

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EXPERTS

Terms of reference for on-site activities and missions

Action code and partner country: *SOCIEUX 2023-46 North Macedonia*

Action title: *Legal framework for social insurance registration and protection for self-employed workers who are uncovered by existing social security schemes*

Partner institution: Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth (MSPDY)

Activity/ies number(s) and title(s):

- *Activity 3 –Co-drafting specific regulatory amendments of the social insurance scheme for covering the protection for independent workers who perform non-standard forms of self-employment.*

Tentative dates of implementation and location:

- *Activity 3- June 02nd , 2025 to August 15th , 2025 (onsite mission form June 30th to July 11th)*

Expert positions and responsibilities (by activity):

- *Activity #3 : Expert #2 – Social Security Organisation and Financing*

Workload:

Activity #3 - Expert # 2: Total_20_days (10 days at distance; and 10 days onsite)

Call for experts' reference: **23-46/MKD/3/2**

Version - #: __ Draft Final Date: April 01st , 2025

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Partnership led by

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1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Country overview

North Macedonia is a landlocked country of the south-central Balkans. Languages in use are: Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, Romani, Serbian, Bosnian. Its population is of 1 836 713 people in accordance with census of 2021. The average age of the population is 37.05 years. In 2005, the country became a candidate for EU membership. North Macedonia was the first Western Balkan economy to sign a Stabilization and Association Agreement. Since 2009, the EU Commission has continuously recommended that the EU Council opens accession negotiations with North Macedonia. In 2020, the Council decided to open accession negotiations and these negotiations started in mid-2022 with the first intergovernmental screening meetings.

In 2021 the country ranked at 0,770 in the HDI value, which places it in the high human development category, positioning it at 78 out of 191 countries and territories. EU continues to be the biggest trading partner of North Macedonia (almost 80% of the Macedonian exports go to EU, 2021). Since its independence in 1991, North Macedonia has made considerable progress in terms of economic development and integration into global economic markets. Despite these achievements, the country is experiencing one of the slowest income convergences with EU countries compared to peers in the Western Balkans region. In 2021 the national income per person reached 38 % of the EU average. Economic growth has slowed in 2023. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Macedonia was worth 13.56 billion US dollars in 2022. North Macedonia GDP per capita for 2022 was \$6,591, a 1.54% decline from 2021 (WORLD BANK).

1.2 Sector situation

The informal employment sector in North Macedonia remains extensive in the number of people employed, although a downward trend can be noticed in the period from 2008-2021. The share of informally employed in the total number of employed has decreased from 28.6% (2008) to 18.13% (2021). Informal employment represents 12.1% of total employment or 96,151 individuals in 2021 (Makstat database, 2022).

A more recent overview of the digital work in Western Balkan (January 2022) shows that North Macedonia is among leading countries in the region in terms of the number of freelancers and share in population. Given that these forms of employment are not a formal employment relationship, these workers are excluded from the benefit of rights at work, such as paid sick leave, annual leave, minimum wage, social security, etc and do not enjoy the freedom of association (ILO, 2021).

Online work through digital labour platforms has raised many challenges for policymakers such as income under-reporting and tax non-compliance, lack of social protection and security, administrative registration of digital workers, etc. The key challenge is still the fact that most digital workers, both online and offline, are classified as self-employed. Hence, they fall outside the scope of labour laws, and cannot be part of a trade union under national law. They are not covered by collective bargaining agreements as there is no clearly attributable employer who would serve as a collective bargaining counterpart.

Strategy for Formalisation of the Informal Economy 2018-2022 related to the fight against informal economy from detection and repression towards deterrence and stimulation to formalize the informal activities. The Strategy objectives were linked to monitoring and detection of the informal economy, improving the environment for establishment and growth of companies, incentives for formalization of informal economic activities, encouraging the morale and reducing the tolerance of the informal economy.

