

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

Procurement References: MD-MOED-206737-CS-INDV

TERMS OF REFERENCE

for consulting services to assist the MoECR with the activities related to the development of the qualification standards

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 Development 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 will 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 will 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 support the modernization and enhancement of key elements of the system's quality assurance mechanisms, such as the development and revision of qualification standards in alignment with the NQF. This activity will be implemented by the MoECR's National Qualification 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.

In this context, the MoECR intends to hire an Individual Consultant who will provide assistance in carrying out the activities related to the development of the qualification standards.

2. Objective of the assignment

The objective of the consultancy is to assist the National Qualification Framework (NQF) Department in carrying out the activities related to the development of the qualification standards.

3. Scope of Work

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

- Develop an Action Plan for the sub-component 1.1. – *National Qualifications Framework and Quality Assurance* for the Project implementation (5 years), with clear establishment of the actions, sub-actions, responsible actors/ structures, timelines, deliverables and related costs;
- Develop a study on the qualifications/study programs offered in higher education and higher education institutions providing the study programs. The study shall contain at least a structured analysis of the qualifications required for the system, of qualifications elaborated already, periodicity for updating qualifications (schedule for qualifications update), correlation of qualifications elaborated with curricula developed, difficulties for transposing qualifications into curricula, etc.;
- Develop/modify/complete the normative acts necessary for the implementation of the NQF, including for development, review and updating of the qualification standards for the NQF levels 6 to 8;
- Develop models of competence standards based on ESCO, ISCO, ISCED 2013F and international good practices and models of qualification standards based on learning outcomes for the NQF levels 6, 7 and 8;
- Develop the Guide on writing learning outcomes;
- Organize and participate in training sessions for experts in the development of competence standards and qualification standards, based on learning outcomes for the NQF levels 6 to 8;
- Coordinate the process for development of qualification standards on fields of professional training by the expert groups;
- Develop the methodology for validation and recognition of micro-credentials, modules, parts, qualification units and non-formal and informal studies;
- Coordinate the activities under the Project for the sub-component 1.1, systematize data, and develop monthly activity reports and support drafting related public communication materials;
- 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 report should be subject to approval by the MHEP Project Coordinator together with 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 education, social sciences or related field;
- At least 5 years of professional experience 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 for regulating education and training in higher education, of the study programs and in quality assurance;
- Experience in international cooperation projects, preferably in the development of NQF and qualifications, the normative framework for regulating study programs in higher education;
- Working experience in elaboration of 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 in 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, 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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