

# TERMS OF REFERENCE

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# **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

## **1.1. Partner country**

Republic of Serbia

## **1.2. Contracting authority**

Centre for Youth Work

## **1.3. Country background**

The Western Balkan region suffers from high unemployment, despite slight improvements in relation to previous years and estimated growth rates reaching an average of 3.5% during 2018 (Western Balkans Regular Economic Report, World Bank). Regional poverty levels remain at 23% overall. Women continue to be underrepresented in WB labor markets, with 40% of employed. Even if youth unemployment decreased, it remains a major issue, since 23% of youth in Serbia is still unemployed. Due to high unemployment in a recent Gallup survey on the “brain drain” (2015-17), the WB performed worse in Europe, 46% youth from Serbia want to emigrate. Continued emigration – especially of the young and highly-skilled will generate mismatches between the available skills and the required composition of the workforce.

In Serbia and Montenegro, the youth unemployment rate is higher than in the EU countries. In Serbia, in 2018, youth unemployment rate reached 24.5% (age 15-29), decreasing by 2.2. points comparing to year 2017, while youth belonging to NEET vulnerable group (not employed or in training or education) is 20.1%. The position of young women is significantly less favorable than their male peers. Their employment rates is less by 11.4 % comparing to young men 41.9%. Similar situation is in Montenegro where youth unemployment rate is 38% , while 27.5% are youth belonging to NEET. Even though data indicate decrease of youth unemployment, this is also result of youth brain drain. In 2018, 20.813 young people left Serbia decreasing youth population by 1.8%. Additionally, urban centres, act as magnets, while rural regions are rapidly depopulating. In Montenegro 11 municipalities are facing negative natural growth, especially northern region where the Action is taking place. Continued emigration – especially of the young and highly-skilled –generate mismatches between the available skills and the required composition of the workforce. Skill shortages are already reported in certain sectors such as IT personnel. When it comes to IT development in the WB countries, IT sector is among the most vibrant and the fastest growing sectors. In Serbia, yearly 200 new IT companies are initiated. The Strategy for the Development of Information Society Until 2020 defines that IT sector in MNE is one of the most important sectors economic development. IT sector offers number of job opportunities with different level of complexity and therefore is very suitable for prequalification especially youth, who are in contact with IT on everyday bases. Youth interest in IT jobs and prequalification is constantly increasing. This is evident by growing students’ enrolment to IT related faculties as well in non-formal education courses. This has been showcased by partner Youth office Novi Pazar, where 120 young women applied for IT course, while there were only 20 places opened. Formal education is failing to respond adequately and timely to the rapid changes on labor market needs. Lack of soft skills and practical experiences are often numbered by employers in WB countries as most deficient. Contrasting formal education which is torpid due to high administration demands, non-formal education can promptly respond to those challenges due to its flexibility. Additional challenge for education brings 4.0. industrial revolution. The problem in the future could not be the lack of employment, but the shortage of skills that the new jobs will demand. It is needed to combine digital, transferable and entrepreneurship competencies, empowering youth not only to seek for open job opportunities but to create new jobs and act globally. Soft or transferable skill, youth exactly gain through youth work programs.

