



# **RULES GOVERNING THE 2022 EESC CIVIL SOCIETY PRIZE**

## *Rewarding excellence in civil society initiatives*

### **1. Aim and overall objective of the Civil Society Prize**

For the European Economic and Social Committee (the "EESC" or the "Committee"), the **aim** of the prize, which is awarded annually, is to reward and encourage initiatives by natural persons (i.e. individuals) and/or private law bodies (i.e. civil society organisations etc.) that have made a significant contribution to promoting the European identity and European integration.

The **overall objective** of the prize is thus to raise awareness of the contribution that civil society can make to creating a European identity and citizenship in a way that underpins the common values that are the foundation of European integration.

### **2. The 2022 EESC Civil Society Prize**

#### **2.1 Category 1: Empowering young people**

Young people were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. On the one hand, the temporary closure of educational institutions and the interruption of social, cultural and sporting activities weakened young people's social connections. On the other hand, they were also more vulnerable on the labour market and often lacked or had only weak social protection. In February 2022, the unemployment rate for young people under 25 was 14% in the EU, with particularly high rates in countries such as Greece (31.1%), Spain (29.8%), Italy (24.2%) and Sweden (22.1%)<sup>1</sup>.

Youth unemployment has long-term consequences on individuals, making them a "lost generation". Moreover, high numbers of NEETs (not in employment, education or training) also represent a big loss for our economies and pose a potential risk for the stability of our democratic societies, as some young people may opt out of democratic and social participation. Indeed, there are concerns about

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<sup>1</sup> [Eurostat unemployment statistics](#). It has to be noted that a percentage of unemployed young people tend to be overlooked in the official data, either because they do not apply for unemployment benefits or because they do not enrol with employment agencies and instead make their living in bogus self-employed work, working for a platform or in the shadow economy. Therefore, it can be assumed that the real figures could be even worse than those reported by Eurostat.

young people's widespread lack of trust in established party-political systems and institutions. A recent European Parliament Youth Survey shows that, although 85% of respondents discuss politics with friends or relatives, the majority of them feel they do not have much, or even any say over important decisions, laws and policies affecting them<sup>2</sup>. NEETs are also at a higher risk of marginalisation, poverty and permanent exclusion from the labour market.

Young people must grapple with serious economic, social, cultural, political and environmental problems inherited from previous generations. They are disproportionately affected by economic crises and subsequent austerity measures. The financial support announced for the economic recovery, for example, will place a burden on future generations, which will continue to experience the financial impact of COVID-19.

On the other hand, however, the green and digital transitions offer a renewed perspective for the future, as well as the possibility to turn challenges into opportunities and to counter the negative impact of the pandemic. More and more young people, for example, are launching new start-ups in cutting edge sectors, they are creating social enterprises to fill the gap in services needed, particularly after the pandemic, or they are implementing forward-looking sustainable business models, delivering profits while simultaneously driving social impact and environmental sustainability. As the European Parliament and the Council rightly pointed out in the decision on the European Year of Youth, "Europe needs the vision, engagement and participation of all young people to build a better future, and Europe needs to give young people opportunities for the future, a future that is greener, more digital and more inclusive"<sup>3</sup>. The European Year of Youth will go hand in hand with the successful implementation of NextGenerationEU in providing jobs, education and training opportunities, in particular to young people coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, rural or remote areas, or belonging to vulnerable groups; it will help them to become active citizens and actors of positive change in the economy and in society.

Not least, also in the context of the current geopolitical situation, young people are also affected by major global issues such as peace and security, sustainable development and dealing with newly emerging technologies including artificial intelligence. It is very important to duly assess the impact of all policies on young people and their perspectives, including for future generations. From climate change and sustainable development to *Farm to Fork* and new technologies, young people have a role to play when considering social aspects and future-proofing policies. The EESC is firmly convinced that this needs to be reflected in strong, meaningful youth engagement at all stages of EU decision-making processes, from the drafting of legislative proposals and initiatives through to implementation, monitoring and follow-up<sup>4</sup>. The climate strikes are a tangible example of the extent to which young people are ready to become active and engaged citizens as well as actors of change in the economy and in society.

