

Employment and Social Affairs Platform 2 – ESAP 2

Open Call for Consulting Services

Title:	Expert on evaluation of the Active Labour Market Measures (ALMM) in Montenegro
Contracting Authority:	Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat
Reporting to:	RCC Secretariat
Duration:	15 March 2021 – 30 April 2021
Eligibility:	¹ Independent individual consultants
Application deadline:	8 March 2021
Reference Number:	016-021

Terms of Reference:

I Background and Context

The Employment and Social Affairs Platform 2 is a regional project, jointly implemented by the Regional Cooperation Council and the International Labour Organisation over a three-year period, 2019-2022. The objective of ESAP 2 is to assist the 6 Western Balkan economies (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) with labour market and social policy reforms in order to improve employment opportunities and working conditions of citizens in the region.

¹ Note: Civil servants or other agents of the public administration of the RCC Participants, regardless of the administrative situation, are excluded of being recruited as consultants in contracts financed by the RCC Secretariat.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

The effectiveness of active labour market measures (ALMM) is in the focus of the Ministry of Economic Development and Employment Agency of Montenegro and it has been addressed by a number of strategic and legal documents, such as: National Strategy for Employment and Human Resources Development 2016-2020, Montenegro Economic Reform Programme 2020-2022, European Commission's Montenegro 2020 Report (Chapter 19), Law on Mediation in Job Placement and Rights Arising from Unemployment.

The frequent labour market changes, increase in skills demand, structural mismatch of the workforce offer and demand, demographic trends and fast development of a new technological environment present challenges in Montenegro. Taking into consideration the impact COVID-19 pandemic has had on the labour market, it is important for the evaluation of ALMM to reflect on how COVID-19 will affect ALMM planning and how ALMM can be used to mitigate the consequences of the pandemic.

Objective

ESAP 2 is seeking a Consultant to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the active labour market measures (ALMM) at national and local levels in Montenegro, through analysis of the labour market measures deployed in period 2017-2020 and in close consultations with the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) and the Employment Agency of Montenegro (EAM), and ESAP 2 team.

The broader purpose of this assignment is to provide support to MED and EAM to improve policy and institutional capacity for better planning of ALMM. More broadly, this assignment will support national processes in Montenegro related to preparation, monitoring and follow-up of the integrated Employment and Social Reform Programmes (ESRPs) and the employment and social components of the Economic Reform Programmes (ERPs), as well as national employment, labour market and social affairs strategies, action plans and measures. This assignment will directly help EAM and MED to strengthen their administrative capacity in different stages and processes related to the employment and social measures of the ERP/ESRP.

II DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Scope of the Assignment/Main activities

Under the supervision of the ESAP 2 project team and with guidance from MED, the Consultant is expected to conduct the following tasks:

1. Review and analyse the existing active labour market measures in Montenegro. Analyse effectiveness and cost effectiveness of the existing active labour market measures in accordance **with relevant EU and the ILO methodologies**, particularly under the pandemic. The evaluation will cover active labour market measures deployed in the **period from 2017 to 2020** in Montenegro, relying on the available statistical and other data, relevant research methods and reports.
2. Assess cost effectiveness of active labour market measures through prism of the effect which these measures have on employment of unemployed persons.
3. Assess effectiveness of active labour market measures and increase of competitiveness of employed/unemployed in the labour market in Montenegro. The evaluation must at a minimum answer the following questions about effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and coherence of the ALMM:
 - How effective and efficient are ALMM in achieving their objectives and objectives of relevant strategy and action plans?
 - Which types of measures were the most effective and most sustainable, for which groups and in which contexts?
 - What factors had the biggest impact in the effectiveness of ALMM?
 - To what extent ALMM contributed to changes in national education systems, lifelong learning providers?
 - Are there significant cost differences between same ALMM? What are these differences related to?
 - To what extent were the organisational arrangements, including management and control systems at all levels, conducive to the effectiveness of ALMM? Was there an administrative burden?
 - How timely and efficient were the procedures for reporting and monitoring?
 - How visible were ALMM?
 - How relevant were ALMM?
 - To what extent were the objectives ALMM relevant to the needs of unemployed persons and labour market?

