



International Foundation
for Electoral Systems

**INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTORAL SYSTEMS
(IFES)**

Request for Proposal (RFP) for Demographic Research in North Macedonia

Solicitation # RFP-20-004

October 8, 2019

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to invite prospective contractors to submit a written response (“Response”) for the procurement of demographic research in North Macedonia. The solicitation provides prospective contractors with the relevant operational and performance requirements.

1.2 Coverage & Participation

IFES reserves the right to reject any and all offers, to add, delete or modify any element of the solicitation at any time without prior notification and without any liability or obligation of any kind. This RFP does not obligate IFES to enter into a contract nor does it obligate IFES to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of submission of any Response.

1.3 Zero Tolerance for Fraud

IFES has zero tolerance for fraud. Fraud is any act or omission that intentionally misleads, or attempts to mislead, to obtain a benefit or to avoid an obligation. If you have concerns about potential fraud in any way related to IFES projects, contracts, or activities, please contact IFES’ Compliance Hotline at compliance@ifes.org or at +1 202-350-6791.

2 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 The Organization

IFES is an independent, non-governmental organization providing professional support to electoral democracy. IFES supports citizens’ rights to participate in free and fair elections. Our independent expertise strengthens electoral systems and builds local capacity to deliver sustainable solutions.

As the global leader in democracy promotion, we advance good governance and democratic rights by:

- Providing technical assistance to election officials
- Empowering the underrepresented to participate in the political process
- Applying field-based research to improve the electoral cycle

Since 1987, IFES has worked in over 145 countries – from developing democracies, to mature democracies.

2.2 Schedule of Events

The following, tentative schedule will apply to this solicitation. The dates may change in accordance with IFES’ needs or unforeseen circumstances. IFES will communicate changes to the schedule.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Issuance of RFP | October 8, 2019 |
| • Technical Questions/Inquiries Due | October 11, 2019 |
| • Answers/Addenda from IFES | October 14, 2019 |
| • RFP Closes | October 22, 2019, 5:00PM Skopje time |

3 PROPOSAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

3.1 Prospective Contractors' Understanding of the Solicitation

Prospective contractors are responsible for understanding the solicitation in its entirety and each of its elements, and should make inquiries to IFES as necessary to ensure such understanding. IFES reserves the right to disqualify any prospective contractor that it determines, at its sole discretion, does not understand the solicitation or any of its elements. Such disqualification shall be at no fault, cost, or liability whatsoever to IFES.

3.2 Information from IFES

All information provided by IFES in this solicitation is subject to change at any time. IFES makes no certification as to the accuracy of any item, and is not responsible or liable for any use of or reliance on the information or for any claims asserted therefrom.

3.3 Communication

All communications related to the RFP must be in writing. Verbal communication shall not be effective unless formally confirmed in writing by the procurement official listed in 3.3.1. In no case shall verbal communication govern over written communication.

3.3.1 Point of Contact: The sole point of contact for all communication related to this solicitation is listed below.

Ian Swank
Contracts and Grants Manager
iswank@ifes.org

and

Sajia Tokhi
Contracts and Grants Administrator
Stokhi@ifes.org

3.3.2 Formal Communications shall include, but are not limited to the following:

- Questions concerning this solicitation must be submitted in writing to the point of contact identified in 3.3.1.
- Errors and omissions in this solicitation, as well as enhancements. Prospective contractors should notify IFES of any discrepancies, errors, or omissions that may exist within this solicitation. Prospective contractors should recommend to IFES any enhancements to the work described in the solicitation which might be in IFES' best interests.
- Inquiries about technical interpretations must be submitted in writing to the point of contact identified in 3.3.1.

3.3.3 Addenda: IFES will make a good-faith effort to provide a written response to the questions or requests for clarifications in the form of written responses or addenda in accordance with the *Schedule of Events*.

3.3.4 Posting Online: Copy of this solicitation, Amendments and or Q&A will be available online at: www.ifes.org/procurement-notices.

3.4 Submission

It is mandatory for prospective contractors to send proposals in electronic copy via e-mail to the point of contact identified in 3.3.1 on or prior to the closing date and time shown in the *Schedule of Events*.

3.5 Criteria for Selection

The evaluation of each Response to this solicitation will be based on the criteria outlined below. The purpose of this solicitation is to identify responsible, prospective contractors that have the interest, capability, and financial strength to supply IFES with the product and/or service identified in the Scope of Work.

