

**Service Contract for the Programme “Recovery through a Circular Economy and Pollution Reduction in the Eastern Partnership countries (EU4Green Recovery East)” –
Component 3 – Communication Coordinator and Awareness raising**

Tender Specifications and Terms of References

1. FINANCING

European Union (Contribution Agreement 700002623)

2. PROCEDURE

Direct award procedure pursuant to sec. 46 BVergG 2018 of Austria and in line with the Umweltbundesamt GmbH's internal procurement regulations

3. CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

Umweltbundesamt GmbH (UBA), Spittelauer Lände 5, 1090 Wien, Austria

4. THEMATIC LEADER

Umweltbundesamt GmbH (UBA)

5. NATURE OF CONTRACT

Service contract

6. INDICATIVE TIME PERIOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

November 2025 – December 2028 (3,1 years)

7. CONTRACT AMOUNT

Max 80.000,00 Euro € (max travel expenses up to 5,000 Euro included)

Place of performance: The services shall be carried out primarily at the **consultant's premises**, with possible **missions to the Republic of Moldova and the Republic of Armenia** as required for coordination meetings and stakeholder consultations.

At this stage, **missions to Ukraine will not be possible**. However, meetings or workshops involving Ukrainian stakeholders may be organised **in another country**, subject to prior agreement with the Contracting Authority.

8. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The EU4Green Recovery East (EU4GRE) programme (2025–2028, EUR 21.3 million EU contribution) aims to accelerate green, inclusive, and resilient development in Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) through policy reforms and capacity measures aligned to the European Green Deal. The programme is implemented by Umweltbundesamt (UBA – Austria), Expertise France, International Office for Water (OiEau, France), OECD, UNIDO, and UNECE, and involves government, private sector, civil society, and IFIs among its stakeholders.

Component 3 of the EU4GRE programme focuses on improving knowledge about the European Green Deal and Chapter 27 of the EU acquis, as well as on legislative alignment, cooperation, data exchange, and integration with EU environmental standards and processes, with country-specific activities developed in partnership with national stakeholders.

The overall objective of the EU4Green Recovery East programme is to promote environmentally and climate resilient development of the countries of the European Union's Eastern Partnership and to contribute towards the implementation of the Economic and Investment Plan (EIP). In the Team Europe spirit, the programme will use synergies with other initiatives and projects funded by the EU Member States and International Financial Institutions.

The programme consists of five components:

1. **Circular Economy Promotion.** Helping businesses adopt circular models to foster local job creation, reduce costs, decrease reliance on imports and facilitate access to EU markets by aligning environmental policies with EU standards
2. **Protect Water Resources & Reduce Pollution.** Improving water quality through better management and monitoring to safeguard public and ecosystem health.
3. **Align with EU Environmental Standards.** Supporting governments in aligning with EU environmental policies (Chapter 27 of the EU acquis).
4. **Strengthen Environmental Data & Digitalisation.** Improving environmental data integration and sharing at country and EU level for better policy-making.
5. **Enhance Transboundary Cooperation on Environmental Issues.** Encouraging regional collaboration on shared water and air resources to address cross-border pollution.

The programme will also build on results of past regional programme (EUWI+, EU4Environment – Green Economy, EU4 Environment – Water and Environmental Data) and other relevant regional programmes, including in the Western Balkans, and it will be fully synergetic to EU projects funded through the bilateral portfolios, the Neighbourhood Investment Platform, Twinning, TAiEX, and other instruments.

The programme is financed by the European Union's Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG ENEST) under the EU Eastern Partnership.

The ultimate beneficiaries of the programme are the citizens of the Eastern partner countries.

The following core stakeholders will be involved in programme activities:

- Relevant government agencies at the central, sub-national and local level;
- Private sector actors, in particular Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and their associations;
- Academia representatives;
- Environmental practitioners and experts;
- Civil society organisations (including women's rights organisations);
- International Financial Institutions (IFIs);

The planned implementation period for the project is 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2028 whereby the **Inception Phase** was implemented from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025. The result of the inception phase is the Inception Report with a detailed work programme agreed with the respective beneficiary countries.

