

ANNEX II: TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. Partner country

North Macedonia

1.2. Contracting authority

Roma Entrepreneurship Development Initiative - REDI Skopje

1.3. Country background

North Macedonia is an EU candidate country undergoing structural reforms aimed at improving governance, economic resilience, and social inclusion. While the country has made progress in areas such as infrastructure and digitalization, stark socio-economic disparities remain—particularly for the Roma population, which faces persistent exclusion from the labour market and formal economic systems. Roma communities experience significantly higher levels of poverty and material deprivation compared to the general population, with limited access to quality education, employment opportunities, and financial services. Unemployment remains particularly high among Roma youth and women, compounded by low educational attainment and systemic discrimination. Despite national strategies promoting inclusion, Roma are underrepresented in active labour market measures and often lack access to business development services. The digital divide further deepens their exclusion, with many Roma lacking the devices, connectivity, and skills needed to benefit from digital transformation. Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated approach that combines access to finance, skills development, digital tools, and policy advocacy to support Roma entrepreneurship and long-term socio-economic integration.

1.4. Current situation in the sector

North Macedonia's framework for Roma inclusion has evolved steadily since the launch of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005–2015). This led to the development of institutional mechanisms and strategic documents targeting Roma integration, culminating in the adoption of the Roma Inclusion Strategy 2022–2030. Coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and supported by the Office of the Prime Minister's Advisor for Roma Inclusion, the strategy is structured around key pillars such as employment, education, health, housing, and digital inclusion. Inter-ministerial working groups and local action teams have been established to support implementation, though coordination and monitoring capacities remain limited.

The employment and entrepreneurship sector is governed by the National Employment Strategy 2021–2027, with Roma-specific measures implemented through the Employment Service Agency. While some programs target vulnerable groups, the actual inclusion of Roma remains limited due to weak outreach, insufficient local infrastructure, and systemic barriers such as rigid labor regulations and high non-wage costs that affect low-income, informal workers. Roma-owned businesses often operate informally, with limited access to finance, markets, or support services.

Civil society organizations like REDI have helped bridge institutional gaps by providing mentorship, facilitating access to finance, and supporting policy advocacy for Roma entrepreneurs. REDI's model emphasizes integrated support, including digital tools, business development services, and connections to financial institutions to promote sustainable entrepreneurship.

Despite existing strategies and institutional structures, several constraints persist. Public institutions often lack dedicated staff or budget lines for Roma-specific economic measures, and national monitoring systems for Roma inclusion are still underdeveloped. Information flows between national and local levels are fragmented, and data disaggregation by ethnicity remains inconsistent. Financial support is available

through public employment programs, donor-funded initiatives, and microfinance actors, but coverage is fragmented and not always aligned with Roma-specific needs.

Limited infrastructure in Roma communities, combined with low digital literacy and lack of internet access, further hinders participation in formal economic programs and the digital economy. To ensure effective Roma inclusion, interventions must strengthen institutional coordination, improve access to finance and markets, and ensure Roma participation in green and digital transitions.

1.5. Related programmes and other donor activities

This contract is part of the **EU Support to REDI Phase II: Advancing Roma Entrepreneurs in the Western Balkans and Türkiye**, and aligns closely with several complementary initiatives in North Macedonia.

The **Council of Europe-led Roma Integration III** programme supports the operationalization of North Macedonia's **Roma Inclusion Strategy 2022–2030**, focusing on mainstreaming employment, digital and green skill development, and anti-discrimination measures. REDI contributes to this work by delivering targeted actions, such as entrepreneurship training, mentoring, and facilitating access to financial services, and shares insights to guide national policy efforts. Joint events in 2024 brought together government ministries, civil society, and international organisations to translate strategic objectives into operational plans.

At the regional level, Roma Integration III and REDI collaborate in policy forums and peer-learning platforms, enabling the exchange of best practices on Roma entrepreneurship, inclusive finance, and socio-economic integration across the Western Balkans.

