

Call for applications

Key Expert on Judiciary - Rule of Law Project, North Macedonia

Mission description

The Key Expert on Judiciary will provide senior technical leadership and sectoral expertise for all project activities concerning courts, judicial governance and related justice-sector institutions. The expert's thematic portfolio may contribute to activities under both project pillars on the fight against organised crime and corruption including complex criminal and financial investigations and prosecutions, and the impartiality, accountability, efficiency and professionalism of the prosecution service.

The expert will report to the Team Leader and work in close coordination with the Pillar Coordinators and, who are responsible for the operational management of their respective pillars, the Deputy Team Leader as well as with the Key Experts on Prosecution and Law Enforcement, the project team in Skopje and Expertise France teams based in Paris.

The expert will act as the project's principal technical counterpart for judiciary-related activities with relevant beneficiary institutions, including the Supreme Court, Judicial Council, Court Budget Council, Constitutional Court, Ministry of Justice, Academy for Judges and Prosecutors, ICT Council for the Judiciary, the Bar Association and relevant courts.

Sector-Specific Technical Responsibilities

- Provide technical leadership on measures to strengthen judicial independence, impartiality, accountability, integrity, efficiency, quality and professionalism;
- Support reforms concerning judicial governance, transparent and merit-based appointments and promotions, performance evaluation, disciplinary and ethical frameworks, human-resource planning and judicial financial autonomy;
- Support courts and judicial institutions in improving case management, court administration, judicial statistics, digital tools and the efficient handling of complex cases;
- Provide technical support to improve the adjudication of organised crime, high-level corruption, financial crime and money-laundering cases, including the application of relevant criminal legislation and confiscation measures;
- Support the Ministry of Justice and other relevant institutions in preparing and implementing judicial strategies, action plans, legislation, policy documents and Chapter 23 reform measures;
- Support the Academy for Judges and Prosecutors and other training institutions in strengthening initial and continuous training, judicial excellence and peer-learning mechanisms.
- Provide senior technical advice, coaching and mentoring to the relevant beneficiary institutions, drawing on European standards and EU Member State practices;
- Monitor institutional, legislative and policy developments in the sector and support the project in adjusting its assistance to evolving needs and reform opportunities;
- Design and lead sector-specific diagnostics, legal and institutional analyses, strategic reviews, needs assessments and other technical studies;

- Provide advisory support for the preparation, revision and implementation of legislation, strategies, action plans, institutional policies and operational procedures;
- Support the monitoring and implementation of the Reform Agenda steps within the Rule of Law and contribute technical expertise relevant to Chapters 23 and 24;
- Lead or contribute to project activities, including mentoring, peer-to-peer exchanges, on-the-job support, training courses, workshops, study visits and technical consultations;
- Promote the ownership and sustainability of the technical solutions, tools and capacities supported by the project.

Activity Planning and Cross-Pillar Coordination

- Work jointly with the Project officers to identify, sequence, calibrate and adapt sector-related activities under both pillar, taking account of beneficiary needs, available resources, the project work plan and logical framework, and implementation risks;
- Provide the Project officers with the technical inputs required for operational planning, resource estimates, procurement and contracting processes, expert mobilisation, scheduling and implementation follow-up;
- Collaborate closely with the other Key Experts to design and implement joint activities, manage thematic interdependencies, avoid duplication and ensure coherent support across the police, prosecution and judicial chain;
- Ensure the timely circulation of technical information to the Team Leader, Project officers and other Key Experts, and alert them to issues that may affect implementation, resources, timelines or the quality of results;
- Identify and analyse sector-specific institutional, political, legal and operational risks and propose appropriate mitigation measures;
- Participate in project planning exercises, technical committees, Steering Committee meetings and other governance or coordination meetings, and contribute to the follow-up of decisions.

Expertise Mobilisation and Quality Assurance

- Identify short-, medium- and long-term expertise needs in the sector and contribute to consolidating and animating the project pool of experts;
- Prepare or review terms of reference, mission agendas, methodologies and technical specifications for national and international experts;
- Contribute to the identification, selection and recruitment of experts in accordance with Expertise France procedures;
- Brief, guide and technically coordinate experts throughout their assignments, in close cooperation with the Team Leader and relevant Pillar Coordinator;
- Review and validate the technical adequacy, timeliness and quality of expert deliverables and ensure that recommendations and products are integrated into the broader project approach;
- Provide technical guidance to national and international project staff working in the sector and facilitate the capitalisation of lessons learned and good practices.