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<sup>2</sup> [European Parliament Youth Survey 2021](#) (Flash Eurobarometer).

<sup>3</sup> Decision (EU) 2021/2316 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 December 2021 on a European Year of Youth (2022) ([OJ L 462, 28.12.2021, p. 1](#)).

<sup>4</sup> Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on *Towards structured youth engagement on climate and sustainability in the EU decision-making process* (own-initiative opinion) – NAT/788-EESC-2020 of 20 February 2020 ([OJ C 429, 11.12.2020, p. 44](#)). See in particular pt. 1.1 and 2.11.

Quality youth participation and representation mechanisms create an opportunity for a partnership between policy makers, young people and youth organisations to shape decisions that impact young people's lives. It is high time for young people to shift from hearings and consultations to co-creation, co-design and co-production. Seizing this opportunity will also ensure the stability and resilience of our democracies, for which the participation of all groups of society in decision-making processes is a prerequisite.

In its opinion *Towards structured youth engagement on climate and sustainability in the EU decision-making process*, the EESC clearly underlined that youth organisations play an important role in this context, as they represent the interests of millions of young people in Europe and globally through their wide networks. They are key actors in ensuring that young people are not only present in institutions, but are also enabled to contribute to the decision-making process in a meaningful way. Youth organisations can also help to amplify youth voices to push for specific measures or policies and to hold governments and institutions to account on their commitments<sup>5</sup>.

Building on its successful initiatives such as "Your Europe, Your Say!" and the Youth Climate and Sustainability Roundtables, the EESC is ready to play a role in restoring young people's trust in institutions, in maintaining connection or re-connecting young people to civil society, in strengthening youth participation and facilitating engagement with youth networks. This is why, in the European Year of Youth 2022, the EESC has decided to award its 13th civil society prize (category 1) to natural persons (individuals) and private law bodies (civil society organisations etc.) who have carried out, on the territory of the EU, effective, innovative and creative projects which aim to create a better future for and with young people in Europe, by tackling the specific needs of young people and contributing to their empowerment and participation in all spheres of economic and social life. In this way, the prize will also highlight the contribution that young people and youth organisations can make to shaping the Future of Europe.

## 2.2 Category 2: European civil society for Ukraine

The EESC has strongly condemned the invasion of Ukraine by Russian military forces, and has repeatedly stressed that it violates international rules and agreements in force, threatens European and global security and directly violates the EU's primary aim "to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples"<sup>6</sup>. In its resolution of 24 March 2022, the Committee called for an immediate stop to military action on Ukrainian soil to avoid any further harm to citizens and also to critical infrastructure<sup>7</sup>.

At the same time, for the EESC, protecting people in Ukraine is one of the current priorities. Millions of people have fled Ukraine as a consequence of the war. The EU has shown solidarity by granting temporary protection to all refugees fleeing their homeland. The EESC insists that all refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine, regardless of their nationality, must receive protection and access to adequate

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<sup>5</sup> Idem, pt. 2.9 and 2.10.

<sup>6</sup> Art. 3 (1) TUE.

<sup>7</sup> EESC resolution of 24 March 2022 [The war in Ukraine and its economic, social and environmental impact](#).

infrastructure and that the needs of vulnerable groups, especially women, children, elderly people and people with disabilities, must be addressed adequately. The role of organised civil society is pivotal in this context. In many countries, civil society has mobilised overnight and is cooperating with the authorities to provide help to Ukrainians who fled the war. These organisations are active on the ground, providing Ukrainians with humanitarian assistance on a day-to-day basis and providing support for refugees both upon arrival, and as they integrate into European society<sup>8</sup>.