The implementation of the EU4GRE programme is currently centered on 3 EaP countries: Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Component 3 focuses on supporting legal approximation and effective implementation of the EU environmental acquis in the partner countries. It comprises four outputs, with a strong emphasis on strengthening institutional and stakeholder capacity.

Output 3.1 aims to support governmental officials and other key stakeholders in becoming better acquainted with the European Green Deal, Chapter 27 of the EU acquis, and the broader framework of EU environmental and climate policies.

Component 3 will coordinate and provide support to all three partner countries (Ukraine, Armenia, and Moldova) to enhance awareness and understanding among public officials and relevant stakeholders — at national, regional, and local level.

The objective is to highlight both the opportunities that environmental reforms and Green Deal integration bring, as well as the economic, environmental, and human risks of inaction. This initiative aims to build stronger political and institutional support within countries' national bodies responsible for implementing these reforms. It will enable a more unified and informed approach to the transposition and enforcement of the EU environmental acquis.

The specific Output focuses on developing a targeted communication strategy for each of all 3 countries. This strategy will act as a cross-cutting preparatory tool, launched ahead of sector-specific or content-based interventions to ensure broad engagement and awareness.

9. SCOPE OF SERVICES AND DELIVERABLES

9.1. Scope of services:

- Development of **Communication strategy for each of 3 beneficiary countries (UA, MD, AM) for the thematic areas** under the Output 3.1. Work Plan, including the overall assessment of stakeholder target groups per country, organization of stakeholder meetings, development of targeted communication messages and action plans, together with the beneficiary country Teams and Component 3 Lead;
- **Strategic and operational management awareness raising and communication activities** in the EU4Green Recovery East programme under Output 3.1. (proposal and description of activities within the budget per country), in line with the budgetary requirements;
- **Report** to and close collaboration with Component Lead, Communication & Visibility Team, project administration, as well as thematic coordinators in the EU4Green Recovery East, the EU delegations and the European Commission.
- **Collaborate** with the selected national-level communications experts (consultants) in the beneficiary countries (AM, MD and UA) on the implementation of the Programme Communication strategy and Action plan (under Communication and Visibility activities)
- **Selection, prioritization and preparation for the approval of activities** and content of the communication activities and (digital) communication materials under Output 3.1
- **Planning strategic and operational media relations** (field trips, press conferences, briefings, empowering key stakeholders to act as communication multipliers, etc.) under Output 3.1, if required,
- **Conception and development of digital communication** materials in particular (policy briefings, brochures, factsheets, videos, infographics, social media packages for communication multipliers) in line with the C&V Strategy and Communication Strategy of the targeted EaP country and with close cooperation with the local communication officers (experts);
- **Coordination and supervision for the project website and social media channels** content related to the Output 3.1 in close coordination with C&V Team
- **Reporting** to EU4GRE Component Lead for Component 3 and to EU4GRE Programme Lead and to Communication and Visibility team at OiEau (coordination to avoid duplication of work, report on KPI of 3.1 communication activities)
- **Monitor visibility guidelines** (general)

9.2. Key Deliverables:

Communication Strategy Package

- **Comprehensive Communication Strategy** for Component 3.1, documenting objectives, stakeholder analysis, messaging, channels, and measurement indicators
- **Stakeholder Mapping Report** identifying and categorizing target groups in each country, with guidelines for engagement.
- **Detailed Communication and Action Plans** per country, outlining scheduled activities and outputs on the level of Component 3.1.

Coordination and Implementation Materials

- **Records of Stakeholder Meetings**—agendas, attendee lists, minutes, and follow-up actions for each major engagement event.
- **Service Request Dossiers (if requested)**—drafted, evaluated, and administratively processed documentation for hiring media, design, or content service providers.
- **Progress and Activity Reports**—regular updates summarizing ongoing activities, outcomes, next steps, and alignment with the communication strategy and EU visibility rules.

Communication Outputs

- **Media Relations Package**—press releases, media advisories, summaries of organized events (press conferences, field trips, briefings), and resultant media coverage documentation.
- **Digital and Print Materials**—brochures, factsheets, newsletters, videos, infographics, and other tailored content, all in English and country-specific versions as needed.

Content Management Reports—records of website and social media updates, analytics summaries, and engagement statistics (quarterly).

