

Open Call for Consulting Services

Subject:	Support Western Balkan economies in implementing policy reforms and price glide-path as defined by the Roadmap for lowering roaming charges between the EU and Western Balkans
Title:	Technical assistance to support implementation of policy reforms and roaming price glide-path as defined by the Roadmap for lowering roaming charges between the EU and Western Balkans
RCC Department:	Programme Department
Reporting to:	RCC Secretariat
Eligible:	Individual Consultant(s)/ Consulting Companies / Individual Consultants within bidding consortia
Timeframe:	January 17 th - December 30 st 2022
Application Deadline:	10 January 2022

I. PURPOSE

The overall objective of the consultancy is to support Western Balkan economies in applying a coordinated regional approach in policy reforms implementation and preparation of the first phase of reduction of roaming charges as defined by the Roadmap for lowering roaming charges between the EU and Western Balkans. Moreover, the consultancy will help to structure the discussion and consultation with all stakeholders as defined by the Roadmap.

II. BACKGROUND

The Common Regional Market 2021-2024 Action Plan (CRM)¹ has been endorsed by the WB leaders in November 2020, and is built on the achievements of the Multi-annual Action Plan on a Regional Economic Area in the Western Balkans (MAP REA)², as the first initiative of this kind. The CRM is a plan based on four freedoms approach, i.e. free movement of goods, services, capital and people, strengthened with investment, digital, industry and innovation. Activities of great importance put forward in the CRM towards integrating Western Balkans

¹<https://www.rcc.int/docs/543/common-regional-market-action-plan>

²<https://www.rcc.int/docs/383/consolidated-multi-annual-action-plan-for-a-regional-economic-area-in-the-western-balkans-six>

into the pan-European digital space are related to roaming charges, i.e. finalising the process of enabling the WB roaming free region, as well as overtime significantly reducing the roaming charges between the WB and the EU.

The Regional Roaming Agreement (RRA), signed at the second Western Balkans Digital Summit in Belgrade in 2019, is an important achievement of WB economies and an example of the benefits of regional cooperation. RRA brought significant reduction of roaming costs, between 83% and 96%, to all WB mobile end-users, while the ultimate goal of RRA to introduce Roam Like at Home (RLAH) regime in the region was achieved on 1 July 2021.

As a next step after having roaming free WB region, lowering the roaming charges between the EU and WB has been reiterated several times by WB. Moreover, all strategic regional documents in place in the area of digital transformation have placed great importance on this process through the implementation of the roadmap. As the first step towards having the Roadmap for WB-EU roaming charges reduction, in October 2020, WB economies agreed on the Elements for the Roadmap on WB-EU roaming charges reduction.

Intensive, transparent and wide consultative process on developing the Roadmap was conducted during the Y2021. As an input for analyses, comprehensive baseline assessment WB-EU Roaming Data has been prepared and discussed at multiple occasions with WB economies and mobile operators.

Roadmap for lowering roaming charges was prepared by all economies with the support from RCC and European Commission, also through a structured consultation process with mobile operators from the EU and WB. The goal of the roadmap is to lower the roaming prices with the EU and bring them close to domestic prices in 2027.

On 6 October 2021, Roadmap for lowering roaming charges between the EU and Western Balkans was finalised and it was welcomed by the EU and WB high-level representatives during the EU-Western Balkans Summit. The Roadmap has established direct correlation between the reduction of EU-WB roaming charges and efficient improvement of investment climate for digital projects in WB region, followed by accelerated alignment with EU policy framework in electronic communications area.

III. DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Objectives, scope and tasks under the assignment

The overall objective of this consultancy service is to support WB economies to further advance in the process of aligning roaming prices with that of the EU. By introducing Roaming Free Western Balkans, a key prerequisite to pursue further harmonisation with the EU policy and lowering of roaming charges between the EU and Western Balkans has been fulfilled.

The Roadmap³ for lowering roaming charges between the EU and Western Balkans consists of two complementary and interdependent streams. Roaming price reduction glide path has to be leveraged by tangible improvement of the digital business environment in WB region. The efficient implementation of the extensive set of policy reforms and measures, aimed to improve investment and operational climate for electronic communication operators across the WB region, should start from January 2022 and should produce results within 2022.

The consultancy will, among others, (i) support the Western Balkan economies with expertise and technical advice in the process of implementation of policy reforms and the glide path, (ii) help to structure the discussion and consultation with all stakeholders as defined by the Roadmap, (iii) provide technical support in the process of further alignment with EU policy framework in the respective areas. Moreover, the consultancy will support the RCC throughout the year to facilitate implementation of regional actions as part of the Regulatory Dialogue EU-WB to be launched during first quarter of 2022.