The Government has committed to implementation and enforcement of the Acquis communautaire, including in the area of chapter 19 encompassing inter alia set of measures aimed at improving working conditions in platform work and social protection of the self-employed:

- Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions "Better working conditions for a stronger social Europe: harnessing the full benefits of digitalisation for the future of work" (COM (2021) 761 final, enclosed),
- Council Recommendation (2019/C 387/01) of 8 November 2019 on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed.

According to the Article 35 of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia (Official Gazette No. 52/1991 as of 22.11.1991) "the Republic provides for the social protection and social security of citizens in accordance with the principle of social justice. The Republic is guaranteeing help to the

helpless and to the citizens incapable for work. The Republic is providing special protection to the persons with disability as well as conditions for their active inclusion in the society.”

The social security system in North Macedonia consists of the following schemes: social insurance (socijalno osiguruvanje), social assistance (socijalna zashtita) and family benefits (zashtita na decata) schemes.

The social insurance schemes are covering three basic types of insurances, i.e. the health care insurance (zdravstveno osiguruvanje), the old pension and invalidity insurance (penzisko i invalidsko osiguruvanje) and the unemployment insurance (osiguruvanje vo slucaj na nevrabotenost). They are financed on the basis of social security contributions. Such schemes are covering the professionally active persons (employees, self-employed people - mostly owners of company, farmers and civil servants), their family members and several assimilated groups.

Social Assistance protection schemes are administrated of by the State, and they focus upon prevention and coverage of the basic social needs. These schemes are universal and cover all citizens and persons residing in the country who are meeting the eligibility criteria determined in the Law. Benefits are means tested. Some categorical assistance schemes, providing assistance to specific groups (elderly in need, persons with disability) exist as well.

The family benefit (child allowance – detski dodatok) schemes are separately organized. Benefits are financed through the State Budget. Although they are universal with regard to their personal scope, they mainly target working families with a low income (below minimum subsistence). For that purpose, use is made of means testing. Special benefit (poseben dodatok) is provided to children with disabilities.¹

With respect to the self-employed workers scheme, the scope of personal application is very limited, focusing primarily on self-employed workers who are owners of companies or businesses or who work in agriculture as self-employed workers. In other words, they are legal persons linked to an establishment or land and who carry out activities on their own account. In some cases, natural persons such as lawyers (who perform a certain or indirect public function) may also be included. However, other natural or physical persons who could fall within the general concept of self-employed workers in many legislations of EU member States (*persons who carry out an economic or professional activity for profit irrespective of employing others, on a regular, personal and direct basis, on their own account and without being subject to lawful subordination*) are not included in the North Macedonian legislation. For example, translators, interpreters, digital platform workers or what is known in Macedonia as “freelancers”, are not covered by the self-employed scheme because there is no company, business premises, physical establishment or legal entity that is linked to the exercise of their self-employed activity. These workers are considered by the North Macedonian Administration as atypical workers, while in other EU legislations they are self-employed workers. In short, therefore, the North Macedonian legislation considers this type of workers as persons who exercise non-standard forms of self-employment and who are not included, despite paying taxes, in the personal field of application of the social security scheme for self-employed workers. In other words, the real problem does not arise from the fact that these workers are informal or undeclared workers, but that social security system does not have the legal tools to protect them. Such findings indicate direction of action: *Extension of the personal scope of application of the social security scheme for self-employed workers and, as a result, the integration of these workers in a new scheme to meet the needs and demands of the groups concerned.*

1.3 Role of partner institution in the sector

NOTE: Following the April 2024 election and the enactment of the new Law on Amending and Supplementing the Law on Organization of State Bodies on June 10, 2024, the scope of work and competences of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) were restructured. Responsibilities were divided between the new Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth (MSPDY), handling social policy and inclusion, and the new Ministry of Economy and Labour (MEL), focusing on employment. The process of transferring competences is expected to take up to five months. The

¹ <https://rm.coe.int/north-macedonia-introduction-2/168096b241>

Action-relevant Department for Policies in the Area of Labour Legislation and Employment Policies are transferred to the new Ministry of Economy and Labour.

Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth (MSPDY) scope of work, among others, is related to employment, pension and disability insurance, protection of workers at work, material security for temporary unemployed, salaries and standard of life, social policy, population policy for the purpose of harmonization of economic and social development, advancement of gender equality, protection of children and minors, protection of youth and women, protection of people with development disabilities etc.

More specifically, the Ministry is entrusted with policy making, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of employment and labour related policies, including Strategy for Formalization of Informal Economy 2023-2027². The strategy is coordinated by the Ministry of Finance. Strategy 2018-2022. The Ministry is also coordinating Economic Reform Programme 2024-2026³. Economic Reform Programme aims in improvement of economic policies and strengthen economic governance particularly in implementation of the Measure 5.1.1: Introducing mechanisms for formalising informal work in sectors with high incidents of undeclared activities and enable compliance, strengthening of the labour and social security benefits for transition to formal jobs.

The Ministry is coordinating negotiations on Chapter 19 “Social policy and employment” of that includes minimum standards in the areas of labour law, equality, health and safety at work, and anti-discrimination. The Government has committed to implementation and enforcement of the *Acquis communautaire*, including in the area of chapter 19 encompassing inter alia set of measures aimed at improving working conditions in platform work and social protection of the self-employed.

In addition, for the purpose of the following action, it should be mentioned that the Social Security of the Republic of Macedonia has three major competent bodies that should also be considered as stakeholders:

- The Health Insurance Fund of the Republic of North Macedonia (FZORSM) is the institution responsible for implementing mandatory health insurance. As the sole state insurance organization in the country, it ensures that insured individuals have access to health services and compensation during sick or maternity leave.
- The Pension and Disability Insurance Fund of Macedonia (PIOM) manages the “Statutory Pension Scheme”. It consists of mandatory insurance, which is paid out to PIOM, and it is generated through the principle of generational solidarity – pay as you go (PAYG)-, providing earnings-related benefits based on the length of working service. This first pillar provides part of the old-age pension, disability and survivors, pension benefits, and the minimum pension benefit. It is mandatory for economically active people, including all employees, self-employed persons (not all of them) and farmers.
- The Employment Agency provides unemployment benefit.

Independently of these three competent bodies, The Public Revenue Office collects the Personal Income Tax, Profit Tax, Value Added Tax and *Social Contributions*. Ministry and the competent bodies as well as The Public Revenue Office are proposed to be taken in account in the implementation of the proposed action.

Through EU funded project “Improving of working conditions” Ministry developed Law on work engagement of persons in certain sector, that aimed to stimulate and support the formalization of informal economic activities by establishing systems of preventive and incentive measures. Drawing on successful experiences from countries in the region, the MLSP, in collaboration with the members of the Working Group for Formalization of the Informal Economy and donor support, has directed reforms towards developing new legislative solutions and establishing an information system aligned with existing operational IT systems tool planned to be supported by German GIZ. GIZ has developed a technical cooperation program to create an electronic tool to register seasonal workers or workers hired for short periods in order to prevent them from falling or remaining in informal work.

²https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewicsL7ViZKFaxVYrFEDHdMEC1gQFnoECA4QAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Ffinance.gov.mk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2023%2F09%2FStrategija-za-neformalna-ekonomija-2023-2027_korekcija-280

³ <https://finance.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/ERP-2024-2026-EN.pdf>

2 ACTION DESCRIPTION

2.1 Overall objective

Access to employment and social protection is expanded to poor and vulnerable groups.

2.2 Specific objective (s) (purpose)

To facilitate the registration to social insurance of workers who develop non-standard forms of self-employment.

2.3 Expected results

R1. Policy recommendations on social insurance for self-employed workers, based on comparative analyses and assessment of the existing social schemes, are provided.

R2. Strengthened legal framework for granting access to social insurance to workers who develop non-standard forms of self-employment.