Evaluation Criteria:

IFES will evaluate bids based on the following criteria:

1. TECHNICAL EXPERIENCE 80%

The technical proposal should consist of:

- Proposed approach and methodology (20%)
- Expertise of the entity submitting the proposal (20%)
- Expertise of the Team leader (20%)
- Expertise of the proposed Team of Experts (20%)

2. PRICE 20%

The financial proposal should include all required costs such as labor cost travel costs, communication costs, costs of preparing the soft and hard copies of required documents and any other relevant costs regarding this assignment. The financial proposal must be reasonable and show efficient use of resources, and additional costs, if any, must be clearly identified. Offers will be compared amongst responsive bidders meeting technical requirements.

Criteria Category	Weight
Expertise of the entity submitting the proposal	20%
Expertise of the Team leader	20%
Expertise of the proposed Team of Experts	20%
Proposed approach and methodology	20%
Price	20%
TOTAL	100%

Evaluation Criteria Grading for Each Criterion:

Highly Exceeds Expectations	5 Points
Slightly Exceeds Expectations	4 Points
Meets Expectations	3 Points
Meets most but not All Expectations	2 Points
Does Not Meet Expectations	1 Point

3.6 Selection and Notification

IFES will evaluate Responses to identify responsible contractors and responsive offers. Finalists will be selected to move into the negotiation phase of this process. Written notification will be sent to finalists via email.

4 SCOPE OF WORK/GOODS/SERVICES

The project team is seeking a contractor that will assist IFES North Macedonia to undertake a comprehensive evidence-based research about voter priorities, rigidities and responsiveness to motivational stimuli. The findings of the research will contribute to improve effectiveness and efficacy of voter and civic education campaigns as well as provide alternative modalities for increased voter engagement.

Such research does not exist despite the fact that both government and civil society organizations (CSOs) implemented a series of voter information campaigns during recent elections, funded from state budget or by different international donors. However, due to lack of evidence or data, critical elements such as specific target groups, choice of media, tools and channels for communication and types of messages are often decided arbitrarily or based on previous experience.

In order to conduct such research a contractor will be selected to guide the design and the implementation of the civic and voter education research and analyze the findings and overall results from the qualitative and quantitative efforts. The contractor will work under the supervision of the IFES field office, with input of NYCM, in cooperation with the SEC's Education Department and other stakeholders and advice from the International Research/Civic Education Expert. The provider shall also prepare Terms of Reference (ToR) that would help in the process of selecting a company for conducting the evidence-based research (qualitative and quantitative) aiming to provide unique respondent data and insights to test voter priorities, rigidities and responsiveness to motivating stimuli. Once the data is gathered, the contractor will analyze it and shall create profile reports on different demographic groups. These profile reports will be presented to different stakeholders at the local and central levels, including civil society, public institutions donors, political parties and their research centers, seeking to improve outreach to voters.

More specifically, the contractor is expected to undertake the following tasks:

- 1) Conduct review of the efforts for voter and civic education in the country

Building upon the Project Inception Phase findings, the contractor shall be responsible to conduct a desk-review of the existing literature and practices in the country related to voter information campaigns and voter education efforts. Also, the contractor shall undertake a series of meetings and consultations with State Election Commission (SEC), other election management bodies, political party Research and Analytical Centers, civil society to identify existing capacities and on-going efforts (if any) related to voter education and information such as: specific target groups, choice of media, type of messages, tools and modalities used for the communication and information sharing with the target groups and similar.

- 2) Prepare the Terms of Reference for engagement of a research company:

The research company shall be responsible for the quantitative aspects of the research. The TOR) for contracting the research company should consist of the following elements:

Background, Objective/sub objectives, Explanation of the tasks and scope of work; Deliverables; Duration of entire assignment and indication on duration of the research stages; contractor's qualifications and requirements. Team of Experts - profile, qualification and expertise, Proposal and criteria for selecting the best offer including technical proposal weight and financial proposal weight; Annexes.

The contractor - prior to the preparation of the ToR -, shall conduct market research, in order to propose the criteria for selection of the research company.

The contractor can include additional elements to the ToR, though these should be broad enough to allow a wide range of interested and qualified entities to apply.

It is expected the contractor to participate and contribute in the selection process of the research company.

The development of the TOR is anticipated to be completed within one month from the beginning of the assignment. The contracting of the research company should take place no later than two months from the beginning of the assignment.

