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MINISTRY OF PUBLIC FINANCE ROMANIA**

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**CFCU**

Our ref: RO-2004/016-772.05.01

**The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education – QAA Scottish Office**

Dear Mr. **DAVID BOTTOMLEY**

**INVITATION TO TENDER FOR**

“Development of Qualifications Framework in Higher Education”, Romania

I am pleased to inform you that [ your firm / the consortium led by you ] is invited to take part in the competitive negotiated procedure for the above contract. The complete tender dossier is attached to this letter. It includes:

**A. Instructions to tenderers**

**B. Draft Contract Agreement and Special Conditions with annexes:**

- I. General Conditions for service contracts
- II. Terms of Reference
- III. Organisation and Methodology (To be submitted by the tenderer according to the template provided)
- IV. Key experts (including templates for the summary list of key experts and their CVs)
- V. Budget breakdown and Cashflow forecast (To be submitted by the tenderer as the Financial offer using the template provided)
- VI. Forms and other relevant documents

**C. Other information:**

- I. Shortlist notice
- II. Administrative compliance grid
- III. Evaluation grid

**D. Tender submission form**

For full details of the tendering procedures, please refer to the **Practical Guide to contract procedures financed from the General Budget of the European Communities in the context of external actions**, which may be downloaded from the following Web site: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/index_en.htm) .

We look forward to receiving your tender at the address specified in the Instructions to tenderers before **01 March 2006, 16:00 local time**. If you decide not to submit a tender, we would be grateful if you could inform us in writing, indicating the reasons for your decision.

Yours sincerely,

**Carmen Rosu**

**Director, PAO**

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

Romania

### Development of Qualifications Framework in Higher Education

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## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **1.1 Beneficiary country**

ROMANIA

### **1.2 Contracting Authority**

**Ministry of Public Finance**

### **1.3 Relevant country background**

The Ministry of Public Finance is in charge with the programming, coordination and monitoring of the non-reimbursable financial assistance granted by EU and the member states to Romania and acts as the National Aid Coordinator. In this position, MPF operates as interlocutor between the different line Ministries and Governmental Organizations and the Commission. As such MPF, on behalf of the Government of Romania, bears the final responsibility for the qualitative level of the various documentation and project proposals submitted on an annual basis to the Commission. In previous years, short-term technical advisors supported the NAC department with the implementation of this complex task.

Under the Phare 2000 programme, for the first time a special Project Preparation Facility (PPF) was identified that can be used for financing relevant studies and short-term technical assistance required for a proper design of project activities finally resulting in more mature project formats to be included in future Phare programmes or proposals financed through other International Financing Institutions (IFI's). Since then, the Phare 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 programmes included allocations for PPF support.

An adequate and comprehensive preparation of solid project proposals is a prerequisite for a timely future accession of Romania into the EU. Complex investment projects require detailed and reliable data and background documentation to identify the best approach for achieving the objective(s). In-depth feasibility studies, systems design, impact analysis and other project background documents are critical for a successful implementation of projects financed both through Phare and other IFI's.

Background studies provide, apart from the project identification, also an analysis of the current status, an identification of possible alternative solutions including a testing of their financial, technical and administrative feasibility and recommendations for the economically most advantageous solutions. The PPF is an instrument to be used for funding activities to be executed during such an identification stage.

However, the PPF facility is also made available to assist institutions in drafting complex tender dossiers, project terms of references or even providing support in designing annual project fiches.

### **1.4 Current state of affairs in the qualifications framework in higher education**

The development of the Qualifications Framework (QFs) in higher education is currently under discussions, being part of the policy-making process in several countries and part of the European initiatives and communications both in formal and informal sessions of Ministers of Education and experts.

#### **o *The European context***

Romania, as part of Bologna process has assumed the accomplishment of its commitments regarding the foundation, until 2010, of a European Area of Higher Education through the initiation of a series of transformations and new approaches.

In a Europe characterized by social, technological and rapid economical changes, the continuing learning had become a necessity, so that, the creation of such a European Area will sustain the long life learning and must assure the rightness of evaluation and results use.

The qualifications framework in higher education is defined as: *the single description, at national level or level of an education system, which is internationally understood and through which all qualifications and other learning achievements in higher education may be described and related to each other in a coherent way and which defines the relationship between higher education qualifications and labor market.*

The EU policy documents and recent developments in the field of education and training induced the need for a more system-based and coherent manner in approaching the issue of National Qualifications Framework (NQF), in the sense of developing overarching NQFs which should be based on a sectoral approach. The interest in NQF is justified by the increased transparency and facilitated comparability, as well as by the opportunity it offers to individuals to develop learning and career paths and to assess the values of their qualifications and competences on the labor market.

