

Terms of reference (ToR) for the procurement of services below the EU threshold

CONFIDENTIAL

Design and delivery of targeted training sessions for the designated MLSP staff involved in the ESF+/EaSI NCP function	Project number/ cost centre: S-010925-025 Tender number 10052971
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0.	List of abbreviations	2
1.	Context.....	3
2.	Tasks to be performed by the contractor	3
3.	Concept.....	5
	Technical-methodological concept	5
4.	Personnel concept.....	6
	Key expert 1 – ESF+/EaSI governance and regulatory framework	6
	Key expert 2 – Interaction with the European Commission.....	7
	Key expert 3 – Procedures and reporting requirements.....	7
5.	Costing requirements	8
	Sustainability aspects for travel	8
	Specification of inputs	9
6.	Requirements on the format of the tender	10

0. List of abbreviations

AG	Commissioning party
AN	Contractor
ANOFM	National Employment Agency
AVB	General Terms and Conditions of Contract for supplying services and work
BMAS	German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
BMZ	German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development
EaSI	The Employment and Social Innovation
ESF+	The European Social Fund Plus
EU	European Union
FK	Expert
FKT	Expert days
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPA	The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
KZFK	Short-term expert
MLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Moldova
NCP	National Contact Point
ToRs	Terms of reference

1. Context

Since EU accession negotiations with the Republic of Moldova were formally opened in June 2024, and given the ambitious accession timeline, full compliance with the Copenhagen criteria remains a key political priority for the Government of the Republic of Moldova. A key prerequisite is the effective use of the instruments and funds that the EU provides under its accession strategy for Moldova.

The European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) is the EU's main financing and support instrument for investments in sustainable employment, skills development, and social inclusion. As part of EU cohesion policy, it strengthens economic, social, and territorial cohesion within the EU and its member states. In June 2024, Moldova became associated with ESF+ through the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand, enabling Moldovan organisations to participate in projects funded under this component.

Pursuant to Government Decision No. 449/2025, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP) was designated as the national institution responsible for coordinating and monitoring Moldova's participation in the EaSI strand of ESF+. Lessons from the accession experience of Member States such as Romania and Bulgaria underline the importance of establishing, at an early stage, the necessary institutional arrangements, capacities and working processes to enable effective participation in, and use of, EU financing and support instruments such as ESF+ following accession.

Against this backdrop, the individual measure aims to support the operationalisation and strengthening of the ESF+/EaSI National Contact Point (NCP) function within MLSP, with a focus on information, coordination and guidance for relevant Moldovan stakeholders interested in EaSI and future ESF+ opportunities. End beneficiaries are individuals and population groups in Moldova who may benefit from ESF+-funded investments in social inclusion, sustainable employment, and skills development. These include socially disadvantaged and vulnerable groups (e.g. Roma, single mothers, pensioners), young jobseekers, and employees seeking to adapt to the digital and green requirements of the modern labour market through further training.

In light of the evolving EaSI/ESF+ framework and the need to ensure effective communication with relevant EU-level interlocutors, designated MLSP staff involved in the ESF+/EaSI NCP function require targeted capacity development in three practical areas: understanding the EaSI/ESF+ governance and regulatory framework, communicating effectively with the European Commission and other relevant actors, and applying basic operational procedures for information management, internal coordination, follow-up and reporting related to the NCP function.

To address these needs, GIZ seeks to engage qualified experts to design and deliver targeted training sessions aimed at strengthening the capacity of designated MLSP staff involved in the ESF+/EaSI NCP function and, where relevant, staff of other MLSP subdivisions or partner institutions agreed with MLSP and GIZ. This initiative supports Moldova's EU integration process and strengthens the practical readiness of MLSP to provide information, coordination and general guidance on EaSI and future ESF+ opportunities.

2. Tasks to be performed by the contractor

The primary objectives of this training initiative are:

- To strengthen the knowledge of designated MLSP staff involved in the ESF+/EaSI NCP function regarding the EaSI/ESF+ governance and regulatory framework.

- To enhance practical skills for effective communication and coordination with the European Commission and other relevant EU-level and national stakeholders.
- To support the development of practical procedures for information management, internal coordination, follow-up and reporting related to the ESF+/EaSI NCP function.

