

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Job title:	Consultant to enhance the parliamentary research services within the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova
Duty station:	Chisinau, Moldova
Reference to the project:	Strengthening Parliamentary Governance in Moldova Project
Contract type:	Individual Consultant
Contract duration:	January – June 2017 (up to 35 working days)
Starting date:	January, 2017

Job content

1. BACKGROUND

The goal of the “Strengthening Parliamentary Governance in Moldova” Project, further on referred to as the SPGM project, is designed to address the main needs of the Parliament of Moldova in the areas of legislation making, oversight and representation during the on-going process of domestic reform spurred by closer relations with the EU. The project is also assisting in making the Parliament’s legislative activity more open, transparent and participatory through establishing tools and mechanisms for the engagement with the Civil Society, professional associations and general public. Project interventions will offer and encourage equal opportunity for male and female participation.

According to the IPU Guidelines for parliamentary research services, authoritative and reliable information sources are important factors to the efficient work of parliamentarians in developing, assessing and voting legislation and subsequently ensuring an effective parliamentary oversight. Secure access to authoritative and concise material that presents synthesis and analysis of the relevant is necessary for MPs to intervene effectively on public policy issues addressed by a parliament.¹

In line with the findings of the Functional and Institutional Analysis of the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova secretariat functions related to the research needs of the MPs need to be further enhanced to allow better research service for the parliamentarians.² Currently the in-depth research work essential for an effective parliamentary oversight is neither covered by the Information-Analytical Department nor by the Committee staff and often there is need for more in-depth research work.³

In line with the Regulation on the organizing and functioning of the Parliament Secretariat, the research and analyses assistance to the activity of the Parliament and Parliament’s Secretariat is ensured by the Information-analytical Department, by means of providing, informative, analytical and synthesis studies necessary for the parliamentary work.⁴ The Department drafts analysis when requested, by individual MPs and Committees. The Department compiles information materials, depending on the topics addressed in the parliament's agenda. Sources of its information are other studies in particular of the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD), mass-media, internet, etc. However, interviews carried out in the context of the Functional and Institutional Analysis indicated a number of challenges to achieve the vision of a fully functioning Research Department.

In order to support the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova consolidate its parliamentary research service and develop the technical capacities to provide timely and objective analyses, the SPGM project is seeking to hire a consultant to enhance the parliamentary research and analyses services within the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova.

¹ Guidelines for parliamentary research services: <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/research-en.pdf>

² Report on the Functional and Institutional Analysis of the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova, 16 April 2016. The analyses was carried out during November-December 2015, page 11

³ The Functional and Institutional Analysis of the Secretariat of the Parliament of Moldova, was carried out during November-December 2015.

⁴ Regulation on the organizing and functioning of the Parliament Secretariat, approved by Decision of the permanent Bureau of the Parliament nr.31 of December 12th 2012 available at <http://parlament.md/CadrulLegal/RegulamentulaSecretariatuluiParlamentuluiRM/tabid/201/language/ro-RO/Default.aspx>.

2. OBJECTIVES

The consultant is expected to conduct a feasibility study on institutional arrangements related to expanding the existing parliamentary research and analyses services within the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, assess the existing mechanisms related to parliamentary study and research, as well as the in-house informational resources and suggest better mechanisms aimed at strengthening the above noted services.

In order to achieve the stated objective, the Consultant will have the following responsibilities:

1. Conduct a desk review of the existing legal framework, Parliament's strategies and action plans, and existing guidelines/manuals as well as current practices on parliamentary informational and research support and best practices on parliamentary research and analyses services;
2. Review the existing mechanisms for research and analyses support within the Parliament and provide recommendations aimed at strengthening parliamentary research services, based on the best international parliamentary practices:
 - Develop the methodology, tools & work plan for carrying out the analyses, including questionnaires, list of topics to be discussed, stakeholders to be interviewed etc.;
 - Carryout the mapping of stakeholders who benefit from the informational and research support;
 - Conduct initial meetings with Office of the Speaker, relevant Standing Committees, and staff from Parliamentary Secretariat to assess parliamentary research services;
 - Conduct the survey of MPs and staff on their expectations and needs towards the parliamentary research services;
 - Consult with local and international NGOs to ensure knowledge and best practices are shared;
 - Identify the potential partners in providing analytical and substantive support to the Parliament in ensuring informational and research support.
3. Based on the findings of the review, draft recommendations and propose new mechanisms for ensuring in-depth and qualitative research services within the Parliament. In the process of developing the recommendations, the consultant shall consider but not to limit to the following:
 - i. Available models related to setting up and functioning of a Parliamentary Research Institute or
 - ii. Expansion of the existing parliamentary research service within the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova by means establishing an institutionalized cooperation with Universities and local think-tanks.
 - 3.1 Provide a comprehensive description of the suggested models (at least three models), that shall cover their strengths and weaknesses and address the following:
 - the cost-effectiveness;
 - financial resources and restrictions;
 - available capacities in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova.
 - 3.2 Conduct consultations with the Parliament's higher management to present the proposed mechanisms and seek endorsement of the most suitable mechanism.
4. Develop a step-by-step guide for establishing the model which has been endorsed by the beneficiary. The guide shall include recommendations to sustainably maintain the model, related to the following:
 - i. implications related to financial resources
 - ii. implications related to human resources;
 - iii. brief description of tasks of the identified necessary human resources;
 - iv. equipment and materials needed.
5. Develop the final report on *"Enhancing the parliamentary research services within the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova"**

The report is expected to be in line with the key basic principles that govern the UNDP process, including:

- Independence of analysis
- Quality of analysis
- Participatory and inclusive preparation
- Flexibility and creativity in preparation
- Thorough understanding of the local environment and situation-tailored analysis
- Clear options and recommendations based on the best practices.