This is why the EESC, while expressing its profound grief for all the victims of the aggression (children, women and men), for the destruction of cities and infrastructure, and for the incalculable human suffering and environmental damage, has decided to award its 13th civil society prize (category 2) to civil society organisations, companies or individuals who have carried out, on the territory of the EU or in Ukraine, effective, innovative projects which aim to help civilians suffering as a result of the war in Ukraine.

### 3. Eligibility

#### 3.1 Eligible candidates

The EESC Civil Society Prize is open on equal terms to all natural persons (individuals) and private law bodies (civil society organisations etc.) under the conditions set out below. Public authorities, governmental organisations and other public bodies are not eligible.

##### 1) Natural persons

For the purposes of this prize, natural persons are individuals or groups of individuals acting jointly without contractual ties. EU citizens are eligible, regardless of their country of residence. Third-country nationals are also eligible, provided they are legally resident in the territory of the EU. Groups of individuals must designate one of the natural persons as a point of contact (the leader) for the administrative and financial aspects of the prize.

EESC members, CCMI delegates, staff of EU institutions and other EU bodies, members of the evaluation committee and their relatives, are not eligible to submit an entry.

##### 2) Private law bodies

Civil society organisations (hereafter: "CSOs") officially registered within the European Union and acting at local, national, regional or European level are eligible. For the purposes of this prize, CSOs as defined in the EESC opinion on *The role and contribution of civil society organisations in the building of Europe* are "organisational structures whose members have objectives and responsibilities that are of general interest and who also act as mediators between the public authorities and citizens"<sup>9</sup>. They are actively involved in shaping public affairs on the basis of their own concerns, drawing on their own specific knowledge, abilities and scope for action. They act autonomously, and membership entails a commitment by members of the general public to take part in the work and activities of those

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<sup>8</sup> See the EESC contributions on <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/initiatives/eesc-ukraine/eesc-speaks-out/section-contributions>

<sup>9</sup> Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on *The role and contribution of civil society organisations in the building of Europe* – CESE 851/1999 of 22 September 1999 ([OJ C 329, 17.11.1999, p. 30](#)).

organisations. This definition includes the so-called labour-market players, i.e. the social partners, organisations representing social and economic players, non-governmental organisations which bring people together in a common cause, such as environmental organisations, human rights organisations, consumer associations, charitable organisations, cultural organisations, and educational and training organisations, etc.; community-based organisations, i.e. organisations set up within society at grassroots level which pursue member-oriented objectives, e.g. youth organisations, family associations and all organisations through which citizens participate in local and municipal life; religious communities. CSOs set up by a legislative or regulatory act and/or to which affiliation is partially or totally mandatory (e.g. professional associations)<sup>10</sup>, are also eligible.

Companies or firms: For the purposes of this prize, "companies or firms" means profit-making entities constituted under civil or commercial law, including cooperative societies and other legal persons governed by private law. Companies or firms are eligible if they are formed in accordance with the law of a Member State and have their registered office, central administration or principal place of business on the territory of the EU. Eligibility of firms/companies is limited to their **not-for-profit** activities such as selfless initiatives, charity projects, individual or corporate volunteering etc.

## 3.2 Eligible initiatives

### 3.2.1 Formal eligibility criteria applicable to both categories

To be eligible, initiatives must fulfil the four criteria listed hereafter:

- they must be **not-for-profit**, such as selfless initiatives, charity projects, individual or corporate volunteering etc.;
- they must have **already been implemented** or be **still ongoing on 31 July 2022 (closing date for submission of applications)**;
- they must **fulfil the thematic eligibility criteria** set out below for each of the categories.
- they must be carried out **on the territory of the EU**. Additionally, **category 2** actions carried out in **Ukraine** are also eligible.

The following initiatives are excluded:

- commercial (i.e. for-profit) initiatives;
- initiatives which are planned but have not begun implementation by 31 July 2022 (closing date for submission of applications);
- for category 2: Initiatives already carried out by the candidates before the outbreak of the war in Ukraine and not directly linked to its consequences. However, existing initiatives which were adapted to react swiftly to the additional needs of their target groups and to properly address the new or increased challenges faced as a consequence of the war, are eligible;
- documentation and/or information and/or awareness raising activities, journalistic, literary or scientific publications of any kind and in any format, audiovisual products, and any kind of artwork.

