

Open Call for Consulting Services

Subject:	Support the initiative to improve interoperability of Bosnia and Herzegovina Public Administration (PA) services data
Title:	Technical assistance to supporting the improvement of interoperability of Bosnia and Herzegovina Public Administration (PA) services data
RCC Department:	Programme Department
Number of Consultants:	Consulting companies/consortia of experts
Reporting to:	RCC Secretariat
Duration:	July – December 2022
Deadline for Application:	14 July 2022
Reference Number:	063-022

I. BACKGROUND

The Common Regional Market (CRM) 2021-2024 Action Plan¹ is built on the successful initiative and achievements of the Regional Economic Area (REA), where regional digital area is one of its four key areas. Digitalisation and new different digital technologies are dictating the development of the world, and the use of digital solutions/products.

Due to the complex administrative setup, Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) institutions are offering information about their services in different ways and platforms by using their logic, lacking overall standards and guidelines. Public service descriptions are often scattered heterogeneously across eGovernment websites and other platforms, with sometimes redundant information still available, making it a daunting task for citizens and companies to access the information on how the institution's services are organised and delivered. This influences and reduces the overall satisfaction of services being offered by PA. According to the Balkan Barometer, general satisfaction with public services in B&H is among the poorest in Western Balkan (WB) economies.

Further, starting in 2013 after the successful implementation of PARCO (Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina) led *Establishment and Development of Interoperability Framework in B&H* project, the Interoperability Framework was developed and gradually adopted at different administration levels (B&H CoM, entity, and BD B&H

¹ <https://www.rcc.int/docs/543/common-regional-market-action-plan>

level)². For the first time, the necessary legal, organisational, semantic, technical, and infrastructural preconditions were systematically defined and adjusted to the current standards in the EU. This was an enabler for more interoperable systems to be developed in later years. A couple of projects worth mentioning include *Implementation of Common Services for e-Services* and introduction of the *Government Services Bus - GSB*. Furthermore, registers of administrative procedures were established and shared on websites of various institutions which helped to organise and publish the information on administrative services in a more structured, though still bureaucratic way.

In the process of developing the new Strategic Framework on Public Administration Reform (PAR) and corresponding Action Plan 2018-2022 strategic focus was maintained on more efficient service delivery. Following SIGMA principles, the user-centric model was introduced. In combination with multichannel service delivery and improved administrative procedures targeted activities have been defined which will result in simpler, faster, cheaper, more understandable, and usable services offered by PA. In order to simplify and enable quality experience across all users, several preconditions were set for the Service Delivery area. One of the priorities is the introduction of Service Catalogue. Upgrade of the semantic repository is planned as well as the establishment of PA generic process repository. In combination with all other actions, this will lead to the establishment of Point of Single Contact (PCS) as a One-Stop-Shop for citizens and companies, which is one of the activities in the Action Plan.

To avoid costly mistakes and enable integration of different PCS, a common method of describing and representing the PA services should be in place. This will improve the adaptation and usage of government life events and services portals. Harmonisation of user experience will be beneficial in B&H wherein a number of different level institutions have their roles in one business process and life events.

In addition, this will be a follow-up to the *Interoperable Western Balkans* initiative as it can contribute to establishing foundations for B&H capacity building for the next phase use-cases, regarding, for example, work permit, tax clearance, and diploma validity Use-Cases (UC).

II. OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the consultancy is to support the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process of enhancement of interoperability and exchange of data on public services across Bosnia and Herzegovina (CoM B&H, FB&H, RS, BD B&H)³. To do this, due consideration should be given to the current state of play in the economy, as well as the EU best practices.

In addition, through this process, and in coordination with PARCO and Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina, all key stakeholder institutions relevant for interoperability should be mobilised, as well as all other institutions that could have

² B&H CoM (Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina), BD B&H (Brcko Distrikt of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

³ FB&H (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), RS (Republika Srpska)

a significant role in developing Service Catalogue (SC) at various administrative levels of Bosnia and Herzegovina, enabling Once-Only-Principle in B&H PA.

Consulting companies/consortia of experts will be engaged for this consultancy.