At European level, the following issues should be considered when assessing the current state of art in the area of NQF:

- Several countries like Estonia, UK, Netherlands, Ireland, Denmark and Spain have developed frameworks and guidelines for the issue and management of qualifications. Some countries (e.g. UK, Ireland and Denmark) have made significant progress in defining and developing NQFs, higher education included. The European Commission and the European Council of Education Ministers have expressed the view that the European labor market cannot function effectively and smoothly without a European Framework to stand as a common reference for the recognition of qualifications.
- Various recent European events held in Helsinki, Lisbon, and Zurich, provided additional discussion and information on NQFs in an European context. The Danish Bologna seminar on *Qualification Structures in European Higher Education* (2003) examined specific the issues, concepts useful for describing qualifications and European approaches to qualifications structures, alternative methodologies and their theoretical foundations for conceiving different educational levels for all higher education; the most important output of this seminar was the set of recommendations on qualifications (QFs) for higher education. The “Dublin descriptors” for higher education (2004) represents a significant progress since it proposes a set of guidelines for reference levels and learning outcomes. The Berlin Communiqué (2003) called for an overarching framework for higher education area „ *‘Ministers encourage the member states to elaborate a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems, which should seek to describe qualifications in terms of workload, level, learning outcomes, competences and profile. They also undertake to elaborate an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area. Within such frameworks, degrees should have different defined outcomes. First and second cycle degrees should have different orientations and various profiles in order to accommodate a diversity of individual, academic and labor market needs.* The overarching QFs of the European Higher Education Area is important since it interactively connects country based QFs, provides the grounds for transparency between higher education systems and qualifications in Europe and provides common European guidelines for developing QFs and effective quality assurance systems. Since the preparation of university graduates for labor market was one of the driving force of the Bologna process, both country based QFs and a future QF for EHEA will address this issues as well as other Bologna goals.
- In July 2005 the European Commission presented a proposal for a voluntary European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong learning that is compatible with and builds on the developments in the Bologna process, but integrates as well the need to link different national and sectoral qualifications frameworks and qualifications at different levels, in order to ensure alternative progression routes into higher education, facilitating a better integration of vocational, sectoral and labour market qualifications with academic qualifications. Romania welcomes this development and would like to ensure that its national qualification framework will be compatible with the EQF, once it has been finalized in 2006.

o ***The Romanian context, towards a national framework for lifelong learning***

An overarching NQF, based on a sectoral approach, should integrate qualifications provided for both youngsters and adults as well as by different institutions within and outside the education formal system. In Romania, the NQF is based on GD 129/2000 or Law 375/2002 referring to a common register for qualifications, quality assurance arrangements, accreditation of prior learning and the development of a credit accumulation and transfer system. It refers to the 5 level structure in place, based on the European framework 1985 Council Decision, with level 1-3 covered by the pre-university education and level 4-5, mainly used in VET, to be covered by universities.

The development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) represents one of the priorities that the Government and social partners have identified. The QF in higher education will be integrated in the NQF

which will include all qualifications nationally recognized issued within the sectors and related to all qualification levels.

Aiming at addressing this priority, some preparatory measures have been taken, as:

- Co-operation with the National Adult Training Board (NATB) which will be assisted by sectoral committees set up with representatives from social partners, professional associations and expertise centres.
- Tripartite agreement on the cooperation in view of developing the NQF have been concluded

Regulatory framework developed also in complementary areas, providing grounds for an overarching NQF. Significant progress has been made in terms of defining the NQF for 1-3 qualification levels. For the above mentioned qualification levels, the Order of the Minister of Education and Research no. 3257/2004 endorses the training standards validated by social partners. All qualifications provided by the formal education are based on these standards. In addition all training standards have to be observed by training providers in view of their authorization for the particular qualifications.

The recent legal developments on higher education, specifically the law 288/2004 concerning the organization of the university studies, are providing grounds for development of a QF in higher education. The legal framework is mentioning the knowledge, general and specific competences, as learning outcomes specific to each education cycle.

In Romania, the Ministry of Education and Research adopts the list of the higher education studies domains, and universities decide, according to the principle of academic autonomy, the qualifications to be provided within the specific domain, as exits at the completion of an education cycle. There are no regulatory acts or methodology for defining QF in higher education.

APART was appointed by the Ministry of Education and Research (GD 1357/3.11.2005 published in OJ 1029/21.11.2005) as the national authority for establishing, elaborating and maintenance of a qualifications framework for Higher Education area.

According to the Bologna process, The Romanian universities have already been engaged in the License-Master-Doctorate (LMD) reform and a NQF will be established in order to correlate the LMD system with the higher education qualifications levels.

Since 1995 Romania has been working on a competence based VET system, for the provision of both initial VET (TVET) and Continuing Education and Training (CVT). Qualifications are either based on occupational or broader training standards, expressed in learning outcomes, on core competences and technical competences. The national register of qualifications will be developed based on existing register of occupations (COR) so that social partners from relevant sectors will be able to validate the qualifications.

- **Project focus**

The project aims developing the QF in higher education in line with EU recommendations and policies and coherent with the QF for 1-3 qualification levels already developed in Romania.

In order to harmonize the qualifications established for the pre-university education and the vocational training with those for university, the NATB will have an active role in consulting actions with the parties involved in this project.

The APART agency will coordinate the development of the qualifications framework for HE. The approach for Higher Education will be in concordance with the approach of NATB for VET qualifications.