- To what extent were ALMM flexible and able to adapt to changes in the implementation, notably in the situation of COVID-19?
 - Were mostly unemployed, in different socioeconomic contexts (e.g. more developed, less developed, urban and rural areas, etc.), targeted for ALMM and to what extent were vulnerable groups reached by ALMM?
 - How coherent and complementary are ALMM among themselves, and with other actions in the area of employment?
 - To what extent were they complementary and coherent with other programmes funded by the EU and other donors?
4. Deliver presentation(s) on key findings and recommendations for creation of future active labour market measures and modification of monitoring of implementation of measures with particular focus on effectiveness, including under pandemic, to the Ministry of Economic Development, Employment Agency of Montenegro and ESAP team.

Methodology

The Consultant is expected to analyse the active labour market measures used in Montenegro in the period from 2017 to 2020, review data and reports, and apply own data analysis and evaluation methods, in line with the relevant EU and ILO standards on ALMM and ALMM evaluation. The consultant is expected to come up with the best technical and evaluation methodology in line with the relevant EU and ILO standards to ensure evaluation methodology is in line with the EU practices and is accepted by Montenegro partners: Ministry of Economic Development (MED) and Employment Agency of Montenegro (EAM).

Ministry of Economic Development (MED) and Employment Agency of Montenegro (EAM) will deliver to the Consultant all relevant written materials, reports and data. The ALMM documents that will be provided by MED will be in Montenegrin language, and it is the duty of the consultant to provide translation, if needed.

The final evaluation design and questions will be agreed as part of the draft methodology submitted to and approved by the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) and Employment Agency of Montenegro (EAM).

The following guiding principles should be taken into consideration while executing the tasks:

1. Written material of highest technical quality related to evaluation of active labour market measures, all in context of EU and ILO standards and practices.
2. Desk review and analysis of relevant materials on active labour market measures, analysis and statistics as required, any other analytical and research method as applicable.
3. Shorter analytical briefs and power point presentation prepared.
4. High-quality technical presentations to the MED and Employment Agency of Montenegro (EAM) at workshops (online or live, subject to pandemic situation).

Lines of Communication

The Consultant will submit all deliverables to the ESAP 2 Project Team Leader, RCC, Ministry of Economic Development and Employment Agency of Montenegro for review and approval. The Consultant will work closely with the ESAP 2 and representatives of MED and EAM.

Timeframe and tasks

The service contract will be concluded for a period from 15 March 2021 to 30 April 2021, with the following key activities and deliverables:

1. Develop the draft evaluation methodology design based on the EU and ILO standards and practices to be reviewed and approved by MED and EAM, prior to proceeding with further work.
2. Complete the evaluation of ALMM per approved methodology, with policy recommendations on active labour market measures, final evaluation and recommendations, addressing all EAM, MED and ESAP comments.
3. Deliver power point presentations to MED and EAM (in person or online, depending on the pandemic).
4. Prepare analytical briefs from ALMM evaluation report.

Deliverables:

1. Comprehensive evaluation methodology with detailed questionnaire, data sample fully addressing the requirements of MED and EAM (covering both national and local levels) and fully aligned with relevant EU and ILO standards and practices on evaluation of ALMM, to be agreed with the MED and RCC.
2. Completed evaluation of ALMM per approved methodology, with policy recommendations on active labour market measures, final evaluation document and policy recommendation document, addressing all EAM, MED and ESAP comments.
3. Power point presentation and analytical briefs.
4. Notes on follow-up assistance and overall recommendations that can be used for Western Balkan peer learning among Public Employment Services (PES) in the region.

All deliverables must be submitted in English and Montenegrin language.