This assignment targets only Bosnia and Herzegovina.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

Specific Tasks

The tasks specified herewith are:

1. Analyse the state of play in the economy, addressing all activities implemented, including legal and strategic documents and action plans;
2. Identify all relevant EU directives, guidelines, rulebooks, and reference standards applied in EU Member States, including the European Interoperability Reference Architecture (EIRA);
3. Prepare a detailed presentation of the Core Public Service Vocabulary Application Profile (CPSV-AP). In addition, the consultant should address the process of introducing a common data model example based on one related best-practice use case in EU or WB region. A toolbox for creating and exchanging public service descriptions should be included;
4. Provide the concept for a series of exercises for selected representatives of institutions, dedicated to:
 - (a) showcasing dozens (at least 10) of key services and procedures in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
 - (b) all aspects of harmonisation and results of a high-quality machine-readable description of PA services examples;
 - (c) at least one real use case that contains SC and CPSV-AP in the economy of administrative arrangements similar to Bosnia and Herzegovina;
 - (d) one real use case of SC cross-border/boundary interoperability implementation (best practice examples including the methods of interaction for both use cases, i.e. API (Application Programming Interface), and API- Gateway. Licensing of data provided via API should also be addressed, as well as explaining the process of transforming information on public services to another suitable and broadly accepted format like XML;
5. The consultant shall propose several operational scenarios for establishing SC in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Functional requirements proposal (including high-level requests, legal, organisational, semantic, and technical) for SC should be included;
6. The consultant shall provide the proposal for specific actions necessary for establishing the SC, as well as a proposal of building blocks for SC.

Methodology

The expert is expected to come up with the best methodology/approaches for undertaking this task. However, the following guiding principles should be taken into consideration:

1. Desk review of all existing reports/documents addressing the area under this ToR;
2. Communication/interviews/consultations with the representative of the Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the representative of the Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and other competent government bodies (contact details to be provided);
3. Any other method applicable.

IV. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

Timeline

The engagement is expected to start on 20 July 2022 and end on 15 December 2022.

Lines of Communication

- The consultant will report to the RCC Secretariat, representative of the Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and representative of the Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- Upon completion of activities as defined in the timeframe and in accordance with the Terms of Reference, a detailed report will be prepared and sent to the RCC Secretariat for review and approval;
- Representative of the Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and representative of the Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be the main contact points for the preparation of the feasibility study;
- A preparatory meeting will be organised to elaborate further on expectations and deliverables prior to the start of the work.

V. REQUIRED OUTPUTS/REPORTING

	Deliverables	Due date
1.	Inception document containing the results from tasks 1 and 2	September 2022
2.	Organisation of the following workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for the presentation of inception document; - dedicated workshop for task 3; - dedicated workshops for tasks 4 and 5 	October-November 2022
3.	Detailed design documents for SC tasks 6 and 7	November 2022
4.	Final report with key findings and recommendations covering all aspects defined in these Terms of Reference.	15 December 2022

<p>The report should reflect all comments of RCC and the representatives of the Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p>	
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VI. REQUIREMENTS

Expert Qualifications:

<p>Education:</p>	<p>Master's Degree in computer sciences, law, economics, technical sciences, telecommunication science, business administration, and public administration.</p>
<p>Experience:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum of 7 years of relevant experience in similar consultancies; ▪ Proven professional experience in semantic interoperability, PA information governance, CPSV-AP data model, and PA service catalogue implementation involvement; ▪ Proven analytical skills and ability to conceptualise and write concisely and clearly; ▪ Proven experience of working in and in-depth knowledge of the economy(es) covered by the assignment; ▪ Demonstrable experience in writing and reporting on complex multi-sector or multi-country strategy development and implementation (samples of work to be provided); ▪ 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.
<p>Language requirements:</p>	<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 desirable.
<p>Other:</p>	<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.

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.

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 reports. 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.

VII QUALITY CONTROL

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.

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 reports. 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.

VIII. APPLICATION RULES

Technical Offer:

The technical offer needs to contain the following:

For the companies and consortia of experts

- Company/institution profile including a brief description (up to 2 pages) about the company. In case of a bidding consortium, the team leader should submit the profile of the consortium;
- Copy of Company's/Institution's Registration Certificate. In case of a bidding consortium, a corresponding written authorisation, power of attorney is accordingly treated;
- CVs of key members of the project team, outlining relevant knowledge and experience as described in the Terms of Reference, along with contact details of referees;
- Work plan outlining proposed action by the consultant, sources of information to be used, timeline and tools to be employed by the consultant;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past 7 years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Application Submission Form (Annex I);
- Signed Statements of Availability (Annex III).

