

Terms of Reference (ToR) for a Short-Term Local Policy Expert

1. Background information

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - GIZ and NALED signed the Contract on implementation of the Project „**Establishing Business Friendly Environment Platform (BFE) in WB6**“ (hereinafter: the Project) in November 2021.

The six Western Balkan economies, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, continue to express their commitment towards the EU integration process and seek to undertake reforms across a variety of fields which would facilitate their alignment with the EU and international standards. The EU Enlargement Strategy for "A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans" acknowledges that all Western Balkan economies face challenges in terms of economic growth and competitiveness.

However, although there is a clear interest for policy harmonization and regional partnership to spur economic development, functional mechanisms for multi-stakeholder and multi-sector dialogue on policy harmonization and exchange of best practice on fostering economic growth at the national and local level have not yet been established (**core problem**).

On the other hand, the mechanism established as of 2012 by the Network for Business-Friendly Certification in Southeast Europe (BFC SEE) has achieved some outstanding results in terms of improvement of the business environment in participating economies from Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. From its establishment, the BFC SEE network improved the services offered to businesses in over 60 municipalities from Western Balkans (excluding Croatia).

By capitalizing on the results of the existing BFC SEE Network, there is a **potential** to use the momentum of existing need for energized economic development and improved business-friendly environment and provide support to the region's underdeveloped capacities to design and implement the required reforms on both national and local level.

The sub-project thus proposes to harness these potentials, namely the demand for closer cooperation and the framework created in WB6 economies as well as the good practice established within BFC SEE Network. Thus, **the objective** of the project is establishment of an efficient mechanism for regional cooperation and knowledge exchange on implementation of reform processes for economic growth on both national and local level.

The project aims at achieving establishment of the mechanisms for the exchange of economic development practices in the region and the partnership culture between economic development stakeholders representing public, private and civil sector. With this expected result, the sub-project is contributing to the achievement specifically to the *Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development since a successful sustainable development agenda requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society*. Moreover, with the support to local economic development of the municipalities in Western Balkans, the project also contributes to achieving Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable growth, employment and decent work for all as well as Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Most prominently, the project promotes regional cooperation among economic development stakeholders and brings a marked contribution to the implementation of economic development agenda of the EU.

NALED acts as a Regional Technical Secretariat. Project implementing partners/technical secretariats are: Association of local-self-governments in North Macedonia (ZELS), Chamber of Commerce in Montenegro, Chamber of Commerce in Republic of Srpska, Research Institute RIINVEST Kosovo*¹, Association for Local Autonomy in Albania and Regional Development Agency REDAH from Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Objective of the Project

An efficient mechanism for regional cooperation and knowledge exchange on implementation of reform processes for economic growth on both central and local level has been established.

Project Purpose

The conditions for municipal development and local economic development in the six economies of the Western Balkans have improved in line with the EU accession requirements.

Overview of the roles of the (Regional) Technical Secretariats

NALED as the Regional Technical Secretariat of the BFE Program, will engage the Lead Policy Expert for Business-Friendly Environment and Lead Legal Expert for Business-Friendly Environment. These experts will support technical secretariats and their local policy experts in the identification of reforms, preparation of prospectus and blueprints of the selected reforms and advocacy efforts in their economies.

Each technical secretariat will engage a local policy expert to support the identification of reforms, prepare prospectus and blue-prints of the reforms and work with the technical secretariat on the advocacy process.

Selection of reforms that will be imported in the economies will be done by the Regional Council (CORE partnership steering authority that comprises the representatives from WB6 economies).

Expected result of the task

Identified successful reforms for improved business environment, prepared prospectus and blue-prints of identified reforms and initiated advocacy processes with the relevant authorities in WB6 economies.

2. Scope of task of the expert

The Expert will be tasked with assisting the technical secretariat in conducting a comprehensive analysis of reforms in the state, that have been performed to contribute to the business enabling environment. The Expert will work closely with the Lead Policy Expert and Lead Legal Expert engaged by NALED.

