TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. **Job title:** Consultant for the evaluation of the project “Strengthening capacities for the acceleration of EU accession of Montenegro”
2. **Type of position:** International, short-term
3. **Duty Station:** Home-based and throughout Montenegro
4. **Duration of appointment:** 20 consultancy days in the period from February 7 – March 31, 2022
5. **Contract type:** Individual Contract (IC)
6. **Deadline for application:** January 24, 2022

**I. Background:**

The project “Strengthening capacities for the acceleration of EU accession of Montenegro II” is funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented by UNDP in partnership with the Office for European Integration and the Secretariat General of the Government. The general objective of the project is to assist, advise and support EU accession negotiations through strengthening the capacities of the Government of Montenegro in responding to the demands of the new phases of accession process, including the areas of policy planning and coordination.

Montenegro submitted a request for EU membership in December 2008 and received the status of the candidate country in December 2010, while accession negotiations opened in June 2012. By the beginning of 2022, Montenegro opened all, and closed three negotiating chapters. For the purpose of EU accession process, Montenegro has established a negotiating structure in which the Office for European Integration (OEI) has a central role at the technical level. OEI was established in April 2018 and took over most of the responsibilities from the former Ministry of European Affairs (MEA). The establishment of a new structure leaded to the distribution of responsibilities between the newly established OEI and the Secretariat General of the Government (SGG), as well as the involvement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in the administration related to the negotiation process.

The advanced stage in the EU negotiations imposed more challenging tasks to the Montenegrin administration, including work on better governance and strategic planning, in particular stricter rules for coherence and coordination of policy planning processes. Significant results have been achieved since the 2017 project began, as legal and institutional framework for policy coordination was established and is now in force. To avoid slowing down the pace of EU negotiations and affect policy planning, as well as programming and absorption rate of IPA funds, more focus should be put on outcome-oriented, evidence-based approach when drafting strategies, in synergy with researchers and academia at all stages of policy development.

Full compliance with the acquis communautaire is achieved through primary and secondary legislation. By joining the EU, regulations become legally binding for all citizens and business entities of the new member state, and therefore every state that joins the EU is obliged to translate the acquis into one of the official languages of the EU. Translation of the legal text into the Montenegrin language and its edits is extremely demanding and represent a significant effort for the candidate country. For the translation of the legal text into Montenegrin, it is necessary to continuously strengthen the capacities of the Department for the preparation of the Montenegrin version of the EU acquis.

In addition, informing the public about the negotiation process and the EU is one of the most important tasks of the institution that is in charge of coordinating and monitoring the negotiation process. Although the current support for Montenegro's entry into the EU is high, these activities are extremely important.

In order to tackle these challenges, the project intervention has four components:

1) Supporting the internal capacities of OEI and of the EU negotiation structure in fulfilling remaining closing benchmarks;

2) Strengthening the system of Montenegro for legal alignment with the EU acquis and preparation of the national version of the EU acquis;

3) Promotion of EU values and results achieved in the negotiation process; and

4) Enhancing evidence-based policy planning as a prerequisite for major quality of government strategies and better advancement of Montenegro in the EU negotiations.

The project implementation started on October 1, 2017 and it will end on July 1, 2022. The total budget of the project is 9,822,090 NOK (954,497 EUR). An independent, external evaluation is planned to take place in the final phase of the project. The evaluation will be based on the original Project document and its amendments. It will analyse the progress of the project towards its results and purpose, and identify areas for further development assistance. The objective of the evaluation is to draw the lessons learned, while assessing the overall project performance and impact, as well as to assess the scope for continuation and/or replication of the action or specific activities in the area of the EU Accession process.

**II. Duties and Responsibilities:**

*Objectives of the assignment:*

The objective of this assignment is to conduct the evaluation of the project “Strengthening capacities for the acceleration of EU accession of Montenegro” in line with the [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/index.shtml), [Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1616) and [UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/2866). The evaluation will specifically aim at the following:

* Assess project results achieved against planned objectives, targets and indicators, including the aspects of effectiveness and efficiency of the intervention and sustainability of project benefits beyond the lifetime of the project, based on the analysis of the documents produced by the project (reports, analysis, papers, etc.) and interviews with major stakeholders including project partners;
* Provide reflections on the state of play now and capacities of the main actors as compared to the beginning of the project implementation and in relation to that, provide recommendations and guidance for future programming in the EU Accession area;

• Identify and consolidate good practices, lessons learned and make recommendations on processes, management, partnerships and other aspects of project implementation that would benefit future engagement of UNDP in this area.

