

# Request for Proposal

## Conducting tracing at the national level of 2021 graduates and trainees from public VET providers in Albania

Location	Albania
Type of Contract	Service Contract
Services Requested	Conducting the tracer at the national level of 2021 graduates and trainees from public VET providers in Albania
Reference number	22-06-S4J
Issue date of the call	11 March 2022
Procurement Process	Request for Proposals One step process - only full proposals will be considered
Number of potential successful offerors	One (sole entity or consortium)
Eligible applicants	Registered entities
Submission Deadline	<b>18 March 2022</b>
Deadline for submitting questions & receiving answers	Questions can be sent at <a href="mailto:al.info@swisscontact.org">al.info@swisscontact.org</a> by <b>15 March 2022</b> end of business day. Answers will be provided by <b>16 March 2022</b> , end of business day.
Tentative starting date of service	<b>4 April 2022</b>
Estimated contract timeframe	April 2022 – September 2022
Service providers report to	Intervention Line 2 Manager
Package of Application	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Company NUIS certificate (copy) and Extract from NBC</li> <li>2. Technical proposal</li> <li>3. Financial proposal</li> </ol>
Where to send applications	All offers will be submitted in hard-copy, sealed in a covering envelope which MUST contain the title of the applied call (as per instruction provided in this documents), to the Swisscontact Albania office: Rr. Skenderbej, Vila 49, Tiranë.

## 1. BACKGROUND

Skills for Jobs (S4J) is a project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by Swisscontact Albania. It is part of the Economic Development Domain of the Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Albania (2018-2021), with specific focus on promotion of employment opportunities and skills development.

S4J was designed to address main Vocational Education and Training (VET) challenges, such as: low quality and status, insufficient financing, weak labour market orientation, and poor private sector engagement. The project addresses these challenges by focusing on ensuring systemic change, capacity development and empowerment of key actors in VET.

The project is in its second phase, S4J2, which started in May 2019 and will last until June 2023. During this phase, the project aims at supporting 10 000 students (6 360 more compared to S4J1) and 6 000 trainees (1 500 more compared to S4J1). It aims for improved access to gainful employment and income for young women and men by offering them relevant training opportunities based on new ways of inclusive learning and in cooperation with the private sector.

10 VET providers (9 vocational education schools and 1 vocational training center) in six selected regions benefit from the project, namely: the vocational Hamdi Bushati school in Shkodra; the vocational Kolin Gjoka school in Lezha; the electro-technical Gjergj Canco school in Tirana; the Technical-Economic school in Tirana; the vocational Ali Myftiu school in Elbasan; the vocational Salih Ceka school in Elbasan; the vocational Kristo Isak school in Berat; the Commercial school in Vlora; the industrial Pavarësia school in Vlora; and the Vocational Training Centre in Vlora.

S4J supports partner VET providers in Albania in terms of:

### 1. Employers and partners relations

S4J1 promoted a new approach to employers relations and partners relations through creating a network around each VET provider. VET providers assumed their role as network focal points, and under S4J2 they will strengthen this network by structuring and formalising it, and by adding non-company partners including the organised private sector, local and national governmental actors, and parents. Furthermore, the 1:1 approach will be further developed at the regional level by establishing regional VET platforms that shall bring together all relevant stakeholders to further develop VET in the region.

### 2. Diversification of VET offer

S4J2 will facilitate the development of VET offers that are labour-market oriented and gender-sensitised. Such offers will be developed in close collaboration with local and regional employers. Apart from directions, profiles or courses, the project will also support VET providers in adding other relevant elements to their offer, namely streamlining entrepreneurship and soft skills learning packages and labour market-relevant extra-curricular activities.

### 3. New Ways of Inclusive Learning and Quality

S4J supports VET providers in shifting towards doing school the new ways, using a combination of new IT-based learning methods – including use of smartphones, tablets, internet-resources where most appropriate – in combination with up-to-date non-digitised learning. This translates into a blended learning approach that contributes to the attractiveness of VET offers and makes VET offers more

accessible at the same time. Furthermore, it promotes and supports industry-led re-skilling trainings for VET teachers.

