

Open Call for Consultancy Services

Reference Number 055-020

Title:	Support to RCC Secretariat on data collection and processing for the preparation of SEE 2030
RCC Department:	Programme Department
Eligible:	Respective consulting companies /individual consultants or individual consultants within bidding consortia
Reporting to:	RCC Secretariat
Duration:	1 September 2020 until 1 July 2021
Deadline for application:	3 August 2020
Reference Number:	055-020

Terms of Reference

I. BACKGROUND

The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) was established in 2008 as a regionally owned and led framework. It works under the political guidance of the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECPP) to promote regional cooperation and European and Euro-Atlantic integration of South East Europe (SEE). The areas of cooperation in the framework of the RCC are Economic and Social Development with particular focus on Economic Competitiveness, Human Capital Development, Digital Integration, and Sustainable Growth and Climate Change resilience; Political Cooperation, Good Governance and Security as well as gender mainstreaming.

At the Trieste Summit of the Berlin process (12th July 2017), Western Balkan leaders endorsed the *Multi-Annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area* (hereinafter: MAP REA), prepared and coordinated by RCC. The MAP REA sets out a mid-term agenda on regional economic integration within the trade, investment, mobility and digital agendas, and foresees a strong implementation, coordination and monitoring role for RCC. Economic policy analysis is pivotal to support the formulation of the required policy interventions both

at the national and regional level. MAP REA has been recognized as a key element for improving living standards from both economic and social perspective, directly feeding into the SEE 2020 Strategy.

As stipulated in the SEECF Declaration from 9 July 2019, given that "the SEE 2020 Strategy is coming to an end, SEECF participants expect from the RCC to prepare a vision of post-2020 Strategy in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)". In this respect, RCC will embark upon the development of a strategic framework of post-2020 Strategy, along with key regional and international partners, European Commission, SEE administrations and a wide array of organisations/initiatives from civil society, academic institutions, media, and private sector.

In this context, the RCC Secretariat submitted the concept of SEE 2030 Strategy to the approval of RCC Board. According to the concept approved the RCC Board, the preliminary objective of SEE 2030 would be to emphasise reaching regionally sustainable economic growth in order to reduce poverty and inequalities, empowering women and girls, improving social inclusion, slowing down depopulation of the region through enhancing quality of life for its citizens, and making smooth transition to a carbon-neutral economy without disrupting competitiveness and private sector development through genuinely regionally owned political process.

The concept does not suggest any regional limitation within SEE economies for their participation or contribution to the implementation of the SEE 2030 Strategy. Therefore, the preparation of SEE 2030 would take into account all the relevant data and other qualitative indicators available in public domain or the access of RCC in the context of SDG for SEE Region.

Purpose

The regional contractor will provide technical assistance to RCC Secretariat in identifying the scope of data need to be collected according to the (sub) indicators of each Sustainable Development Goal by reviewing the practices in the EU and other international, regional and national best practices, and mapping, collecting and processing the relevant data in consultation with the RCC Secretariat.

II. DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Objectives and Scope of the Assignment

The overall objective of the consultancy is to assist the economies of South East Europe in preparing SEE 2030 Strategy under the guidance of the Sustainable Development Goals based on a thorough socio-economic and political analysis based on quantifiable data to be collected from publicly available sources and processed. The expert is expected to come up with the best approaches for undertaking this task.

The scope of services under this assignment includes the following key activities:

Activity 1: Scoping data collection

- The contractor will identify the scope of quantifiable data, preferably available in historical datasets and through publicly accessible (open) sources, per each sub-indicator of Sustainable Development Goals.
- In the context of this activity, the contractor is expected to propose comparability of longlist of data based on the set of metadata in accordance with each DSG.
- In this regard, the contractor may propose a list of indices and other sets of statistical methodologies which would be appropriate in processing of data in the later stages of this assignment. Thus, the scoping of data collection may then be fine-tuned according to such pre-planning document displaying the limits of data processing (in particular the ones related to data quality, comparability, objectivity, and timespan).

Activity 2: Data mapping

- In determining the scope of data, the contractor will check the scope of data either raw or processed in the EU, EUROSTAT, UN, and other international organisations such as development banks, donors etc., as well as other regional organisations in the South East Europe and other regions, and national statistical offices.
- Based on this review, a data mapping is to be prepared to show which data would be collectable for the SEE and which data are not available for the SEE but could be critically important in the implementation of SEE 2030. Thus, the gaps in data availability will also be mentioned in this data mapping in order to recommend how such missing data could be substituted by alternative methods (such as checking data availability in projects offering in short-time span or initiating surveys for the collection of qualitative data).