In addition, REDI Phase II aligns with EU frameworks including **IPA III**, the **EU Roma Strategic Framework 2020–2030**, and regional development agendas such as the **Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans** and the Green and Digital Agendas. Together, these initiatives reinforce policy convergence and institutional coordination, ensuring that REDI's activities support broader, sustainable economic empowerment of Roma entrepreneurs in North Macedonia and the wider region.

2. OBJECTIVES & EXPECTED OUTPUTS

2.1. Overall objective

The overall objective to which this action contributes is to support the socio-economic empowerment and visibility of Roma entrepreneurs in the Western Balkans and Türkiye by enhancing the outreach and communication capacity of REDI through strategic, data-driven digital promotion.

This long-term objective contributes to broader EU goals of Roma inclusion, participation, and access to economic opportunities, as outlined in the EU Roma Strategic Framework 2020–2030 and the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans.

2.2. Specific objective(s)

The specific objectives (Outcomes) of this contract are as follows:

Specific Objective 1 (Outcome 1): To strengthen REDI's digital communication strategy by designing and implementing targeted social media advertising campaigns that increase reach, visibility, and engagement with Roma entrepreneurs and relevant stakeholders.

Specific Objective 2 (Outcome 2): To support continuous learning and performance improvement through data collection, analysis, and monthly reporting on digital campaign effectiveness.

2.3. Expected outputs to be achieved by the contractor

The expected outputs of this contract are as follows:

Output 1 to Outcome 1: Monthly development and implementation of paid digital advertising campaigns on REDI's platforms (Meta platform), targeting Roma entrepreneurs and wider audiences.

Output 2 to Outcome 1: Creation of platform-specific strategies for audience segmentation, ad targeting, and content boosting aligned with REDI's programmatic goals.

Output 3 to Outcome 1: Demonstrated growth in REDI's digital reach and follower base, with increased engagement metrics (likes, shares, comments, link clicks, etc.).

Output 4 to Outcome 2: Monthly reports delivered in English with key performance indicators (e.g., reach, engagement rate, CTR, CPC), analysis of trends, and actionable recommendations.

Output 5 to Outcome 2: Regular consultation and feedback exchange with REDI's communication team, including suggestions for content adaptation and strategy alignment.

3. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS

3.1. Assumptions underlying the project

- The contractor has access to experienced staff, digital tools, and advertising platforms required to implement the campaign effectively.
- REDI will continue to provide timely input, guidance, and content for the implementation of the communication activities.
- Social media platforms (Meta) will remain accessible and allow targeting options appropriate for reaching Roma entrepreneurs and relevant audiences in the Western Balkans and Türkiye.
- The target audiences will remain reachable via digital platforms, and public interest in REDI's initiatives will remain steady or grow over the contract period.
- Cooperation with REDI's Dissemination Officer and communication team will be sustained, enabling regular alignment of communication strategies with programmatic goals.

3.2. Risks

- Changes in platform algorithms or advertising policies could reduce the effectiveness or reach of paid campaigns.
- Limited digital infrastructure or low digital literacy among Roma entrepreneurs in some regions may hinder the intended engagement.
- Delays in content delivery or approval from REDI could affect campaign schedules.
- Political or institutional instability in any of the target countries may impact communication sensitivity or content reach.

4. SCOPE OF THE WORK

4.1. General

4.1.1. Description of the assignment

The assignment involves the provision of professional marketing and communication services to support the visibility, outreach, and engagement of the Roma Entrepreneurship Development Initiative (REDI North Macedonia) across North Macedonia and the Western Balkans. Until 31st August 2027, the contractor will

design, implement, and monitor paid digital promotion strategies on REDI's official social media platforms (Meta).

The purpose is to increase awareness of REDI's mission and activities, promote entrepreneurship among Roma communities, and engage key audiences such as Roma entrepreneurs, civil society actors, financial institutions, and the general public. The contractor will be responsible for executing monthly advertising campaigns, performing audience targeting and segmentation, tracking digital performance, and generating monthly reports with actionable recommendations.

