

Western Balkans Youth Policy Lab (WBYPL) Project of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Secretariat

Open Call for Consulting Services

Terms of Reference:	Mapping of Youth Policies and Identification of Existing Support and Gaps in Financing of Youth Actions in the Western Balkans
Contracting Authority:	RCC Secretariat
Eligible:	Individual consultants/respective consulting companies or individual consultants within bidding consortia
Reporting to:	RCC Secretariat
Duration:	August 2020 – December 2020 (maximum 100 working days)
Deadline for application:	10 August 2020
Reference Number:	037-020

I. BACKGROUND

Purpose

In 2019 Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) conducted a mapping exercise which looked into national youth policies and programmes in the Western Balkans Six and major donor interventions aimed at youth population in the Western Balkan (WB) region. Initial mapping process resulted in six structured reports, one for each Western Balkans Six economy, and a comparative report highlighting commonalities and differences between the six Western Balkans economies.

The purpose of the current assignment, *Mapping of Youth Policies and Identification of Existing Support and Gaps in Financing of Youth Actions in Western Balkan*, is to update, build upon and expand the abovementioned reports on each economy and the comparative report in order to provide for an evidence-based development of potential new instruments, which would further support youth and youth policy in Western Balkans with the aim to provide more specific insights and nuanced approach to be reflected in the activities which

will be implemented within the Western Balkans Youth Lab Project. Reflections on new COVID-19 and post COVID-19 pandemic-induced realities and changes in policy areas of high relevance for youth (e.g. education, upskilling, innovation, etc.) will also be provided.

The expected output of the assignment is to provide six updated reports, with consistent structure and quality of information, of maximum 35 pages each, for each Western Balkan economy and updated comparative summary report highlighting the commonalities and differences between the six Western Balkans economies.

The six national reports for each of the Western Balkan Six economies include: (1) youth population data; (2) overview and analysis of the national youth policy framework; (3) overview and analysis of national youth programmes and instruments aimed at youth; (4) description of the existing mechanisms of youth participation in national policy making and status of the establishment of national youth councils; (5) summary of major interventions aimed at youth population by the donor community and (6) good practice and gap analysis.

Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 will be updated accordingly in order to reflect the current state of play in each economy, while section 5 on donor interventions will be expanded in order to provide specific insights on donor supported youth interventions, which will be accompanied by a detailed annex on youth actions, including financial envelopes (recently completed, ongoing and planned). This section will also provide: a) clear indication between direct interventions impacting youth and general interventions that may support youth; b) description of activities and clarification whether funding instrument/programme is divided into smaller projects and if so what is the number of projects/organisations implementing these; c) impact (e.g. how many young people were reached by intervention); d) amount of allocated funds, and e) clear indication of most active donors. Such overview should be accompanied by a list of identified financial gaps.

The comparative report for the Western Balkans will also be updated as necessary, including an analytical summary of the national youth policies, youth programmes, major national interventions/instruments aimed at youth and the existing mechanisms of youth participation in national policy making, as well as progress towards the establishment of national youth councils which will highlight comparatively the progress of the Western Balkan economies to the EU and between each other, as well as the differences and commonalities in the approaches taken by the Western Balkan governments.

The comparative report will identify good practice examples, opportunities for peer-learning and provide recommendations on possibilities to work together towards improvement of youth policies and increased effective engagement of young people in the decision-making in the Western Balkans. Furthermore, the comparative report will identify potential EU member state case examples which may be relevant to the Western Balkans.

The main elements of these reports are to be updated continuously throughout the assignment in order to reflect changes taking place in each of the economies.

In addition, as part of the assignment, support will be provided to establishing an informal coordination mechanism among donors active in the Western Balkan region on youth and

youth policy, through provision of support in organising the first annual donor coordination meeting on youth agenda for the Western Balkans.

Background information

The issues which Western Balkans youth is facing have been under increased attention over the last couple of years, both at the level of each economy and as a part of high-level dialogue taking place between the WB and the EU.

Similar to the European institutions and organisations which have continuously emphasised importance of consulting and involving young people in relevant decision making processes Western Balkans Six economies, with 3.6 million young people or 21.27% of total population, have recognised the importance and the potential of youth and necessity to address the issues they face. Respectively, Western Balkan economies established legal and strategic frameworks by developing and adopting consequent laws, National Youth Strategies and accompanying action plans aimed at addressing the challenges of the youth. In addition to this, in some of the economies relevant National Youth Councils have been established, while in others these are still non-existing or in the process of establishment.

