Terms of Reference

Expert to support the development of the IT tool for monitoring and reporting the PAR strategy 2023-2030 in North Macedonia

Introduction

The Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) is an inter-governmental organization for enhancing regional cooperation, promoting shared learning, and supporting the development of public administration in the Western Balkans. ReSPA Members are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, while Kosovo*[1] is a beneficiary. ReSPA's purpose is to help regional governments in developing better public administration, public services, and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses and prepare for membership in the European Union.

ReSPA establishes close cooperation with ministers, senior public servants, and heads of function in Member countries. ReSPA also works in partnership with the European Union, Directorate General for Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), other regional players such as OECD/SIGMA and Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), as well as agencies and civil society organizations. Since its inception, ReSPA, as an international organization and a key regional endeavor in Public Administration Reform, has contributed to capacity-building and networking through in-country support mechanisms, peering, and the production of regional research material.

The European Commission (EC) provides directly managed funds to support the ReSPA activities (research, training, and networking programs) in line with the EU accession process.

ReSPA works primarily through regional networks, which operate at three levels: Ministerial, Senior Officials, and networks/working groups of experts and senior practitioners. There is one network – Programme Committee composed of the representatives of institutions in charge of PAR, government policy planning, and the European Integration coordination process and four regional thematic groups: Policy planning, better regulation and coordination of Centre of Government; European integration and accession negotiations (with specific reference to PAR and governance aspects); Human Resources Management and Development; and Service Delivery (digitalization and quality management).

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[1] * This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and ICJ Advisory opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of independence

The "On-demand support mechanism" is ReSPA's instrument that enables ReSPA Members to apply for and receive external expertise support. In the framework of the latter-mentioned type of instrument, ReSPA is looking for the expert for developing the IT tool/platform for monitoring and reporting the implementation of new PAR Strategy 2023-2030 in North Macedonia. However, it shall be emphasised that the ownership of the whole process and the further maintining of the tool/platform, should be the responsibility of the Ministry of Information Society and administratiion.

Problem Statement

The new PAR Strategy (2023-2030) of North Macedonia is an eight-year document with general and specific objectives that shoul contribute to improving the services to citizens and bringing our country closer to EU standards.

The institutional framework for preparation, implementation, coordination, and monitoring of public administration reform is largely in place, with the Ministry of Information Society and Administration (MISA) in charge of the overall management of the process.

The MISA has a double role in the PAR process. On the one hand, it is an institution responsible for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the PAR Strategy, and, on the other hand, it is a leading institution for implementation of most of the planned activities in the PAR Strategy.

At the technical level, the PAR Team in the MISA is responsible for implementation and monitoring of the PAR. The PAR team is also in charge of ensuring alignment of the PAR priorities and objectives with the annual objectives and strategic priorities set by the Government, for collecting data and preparation of progress reports that are reviewed by the PAR Secretariat, PAR Council and the Government, as well as for donor and stakeholder coordination.

The system for the implementation of the PAR Strategy (2023-2030) includes nearly 40 institutions that have special responsibilities for certain measures and activities defined by the Action Plan, and which, in coordination with the Ministry of Information Society and Administration. The monitoring and reporting of PAR strategy implementation should be carried out on a regular basis, with advance defined dynamics, to report on the achieved progress to the Secretariat, the Council for the PAR, the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, and additionally to the entire interested public in the country.

In view of the complexity of the Action Plan, the large number of activities and measures under the joint competence of several institutions, the reporting of the achieved results, goals and defined measurable indicators will be coordinated in harmonized forms of documents. After collecting the data according to the defined dynamics (every 6 months), MISA will have the obligation to analyze, summarize the data, compare it with the dynamics of the Action Plan and

present them in narrative and tabular form in semi-annual and annual reports for approval by the higher structures.

The Government of North Macedonia recently adopted the *Methodology for the manner of preparation, monitoring of the implementation, evaluation and reporting of the sector strategies* and the *Guidelines on the structure, contents and mode of preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of sector and multisector strategies.* The documents regulate the elements and structure that sector and multi-sector strategies should contain, the requirements for monitoring the implementation, reporting and evaluation.[2]

Regarding to this above-mentioned activity for monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the strategies contained in PAR Strategy (2023-2030), MISA needs to develop an IT tool (Platform) that will facilitate the processes of monitoring and reporting on the realization of the PAR Strategy.