The scope of work includes the design and delivery of three distinct training sessions, each with specific topics and objectives:

1. ESF+/EaSI Governance and Regulatory Framework

Preliminary timing: End of December 2026

- 1.1. Conduct a needs assessment through stakeholder interviews or surveys.
- 1.2. Develop a modular curriculum with clear learning objectives.
- 1.3. Create training materials covering:
 - a) Legal bases and governance structures of ESF+/EaSI.
 - b) Roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders.
 - c) Good practices from EU Member States.
- 1.4. Deliver interactive one day training session with case work and Q&A.
- 1.5. Provide a short follow-up report with recommendations.

2. Interaction with the European Commission

Preliminary timing: Third week of January 2027

- 2.1. Review existing communication practices and templates.
- 2.2. Design modules covering:
- 2.3. Stakeholder mapping within the European Commission.
 - a) Communication standards and query management.
 - b) Preparation for meetings and follow-up actions.
 - c) Facilitate practical exercises and simulations.
- 2.4. Deliver interactive one day training session with case work and Q&A
- 2.5. Provide a short follow-up report with recommendations.

3. Procedures and Reporting Requirements

Preliminary timing: March 2027

- 3.1. Conduct a mapping and gap analysis of current procedures.
- 3.2. Develop training modules on:
 - a) Standard operating procedures (SOPs) and internal controls.
 - b) Data quality and reporting cycles.
- 3.3. Deliver training sessions with case studies and group work.

3.4. Provide a short follow-up report with recommendations.

Certain milestones, as laid out in the table below, are to be achieved during the contract term:

Milestones/process steps/partial services	Deadline/place/person responsible	Criteria for acceptance
Training concept and draft agenda	3 weeks prior to training	Written approval by the designated MLSP contact point and GIZ project coordinator or equivalent.
Final training materials	1 week prior to training	Written approval by the designated MLSP contact point and GIZ project coordinator or equivalent.
Delivery of training sessions	On the training day	
Final report	1-2 weeks post-training	Written approval by the designated MLSP contact point and GIZ project coordinator or equivalent.

Period of assignment: from November 2026 until 31.05.2027.

3. Concept

In the tender, the tenderer is required to show *how* the objectives defined in Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed) are to be achieved, taking into account the technical-methodological requirements of the assignment, where applicable. In addition, the tenderer must describe the proposed approach to managing and delivering the services.

Note: The numbers in parentheses correspond to the lines of the technical assessment grid.

Technical-methodological concept

Strategy (1.1): The tenderer is required to consider the tasks to be performed with reference to the objectives of the services put out to tender (see Chapter 1 Context) (1.1.1). Following this, the tenderer presents and justifies the explicit strategy with which it intends to provide the services for which it is responsible (see Chapter 2 Tasks to be performed) (1.1.2).

The tenderer is required to present the actors relevant for the services for which it is responsible and describe the **cooperation (1.2)** with them.

The tenderer is required to describe the key **processes** for the services for which it is responsible and create an **operational plan** or schedule (1.4.1) that describes how the services according to Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed by the contractor) are to be provided. In particular, the tenderer is required to describe the necessary work steps and, if applicable, take account of the milestones and **contributions** of other actors (partner contributions) in accordance with Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed) (1.4.2).

The tenderer is required to describe its contribution to knowledge management for MLSP, with a focus on practical transfer of knowledge, internal use of deliverables and sustainability of the ESF+/EaSI NCP function (1.5.1) under **learning and innovation**.

4. Personnel concept

The tenderer is required to provide personnel who are suited to performing the tasks described, on the basis of their CVs (see Chapter 6), the range of tasks involved and the required qualifications.

The qualifications specified below represent the requirements to reach the maximum number of points in the technical assessment.

Key expert 1 – ESF+/EaSI governance and regulatory framework

Tasks of key expert 1

- Conduct short stakeholder interviews or an online survey to establish baseline knowledge and priorities.
- Develop a modular curriculum (1 day) with learning objectives, agenda, and methods mix.
- Explain ESF+/EaSI architecture: legal bases (regulations, guidance), governance at EU/national levels; roles of the European Commission, Member States, managing authorities, NCPs.
- Produce a role and process map for the Moldovan NCP (interfaces with ministries, implementing bodies, monitoring committees).
- Compile good practices on governance/coordination from EU Member States.
- Run interactive sessions with case work.
- Facilitate Q&A on common interpretative issues.
- Provide handout/slide deck, glossary, and checklists (e.g., minimum governance standards).
- Submit a short report with concrete recommendations to refine NCP governance.

