

Open Call for Consulting Services

Employment and Social Affairs Platform-ESAP

Reference Number: 043-021

Subject:	Expert on labour market assessment in the context of the COVID-19 crisis in Serbia
Contracting Authority:	Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat
Reporting to:	RCC Secretariat
Duration:	31 May 2021 – 31 July 2021
Number of Posts:	1 individual consultant
Submission of Offer Deadline:	24 May 2021
Reference Number:	043-021

Terms of Reference:

I Background and Context

The Employment and Social Affairs Platform 2 (ESAP 2) is a regional project, jointly implemented by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) 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.

Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia closely

* 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

monitors the situation in the Serbian labour market. The effect of the Covid-19 pandemic was mitigated through adopted government measures which have enabled labour market indicators to sustain relatively good performance, specifically compared to 2019; the unemployment rate decreased by 1.4 pp and stood at 9.5% in 2020. The new Employment Strategy 2021-2026 was adopted in February 2021 aimed at establishing stable and sustainable increase of employment and is based on multi-sectoral approach and cooperation between active labour market, education, economy, social protection, youth policies and institutional structures in the area.

Taking into consideration the impact COVID-19 has had on the labour market, it is important to prepare a detailed analytical report of the situation in the Serbian labour market and of ways in which economic measures could be used to mitigate the consequences of the pandemic.

Objective

ESAP 2 is seeking a Consultant to prepare an analytical report of the situation in the Serbian labour market in the context of the COVID-19 crisis and its impact on the Serbian economy. This report should be made in close consultations with the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia and ESAP 2 project team.

The purpose of this assignment is to provide an updated and detailed assessment of the labour market impact of the pandemic on the basis of available quantitative and qualitative data. The Consultant will liaise with government institutions and enterprises for better assessment of the labour market impact. The Consultant will also assess sectoral levels and impact of government measures, develop labour market projections for the next 12-month period, and assess current figures and estimates.

II DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Scope of the Assignment/Main activities

Under the supervision of the ESAP 2 project team and with guidance of the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia and ESAP 2 team the Consultant is expected to:

1. Review and analyse the existing labour market measures in Serbia under the pandemic and its impact on the Serbian economy. The assessment will cover active labour market measures deployed in 2020 in Serbia, relying on the available statistical and other data, relevant research methods and reports, and will be based on adequate analysis, evaluation and research methods.
2. Analyse quantitative and qualitative data and economic measures adopted to mitigate the effect of Covid-19 crisis and minimise economic downturn. Assess cost-effectiveness of adopted

economic measures through the prism of the effect which these measures have on employment of unemployed persons (particularly youth, vulnerable and women).

3. Assess the effects and impacts of government measures implemented in 2020 on labour demand and supply in Serbia. The evaluation must, at a minimum, answer the following questions about effects of the adopted economic measures:
 - Analytical report on the situation in the Serbian labour market in the context of COVID-19 crisis and its impact on Serbian economy.
 - What can be seen in terms of sectoral employment reactions and regarding permanent, fixed-term or agency workers? Which types of measures were most effective and most sustainable, for which groups and in which contexts?
 - The position of certain categories in the labour market and impact of the pandemic in Serbia, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia will define these categories.
 - What are labour market projections for the next 12-month period?
 - What can be done from the side of the employment policy and relevant ministries and institutions?
 - How timely and efficient were the reporting and monitoring procedures?
 - How visible were the economic measures?
 - How relevant are the adopted economic measures?
 - Are the current figures and estimates more or less in line with earlier forecasts or are there some unexpected or even surprising deviations?
 - To what extent have they been complementary and coherent with other programmes funded by the EU and other donors?
4. Deliver presentation(s) on key findings and recommendations in the context of pandemic to the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia and ESAP 2 team.

Methodology

The Consultant is expected to analyse Serbian labour market in the context of COVID-19 crisis and its impact on Serbian economy and the position of certain categories in the labour market, as defined by the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia. The Consultant needs to review and analyse data, reports and economic measures, and apply own data analysis and evaluation methods, in line with the expected standards of labour market assessment. The Consultant is expected to come up with the best technical and assessment methodology in line with the

relevant EU and ILO standards to ensure assessment methodology is in line with the EU practises and is accepted by the Serbian partners at the Ministry.

The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia will deliver to the Consultant all relevant written materials, reports and data. The documents that will be provided by the Ministry are in Serbian language, and it is the duty of the Consultant to ensure translation, if needed.

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

1. Written material of highest technical quality related to assessment of economic measures in the labour market, all in the context of EU and ILO standards and practises.
2. Desk review and analysis of relevant materials on adopted economic 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 presentation to the Ministry 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, and Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (Ministry) of the Republic of Serbia for review and approval. The Consultant will work closely with the ESAP 2 and representatives of the Ministry in Serbia.

Timeframe and tasks

The service contract will be concluded for a period from 31 May 2021 to 31 July 2021, with following key activities and deliverables:

1. Develop the draft assessment design methodology based on the EU and ILO standards and practices to be reviewed and approved by the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia prior to proceeding with the next step.
2. Complete the assessment of the adopted economic measures per approved methodology, with recommendations for potential new services (12 months) or market measures which can be a suitable response to projected developments, addressing all Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia and ESAP 2 comments.
3. Deliver power point presentations to the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia (in person or online, depending on pandemic context).
4. Prepare analytical briefs from the assessment report.

Deliverables:

1. Comprehensive assessment methodology for the analytical report, addressing requirements of the Ministry and fully aligned with relevant EU and ILO standards and practises on assessment of labour market to be agreed with the Ministry and RCC.
2. Completed analytical report of the situation in Serbian labour market in the context of COVID-19 crisis and its impact on Serbian economy, including position of certain categories in the labour market and recommendations for potential new services, addressing all Ministry and ESAP 2 comments. The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia will define these categories.
3. Power point presentations and analytical briefs

All deliverables must be submitted in English and Serbian language.

III Profile and Competencies of the Consultant

The Consultant should possess excellent technical skills and experience highly relevant to the assessment of the situation in the Serbian labour market in the context of COVID-19 crisis. In addition, the Consultant should have overall excellent analytical skills, work ethic and ability to analyse and contextualise empirical evidence, data and draft recommendations, excellent communication and flexibility, and be highly responsive to deadlines and working under time pressure.

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 labour market analysis, applying EU and ILO standards• Prior experience in recent assessments of the Covid-19 impact on labour market in WB economies is desirable• Prior experience in assessment of labour market economic measures 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 the labour market, carry out independent research, develop policy recommendations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 Serbian 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 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 24 May 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 a 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;
- VAT amount, if applicable, should be presented.

Price ceiling for this assignment is maximum 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 bidder: Relevant work experience; experience with tasks comparable to the TOR and clients comparable to the Contracting Authority.	30

<p>A.2. Quality and professional capacity of the applicant:</p> <p>CV satisfies the criteria set forth in the Terms of Reference and demonstrates professional capacity and experience required.</p>	30
<p>A.3 Quality of concept note:</p> <p>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.</p>	40
<p>B. Financial Proposal/ lowest price has maximum score</p>	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.

ANNEX I: APPLICATION SUBMISSION FORM

REF: 043-021

Title: Expert on labour market assessment in the context of the COVID-19 crisis in Serbia

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 043-021.

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	

ANNEX II: BUDGET BREAKDOWN

REF: 043-021

No	Cost categories	Daily fee rate	Total Cost
TOTAL COSTS			

Proposed daily fee rate for consulting services should be broadly consistent with the regional framework rates for these types of professional services.