The Expert will consider reforms that have been earmarked as significant by the public bodies, businesses, and civil society, hence had made an impact in ease of doing business or had influenced the position of their economy in internationally recognized competitiveness indexes. The reforms may differ

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo• declaration of independence

in scope, whereas the Expert will only consider reforms that had been implemented on the highest governance level in their economy, excluding reforms performed at a local level of governance.

Work will be comprised of conducting a baseline assessment of reforms, thus identifying those that have had the most significant impact and/or visibility. Following the identification of reforms, the Expert will be tasked with analyzing the reforms using a comprehensive methodology (see more in Methodology) to select 3-5 most relevant ones in agreement with technical secretariat and NALED and prepare Prospectus for them. Once reforms are selected by the Regional Council, the Expert will prepare blueprints of the 1-3 reforms that had been proven to made significant impact and are considered to be best practice examples, thus likely to be replicable in other WB6 economies. Finally, the Expert will provide expert support to the technical secretariat and to the Lead Policy Expert in consultations with relevant stakeholders for the purposes of advocating reforms.

2.1. Expected Deliverables

The expert will provide the following deliverables during the course of his engagement:

- ▶ Report on conducted desk research, collection and analysis of data, list of 10-20 reforms and reform brochures (prospectus) for selected 3-5 reforms to be replicated in other economies;
- ▶ Reform blueprints on 1-3 best practice reforms for reforms to be ``imported`` from other economies;
- ▶ Report on conducted advocacy process.

2.2. Specific tasks

The Expert is envisaged to perform the following tasks:

Task 1: Inception phase and preparation of the list and prospects

- ▶ Participate at the kick-off meeting with the representatives of all technical secretariats and policy experts.
- ▶ Identify and analyse best practice reforms in cooperation with the technical secretariat and Lead Policy Expert,
- ▶ Perform a detailed document analysis. In this task, the Expert is expected to analyze:
 - Country reports and international competitiveness index reports,
 - Ex-post and ex-ante regulatory impact assessment statements, prepared for the means of implementing a certain reform (adoption of new or amended regulations),
 - Studies and other analytical documents that highlight the procedural steps, legal requirements, and other characteristics of analyzed reforms,
 - Public policy documents and regulations that refer to analyzed reforms,
 - Other relevant documents.
- ▶ Conduct a consultation process with relevant stakeholders, using an appropriate consultation method (interviews, forums, panels, questionnaires, etc.).
- ▶ Prepare a list of 10-20 proposed reforms to be replicated in other economies.
- ▶ Out of the list select 3-5 reforms in an agreement with the technical secretariat and NALED.
- ▶ Prepare prospects with 3-5 proposed reforms in line with the Manual (Manual to be prepared and provided by the Lead Policy Expert)

Total number of days: 8

Task 2: Preparation of blueprints of reforms

- ▶ Prepare blue-print of 1-3 reforms that will be imported to the respective economy in line with the Manual;
- ▶ Actively participate at the roundtable with relevant stakeholders organized by technical secretariat.

Total number of days: 7

Task 3: Advocacy process

- ▶ Participate in conferences and other advocacy events, prepare presentations and other materials for presenting findings on best practice reforms to be "imported" from other economies including the letter for the ministry(ies) to start the advocacy dialogue for the implementation of the reform.
- ▶ Draft a report on results of consultations.

Total number of days: 5

The Expert will use up to **20 working days in total** in performing the tasks.

3. Expected timeframe

The Expert is expected to produce deliverables in the following timeframe:

Deliverable	Date
Task 1 delivery: Report on conducted desk research, collection and analysis of data, list of identified 10-20 reforms and reform brochures (prospectus) for 3-5 identified reforms.	August 15 th , 2023
Task 2 delivery: Blue print of 1-3 reforms	September 30 th , 2023
Task 3 delivery: Report on conducted advocacy process	30 th December 2023

4. Methodology

While performing his tasks, The Expert will be obliged to apply the methodological guidelines provided by the Lead Policy Expert, which is consisted of methodological steps for the proceedings to be undertaken while identifying the best practice reforms, and standards to be used in course of assessment of the reforms. Finally, the methodological guidelines provide forms in which the findings are ought to be presented. In communication with the Lead Policy Expert, the methodology can be aligned according to specific characteristics of the economy and analyzed reforms.