In addition to this, youth issues were discussed and Western Balkan youth representatives took part at important events organised as part of high-level political processes related to the Western Balkans. The 2018 Commission Communication on Credible Enlargement Perspective for and Enhanced EU Engagement with the Western Balkans announced increased cooperation and further support for youth sector. At the occasion of Sofia EU-Western Balkan Summit the EU and WB Leaders confirmed that special emphasis should be placed on creating further opportunities for the youth, while ensuring that this contributes to the socio-economic development of the Western Balkans and called for the establishment of Western Balkans Youth Lab, in order to provide space for innovative policy-making, to address the needs of young people and to tackle brain drain.

In January 2020, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) started implementation of the regional EU-funded Western Balkans Youth Lab Project, which seeks to provide opportunities for youth to participate in decision making. The main components of the project include: (i) mapping of youth policies and identification of existing support gaps in financing of youth actions in the Western Balkans, (ii) Western Balkans Youth Policy Labs, (iii) strengthening national youth councils in the Western Balkans; and (iv) participation of the Western Balkans youth in regional and international events. The project will strive to create a longer-term structured regional dialogue between youth organisations and governments focused on jointly devising policies which will increase youth participation in decision-making, to improving the overall socio-economic environment for and mobility of youth in the Western Balkans economies through different types of activities.

As part of preparation for the Western Balkan Youth Lab in 2019 the Regional Cooperation Council conducted a mapping exercise which provided relevant insight into the situation in youth sector around the region. This assignment will update, build on and broaden the extent of information gathered in 2019 so as to provide an evidence-based overview and more

detailed assessment of the existing youth policy frameworks, youth programmes and mechanisms of youth participation as well as existing financial support and gaps provided by the central and local level administrations in each of the six Western Balkan economies, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. The assignment will especially focus on identification of donor interventions targeting youth population in the Western Balkans Six, including but not limited to the actions implemented by EU, OSCE, UN system, SDC, GIZ and other relevant donors active in the field and will provide support to establishing informal donor coordination mechanism for the youth agenda in the Western Balkans.

II. DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Objective and scope of the assignment

The objective of the assignment is to 1) update and ensure compatibility of quality of information of the existing structured reports of maximum 35 pages for each of the Western Balkan Six economies and comparative report of maximum 35 pages based on the six national reports, and brief two-page summary reports for each economy which contain only factual information which may be published, and 2) provide support in the establishment of an informal coordination mechanism among donors active in the WB region on youth and youth policy.

The existing six national reports will be updated as needed in each of the following chapters:

(1) Youth Population Data: the statistical data on youth population with share of young population [15-29] as total number and as percentage of the overall population. Furthermore, the updated data will be broken down for age cohorts [15-19], [20-24], [25-29], by gender, ethnicity, and education level if available and will include trends by providing compatible data from the past and reliable future forecasts where possible. This chapter will also provide available data on youth employment, unemployment, Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET), as well as data on migration, with focus on youth.

(2) Overview and analysis of the national youth policy framework: update on national strategic documents (strategies and action plans) and legal framework (laws and bylaws) for youth will be provided as appropriate along with detailed overview of institutional framework and competences of institutions in each of the economies.

(3) Funding framework: Overview and analysis of national youth programmes and instruments: update of national youth programmes and instruments aimed at implementation of national strategic documents for youth, including summary of the key programmes and instruments aimed at youth, their objectives and aims, key institution/s responsible for their implementation and indicative budget provided for their implementation.

* 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

(4) Description of the existing mechanisms of youth participation in national policy making and status of the establishment of national youth councils: update on the existing mechanisms, or lack thereof, of youth participation in national policy making with particular attention focused on identifying possible and interesting innovative cases of youth participation in national policy making. Special attention will be dedicated the status of establishment of the national youth councils in each of the economies with identification of challenges towards their establishments. The reports should also provide information on the existing structured platforms of youth cooperation, be it international, regional, or bilateral.

