

Employment and Social Affairs Platform 2 – ESAP 2

Open Call for Consultancy Services

Terms of Reference:	Expert on Public Employment Services (PES) effectiveness in the area of cooperation with business community in Kosovo*
Contracting Authority:	Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat
Reporting to:	RCC Secretariat
Duration:	1 September 2021– 1 November 2021
Number of Posts:	1 individual consultant, expected LOE - not less than 30 days
Application Deadline:	09 August 2021
Reference Number:	066-021

I Background and Context

The “*Employment and Social Affairs Platform 2*” (ESAP 2) was launched in 2019 for a period of for 3 years. The project is funded by the European Commission and jointly implemented by RCC and ILO in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*¹, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. The objective of ESAP 2 is to assist the 6 Western Balkan economies with labour market and social policy reforms in order to improve employment opportunities and working conditions of citizens in the region.

Labour market in Kosovo* is characterized by low employment rates and relatively high unemployment and inactivity rates. The cooperation between the Kosovo* Public Employment Service (PES) and the business community should be enhanced, and this has been highlighted as an important priority for ESAP 2 partners in Kosovo*. Encouraging labour market participation

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

through stronger activation policies is integral to Kosovo* 2018-2022 Sector Strategy on Employment and Social Welfare, the Action Plan on increasing Youth Employment and the Annual Economic Reform Programme (ERP).

Moreover, young people from Kosovo* lack guidance and information about the labour market opportunities from their educational institutions. Cooperation between schools, universities, PES and the business sector should be enhanced.

Objective

ESAP 2 seeks a Consultant to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the current situation and practices of cooperation between the Kosovo* PES and the business community, and provide recommendations for its enhancement (hereinafter, the comprehensive analysis will be referred to as the “Analysis”). The Consultant will provide a detailed assessment and specific recommendations for Kosovo* PES to enhance cooperation with the business community.

II DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Scope of the Assignment/Main activities

1. Review and analyse strategic documents, research reports, assessments, evaluation and previous labour market surveys. Review previous level of cooperation between Kosovo* PES and business community. Use available data, empirical research and other relevant reports, and apply own analysis and research methods.
2. Organise consultations, conduct surveys and interviews with key stakeholders, such as Business Associations, Chamber of Commerce, private sector employers, education providers, relevant government ministries and agencies.
3. Map and analyse current practices of cooperation between Kosovo* PES and business community and identify future needs through interviews and focus groups.

The Analysis should answer at least the following questions, and include specific recommendation on enhancing cooperation between the Kosovo* PES and the business community:

- What are the key challenges and needs for Kosovo* PES to enhance modes of cooperation with the business community?
- Which current practices of cooperation between Kosovo* PES and the business community are the most effective and sustainable?

- Which groups of beneficiaries are the most affected in terms of employment opportunities and outcomes in the current mode of cooperation?
4. Deliver presentation to Kosovo* PES, business community and the RCC ESAP 2 project on key findings and recommendations for enhancing cooperation between the Kosovo* PES and the business sector.

Methodology

The Consultant is expected to analyse the existing mode of cooperation in Kosovo*, review data and reports, and apply own analysis and original methods of research, in line with the relevant EU and ILO standards and for this methodology to be accepted by the Kosovo* partner. The Consultant is expected to come up with the best technical and research approach to ensure the high quality of the Analysis. The PES will deliver relevant written materials to the Consultant. The following guiding principles should be taken into consideration:

1. Written material of the highest technical quality related to the analysis of the current situation and mode of cooperation between the Kosovo* PES and business community and recommendations for enhancement, in the context of relevant EU and ILO standards of research and best practices.
2. Review and analysis of strategic documents, research reports, data, evaluations, labour market surveys; carry out own research, including qualitative assessments and any other analytical and research method, as applicable.
3. High-quality technical presentation to the Kosovo* PES, business community and RCC in a workshop (online or live event, subject to the pandemic situation).

Lines of Communication

The Consultant will submit all deliverables to the Kosovo* PES and ESAP 2 for review and approval. The Consultant will work closely with the ESAP 2 project team and representatives of the Kosovo* PES.