Activity 3: Collecting and classifying data

- Once the scope of data collection and the subsequently prepared data mapping is agreed, the contractor will start collecting data through using electronic communication means and make them ready for further classification as well as processing.
- In case of data not available through public access, the contractor may request the RCC Secretariat to communicate the request of receiving data through official channels.
- The RCC Secretariat may also consider purchase the paid inscriptions and access to the databases in the cases the specific data are not available through other means and based on its assessment regarding the importance of that data in the context of SEE 2030 preparations.

Activity 4: Data processing

- Collected and classified data are to be processed by the contractor in order to serve the inputs to RCC Secretariat in contextualizing the chapters of SEE 2030 according to SDGs.
- Therefore, the geographic margins of data to be processed will be all SEECIP participant economies.
- In the processing, simple to complex comparative statistical methodologies could be applied to compare between the WB 6 and other SEE economies, and between SEE/WB 6 and EU, and other possible comparators.
- If the available data allows, the regression and correlation analyses might be also be carried out by the contractor.

- The processed data will be made ready to be presented in visual displays to be prepared by the contractor.
- Some or all data to be processed will also be made ready to be present in visuals to the general public through the RCC's website.

Activity 5: Participation in further preparatory activities of RCC Secretariat

- The RCC Secretariat plans to organize three consultation groups comprising the relevant stakeholders in each SEE economy, international organisations, and IFIs and donors, respectively. Furthermore, the RCC Secretariat considers launching economy level consultation in each SEE economy through consultation workshops to be organized via online meetings or in the format of webinars. Another layer of the consultation cycle is the public consultation. Therefore, the summary chapters of draft SEE 2030 or its earlier synopses would be available in the RCC Website for public consultation.
- The contractor will avail itself during each consultation cycle, not necessarily physically, in order to provide any type of assistance to explain and present data processed, and to collect new data if they are to be available as the outcome of the above mentioned consultation process.

Activity 6: Preparation of technical specifications (client side) to create an electronic ITC System for data portal on regional implementation of SEE 2030 and SDGs

- The RCC Secretariat aims to create an electronic data portal which would automatically collect (upload) all the publicly available data for SEE economies according to SDGs or its sub-indicators, process electronically through predefined calculations/indices etc., and share with the relevant public through predetermined display formats without manual intervention.
- In this regard, the contractor will prepare technical specifications of the client side offering the most cost efficient and best available technologies without creating any additional burden to the statistical offices of SEE Economies.
- The contractor will also prepare a budgetary estimation based on the technical specifications to be prepared.

Lines of Communication

- The contractor will report directly to the RCC Senior Economic Policy Analyst, in all stages of this assignment.

Timeframe

The assignment is expected to start on 01/09/2020 and end on 01/07/2021.
Up to 100 expert days are envisaged for this assignment.

Deliverables

The following deliverables will be produced and transferred to the RCC during the course of the assignment:

Methodology and work plan: The contractor will define the methodology to be applied during the course of the contract implementation and offer a tentative work plan which identify risks, in particular the ones related to data quality and availability. It is expected that the work plan coincides with the time-plan of the deliverables mentioned below.

Data scoping: A concise report is expected to identify the scope of data to support the contextualisation of the SEE 2030 Strategy while also for supporting the RCC Secretariat’s consultation process with SEE economies, regional and international organisations. Therefore, the activity related to data scoping is expected to start immediately after the commencement date.

Data Map: Data mapping will be as a result of data scoping while it would be a living document which would be changed according to data availability, quality and wherever possible to incorporate substitute data in the case of the data unavailability or of low quality. Therefore, the due date of data map is only for the document that draws margin of data mapping according to data scoping while the activities in this regard will be continuous.

Monthly activity reports: The contractor is expected to carry out tasks in Activities 3,4, and 5 according to the planning made in the initial stages and the subject activities will be continuous until the end of the implementation period. Therefore, monthly activity reports are to summarise only the activities undertaken during the given period and to flag out the outputs reached by name as well as identify any issued encountered.

Draft Technical Specifications: The draft technical specifications are to be delivered by the end of this contract in the content as described in Activity 6.

Compiled data sets: All the data compiled, processed, and reported through displays will be delivered to RCC in the format which are ready to be updated either manually or through automated tools.

Final Report: The final report of this contract is to be delivered by the end of the implementation period to summarise all the activities, outputs delivered, and any issues encountered during the implementation period.