Sectoral committees will be involved in the development and maintenance of qualifications. The exact role of sectoral committees in developing, maintaining and reviewing sectoral qualifications at level 4-5 (corresponding to reference levels 6-8) will be clarified in line with the commitment of the Romanian government to ensure a coherent partnership framework, as well as respecting ruling principles for the development of HE qualifications in Europe.

There will be one register of qualifications based on an agreed format (e.g. in line with the EQF descriptors).

The main expected outcome of this project is a methodology for developing a QF in higher education containing descriptors for each educational cycle according to Bologna structure.

In order to accomplish the goals mentioned above, this project will be financed under Phare 2004.

### **1.5 Related programmes and other donor activities**

The project will be closely coordinated with the Phare project for the establishment of a National Authority for Qualifications. This project aims to develop processes and methodologies for the development and maintenance of the NQF, and includes measures to develop the capacities of sectoral committees.

The results of this project will also represent an input for Phare-TVET 2004 Project which will envisage to adapt the qualifications developed or reviewed based on sectorial analysis at all qualifications levels validated by the NAQ and Sectorial Committees.

Within Phare 2003 a Study on the influence of the enhanced TVET in the selected areas and regions, as recommended by multiple-level planning documents: REAPs, LEAPs and SAPs will be realized and it will also explore the inclusion of higher education in the REAPs process and coordination with regional Employment Action Plans.

## **2. CONTRACT OBJECTIVES & EXPECTED RESULTS**

### **2.1 Overall objectives**

The overall objective of the project of which this contract will be a part is:

Line Ministries and/or Governmental Institutions in Romania are, upon request, strengthened with short-term technical assistance in order to produce relevant background documentation, feasibility studies, project design schedules, terms of references and tender dossiers with the ultimate goal to develop solid project documents feasible for implementation.

### **2.2 Specific objectives**

The specific objective of this project is to assist Romania in implementing a QF in higher education as part of an integrated NQF in Romania. The actions are meant to bring the education and training policies in line with EU objectives and practices.

### **2.3 Results to be achieved by the Consultant**

The main expected outcome of this project is a methodology for developing a QF in higher education containing descriptors for each educational cycle according to Bologna structure.

**The expected results of this project are:**

#### ***Result 1***

Clear understanding of achievements and gaps in terms of legislation, institutional arrangements and current practices presented in an assessment paper. The assessment paper will be based on (a) analysis of the implementation of Romania's legislation and institutional arrangements relevant for the field of the project (QF in higher education) and (b) Field Research Reports issued based on 4 research visits on several Romanian institutions relevant for the area of the project, mentioned below;

#### ***Result 2***

Identification of key principles for the development of the Romanian HE Qualification framework, based on a (a) comparative analysis of examples of good practices in EU Country Reports on some EU Member States (at least Ireland, Denmark and Scotland) experiences concerning QF in higher education (part of the NQFs); (b) Report on the current initiatives in QF in higher education at European level; and (c)

Comparative Assessment and conclusions of the developments related to QFs in higher education in EU Member States and at European level;

### **Result 3**

Agreed list of Descriptors of learning outcomes and competence for a QF in higher education in Romania as part of a methodology for the QF in higher education in Romania, debated and validated at national level (based on workshops organized at least 1 at national level and 8 within the development regions); and Recommendations on institutional arrangements for the implementing the QF in higher education in Romania and Action Plan for further development of the QF in higher education and its integration in the NQF;

### **Result 4**

Public awareness on the function and implications of the Romanian HE QF within the NQF focused on identified target groups of employers, social partners, sectors, students organisations, parents, universities, and teachers.

(a) Identification of the information needs of the target groups and the most appropriate media channels.

(b) Mass media materials and a guide of best practices in some of the most important areas in the field of QF.

Media materials will comprise articles for news papers and specialized media, 3 leaflets (600 pieces) for stakeholder organisations and a small guide of best practices (300 pieces) for practitioners that will be involved in the development and maintenance of the HE QF. The existing web pages of APART agency, NATB and MER will be used to disseminate project results and provide a permanent reference base for interested stakeholders.

The Consultant will submit the reports which will include the analysis and recommendations to the Co-ordinator of the project for approval and makes appropriate adjustments.

## **3. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS**

### **3.1 Assumptions underlying the project intervention**

- Clear definition of regional priorities of economic and social cohesion;
- Continuation of the decentralising policy in the higher education system in order to enforce the universities autonomy;
- Inter-ministerial agreements on the integrated policies on human resources development.

### **3.2 Risks**

The main risks concerning the effectiveness of the present programme are:

- Lack of adequate institutional ownership might not ensure the necessary visibility and impact of the programme;
- Lack of co-operation at regional and county level among public institutions could delay or jeopardise the impact of the programme;
- The lack of the operational capabilities of the Ministry of Education and Research and the National Agency of Partnership between Universities and Economical and Social Environment, which will act as PIU could jeopardise the success of the programme.

## **4. SCOPE OF THE WORK**

### **4.1 General**

The increase in participation in HE in Romania, the growth of private provision, the development of an accreditation system for HE as well as the establishment of APART as an agency to improve links between the university sector and the labour market, demonstrate attempts to raise participation and quality and ensure relevant HE in Romania in a labour market context.