Qualifications of key expert 1

- Education/training (2.2.1): Master's degree (or equivalent University degree) in Public Administration, Law, Economics, European Studies, Organizational Development.
- Language (2.2.2): C1 - level language proficiency in English and Romanian language.
- General professional experience (2.2.3): 7 years with ESF+/EaSI (or ESF/Progress), governance and compliance structures.
- Specific professional experience (2.2.4): 3 years of advisory work with coordination/management bodies in EU Member States or accession/neighbouring countries.
- Leadership/management experience (2.2.5): not required.
- Regional experience (2.2.6): 2 years experience working with public administration structures in EU candidate/accession countries (specifically the Western Balkans or Eastern Partnership countries) or EU Member states.
- Development Cooperation (DC) experience (2.2.7): not needed.
- Other (2.2.8): Training skills: Documented successful delivery (training agendas, facilitation guides, etc.) of similar training programs within the past 3 years.

Key expert 2 – Interaction with the European Commission

Tasks of key expert 2

- Assess existing communication channels, templates, approval and escalation paths.
- Prepare training modules on: Commission stakeholder mapping (units/roles), communication standards, briefings/non-papers, query management, use of Commission portals/tools, preparing structured dialogues and thematic missions.
- Develop a modular curriculum (1 day) with learning objectives, agenda, and methods mix.
- Deliver practical exercises for dossier management, deadline control, action tracking, handling Commission requests.
- Facilitate Q&A on common issues.
- Provide a toolkit: briefing template, talking points, action tracker, communication plan, minutes template.
- Submit a short report with concrete recommendations.

Qualifications of key expert 2

- Education/training (2.3.1): Master's degree (or equivalent University degree) in Public Administration, Law, Economics, European Studies, Organizational Development.
- Language (2.3.2): C1 - level language proficiency in English language.
- General professional experience (2.3.3): 7 years of professional experience in institutional communication, coordination or liaison with the European Commission or EU programme authorities in ESF+/EaSI or related EU funding contexts.
- Specific professional experience (2.3.4): 3 years of experience in government relations/institutional liaison within European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)/ESF+.
- Leadership/management experience (2.3.5): not required.
- Regional experience (2.3.6): 2 years experience working with public administration structures in EU candidate/accession countries (specifically the Western Balkans or Eastern Partnership countries) or EU Member states.
- Development Cooperation (DC) experience (2.3.7): not needed.
- Other (2.3.8): Training skills: Documented successful delivery (training agendas, facilitation guides, etc.) of 3 similar training programs within the past 3 years.

Key expert 3 – Procedures and reporting requirements

Tasks of key expert 3

- Compile relevant procedural and reporting requirements; compare with national workflows to identify gaps.
- Prepare training modules on experience with ESF/ESF+/EaSI procedures, reporting, results monitoring, documentation, data quality and internal follow-up arrangements, preferably in public administration or EU-funded programme contexts.
- Develop a modular curriculum (1 day) with learning objectives, agenda, and methods mix.
- Deliver case studies, group work to draft SOPs/checklists.
- Facilitate Q&A on common issues.
- Provide a toolkit: briefing template, talking points, action tracker, communication plan, minutes template.
- Submit a short report with concrete recommendations.

Qualifications of key expert 3

- Education/training (2.4.1): Master's degree (or equivalent University degree) in Public Administration, Law, Economics, European Studies, Organizational Development.
- Language (2.4.2): C1 - level language proficiency in English language.
- General professional experience (2.4.3): 7 years of experience with ESF/ESF+/EaSI procedures and reporting, including Internal Control System (ICS) and audits.
- Specific professional experience (2.4.4): 3 years track record in introducing SOPs/reporting systems in public administrations; monitoring/indicator expertise
- Leadership/management experience (2.4.5): not required.
- Regional experience (2.4.6): 2 years experience working with public administration structures in EU candidate/accession countries (specifically the Western Balkans or Eastern Partnership countries) or EU Member states.
- Development Cooperation (DC) experience (2.4.7): not needed.
- Other (2.4.8): Training skills: Documented successful delivery (training agendas, facilitation guides, etc.) of similar training programs within the past 3 years.

