



Call for applications

Terms of Reference for National Consultancy Services to assist the Swiss Representation in Moldova during the opening phase of the Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy in Moldova (PADEM) project

1. Background

As per its constitution, Moldova is a parliamentary republic. It wants to strengthen parliamentary efficiency and performance to ensure a viable democracy. In order to improve the performance of its legislative, representative and oversight functions, and to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, transparency and inclusiveness of parliamentary operations, at the initiative of the Parliament's leadership, the following needs have been identified: 1) strengthening parliamentary oversight through more extensive use of the post-legislative scrutiny instruments, incl. impact evaluation of laws' implementation; 2) improving legal drafting and ensuring the necessary approximation with the EU legislation; 3) enhancing communication between the Parliament and citizens by developing mechanisms to engage with civil society; and 4) continuous learning, incl. from the parliamentary experience of other countries. All these inevitably rely on 5) increasing the capacities of the Parliamentary Administration to provide professional support to individual members of Parliament (MPs) and parliamentary standing committees (PSCs). This is an important precondition because the parliamentary administration ensures the practical implementation and sustainability of intended changes. Finally, there is a recognized need to 6) improve the endowment of IT equipment of the Parliament to strengthen outreach and efficiency of Parliament's work and, in turn, the e-governance capacities of the legislative.

The EU-candidacy status (granted in June 2022) and opening of the EU accession negotiations (December 2023) require multiple reforms, including effective checks and balances as an important pre-requisite to viable parliamentary democracy. In these conditions, state institutions need to make more robust efforts to enhance democratic governance within a complex geopolitical environment. Connections amongst reform-minded actors across multiple institutions – government, parliament, civil society, political parties, media – need to be boosted in order to drive meaningful reforms that measurably improve peoples' lives.

The Swiss Representation in Moldova (SR-M) intends to support the Moldovan Parliament in addressing the aforementioned needs, which have been confirmed by representatives of parliament administration, and major political parties represented in the Parliament. There is also a need for enhanced capacity to work across partisan lines. Furthermore, cooperation with the Swiss Parliamentary Service (SPS) is envisaged from the early stage; the SPS will be mobilised to provide support and boost the collaboration between the two Parliamentary Services, including through peer-exchange.

2. Project focus

The Swiss support to the Moldovan Parliament will be ensured through a project, which shall contribute to the establishment of improved parliamentary practices, based on good governance principles. To institutionalize these practices, the project will work with and through the parliamentary administration, which ensures continuity and sustainability of the parliamentary work, including the work of MPs and PSCs. The project will work on the capacity building of the

parliamentary administration, MPs and PSCs, improving the quality of legislative oversight and law making; increasing transparency and accountability of legislative processes and evidence-based approaches; embedding legislative responsiveness, inclusivity and participatory methods in MPs' work; improving the Parliament's communication with the civil society and the public. This will be done through supporting expertise and advice; exchanges with other (incl. the Swiss) parliaments; and provision of a limited amount of IT equipment.

With this project, Switzerland will strengthen its partnership with the Parliament of Moldova, offering a steady stream of advice and targeted capacity building support, pursuing improved parliamentary practices, greater inclusion and enhanced transparency and cohesion. Switzerland will make the most of its relevant cooperation experiences with other countries, stimulating exchanges. The project will complement engagements of other donors, especially the EU, which is expected to provide substantial support to the state institutions for the EU approximation process. Switzerland's support will be focusing on improving the general working modalities of the Parliament and will help improve the collaboration between the Parliament and the Government as well as the communication and the accountability of the Parliament towards its constituencies.

3. Scope of the consultancy

The opening phase of this new project spans from February 2024 till January 2025. The purpose of the opening phase is to prepare the first phase of the project (February 2025 - January 2029) through a series of assessments and workshops, engaging relevant stakeholders, incl. civil society organizations, and exchange visits.