#### **4.1.1 Project description**

Romania has committed itself to develop a National Qualification Framework for lifelong learning. In the area of HE qualifications Romania is actively involved in the Bologna process. The common three-cycle structure is being introduced in Romanian universities, accompanied by agreed quality assurance measures. Qualifications at the level of HE need to be transparent to promote mobility, employability and progression. Romania has introduced Europass and the Diploma supplement to translate existing qualifications in clear learning outcomes. Romania will also need to review existing qualifications, develop new qualifications and ensure a better link between the future needs of the Romanian labour market and HE qualifications. Therefore the APART agency for University-enterprise cooperation has been nominated to lead the process of the development of a national qualification framework.

The APART agency will closely cooperate together with the NATB and sectoral committees. There will be one register of national qualifications, based on common principles, agreed processes on the development and maintenance of qualifications and agreed format and descriptors of learning outcomes.

The aim of the current project is to clarify the structure of the qualification framework for HE, including

- the principles for managing, developing, defining and maintaining qualifications,
- clear level descriptors and an agreed format for learning outcomes,
- clear roles of different stakeholders in the framework,
- recommendations for legislative development, incl. arrangements for the institutional set up and
- a general understanding among interested parties of the implications of the development of the HE QF within the Romanian NQF.

#### **4.1.2 Geographical area to be covered**

The activities underlined by this project will have a general impact at national level and will impact also on all 8-development regions of the country, assuring the national coherence and relevance within the educational system

#### **4.1.3 Target groups**

##### ***Direct***

- APART Agency as the main body responsible for developing the HE QF, NATB as National Qualification Authority, and experts and decision makers from MER, are involved in all activities related to the four results.
- Selected sectoral Committees and universities and if relevant professional associations, and key employers in field research as part of result 1 and activities related to result 3.

##### ***Indirect***

- University community, social partners, organisations of teachers, parents and students in activities related to result 4.

## **4.2 Specific activities**

The technical assistance is requested to undertake the following activities for addressing the project goals:

### **Result 1: Assessment of the current state of arts and needs in the field of QF in higher education in Romania.**

The activities to be undertaken for the provision of this service will include

- 1.1 Desk research on the implementation of Romania's legislation and institutional arrangements relevant for the field of the project (QF in higher education)
- 1.2 Field research to various representative institutions in Romania located in Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Iasi and Timisoara.

Bucharest:

- a. *National institutions*: National Council for Academic Accreditation and Evaluation, National Adult Training Board, National Center for the Development of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, APART National Agency for the Partnership between Universities and Social and Economic Environment,
- b. *Universities*: University of Bucharest, Academy of Economic Studies of Bucharest, University "Politehnica" of Bucharest, University of Civil Engineering of Bucharest and University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Bucharest.
- c. *Social partners*: Sectoral Committees for Machinery, fine mechanics, equipments and devices, for Food Industry, spirits and tobacco, for ICT, for Tourism, hotels and restaurants, for Construction, for Textile industry, confections, leather processing and shoes, for Geology, energy and extractive industry, for Wood Processing, cellulose and paper, and some representatives from key employers (incl. foreign investors) and relevant professional associations.

Cluj-Napoca:

- a. *Universities*: Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, University "Babes Bolyai" of Cluj-Napoca, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Cluj-Napoca
- b. *Social partners*: some representatives from key employers (incl. foreign investors), and/ or social partner representations cooperating with the universities

Iasi:

- a. *Universities*: Technical University "Gh. Asachi" of Iasi, University "A.I. Cuza" of Iasi,
- b. *Social partners*: some representatives from key employers (incl. foreign investors), and/ or social partner representations cooperating with the universities

Timisoara:

- a. *Universities*: University "Politehnica", University of West, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine
- b. *Social partners*: some representatives from key employers (incl. foreign investors), and/ or social partner representations cooperating with the universities

The type of universities in Bucharest, Cluj Napoca, Iasi and Timisoara covers the entire scale of specializations and profiles of Romanian higher education system.

All Reports will be drafted and presented in an Agreed Layout with the PIU of the project.

### **Result 2: Identification of key principles for the development of the Romanian HE Qualification framework**

The activities to be undertaken for the provision of this service will include

- 2.1 A comparative analysis of examples of good practices in EU Country Reports on some EU Member States (at least Ireland, Denmark and Scotland) experiences concerning QF in higher education (part of the NQFs);

Each country report should contain information on: legislation in force, description of the QF in higher education, institutional arrangements learning outcomes (defining), adequate use of Diploma Supplement, linking outcomes and credits, use of credits in national systems, quality assurance, assessment, certification and accreditation of prior learning in HE, the role of peer review, registers of qualifications, higher vocational qualifications in the countries concerned and labour market oriented courses in HE (links between tertiary vocational or labour market oriented qualifications and qualifications at other levels), practical training at tertiary level.