#### **4. Work-Based Learning (WBL) in cooperation with employers**

S4J project will continue to strengthen and broaden its successful WBL initiatives, supporting the partner providers to consolidate, grow and streamline the chosen WBL approach including gradual skills development schemes, internships and apprenticeship solutions. Companies also receive the needed support – training and instruments – to provide quality intern- and apprenticeships, including in-company mentors training.

#### **5. Provider management / organisational development (OD)**

S4J supports VET providers to perform better internally, to be organised and prepared for the new functions as defined by the VET law and developed with project support in S4J1. Important elements include strategic planning, IT-based management functionalities, implementation of all seven functions attributed to the Development Units, and provider-wide and specific quality assurance and development.

## **2. CONTEXT OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

Monitoring of labour market outcomes of graduates is carried out using ‘tracer studies’ that trace or follow students or trainees once they have left their education or training institution. Graduates’ tracing has gained importance to become a recognizable and systematic practice in the VET sector worldwide (see for example Schomburg, 2016). A tracer study usually employs a quantitative approach using a standardized questionnaire survey. Topics can be manifold, but common topics include questions on the transition to work, work entrance, job career, use of learned competencies, current occupation and bonds to the education or training institution.

Changes in the policy and legislative framework in Albania have propelled an increasing demand for departing from ad hoc practices of graduates’ tracking to systematic ones. At the policy level, the National Employment and Skills Strategy (NESS) and Action Plan 2014-2020 strategized the “establishment of a gender-sensitive tracer system for VET graduates” under its fourth strategic pillar concerning the strengthening of the governance of the labour market and qualification systems. At the legislative level, Article 9/2 of the Law no. 15/2017 “On Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Albania” institutionalizes graduates’ tracing at the national level and holds the National Agency of Employment and Skills (NAES) responsible for the carrying out of VET tracer studies. Additionally, pursuant to Article 15 of the law, Development Units in VET Schools are responsible for data collection at the provider level.

Tracing at the national level is fundamental to reliably inform the responsible ministry and other central bodies about the labour market outcomes of the VET graduates to feed evidence-based policy-making and monitoring. *The most recent tracing of VET graduates at the national level was held in 2021 covering the 2019-2020 cohort of graduates and the certified trainees of 2019.* Graduate tracing at the institutional level, on the other hand, complements the tracing system at the national level and makes for a convenient tool of systematic students’ feedback providing thus, a basis to determining VET providers’ capability in preparing graduates that meet the demands of their future workplace. It represents a management tool for the planning and monitoring of curricula and for the enhancement of the marketability of vocational programs. To this regard, the Skills for Jobs project (S4J) developed a specific methodology and piloted an institutional-

based tracer system in September 2017 in the providers supported by S4J. Implementation so far has covered five cohorts of graduates from 9 VE partner providers and 1 Vocational Training Center.<sup>1</sup>

*In this context, and based on S4J experience, S4J will support the National Agency of Employment and Skills (NAES) in conducting tracer at the national level of 2021 graduates and trainees from public VET providers in Albania.*

### 3. SCOPE OF WORK

The objective of this assignment is to engage a consulting entity or consortium to carry out and implement a tracer study at the national level to report and understand the integration of VET graduates in the labor market. The tracer survey should fulfill the following objectives: a) to determine empirically the labour market outcomes of VET graduates and b) to assess the horizontal link between education or training and work by graduates' retrospective evaluation. The tracer shall reliably inform the Ministry of Finance and Economy (MoFE) and the National Agency of Employment and Skills (NAES) about the labour market outcomes of the VET graduates in order to feed evidence-based policy-making and monitoring.