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<sup>10</sup> This applies for instance to Austrian labour-market players.

### 3.2.2 Thematic eligibility criteria for category 1 - Empowering young people

The specific objective of category 1 of the 2022 Civil Society Prize is to reward **effective, innovative and creative initiatives carried out on the territory of the EU which aim to create a better future for and with young people in Europe, by tackling the specific needs of young people and contributing to their empowerment and participation in all spheres of economic and social life.**

To be eligible, activities/initiatives must contribute to empowering young people by covering **at least one** of the following areas: employment and access to the labour market, including entrepreneurship; education and training; health and wellbeing, in particular as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic; participation in political processes, including matters such as climate change and new technologies; empowering vulnerable groups; capacity building of young multipliers.

More concretely, the initiatives proposed for the prize can cover a wide range of themes, for example (non-exhaustive list):

- countering the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people, including mental health;
- promoting an inclusive and accessible debate on challenges that young people, including those with fewer opportunities and belonging to vulnerable groups, face, such as their social situation, access to education and training, working conditions and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people;
- fostering youth entrepreneurship, for example by promoting entrepreneurial skills and self-employment opportunities for young people and addressing the specific challenges faced by young entrepreneurs;
- promoting young women's participation in the labour market i.e. by ensuring equal opportunities and fostering female entrepreneurship;
- improving young people's skills and promoting their digital competences; tackling the existing skill gaps and gender segregation patterns; offering quality and inclusive education for young people, especially those with disabilities or belonging to minorities or disadvantaged groups; raising young people's awareness of the importance of environmental sustainability; helping young people to acquire relevant knowledge and competences to become active and engaged citizens and actors of change, inspired by a European sense of belonging;
- combating youth unemployment, the proliferation of unpaid traineeships and the offer of precarious or low-paid jobs to young people; promoting new opportunities and decent jobs e.g. for young people living in rural or remote areas, young disabled people, students and young parents; promoting fair recruitment and retention measures for young people and their integration in the labour market, thus contributing to tackling brain drain and fostering young people's economic independence;
- addressing the specific challenges and needs of disadvantaged young people such as those belonging to marginalised or vulnerable groups, young people from rural, remote, peripheral and less-developed areas and from the outermost regions, young people with disabilities or belonging to minorities, and harder-to-reach young people with multifaceted problems who require personalised guidance;

- removing obstacles (social, economic, administrative, political and cultural) to young people's participation and promoting their civic and political engagement at all stages of the decision-making processes at European, national and/or local level that goes beyond mere consultation and ad hoc meetings; promoting active youth engagement in proposing and implementing solutions to major challenges such as climate change, the just transition, sustainable development and new technologies; creating a space for regular and meaningful dialogue with young people on policy proposals and strategies, making sure that harder-to-reach groups are also included; raising awareness of existing youth participation and representation mechanisms; promoting specific participation patterns that are suitable for young people, taking into account digitalisation while avoiding any kind of discrimination or exclusion;
- raising awareness about the generational impact of policies and/or developing instruments to better assess it;
- strengthening youth work and promoting the capacity building of young multipliers such as youth leaders and youth workers, and of stakeholders representing youth's interests.