If an expert's experience and profile align with two or all three training topics, **GIZ may proceed with contracting a single or two experts to conduct the training for all sessions.** This approach will ensure consistency in delivery and maximize the expertise brought to each topic, ultimately enhancing the overall effectiveness of the training program.

5. Costing requirements

Per diem allowances are reimbursed as a lump sum up to the maximum amounts permissible under tax law for each country as set out in the country table in the circular from the German Federal Ministry of Finance on travel expense remuneration (downloadable from the [German Federal Ministry of Finance – tax treatment of travel expenses and allowances for international business travel as of 1 January 2026 \(GERMAN ONLY\)](#)).

Accommodation allowances are reimbursed as detailed in the specification of inputs below.

With special justification, additional Accommodation costs up to a reasonable amount can be reimbursed against evidence.

All business travel must be agreed in advance by the officer responsible for the project

Sustainability aspects for travel

GIZ has undertaken an obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂ emissions) caused by travel. When preparing your tender, please incorporate options for reducing emissions, such as selecting the lowest-emission booking class (economy) and using means of transport, airlines and flight routes with a higher CO₂ efficiency. For short distances, travel by train (second class) or e-mobility should be the preferred option.

CO₂ emissions caused by air travel must be offset. GIZ specifies a budget for this, through which the carbon offsets can be settled against evidence.

There are many different providers in the market for emissions certificates, and they have different climate impact ambitions. The [Development and Climate Alliance \(German only\)](#) has published a [list of standards \(German only\)](#). GIZ recommends using the standards specified there.

Specification of inputs

Fee days	Number of experts	Number of days per expert	Total	Comments
Key expert 1 – ESF+/EaSI governance and regulatory framework	1	8	8	
Key expert 2 – Interaction with the European Commission	1	8	8	
Key expert 3 – Procedures and reporting requirements	1	8	8	
Travel expenses	Quantity	Number per expert	Total	Comments
Per-diem allowance in country of assignment	2	3	6	
Overnight allowance in country of assignment	2	3	6	Overnight stays abroad: Note: Under the BMF travel expense regulations, overnight allowances not exceeding 100% of the lump sum amounts can be submitted for reimbursement against evidence. Up to 75% of the maximum rates specified in the travel expense regulations can be submitted for reimbursement on a lump-sum basis. Please indicate in the price schedule whether your offer is on a lump-sum basis or against evidence.
Transport	Quantity	Number per expert	Total	Comments
International flights The Republic of Moldova	3	1	3	Roundtrip Travel to the place of service delivery the Republic of Moldova

CO₂ compensation for air travel	3	80 EUR	240 EUR	A fixed budget of EUR 240 is earmarked for settling carbon offsets against evidence.
Other travel expenses Airport transfers	6			Roundtrip airport transfers in the country of departure and the country of arrival against evidence.

6. Requirements on the format of the tender

The structure of the tender must correspond to the structure of the ToR. In particular, the detailed structure of the concept (Chapter 3) should be organised in accordance with the positively weighted criteria in the assessment grid (not with zero). The tender must be legible (font size 11 or larger) and clearly formulated. It must be drawn up in English (language).

The complete tender must not exceed 10 pages (excluding CVs). If one of the maximum page lengths is exceeded, the content appearing after the cut-off point will not be included in the assessment. External content (e.g. links to websites) will also not be considered.

The CVs of the personnel proposed in accordance with Chapter 4 of the ToRs must be submitted using the format specified in the terms and conditions for application. **The CVs shall not exceed 4 pages each.** They must clearly show the position and job the proposed person held in the reference project and for how long. The CVs can also be submitted in English (language).

Please calculate your financial tender based exactly on the parameters specified in Chapter 5 Quantitative requirements. The contractor is not contractually entitled to use up the days, trips, workshops or budgets in full. The number of days, trips and workshops and the budgets will be contractually agreed as maximum limits. The specifications for pricing are defined in the price schedule.