A quantitative approach using a standardized questionnaire survey shall be adopted to allow comparability of the findings with previous national tracer studies. A broad range of aspects regarding employment and work as well as prior learning experiences shall be included. The survey should provide feedback information for improvements in VET, as well. Key research questions to be covered by tracer include:

- What is the incidence of employment, self-employment, under/unemployment AND further education among graduates?
- Do the labour market outcomes differ with respect to gender and socio-demographic background?
- Are the present occupations of graduates related to their vocational education/training?
- What are the economic returns on the received education/training?
- What are the waiting times for first employment and the associated reasons?
- What are the means by which graduates acquire employment? How does the TVET institution assist them through their transition?
- What are some of the difficulties encountered by those graduates that have not been able to find relevant employment?
- How secure/stable do graduates feel in their first-destination employment arrangement?
- How are the work tasks of graduates related to their study programme and their competencies?
- How do graduates assess the relevance, usefulness and prospect of their vocational education and training?

The service provider should come up with a detailed methodological framework based on the following guidelines:

- The target population is the cohort of 2020-2021 graduates from all public vocational schools (around 4,000 graduates) and the certified trainees in 2021 from public training centers (around 10,000 trainees). The target population database comprising of all the relevant background and contact

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<sup>1</sup> <https://skillsforjobs.al/publications/what-happens-to-vocational-education-graduates-after-leaving-school-findings-from-tracer-at-the-provider-level/>

information of the target groups will be provided to the service provider by NAES. The list of public vocational schools and public training centers is in Annex 1.

- The methodological framework and key approaches should inform about the following aspects: research and sampling design, data collection method and instruments, data processing and data analysis and limitations.
- The tracer questionnaires for schools and training centers have been developed by S4J team but need to be pilot-tested for fine-tuning and finalization by the service provider.

The methodological framework shall be finalized in consultation with the S4J and NAES. The service provider will have a kickoff meeting together with NAES and S4J to understand the expectations and to collect required available documents.

#### 4. TASKS

To this regard, the primary role of the service provider under this assignment will be to undertake the implementation of the national tracer survey along with report production and dissemination. The range of tasks of the service provider will include the followings but not limited to:

Phase	Major tasks	Deadline
<b>Design and preparation phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the research methodology and design for the national tracer of graduates and trainees</li> <li>• Review and finalize tracer questionnaires</li> <li>• Recruit and train the enumerators to be engaged with data collection</li> </ul>	By April 2022
<b>Data collection and implementation phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the surveys</li> <li>• Data collection, monitoring and quality control</li> </ul>	By June 2022
<b>Data analysis and reporting phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data cleaning and data processing and analysis</li> <li>• Produce final national tracer reports (2 reports)</li> <li>• Produce summary leaflets</li> </ul>	By July 2022
<b>Dissemination phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translation (to English), design and printing of the report</li> <li>• Organize launching event of the reports</li> </ul>	By September 2022

The final work-plan will be devised with the selected service provider.

## 5. DELIVERABLES

Below are listed the expected deliverables and projected timeframe:

Nr	Deliverables	Deadline	Instalment
1	Work Plan and milestones Research Methodology report (including research questions, sampling, data collection methods, data collection instruments and data analysis plan)	April 2022	50%
2	Final data files including raw data entry, cleaned data and data analysis	June 2020	30%
3	Final tracer reports Final report on the completion of the assignment	September 2020	20%

## 6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The applicants shall be officially registered at the national business center. The entity must provide information and documentary evidences to establish that they have technical knowledge on VET and the labor market in Albania and adequate professional skills and capacities to carry out the tasks.

## 7. DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED

The interested company should send the application file as indicated in the cover page, containing:

### 1. Extract from NBC

### 2. Technical proposal

The technical proposal describing the planned support that will be given to S4J team in successfully delivering the services. The technical proposal must comply with the specifications required under the deliverables section:

- 2.1. *Company profile*
- 2.2. *Approach and Research Methodology*
- 2.3. *Workplan and milestones*, describing the implementation of the tasks listed above
- 2.4. *Proposed Team*: BIOs of proposed team indicating respective expertise and role.

### 3. Financial proposal

Financial Proposal must be submitted in an excel format. Lump Sums will not be accepted. Please provide a description of items and prices per unit. Prices shall be provided in Albanian Lek (ALL) or CHF. Should VAT apply, please indicate the amount separately.

