faced by human rights defenders.
- This study would also map out the institutional and policy measures taken by national governments against human rights defenders, journalists and critics of the regime. An institutional analysis of the national ecosystem for addressing human rights, citizen participation and good governance could complement the report.
- This study would also analyze the impact of the EU's new partnership with its southern neighborhood on human rights and human rights defenders in the region.

Security and the fight against violence: The southern Mediterranean region is strongly marked by endogenous and exogenous violence whose sources are rooted in history as well as in more contemporary factors that may have their origins in territories outside the region. More recently, in 2011, a wave of violence and radicalization hit the region hard. This wave illustrated the ability of violence to spread regionally and globally, but more importantly it showed the complexity and multi-causality of this phenomenon. For the MAJALAT Consortium, the concept of "security" must be interpreted as the duty of the state to protect its citizens and to guarantee them access to the entire system of human rights - political, civil, social, economic and cultural rights. The following issues will be considered for this research:

- Spread of digital forms of activism
- Expansion of state-led surveillance and restrictions on the Internet, which have led to restrictions on the media and a reduction in space for protests and mobilization
- Attacks on privacy and personal data
- Increase in disinformation campaigns

Migration: Migration expresses access to human dignity, freedom, democracy, meritocracy, personal and/or family fulfillment, or simply, escape from a deteriorating environment. We are witnessing the multiplication of forms of displacement and journeys, to adapt to crisis situations and to legal, security and coercive measures with disproportionate risk-taking. As a result, it is a structuring and cross-cutting theme in the agendas of both the countries of the European Union and the countries of the southern shore of the Mediterranean. The changing situation in the southern neighborhood of the EU in recent years in terms of migration has led the Union to address these issues in a number of resolutions and policies, materialized by the adoption of various measures in the host countries in Europe and in the countries of origin of refugees. For the theme of migration, the MAJALAT consortium will focus on

- The protection of seasonal workers working in Europe and in the region
- The repercussions of the new partnership of the EU with its southern neighborhood on the protection of migrants and especially seasonal workers working in Europe.

Economic development and social dialogue: Economic policies and social dialogue are central to the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). Several policies have been developed and instruments put in place at the level of the European Union (EU), whether it be at the level of its external policy or even vis-à-vis its commitment to the implementation of the global agenda, which aim to address the challenges related to economic and social dialogue and their implications for the southern neighborhood; development cooperation. For the research, in the context of trade and investment policies in the region, following issues will be explored:

- Evaluation of trade and investment framework and unpacking green and digital transition and resilient economic approach
- Socio-economic needs of the southern partner countries in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the policy responses and initiatives within the partnership
- Lessons learnt from the evaluation of FTAs and for the DCFTAs negotiations

Social and climate justice: Climate change represents a major challenge for the Mediterranean region. Most southern Mediterranean countries are experiencing rising temperatures, water scarcity and increasing desertification. Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent. They affect the quality of life and key sectors of the economy, slowing economic growth and exacerbating social and geopolitical tensions. Climate change adaptation and mitigation measures are therefore fundamental to promoting growth, sustainable living conditions, and ultimately stability and security in the region. The following issues will be explored for this research:

- Finance and investment in relation to NDICIs
- Green deal and national adaptation policies
- Assessment of the working environment of NGOs on the theme and their actions for climate justice

Youth: During the first half of the 2000s, the EU started to implement and/or financially support several cooperation programs targeting youth in the areas of: vocational training, employment, culture, mobility, fight against violence and despite the fact that many EU policy documents highlight the importance of the role of youth and the challenges they face, there is no specific policy for youth in the South Mediterranean. It is essential that they participate in existing or future dialogues between CSOs and institutions, and that they have their own spaces to express their priorities. For this research theme, the problematic will be Opening permanent spaces for dialogue: young activists and independent youth organizations as key actors in regional and national public policies in the Mediterranean.

It will involve:

- Drawing up the findings of the action of youth activists and youth CSOs in the region (scales of work, relationship with public authorities, difficulties encountered and strengths)
- Based on these findings, develop perspectives by developing the reflections and recommendations chosen by the consortium: the perpetuation of a space for dialogue with European and national institutions, the mobilization and appropriation of young activists of these spaces, capacity building of youth in terms of advocacy and fundraising and management.
- The research will include the contribution of the European Commission on "youth" issues in the context of the renewed partnership with the neighborhood.

3. Time and duration

3.1 Location of the mission

The mission will take place under the conditions permitted by the health conditions, including regular online contact.

3.2 Key dates of the mission

Application deadline: April 26

Recruitment of research consultant: April 26-30

Engagement start and end date: Monday, May 3 to Monday, May 24

Submission of research: May 24

Publication of research: May 30

Presentation of the research results during the round tables to be organized in June 2021

3.3 Practical information

If you are interested, please send your CV and research samples no later than April 26

4. Desired profile

The mission requires the mobilization of six researchers in the following thematic areas

- Governance and rule of law
- Migration - Climate justice
- Security and the fight against violence
- Economic and social dialogue
- Youth

4.1. Qualifications and skills

- An advanced degree in a respective thematic field
- Proven written and communication skills in English/French, knowledge of Arabic will be considered an asset
- Analytical ability Advanced degree in a respective thematic area
- Demonstrated written and communication skills in English/French, knowledge of Arabic is considered an asset
- Analytical skills

4.2 General work experience

- At least 5 years of research experience in the civil society sector in the Southern Mediterranean area
- Excellent knowledge of EU policies in their respective thematic areas and in the region
- Knowledge of EU financial instruments and programs in the region
- Long term experience in the neighborhood countries is an asset