The scope of services and tasks under this assignment include the following:

1. Map and assess the state of play of policy reforms contained in the Roadmap by March 2022, in consultation with WB economies, including through a structured reporting template and provide an updated status by December 2022;
2. Map and identify the current state of play in the procedures and requirements for obtaining construction/building permits for deployment of electronic communications infrastructure (measure 4.2 of the Roadmap) and for fees for permits and rights of way (measure 4.3 of the Roadmap). The assessment should also provide examples of best practices from EU MS, as feasible (at least best practices from 2-3 EU MS);
3. Provide technical support to coordinated efforts of WB economies in further alignment with EU policy framework and implementing a set of policy reforms and measures with the objective to improve investment climate for digital projects in the region;
4. Provide technical and expert advice to WB economies and as appropriate to mobile operators in the process of preparation for implementing the first phase of the glide path of roaming price reduction;
5. Provide technical and expert support to RCC in preparation of the meetings of Advisory and Coordination Body to be established as part of the Regulatory Dialogue between the EU and WB and other meetings as needed;
6. Take active participation at the meetings facilitated by RCC, including the meetings of WB working groups on roaming, broadband and 5G, as well as at the consultation meetings with mobile operators, etc. (physically or online - subject to consultant's availability and in consultation with RCC);

³ The Roadmap will be shared upon contract signing

7. Prepare data factsheet(s) on WB-EU roaming traffic volumes and prices, retail and wholesale roaming revenues and charges, etc. for all services in Y2021 in consultation with WB economies.

This assignment targets all Western Balkan economies.

Deliverables

Deliverable	Due date
Report on the state of play of the policy reforms contained in the Roadmap	March 2022
Report on procedures and requirements for construction/building permits for deployment of electronic communications infrastructure (measure 4.2 of the Roadmap) and for fees for permits and rights of way (measure 4.3 of the Roadmap), including examples of best practices from EU MS, as feasible (at least best practices from 2-3 EU MS)	May 2022
Data factsheet(s) on WB-EU roaming traffic and prices, retail and wholesale roaming revenues and charges for all services in Y2021	July 2022
Updated state of play of the policy reforms contained in the Roadmap (i.e. the report should update the draft of March 2022)	December 2022

Timeframe

The consultant is expected to support implementation of the set of deliverables indicated in the table above throughout the year, starting on 17 January 2022 and finishing on 30 December 2022. It is expected that the consultant dedicates 50 working days spread throughout the year.

Lines of Communication

The expert will report to the Senior Expert on Economic and Digital Connectivity in the RCC Secretariat. After completion of activities as defined in the timeframe for deliverables under these Terms of Reference, a detailed report will be prepared and sent to the RCC Secretariat for review and approval.

IV COMPETENCIES

Qualifications:

Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Degree in engineering, economics, business, or other areas directly related to the subject of work.
Experience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum of 10 years of relevant experience in business, legal and/or regulatory affairs in the field of electronic communications; ▪ Minimum of 7 years of experience in the field of roaming/broadband development in EU and/or WB; ▪ Proven analytical skills and ability to conceptualise and write concisely and clearly; ▪ Experience in working with EU governments and/or EU institutions and/or governments in the WB region is an advantage; ▪ In-depth knowledge of the economies covered by the assignment is an advantage; ▪ Demonstrable experience in writing and reporting on complex multi-sector or multi-country strategic development and implementation; ▪ Proven communication and presentation skills and ability to work in an environment requiring liaison and collaboration with multiple actors including government representatives, businesses, civil society institutions, donors and other stakeholders.
Language requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fluency in written and spoken English, as the official language of the RCC.
Other:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N.A.

Core Values

- Demonstrates integrity and fairness by modelling RCC values and ethical standards;
- He/she is independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities defined by the Terms of Reference;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

Core Competencies

- Demonstrates professional competence to meet responsibilities and post requirements and is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results;
- Result-oriented; plans and produces quality results to meet the set goals, generates innovative and practical solutions to challenging situations;
- Communication: Excellent communication skills, including the ability to convey complex concepts and recommendations clearly;

- Team work: Ability to interact, establish and maintain effective working relations in a culturally diverse team;
- Ability to establish and maintain productive partnerships with regional and national partners and stakeholders.

V QUALITY CONTROL

The expert should ensure an internal quality control during the implementing and reporting phase of the assignment. The quality control should ensure that the deliverables comply with the above requirements and meet adequate quality standards. The quality control should ensure consistency and coherence between findings, conclusions and recommendations provided. It should also ensure that deliverables are duly substantiated and that conclusions are supported by relevant judgment criteria.

IV. APPLICATION RULES

The application needs to contain the following:

- Technical Offer;
- Financial Offer.

Technical Offer

For companies and consortia of individual consultants:

- Company profile including a brief description (up to 2 pages) of the company. In case of a bidding consortium, the team leader should submit the profile of the consortium;
- Copy of Company's Registration Certificate (in case of consulting companies);
- In case of bidding consortia of individual consultants participating in this Call, they must indicate the members and show how the work is divided between them. Specifically, all members must name the team leader and authorise this member to represent the consortium and receive payments on behalf of the other members. A corresponding written authorisation, power of attorney must be attached to the bid;
- Financial records - company's balance sheet and profit-and-loss statement for the past 2 years (only in case of a bidding of consulting companies);
- CV of the consultants, outlining relevant knowledge and experience as described in the Terms of References, Section IV Competencies along with contact details of referees;

- List of reports, papers, and other documents the expert has drafted
- Brief concept note describing the main issues, information, data sources, and tools to be employed by the expert, as well as the approach to the work to be undertaken;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past 5 years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter
- Application Submission Form (Annex I);
- Signed Statement of Availability (Annex II).

