**Terms of Reference**

**The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit - “From Education to Employment – E2E“**

**Support to the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs for the methodology in the process of development of the Occupational Standards in the Republic of Serbia**

**Position: Consultant**

# Background

The accession to the EU is one of the key priorities of the Government of Serbia and at the same time the main driver of structural reforms. Negotiations for EU acquis chapter 19 – Social Policy and Employment – and relevant Action plan concluded that Serbia is moderately prepared in the area of social policy and employment. Some progress was made in further aligning the legislation with the acquis, mainly in the area of working conditions. In the coming period, Serbia should ensure adequate financial and institutional resources for employment and social policies to more systematically target the young, women and long-term unemployed, a priority indicator of the E2E in the second phase. The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit (SIPRU), a part of the Prime Minister’s Office, will support this process of social dimension of EU accession and relevant youth employment policies.

In the previous period, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) funds were unsuitable for developing and testing ideas for policy reforms before the wider implementation. The Government of Serbia (GoS) has invited Switzerland to support the ESRP process within the E2E main phase, as the Swiss support to the GoS reforms so far has been assessed as the very influential in the social and economic field. As Switzerland also leads the Human Resources and Social Development (HRSD) Sector Working Group, in the frame of donor coordination, and within the already established strategic partnership with SIPRU, Switzerland is well positioned to influence positively youth employment policy framework through proposed interventions. The good reputation is further supported by the excellent results of the Swiss engagement in the education reform support.

The education system still fails to develop skills relevant for the Serbian labour market. This mismatch between skills supply and demand on the labour market affects mainly young persons and among them the young women that face a long transition from school to work and thus often become long-term unemployed or even inactive. The impact hypothesis of E2E is reflected in the strategic policymaking approach whereby improved employment policies and capacities of institutions are built up to promote a more efficient use of public resources in the field of employment and education.

The Project “From Education to Employment – E2E“ is part of the larger E2E program launched by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in 2015 with the overall goal to increase decent youth employability in Serbia in a socially inclusive and sustainable way. E2E improves the position of youth on the Serbian labour market through modernization of youth employment policies and the development of young skilled labour demanded by the private sector.

The E2E program supports evidence-based approaches in the youth employment policies in Serbia. Under the lead of the SIPRU, it facilitates the policy dialogue between key national and local stakeholders. By including good practices from the main phase’ pilot regions, SIPRU advocates changes in the youth policy framework. The key line ministry in charge of the implementation of the youth employment and employability policies in Serbia relevant for implementation of the E2E is the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (MoLEVSA) with the support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD). Line ministries were actively involved in the design and implementation of the main phase and the 2nd phase is continuation of the joint efforts for youth employment up to 2021.

**Introduction**

The overall goal of the E2E programme is to increase decent youth employability in Serbia in a socially inclusive and sustainable way. The project has two outcomes:

* Outcome 1: Relevant national and local key stakeholders apply effective and evidence-based policies on youth employment and employability through increased performance capacities and diversified funding portfolio.
* Outcome 2: Young jobseekers are better able to position themselves on the labour market through employment promotion measures and non-formal training offers required by the private sector in selected regions of Serbia.

This specific Terms of Reference is related to achievement of Outcome 1 and support to the MoLEVSA in development of National Standard Classification of Occupations (NSCO), which is a process that has been going on for the last three years intensively and with the support of SIPRU through E2E and other donors (GIZ). The first step was adoption of the new Codebook of Occupations within Decision on a Uniform System of Codes to enter and encrypt data in the records in the field of labor (Official Gazette of the RS, no 56/18). As integral parts of the Decision, five new codebooks were adopted: Codebook of Occupations, Codebook of Qualification Levels, Codebook of Countries, Codebook of Municipalities in the Republic of Serbia and Codebook of Settlements in the Republic of Serbia.

The new Codebook of Occupations is the result of several years of work of the experts from the field of employment, who started from the international standard ISCO-08 (International Standard Classification of Occupation) and brought them in line with the needs of the labour market in the Republic of Serbia through consultations with employers and relevant state institutions. The experts had the support from the inter-sectoral Working Group jointly established by MoLEVSA and MoESTD (in November 2016), bearing in mind close relationship and interdependence between the education and employment, the National Qualifications Framework and the National Classification of Occupations. By June 2018, with the support of SIPRU through E2E, a list of occupations was prepared and each occupation got its own code. On July 17, 2018, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Decision which was effective from January 01, 2019.

In order to ensure the implementation of new codes by all potential users, in particular by employers, mandatory social security organizations responsible for keeping records in the field of employment (unemployed, employed, insured and users of social insurance ...) and for the official statistics needs, MoLEVSA in cooperation with the National Employment Service and other relevant institutions (e.g. the Serbian Chamber of Commerce) and with donor support (GIZ) has prepared the *Manual for the implementation of the codebooks*, organized ten information sessions for users of codebooks and set up the webpage for interactive communication with users (<http://kodekssifara.minrzs.gov.rs/>).

The second step in the process of establishing the NSCO was development of a proposal for relevant institutional framework for NSCO under the Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance, including responsibilities, maintenance and improvement of NSCO. This analysis was prepared with E2E support (September 2019) and resulted with concrete articles for amending the Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance.