Financial offer (Annex II)

Note:

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.

Applications need to be submitted via e-mail to ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int by 14 July 2022.

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. (Maximum size of the email should not exceed 15MB. We transfer alternative is recommended. Please avoid RAR files.

IX. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

The assignments will be awarded to the highest qualified applicant based on the skills, expertise, and the quality of the concept note(s) and the cost-effectiveness of the financial offer. Applications will be evaluated on the basis of the profile and competencies of the candidate and the responsiveness to the Terms of Reference for consulting services.

The best value for money is established by weighing technical quality against price on an 80/20 basis.

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 nature comparable to that of the Call; experience with clients comparable to the Contracting Authority.	35
A.2. Quality and professional capacity of the consultants: CV satisfies the criteria set forth in the ToR, education and experience demonstrates professional capacity and experience required.	35
A.3 Quality of the Work Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work plan outlining proposed action by the consultant, sources of information to be used, timeline and tools to be employed by the consultant;	30
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 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 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 appeal.

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
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Trg Bosne i Hercegovine 1/V
71000 Sarajevo
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ANNEX I:

APPLICATION SUBMISSION FORM

Open Call for Consultancy Services:

Technical assistance to supporting the improvement of interoperability of Bosnia and Herzegovina Public Administration (PA) services data

REF: 063-022

One signed copy of this Call for Consultancy Submission Form must be supplied.

1 SUBMITTED by:

Name of the Entity	
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
e-mail	

2. STATEMENT

[Name of the Authorised person representing the Entity] _____ hereby declares that we have examined and accepted without reserve or restriction the entire contents of the Open Call for Experts, Grounds for Exclusions and Conflict of Interest as such:

Grounds for exclusion

Candidates or bidders will be excluded from participation in a procurement procedure if it is known that:

- (a) They are 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) They have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- (c) They have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Contracting Officer can justify;
- (d) They 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 Officer or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- (e) They 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.

Contracts may not be awarded to candidates or bidders who, during the procurement procedure, are:

- (a) Subject to a conflict of interest;
- (b) Guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Contracting Officer as a condition of participation in the contract procedure or fail to supply this information.

Conflict of Interest

- a) The Contractor shall take all necessary measures to prevent or end any situation that could compromise the impartial and objective performance of the contract. Such conflict of interests could arise in particular as a result of economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties, or any other relevant connection or shared interest. Any conflict of interests which could arise during performance of the contract must be notified in writing to the Contracting Authority without delay.
- b) The Contracting Authority reserves the right to verify that such measures are adequate and may require additional measures to be taken if necessary. The Consultant shall ensure that their staff, including its management, are not placed in a situation which could give rise to conflict of interests. The Consultant shall replace, immediately and without compensation from the Contracting Authority, any member of its staff exposed to such a situation.
- c) The Contractor shall refrain from any contact which would compromise its independence or that of its personnel. If the Contractor fails to maintain such independence, the Contracting Authority may, without prejudice to compensation for any damage which it may have suffered on this account, terminate the contract forthwith.

- d) The Contractor shall, after the conclusion or termination of the contract, limit its role in connection with the project to the provision of the services. Except with the written permission of the Contracting Authority, the Contractor and any other contractor or supplier with whom the Contractor is associated or affiliated shall be disqualified from the execution of works, supplies or other services for the project in any capacity, including tendering for any part of the project.
- e) Civil servants and other agents of the public administration of the RCC Participants, regardless of their administrative situation, shall not be recruited as experts in contracts financed by the RCC Secretariat.
- f) The Contractor and anyone working under its authority or control in the performance of the contract or on any other activity shall be excluded from access to RCC Secretariat financing available under the same project unless they can prove to the Contracting Authority that the involvement in previous stages of the project does not constitute unfair competition.

We offer to provide the services requested in the Terms of Reference on the basis of supplied documentation subject to this Open Call for Consultancy Services, which comprise our technical offer, and our financial offer.

This Open Call for Consultancy Services is subject to acceptance within the validity period stipulated in the Terms of Reference.

Name	
Signature	
Date	

ANNEX II: Financial Offer

REF: 063-022

Use a free format providing the lump sum for the services to be provided.

NOTE:

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

- The consultants fees should be consistent with those applicable in the region.