2.4 Final deliverables

D. 4: Proposal of the regulatory amendments to enable insurance schemes of the workers who develop non-standard forms of self-employment uncovered by existing social security schemes.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 General methodology (of the action)

The aim of the Action is to expand access to social protection to the self-employed workers in North Macedonia. Given that other organizations are trying to solve the issues of nonstandard employees, the SOCIEUX+ Action will focus on the protection of informal workers who carry out non-standard forms of self-employment, in future legal provision as “self-employed persons, registered as natural persons”. This would include among others, interpreters, translators and other freelancers as well as digital platform workers. Under the current legislative framework, the self-employment could be done only through establishment of defined forms of legal entities pursuant to the Law on Trade Companies.

Action results will extend the personal scope of application of the social security scheme for self-employed workers by creating an insurance formula for natural persons who performs self-employed work activity for which they receive incomes and that would serve to be protected in the field of health and pensions. It will strengthen legal framework of North Macedonia for granting access to social insurance to workers who develop non-standard forms of self-employment.

To achieve this, the action involves assessing the current social insurance scheme and formulating recommendations to extend its coverage to workers engaged in non-standard forms of self-employment. This includes a comparative analysis of European Union and Western Balkans modalities for such schemes, aiming to identify best practices and gaps. A position paper will be developed to advocate for policy reforms necessary to encompass these workers within the social insurance framework. Furthermore, a proposal for regulatory amendments will be drafted to ensure that insurance schemes adequately cover self-employed persons who are not currently protected by existing social security scheme provisions.

3.2 Planned activities (work plan of the action)

The following activities are currently planned for the action:

- Activity 1 – Assessing the modalities of social insurance scheme and the legal possibilities of including the personal scope of non-standard forms of self-employment, based on EU and Western Balkan countries practices.
- Activity 2 – Co-drafting a policy position paper setting the stage for a reform of the current social insurance scheme and covering lack of protection for independent workers who perform non-standard forms of self-employment.

- Activity 3 – Co-drafting specific regulatory amendments of the social insurance scheme for covering the protection for independent workers who perform non-standard forms of self-employment.

The present terms of reference cover the services expected for activities of the above work plan:

- Activity #3.

3.3 Inclusion of cross-cutting issues

SOCIEUX+ recognises the importance to include cross-cutting issues in social protection, labour and employment policies and systems. The following cross-cutting issues are duly taken into account:

- Good governance;
- Human rights (including rights of children, people living with disabilities, vulnerable groups and minorities); and,
- Social and economic inclusion of vulnerable groups.

4 ACTIVITIES DESCRIPTION

4.1 Tasks

Activity 3 – Co-drafting specific regulatory amendments of the social insurance scheme for covering the protection for independent workers who perform non-standard forms of self-employment.

The aim of the activity is to co-draft specific regulatory amendments to the social insurance scheme, particularly targeting at extending protection to workers engaged in non-standard forms of self-employment. However, it should be noted that content of the activity will be baselined on policy paper developed in activity 2 that will indicate direction of the general structure of the future social protection scheme for the self- employed workers.

Due to the short-term nature of the mission, experts and partners will collaboratively establish a joint methodology during the preparation phase, focusing on defining the outline and scope of the final deliverable and determining the modalities for co-drafting the regulatory amendments.

The Activity will be organized in hybrid model. A series of on-site workshops and on-line consultations will be organized to facilitate the co-drafting process alongside working group managed by the partner institution. These workshops will be dedicated to the drafting of the legislation proposal. Experts will work 5 days remotely and collaborate with PI and stakeholders to further refine and finalize the proposal.

Throughout the process, the expert team will offer recommendations on key outcomes and advise the partner institution on actions related to social schemes reform, legislation drafting and institutional configuration.

The principal expert will lead the on-site mission. He/she will be responsible for the delivery of all deliverables of the activity (see below Section **Error! Reference source not found.**). He/she will be responsible for the preparation, coordination, implementation and reporting of the overall activity towards SOCIEUX+.