Further steps imply defining a methodology for the development of the occupational standards, as well as preparing translation and harmonization with a new list of occupations all of Major groups, Sub-major groups, Minor groups and Unit groups in ICSO-08.

Regarding the methodology for the development of the occupational standards, in the previous period efforts were made in this direction, but further efforts are needed to reach sustainable and systematic solution in multisector environment.

Namely, in December 2007 Ministry of Economy and regional development contracted Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS) to put together methodology and instruments for the development of NSCO. The methodology was developed and descriptions of 600 occupations were created. Following that, with the support of the technical assistance project ”*Further integration of forecasting, monitoring and evaluation in the design and implementation of active labor market polices and harmonization of national occupational classification with ISCO 08 standards*” from IPA 2011 program cycle, new methodology was developed and 1.800 descriptions of occupations were created. The results of these projects were used and will be used for further development of the NSCO.

With the E2E support, the development of the proposal of the elements of occupational standard, based on the results of the previous projects (SORS, IPA 2011) and the occupational systems in EU member states is in the process (May 2020). The results of this project will be utilized in the further development of the methodology for the development of the occupational standards.

There are numerous benefits of developing the NSCO. It helps us to better understand certain occupations, improves connections of labor market needs with education and training and thus improves the relevance of education and training, career guidance and counseling, job matching, incites competitiveness, sustainable employment, innovations and labor market in general. On the base of composed occupational standards, qualification standards will be developed, which will be the basis for creating new and improving existing, quality and relevant educational programs in the Republic of Serbia. Adoption of The Law on National Qualification Framework of the Republic of Serbia in 2018 represents an important step forward in this area. Once established and connected, the National Qualifications Framework and the NSCO will significantly improve the link between the education system and labor market in Serbia.

In order to ensure systematic development of the NSCO, it is necessary to define a methodology for the development of the occupational standards and to set a roadmap for adopting the occupational standards, including the roles of the institutions and expert bodies within the employment and education sectors.

Considering the significance of the NSCO, the Consultant will operate in close cooperation with the Working group for the development of the NSCO, meaning that all results according to this ToR need to be approved by the Working group. The Working group will be established by the MoLEVSA and will consist of representatives of the MoLEVSA and MoESTED, other relevant ministries and institutions (Agency for Qualifications, National Employment Service) and social partners.

Taking into account the importance of this methodology and importance of further development of NSCO and its relevance to the activities stipulated in the E2E, the SIPRU will support the development of methodology through the engagement of consultant who will be responsible for developing and drafting methodology proposal.

**Objective of the Assignment**

Defining the methodology for the development of the occupational standards and mapping out the process for adopting the occupational standards in the Republic of Serbia, including institutions and expert bodies within the employment and education sectors and their specific roles and responsibilities in the process.

**Scope of Work and Tasks**

The consultant is expected to fulfill the following tasks:

1. suggest possible tools and techniques used in the process of development/adaption of the occupational standard;
2. define general form of occupational survey, steps, actors involved, tools and techniques that can be used and method for processing the gathered data;
3. describe the workflow/roadmap for the adoption of occupational standard, expected inputs and outputs, actors involved with their specific roles and responsibilities;
4. work closely with the Working group for the development of the NSCO, present them possible solutions and take into account their comments and recommendations in order to ensure their approval on outputs defined in this ToR.

**Responsibilities and Methodology**

The Consultant is responsible for the tasks listed by this ToR to the SIPRU Deputy Manager and the Head of Division for Active Employment Policy in MoLEVSA.

To produce this methodology, the Consultant should build upon the proposal of the elements of occupational standard developed within E2E. Also, the results of previous projects (SORS and IPA 2011) should be used to the fullest extent possible to create new solutions.

**Outputs/Deliverables**

**For the tasks 1-3:** in writing; methodology for development of the occupational standards including workflow/roadmap for their adoption, with following annexes: general form of occupational survey and forms needed in the process, like motion/form to adopt/develop occupational standard etc.

**For the task 4:** presentation of the proposals to the Working Group, on at least two workshops, for feedback and suggestions in order to ensure the final approval of the Working Group on methodology for the development of the occupational standards and roadmap for their adoption. Reports on Working group workshops including elaboration of discussed topics.

**Consultant Requirements**

* University degree;
* Excellent analytical and conceptualization skills;
* Experience in research techniques and methodological framework;
* Experience in developing occupational and qualification systems;
* Familiarity with international classifications in the field of employment and education – ISCO, ESCO and ISCED;
* 10 years of experience in EU employment and education projects;
* Familiarity with Serbian labour market and administrative institutions;
* Previous experience in cooperation with the MoLEVSA and MoESTD would be considered an asset;
* Good writing, editing and oral communication skills in Serbian (or Croatian and Bosnian) and English;
* coordinate and monitor own work.

**Reporting**

* First draft of the methodology – until 1 month from the beginning;
* Report after Working group workshops – until 3 months from the beginning (additional 1 month);
* Second draft after consultations with the Working group – until 4 months from the beginning (additional 1 month)
* Final draft of the methodology – 5 months from the beginning (additional 1 month).

## Duration of the Assignment

The contract shall cover period between 15th June 2020 and 31st December 2020.