Timeframe and tasks

The engagement is expected to take place in following timeframe: 1 September 2021– 1 November 2021.

Deliverables	Due date (from mobilisation)
Methodology, technical approach and technical work plan with detailed timelines approved by the PES Kosovo* and RCC ESAP 2 project	1 weeks
Draft analysis of the current practices of cooperation between PES Kosovo* and the business community, including recommendations for enhancement (Analysis) submitted to PES Kosovo* and RCC ESAP 2 project.	5 weeks
Final version of the Analysis to be submitted to PES and RCC, addressing all feedback from PES Kosovo* and RCC ESAP 2 project	8 weeks
Presentation of the analysis to PES Kosovo*, stakeholders and the RCC ESAP 2 project.	Date to be agreed with partners, within the contract period

1. Develop the draft methodology and the work-plan for the Analysis, based on EU and ILO standards and practices; this methodology and the work-plan needs to be reviewed and approved by the Kosovo* PES, prior to proceeding with the next step.
2. First draft of the Analysis to be submitted to the Kosovo* PES and the RCC ESAP 2 project for comments and approval.
3. Complete the Analysis of the current situation and practices of mode of cooperation between the Kosovo* PES and business community with recommendations on enhanced mode of cooperation. The final Analysis must address all Kosovo* PES and ESAP 2 project comments.
4. Deliver presentations to Kosovo* partners (in person or online, depending on context) and any follow-up notes and briefs from the Analysis report.

Note: The service contract is expected to be carried out during a period from around 1 September 2021– 1 November, 2021, with the expected level of effort (LOE) of minimum 30 working days,

indicative time frame is stated above, the exact schedule will be agreed with the ESAP Team Leader and the Kosovo* partners.

The expected level of effort (LOE) envisaged for this task is minimum 30 working days, the longer period of performance (1 September, 2021- 1 November, 2021) is specified to enable feedback from Kosovo* counterparts on interim deliverables.

Presentations may take place in October, 2021, dates to be confirmed when the ESAP 2 team agrees on dates with the Kosovo* PES.

III Profile and Competencies of the Consultant

The Consultant should possess excellent technical skills and experience relevant for strong analysis of the current labour market situation and mode of cooperation between the PES and business community and high-quality document drafting skills in this TOR's subject area(s). In addition, the Consultant should have overall excellent analytical skills, be highly responsive to deadlines and be able to work under time pressure, possess excellent work ethic and ability to analyse and contextualise research, empirical evidence, data and draft policy recommendations, excellent communication skills and flexibility.

Criteria related to the expert delivering the service:

Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master's degree in the relevant thematic area (Labour Market) or in a general field (Economics, Management), PhD preferred,
Experience:	<p>Qualifications and Skills Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 7 years of relevant work experience in labour market, business environment or statistics, Experience in analysis of labour market and business environment, conducting research, private sector development, SMEs and employment programmes Ability to work with statistical data and indicators from official sources at national and/or local levels related to the strategic

	documents, research reports evaluations, and previous market surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent analytical skills • Excellent writing 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 Albanian.

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 accepted 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 (Kosovo* PES), including the representatives of the ESAP 2 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 **9 August 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 an 80/20 basis;
- **Only shortlisted candidates might be contacted for the competency-based interview.**

The application should 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 a detailed proposal of the work to be undertaken and the proposed timeline;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past 3 years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Submission Form (Annex I);

The Financial Offer

The financial offer should reflect the following:

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

Price needs to be competitive and commensurate with tasks. Maximum price ceiling for TA is EURO 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 bidder: 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 satisfy the criteria set forth in the Terms of Reference and demonstrate 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 a 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

ANNEX I: APPLICATION SUBMISSION FORM

REF: 066-021

Title: Expert on Public Employment Services (PES) effectiveness in the area of cooperation with business community in Kosovo*

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 066-021

And that we are not in one of the following situations:

- (a) Bankrupt or being wound up, are having our 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 our 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 concerning the subject of this call, which comprise our technical offer and our financial offer.

Name and Surname of the Consultant	
Signature	
Date	