### 3.2.3 Thematic eligibility criteria for category 2 – European civil society for Ukraine

The specific objective of category 2 of the 2022 Civil Society Prize is to reward **effective, innovative and creative initiatives (including youth initiatives) carried out on the territory of the EU and/or in Ukraine, which aim to help civilians suffering as a result of the war.**

More concretely, the initiatives proposed for the prize can cover a wide range of themes, for example (non-exhaustive list):

- implementing humanitarian actions to grant civilians access to essential items such as water, food and medicine in Ukraine;
- providing means of evacuation, shelter, emergency assistance and immediate relief to people fleeing the war in Ukraine and entering the territory of the EU, including both Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian nationals;
- providing social support, psychological and medical assistance and housing;
- offering practical support and advice as regards administrative procedures and services available in the receiving country and helping Ukrainians overcome practical hurdles related to access to housing, health services, education, employment, public services etc.;
- facilitating the social inclusion of Ukrainian nationals in the receiving communities and fostering their participation in the labour market;
- providing training, included language training and training designed to help children to attend school together with local children as quickly as possible; cooperate with public authorities to speed up the process of inclusion (e.g. as regards the classification of certificates, skills and qualifications);
- addressing the situation of specific target groups (children, women, people with disabilities etc.);
- combating disinformation specifically linked to the war in Ukraine.

#### 4. Application procedure and deadline

Applications are to be made by filling in the online application form ([www.eesc.europa.eu/civilsocietyprize](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/civilsocietyprize)). In duly justified cases linked to documented technical problems, the EESC may allow candidates to apply by email or post.

The application must contain all the information the selection board requires in order to:

- ascertain that the candidate fulfils the formal entry criteria;
- ascertain that the candidate complies with the non-exclusion criteria;
- ascertain that the candidate accepts the provisions concerning liability, checks, audits and applicable law;
- evaluate the substantive merits of each entry in relation to the award criteria.

Before the prize is awarded, the EESC will ask candidates to provide the duly completed and signed Legal Entity Form and Financial Identification Form, as well as the relevant supporting documents.

These forms are available at:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/legal-entities\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/legal-entities_en)

and the

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/financial-identification\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/financial-identification_en).

Applications can be drafted in any official EU language. However, to speed up the evaluation process, the EESC would appreciate receiving the application form in English or French.

Submission of an application implies acceptance of all the terms and conditions set out in the contest documents and, where appropriate, the waiver of the candidate's own general or specific terms and conditions.

The final deadline for sending applications is **31 July 2022, at 10:00:00 (CEST)**.

The EESC will disregard any application received after this date and time. **Candidates are strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit their applications**, since heavy internet traffic or a faulty internet connection could lead to difficulties in sending in the application. The EESC cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such difficulties.

Candidates can only submit one entry. In the application form, candidates have to choose one of the two categories. Entering the competition is free of charge. If preparing and sending the application entails costs for a specific candidate, these will not be reimbursed.

Candidates will see a message on the screen thanking them for the application and offering them the possibility of printing it or saving it in PDF format.



## 5. Evaluation and award

### 5.1 Evaluation steps

The evaluation will be carried out by a panel of experts composed of 10 members (the "evaluation committee"), who are subject to the requirements on conflict of interests laid down in the Financial Regulation<sup>11</sup>. The evaluation will be based solely on the information provided in the submitted application form.

The EESC reserves the right not to disclose the identity of the members of the evaluation committee.

Participants should not contact the members of the evaluation committee for any reason related to the prize throughout the whole procedure. Any such attempt will result in disqualification.

The decisions of the evaluation committee are final, binding and not subject to challenge.

The procedure will take place in five steps:

- (1) verification of eligibility of candidates;
- (2) verification of eligibility of the initiatives proposed for the prize;
- (3) verification of non-exclusion of candidates;
- (4) evaluation of the quality of the initiatives proposed for the prize on the basis of the award criteria;
- (5) award of the prize.

The EESC will assess eligibility, non-exclusion and quality in no particular order. The applicants must pass all steps to be awarded the prize. No feedback will be provided to candidates until the end of the procedure. Results will be notified to all candidates as soon as possible, and in any case within 15 calendar days after the award decision has been taken by the authorising officer (step 5), provisionally by mid-December 2022.

#### 5.1.1 Verification of eligibility of candidates

To be eligible, candidates must fulfil the requirements of point 3.1 above.

