

Call for consulting services

Subject: Support Regional Cooperation Council in monitoring the implementation of the Western Balkans Regional Roaming Agreement and EU/WB Roaming Declaration

Title: Monitoring the implementation of the Western Balkans Regional Roaming Agreement and EU-WB Roaming Declaration

Eligible: Individual Consultant(s)/Consulting Companies/Individual Consultants within bidding consortia

Reference number: 019-024

TERMS OF REFERENCE**I. PURPOSE**

The overall objective of the consultancy is to monitor the implementation of the Western Balkans Regional Roaming Agreement (RRA), i.e. prepare Western Balkans Roaming Report based on the data from 2022 and if feasible from 2023. This consultancy also aims to prepare the methodology for monitoring the impact of implementation of the European Union (EU)/Western Balkans (WB) Roaming Declaration (Declaration)¹.

II. BACKGROUND

The Common Regional Market (CRM) Action Plan 2021-2024² was endorsed by the WB leaders in November 2020. Activities of great importance put forward in the CRM towards integrating Western Balkans 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.

RRA, signed in 2019, is an important achievement of WB economies and an example of the benefits of regional cooperation. The ultimate goal of RRA to introduce Roam Like at Home (RLAH) regime in the region was successfully reached on 1 July 2021.

¹ <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-12/eu-wb-roaming-declaration.pdf>

² <https://www.rcc.int/docs/543/common-regional-market-action-plan>

After having roaming free WB region, lowering the roaming charges between the EU and WB has been reiterated several times by WB as the next step. In that regard, intensive, transparent and wide consultative process with all the stakeholders involved was held in 2021 and 2022. As the process of lowering roaming charges between the EU and WB is voluntary and up to the telecommunications operators to mutually agree, the Declaration was signed by 38 EU and WB operators³ on 6 December 2022 in Tirana, during the EU-Western Balkans Summit. In line with the Declaration, the signatories agreed on the price caps for retail data roaming charges for the period 2023-2028⁴. The reductions started on 1 October 2023.

III. DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Objectives, scope and tasks under the assignment

The overall objective of this consultancy is to follow the implementation of both RRA and the Declaration. In doing so, the consultant should support the following:

1. Preparation of the WB Roaming Report

- Based on the questionnaire to be developed and shared with all WB National Regulatory Authorities responsible for telecommunications (Regulators), prepare the assessment of international roaming services within the Western Balkan region as well as between the region and the EU based on the data from 2022 and if feasible from 2023⁵; the assessment should include but not be limited to the number of roaming users and service consumption, retail and wholesale roaming revenues, wholesale roaming costs and mobile termination rates, etc. The assessment should be done as a follow-up of similar reports RCC prepared, based on the roaming data from 2019 and 2020⁶, and 2021⁷, while it should also take into account and not duplicate the analysis already covered in the BEREC Report on Western Balkan Roaming, to be published in March 2024;
- Prepare data fact-sheet(s) on retail data roaming charges between WB and EU, i.e. check the retail prices of new plans/options/packages for data roaming offered by each signatory of the Declaration to their customers while in roaming in WB and EU, in line with the Declaration and the glide path agreed. This exercise should be based on the collection and research of data publicly available on the websites of Declaration signatories;

2. Prepare the methodology for monitoring and measuring the impact of implementation of the Declaration, taking into account the confidentiality of data and the limited number of telecommunications operators involved in the reductions;

³ The list of all telecommunications operators involved will be shared with the consultant after signing the contract.

⁴ https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/decrease-data-roaming-fees-between-western-balkans-and-eu-2023-05-03_en

⁵ The exact period to be covered in this report will be discussed and agreed with the consultant.

⁶ <https://www.rcc.int/pubs/127/western-balkans-european-union-roaming-data-report>

⁷ <https://www.rcc.int/pubs/153/western-balkans-roaming-report-2022>

3. Participate in meetings with WB economies and/or telecommunications operators, physical or online to be agreed with RCC in advance.

Deliverables

Deliverable	Due date
Methodology for monitoring of the implementation and measuring the impact of the Declaration	7 May 2024
Western Balkans Roaming Report	10 July 2024
Data fact-sheet(s) on retail data roaming charges between WB and EU	To be checked until 20 December 2024

Timeframe

The consultant(s) is expected to support implementation of the set of deliverables indicated in the table above, starting in April and finishing on 20 December 2024.

Lines of Communication

The consultant(s) will report to the RCC Secretariat.

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 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 consultant 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.

VI. 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 an expert(s), outlining relevant knowledge and experience as described in the Terms of References, along with contact details of referees;
- An outline work programme of a maximum of 5 pages describing the main issues, sources of information to be used, timeline and methodology. The work programme should include the initial outline of the content of the assignment;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Signed Statements of Availability (Annex I).

For individual consultants:

- Letter of interest;
- CV(s) including relevant knowledge and experience, as well as reference list including contact details (e-mail addresses) of referees;
- An outline work programme of a maximum of 5 pages describing the main issues, sources of information to be used, timeline and methodology. The work programme should include the initial outline of the content of the assignment;
- Application Submission Form, Annex I.

Financial Offer (Free format)

The financial offer should reflect the following:

- All figures should be expressed in EUR;
- VAT amount, if applicable, should be presented.

When preparing the financial offer, the applicant should take into account the following:

- Use a free format for the Budget providing the Global Price for the work to be provided.

NOTE:

- When preparing the financial offer, the applicant should take into account that the fee rates should be broadly consistent with those applicable in the region.

Submission of applications:

Applications need to be submitted by 1 April 2024.

VII. EVALUATION RULES:

- The consultancy will be awarded to the highest qualified bidder based on the relevance of skills and expertise to this assignment;
- 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: <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 in EU and/or WB;▪ Experience in working with EU governments and/or EU institutions and/or governments in the WB region is an advantage;	<div>10</div> <div>20</div> <div>5</div>
A.2. Quality and professional capacity of the consultant(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Degree in engineering, economics, business, or other areas directly related to the subject of work.▪ 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	<div>25</div> <div>10</div>

collaboration with multiple actors including government representatives, businesses, civil society institutions, donors and other stakeholders.	
A.3 Quality of the work plan: An outline of work plan describing the main issues, information, data sources, research and analytical tools to be employed by the author, as well as the timeline.	30
B. Financial Offer/ lowest price has maximum score	100

Score for offer X =

A: [Total quality score (out of 100) of offer X / 100] * 80

B: [Lowest price / price of offer X] * 20

In addition to the results of the technical and financial evaluation, a competency-based interview will 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 STATEMENT OF AVAILABILITY

REF: 019-024

Support Regional Cooperation Council in monitoring the implementation of the Western Balkans Regional Roaming Agreement and EU/WB Roaming Declaration

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:

[illegible]