Objectives and Scope of the Assignment

The main purpose/objective of this assignment is to identify an external expert who will support the North Macedonian authorities in developing the IT tool (platform) for monitoring and reporting new PAR Strategy 2023-2030 and its related documents.

The purpose of this IT tool is to provide an appropriate web platform that will digitize manual data collection process for the implementation of the action plan activities, and at the same time automate the process of reporting and publishing reports. The IT tool will define the types of possible statistical reports, which through tabular and graphic displays can be used for various purposes of monitoring and reporting by users, and especially for the preparation of infographics and progress reports.

In particular, users of the system will be, but not limited to:
- MISA in charge of coordination, monitoring and reporting on the PAR Strategy (2023-2030);
- Contact points from about 40 institutions, in charge of reporting on the implementation of the measures and activities that are in their competence;
- The PAR Secretariat, in charge of technical support of the PAR Council during the management and monitoring of the PAR process;
- The PAR Council, responsible for overall management and coordination of the PAR process.

Tasks and Responsibilities

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[2] Published in the "Official Gazette of RNM" no. 122/22.

The expert will have to work closely with the MISA team focusing on accomplishment of the following tasks:

- Develop a detailed analysis that should contain mockups (draft images of how the application will look like), proposed scenarios and ER-diagrams, Behavioral UML Diagram, Structural UML Diagram, etc. according to the needs of the contracting authority (7 days).
- Develop a draft IT tool (platform) for monitoring and reporting on the realization of the PAR Strategy through the consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the installation, configuration, set up and test of the environment (18 days).
- Develop the final IT tool (platform) (3 days).
- Lead the workshop with the presentation of the IT tool and training for the users of the tool (2 days)

The expert will cooperate closely with another expert who will work on development of the content of the Web platform for monitoring and reporting the PAR Strategy.

Necessary Qualifications

The expert needs to have a diverse but compatible experience related to design and implementation of various IT tools relevant for the development and implementation of public policies and/or strategies. More specifically, the expert shall possess the following profile:

Qualifications and skills:
- University Degree in Applied Computer Engenering, Electronic Engineering, Control Systems Engineering,
- Master Degree will be considered an asset.

General professional experience:
- At least 10 years of experience working in or with the public sector and related assignments/positions, as public servant, consultant, expert, advisor, etc.

Specific professional experience:
- At least 5 years of experience ICT tools for monitoring, other IT infrastructures and ICT systems,
- Experience in delivering trainings, workshops, and/or experience in preparation of, Guidelines, methodologies,.

Skills:
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English;
- Knowledge of official language(s) of North Macedonia will be considered an asset;
- Ability to prepare and deliver well-structured presentations;

Note: The expert shall not be civil/public servant in any of the Western Balkans' administrations in the moment he/she applies.

Time frame, Level of Effort

The assignment will take place from September 2023 to February 2024.

The Level of Effort is estimated at thirtee (30) expert day.

Remunerations

The maximum amount of funds allocated for this assignment is 15,000 EUR for a total of up to 30 expert days. However, the daily fee per expert day will be defined following ReSPA expert selection procedure based on assessed and evaluated expert capacities.

The payment will be made in one installment upon completion of the assignment. The final product will be subject to approval from MISA as the beneficiary institution and ReSPA before the execution of the payment.

Note: No other costs will be covered apart from the expert cost per day. The Expert cost per day comprises of Expert's fee per day and a lump sum for covering related expenses, including travel, accommodation, local transport, meals, and other incidentals.

Reporting and Final Documentation

For the purpose of reporting, the Expert will be requested to deliver the following documents:

- The outputs of the assignment as approved by MISA and ReSPA;
- A final report in English no later than ten days after completing the assignment. This final report on the implementation of the assignment should indicate key challenges, lessons learnt and relevant recommendations for future work of ReSPA and beneficiary institution in this area. The report will be subject to approval of the ReSPA as a contracting authority;
- Timesheet (original and signed);
- Invoice (original and signed).