For individual consultants:

- Letter of Interest;
- CV of the consultant outlining relevant knowledge and experience as described in the Terms of References, Section IV Competencies along with contact details of referees;
- Brief concept note describing the main issues, information, data sources, and tools to be employed by the expert, as well as the approach to the work to be undertaken;
- List of reports, papers, and other documents the expert has drafted
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past 5 years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter
- Application Submission Form (Annex I).

Financial offer

Use a free format providing the lump sum for the services to be provided.

Note

Please make sure that the application is submitted in two separate folders one containing Technical Offer and the other Financial Offer.

The documents should be submitted in a form of copies of the originals.

Applications including technical and financial offer need to be submitted via e-mail to ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int by 10 January 2022.

V. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

The assignments will be awarded to the highest qualified applicant based on the skills, expertise, and the quality of the concept note(s) and the cost-effectiveness of the financial offer. Applications will be evaluated on the basis of the profile and competencies of the candidate and the responsiveness to the Terms of Reference for Consulting Services.

The best value for money is established by weighing technical quality against price on an 80/20 basis.

The applications are evaluated following these criteria:

EVALUATION GRID	Maximum Score
A. Technical Offer (A.1+A.2+A.3)	100
A.1. Work experience, references list: Relevant work experience; evidence of other contracts of the nature comparable to that of the Call; experience with clients comparable to the Contracting Authority.	35
A.2. Quality and professional capacity of the consultants: CVs satisfy the criteria set forth in the ToR, education and experience demonstrates professional capacity and experience required.	35
A.3 Quality of the concept note: Quality of main issues, information, data sources, and tools to be employed by the expert as well as the approach to the work to be undertaken	30
B. Financial Proposal/ lowest price has maximum score	100

<p style="text-align: center;">Score for offer X = A + B A = [Total quality score (out of 100) of offer X / 100] * 80 B = [Lowest price / price of offer X] * 20</p>

In addition to the results of the technical and financial evaluation, a competency-based interview may be held with the selected bidder.

Information on selection of the most favourable bidder

The RCC Secretariat shall inform candidates and bidders of decisions reached concerning the award of the contract as soon as possible, including the grounds for any decision not to award a contract for which there has been competitive tendering or to recommence the procedure. Standard letter of thanks for participation to unsuccessful bidders shall be sent within 15 days after the contract is signed with the awarded bidder. The candidates and bidders wishing to receive a feedback may send a request within 15 days after receipt of the standard letter of thanks.

The request may be sent to the e-mail address ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int or to the address of the RCC Secretariat:

Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat
Attention to: Administration Department
Building of the Friendship between Greece and Bosnia and Herzegovina
Trg Bosne i Hercegovine 1/V
71000 Sarajevo
Bosnia and Herzegovina

Appeals procedure

Bidders believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may petition the RCC Secretariat directly. The RCC Secretariat must reply within 15 days of receipt of the complaint.

The appeal request may be sent to the e-mail address ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int or to the address of the RCC Secretariat:

Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat
Attention to: Administration Department
Building of the Friendship between Greece and Bosnia and Herzegovina
Trg Bosne i Hercegovine 1/V
71000 Sarajevo
Bosnia and Herzegovina

ANNEX I:**APPLICATION SUBMISSION FORM****REF: 119-021 Open Call for Consultancy Services**

Subject:

One signed copy of this Application Submission Form must be supplied.

1 SUBMITTED by:

	Name(s) and address(es) of the bidder submitting this tender
Full Name of the Entity	

2 CONTACT INFORMATION (for this Call)

Name	
Surname	
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
e-mail	

3 **DECLARATION**

[Name of the Entity/ Individual Consultant] _____ hereby declares that we have examined and accepted without reserve or restriction the entire contents of the Open Call for Consultancy .

And we are not in one of the following situations:

- (a) 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 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) Have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- (c) Have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Contracting Authority can justify;

- (d) 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 Contracting Authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- (e) 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.
- (f) Are civil servants or other agents of the public administration of the RCC Participants, regardless of the administrative situation, excluding us from being recruited as experts in contracts financed by the RCC Secretariat.

We offer to provide the services requested in the open call for consultancy on the basis of supplied documentation subject of this call, which comprise our technical offer and our financial offer.

Name and Surname	
Signature	
Date	

ANNEX III: STATEMENT OF AVAILABILITY

REF: 119-021

By representing the Entity_____ we agree to participate in the above-mentioned tender procedure. We further declare that we are able and willing to work for the period(s) foreseen for the position for which our CVs have been included in the event that this tender is successful, namely:

Full Name	Available from (Date)	Available until (Date)	Acceptance by signature	Number of man-days associated to each task from the ToR