The assignment must comply with EU Communication and Visibility Requirements and align with REDI's brand guidelines and inclusion principles. Close collaboration with REDI's communication team will be required throughout the contract period.

4.1.2. Geographical area to be covered

Primary: North Macedonia

Secondary: Western Balkans region

4.1.3. Target groups

- Roma entrepreneurs, aspiring entrepreneurs and unemployed Roma
- Roma youth and women
- Civil society organizations and community leaders
- Policy stakeholders and institutional partners
- General public and media audiences

4.2. Specific work

The contractor shall undertake the following tasks:

1. Develop and implement monthly paid advertising campaigns on REDI's active platforms (Meta), in accordance with REDI's communication objectives and project milestones.
2. Design platform-specific promotion strategies, including audience segmentation, message tailoring, budget allocation, and content boosting based on campaign goals.
3. Monitor campaign performance using digital analytics tools, assess reach, engagement (likes, shares, comments), click-through rates (CTR), and cost-per-click (CPC), and provide data-driven insights.
4. Prepare and submit monthly reports in English (see Section 7), summarizing campaign results and including clear performance indicators and strategic recommendations.
5. Coordinate regularly with REDI's Local Dissemination and Outreach Officer, participating in planning sessions and adjusting campaigns in response to evolving project priorities or feedback.
6. Ensure compliance with EU visibility guidelines, including use of official logos, disclaimers, and branding standards, and contribute to the dissemination of REDI's impact stories and public messages.

All tasks are to be carried out on a continuous basis and the contract will remain in effect until 31 August 2027, with key performance reviews conducted quarterly. Specific expertise in digital advertising, campaign analytics, and inclusive communication is required for successful execution.

4.3. Project management

4.3.1. Responsible body

Roma Entrepreneurship Development Initiative - REDI Skopje

4.3.2. Management structure

The contract will be managed by REDI's Dissemination Officer, in consultation with the Executive Director and senior management team. Monthly check-in meetings will be held to review campaign performance, approve reports, and adjust strategy where necessary.

The Dissemination Officer will be the primary contact and will approve monthly deliverables (in coordination with the Finance and Project teams). Strategic decisions related to contract amendments or budget changes must be escalated to the REDI Executive Management.

4.3.3. Facilities to be provided by the contracting authority and/or other parties

REDI will provide:

- Content material for promotion (texts, visuals, videos, etc.)
- Access to brand assets and communication guidelines
- Coordination support through its communication team
- Feedback and approvals on campaign strategies and reports

The contractor is expected to use its own equipment, software tools, and administrative systems to deliver the services under this contract.

5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

5.1. Location

The operational base for the project will be Skopje, North Macedonia. The contractor is expected to work remotely but maintain regular coordination with REDI's office in Skopje. Activities will target digital audiences in North Macedonia and the Western Balkans.

5.2. Start date & period of implementation of tasks

The intended start date is 01.08.2025 and the period of implementation of the contract will be until 31st August 2027. Please see Articles 19.1 and 19.2 of the special conditions for the actual start date and period of implementation.

At this stage, no additional service contracts are foreseen. However, should further digital communication needs arise beyond 31 August 2027, REDI reserves the right to consider awarding additional services under a negotiated procedure, in line with EU procurement rules.

6. REQUIREMENTS

6.1. Staff

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration of the partner country, or of international/regional organisations based in the country, shall only be approved to work as experts if well justified. The justification should be submitted with the tender and shall include information on the added value the expert will bring as well as proof that the expert is seconded or on personal leave.

6.1.1. Key experts

Given the importance of cultural sensitivity, communication, and digital marketing expertise in the context of Roma inclusion, the mission requires key experts with a strong understanding of the regional context and professional experience in strategic communication.