Reporting and Compliance

- **Reports**—structured documents reporting on communication activities and outcomes to the U4GRE Component Lead for Component 3 and to EU4GRE Programme Lead and to Communication and Visibility team at OiEau (regular, biannually)
- **Visibility Monitoring File/Folder**—review of all materials for consistency with EU visibility and branding guidelines.

Budget and Administrative Deliverables

- **Monitoring Reports**—reports for communication actions per country/output, for further integration into progress reports. These reports need to be in line with the Programme budget monitoring reports (biannually).
- **Achieving Outputs** - responsibility for monitoring and achieving the deliverables and outputs agreed under the Strategy and the action plan'

The individual deliverables and all data will be prepared in English language and submitted to:

- EU4Green Recovery East Programme Component 3 Lead – Josipa Krizanovic Cimesa (josipa.krizanovic-cimesa@umweltbundesamt.at)

10. IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

Location of services

No specific place of performance, with occasional travel to Armenia and Moldova (with exception of Ukraine – online meetings or stakeholder event) is expected and required. Travel expenses, necessary to perform the tasks described, will be reimbursed up to € 5,000.- on real cost basis and upon submission of proofing documents, according to project requirements and rules. Travel activities must always be approved in advance by the Component 3 Leader.

Ancillary Services

Ancillary services, which are not explicitly stipulated in this document but obviously are necessary in order to perform and fulfil the services, shall be covered by the remuneration. The same shall apply to minor supplements, clarifications or attendance at meetings regarding the subject matter by the service provider.

Assignment schedule

The duration of the assignment is approx. **37 months**. The expected commencement of the assignment is upon signature of the contract (approx. November 2025) and the planned completion date is December 2028.

Input

The provision of services is limited maximum of **1120 hours (140 days)** throughout the entire performance period (start/mid November 2025 – end December.2028).

Umweltbundesamt GmbH is not obliged to exhaust the maximum volume of the Contract throughout the entire performance period.

Management

The Contractor will regularly report to the Component 3 Lead (UBA) and will cooperate with the respective departments in charge for delegated activities.

The main counterparts on the side of the beneficiary are the National Focal Point(s) (NFPs) at the concerned Ministries or Agency. On the side of the Implementing Partners it is the Component 3 Lead and UBA Programme Lead.

All correspondence and documents related to these services must be written **in English**.

The Contractor must personally provide the services. Subcontracting of one or more parts of the contracted services is not allowed without prior permission from UBA.

The Contractor agrees to adhere to the EU communication & visibility guidelines.

The maximum available budget for this assignment is EUR 80,000 (eighty thousand Euro).

This total amount includes:

- All professional fees (expert time, preparation, delivery of outputs)
- Up to EUR 5,000 for reimbursable travel costs (based on actual expenses and against receipts)
- The final contract amount will be determined through the tender procedure, based on the best price-quality ratio.

Offers exceeding EUR 80,000 (including travel) will not be considered.

11. EXPERTISE AND QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONTRACTOR

- Preferably, a minimum of 15 years' professional working experience in the environmental field, e.g. as a PR Manager, Journalist or related field
- Demonstrated experience working with digital communication/marketing, online and print media
- Working experience with public authorities, especially the accession or candidate countries in the enlargement process, is additional value
- Minimum of 10 years of professional working experience in the environmental field covering at least one of the topics within the EU4Green Recovery East programme
- Demonstrated solid knowledge of EU Green Deal, EU acquis and particularly legislation in the environment protection sector, green transition and especially circular economy
- Experience with EU or international donor funded projects (related to environmental topics), specifically in the enlargement process preparation
- Excellent organizational, communication and networking skills
- Hands-on mentality and solution orientated approach
- Visual content creation skills (designing websites, social media infographics) would be an added value

- Excellent command of English

Solid computer skills, such as office software, project management tools, and communication platforms would be expected. Any use of visualization tools or design software will be an asset.

12. SELECTION AND AWARD PROCEDURE

The submitted offers will be evaluated by the Evaluation Team, led by Component 3 Lead (UBA). The Contracting Authority will award the contract according to the best-bidder principle based on the best value for money.

12.1. ELIGIBILITY AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

The Contracting Authority will award the contract after the standard evaluation and selection procedures based on the best price-performance ratio through direct award procedure according to the relevant legal procedure.