Monitoring, Reporting and Learning

- Monitor the technical progress of sector-related activities and their contribution to project indicators, in coordination with the Pillar Coordinators and the project's monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning focal point;
- Support beneficiary institutions in collecting, analysing and interpreting the data required to monitor reforms, institutional performance and project results;
- Draft thematic contributions to inception, monthly, semi-annual, annual, final and ad hoc reports, and coordinate the technical inputs provided by experts and relevant project staff;
- Contribute to the preparation and regular updating of project planning, monitoring and project-management tools;
- Identify lessons learned, transferable practices and emerging needs and contribute to their dissemination and use in future programming.

Stakeholder Coordination and Institutional Representation

- Develop and maintain close working relations with relevant beneficiary institutions and counterparts, ensuring that project support remains aligned with their current and emerging needs;
- Coordinate with the European Union Delegation, other implementing agencies, international partners and donors, alongside or on behalf of the Team Leader when requested,, to promote complementarity, synergies and the exchange of information;
- Represent Expertise France and the project, alongside or on behalf of the Team Leader when requested, in technical meetings and in the dialog with national institutions;
- Work closely with the beneficiary project facilitators and the full project team to ensure effective preparation, implementation and follow-up of activities;
- Contribute to the visibility and communication of sector-related project activities and results, in coordination with the staff responsible for communication and in compliance with EU visibility requirements.

Other Tasks

- Ensure compliance with Expertise France rules and procedures, including requirements relating to professional conduct, conflicts of interest, fraud and corruption prevention, data protection and security;
- Perform any other project-related tasks requested by the Team Leader.

Project description

The Rule of Law II Project in North Macedonia aims to strengthen the rule of law by improving the independence, efficiency and effectiveness of the justice system and the country's ability to fight high-level corruption and organised crime. The action is structured around two pillars corresponding to the priorities identified in the Guidelines:

- 1 Improved efficiency of the justice system against organised crime and high-level corruption
- 2 Enhanced impartiality, accountability, efficiency and professionalism of the judiciary

The project will mobilise three sectoral Key Experts - Judiciary, Prosecution and Law Enforcement - whose thematic responsibilities may contribute to activities under either pillar. Pillar Coordinators will be responsible for the operational management of their respective pillars, while the Key Experts will provide technical leadership within their sectors and work jointly to ensure coherence and synergies across the criminal justice chain.

The Project will mainly provide assistance to the relevant institutions through coaching and mentoring by EU Member State peers, peer-to-peer exchanges among national and EU Member State actors, and other forms of hands-on transfer of experience.

Expertise France is applying to a call for proposals published by the European Union for this project. It will be co-funded by the European Union and the French Government for an overall amount of EUR 10 million. The planned implementation period is 48 months.

Applicant profile

Qualifications and Skills

- Advanced university degree in law or an equivalent professional qualification relevant to the position;
- Strong knowledge of European standards, EU Member State practices and institutional reform issues in the relevant sector; Good understanding of the EU enlargement process and sound knowledge of the EU *acquis* relevant to Chapters 23 and 24;
- Strong understanding of rule of law cooperation and institution-building approaches, including coaching, mentoring and peer-to-peer support;
- Excellent command of written and spoken English; knowledge of Macedonian and/or French would be an asset;
- Excellent analytical and drafting skills, including the ability to prepare technical notes, terms of reference, reports and recommendations;
- Strong interpersonal and intercultural skills, including diplomacy and the ability to work with senior institutional counterparts;
- Ability to work autonomously while contributing effectively to a multidisciplinary and cross-pillar team;
- Good command of standard office and collaborative project-management tools.

Professional Experience

- At least 10 years of professional experience working in or with the judiciary, if possible as a judge or in a senior position within a judicial institution or Ministry of Justice of an EU Member State;
- Demonstrated experience in one or more of the following areas: judicial independence and governance, court administration, judicial careers and discipline, judicial integrity, case management, judicial training, efficiency and quality of justice;
- Experience relating to the adjudication of complex organised crime, high-level corruption, financial crime or money-laundering cases would be a strong asset;
- Experience in institutional development, reform management and capacity building in the justice sector;
- Experience in designing and delivering technical assistance, including diagnostics, policy advice, mentoring, training and peer-to-peer exchanges;

- Experience in EU-funded or other international technical cooperation projects would be a strong asset;
- Previous experience in an EU enlargement context in North Macedonia or in the Western Balkans would be an asset.

Additional information

Job start: end of 2026/early 2027, at the start of the ROLAW II Project;

Contract duration: one or two years, renewable for the duration of the project (4 years);

Documents to submit: Resume.