The application MUST contain all required documentation, otherwise may be automatically eliminated by Swisscontact without a further request for clarification and/or completion.

## 8. EVALUATION CRITERIA

An evaluation panel, consisting of no less than 3 (three) members, will evaluate the applications as per the following criteria:

- |                                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| • <b>Technical proposal</b>          | <b>70%</b> |
| - Profile of the service provider(s) | 10%        |
| - Research Methodology               | 20%        |
| - Team Composition                   | 20%        |
| - Work-Plan                          | 20%        |
| • <b>Financial Proposal</b>          | <b>30%</b> |

## 9. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

The deadline of submission is **18 March 2022, 16:00**. Please note that in case your offer will be sent later than the deadline for submission, Swisscontact may decide to disqualify your submission and not consider this eligible for further phases of evaluation.

All applications will be submitted in hard-copy, sealed in a covering envelope, to the Swisscontact Albania office: Rr. Skenderbej, Vila 49, Tirane by the deadline above mentioned. The outside of the envelope must clearly note the Request for Proposal reference number and title: 22-06-S4J - Conducting tracing at the national level of 2021 graduates and trainees from public VET providers in Albania. All documents should be duly signed and/or stamped.

The application MUST contain all required documentation, otherwise may be automatically eliminated by Swisscontact without a further request for clarification and/or completion.

## 10. COMMUNICATION WITH THE BIDDERS

Any communication between SC-ALB and the bidders that might compromise the transparency and fairness of the bidding process must be avoided. Communication has to be documented in writing. The interested applicants can send their questions to [al.info@swisscontact.org](mailto:al.info@swisscontact.org) by *15 March 2022, EOB*. The deadline for submitting responses will be *16 March 2022, EOB*. Responses to requests for clarification by one bidder must be shared with all bidders in BCC mode of email or the response to be uploaded on the website.

## ANNEX 1

Table 1 Distribution of schools to be traced

Rajoni Verior	Rajoni Qendror	Rajoni Jugperëndimor	Rajoni Juglindor
Hamdi Bushati	Beqir Cela	Industriale Pavarësia	Demir Progri
Arben Broci	Hysen Cela	Tregtare Vlorë	Shkolla e Ndërtimit Korçë
Kole Margjini	26 marsi	Antoni Athanas	Fan Noli
Ndre Mjeda	Shkolla e Mesme Kombëtare e Agrobiznesit Golem	Thoma Papapano	Isuf Gjata
Kolin Gjoka	Hoteleri-Turizëm Tiranë	Petro Sota	Irakli Terova
Nazmi Rushiti	Teknike-Ekonomike Tiranë	Rakip Kryeziu	Enver Qiraxhi
Havzi Nela	Gjergji Canco	Shkolla Mekanike Lushnjë	Kristo Isak
Industriale Rubik	Hermann Gmeiner		Stiliano Bandilli
	Karl Gega		Ali Myftiu
	Qendra Shumëfunktionale Kamëz		Salih Ceka
			Mihal Shahini

Table 2 Geographical distribution of schools to be traced

Rajoni verior	Rajoni qendror	Rajoni jugperëndimor	Rajoni juglindor
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dibër	<input type="checkbox"/> Durrës	<input type="checkbox"/> Fier	<input type="checkbox"/> Berat
<input type="checkbox"/> Kukës	<input type="checkbox"/> Tiranë	<input type="checkbox"/> Gjirokastrë	<input type="checkbox"/> Elbasan
<input type="checkbox"/> Lezhë		<input type="checkbox"/> Vlorë	<input type="checkbox"/> Korçë
<input type="checkbox"/> Shkodër			

Table 3 List of Public Vocational Training Centers to be traced

DRFPP
DRFPP Durrës
DRFPP Elbasan
DRFPP Fier
DRFPP Gjirokastrë
DRFPP Korçë
DRFPP Nr.1 Tiranë
DRFPP Nr.4 Tiranë
DRFPP Shkodër
DRFPP Vlorë
Qendra e Lëvizshme