

Section II: Schedule of Requirements

eSourcing reference: RFP/2022/40688

Consultancy services under the “Knowledge for Reform Action in the Western Balkans” Project

1. Background

Under the framework of the multi-year project titled **“Knowledge for Reform Action in the Western Balkans”** UNOPS AUMCO is providing support in the six countries of the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*¹, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) with access to tailored expertise, knowledge and best practice to assist them with advancing their respective reform agenda. Learning and exchanges will be promoted across the region, as well as from neighbouring countries which have joined the EU. The project will result in strengthened institutional, administrative and legislative frameworks and practises. To this end, the Project will coordinate with the respective national governments, UN organisations, EU delegations/offices and other development partners, as well as the civil society.

2. Overview of Services required:

The selected organisations will provide Consultancy services under the “Knowledge for Reform Action in the Western Balkans” Project.

UNOPS will be part of the experts’ approval processes and will have a right to objection.

3. Target Audience/coverage

The geographical coverage area will include Albania/ Kosovo*/ Bosnia-Herzegovina/BiH/ North Macedonia/ Montenegro and Serbia.

4. Purpose, Scope and Required Services Request for Proposal/services

- provision of consultancy (local and international experts) on the EU integration based on the needs of the beneficiaries,
- monitoring and evaluating the experts’ performance and delivery, analyzing and reporting on their delivery and impact of their work,
- closely monitoring and following up on all the EU integration related developments (including those relevant to the Chapters of the EU acquis and/or Clusters as per the new EU enlargement methodology) in synergy with the recruitment and deployment of experts and outcome of their work,
- providing regular analytical country reports as relevant to the country’s needs for expertise and bringing it to the attention of the Senior Project Manager,

¹ * All references to Kosovo are made in the context of UNSCR 1244.

- Collecting lessons learned and best practises as relevant to the deployment of experts and knowledge needed as relevant to the EU accession.

5. Deliverables:

- Periodical monthly reports on provision of consultancy services including the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation of the performed services to be submitted within five calendar days after end of the period
- Specific reports on a specific activity to be submitted as per the deadlines to be established by the Project team
- Ad-hoc and spot reports on challenges and risks encountered, lessons learnt and best practises to be provided within two calendar days.
- Final report (first draft) to be submitted 15 calendar days before the contract end date. Revised version of the final report to be submitted within 5 calendar days upon provision of feedback by the Project team

6. Coordination and Responsibility

The Project team will be responsible for:

- Providing Service provider with background documentation;
- Reviewing and approving the terms of reference for the experts;
- UNOPS will maintain direct communication with the beneficiaries about the selected experts and all their engagements with the beneficiaries. High level communication will remain the exclusive domain of UNOPS.
- UNOPS will be part of the experts' approval processes and will have a right to objection.

The selected Service Provider will be responsible for:

- Contracting international and national experts on the EU integration;
- Monitor and evaluate the work of experts against the impact on the reforms related to the EU integration;
- Draft of terms of reference for the experts and provision for review and approval to the Project team;
- Report on any challenges encountered, lessons learnt and perform risk assessment;
- Facilitating the meetings with stakeholders as per the UNOPS instructions;
- Selected company will be obliged to coordinate and get pre-approval by UNOPS for each agreed activity/deployment as per agreed work plan.

The bidder should take all reasonable steps to ensure that the implementation of services under this contract is conducted to respect and protect the rights, welfare and privacy of the people and communities involved in and/or affected by the project. Particular attention should be placed on data security, including the collection, processing, and storage of personal or in any other way sensitive information. Actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest which may jeopardise their independence and impartiality from the part of the evaluation team must be declared to UNOPS to allow the most appropriate course of action to be taken.

7. Timeline and Payment Schedule

	Deliverables	Indicative timeline	Payment
2	Monthly report	5th day of each month	actual costs for expert works, travel & monthly company's service fee
5	Specific reports	as per specific deadlines	actual costs for expert works
6	Final report (first draft)	15 calendar days before contract end	N/A
7	Final report (revised)	5 calendar days after response from Project team	final payment of the actual costs for expert works

8. Evaluation Considerations/requirements

Competencies and experience required of the consultancy include:

- At least 5 years of experience in provision of technical expert services related to EU integration or similar (local and international experts) including ToRs development, contracting, coordination (at least 2 previous projects/contracts and 2 reference letters to be provided);
- At least 3 years of working with the EU Integration issues (at least 2 previous projects/contracts and 2 reference letters to be provided);
- Knowledge of the political and socio-economic context of the country, preferably also familiarity with the socio-political and economic context of the Western Balkans region (to be demonstrated by provision of at least 2 relevant reports on delivered similar projects/activities);
- Understanding of Stabilisation and Accession Agreements (SAA) and negotiation process in the country (1-pager statement/essay on organisation's understanding and experience on SSA in the respective countries to be provided);
- Experience in developing monitoring and reporting indicators (at least 2 previous projects/contracts and 2 reference letters confirming developing monitoring and reporting indicators to be provided);
- Experience working with international organisations and donors (at least 5 years);
- Fluency in English of key personnel and knowledge of locally spoken languages of the countries where services will be provided (Albania, Serbia, BiH, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo).
- Analytical and communication skills (examples of at least 2 analytical reports).