#### **1.4. Current situation in the sector**

Due to lack of inter-sectoral cooperation, existing youth employment services implemented by CSOs in most of the cases are one-dimensional - focused only on one aspect; digital skills, entrepreneurship, practice or soft skills. Even if young person attends professional development course, they end up with missing one of the crucial competences for employment, straining them to attend several programs, resulting with confusion and demotivation. Recognizing this problem in 2017/19, Centre for Youth Work; Serbia in partnership with 3 ICT companies; developed and piloted innovative youth employability model preparing youth for 4.0. revolution, respecting “one-stop-shop” methodology, cross-sectoral cooperation, the needs of young people and employers (supported by the Social Inclusion and Poverty Unit of R. Serbia). The uniqueness of this model is in close cooperation of business sector, government institutions and CSOs. The model reconciles employers and youth needs through tailored made NFE curricula and mentorship, equipping youth with practice, soft skills, digital and entrepreneurship competencies at one place, including contact with employers. Model evaluation (2019), showed great potential where methodology could be transferred to other cities/countries respecting local needs. Additionally, CZOR in partnership with Forum MNE (Montenegro) and 3 other partners from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Albania applied with similar project to the Call for proposals: EuropeAid/162473/DH/ACT/Multi, Civil Society Facility and Media Programme 2018-2019, where project has been preselected for granting (contract to be signed). This project aims to build capacities of CSOs through re-granting schemes to implement employability model based on one-stop-shop methodology. Both of the Actions are in great synergy and strategically build one on another. There will be no overlapping since projects target different geographical areas. Apart of building quality youth employment model, one of the major benefits of this Action is enhancing SMEs and individual producers. Entrepreneurship plays important role since one of the pillars for Sandzak economic development and job creation are SMEs (woodworking, furniture, food production, etc). Most of these SMEs are in start-up phases, community based and operating on old traditional way, where marketing is not adjusted to the modern society via internet. The project aims to reconcile the needs of community-based SMEs and youth employability (e.g., webpage development for SMEs, internet marketing or developing web-shop for selling products or services globally or in the WB country region). IT offers number of possibilities for setting up new business or improving the existing ones. The proposed action aims to empower youth to give life to their own ideas for community economic development in terms of IT business ideas acting in cross-border region and globally. The action takes into account all existing governmental strategies available at central and local government level in Serbia and Montenegro, complementing governmental efforts through innovative approaches. The action is linked to National Youth Strategy, Serbia (2015-2025) with specific objective of Increasing employability and employment possibilities for young man and woman, while in Montenegro it is linked to National Youth strategy (2017-2021) under outcome: “Young people achieve economic and social security through increased access to labour market and employment”. In MNE, the action complements the National Strategy for Employment and Human Resource Development 2016-2020 and objective "Creating optimal conditions for the growth of employment and improvement of human resources ". The project is linked to the EU Youth Strategy emphasizing that young women and men have a crucial role to play in meeting socio-economic, demographic, cultural, environmental and technological challenges and opportunities facing the EU. Specifically, it is linked to Employment and entrepreneurship measure; invest in the skills employers look for and encouraging entrepreneurship.

#### **1.5. Related programmes and other donor activities**

Contracting Authority (Centre for Youth Work) implemented a successful pilot project in Serbia (Novi Sad) in partnership with 3 IT companies in the period from 2017-2019. They have developed an innovative youth employability model preparing youth for 4.0. industrial revolution, respecting “one-stop-shop” methodology, cross-sectoral cooperation, the needs of youth and employers called: My career from zero to hero (supported by the SIPRU - Social Inclusion and Poverty Unit of R. Serbia within scheme Supporting Innovative Approaches to Tackle Youth Employment and Employability). The model design is based on the research and active involvement both of youth and IT sector.

Current Action (2021-2023) represents transfer of piloted model of youth employment from Novi Sad to cross-border Sandzak area, respecting local needs. It brings innovative and new approach to youth service development built on fostering networking of a broad range of actors from CSOs, local government, young people, SMEs, private producers and IT business sector, which contribute to sustainability and quality. Digital, transferable and entrepreneurship competencies will encourage innovation and creative ideas for youth employability and productivity increase of SMEs. Built relationships, cooperation and transferable skills as a result of this action, will last beyond the project life. By respecting core youth work principals; views and needs of the most vulnerable groups (women, youth, ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups) will be fully acknowledged, ensuring engagement of the most vulnerable youth from deprived communities. The action will give specific focus on gender equality and empowering young woman. Due to fact that IT is technical vocation, where men are predominantly employed, the action contribute to reducing stereotypes and gender roles. Youth employment in rural areas contributes to prevention of depopulation of rural areas and tendency of aging population. IT jobs are particularly suitable for it, since job opportunities are not specifically connected to living area. IT opens global world-wide perspective of finding jobs opportunities online.

## **2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS**

### **2.1. Overall objective**

The overall objective of the Action of which this contract will be a part is as follows:

To contribute to economic, social, and territorial development by increasing access to social and cultural services aimed at vulnerable youth from Sandzak cross-border area.

A specific objective is to develop an innovative youth employability one-stop-shop service (Curricula) which fosters employability and social inclusion of vulnerable youth in cross-border Sandzak area by increasing their employment competencies and networking with SMEs, as a part of a working group consisting of 6 experts (3 from Serbia and 3 from Montenegro).

### **2.2. Purpose**

The purpose of this contract is as follows:

To develop 7 months educational program (Curricula) combining soft, IT technical skills, entrepreneurship, practical work, mentorship, and networking with employers and SMEs as a part of a working group consisting of 6 experts (3 from Serbia and 3 from Montenegro).

### **2.3. Results to be achieved by the contractor**

With the identified need to introduce innovative services that will effectively and efficiently respond to youth employment and social inclusion of the most vulnerable groups, the Action will use know-how from lead applicant experience who piloted model and adjust the service to the local needs by involving relevant experts.

Therefore, the Action starts with the Mapping study analyzing the existing situation related to youth employment in 6 municipalities in the cross-border Sandzak area, which will serve as a basis for adaptation of the Youth Employment “one-stop-shop” model in line with local needs.