Minimum tasks expected from the experts shall include *(the below list includes indispensable tasks and is non-exhaustive; eventual additional tasks specific to the activity shall be included)*:

Task 1 – Preparation of the mission. The Experts Team:

- gets substantial knowledge of the local context; reviews any relevant background document provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team and/or the Partner institution (PI);
- establishes in close consultation with the PI the mission’s methodology and agenda (MeN);
- submits the MeN for approval by the SOCIEUX+ Team (latest 1 week before the mission);
- takes part in the pre-departure briefing with the SOCIEUX+ Team (around 1 week before the mission);

Task 2 – Implementation of the mission. The Experts Team:

- reviews and finalises the agenda of the mission and the list of stakeholders to be consulted with the PI upon arrival; any changes to the MeN shall be timely communicated to the SOCIEUX+ Team;
- organises, as necessary, a brief presentation of the objectives and methodology of the mission for the PI and relevant stakeholders;
- provides a briefing on the background of the request and objectives of the mission to the EU Delegation, if applicable;
- as per agenda, conduct consultations with the PI’s executives and staff, and relevant stakeholders, including the EU Delegation;
- compiles the initial findings and main conclusions emerging from the peer-to-peer technical exchange in a brief presentation that will be used for the final consultation and debriefing on-site;
- channels to SOCIEUX+ Communication officer any material that can be useful to inform the public about the activity (pictures, interviews, brief notes or articles); and,
- at every stage of the implementation, liaise with the SOCIEUX+ Team in case of doubts on the eligibility of proposals raised by the PI, politically sensitive developments, or any other relevant issue that may require a formal position of SOCIEUX+.

Task 3 – Final consultation and debriefing. The Experts Team:

- presents the initial findings and main recommendations emerging from the peer-to-peer technical exchange to the PI, relevant stakeholders and the EU Delegation; and,
- collects the feedback of the PI, relevant stakeholders and the EU Delegation for inclusion, as possible, in their final draft of the activity’s final deliverables.

Task 4 – Finalisation and submission of the deliverables. The FFM Team:

- elaborates the final deliverables for review and commenting by SOCIEUX+, the PI and eventually other stakeholders.

4.2 Deliverables

4.2.1 Pre-mission deliverables

- MeN: A methodological note, detailing the working approach, tools and methods to be employed, a risks analysis, etc.; and an activity/mission agenda, detailing the meetings and working sessions to be held, persons to meet, etc. The Methodological Note shall not exceed 5 pages (excluding the cover page and annexes):

4.2.2 Final deliverables

For Activity 3

- D1: An individual Expert Mission Report (ExMR) in SOCIEUX+ format (template provided). This report is a confidential product intended solely for and use by SOCIEUX+. The expert team may also submit a single-joint ExMR report if they prefer to do so (see instructions on the template).
- D2: An individual completed Expert Feedback Form (ExF) completed online (see instructions and link on the ExMR template).
- D3: A collective Activity Report (AcR) in SOCIEUX+ format (template provided). This AcR is to be produced jointly by the mission team. It is intended for the Partner Institution, and will be shared, most probably, with key stakeholders of the action. The report will reflect the tasks conducted in during the activity. It shall provide a meaningful contribution towards the final deliverables of the action.
- D4: A Technical report, representing the experts’ contribution to the PI in relation to the content of the peer-to-peer exchanges and in view to attain the action’s expected results and to contribute to the achievement of its specific objectives. It is a piece of technical work on the very subject matter of the peer-to-peer cooperation. The technical report shall comply with the description provided in ToREx and further agreed upon in the MeN:

- Proposal of the regulatory amendments to enable insurance schemes of the workers who develop non-standard forms of self-employment uncovered by existing social security schemes.