(5) Summary of major interventions aimed at youth population by the donor community: an update will be provided to the summary of major interventions aimed at youth population by the donor community, covering but not limited to EU, OSCE, UN system, GIZ, CoE, etc. for each of the Western Balkan Six economies. This overview will provide: a) clear indication between direct interventions impacting youth, and general interventions that may support youth; b) description of activities and clarification whether funding instrument/programme is divided into smaller projects and if so what is the number of projects/organisations implementing these; c) impact (e.g. how many young people were reached by intervention); d) amount of allocated funds, and e) clear indication on most active donors.

This section should have an annex with detailed information on the interventions, including a list of all projects, specifying: donor, title, duration, timeframe, objective, youth focused or general intervention, main activities, target groups and allocated budget.

This overview should be accompanied by a list of identified financial gaps.

(6) Good practice and Gap Analysis: for each of the Western Balkan Six economies, critical assessment of the collected information will be provided in the concluding chapter. The assessment will include identification of good practice (best case examples) and a gap analysis leading to possible recommendations, including on possible new instruments to support youth and youth policy. The reports for each Western Balkans Six economy should provide positive as well as less successful examples of youth participation in decision and/or policy making, by stating concrete examples (case studies) of youth participation in policy and decision making which produced positive results or which were based on the principles of co-management and co-production and examples of inadequate level of youth involvement which did not produce positive results. This section should also provide analysis on the impact of COVID-19 related decisions and policies on important aspects for youth including education, employment, socialisation, and other relevant elements.

The comparative report for the Western Balkans of maximum 35 pages will be updated accordingly, taking into consideration updates to be made in the individual national reports. The report should also provide information and analysis on actions that each economy individually and the region as a whole have undertaken to address the 2018 EU-Western Balkans Summit Sofia Declaration commitments related to youth.

Support will also be provided in **organising the first annual donor coordination meeting for youth agenda in the Western Balkans**, by proposing donors to be invited to the

meeting, supporting preparation of Agenda and materials to be used at the meeting and by participating at the meeting, in order for Section 5 of national reports to be adequately updated and populated.

Duties

The services under this assignment include the following key duties:

1. Get proper insight and get familiar with 6 national and 1 comparative 2019 youth mapping reports;
2. Update and enhance content and quality of 6 national and 1 comparative 2019 youth mapping reports, through:
 - Gathering statistical data on youth population;
 - Conducting desk research exercise on existing legal, strategic and national financial frameworks for youth policy and programmes aimed at youth policies;
 - Conducting mapping exercise and relevant interviews in order to identify existing donor programmes and actions aimed at youth;
 - Carrying out a critical assessment of the information gathered to identify strengths and weaknesses of the national youth policy, youth programmes and the existing funding framework;
 - Conducting a qualitative assessment of practice of engaging youth in the decision-making, including identification of possible good, innovative practices and identifying challenges and gaps to ensuring effective mechanisms of including youth into decision-making;
 - Providing recommendations based on the data collected on improving existing and establishing new practices and possible new instruments to support youth and youth policy in the Western Balkans;
3. Provide support in preparation of the first informal annual donor coordination meeting on youth agenda in the Western Balkan through:
 - provision of advice on donors to be invited to the meeting;
 - provision of support in preparing the concept, agenda and materials for the meeting;
 - participation at the first annual donor coordination meeting on youth agenda in WB.

In all its stages, the deliverables will be developed in close consultation with Western Balkans Youth Lab Project Team Leader.

Outline and methodology of work will be discussed and agreed upon with the RCC Secretariat during the initial preparatory online meeting to be organised at the beginning of the assignment. Key expert participation is envisaged on the occasion of the first informal donor coordination meeting to be organised during the course of 2020.

Deliverables

The following deliverables will be produced and transferred to the RCC during the course of the assignment, in the following timeline:

Deliverable	Deadline
Attendance to the Preparatory meeting	August 2020
Preliminary update of 6 national and 1 comparative report for chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6	September 2020
Preliminary update of chapter 5 of 6 of national reports and of comparative report	October 2020
Materials related to Donor Coordination Meeting	October 2020
Final update of 6 national and 1 comparative report	December 2020

Methodology

The consultancy is expected to propose the best methodological approach for undertaking this task. However, the following guiding principles should be taken into consideration:

- i. Desk review of primary and secondary information;
- ii. Communication/interviews/consultations/focus groups with the representatives of national administrations, youth organisations and donors in the Western Balkans Six;
- iii. Participation at annual donor coordination meeting;
- iv. Any other methods applicable.