- 2.2 Report on the current initiatives in QF in higher education at European level; The report will focus on critical issues for qualifications framework in HE at European level and the modalities in which they are addressed and will reveal specific relevant issues for further decision making in the case of Romania; It will include developments in the framework of the Bologna process and the European Qualifications Framework.
- 2.3 Comparative Assessment and conclusions of the developments related to QFs in higher education in EU Member States and at European level; This report should indicate key principles for the development of the Romanian HE QF.

The activities undertaken for the provision of this service will be exclusively company headquarter based desk research.

### **Result 3: Methodology development and institutional arrangements recommendations for the set up of a QF in higher education in Romania.**

The activities will be split in two categories:

- 3.1 Activities aiming to field research and collecting information through 8 regional workshops in each of the 8 development regions in Romania and one national seminar. At the regional workshops will attend approximately 20 persons/each, representatives of universities and economic actors of the region while for the national seminar will be attended by approximately 60 persons.
- 3.2 Activities for drafting and presenting the three demanded papers.
  - a. Agreed list of descriptors of learning outcomes and competence for a QF in higher education in Romania;
  - b. Methodology for the QF in higher education in Romania, debated and validated at national level (based on workshops organized at least 1 at national level and 8 within the development regions);
  - c. Recommendations on institutional arrangements for the implementing the QF in higher education in Romania and Action Plan for further development of the QF in higher education and its integration in the NQF;

All Reports will be drafted and presented in an Agreed Layout with the PIU of the project.

**Result 4: Public awareness on the function and implications of the Romanian HE QF within the NQF focused on identified target groups of employers, social partners, sectors, students' organisations, parents, universities, and teachers.**

**Identification of the information needs of the target groups and the most appropriate media channels.**

**A series of materials for mass media (press releases and press conferences addressed at the following national news papers, and the following specialized media: Gandul, Suplimentul Educational, Top Business, Higher Education in Europe edited by UNESCO-CEPES), 3 information leaflets on the following topics:European framework of qualifications for Higher Education, results of the ongoing project, glossary of terms; regular updates on APART, NATB and MER web pages.**

**A Guide of best practices in some of the most important areas in the field of QF;**

The Consultant will submit the reports which will include the analysis and recommendations to the Co-ordinator of the project for approval and makes appropriate adjustments.

No.	Activity	Results	Month	Experts
1	Assessment of the current state of arts and needs in the field of QF in higher education in Romania (Result 2)	Result 1.1	M1	Team Leader Expert 2
		Result 1.2	M1	Team Leader Expert 2 Expert 3
2	Description and analysis of some EU Member States (at least Ireland, Denmark and UK) and European initiatives, good practices, legislation in force and institutional arrangements in the field of QF in higher education (Result 1)	Result 2.1	M2	Team Leader Expert 3 Expert 2
		Result 2.2	M2	Team Leader Expert 2 Expert 3
		Result 2.3	M2	Team Leader Expert 2
3	Methodology development and institutional arrangements recommendations for the set up of a QF in higher education in Romania (Result 3)	Result 3.1	M3	Team Leader Expert 3
		Result 3.2	M3-M5	Team Leader Expert 2 Expert 3
4	Mass media materials	Result 4.1	M1-M6	Team Leader Expert 3
		Result 4.2	M1-M6	Team Leader Expert 3
		Result 4.3	M1-M6	Team Leader Expert 2

### 4.3 Project management

#### 4.3.1 Responsible body

The institutions involved in the project are:

- The Central Finance and Contracts Unit (CFCU) within the Ministry of Public Finance will be the **Contracting Authority** and as such be responsible for all procedural aspects of the tendering process, contracting matters and financial management (including payments) of the contract activities;
- the Ministry of Public Finance, Technical Assistance Directorate, as **Implementing Authority**;  
Ms. Livia Chirita  
Director -SPO  
Tel 319 98 987, fax 319 96 50
- National Agency for the Partnership between Universities and Social and Economical Environment (APART), as the unit designated by the Ministry of Education to **implement the project – Project Implementing Unit (PIU)**.

Schitu Magureanu, district 1 Bucharest

**Mr. Sorin Eugen Zaharia, director, tel: +40213130052, fax: +403130053, sorinz@apart.ro**

Other beneficiaries:

- The Ministry of Education and Research;

**Laura Marinas– director Ministry of Education and Research, tel 0723150736, fax 312 48 77, email laura.marinas@gmail.com**

- The National Adult Training Board;  
**Ana Costin – Executive director NATB, tel 315 78 46, fax 315 78 55, email ana.costin@cnfpa.ro**

### **4.3.2 Management structure**

A Steering Committee will be formed in order to direct and give general orientations to the project. The Steering Committee will comprise the following members:

- the representatives of Ministry of Education and Research;
- the representatives of NATB;
- the representatives of National Center for VET Development;
- the representatives of APART;
- Implementation Authority being MFP;
- EC Delegation in Bucharest & European Training Foundation (as observers);
- CFCU - Contracting Authority (as observer).

Besides the members listed above, the PSC will also include the Team-leader and the members of the project team.

Upon request of one of the parties represented in the PSC, additional partners can be invited to participate in the PSC meetings if this would positively stimulate the project implementation process.