The EESC will evaluate the eligibility of candidates on the basis of the information provided in the application form. Before awarding the prize, it will ask the candidates to provide a duly completed and signed Legal Entity Form with its supporting evidence (see point 4 above).

The EESC reserves the right to require the above-mentioned form and supporting evidence from any candidate at any time during the evaluation procedure. In this case, the candidate must provide the

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<sup>11</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 ([OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1](#)).

form and the supporting evidence without delay. The EESC may reject the application if the form and the supporting evidence are not provided in due time.

#### **5.1.2 Verification of eligibility of initiatives**

Eligibility of the initiatives proposed for the prize will be checked on the basis of the online application form. To be eligible, the initiatives proposed for the prize must fulfil the requirements of point 3.2 above. Other activities carried out by the candidate will not be taken into consideration.

#### **5.1.3 Verification of non-exclusion**

Compliance of the candidates with the non-exclusion criteria referred to in Articles 136 and 141 of the Financial Regulation and listed in the application documents will be checked on the basis of the online application form.

The EESC reserves the right to verify whether the candidates are in one of the situations of exclusion by requiring to submit supporting documents. In this case, the candidate must provide the documents required within the deadline given by the EESC. The EESC may reject the application if the requested documents are not provided in due time.

A candidate is not required to submit a specific document if he/she/it informs the EESC that the document in question can be accessed on a public database free of charge.

#### **5.1.4 Evaluation of quality**

The evaluation committee will assess the quality of the applications on the basis of the award criteria set out below. The evaluators will only consider the initiatives proposed for the prize, not the candidate's other activities. There is no minimum threshold for each individual criterion. However, candidates that fail to obtain at least 50% of the maximum total score will be eliminated.

<b>Prize award criteria – category 1</b>	<b>Points</b>
<p><b>Criterion 1 – Long-term impact</b></p> <p>This criterion will assess the potential of the proposed initiative to have a long-term impact and to inspire others in Europe, i.e. to be applied or adapted to the same category of beneficiaries or to another category of beneficiaries elsewhere in the same or in another Member State of the EU. In this context, the impact will be evaluated in light of the human and financial resources employed to implement the proposed initiative.</p>	<b>35 points</b>
<p><b>Criterion 2 – Participation and collaboration</b></p> <p>This criterion will assess, on the one hand, how far the proposed initiative actively involves participants and beneficiaries and, on the other hand, its ability to share good practice and raise awareness on issues related to the theme for which the civil society prize is awarded.</p>	<b>35 points</b>
<p><b>Criterion 3 – Innovation and creativity</b></p> <p>This criterion will assess the creativity of the proposed initiative, its uniqueness and degree of innovation in its specific context. To this end, innovation is understood to mean both new ideas and new or improved ways to implement an existing solution or approach or to adapt it to a different context or target group.</p>	<b>30 points</b>
<b>Total points</b>	<b>100 points (minimum 50 points)</b>

<b>Prize award criteria – category 2</b>	<b>Points</b>
<p><b>Criterion 1 – Impact and efficiency</b></p> <p>This criterion will assess both the short-term and long-term impact of the proposed initiative, as well as its potential to inspire others in Europe, i.e. to be applied or adapted to the same category of beneficiaries or to another category of beneficiaries elsewhere in the same or in another Member State of the EU. In this context, the impact will be evaluated in light of the human and financial resources employed to implement the proposed initiative. The ability of the initiative to share good practice will also be taken into consideration.</p>	<b>70 points</b>
<p><b>Criterion 2 – Innovation and creativity</b></p> <p>This criterion will assess the creativity of the proposed initiative, its uniqueness and degree of innovation in its specific context. To this end, innovation is understood to mean both new ideas and new or improved ways to implement an existing solution or approach or to adapt it to a different context or target group.</p>	<b>30 points</b>
<b>Total points</b>	<b>100 points (minimum 50 points)</b>

### 5.1.5 Award of the prize

The prize will be awarded by the Committee, on the basis of the evaluation provided by the evaluation committee, who will be free to decide whether to recommend that prizes be awarded, depending on their appraisal of the quality of the entries.