Key expert 1: Team leader

Qualifications and skills

Qualifications and skills

Preferred: Postgraduate qualification in a relevant discipline and certification in digital advertising platforms (e.g., Meta, Google).

Excellent command of English; knowledge of local languages (e.g., Macedonian, Albanian, Romani) is an asset.

General professional experience

Minimum: At least 3 years of professional experience in managing digital communication campaigns.

Preferred: 5+ years, including experience working with civil society organizations or development projects.

Specific professional experience

Minimum: 3 years of experience in managing paid social media campaigns (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, TikTok) with performance-based reporting (reach, CTR, CPC, engagement).

Experience in inclusive or socially impactful communication projects targeting marginalized communities is highly desirable.

All experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities they take on.

6.1.2. Other experts, support staff & backstopping

The contractor shall be responsible for selecting and hiring other experts as needed. This may include content creators, graphic designers, data analysts, or community engagement specialists. CVs for non-key experts are not required in the tender, but the contractor must demonstrate access to qualified professionals. Selection procedures should be transparent and based on predefined criteria such as qualifications, language proficiency, and relevant experience.

All backstopping and support staff costs must be included in the contractor's financial offer.

6.2. Office accommodation

The contractor shall carry out all tasks from their own office premises. Remote work is acceptable, provided that the contractor ensures reliable communication with REDI's team and timely delivery of all contract outputs. No office accommodation will be provided by the contracting authority.

6.3. Facilities to be provided by the contractor

The contractor shall ensure that all experts are adequately supported and equipped. This includes access to advertising management tools, performance analytics dashboards, design software, and internal administrative support. The contractor is also responsible for ensuring secure data handling, timely transfer of project funds, and regular payment of expert fees.

6.4. Equipment

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the contracting authority or transferred to the partner country under this contract. Any necessary hardware or software must be provided and maintained by the contractor at their own expense.

7. REPORTS

7.1. Reporting requirements

The contractor will submit the following reports in English, in one original and one digital copy (PDF). Paper copies are not required, in line with environmental considerations.

1. Monthly Performance Reports will be submitted on the 5th of each month. These reports will summarize the social media campaigns implemented, audience reach and engagement, key metrics (e.g., CTR, CPC), and recommendations for optimization. These reports serve both as performance monitoring and operational planning tools.
2. Draft Final Report (maximum 20 pages, excluding annexes) to be submitted no later than one month before the end of the contract. It will provide a comprehensive overview of the contract results, lessons learned, and recommendations for future communication strategies.
3. Final Report, revised based on comments received on the draft, will be submitted **within 15 days** after receipt of feedback. It must include a detailed summary of digital campaign results, visibility impact, and key analytics to support future decision-making. The final invoice will be submitted alongside this report.

7.2. Submission and approval of reports

The report referred to above must be submitted to the project manager identified in the contract. The project manager is responsible for approving the reports.

Approval of reports will be managed internally by REDI's project team. In the absence of feedback within 10 working days of submission, reports shall be considered approved.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

8.1. Definition of indicators

The following indicators will be used to measure progress and performance under this contract:

- Number of paid campaigns implemented per platform (monthly breakdown).
- Audience reach per platform (measured by impressions and unique viewers).
- Engagement metrics, including likes, shares, comments, saves, and click-through rates (CTR).
- Cost-efficiency indicators, such as cost-per-click (CPC) and cost-per-engagement.
- Follower growth per platform over time (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, YouTube).
- Report submission compliance, including timely delivery of monthly reports and responsiveness to feedback.
- Qualitative feedback from REDI's communication team on relevance, visibility, and resonance of promoted content.

These indicators will be tracked monthly and analysed cumulatively in the final report to assess the overall effectiveness and visibility impact of the campaign strategy.

8.2. Special requirements

The contractor must comply with the Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions. All promotional materials must include the appropriate EU visual identity, disclaimers, and acknowledgments. In addition, the contractor must ensure data confidentiality and GDPR compliance when handling platform analytics or audience information.