



Open Call for Consulting Services

Subject:	Common Regional Market Action Plan 2021 – 2024 / Regional Investment Area
Title:	Comprehensive Assessment of the Investment Environment for Sustainable Development in the Western Balkan Six
RCC Department:	Programme Department
Number of consultants:	Consulting companies, bidding consortia of individual experts
Reporting to:	RCC Secretariat
Duration:	November 2024 – January 2025
Reference Number:	058-024

I. BACKGROUND

In November 2020, the leaders of Western Balkan Six (WB6) 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.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows in the WB6 have been growing at a compound annual rate of approximately 6.7% in recent years. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that its contribution to sustainable development has been modest. To address the region's sustainability challenges, investment policies need to shift more decisively towards attracting investments that foster sustainable development, in line with global and EU trends. This shift has already become a key focus of recent investment activities under the current CRM. Moreover, in the second iteration of the CRM (CRM2), the investment priority area is expected to place even greater emphasis on investments that contribute to sustainable development.

To gain a clearer understanding in each WB6 of how the environment—namely regulatory frameworks, promotion activities, measurement systems, and similar aspects—supports investments that contribute to sustainable development, a comprehensive assessment has been

considered necessary. This assessment will provide the basis for identifying gaps and opportunities, ensuring that future efforts can be strategically aligned to foster sustainable investment across the region.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Objective of the assignment

The objective of the technical assistance is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the investment environment in each WB6, focusing on how regulatory frameworks, investment promotion activities, and measurement systems are conducive to attracting investments that contribute to sustainable development. The assessment will provide insights into the strengths and gaps in existing structures and offer recommendations for enhancing the region's ability to attract and retain sustainable investments. This will support the ongoing shift in CRM2 towards prioritising investments that address sustainability challenges in line with global and EU trends.

Specific tasks

This contractor should focus on the following specific tasks:

- Review the regulatory framework and strategic investment documents to assess the extent to which sustainable development aspects are considered and whether there is an emphasis on attracting investments that contribute to sustainable development;
- Review the Western Balkans Investment Incentive Platform (hosted on the RCC website) to assess the extent to which the WB6 aim to attract investments that contribute to sustainable development;
- Engage with the Ministries responsible for investment policy, Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs), and other relevant institutions to gather information on whether they distinguish investments related to sustainable development, whether they track such investments, whether dedicated staff are assigned to them, and other relevant details to better understand the current situation;
- Analyse initiatives in the EU and OECD aimed at aligning investment policies with sustainable development goals;
- Develop well-founded recommendations that are specifically tailored to the unique context and challenges of the WB6. These recommendations should draw from and be informed by best practices and successful initiatives from both the EU and OECD.

Methodology

The contractor 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 **November 2024** and end in **January 2025**. 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.
- 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	November 2024
2.	Draft report compiled with findings from desk research and meetings	January 2025
3.	Final report with detailed findings and recommendations delivered, incorporating feedback from RCC and other stakeholders	January 2025

IV. REQUIREMENTS

Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Advanced university degree (Master's Degree or equivalent) in economics or other field of relevance for the assignment.
Experience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Minimum of 5 years of relevant experience related to investment or other related policies;▪ 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 stakeholders 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;
- 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 contractor 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 contractor 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 contractor, the reasons should be explained in a comments table.

V. APPLICATION RULES

The application needs to contain the following:

- Technical Offer;
- Financial Offer.

Technical Offer

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;
- Copy of Company's Registration Certificate (in case of consulting companies);
- In case of bidding consortia of individual consultants participating in this Call, they must indicate the members and show how the work is divided between them. Specifically, all members must name the team leader and authorise this member to represent the consortium and receive payments on behalf of the other members. A corresponding written authorisation, power of attorney must be attached to the bid;
- 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 an expert(s), 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. The work programme should include the initial outline of the content of the assessment;

- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Signed Statements of Availability (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 20,000]**
- The fee rates should be broadly consistent with those applicable in the region.

Submission of applications:

Offers need to be submitted by 31 October by 17:00 Central European Time. The offers should be submitted through the web site link [Apply now](#).

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):	35

CV(s) satisfy the criteria set forth in the Terms of Reference, education and experience demonstrate professional capacity and experience required.	
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 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

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ANNEX I: STATEMENT OF AVAILABILITY

REF: 058-024

By representing the Entity _____ we agree to participate in the above-mentioned tender procedure. We further declare that we are able and willing to work for the period(s) foreseen for the position for which our CVs have been included in the event that this tender is successful, namely:

Full Name	Available from (Date)	Available until (Date)	Acceptance by signature