The Consultant will inform the members of the PSC about the progress of the project. In return, the stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on the results of the project implementation process. Based on the information provided by both the Consultant and the project stakeholders, the PSC will make recommendations for adjustments whenever required. The PSC can delegate concrete actions following its meetings, which are going to be followed-up by the Consultant, in joint co-operation with the project stakeholders.

The PSC will operate as an advisory committee and meet every time is considered necessary. The Steering Committee will meet to receive, discuss and approve the inception and final reports of the project.

The Project Implementation Unit will work in close cooperation with the Steering Committee.

The SPO and PIU must be consulted by the Consultant on every issue arising in the implementation of the project.

The Consultant, following SPO's approval of the reports and invoices, shall address to CFCU the invoices for payments under this contract.

### ***4.3.3 Facilities to be provided by the Contracting Authority and/or other parties***

The Consultant shall also liaise, as required, with the EC Delegation in Bucharest. Arrangements and procedures relating to such contacts shall be formalised with the APART.

APART will ensure public relations support through the mass media, including public awareness initiatives, as part of the programme implementation.

The beneficiary will provide the project team with proper office space within the APART Bucharest. The Consultant will be provided with office room(s). However, the Consultant should have its own laptops/PCs, portable printers and make necessary arrangements to support the TA team with stationary, communications facilities etc

If necessary, the PIU (APART) will also offer access to its IT equipment, stationery and communication but the cost of the use of this facilities will be supported by the consultant as mentioned at 6.3.

The beneficiary institutions shall provide the Consultant with copies of all data and reports as available and considered relevant to successful implementation of the Consultant's work as well as provide liaison with other government agencies or ministries as required.

## 5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

### 5.1 Location

The operational basis for this project will be in Bucharest, Romania.

### 5.2 Commencement date & Period of execution

The intended commencement date shall be the date of the signature of this contract by the last party and the period of execution of the contract will be 6 months from this date.

## 6. REQUIREMENTS

### 6.1.1 Personnel

The proposed experts will have the professional qualifications and experience required to successfully cover all the activities as indicated in these ToR.

All experts who have a crucial role in implementing the contract are referred to as key experts. The profiles of the key experts for this contract are as follows:

#### ***Key Expert 1: Team leader: 70 man/days***

##### ***Qualifications and skills***

- university education at least up to Master Degree;
- team work abilities;
- demonstrated coordination skills;
- excellent inter-personal and communication skills;
- fluency in English.

##### ***General professional experience***

- at least 10 years experience in the field of educational policy in EU member states;
- international experience with a European program in the field of education;
- expertise in national/international project management as project manager or team leader.

##### ***Specific professional experience***

- experience with the establishment of a QF for HE or with the development of the Bologna process at national and European level;
- participation to the production/development of qualification frameworks in education, in particular in higher education, in at least one EU member state.

#### **Team leader direct responsibilities:**

a. related to the results mentioned in the section Results to be achieved by the Consultant will include:

R 1..1. Desk research on the implementation of Romania's legislation and institutional arrangements relevant for the field of the project (QF in higher education)

Organization of the field research activities:

R 1.2 Field research to various representative institutions in Romania located in Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Iasi and Timisoara.

R 2.1 A comparative analysis of examples of good practices in EU Country Reports on some EU Member States (at least Ireland, Denmark and Scotland) experiences concerning QF in higher education (part of the NQFs);

Coordination of the debates and reunions for the validation of the methodology proposed:

R 3.2 b Methodology for the QF in higher education in Romania, debated and validated at national level (based on workshops organized at least 1 at national level and 8 within the development regions);

R 3.2. c Recommendations on institutional arrangements for the implementing the QF in higher education in Romania and Action Plan for further development of the QF in higher education and its integration in the NQF.

b. related to the management of the activities developed:

- coordination of the activities of the project;
- coordination of the results R 2.2, R 2.3, R 3.1, R 3.2 a and R 4;
- coordination of the team of European and local experts and specialists involved in the activities of the project;
- reporting process;
- possibility to mobilize any additional expertise to address unforeseen problems and technical issues.

**Key Expert 2: 35 man/days**

***Qualifications and skills***

- university degree;
- team work abilities;
- excellent inter-personal and communication skills;
- initiative and co-operative attitude;
- fluency in English.

***General professional experience***

- at least 3 years of experience in the area of higher education;
- international experience with a European program during the last 3 years.

***Specific professional experience***

- at least 2 years experience in the field of learning descriptors and outcomes, in at least one Member State;
- at least 1 year experience in conducting analyses on the existing qualifications framework and institutional arrangements in one of EU Member States in order to assure the link between the area of HE and the social and economic partners;
- familiar with Dublin descriptors and methodology guidelines for a QF in higher education.

**Expert 2 responsibilities:**

R 1.1. Desk research on the implementation of Romania's legislation and institutional arrangements relevant for the field of the project (QF in higher education)

R 1.2 Field research to various representative institutions in Romania located in Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Iasi and Timisoara.