The evaluation criteria is further elaborated in Section III.

The bidders shall provide CV of key personnel as per the table below

Subject Area	Key Personnel Titles	Responsibilities	Minimum Qualification and experience
General Management, EU Integration	Team Leader/Main focal point	Overall coordination	At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in project management, coordination
Financial management	Finance specialist	Financial transactions and reporting	At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in project management, coordination

The Service provider shall provide technical expertise through the international, regional and national experts. The experts should have a high level of expertise and professional experience in one of the fields of the EU action and policy, in particular as relevant to the support in stabilization processes and EU integration of the Western Balkans countries including the capacity building expertise in the areas of assistance with harmonization, approximation and standardization in EU Accession process, visibility in Brussels and EU Institutions, EU policies and advocacy in EU and similar. Both local and international experts will be engaged (service provider shall quote expert rates separately for local and international consultants).

Total number of expert days per each lot/country shall not exceed 300 expert days for a 30 months period (50% local and 50% international with expected equal distribution of senior (50%) and junior experts (50%).

Below table provides an overview of the experts profiles

Areas of expertise (each expert can have one or more areas of expertise)	Responsibilities	Requirements
EU negotiations	Provide technical expertise and advise on EU negotiations to the beneficiaries, including roadmaps and benchmarks	Senior expert - Advanced University Degree either in Law, EU integration, International Relations, Public Administration, Management, Developments Studies, Sociology, Political Sciences, Agriculture and Rural Development, Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Employment, Social Inclusion, Environment, Finance or other relevant discipline is required. University Degree (Bachelor's degree / first level) with a combination of five additional years of relevant professional experience may be accepted. 7 years of experience in working for/with the EU institution and/or working for/with the beneficiary countries in EU accession matters is required, with specialization in at least one of the seven areas
Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) and Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP)	Provide technical expertise and advise on SAA process	
Various Chapters of the EU acquis communautaire	Provide assistance with harmonization, approximation and standardization in the line with the enlargement methodology	
Networking with the EU institutions	Provide technical expertise and advise on the reforms under various Chapters of the EU acquis communautaire	
	Provide assistance with harmonization, approximation and standardization of legislation aligning it with the EU Acquis	
	Provide technical expertise as relevant to the networking with the EU institutions, facilitate the access to the relevant EU institutions	
	Provide technical expertise and advise on the	

Implementati on of the EU reform agenda for Western Balkans	implementation of the EU reform agenda for Western Balkans on a needs based cases Provide technical expertise and advise on the establishment of the EU learning platform	mentioned above is highly desired.
Establishment of the EU learning platform	Advice on the content of the EU knowledge and learning Platform Other Tasks and Responsibilities may include:	Junior expert - Advanced University Degree either in Law, EU integration, International Relations, Public Administration, Management, Developments Studies, Sociology, Political Sciences, Agriculture and Rural Development, Human Rights, Social Sciences, Public Policy, Environment, Finance or other relevant discipline is required.
Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) programming	Develop roadmaps and procedures as relevant EU Acquis Chapters Perform analysis of certain EU acquis chapters or clusters Design monitoring and coordination mechanism for the governments as relevant to the EU integration reforms Carry out technical assessments, analysis on the subject matter Draft concept notes, design and develop trainings and similar in relation to the reforms that beneficiaries are undertaking with the view to the EU integration processes.	University Degree (Bachelor's degree / first level) with a combination of five additional years of relevant professional experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree. 3-5 years of experience in working for/with the EU institution and/or working for/with the beneficiary countries in EU accession matters is required, with specialization in at least one of the seven areas mentioned above is highly desired.

9. Travel

Experts are expected to work in the field (country). International travel as well as intra-country travel are expected. Travel of experts shall be in economy class as per UNOPS rules. Travel expenses (lodging/per diem) shall not exceed UN DSA rates. Number of trips per expert will depend on the needs of the assignment and will have to be cleared in advance by the project and will be reimbursed as per actual costs. Estimated number of travel days per month to each country is 20 days, but long-term uninterrupted stay of international experts in the country may be required by the project.

10. Gender Mainstreaming and Technical Sustainability

UNOPS promotes gender mainstreaming and technical sustainability as core requirements. The service provider must ensure these aspects are integrated in the delivery of Services. UNOPS encourages female participation in the delivery of Services.

11. Bidder's Proposal

When preparing proposals in response to this Request for Proposal, the Bidders must take into account all information provided in the RFP document and prepare and submit a comprehensive submission that will include all document requirements in the RFP. Incomplete submissions (may be rejected without consideration). All returnable schedules must be completed in full and supporting documents must be attached.

12. Duration

Duration of assignment: 30 months (with possibility to extend based on the satisfactory performance). Volume of requests for consultancy services provision and experts engagement during this period will depend on the actual demand from the beneficiaries and operational needs of the Project. UNOPS can not guarantee any monthly or annual days of engagement.

Expected Start Date: 1 May 2022