Tenderers must comply with all requirements set out in these ToR and applicable EU procurement rules, including:

- Compliance with EU sanctions under Council Regulation (EU) 833/2014, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2022/576;
- Submission of a signed Declaration of Honour (Annex 1) affirming that the tenderer is not in any of the exclusion situations defined in Article 136(1) of the EU Financial Regulation

Tenderers found to be in an exclusion situation and/or in breach of these regulations may be rejected.

12.2. SELECTION CRITERIA

The objective of the selection criteria is to assess whether the tenderer has necessary capacities to perform the contract. The selection criteria, including the minimum levels of capacities, are specified in the following sub-sections. Tenders submitted by tenderers which do not meet the minimum level of capacities may be rejected.

12.2.1. LEGAL CAPACITY

Each tenderer must be authorised to perform the contract and to confirm the possession of appropriate licenses and certificates as required under the relevant laws and regulations. Upon request, he must submit appropriate approving documents.

12.2.2. ECONOMIC CAPACITY

Tenderers must be in a stable financial situation and the economic capacity to perform the contract. Upon request of the Contracting Authority, he/she must submit appropriate approving documents.

12.2.3. TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY

Human resources capacities

Capacity to carry out services in the required standards to handle the proposed contract (including time records).

Relevant experience

Professional working experience as expert in the environmental fields and the provided evidence of skills and competences as described in point 11 above will be taken into consideration to determine the best price-performance ratio of tenderers (The tenderer is requested to provide references).

12.3. AWARD CRITERIA

The contract will be awarded according to the applicable legal tender procedure, based on the best price-quality ratio principle. The Contracting Authority will, in its sole discretion, determine the best bid.

The Contracting Authority may also conduct negotiation rounds at its own discretion if, from its point of view, a better offer (but not limited to the price offered or with respect to any other criteria the Contracting Authority deems appropriate) can be achieved. For this purpose, the Contracting Authority may, in its sole discretion, conduct either one or more rounds of negotiations with any bidder.

Technical Quality

Based on the applicable legal procedure: none specific.

Financial Offer

Tenderers are requested to submit a financial offer giving an all-inclusive price excluding VAT in EURO for the requested task and a daily rate. Travel expenses up to 5,000 Euro will be reimbursed separately upon submission of receipts.

The Contracting Authority is not obliged to exhaust the maximum contract volume throughout the entire performance period.

The tenderer must indicate if the service is subject of any VAT or indicate whether Reverse Charge applies. If the tenderer is VAT-exempt, it must be declared and an official confirmation of VAT-exemption must be submitted with the offer.

It is understood that the contracting authority has no obligation to award any contract of this tender and reserves the right to withdraw from or cancel this tender.

12.4. TENDER SUBMISSION AND TIMELINE

Submission of the tender

Interested candidates must submit the following documents in **English** by email (max. 9.9 MB):

- **Technical offer**, references, and CVs;
- **Financial offer**, indicating daily rate and all-inclusive total price excluding VAT;
- **Declaration of Honour** (Annex 1).
- **Self-Declaration** (Annex 2)

by email to the following address: josipa.krizanovic-cimesa@umweltbundesamt.at

The tender and all documents must be submitted in English.

Signatures must be either hand-written, or a qualified electronic signature as defined in Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions.

It is advised to start completing your tender early and to submit your tender several hours before the deadline. A tender received after the deadline for submission of the tender will be rejected.

In case of technical problems, please contact the following address:

josipa.krizanovic-cimesa@umweltbundesamt.at

The Contracting Authority shall not reimburse any costs for participating in this selection procedure, such as but not limited to the preparation of bids, translation, clarifications, negotiations.

Deadline for submission of the tender

The deadline for submission is **27 October 2025, 16:00** CET. Tenders submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

The publication of these Terms of Reference does not commit the Contracting Authority to award the announced contract. The Contracting Authority can withdraw from this call at any given time. In no event shall the Contracting Authority be liable for any damages whatsoever including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, in any way connected with the cancellation of a tender procedure.

13. ANNEX

Annex 1: Declaration of Honour (DoH)

Annex 2: Self Declaration