R 2.1 A comparative analysis of examples of good practices in EU Country Reports on some EU Member States (at least Ireland, Denmark and Scotland) experiences concerning QF in higher education (part of the NQFs);

R 2.2. Report on the current initiatives in QF in higher education at European level.

R 2.3. Comparative Assessment and conclusions of the existing experiences and developments related to QFs in higher education in EU Member States and at European level.

R 3.2 a Agreed list of descriptors of learning outcomes and competence for a QF in higher education in Romania;

R 3.2.b Methodology for the QF in higher education in Romania, debated and validated at national level.

R 3.2. c Recommendations on institutional arrangements for the implementing the QF in higher education in Romania and Action Plan for further development of the QF in higher education and its integration in the NQF.

R 4.3. A Guide of best practices in some of the most important areas in the field of QF.

**Key Expert 3: 35 man/days**

**Qualifications and skills**

- university degree;
- team work abilities;
- excellent inter-personal and communication skills;
- initiative and co-operative attitude;
- fluency in English.

**General professional experience**

- at least 3 years experience in the field of higher education;
- experience in at least 2 projects with European programs.

**Specific professional experience**

- at least 3 years experience in the field of training responsiveness to labor transformations;
- at least 1 year experience on the labour market demands and institutional arrangements at sectoral level in EU Member States in order to assure the link between the labour market and the universities;
- at least 2 years experience in the area regarding the involvement of employers in qualifications framework for higher education.

**Expert 3 responsibilities:**

R 1.2. Field Research Reports to various representative institutions in Romania located in Bucharest, Cluj Napoca, Iasi and Timisoara.

R 2.1. A comparative analysis of examples of good practices in EU Country Reports on some EU Member States (at least Ireland, Denmark and Scotland) experiences concerning QF in higher education (part of the NQFs).

R 2.2. Report on the current initiatives in QF in higher education at European level.

R 3.1. Activities aiming to field research and collecting information through 8 regional workshops

R 3.2 b Methodology for the QF in higher education in Romania, debated and validated at national level (based on workshops organized at least 1 at national level and 8 within the development regions);

R 4.1 Identification of the information needs of the target groups and the most appropriate media channels.

R 4.2 A series of materials for mass media (press releases and press conferences).

The minimum percentage of time international experts should work in the beneficiary country is 75%.

### **6.1.2 Other experts**

CVs for experts other than the key experts are not examined prior to the signature of the contract. They should not have been included in tenders.

The Consultant shall select and hire other experts as required according to the profiles identified in the Organisation & Methodology and/or these Terms of Reference. These profiles must indicate whether they are to be regarded as long-term/short-term, international/local and senior/junior so that it is clear which fee rate in the budget breakdown will apply to each profile. For the purposes of this contract, international experts are considered to be those whose permanent residence is outside the beneficiary country while local experts are considered to be those whose permanent residence is in the beneficiary country.

The Consultant should pay attention to the need to ensure the active participation of local professional skills where available, and a suitable mix of international and local staff in the project teams. All experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities accorded to them.

**The Consultant will recruit experts from different subject areas – indicative 90 man/days – short term experts, for assisting the key experts in all areas of the project.**

The experts must have university degree in education or an equivalent academic degree.

Required expertise: professional experience in higher education, in the area of training responsiveness to labor transformations or regarding the demands of employers in different sectors of activities and experience of working in international programmes.

Good command of English and experience of working within a team are also required.

The selection procedures used by the Consultant to select these other experts shall be transparent, and shall be based on the above criteria. The findings of the selection panel shall be recorded. The selection of experts shall be subject to approval by the Contracting Authority.

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration of the beneficiary country cannot be recruited as experts (university staff are not civil servants).

### **6.1.3 Support staff & backstopping**

Backstopping costs are considered to be included in the fee rates.

The costs of support staff must be included in the fee rates of the experts.

## **6.2 Office accommodation**

Office accommodation of a reasonable standard for each expert working on the contract is to be provided by the PIU.

## **6.3 Facilities to be provided by the Consultant**

The Consultant shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. In particular it shall ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting provision to enable experts to concentrate on their primary responsibilities. It must also transfer funds as necessary to support its activities under the contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion.

The Consultant shall ensure that the project office is adequately equipped with computers, printers, projector and other devices to make the training sessions as effective as possible. Besides, the Consultant is expected to support its experts with all the necessary means and equipment needed to successfully execute this contract.

If the Consultant is a consortium, the arrangements should allow for the maximum flexibility in project implementation. Arrangements offering each consortium partner a fixed percentage of the work to be undertaken under the contract should be avoided.

The expenses related to secretarial activities, personal transport facilities, communications, logistical support in the Consultant's office in Bucharest must be supported by the Consultant.

#### **6.4 Equipment**

**No** equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the Contracting Authority / beneficiary country as part of this service contract or transferred to the Contracting Authority / beneficiary country at the end of this contract. Any equipment related to this contract, which is to be acquired by the beneficiary country, must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.

