The Effects and Results of the Youth Employment Programmes in Bosnia and Herzegovina

TERM OF REFERENCE

March 2020
Introduction

Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). WFD is currently implementing a three-year CSSF funded programme in the Western Balkans titled Western Balkans Democracy Initiative www.wfd.org/wbdi.

The programme seeks to contribute to development of more resilient and legitimate democratic governance across the Western Balkans. WFD will achieve this through engaging with entities across the democratic spectrum to strengthen their ability to fulfil their mandates and promote inclusive governance which delivers for citizens. The programme will make interventions at country and regional levels to make progress across these various elements.

As part of this regional initiative, the programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina works towards building responsiveness of political actors towards youth problems. Its aim is to improve the awareness, capacities and actions of political actors to deal with the youth unemployment while actively engaging the groups directly affected by this issue.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has one of the highest youth unemployment rates in the world. The Agency for Statistics writes that the current rate is 38,8 % (Survey on the Work Force, 2018). On the other hand, the World Bank estimates that the youth unemployment is significantly higher, with the rate as high as 47,4%. The problem, although not new and not specific to BiH context, has been showing negative trends over a long period of time: World Bank data on youth unemployment for Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1991 to 2017 show that average value of the youth unemployment in that period was 53.8 percent with a minimum of 35.01 percent in 1991 and a maximum of 62.66 percent in 2014. The figure covers those up to 24 years old. One out of four young people is neither in education, employment, nor training.

Poor economic situation and lack of employment opportunities are one of the leading reasons why young people move abroad in pursuit of better life. 2018 FES Youth Study found that 61,8 percent of young people want to move to another country. This is a 12,6 percent increase from the previous study conducted in 2015 using the same methodology. According to the finding of the study, “negative experiences have been accumulating for some time, which is why leaving the country seems to be the only solution for a great number of young people. The dominant public discourse on migration creates an impression that this is not merely a desirable course of action, but also a necessary one.”

One of the features of BiH emigration is the “brain drain”, the departure of young, educated and qualified people. In the World Economic Forum’s 2017-2018 Global Competitiveness Report, BiH ranked 135th out of 137 countries for “capacity to retain talent”. The BiH population is shrinking not only because of youth emigration, but also to the negative birth rate and aging population. The brain drain further weakens the country’s development, as populations increasingly made up of elderly and also challenges the stability of the economic and social security systems.

Given the high levels of unemployment of young people in relation to the rest of the populations, many countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, use active labour market policies to support youth employment, skills development and successful transition from education to labour market. One of the dominant measures implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina, through programmes in Federation BiH, Republika Srpska and Brčko Distrikt, is co-financing the employment of young people. The aim of this measure is to help young people gain first work experience, develop skills and in the long run, increase their employability. However, the available reports, including those of the audit offices, indicate that employment programme have not been well-targeted to include the most vulnerable groups.
and that they have not been effective in reducing youth unemployment. The main criticism of the youth employment programme is the lack of clear and measurable objectives and performance indicators that would allow assessing the programme's successes and failures.

For that purpose, WFD is seeking a consultant(s) to conduct a comprehensive, empirical research on the effects and results of the youth employment programmes implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in its administrative units Federation of BiH, Republika Srpska, District Brčko.

2. Objectives and Research Questions

The objective of this research is to examine to which extent youth employment programmes have been successful in addressing youth unemployment in BiH and what have been the effects of these active labour measures. The aim of the research is to provide empirical evidence about the results and outcomes of these measures on the targeted populations, as well as inputs on how these measures should be (re)designed to achieve better results.

In addition to the main research question about the effects, outcomes and results of youth employment programmes, this study should provide answers to the following questions (not exhaustive):

What is the structure of beneficiaries of the youth employment programmes, both on the employer and employee side, and how are they selected?

How are youth employment programmes funded and what’s their share in overall active labour measures?

To which extent do youth employment programmes support or contribute to the overall economic reforms adopted at all levels of government?

Do any complementary active labour measures, such as trainings and counselling, support the co-financing of the youth employment?

Are youth employment programmes developed following gender-responsive budgeting methodology? To which extent youth employment programmes increase or decrease unemployment of young women? To which extent do youth employment programmes contribute to occupational segregation between women and men?

How well-informed are the potential beneficiaries about youth employment programmes?

What impact, if any, do youth employment programmes have in boosting employability of young people after the end of the programme’s implementation?

Which factors contribute to the effectiveness of the youth employment programmes?

What is the role do and should public employment services play?

As part of the research methodology, the consultant(s) should develop indicators to assess the success of youth employment programmes. The study should outline clear conclusions and recommendations for the decision makers on improving the implementation and the effectiveness of these measures and processes.

The methodology for this study should include the desk review of the existing data and literature, review of the primary sources and documents and well as the primary research, including interviews with beneficiaries of the programme, and other relevant actors.
3. Timelines

The deadline for sending proposals for this call is 27th of March, 2020.

Deadlines listed in the table below assume the contracting is completed by the March 31st, 2020. If contracting with the vendor/consultant/organisation is concluded after this date, the deadlines will be adjusted accordingly. The studies should be delivered and presented to WFD by the following deadlines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The full research methodology</td>
<td>The full details of the research methods and instruments that would be used.</td>
<td>10 April, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Research Study</td>
<td>The draft research study with answers to all the relevant research questions, analysis and recommendations</td>
<td>01 June, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments and feedback from WFD on draft</td>
<td>WFD will respond and provide comments to the draft research study</td>
<td>05 June, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final research study on BiH</td>
<td>Final research study with answers to all the relevant questions addressing comments and feedback from the WFD prepared and delivered to WFD</td>
<td>10 June, 2020</td>
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4. Key Deliverables

The consultant/s is expected to collect necessary information and data in order to deliver the research study.

The vendor/consultant/s/organisation is expected to prepare and deliver a research study on the Effects and Results of the Youth Employment Programmes in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The vendor/consultant/s/organisation is/are expected to present the findings of the study to a relevant audience agreed with WFD country office Bosnia and Herzegovina at an agreed time.

5. Budget

- The budget for conducting and writing the research study is 6,000 EUR (inclusive of taxes);
- The consultant/s travel expenses, field research costs, draft report preparation and any incidentals for preparing the study are the sole responsibility of the consultant. WFD will not be covering any of the above expenses and the budget provided is inclusive of these costs.
- 40% of the approved budget will be provided upon signing the contract to ensure effective execution of the tasks. 60% upon successful completion and delivery of the assessment/s.

6. Eligibility and Application details

Eligible candidates for this call are all interested individuals and organizations (consultants, think-tanks, CSOs, faculties, institutes, etc) with relevant experience in conducting economic analysis and social science research.
Interested consultants/organisations should send their application by 27th of March 2020, to the WFD BiH office at azra.dizdar@wfd.org.

The application should include:

- CV of the consultant(s), listing the experience relevant for this work and any prior published work on this topic.
- One page proposal, with description of the methodologic approach
- A budget proposal

Only vendors/consultants/organisations which have relevant experience and have conducted and published work on the relevant topic will be considered.

Only consultants/organisations which will be able to complete the research study by the provided deadline and conditions will be considered for this assignment.