Deliverables	Due date (tentative)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Methodology and work plan; 	15/09/2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data scoping 	01/10/2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Margins of Data Map 	15/10/2020

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monthly activity reports for data collection and processing data for analysis, reporting, and display according to data scoping and map (max 2 pages) 	By the end of each month between October 2020 and June 2021 (a total of nine monthly reports)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft Technical Specifications to create a data portal of SEE 2030 and SGDs 	20 June 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compiled sets of data processed and ready to update either manually or through automated tools 	20 June 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Final report, incorporating all relevant comments provided by RCC Secretariat; 	20 June 2021

III. Profile and Competencies of KEY EXPERT/TEAM LEADER

Qualifications:

Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Higher university degree in IT, Statistics, Mathematics or any other relevant areas of science
Experience and skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum of 7 years of relevant professional experience ▪ Proven experiences in the areas relevant to the content of the assignment. ▪ At least three earlier projects/consultancy services undertaken in the area of electronic data collection, exchange, or processing and displaying the processed data on socio-economic and/political matters ▪ Experience in SEE Region, EU, and/or UN is preferable ▪ Strong writing skills in English; ▪ Excellent organisational skills.
Language requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fluency in English, as the official language of the RCC; and ▪ Knowledge of other RCC language is considered a plus.

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 assignment 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;
- Teamwork: 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.

The contractor is free to establish a backstopping team supporting the key expert. The contractor must submit only the CV of Key Expert as part of this tender. Any other team member who would take place in the performance of this contract to support Key Expert will not have contractual relation with the RCC though remain under the responsibility of the Contractor.

IV. QUALITY CONTROL

The contractor should ensure internal quality control during the implementing and reporting phase of the assignment. The quality control should ensure that the draft report complies with the above requirements and meet adequate quality standards before sending them for comments. The quality control should ensure consistency and coherence between findings, conclusions and recommendations. It should also ensure that findings are duly substantiated and conclusions supported by relevant judgment criteria.

The views expressed in the report 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 expert 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 expert, he/she should clearly explain the reasons for his/her final decision in a comments table.

Quality Control by the Regional Cooperation Council

Each output received from the Contractor shall undergo an external review. The first draft shall be reviewed in parallel by all relevant stakeholders and the Regional Cooperation Council.

The final (second) draft of each output shall be reviewed by the Regional Cooperation Council taking account of the comments made by the different stakeholders and how the contractor has handled these comments. The approved final report will be subject to a quality assessment by the Political and Programme Departments of the Regional Cooperation Council.

IV. APPLICATION RULES

The application needs to contain the following:

- Technical Offer;
- Financial Offer.

Technical Offer

For individual consultants:

- Letter of interest;
- CV, outlining relevant knowledge and experience as described in Competencies section of the Terms of References;
- List of reports, papers, and other documents that expert has drafted;
- Methodological note/concept note for the implementation of the assignment, including timeframe;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past 7 years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Submission Form (Annex I);
- Financial offer, as per Budget Breakdown (Annex II).

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 stating the key expert and experts;
- Copy of Company's Registration Certificate (in case of consulting companies). In case of a bidding consortium a corresponding written authorisation, power of attorney is accordingly treated;
- 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 key expert/team leader outlining relevant knowledge and experience as described in Competencies section of the Terms of References. The bidder may establish a supporting team and state their role in the implementation.
- Methodological note/concept note for the implementation of the assignment, including timeframe;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past 7 years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Application Submission Form (Annex I);

Financial Offer (Free format)

The financial offer should reflect the following:

- All figures should be expressed in EUR;
- 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 the following:

- Maximum budget should not exceed EUR 20,000
- 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.
- The offer should also include the costs of travel to the Beneficiaries if required by Terms of Reference, providing it as a separate budget line.

Submission of applications:

Applications need to be submitted by 3 August by 17:00 Central European Time to the following address ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int

- 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.

VI. 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: Relevant work experience; evidence of other contracts of the size comparable with that of the tender; experience with clients comparable to the Contracting Authority.	35
A.2. Quality and professional capacity of the consultant(s): CV(s) satisfy the criteria set forth in the Terms of Reference, education and experiences demonstrate professional capacity and experience required.	35
A.3 Quality of the Concept Note: An outline of concept note 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, 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:**APPLICATION SUBMISSION FORM****REF: 055-020 Open Call for Consultancy Services****Subject:** Support to RCC Secretariat on data collection and processing for the preparation of SEE 2030**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 Entity Name	

2 CONTACT PERSON (for this Call)

Name	
Surname	
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
e-mail	

3 **DECLARATION**

[Company Name or Name of the Entity] _____ 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	