5 REPORTING AND SUBMISSION OF DELIVERABLES

5.1 Formats

All deliverables and products of the activity (notes, reports, presentations, etc) shall comply with the formats and templates provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

All deliverables are to be submitted in electronic editable versions [Microsoft Word 97-2003 [doc], PowerPoint 97-2003 [ppt] and Excel 97-2003 [xls]; or in equivalent OpenDocument format). Non-editable electronic document such as in Portable Document Format (PDF) shall not be accepted.

Templates for electronic presentations during the activity/mission are provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team. These templates are in Microsoft PowerPoint format and comply with the SOCIEUX+ corporate image standards. These templates are to be used as a sole format by all members of the expert mission team. They are to be used for all presentations by the experts during and for the activity/mission. The use by the experts of their own, or their organisation(s), templates or formats are not allowed unless otherwise instructed in written [by email] to the experts by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

All versions of deliverables or other products used or produced during activity/mission by the experts shall include the following disclaimer:

"Disclaimer:

The responsibility of this publication sole lies with its authors. The European Union, the European Commission, the implementation partners of SOCIEUX+ and the SOCIEUX+ Staff are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein."

Please refer to the expert information package for further guidance on communication and templates.

All deliverables are to be provided in English, or in the language of the Partner Institution.

5.2 Submission and approval

All deliverables versions (drafts, final or other) shall be submitted directly and only to SOCIEUX+ Team, unless otherwise instructed in writing [by email] to the experts by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

5.2.1 Pre-mission deliverables

- Pre-mission deliverables shall be first agreed with the Partner Institution, then submitted to the SOCIEUX+ Team no later than 5 working days before the departure on mission of the Experts Team.
- Pre-mission deliverables will be shared and reviewed by SOCIEUX+. Feedback on the deliverables should be provided to the FFM Team at the latest 2 days before the departure on the mission of the experts. Comments and recommendations of this feedback shall be taken into account for the implementation of the activity/mission by the experts. An updated version of the MeN, integrating the SOCIEUX+ Team's feedbacks and recommendations shall be re-submitted by the Experts Team at the earliest possible occurrence.

5.2.2 Final deliverables

- The first draft versions of the final deliverables are to be submitted by the Experts Team to the SOCIEUX+ Team no later than 10 working days upon completion of the Experts Team's mission.
- Feedback by the SOCIEUX+ Team on the first draft version of the report should be provided 5 working days after its submission.
- Inclusion of the feedback by the Experts Team on draft versions is expected 5 working days upon reception of the comments.

- Intermediate versions of the deliverables shall be submitted by the SOCIEUX+ Team to the PI for review and approval. The PI should approve or formulate comments and/or requests of amendments no later than 5 working days after having received them.
- In case of comments and/or requests of amendments, the Experts Team will have 5 additional working days to achieve a final version of the deliverables. Generally, no more than one round of feedback and revision is accepted.
- Final payments and reimbursement of travel costs to experts can only be authorised upon approval of the final version of the deliverables by the PI and SOCIEUX+.

6 REQUIRED EXPERTISE

6.1 Expertise profile

Expert #2:

Area(s) of expertise: Social Security Organisation and Financing

Specific skill(s) & competence(s):

- *L&R making and development, Planning, budgeting & costing, Organ. structures, roles and arrangements, P&S making and development.*

Requirements (essential/required):

a) The education type and level required:

“Bachelor’s” degree (or equivalent academic degree or diploma requiring three (3) years of formal education) in the areas of expertise (see above), or another directly related discipline. In its absence, the bachelor’s degree can be replaced by a combination of:

- A first-level academic degree (“License” or equivalent) with an additional two (2) years of professional experience in one or more relevant fields.

