

## PUBLIC CALL

### For Engagement of Expert

for the Development of an Engagement Study on Business Integrity and Anti-Corruption Practices among SMEs

**Project:** “Clean Business North Macedonia – Mobilizing SMEs as Champions Against Corruption”

**Date of publishing:** 07 April 2026

## 1. Background

The project “**Clean Business North Macedonia – Mobilizing SMEs as Champions Against Corruption**”, implemented by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and co-financed by the European Union and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, aims to strengthen the role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in promoting integrity, transparency, and responsible business practices in North Macedonia.

The project contributes to raising awareness within the business community on the importance of ethical conduct, prevention of corruption, and alignment with European standards of corporate integrity. Through capacity building, multi-stakeholder dialogue, and digital tools, the project seeks to empower SMEs to actively contribute to anti-corruption efforts.

As part of the initial phase of the project, a questionnaire was developed and several **focus groups with representatives of SMEs** have already been conducted, generating qualitative and quantitative insights into challenges, perceptions, and needs related to business integrity and corruption risks.

To further consolidate this knowledge and support evidence-based project implementation, the project foresees the development of an **Engagement Study**.

Both **individual experts and teams from companies/organizations** providing such services are eligible to apply.

## 2. Objective of the Assignment

The objective of this assignment is to **develop a comprehensive Engagement Study** that will:

- analyze the current state of business integrity and corruption risks among SMEs in North Macedonia
- synthesize findings from previously conducted questionnaires and focus groups
- complement these findings with relevant **desk research and secondary data analysis**
- provide practical recommendations to guide project activities and stakeholder engagement

### 3. Scope of Work

The selected expert will be responsible for conducting the following tasks:

#### 3.1 Desk Research

- Review relevant **national and international literature**, including:
  - reports on corruption and business integrity
  - EU and OECD standards and frameworks
  - national policies and legal frameworks
  - previous studies related to SMEs and anti-corruption
- Identify key trends, challenges, and good practices relevant to SMEs

#### 3.2 Analysis of Questionnaires and Focus Group Findings

- Review documentation and notes from the **already conducted questionnaires and focus groups with SME representatives**
- Systematize and analyze qualitative and quantitative findings, including:
  - key challenges faced by SMEs
  - perceptions of corruption risks
  - existing practices and gaps
  - needs for support and capacity building
- Identify patterns, common themes, and divergences across groups

#### 3.3 Development of the Engagement Study

- Structure and draft a **comprehensive analytical report**, including:
  - executive summary
  - methodology
  - key findings from desk research
  - synthesis of questionnaires and focus group insights
  - analysis of gaps and opportunities

- practical recommendations for SMEs and stakeholders
- Ensure that the study is **clear, evidence-based, and policy-relevant**

The expert will work under the supervision of the project team and will coordinate closely with relevant team members.

All deliverables will be subject to review and approval by the project team.

#### 4. Deliverables (Expected Results)

The expert is expected to deliver:

- a) **Draft Engagement Study**
- b) **Final Engagement Study** (incorporating feedback from the project team)
- c) **Brief presentation of key findings** (might be requested by the project team)

#### 5. Timeline

The assignment is expected to start in **April 2026** and be completed within **2-3 weeks** from contract signature.

Indicative timeline:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Desk research and review of materials	Week 1
Analysis of questionnaires and focus group findings	Week 2
Draft report	Week 3
Final report	Week 3

#### 6. Required Qualifications

The selected expert should demonstrate:

- University degree in **social sciences, law, economics, public policy, or related field**
- At least **5 years of relevant experience** in:
  - anti-corruption
  - business integrity
  - governance or private sector development
- Proven experience in **research and analytical report writing**
- Experience in **qualitative data analysis** (focus groups, interviews, etc.)

- Experience working with **EU-funded projects, NGOs, or international organizations** (considered an asset)
- Strong analytical and writing skills in English
- Proficiency in Macedonian language

## 7. Remuneration

The expected remuneration must be specified by the applicant in the application form. The expert shall propose a gross amount for Expert Days (ED) unit rate (1 ED = 8 hours), including personal income tax. The terms of payment will be defined in a separate honoraria contract.

## 8. Application Procedure

Interested candidates should submit:

- A **short technical proposal** using the provided application form
- **CV(s)** of the expert(s)
- A **financial offer** for the assignment (in EUR) using the provided application form
- Examples of previous similar work (if available)

Applications should be submitted no later than **17 April 2026 (23:59)** to:

[anita.nikolovska@kas.de](mailto:anita.nikolovska@kas.de)

## 9. Ownership and Copyright

All materials produced under this assignment will remain the **exclusive property of the project and the implementing organization**.

The selected expert may not use or reproduce the materials without prior written consent.

## 10. Selection Procedure

Applications will be evaluated based on a 100-point scoring system, combining technical quality, relevant experience, and financial offer.

To be considered for selection, candidates must demonstrate a strong understanding of the assignment, relevant professional experience, and a competitive financial proposal.

## Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

**Technical Proposal (max. 40 points)**

Assessment of the quality, clarity, and relevance of the proposed methodology, including understanding of the assignment, feasibility of the approach, and added value. The most comprehensive technical proposal will receive the maximum score, with other offers scored proportionally.

**Relevant Experience (max. 30 points)**

Assessment of the applicant's professional background, experience in similar assignments, and quality of references, including experience with EU-funded or international projects (considered an asset). The candidate with the most extensive experience and number of similar assignments will receive the maximum score, with other offers scored proportionally.

**Financial Offer (max. 30 points)**

Assessment based on cost-effectiveness and value for money. The lowest financial offer will receive the maximum score, with other offers scored proportionally.

**Minimum Requirements**

To qualify for further consideration, applicants must:

- Achieve a minimum of 60 points overall, and
- Score at least 50% of the points in the Technical Proposal section (minimum 20 points)

**General terms**

The contract will be awarded to the applicant with the highest overall score, subject to meeting the minimum technical requirements.

The contracting authority reserves the right to:

- Request clarifications from applicants during the evaluation process
- Award the contract to one or more applicants (where applicable)
- Cancel the procedure without awarding a contract

Only shortlisted candidates may be contacted.

The Foundation commits not to use submitted proposals (selected or rejected) for other purposes.

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## **11. Contact information**

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**Project:** “Clean Business North Macedonia – Mobilizing SMEs as Champions Against Corruption”, Konrad Adenauer Foundation

