

Call for Consulting Services

Subject:	Common Regional Market Action Plan 2021 – 2024 / Regional Investment Area
Title:	Upgrading the Regional Investment Incentives Database to Include Non-Fiscal and Sector-Specific Incentives
RCC Department:	Programme Department
Eligible:	Individual consultants
Reporting to:	RCC Secretariat
Duration:	March – June 2024
Reference Number:	018-023

Terms of Reference:

I. BACKGROUND

In November 2020, the leaders of Western Balkans (WB) endorsed the Common Regional Market (CRM) Action Plan (AP) 2021 – 2024 at the Berlin Process Summit held in Sofia. The CRM Action Plan consists of targeted measures along the four key areas: Regional Trade Area, Regional Investment Area, Regional Digital Area, and Regional Industrial and Innovation Area. The overarching goal of the Regional Investment Area is to align investment policies with the EU standards and best international practices, as well as to increase the attractiveness of the region for foreign investors and facilitate higher investment inflows through joint investment retention and promotion activities.

To attract investments, Western Balkan economies have developed their own investment incentive regimes. In the CRM AP 2021 – 2024, within the Regional Investment Area, the Western Balkan economies committed to creating a regional investment incentive database to enhance transparency. Following this obligation, in 2022, a general toolbox was created on the Invest in SEE website, focusing mainly on legislation and some general fiscal incentives.

To enhance this initial effort further, it is crucial to upgrade the database to reflect recent changes in incentives within the Western Balkan economies and to broaden its scope to encompass additional non-fiscal and sector-specific incentives. This upgrade necessitates comprehensive stocktaking, utilising available documents and engaging with the economies to collect information on investment incentives within this expanded scope.

Upgrading the WB6 CIF regional investment incentive database to include a wider range of and sector-specific incentives is crucial for enhancing transparency and contributes to efforts to align with EU standards and best international practices.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Objective of the assignment

The objective of this Technical Assistance is to upgrade the regional investment incentive database by expanding its scope to encompass additional available incentives, including non-fiscal and sector-specific incentives, while ensuring that all information is structured in a coherent manner.

Specific tasks

This assignment should focus on the following specific tasks:

- Review the Invest in SEE platform and recent investment promotional materials from each Western Balkan economy to compile a comprehensive overview of the available investment incentive information;
- Update the existing data collection questionnaire, customising it to reflect the unique aspects of Western Balkan economies and broadening its scope to include sector-level inquiries;
- Engage with the Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs), Ministries of Finance, and other responsible institutions to inventory information on investment incentives, covering both fiscal and significant non-fiscal types, as well as those relevant to key sectors, using the prepared questionnaire;
- Process and analyse the data collected from both desk research and engagement with responsible institutions, organising the information on investment incentives in a coherent and structured manner;
- Simplify and standardise the explanation of investment incentives to ensure it is easily understandable and comparable for platform users.

Methodology

The expert is expected to suggest the most suitable methodology for successful completion of the assignment. This may include, but is not limited to, a mix of online and onsite activities. Note that a clear methodological overview should be an integral part of the concept note.

II. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

Timeline

The engagement is expected to start in **April 2024** and end in **June 2024**. The selected bidder should submit a Gantt chart with a clear overview of planned activities.

Lines of Communication

- The task will be implemented in close consultation with the RCC Secretariat and in coordination with the World Bank Group counterparts.
- The contracted bidder will report to the **Senior Expert on Competitiveness**.
- As appropriate, meetings with RCC experts will be organised to agree on expectations and deliverables.

III. REQUIRED OUTPUTS / REPORTING

The following deliverables will be produced and transferred to the RCC Secretariat during the course of the assignment, as per the timeframe specified below:

	Deliverables	Due date
1.	Detailed methodology and work plan submitted and agreed with the RCC	11 April 2024
2.	Submission of updated and customised data collection questionnaire/document	17 April 2024
3.	Submission of the draft of collected investment incentives, including general fiscal and non-fiscal as well as sector-specific incentives	7 June 2024
4.	Submission of investment incentives structured in a standardised and coherent	20 June 2024

	format, ready for inclusion in the platform.	
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IV. REQUIREMENTS

Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An advanced university degree (Master's Degree or equivalent) in economics, business, or other field of relevance for the assignment.
Experience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 7 years of relevant experience in FDI, investment incentives, economic policy, or other related fields; Proven analytical skills and ability to conceptualise and write concisely and clearly, preferably evidenced by a list of published reports/papers in English; Proven communication and presentation skills and ability to work in an environment requiring liaison and collaboration with multiple actors including government representatives, international organisations' representatives, business community, civil society institutions, donors and other stakeholders; Advanced computer skills (MS Office and internet software).
Language requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fluency in written and spoken English, as the official language of the RCC; Knowledge of other RCC languages is an advantage.

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.

The expert should ensure an internal quality control during the implementing and reporting phase of the assignment. The quality control should ensure that the draft reports and deliverables comply with the above requirements and meet adequate quality standards before sending them to stakeholders for comments. 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.

V. APPLICATION RULES

The application needs to contain the following:

- Technical Offer;
- Financial Offer.

Technical Offer

- CV of an expert, 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.
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Application Submission Form (Annex I).

Financial Offer

The financial offer should reflect the following:

- All figures should be expressed in EUR

NOTE:

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;
- Maximum budget should not exceed EUR 10,000;
- The fee rates should be broadly consistent with those applicable in the region.

Applications need to be submitted by 28 March 2024, by 24:00 Central European Time.

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 relevant experience in FDI, investment incentives, economic policy, or other related fields.	35
A.2. Quality and professional capacity of the consultant(s): CV(s) satisfy the criteria set forth in the Requirements, education and experience demonstrate professional capacity and experience required.	35
A.3 Quality of the concept note: An outline of work programme 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 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
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