The additional work experience used in calculating academic equivalence shall not count towards the minimum general professional experience.

b) The number of years of relevant work/professional experience combining the area(s) of expertise and demonstrated specific skill(s) & competence(s):

Five (5) years.

c) Required language knowledge: English

N.B.: Translation and interpretation services may be commissioned by SOCIEUX+.

d) Other essential qualification(s):

- Relevant experience in contributing to policy formulation and legislation reforms of social protection schemes;
- Experience providing advice to public institutions in adapting and optimizing their processes and structures

Additional assets (advantageous in selection):

- Previous professional experience of delivering short-term technical assistance in West Balkan
- Language(s): Macedonian, Montenegrin, Bosnian, Serbian

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Collaborative institutions:

Public or publicly mandated institutions from European Union Member States with relevant expertise and competencies as outlined above are also encouraged to directly apply and contact SOCIEUX+ to provide expertise and participate in these/this activity. Focal points and responsible staff may directly contact the SOCIEUX+ Team at:

experts@socieux.eu, indicating the reference of the call for experts.

6.2 Estimated workload⁴

Activity 3	Preparation	Onsite work	Distance work	Reporting & deliverables	Total
Expert (#2)	3	10	5	2	20
Total experts	3	10	5	2	20

⁴ Please note that travel days are not considered as working days.

7 APPLICATIONS

7.1 Call for experts

All calls for experts for SOCIEUX+ activities are published online on the SOCIEUX+ website. Interested experts should submit their application on the SOCIEUX+ online expert database: <https://pmt.socieux.eu> (currently only available in English). The application process is:

1. If they have not already, experts create their SOCIEUX+ account by clicking on “Create an account” using an email address.
2. Login details for their account will be sent to experts by email, experts should create and submit their profile for review by⁵:
 - a. Providing contact details
 - b. Providing information on the competencies, skills and working history of the expert. Experts are required to provide only limited information through fields marked with an asterisk. However, *experts are encouraged to complete in most detail de sections on skills and competencies as the SOCIEUX+ Team also regularly reviews profiles in the roster to identify and contact potential experts for future missions.*
 - c. Uploading of a curriculum vitae, preferably in Europass format⁶.
3. Once their profile is approved by the SOCIEUX+ Team, they can apply to any available calls for experts accessible under the tab “Call for experts” and click on “Apply.”

If more information is needed, please contact SOCIEUX+ by email at experts@socieux.eu with the reference number of the application.

Collaborative or interested institutions wishing to make expertise available for a specific call for application may directly contact the team of SOCIEUX+ at experts@socieux.eu.

7.2 Selection of experts

In principle, SOCIEUX+ mobilises experts from the public administrations and mandated bodies of EU member states, and practitioners working for social partners, including:

- Practitioners, civil servants and employees from publicly mandated bodies;
- Collaborators and employees of social partner institutions, such as trade unions and employer associations; and,
- Academic and research institutions.

Active public experts from collaborative institutions are given priority in the selection. Private consultants may also apply. Their application will be considered if an appropriate public expert cannot be identified. The mobilisation of experts currently employed with specialised international agencies is limited to activities and/or actions that are jointly implemented with that expert's agency of origin, indicated as ‘Supporting Entity’ in the Request.

Only short-listed applicants may be contacted. The selection process may include interviews by phone or other communication means.

Interested candidates may download the **Guide for Experts and Collaborative Institutions** with detailed information on contracting with SOCIEUX+ at www.socieux.eu

7.3 Contracting of public experts

Public experts can be on active duty or retired. Retired employees from international specialised agencies or cooperation agencies can also be mobilised, without regard to their former employer's

⁵ SOCIEUX+ expert database and other management tools comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) -Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

⁶ Europass templates for CVs are available here: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>

collaborating with SOCIEUX+ on a specific action. Retired experts are considered as public experts for all purposes, benefits, and financial compensation provided by SOCIEUX+.

Short-listed candidates may be required to provide the contact of the employer or proof of their ability to be directly contracted under their status as a civil servant or public employee.

Various options for contracting:

- **Active French Public Expert** (Contracted by Expertise France)

Engagement letter (+ Cumulation of activities form signed by the hierarchical superior)

- **Active Spanish Public Expert**

Spanish public servant will be contracted by FIIAPP according to its internal rules.