* The Report on enhancing the parliamentary research services shall address, but is not limited to, the sections proposed below:

- Introduction
- Executive summary
- Current functions of parliamentary research services
- Properly functioning parliamentary research service
- Roles to be performed by parliamentary research service and tasks outside its scope
- Enhancing parliamentary research staff capacities
- Public access to research materials
- Models for building the parliamentary research service
- Conclusions & Recommendations

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6. Based on the finding of the review and in line with the recommendations, develop a Research Development Action Plan for the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova
7. Develop a capacity building plan for the parliamentary staffers engaged in parliamentary research services in line with the best parliamentary research practices.
8. Provide on job coaching to parliamentary staffers engaged in parliamentary research, to enhance their capacity in conducting parliamentary research on selected topics and subsequently disseminating the research products.
9. If required, the consultant will have to undertake two Missions to Moldova (tentatively) in the period between January – June 2017:
 - First half of February 2017
 - First half of April 2017

3. KEY DELIVERABLES AND TENTATIVE TIMETABLE

	Key deliverables:	Tentative timeframe/deadline
1.	A detailed inception report with suggested methodology and work Plan developed based on desk review of relevant documents and initial consultations with UNDP Moldova project and relevant Parliament of Moldova staff submitted to and reviewed by UNDP and Parliament	By 27 January 2017
2.	Draft Report on Enhancing the parliamentary research services within the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, developed and submitted to the SPGM project and Parliament appointed representative for feedback	By 20 February 2017
3.	Draft description of the models to enhance the parliamentary research services, developed and submitted to the SPGM project and Parliament appointed representative for feedback	
4.	Capacity building plan for the parliamentary staffers engaged in parliamentary research services in line with the best parliamentary research practices developed	
5.	Research Development Action Plan for the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova developed and submitted to the SPGM project and Parliament appointed representative	By 10 April 2017
6.	Roundtable discussion with MPs and parliamentary staff to present the models to enhance the parliamentary research services and identify the most suitable model conducted	
7.	Final description of the endorsed model to enhance the parliamentary research services, developed and submitted to the SPGM project and Parliament appointed representative	
8.	Step-by-step guide for establishing the model which has been endorsed by the beneficiary, including the implications related to financial and human resources, equipment and materials needed to sustainably maintain the model submitted for approval to UNDP	By 5 May 2017
9.	Final Report on Enhancing the parliamentary research services within the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova incorporating the feedback received developed and submitted	
10.	On job coaching to parliamentary staffers engaged in parliamentary research, to enhance their capacity in conducting and parliamentary research on selected topics and subsequently disseminating the research products provided	By 31 May 2017

4. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the UNDP Parliament Specialist for substantive aspects of the assignment, and under the guidance of the Senior Project Officer – for administrative aspects. The consultant will report to the Parliament appointed representative and the UNDP Parliament Specialist.

Timeframe

The timeframe for the work of consultant is tentatively planned through January – June 2017. Consultancy should involve about 35 days of work. The Parliament will provide consultant with working space, access to Internet, a printer and a telephone line.

Language

All communications and documentation related to the assignment will be in English. Before submission of the deliverables, the consultant will discuss the draft documents with the parties involved (i.e. Parliament, UNDP and other stakeholders) so that the final products reflect their comments.

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5. QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED

I. Academic Qualifications:

- Master degree or equivalent (5 year university degree) in political sciences, public administration, law, social sciences or other related fields.

II. Years of experience:

- A minimum of 5 years of relevant working experience in conducting feasibility studies and business planning, sustainable analysis, research and assessment related to area of democratic governance and rule of law;
- Previous work experience in developing business plans, feasibility studies, producing audit/analytical reports and conducting surveys/market researches would be an asset;
- Experience in setting up effective parliamentary research services is a strong advantage;
- Experience in working with government institutions, international organizations (successful experience in working with UN agencies is an asset);
- Previous work experience in former CIS countries will be an asset.

III. Competencies:

- Good knowledge and understanding of parliamentary processes, including experience in the field of law-making processes, legal analysis and research and functions of the parliament;
- Excellent drafting and analytical skills;
- Demonstrates strong understanding of parliamentary practices and procedures, as well as international best practices and standards;
- Extensive knowledge and experience with public consultation tools and process;
- Proficiency in English. Knowledge of Romanian and/or Russian is considered an advantage.

Proven commitment to the core values of the United Nations, in particular, respecting differences of culture, gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality, language, age, HIV status, disability, and sexual orientation, or other status.

6. DOCUMENTS TO BE INCLUDED WHEN SUBMITTING THE PROPOSALS:

Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications:

- a. Brief methodology to describe the implementation of the assignment (maximum 5 pages)
- b. Proposal: explaining why they are the most suitable for the work including past experience in similar Projects (please provide brief information on each of the above qualifications, item by item);
- c. Financial proposal (LUMP SUM) in USD, specifying in a total requested amount per day, number of days needed to complete the assignment, including all related costs, travel, phone calls etc.);
- d. Duly completed P 11 form, personal CV and at least 3 references.