Lines of Communication

The consultant/s will report to the RCC Secretariat. Each deliverable will be sent to the RCC Secretariat within the set deadlines. RCC Secretariat will conduct a quality assessment and approval of each deliverable.

Timeframe

The engagement is expected to start in August 2020 and end by December 2020, with maximum of 100 working days for a team to be led by team leader and to include team members as adequate to finalise 6 national and 1 comparative youth policy report and provide assistance in organising a regional donor coordination meeting by providing information, materials, and have team leader participate at the meeting.

III COMPETENCIES

Qualifications

Key expert qualifications

Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced degree in social sciences: economics, business, political sciences, education, law; or other areas directly related to the subject of work
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 7 years of relevant experience on youth policy in the Western Balkans and the European Union; Experience in direct implementation of youth policy, youth programme or action is mandatory; Experience in a civil society organisation or youth organisation will be considered an advantage; Proven analytical skills and ability to conceptualise and write concisely and clearly evidenced by a list of published reports in English; 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.
Language requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fluency in English, as the official language of the RCC; Knowledge of other RCC languages is an advantage
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Familiar with MS Office applications.

Expert/s for national research

Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced degree in social sciences: economics, business, political sciences, education, law; or other areas directly related to the subject of work
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 5 years of relevant experience on youth policy in the Western Balkans; Experience in direct implementation of youth policy, youth programme or action is mandatory; Experience in a civil society organisation or youth organisation will be considered an advantage; Proven analytical skills and ability to conceptualise and write concisely and clearly evidenced by a list of published reports in English; 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.
Language requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency in English, as the official language of the RCC; • Knowledge of other RCC languages is an advantage
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiar with MS Office applications.

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 APPLICATION RULES

The application needs to contain the following:

- Technical Offer;
- Financial Offer.

Technical Offer

For individual consultants:

- Letter of interest;
- CV, outlining relevant knowledge and experience as described in Section III Competencies of the Terms of References;
- List of reports, papers, and other documents the expert has drafted;
- Brief concept note describing the main issues, information, data sources, and tools to be employed by the expert as well as the approach to the work to be undertaken;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past 5 years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Submission Form (Annex I);

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 stating the key expert and experts;
- Copy of Company's Registration Certificate (in case of consulting companies). In case of a bidding consortium a corresponding written authorisation, power of attorney is accordingly treated;
- 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);
- CVs of experts (stating the key expert and experts), outlining relevant knowledge and experience as described in Section III Competencies of the Terms of References, along with contact details of referees;
- Brief concept note describing the main issues, information, data sources, and tools to be employed by the expert as well as the approach to the work to be undertaken, as described in the Terms of Reference;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past 5 years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Submission Form (Annex I);
- Signed Statements of Availability (Annex II).

Financial Offer

The financial offer should reflect the following:

- All figures should be expressed in EUR

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.

NOTE:

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

- Maximum total budget should not exceed EUR 35,000
- When preparing the financial offer, the applicant should take into account that the fee rates should be broadly consistent with those applicable in the region.

Applications need to be submitted by 10 August 2020, by 15:00 Central European Time to the following address: ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int

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.

V 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 nature comparable to that of the Call; experience with clients comparable to the Contracting Authority.	35
A.2. Quality and professional capacity of the consultant: CV satisfies the criteria set forth in the Terms of Reference, education and experience demonstrates professional capacity and experience required.	35
A.3 Quality of the concept note: Concept note describing the main issues, information, data sources, and tools to be employed by the expert as well as approach to the work to be undertaken.	30

B. Financial Proposal/ lowest price has maximum score
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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 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

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71000 Sarajevo

Bosnia and Herzegovina

ANNEX I: SUBMISSION FORM

Open Call for Consultancy Services: Mapping of Youth Policies and Identification of Existing Support and Gaps in Financing of Youth Actions in the Western Balkans

REF: 037-020

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

1 SUBMITTED by:

	Name(s) and address(es) of the Entity submitting this Application
Full name of the entity	

2 CONTACT PERSON

Name	
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
e-mail	

3 STATEMENT

[Name of the representative of 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 its staff, including its management, is 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	
Address	
Telephone	

ANNEX II: STATEMENT OF AVAILABILITY

REF:

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	Number of man-days associated to each task from the ToR