

Training in EU Advocacy for civil society from the Great Lakes region

How to best advocate to EU policy and decision-makers for a coherent and strong engagement in the region?



Brussels, Belgium



EurAc's 5-days training aims to help civil society actors and pro-democracy activists to better understand the functioning of the European Union (EU) so to frame their advocacy messages in an effective way and to link-up with relevant actors within the EU institutions.

The EU has a major role to play in promoting peace, security, inclusive political participation, the sustainable and equitable management of natural resources as well as the full respect of human rights in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Rwanda.

The main objective of this training is to strengthen civil society's capacity to advocate at the European level.

The thematic issues covered by the training will be: inclusive political participation and human rights, peace and security, and natural resources in Burundi, the DRC and Rwanda.

For whom?

Activists, members of pro-democracy movements and of civil society organisations from **Burundi, Rwanda and the DRC** who are engaged in their country and/or regionally in the promotion of human rights and/or inclusive political participation and/or equitable and sustainable management of natural resources and/or peace and security.

Issues, countries and key stakeholders covered are subject to the country of origin and interests of participants.

We encourage women applicants and those who have not had the opportunity in the past to benefit from similar training/travel.

Places are limited.

Objectives

After the training, participants will:

- Better understand the role of the different EU institutions and actors in policy and decision-making processes especially for the 3 thematic issues in the 3 countries
- Be aware of recent and current EU positions (policy, practices and dynamics) on the 3 thematic topics in the 3 countries
- Be able to develop effective messages and to use adequate advocacy tools
- Put into practice their knowledge through bilateral meetings with relevant EU-policy and decision makers
- Build relationship, network and contact with key EU-stakeholders and peer organisations from the Great Lakes region

Context

The EU is one of the most influential international diplomatic actors and the largest donor in the Great Lakes region of Africa. For many years, it has significantly contributed to building peace and promoting democracy and development through its substantial investment in the development of the region.

The **Lisbon Treaty** obliges the EU and its member states to ensure coherence between their economic policies and development policy objectives and the values of the EU's external action, including the defence and protection of human rights. The **Cotonou Agreement** commits the EU and its member states to align their development aid intervention with, among others, the promotion of human rights. This approach constitutes the true added value of European cooperation.

But some EU member states seem to put their **bilateral business interests** before the human rights and interests of the people of the region. There is also a clear **shift in EU Foreign Policy priorities** in favour of the fight against terrorism and the management of migration flows, while progressively neglecting its engagement in favour of peace, development and the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is crucial for the EU to remember and respect its fundamental values.

For EU foreign and development policies to better reflect the needs of local populations, the voices of civil society organisations, activists and pro-democracy movements must be heard by EU policy and decision-makers. Local actors are the first to be affected by EU policy and programs. **EurAc aims to make the voices of these actors from Burundi, Rwanda and the DRC taken into consideration at the EU level.**



For more information on the
application process
brune.mercier@eurac-network.org

Registration fees

Registration fees are of 4,100€ and include:

- Round trip from the DRC/Burundi/Rwanda to Brussels in economy class
- Visa fees and procedures including Schengen insurance
- Local transportation, *perdiem* and accommodation in Brussels (up to 8 nights depending of flight arrangements)

Duration

5-day training module

More info

eurac-network.org/en/training

About EurAc

Created in 2003, the **European Network for Central Africa (EurAc)** gathers member organisations from civil society in several European countries. These organisations work on and in the **Great Lakes region**. They support civil society organisations in **Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Rwanda** in their efforts to promote **peace, the defence of human rights and development**.

EurAc's mission is to carry out **advocacy work** towards the European Union (EU) to ensure a strong, coherent and sustainable engagement by the EU and its member states, integrated to a regional approach, in order to help the Great Lakes region build a better future.



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