3) Guide and provide quality assurance of the research company

The contractor is expected to (in cooperation with IFES) provide oversight, closely collaborate with and guide the research company in the process of developing and implementing:

- Quantitative research
 - design of the questionnaire,
 - proposed techniques for data collection,
 - data sampling, and
 - processing of the collected data (its disaggregation, cross-tabulation, etc).
- Qualitative research;

The objective of the qualitative research is to explore in depth voter priorities, rigidities and responsiveness to motivating stimuli of specific target groups such as rural women, the very poor, chronically unemployed, persons with disabilities, remote communities and other ethnic minorities (such as Roma)—who are largely neglected in public and political life. The contractor shall guide the research company on:

- Areas which need to be further explored,
- Techniques to be used, and
- Manner how collected qualitative data will be processed

The quantitative and the qualitative research need to be complementary and be prepared in a manner to provide comprehensive overall picture of the research.

4) Analyze the results and prepare profile demographic reports for each of target groups;

Based on the findings and conclusions from the qualitative and quantitative research and the desk review, the contractor shall prepare a series of demographic reports dedicated to specific profile of voters that were subject of research. The reports shall include proposals for how to improve outreach and civic/voter engagement for the profile groups.

The elements of profile demographic report are, but not limited to, following: Voter priorities, rigidities, responsiveness to motivating stimuli, messaging, choice of media and other elements that contractor may suggest.

It is anticipated that one (1) comprehensive analysis and at least ten (10) specific profile demographic reports be prepared for the following specific target groups: urban population (general), rural population (general), rural women, youth (first time voters but not only), rural youth, the very poor, chronically unemployed, persons with disabilities, remote communities and other ethnic minorities (such as Roma).

All profile demographic reports should present data disaggregated by age groups, geographical areas, gender and ethnic background at minimum.

5) Presentations of the analyses and specific profile demographic reports;

The contractor in close collaboration with IFES field office, NYCM staff and other involved experts, is expected to participate and contribute to a series of public events that would be organized with different groups, present the analyses and specific profile demographic reports. These efforts aim at assisting election stakeholders such as SEC, civil society, political parties, public institutions, donors, international community, in their efforts to design voter education program and voter information campaign.

It is anticipated that at least nine (9) one- day events be organized throughout the project lifecycle mostly focusing prior to parliamentary elections (2020) and local elections (2021). The costs for the events will be covered by IFES and shall not be part of this financial offer.

I. Deliverables

The following deliverables are anticipated within the assignment:

1. Initial Report, including review of existing and past efforts in the voter and civic education programs, refined approach for the research based on the initial findings, draft TOR for procurement of a research company;
2. Guidance and quality assurance for the work and deliverables required from the research company (developed questionnaire, guidance on methodological approach, data processing);
3. Comprehensive analysis report and specific profile demographic reports;
4. Inputs and presentation of the reports and preparation of Power Point Presentation tailored for different profiles of the target groups;
5. Final Report;
6. Other reports/analysis and duties as may be agreed and required.

II. Duration

The contract is expected to start from end-December 2019, to be completed by 31 December 2022.

III. Requirements

Prospective contractor must provide the following information for their response and offer to be considered:

- A brief outline of the company/CSO and services offered, including:
 - Full legal name and address of the company /CSO
 - Corporate and tax Registration Documents
 - Year business was started or established
 - Full name of the legal representative (president or managing director) of the company/CSO
 - Name of any individuals or entities that own 50% or more of the company /CSO, if applicable
- The Consultancy Company/CSOs must have experience in at least three (3) assignments in conducting or contributing to large scale research targeting mainstream population and specific marginalized groups of population (vulnerable groups) in line with the acceptable international standards and good practices;
- Experience in preparing at least three (3) evidence-based analyses using the qualitative and quantitative data on different topic including social inclusion, gender, marginalized/vulnerable groups and similar;
- Proof of successful accomplishment of the contract with the similar nature. In this sense, the contractor must also provide contact information for no less than three references from projects similar in size, application, and scope of work and a brief description of their implementation (including location and year). IFES reserves the right to request and check additional references.
- Prospective contractor must be legally registered under the laws of the country in which they are organized and possess all licenses, permits and government approvals necessary for performance of the Scope of Work.

Team of Experts

The contractor should propose composition of the team required to deliver the afore mentioned tasks and deliverables. The subject of the evaluation of the offer will be the CV of the Key Team Members with following profile, qualifications and expertise:

Team Leader/ Research Expert

- Master's degree in political science, social science and similar
- Minimum of 10 years of experience in undertaking research in the field of political participation, outreach to vulnerable groups and marginalized communities.
- Experience in drafting minimum 5 (five) analysis, papers and reports understandable for general public and for expert community;

- Strong understanding of demography and statistics;
- Excellent command of English;
- Fluency in more than one local language spoken in the country will be considered as asset.