#### **6.5 Incidental expenditure**

The Provision for incidental expenditure covers the eligible incidental expenditure incurred under this contract. It cannot be used for costs, which should be covered by the Consultant as part of its fee rates, as defined above. The provisions in the General Conditions and the notes in Annex V of the contract govern its use. It covers:

- Local and regional workshops (8 regional and at least 1 national) comprising accommodation, meals and all proceedings. The expected number of participants for regional workshops is 20 and for national seminar is 60.
- Translation of documentation related to the activities defined under section 4.2.
- Printing, editing, multiplying and publication of materials and other documentation related to the activities defined under section 2. (The materials for printing are R 1.1 (300 pieces), R 2.1 (300 pieces), R 3.2 a and b (300 pieces) the guide of best practices from R 4.3 (800 pieces)
- Local transportation related to the activities defined under section 4.

The provision for incidental expenditure are in the limits of the budget of 30 500 EURO and does not cover travel to/from beneficiary country for international experts. This amount must be included **without modification** in the Budget breakdown.

### **7. REPORTS**

#### **7.1 Reporting requirements**

The Consultant is expected to produce the following reports:

##### **Inception Report**

The Contractor is expected to submit an Inception Report (IR). Latest one week after completion of the assignment, the incumbent will submit to the counterpart organisation a clear, systematic and detailed overview of the completed activities. The IR will include a detailed planning of all the activities to be completed within the project implementation period, including a description of the methodology to be used, possible problems encountered and proposals to overcome them, indicators of achievement, and a matrix of compliance. The IR will also give a clear overview of both the international and national experts including their exact time involvement in programming, coaching and development activities to be executed under the project. The IR (alongside TOR) will become the main working instrument during the project implementation period and will be referred to throughout the entire duration of the project.

The Consultant will present in the IR an accurate and detailed programme chart showing in a systematic way the order in which the activities are planned and going to be executed during the project lead-time. The chart is an adjusted version of the one included in the project proposal. Updated benchmarks to monitor the progress of the project are included as well.

The IR will be submitted within four weeks after commencement of the services.

##### **Final Report**

The Final Report provides a comprehensive description of the work performed by the Contractor and shall record project implementation details of a technical, financial, and administrative nature. The Report shall

also include an assessment of the success of the project in satisfying the defined objectives. The final report shall be submitted within 30 days after finalisation of the Contract.

Attached to the final invoice and final update of the monitoring spreadsheet, an audit certificate confirming the final certified value of the contract must be submitted, in compliance with Article 28 of General Conditions.

## **7.2 Submission & approval of progress reports**

All reports shall be in accordance with standard EC formatting providing information on:

- General progress (actions, meetings with authorities, suppliers, etc.);
- Problems encountered and appropriate solutions identified;
- Recommendations: short-term and within the lifetime of the project, as well as long-term and beyond the programme;
- Requests.

The reports shall make a distinction between activities accomplished, and declared completed, and activities currently under way, in order to have a clear picture of the progress of the programme.

Three hard copies of each report will be submitted for official approval to the Implementing Authority (i.e. the Management Authority for Community Support Framework within the Ministry of Public Finance) that will have to endorse it officially. All reports and other documentation will also be forwarded in electronic format to the Implementing Authority.

Reports shall be addressed to:  
Ministry of Public Finance (MPF)  
Managing Authority for Community Support Framework

One copy of each approved report will be submitted to the CFCU and the responsible task manager within the EC Delegation in Romania. Payments will be made by the Contracting Authority only after official approval of the invoices and of the reports by the Implementing Authority. The Inception Report and the Final Report will be upon their approval, milestones for release of interim and final payment. The original final report will be presented on paper and electronic format.

## **8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **8.1 Definition of indicators**

The monitoring data will provide the basic management information that will enable the following factors to be assessed:

- progress made towards the achievement of the general and specific objectives of the project
- on-time completion of the various tasks, including field activities,
- on-time delivery of the reports,
- use of internationally recognised methodology and design methods.

The Consultant should clearly define the expected realistic results (outputs, outcome and impact) of the project activities, using appropriate analyses. Monitoring and assessing progress and resources consumed shall be done through the process of identifying indicators that will reveal, over time, the degree to which results have been achieved and can be attributed to the project activities.

Bidders are expected to comment on the likely impact of the work included in these Terms of Reference. They should identify suitable Performance Indicators for each component of the tasks described. These Performance Indicators will be used to monitor the progress and achievements of the project by the consultant, the beneficiary, and the donor.

### **8.2 Special requirements**

The Consultant shall follow the Identity Guidelines, which apply, to all information and publicity products to be employed in the course of the work. The Guidelines are specified in a brochure and/or CD ROM produced in both English and the language of the country in which the work is to be carried out. This brochure/ CD ROM forms an integral part of the Contract and one copy is provided in Annex of the Contract. Further copies may be obtained from the Information Officer at the EC Delegation in Romania. In

specific cases, or where further clarification is required the Consultant shall, in the first instance, turn to the Information Officer in EC Delegation. The identity standards contained in this brochure/CD ROM may only be used in connection with the implementation of the contract.

The Consultant shall liaise with EC Delegation on matters in which guidance is sought including compilation of guest lists, use of mailing lists and promotional items.