III Profile and Competencies of the Consultant

The Consultant should possess excellent technical skills and experience highly relevant to the evaluation of active labour market measures, especially benchmarking to the EU and ILO standards. In addition, the Consultant should have overall excellent analytical skills, be conscientious, highly responsive to deadlines and working under time pressure, have excellent work ethic and ability to analyse and contextualise empirical evidence and data and draft policy recommendations, excellent communication and flexibility.

Criteria related to the expert delivering the service:

Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Master's degree (or equivalent) in a relevant thematic area (Labour Market) or in a general field (Economics, Management, Social Sciences)
Experience:	<p>Qualifications and Skills Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least 15 years of relevant work experience in ALMM, EU and ILO standards and evaluation of ALMM and policy briefs in ALMM area;• Prior experience in evaluation of ALMM, especially in the EU context and using EU and ILO methodologies;• Ability to work with statistical data and indicators from official sources at national and local levels related to ALMM, carry out independent research, develop policy recommendations;• Excellent analytical skills;• Excellent command of computerised office tools.
Language requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fluency in English, as the official language of the RCC• Fluency in Montenegrin desirable.

Core Values

- Demonstrates integrity and fairness by modelling RCC values and ethical standards;
- 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.

IV QUALITY CONTROL

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

The views expressed in the reports will be those of the contractor and will not necessarily reflect those of the Regional Cooperation Council. Therefore, a standard disclaimer reflecting this will be included in the report. In this regard, the consultant may or may not accept comments and/or proposals for changes received during the above consultation process. However, when comments/proposals for changes are not agreed by the consultant, he/she should clearly explain the reasons for his/her final decision in a comments table.

Quality Control by the Regional Cooperation Council

The Consultant outputs shall undergo external reviews by relevant stakeholders, including the representatives of the ESAP project team, and the Regional Cooperation Council.

Application Rules

- Qualified candidates are invited to send an application via e-mail to ProcurementforRCC@rcc.int no later than 8 March 2021 by 12.00 Central European Time;

- The assignment will be awarded to the highest qualified applicant based on the skills, expertise, and the quality of the concept note and the cost-effectiveness of the financial offer;
- The best value for money is established by weighing technical quality against price on a 80/20 basis;
- Only shortlisted candidates might be contacted for the competency-based interview.

The application needs to contain the following:

- Technical Offer;
- Financial Offer;

The Technical Offer must include the following documents:

- CV, outlining relevant knowledge and experience as described in the Terms of References, along with contact details of referees;
- Concept note describing the main issues, information, research and analytical tools to be employed by the bidder as well as detailed proposal of the work to be undertaken and proposed timeline;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past 3 years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Application Submission Form (Annex I).

The Financial Offer

The financial offer should reflect the following:

- All figures should be expressed in EUR;

Price ceiling for this assignment is EUR 10,000

Evaluation rules:

- The applications are evaluated following these criteria:

EVALUATION GRID	Maximum score
A. Technical Offer (A.1+A.2+A.3)	100
A.1. Track record, references and general experience of the applicant: Relevant work experience; experience with tasks comparable to the TOR and clients comparable to the Contracting Authority.	30

A.2. Quality and professional capacity of the applicant: CV satisfies the criteria set forth in the Terms of Reference and demonstrates professional capacity and experience required.	30
A.3 Quality of concept note: Brief concept note describing the main issues, information, data sources, research and analytical tools to be employed by the author as well as detailed proposal of the work to be undertaken and proposed timeline.	40
B. Financial Proposal/ 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, a competency-based interview may be held with the shortlisted candidates.

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:

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ANNEX I:**APPLICATION SUBMISSION FORM****REF: 016-021****Title:** Expert on evaluation of the Active Labour Market Measures (ALMM) in Montenegro**One signed copy** of this Call for Consultancy Submission Form must be supplied.

1 SUBMITTED by:

Name	
Surname	
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
e-mail	

3 **DECLARATION**

[Name] _____ hereby declares that we have examined and accepted without reserve or restriction the entire contents of the 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 call for experts on the basis of supplied documentation subject of this call, which comprise our technical offer and our financial offer.

Name and Surname of the Consultant	
Signature	
Date	