



Open Call for Consulting Services

Subject:	Support regional exchange and raise awareness and technical capacities of parliamentary staff and ministries regarding measures linked with CRM
Title:	Technical assistance to support regional exchange and raise awareness and technical capacities of parliamentary staff and ministries regarding measures linked with CRM
RCC Department:	Political Department
Starting Date:	July 2024
Reporting to:	RCC Secretariat
Duration:	July 2024 – 30 September 2024
Eligible:	Respective consulting companies, consortia of individual consultants
Application Deadline:	4 July 2024
Reference Number:	035-024

Terms of Reference:

I. PURPOSE

The overall objective of the consultancy is to assist the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) to support regional exchange and raise awareness and technical capacities of parliamentary staff and ministries on measures linked with Common Regional market (CRM).

To this end, a consultant will be engaged to support regional exchange and raise awareness and technical capacities of parliamentary staff and ministries regarding measures linked with CRM.

II. BACKGROUND

Leaders of the Western Balkans agreed at Sofia Summit in November 2020 to enhance economic cooperation in the region by developing the Common Regional Market, based on the EU rules and standards, with the aim to increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of the region and bring it closer to the EU markets. The Common Regional Market aims to have a transformative effect by putting the region on the map for global investors, thereby creating jobs and offering greater choices at lower prices for its consumers, and enabling people to work throughout the region.

As the region remains committed to the completion of the first iteration of the CRM Action Plan ending in 2024, the RCC in cooperation with national Governments and regional partners is working on the new Action Plan for Common Regional Market 2025-2028 set to be endorsed at the Berlin Process Leaders' Summit 2024. This new phase of the CRM will act as a stepping-stone towards the EU's Single Market in many sectors, unlocking the economic potential of the region and creating opportunities for the private sector and as well as for workers. It will focus on four freedoms of the EU Single Market and will be accompanied with clear strategic aims mostly focused on boosting human capital in areas such as: education, innovation, digitalisation, mobility, migration, brain drain, women's economic empowerment and green agenda.

Implementation of CRM and the ambitious Action Plan put forward requires an increased level of information and awareness of all stakeholders, especially national parliaments, and of the relevant Ministries involved in the implementation of CRM deliverables. Therefore, the RCC is placing a strong focus on strengthening human capital in the Public Administration through tailor-made capacity building activities on Common Regional Market and other regional cooperation processes.

II DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Objectives and scope of the assignment

Inter-institutional cooperation, combined with sequenced capacity building programmes is crucial for the implementation of CRM and for complying with requirements of accessing the EU Single Market. The capacity building activities on CRM and other regional cooperation process will offer a unique combination of in-depth academic background and practice, bringing together representatives of line ministries and parliaments of the region who are responsible for pushing forward the reforms under the regional framework.

The RCC has recently prepared a regional assessment on the training needs of parliamentary staff in the Western Balkans related to CRM, which identifies the lack of proper and timely information sharing on regional reforms among Governments and respective Parliaments as one of the most important gaps. Hence, one important objective of this assignment is to achieve increased interaction by strengthening the inclusiveness of all stakeholders, especially Parliaments, in moving forward the regional cooperation agenda.

The capacity building and awareness raising activities will aim to provide in-depth information on regional cooperation agenda in Western Balkans with a special focus on Common Regional Market, enhanced regional cooperation, main regional frameworks, Green Agenda, etc. Targeted audience of these activities will be representatives of line Ministries and of the Parliaments of the Western Balkan economies who are engaged with CRM deliverables and /or other important regional cooperation activities.

Format of activities:

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- Lectures by experienced lecturers/experts including representatives of RCC, CEFTA, RESPA and TCT;
 - Workshops on specific topics, such as 4 freedoms of the Single Market, green transition, digital agenda etc.;
 - Increased regional exchange and networking with different stakeholders.
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Working language: English

Specific Tasks

The tasks specified herewith are:

- In consultation with RCC prepare the open call for applications for the workshop with clear and transparent selection procedures, and handle all application procedures including the initial shortlisting of candidates;
- In coordination with RCC prepare a solid programme of the workshop;
- In cooperation with RCC identify lecturers for each of the topics;
- In cooperation with RCC evaluate the applications received and select the workshop participants;
- Prepare and distribute all relevant supporting materials to the participants for each of the topics of the workshop;
- Organise the workshop in one of the economies of the Western Balkans;
- Prepare a comprehensive Workshop Report covering all topics discussed, with a special focus on freedom of movement, and provide recommendations for follow-up activities.

The consultant is expected to have knowledge of other relevant projects, activities and interventions in the area to avoid overlapping.

Lines of Communication

The consultant will report to the Political Department of the RCC Secretariat throughout the duration of the contract. Comments and recommendations provided by the RCC should be duly incorporated in the final version of the deliverables.

Timeframe

The total duration of the engagement will be from July 2024 to 30 September 2024.

	Deliverables	Due date
1	In consultation with RCC prepare the open call for applications for the workshops with clear and transparent selection procedures, and handle all application procedures including the initial shortlisting of candidates	July 2024
2	In coordination with RCC prepare a solid programme of the workshops. Special focus should be devoted to freedom of movement	End of July 2024
3	In cooperation with RCC identify lecturers for each of the topics	End of July 2024
4	In cooperation with RCC evaluate the applications received and select the workshop participants	15 August 2024
5	Prepare and distribute all relevant supporting materials to the participants for each of the topics of the workshops;	20 August 2024
6	Organise the workshops in one of the economies of the Western Balkans	In the week of 2 September

7	Submit the draft comprehensive report for RCC comments	15 September 2024
8	Finalise the report with RCC comments/suggestions duly incorporated	30 September 2024

III COMPETENCIES

Expert Qualifications:

Criteria related to the experts delivering the service

Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ University or advanced degree in an area directly related to the subject of work.
Experience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum of 5 years of relevant experience in regional cooperation, research, and training delivery; ▪ Good knowledge of the Western Balkan region, regional cooperation, Berlin Process, CRM, Green Agenda and relevant regional documents, initiatives and strategies; ▪ Proven analytical skills and ability to conceptualise and write concisely and clearly; ▪ Proven communication and presentation skills and ability to work in an environment requiring liaison and collaboration with multiple actors, including representatives of parliaments and governments, public administration, and other stakeholders.
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 desirable.
Other:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N.A.

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.

IV 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, they should clearly explain the reasons for their final decision 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;
- Concept note outlining the proposal of the Workshop¹, timeline and analytical tools to be used in carrying out the assignment;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Signed Statements of Availability (Annex II).

Financial Offer (Free format)

The financial offer should reflect the following:

- All figures should be expressed in EUR;
- VAT amount, if applicable, should be presented.

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:

- Maximum budget should not exceed EUR 45,000.

¹ Applicants are expected to present the outline of the courses in the Concept Note, while the final programme of the Workshop will be agreed with RCC upon selection of the successful Applicant.

- The fee rates should be broadly consistent with those applicable in the region.

Submission of applications:

Applications need to be submitted by 4 July 2024, by 17:00 Central European Time.

- 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.

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 call; experience with clients comparable to the Contracting Authority.	35
A.2. Quality and professional capacity of the consultant(s): CV(s) satisfy the criteria set forth in the Terms of Reference, education and experience demonstrate professional capacity and experience required.	35
A.3 Quality of the concept note: Concept note outlining the proposal of the Workshop, timeline and analytical tools to be used in carrying out the assignment	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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