Social Science Expert

- Demographer or similar social science professional, preferably with M.A. or significant academic research background;
- Minimum of 7 years of experience in undertaking research in the field of social inclusion, and vulnerable groups.
- At least five (5) analyses, papers and reports aimed for practitioners and/or for expert community;
- Excellent command of English
- Fluency in more than one local language spoken in the country will be considered as asset.

Communication Expert

- Communicology or political science and communication professional, preferably with M.A. or significant academic research background;
- Minimum of 7 years of experience in undertaking research in the field of communication and outreach to general public and to vulnerable groups of population.
- At least five (5) analyses, papers and reports aimed for practitioners and/or for expert community;
- Excellent command of English
- Fluency in more than one local language spoken in the country will be considered as asset.

The contractor can suggest additional non-key experts.

5 FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Timeline

Prospective contractors must submit a timeline in the Response showing the time required to produce and consolidate the products and/or deliver services.

5.2 North Macedonia License, Clearance and Approvals

The prospective contractors will include in the timeline any time needed to obtain any licenses, clearances, and/or approvals required under local legal requirements to produce or deliver the products and/or services described in the Scope of Work.

6 QUALIFICATIONS & REFERENCES

Prospective contractors must provide the following information for their Response to be considered:

1. A brief outline of the company and services offered, including:
 - Full legal name and address of the company
 - Corporate and tax registration documents
 - Year business was started or established
 - Full name of the legal representative (president or managing director) of the company
 - Name of any individuals or entities that own 50% or more of the company

- U.S. companies must indicate if they are a registered Small Business (Woman owned, veteran-owned, Minority-owned, Disabled, Service Disabled Veteran-owned)
 - No subcontracting is allowed under this solicitation.
2. Evidence of successful completion of a project of a similar size and complexity.
 3. References: Contact information for no less than three references from projects similar in size, application, and scope and a brief description of their implementation (including location and year). IFES reserves the right to request and check additional references.
 4. Prospective contractors must be legally registered under the laws of the country in which they are organized and possess all licenses, permits and government approvals necessary for performance of the work. Scope of Work.
 5. A certification signed by an officer or authorized representative that the prospective contractor has sufficient financial, technical and managerial resources and facilities to complete the Scope of Work.

7 PRICING

Prospective contractors must complete the following cost breakdown for the implementation of their solution for IFES’ project as described in this solicitation. Prospective contractors must agree to keep these prices valid for a minimum of 90 calendar days.

Pricing must be in Macedonian Denar (MKD). Unit prices are required and in the case of discrepancies between unit prices and the total price, the unit price will be taken as reference basis in the evaluation. Technical specifications must be shown for each item.

No.	Item Description	Technical Specifications	QTY	Unit	Unit Price MKD	Total Price MKD
Group 1						
1.						
2.						
	Subtotal Group 1					
Group 2						
3.						
4.						
	Subtotal Group 2					
Group 3						
5.						
6.						
	Subtotal Group 3					
Total					MKD	
Taxes (IFES is VAT-exempt)					MKD	
Grand Total					MKD	

8 ADDITIONAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

8.1 Non-Disclosure Agreement

IFES reserves the right to require the prospective contractor to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.

8.2 No Collusion

Collusion is strictly prohibited. Collusion is defined as an agreement or compact, written or oral, between two or more parties with the goal of limiting fair and open competition by deceiving, misleading, or defrauding a third party.

8.3 Companies Owned or Controlled by Government

The prospective contractor must disclose in writing with its Response if a government, its agents, or agencies, have an ownership or managerial interest in the company. Failure to disclose a government ownership or managerial interest in the company will result in the prospective contractor's offer being removed from consideration.

8.4 Subcontracting

No subcontracting is allowed under this solicitation.

8.5 Costs

The solicitation does not obligate IFES to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by a prospective contractor or third parties, in connection with the Response.

8.6 Intellectual Property

Prospective contractors may not use any intellectual property of IFES including, but not limited to, all logos, trademarks, or trade names of IFES, at any time without the prior written approval of IFES.

8.7 Prospective Contractors' Responses

All accepted Responses shall become the property of IFES and will not be returned.

8.8 Partial Awarding

IFES reserves the right to accept all or part of the Response when awarding a contract.

8.9 No Liability

IFES reserve the right to accept or reject any Response or to stop the procurement process at any time, without assigning any reason or liability. IFES shall not be liable to any prospective contractor, person, or entity for any losses, expenses, costs, claims, or damages of any kind.

8.10 Entire Solicitation

This solicitation, any addenda to it, and any attached schedules, constitute the entire solicitation.

[End of Solicitation]