This will be done by a working group consisting of cross-sector and cross-border relevant experts (6 members).

After piloting, the model of the “one-stop-shop” methodology will be evaluated by all experts, and by the end of the project will be ready for multiplication to other regions/countries as a tool for enhancing Youth Employability.

The model and its result and impact will be promoted at the final “Round table” that will gather relevant stakeholders (70) but primarily representatives of local government from targeted 6 municipalities from the cross-border Sandzak region. The event will serve to advocate for recognition of the service by the local government as the innovative promising practice that could be supported through youth employment measures within public policies contributing to its further sustainability.

The expected result to be achieved by the expert, as a part of the working group, consisting of 6 experts (3 from Serbia and 3 from Montenegro) of this contract is:

Service responding to local needs of youth employability is developed, evaluated, and recognized as a model of good practice by the local self-governments in Sandzak cross-border area of SRB and MNE.

### **3. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS**

#### **3.1. Assumptions underlying the project**

Assumptions underlying the project are as follows:

It is assumed that the Contracting Authority will provide all necessary information to the Contractor on Action documents and procedures to follow during the assignment.

It is assumed that the expertise of the selected Contractor as well as its access to/experience in working with target groups will contribute to achieving the project results.

#### **3.2. Risks**

Risks are as follows:

Collected and analyzed data cannot contribute to tailored-made youth employment service (3 educational curricula: social, IT technical, and entrepreneurial competencies) and does not represent the baseline for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the Action.

Recommendations for merging existing relevant resources and stakeholders to create a platform – a one-stop-shop youth employability model for future jobs for vulnerable youth in the cross-border Sandzak region are not developed.

The further possible development of COVID 19 could influence the working group in terms of time and the fact that the live meetings will be difficult to organize. Therefore, the research if needed could be limited only online.

### **4. SCOPE OF THE WORK**

#### **4.1. General**

##### **4.1.1. Description of the assignment**

The Action “One-stop-shop service for social inclusion and youth employability” - strengthening cross-border cooperation among CSOs to implement innovative youth employability model for future jobs of 4.0. digital revolution represents a joint effort between Centre for Youth Work (Serbia), Forum MNE (Montenegro), Local Youth Office Novi Pazar (Serbia), and Citizen Initiative for Youth, Rozaje (Montenegro).

The Action is funded by European Commission through Cross-border Programme Serbia – Montenegro 2014-2020 under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II), and will cover 20 months. The Action starts with the Mapping study analyzing existing situations related to youth employment in Serbia, which will serve as a basis for adaptation of country-specific one-stop-shop youth employment model through consultative processes involving all relevant stakeholders.

The one-stop-shop youth employment model is a model which facilitates young's people transition from school to the labour market by offering a range of different, multi-stakeholders services to young people at one place, such as youth outreach, youth work support, non-formal and informal education, career counseling, entrepreneurship, employer contact of point.

The purpose of this contract is to develop 7 months educational program (Curricula) combining soft, IT technical skills, entrepreneurship, practical work, mentorship, and networking with employers and SMEs.

Experts can apply only for one of the 3 courses

Course 1 - transferable skills;

Course 2 - digital skills;

Course 3 - entrepreneurship.

It must be clearly and unambiguously stated in the application for which course the expert is applying.

#### **4.1.2. Geographical area to be covered**

The Republic of Serbia.

The working group will be consisted of 6 experts (3 from Serbia and 3 from Montenegro) and will collaborate with researchers in Serbia and Montenegro, who conducted a mapping study for 6 municipalities in the Sandzak region of Serbia and Montenegro.

#### **4.1.3. Target groups**

Target groups are as follows:

- NEET youth: 18 - 30 years old youth not in education, employment, or training. 30 NEET youth from targeted municipalities have been reached within the mapping study.
- Civil society organizations (CSOs) are active in the field of youth employment in the Sandzak region of Serbia. 7 CSOs from targeted municipalities have been reached within the mapping study.
- Public institutions and local government representatives are active in the field of youth employment. 7 local public institutions and relevant local government representatives from targeted municipalities have been reached within the mapping study.
- SME and IT employers. 15 SME and IT employers from targeted municipalities have been reached within the mapping study.

When it comes to final beneficiaries the Action will target:

- youth aged 18-30 in the Sandzak cross-border region who are not in education or employment, young from Novi Pazar, Sjenica, Tutin, and from Berane, Bijelo Polje, and Rozaje. These youth lack competencies relevant for the labour market needs (digital IT skills, entrepreneurship, soft skills, practical experience) and stay unemployed with a tendency of long-term unemployment.