- **UE Public Expert** (including French and Spanish retired or private experts)
 - Service contract with expert (+ Authorization document from employer indicating the dates of the activity + a tax identification number (TIN) to be able to issue an invoice; or
 - Umbrella company: experts who do not have a tax identification number allowing them to invoice for services in their country, but they are authorized to sign temporary employment contracts according to local legislation, or
 - Service contract with institution: experts who do not have a tax identification number that allows them to work in their country and cannot sign an employment contract according to local legislation.

7.4 Financial compensations

Contract officials or active-duty or retired employees are entitled to standard fixed allowances of 350 euros per working day worked. The fees of private consultants are negotiated according to their number of years of relevant expertise and the standard scale of SOCIEUX+.

Retired experts are assimilated into public employees for all intents and purposes, benefits and financial compensation are provided by SOCIEUX+.

National regulations on remuneration and compensation of public employees and civil servants apply and may limit the payment of allowances by SOCIEUX+. The responsibility for compliance and verification lies with individual experts and their institutions of origin. The payment of income or other taxes is the sole responsibility of the mobilised experts and/or their organisations.

7.5 Travel costs

All travel expenses for the mobilised experts (public, private or international institutions) are covered by SOCIEUX following the **Guide for Experts and Collaborative institutions** with detailed information on contracting with SOCIEUX+ (version as of the date of signature of the contract).

8 COMMUNICATION & VISIBILITY

SOCIEUX + can use its communication channels, such as the web, newsletter and other media, to share information about the implementation and results of the activities. For this, contributions of the experts mobilised are expected. The experts may be requested to provide such contributions in the field of communication as photographs, provide short texts, and interviews.

Short briefings, before and after the mission, can be organized with the Communication Officer of SOCIEUX+. These briefings will provide the opportunity to identify communication opportunities and strategies.

For specific activities, visibility products, such as brochures, USB sticks, notebooks and pens, can be made available to experts for on-site distribution.

9 CODE OF CONDUCT

The experts mobilised by SOCIEUX+ will provide technical assistance from the preparatory stages of each activity to the delivery of products. The SOCIEUX+ Team will assist experts to fulfil their assignments by supporting and advising on preparing background materials before meetings. The SOCIEUX+ team will collect feedback from partner institutions and relevant stakeholders to ensure that mission reports and recommendations are delivered to national authorities, the EU Delegations in the partner countries and the European Commission.

The experts mobilised are not representing SOCIEUX+ nor the EU. Technical opinions and recommendations expressed are their own. They shall not express negative opinions on the implementation of actions supported by SOCIEUX+ to third parties. Nevertheless, they shall be aware of SOCIEUX+'s objectives and functioning, and promote its services to the best of their knowledge, whenever possible and feasible.

The experts shall perform their duties in the Partner Country in a way that is fully compliant with and respectful of the local institutions, policies and cultural behaviours. They shall particularly adopt culturally-sensitive behaviour when dealing with their local counterparts.

10 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

n.a.

11 ANNEXES

n.a

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ABOUT SOCIEUX+

The SOCIEUX+ Facility was established and funded by the EU through the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) and Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR). The Facility is co-funded by France, Spain, and Belgium. It is implemented by a partnership composed of Expertise France (the partnership lead), the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, France Travail, the Fundación Internacional y para Iberoamérica de Administración y Políticas Públicas (FIIAPP) from Spain, the Federal Public Service Social Security of Belgium, and the Belgian Development Agency (Enabel).

The Facility's general objective is to increase employment opportunities and inclusive social protection systems in Partner Countries. Its specific objective is to improve policy and institutional frameworks for the development of labour, employment and social protection in Partner Countries, based on an inclusive and sustainable approach.

SOCIEUX+ recognises the impact of social protection and employment in reducing poverty and vulnerability. It supports the efforts of partner governments in promoting inclusive and sustainable social protection and employment systems. SOCIEUX+ also complements the efforts made through other EU initiatives.

The Facility is an expansion of SOCIEUX Social Protection EU Expertise in Development Cooperation, established in 2013.

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