Task 1:

In the course of the identification of the best practice reforms, the Expert will:

- ▶ Deliver a step-by-step plan for conducting the assessment,
- ▶ Conduct detailed desk research, comprised of document analysis and resulting in inputs on reforms to be analyzed in later stages of the assessment,
- ▶ Conduct a consultation process with relevant stakeholders in order to collect evidence on reforms' characteristics,

In the course of analyzing the best practice reforms, the Expert will:

- ▶ Perform a multi-criteria analysis, comparing different reforms and ranking their significance, while using evaluation criteria. Evaluation criteria to be used:
 - Scope of the reforms,
 - Impact,
 - Resource intensity,
 - Time efficiency,
 - Rise in competitiveness,
 - Contribution to EU accession process (where applicable).
- ▶ Develop 10-20 reforms brochures, in line with the methodological guidelines provided by Lead Policy Expert,

Task 2:

In the reporting phase of the assessment, the Expert will:

- ▶ Participate in coordination events within the WB6 network, and advocacy events,
- ▶ Prepare presentations and other info materials of findings,
- ▶ Present findings in the form of the final report (presentation of multi-criteria findings),
- ▶ Develop 1-3 reform blueprints in line with the Methodology prescribed by Key Legal Expert for Business-Friendly Environment,
- ▶ Prepare a letter (highlighting selected reforms characteristics) engaging the advocacy with the Ministry/other public body that is the lead implementing body of the selected reforms,
- ▶ Participate in advocacy of the reforms.

Task 3: Report on conducted advocacy process

The final report will have to be presented in the following format:

- Executive summary, summarizing main findings,
- Findings arising from the advocacy process,
 - How the advocacy was performed,
 - Who was advocated, and using what methods,
 - What are the main results, and what are the future steps.
- Conclusions and lessons learnt.

The use of visualization and info graphs is strongly recommended in the reporting phase and should be included in the final report.

All the reports will be prepared in English.

5. Duration of assignment

The Expert will be engaged until the end of 2023.

6. Experience and qualifications

Experience and qualifications required by the position are as follows:

- ▶ University degree in Economics, Law, Political Sciences, Public Administration, or relevant field; ; at least 10 years of relevant professional experience can compensate for the lack of relevant degree
- ▶ Higher University degree (MA) would be considered an advantage;
- ▶ At least 7 years of general experience;
- ▶ At least 5 years of experience working on public policy analysis and reforms, conducting policy analysis, and implementation of reforms; in economic reforms and policies related to business environment would be considered as an asset;

- ▶ Proven experience in design and implementation of reforms;
- ▶ Experience in cooperation with government officials is required;
- ▶ Experience with quantitative and qualitative research methods, tools, and techniques,
- ▶ Analytical skills;
- ▶ Fluency in written and spoken English and local language is required,

7. Payments

The Expert will be paid after the competition of each Task, approval of the deliveries by technical secretariat and presented and approved Time Sheet.

In case of travel, accommodation costs will be covered by technical secretariat. Travel costs will be covered 0.2 EUR per km.

8. Submission of offer and Points of contact

The Offeror shall submit his CV and the application form with clearly indicated gross daily rate, not later than 03 July 2023, 16.30 hrs. to an email: contact@zels.org.mk .

If the Offeror is a legal entity, he is obliged to submit a proof of registration from the business registers authority.

For additional information, please contact Ivana Serafimova, e-mail: ivana.serafimova@zels.org.mk, 071 351 731, 02/3099033 intr.131.