In order to support the SR-M during the opening phase, **Switzerland is looking for a national consultant who will team up with an international consultant, working closely with SR-M and SPS**. Considering the needs mentioned in chapter 1 above, the selected consultant will be responsible for carrying out the following activities:

- Prepare an analysis of strengths and weaknesses, challenges and opportunities of the existing parliamentary procedures and practices, based on the current legislation, and available reports and analyses, as well as the ongoing negotiations with the EU.
- Map, through political economy lenses, the competencies, existing power relations between stakeholders (parliamentary administration, MPs, PSCs, political parties, government, civil society etc) and their openness to change.
- On parliamentary administration: through participatory and inclusive methodologies, identify entry points, approaches, and scope to improve ongoing parliamentary practices and the financial and managerial capacities of the Moldovan parliamentary administration.
- On working with MPs and PSCs: identify entry points and approaches to promote the political culture of dialogue within the Parliament, compromise and consensus-building across the political spectrum.
- Propose working modality options, either mandate, or contribution, or both ¹, for the implementation of the first phase of the project (four years).
- Prepare inputs for the project document and tender document (in case the implementation modality of a mandate is chosen) of the first phase, incl. by considering the relevance of the proposed project within the ongoing reforms, and its synergy with other projects/interventions.
- Design and facilitate the provision of an initial targeted support to the Moldovan Parliament during the opening phase, incl. organization of an exchange visit to Switzerland and provision of some IT equipment.

¹ The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) can award mandates and provide contributions in order to achieve the objectives of Switzerland's international cooperation. Mandates are SDC-initiated activities carried out by NGOs or other actors, whereas contributions represent SDC support for activities initiated by other actors, incl. NGOs and multilateral organizations. In case of contributions, a co-financing of minimum 50% of the overall financial volume of the project is mandatory.

4. Methods and approaches

During the opening phase a mix of methodologies will be required to achieve the goals of the consultancy. These will include:

- Desk research and review of relevant documents.
- Meetings, workshops and exchanges with key stakeholders, incl. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and SR-M to prepare the inputs for the key documents for the implementation of the first phase.
- A series of assessments involving focus group discussions to validate and test proposals for project implementation approaches and to create ownership.

5. Main deliverables (including consultations with international expert)

- Analysis of strengths and weaknesses, challenges and opportunities of the existing parliamentary procedures and practices, and mapping of the competencies and existing power relations between stakeholders by 31 May 2024.
- Proposal on the working modality options, either mandate, or contribution, or both, for the implementation of the first phase of the project (four years) by 31 May 2024.
- Present inputs for the tender document (in case the implementation modality of a mandate is chosen) allowing to finalize the required documentation by end of June 2024.
- Present inputs for the project document, incl. entry points, approaches, and scope of the project by 30 September 2024.
- Design the provision of an initial targeted support to the Moldovan Parliament during the opening phase by 30 June 2024 and facilitate the implementation by the end of the contract.
- Monthly workplans.
- Final financial report at the end of the consultancy.

6. Qualification and expertise

The selected candidate, working through a legal entity (individual enterprise, NGO, Ltd etc.), shall prove the following expertise and competencies:

- Advanced university degree (or equivalent) in political or social sciences, public administration, governance, development-related studies, international relations, or other related fields;
- In-depth understanding of parliamentary processes and procedure;
- Previous parliament-related capacity-building work;
- Experience in designing international projects;
- Strong analytical and writing skills;
- Excellent inter-personal skills, including in an international environment;
- Excellent understanding of change management and ability to facilitate change processes;
- Excellent network and access to stakeholders at all levels;
- Understanding of do no harm / conflict sensitive working principles;
- Capacities to organise and conduct multistakeholder meetings and workshops;
- Excellent time management and attention to detail;
- Fluency in English, Romanian or Russian languages (both written and spoken).

The consultant will be in charge of making logistical arrangements for in country travels, workshops, translations etc. The total number of days estimated for the involvement of consultant is max. 90 from April through November 2024.

7. Technical and financial offer

The offer for this assignment shall adhere to the following structure, including page limitation:

Chapter	Description	No. page (max)
0	Cover letter	1
1	Technical Offer	5
1.1	Introduction with motivation for the consultancy services	
1.2	Understanding the assignment	
1.3	Description of the proposed methodology and implementation plan with timeframes, risks and opportunities	
2	Financial Offer: in accordance with the indicative numbers of days (see above)	1
3	Annexes: -CV (not exceeding 2 pages) -List of similar assignments and work experiences -Other relevant information	

The financial offer must be prepared in MDL, indicating separately the consultant's fees/tariff, expenses for travels, per diems, cost for workshops incl. renting workshop rooms, translators etc.

Following criteria will be used to select the best candidate:

- Qualifications and expertise, as per chapter 6 above (weighting factor: 50%)
- Quality of the Technical Offer (weighting factor: 30%)
- Quality of the Financial Offer (weighting factor: 20%).

All applications should be sent latest by **11 March 2024** by e-mail to Mr. Radu Danii: radu.danii@eda.admin.ch and SR-M: chisinau@eda.admin.ch

The subject of the email should read: **Call for applications PADEM (National)**