- Local SMEs and individual productions from cross-border Sandzak area in Serbia and Montenegro, lacking digital marketing and selling products or services via the internet.
- Local companies from Sandzak cross border area.
- Local authorities and relevant local public institutions, such as Local Youth Offices, National Employment service, etc.

#### 4.2. Specific work

The contractor will perform the following:

Type of the activity	Description of the activity	Time frame
1. Team meetings	The expert is expected to actively participate in team meetings of the working group live and/or online.	January 2022
2. Consultations with researchers	The expert is expected to have general consultations with researchers from Serbia and Montenegro who conducted mapping studies for municipalities in the Sandzak region.	January 2022
3. Developing educational program (Curricula) combining soft, IT technical skills, entrepreneurship, practical work, mentorship, and networking with employers and SME	The expert is expected to actively participate in developing the educational program (Curricula) the most suitable for achieving results defined in section 2.	25. January 2022
4. The „Round table “	<p>The model and its result and impact will be promoted at the final „Round table“ that will gather relevant stakeholders (70) but primarily representatives of local government from targeted 6 municipalities from the cross-border Sandzak region.</p> <p>The event will serve to advocate for recognition of the service by the local government as an innovative promising practice that could be supported through youth employment measures within public policies contributing to its further sustainability.</p>	The final „Round table“ will be organized in December 2022.
5. Ensuring quality and timely	The expert is obliged to ensure the quality of the educational program	During the whole period of

delivery of research outputs	(Curricula), as well as timely delivery of the final version.  During all the defined tasks the contractor (the expert) is obliged to take into account suggestions from the Contracting Authority.	implementation of the task.
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### **4.3. Project management**

#### **4.3.1. Responsible body**

The Contracting Authority will be responsible for managing this contract.

#### **4.3.2. Management structure**

Ivan Topalovic, the project manager, will be responsible for the implementation of tasks related to this contract on behalf of the Contracting Authority.

#### **4.3.3. Facilities to be provided by the contracting authority and/or other parties**

N/A

## **5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING**

### **5.1. Location**

Republic of Serbia

### **5.2. Start date & period of implementation of tasks**

The intended start date is the date of signing the contract by both parties. The period of implementation of the contract will cover the period between the start date and January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at the latest.

## **6. REQUIREMENTS**

### **6.1. Staff**

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration of the partner country, or of international/regional organizations based in the country, shall only be approved to work as experts if well justified. The justification should be submitted with the tender and shall include information on the added value the expert will bring as well as proof that the expert is seconded or on personal leave.

#### **6.1.1. Key experts**

Key experts are not required.

All experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities they take on.

The Contractor shall have sufficient relevant experience in conducting similar researches.



## 6.2. Office accommodation

N/A

## 6.3. Facilities to be provided by the contractor

The contractor shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. In particular, it must ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial, and interpreting provision to enable experts to concentrate on their primary responsibilities. It must also transfer funds as necessary to support its work under the contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion.

## 6.4. Equipment

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the contracting authority/partner country as part of this service contract or transferred to the contracting authority/partner country at the end of this contract. Any equipment related to this contract that is to be acquired by the partner country must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.

# 7. REPORTS

## 7.1. Reporting requirements

*The contractor will submit the following reports in mother tongue in one original and 2 copies:*

- ***Inception Report*** of maximum 10 pages to be produced after 10 days from the contract signature. In the report the contractor shall describe e.g., initial findings from researchers report detailed methodology, progress in creating Curriculum, any difficulties encountered or expected in addition to the work. The contractor should proceed with his/her work unless the contracting authority sends comments on the inception report.
- ***Draft final Curriculum*** of a maximum of 20 pages. This Draft shall be submitted no later than 10 days before the end of the period of implementation of tasks.
- ***Final Curriculum*** with the same specifications as the draft final Curriculum, incorporating any comments received from the parties on the draft report. The deadline for sending the final report is 10 working days after receipt of comments on the draft final Curriculum. The final Curriculum shall contain a sufficiently detailed Curriculum of the Course for which the expert applied. The final Curriculum must be provided along with the corresponding invoice.

## 7.2. Submission and approval of reports

The report referred to above must be submitted to the project manager identified in the contract. The project manager is responsible for approving the reports.

The project manager will provide comments or approval of the report within 3 business days of submission from the contractor. In the absence of comments or approval by the partner country within the set deadline, the reports are deemed to be approved.

# 8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

## 8.1. Definition of indicators

Specific performance measures were chosen because they provide valid, useful, practical, and comparable measures of progress towards achieving expected results. Can be quantitative: measures of

quantity, including statistical statements; or qualitative: judgments and perception derived from subjective analysis.

## **8.2. Special requirements**

N/A