

Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MoECR)
Moldova Higher Education Project (MHEP)

Procurement References: MD-MOED-206736-CS-INDV

TERMS OF REFERENCE
for consulting services to assist the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research with the
development of the National Qualifications Framework

1. Background information on the project

„Moldova Higher Education” Project (MHEP) is a World Bank-financed Project to be implemented between May 2020 and December 2025.

The total cost of credit is EUR 35.7 million (US\$39.4 million equivalent) financed by the International Development Association (IDA) and is provided to the Republic of Moldova in support of Moldova Higher Education.

The Project Objective is to improve the labor market orientation of selected higher education institutions and the quality assurance mechanisms. The Project is organized around three components and includes systemic interventions in the areas of higher education quality, financing and management, as well as a targeted program to be implemented by selected higher education institutions and pedagogical colleges to address some of their most pressing needs in labor market orientation.

The MHEP components are described below:

1. Improving the Quality Assurance Mechanisms
2. Improving the Labor Market Orientation through Targeted Interventions
3. Project Management

Component 1 – Improving the Quality Assurance Mechanisms. This component aims to improve Moldova higher education system’s quality assurance mechanisms, which would also contribute to improve its labor market orientation. It comprises three sub-components that support activities in: (i) National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and Quality Assurance (QA); (ii) System Management and Monitoring; (iii) Higher Education Financing.

Component 2 – Improving the Labor Market Orientation through Targeted Interventions. This component would finance the design and implementation of a targeted and needs-based program (Higher Education Improvement Program - HEIP) aimed at improving the labor market orientation of Moldova’s higher education institutions, as well as their research capacity.

Component 3 – Project Management. This component would support the day-to-day management of the Project by the MoECR with assistance of a dedicated team of individual consultants who would provide managerial, fiduciary, and technical support to the implementation of the proposed Project for its full duration.

Component 1 of the Project will finance relevant activities in ensuring the quality of education and training in higher education, including the improvement of the existing QA mechanisms. This activity will be implemented by the MoECR’s National Qualifications Framework Department in close collaboration with the MoECR’s Higher Education Department, MoECR’s Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Department and the Information and Communication Technologies Center for Education.

The MoECR intends to hire an individual consultant to provide support to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Department in the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework.

2. Objective of the assignment

The objective of the consultancy is to provide assistance to the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework including through the training of 80 university teachers, as well as support to the MoECR's NQF Department for the self-certification of the NQF.

3. Scope of Work

In order to achieve the objective, the individual consultant shall perform the following tasks:

- Support development / adjustment of the normative framework that regulates the development of the curriculum for the higher education programs that lead to awarding qualifications of the NQF levels 6, 7 and 8;
- Support development of the models of study programs in accordance with the models of qualification standards for the NQF levels 6,7 and 8;
- Support development of the principles of modularisation of qualification for new programs, including for ensuring access and motivation of lifelong learning for adults and people with special educational needs;
- Support development of the methodology for assessment and certification (final validation) of qualification;
- Organize and participate in training sessions for experts in curriculum development according to qualification standards, based on learning outcomes for the NQF levels 6, 7 and 8;
- Support preparation of the Report on alignment of the NQF to the European Qualifications Framework for Life-Long Learning (EQF LLL) and self-certification in relation to the Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA), according to the reference criteria recommended by the European Council and Council of the European Parliament;
- Support development of the mechanism and tools for monitoring quality and relevance, regular evaluation and updating of qualifications in higher education;
- Coordinate the activities under the Project for the sub-component 1.1 related to curriculum, systematize data, develop monthly activity reports, and support drafting related communication materials with the public;
- Coordinate activities with other consultants in the area of National Qualifications.

4. Duration of the assignment

This is a full-time assignment (subject to 8 hours per day) expected to begin in April 2021. The contract will be signed for a period of 12 months. Subject to Consultant's satisfactory performance, the contract may be renewed, not exceeding the closing date of the Project on December 31, 2025.

5. Consultant's reporting obligations

The consultant to be hired in accordance with the proposed assignment should prepare monthly reports on all activities performed. The monthly reports should be subject to approval by the MHEP Project Coordinator and the Head of the National Qualifications Framework Department.

6. Qualification requirements and basis for evaluation (evaluation criteria)

(i) General experience (30 points):

- PhD degree in pedagogy, social science and/or related field;
- At least 5 years of professional in the in the area of higher education;

(ii) Adequacy for Project (40 points):

- At least 5 years of professional experience in the development of the National Qualifications Framework and qualification standards, the normative framework in the field of higher education and training, of the study programs in higher education, and of the quality management of the training process in higher education;
- Experience in international cooperation projects, preferably in the development of the NQF and qualifications in higher education, in the development and implementation of the normative framework for ensuring the quality of education in higher education;
- Working experience in higher education system policies would be an advantage;
- Experience in delivering trainings, chairing meetings.

(iii) Language and Experience (30 points):

- Strong computer skills, specifically with MS Office, and ability to master other software quickly;
- Flexibility and good analytical skills;
- Very good teamwork skills;
- Excellent knowledge of Romanian (both written and oral), good knowledge of English and ability to develop documents in English.

7. Institutional Arrangements

The Consultant will report to the Project Coordinator, Project Executive Director and to Head of the National Qualifications Framework Department of the MoECR. The MHEP team will oversee the process of consulting services, and will manage the implementation of the contract.

The MoECR and Project team will provide the Consultant with necessary support to complete the assignment: project documents necessary for assignment accomplishment, necessary work conditions, including office space, telephone, fax and other office equipment and supplies.

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