For each category, the EESC may award a maximum of three prizes to the three top-ranked candidates of the respective category.

## 6. Prize money

The Committee plans to award a maximum of three prizes for each category. The first prize has a value of EUR 14.000. The amount of the second prize is 8.000. The amount of the third prize is EUR 8.000. If first place is shared between more than one winner *ex aequo*, the amount of each of the first prizes is respectively EUR 11.000 for two first prizes, EUR 10.000 for three first prizes. The Committee is not bound to award all the prizes. The EESC may decide not to award the Civil Society Prize.

The prize award ceremony is likely to take place during the EESC plenary session on **14-15 December 2022**. Up to two representatives per winner will be invited to the ceremony, with travel and accommodation organised by the EESC according to the rules which will be notified to winners in due time. Physical presence might be replaced at any time with online attendance, if so required by health and safety rules in place on the day of the award ceremony.

Prizes will be paid by bank transfer within 30 days of the award ceremony, provided that the winners have submitted all the requested documents. Winners are responsible for the payment of taxes and charges applicable when using the prize money.

## 7. Personal data

Personal data contained in the application documents (such as name and address) will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data<sup>12</sup>. Unless indicated otherwise, the replies to the questions and any personal data requested to evaluate the application in accordance with the contest rules will be processed solely for that purpose by the Directorate for Communication and Interinstitutional Relations. Details concerning the processing of personal data are attached (Appendix 2).

The candidate's personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) if the candidate is in one of the situations mentioned in Article 136 of the Financial Regulation. For more information, see the Privacy Statement on [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm)

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<sup>12</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC ([OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 93](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1725/oj)).

## 8. Disclosure requirements

Without prejudice to point 7 above, candidates grant the EESC the right to communicate to the public, in any language, in any format and using any kind of technique, the name of the candidates, the activities proposed for the prize and the amount of the prizes awarded to the winners.

Any communication or publication by the winners about the activity for which the prize was awarded must indicate that the activity has been awarded the EESC Civil Society Prize. This obligation applies for one year from the date of the awarding of the prize.

## 9. Liability

Candidates have sole liability in the event of a claim relating to the activities carried out in the framework of the prize.

## 10. Checks and audits

The winners must accept the checks and audits by the EESC, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the Court of Auditors referred to in Article 129 of the Financial Regulation and the publicity obligations in relation to the contest and the received prize, as detailed in point 8 above.

## 11. Law applicable, complaints and competent court

The Civil Society Prize is governed by EU law, complemented, where necessary, by the national law of Belgium.

Observations concerning the prize award procedure may be submitted to the authority awarding the prize using the contact details indicated in point 13 below.

If candidates believe that maladministration has occurred, they may lodge a complaint with the European Ombudsman within two years of the date when they become aware of the facts which form the basis for the complaint (see <http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu>).

The court responsible for matters relating to this prize is the General Court of the European Union:

General Court of the European Union  
Rue du Fort Niedergrünewald  
L-2925 Luxembourg  
Tel.: +352 43031  
Fax.: +352 4303 2100  
URL: <http://curia.europa.eu>

Information about the lodging of appeals may be obtained at the address indicated above.

## 12. Penalties

Financial penalties of 2 to 10% of the value of the prize and exclusion decisions from all contracts, grants and contests financed by the EU budget may be imposed on participants who have made false declarations, or committed irregularities or fraud, in accordance with the conditions laid down in Article 136 of the Financial Regulation.

## 13. Further information

For more information, please contact: [civilsocietyprize@eesc.europa.eu](mailto:civilsocietyprize@eesc.europa.eu)

If relevant to other potential candidates, questions and answers will be published on the Civil Society Prize page of the EESC website ([www.eesc.europa.eu/civilsocietyprize](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/civilsocietyprize)). The EESC recommends that candidates check the prize website regularly in order to get the most up-to-date information.

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