*Job content:*

The evaluation will comprise of the following key stages/ processes:

**Desk review**: The consultant will review all available documents related to the project, such as projects documents, amendments to the project documents, project progress reports, relevant evaluation reports, relevant national and international surveys, knowledge products, as well as policy and legal documents.

**Finalization of evaluation methodology and work plan:** In consultation with the UNDP Project Team, the consultant will finalize the appropriate methodology to address the three key objectives of this evaluation. The methodology will entail a participatory process for data collection, generating an evidence base to substantiate all findings while ensuring that the data collection methods and data analysis is of high quality and that stakeholders are involved in data collection processes and debriefed on regular basis to address any unforeseen challenges requiring support or clarification.

**Field visit:** The consultant will conduct field visit supported by UNDP to collect data using a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Depending on COVID-19 related travel restrictions, the meetings can be held online. In consultation with UNDP, the consultant will formulate questionnaires and identify key stakeholders to be interviewed during the evaluation so that their engagement and involvement in the evaluation process can be arranged in a timely manner. Key stakeholders include representatives of the institutions (Office for European Integration, Secretariat General of the Government, Agency for Protection of Competition, Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism, Agency for Prevention of Corruption) and relevant representatives of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Belgrade and UNDP staff.

**Preparation of the draft evaluation report and finalization of the report:** The consultant will prepare the draft evaluation report, submit it to the Programme Manager, which will gather comments from the Project Board members. Upon receiving the comments, the consultant will finalize the report.

**Debriefing session:** The consultant will debrief the Project Board members about the findings including key observations and recommendations based on verifiable facts and figures.

*The expected results:*

Under the supervision of the UNDP Project Team, the international consultant is expected to deliver the following results:

* The final evaluation report, taking into account feedback given by partners, stakeholders and submit it to the Programme Manager (the final evaluation report should include executive summary, evaluation methodology, analysis and findings, good practices & lessons learnt and recommendations).

*Timing and reporting:*

International consultant is expected to work in Montenegro and home-based during the assignment duration (February 7 – March 31, 2022). The international consultant will be responsible for written regular reporting to the UNDP Programme Manager.

*Time duration and travel:*

The international consultant will be engaged under individual contract, for total of **20 consultancy days**, in the period from February 7 – March 31, 2022. The consultant is expected to work from home in duration of approximately **15 working days**, and undertake **one field visit in Montenegro** (Podgorica) in duration of approximately **5 working days**. International and local travel costs and daily subsistence allowance costs should be included in the lump sum figure.

Proposed evaluation schedule includes the following:

Desk Review – 4 days;

Evaluation design, methodology and detailed work plan – 2 days;

Field visits, interviews, consultations – 5 days;

Preparation of draft evaluation report for debriefing – 6 days;

Finalization of evaluation report – 2 days;

Debriefing at the meeting of the Project Board – 1 day.

**III. Competencies:**

* Demonstrates integrity by modeling the UN’s values and ethical standards;
* Promotes the vision, mission and strategic goals of UN/UNDP;
* Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability;
* Ability to lead strategic planning, results-based management and reporting;
* Builds strong relationships with clients, focuses on impact and result for the client and responds positively to feedback;
* Consistently approaches work with energy and a positive, constructive attitude;
* Demonstrates good oral and written communication skills;
* Demonstrates ability to manage complexities and work under pressure, as well as conflict resolution skills.

**IV. Qualifications and expertise:**

* Advanced Degree in Economics, Law, Management, EU Affairs or other relevant field and 10 years of professional experience is required, longer professional experience is advantage;
* Proven expertise and experience in the UNDP project evaluation;
* Proven professional experience in the area of EU Accession process;
* Modern approach to delivery of policy/technical advice, and experience of working with government senior officials in a process of EU Accession process;
* Excellent knowledge of written and spoken English, whereas knowledge of the local language would be an asset;
* Excellent communication and presentation skills, demonstrated ability to facilitate/conduct trainings, workshops, etc;
* Excellent IT skills, including word-processing, presentation software, etc.