



# Terms of Reference

## Consultant to conduct an assessment of sustainable tourism development intervention areas in Kosovo

### Introduction:

The Promoting Private Sector Employment (PPSE) is a Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) Kosovo project, implemented by Swisscontact in consortium with the Riinvest Institute. PPSE is implementing its Phase III (November 2021 to November 2025). The goal of the project is to facilitate operation of growing and resilient SMEs and farms in inclusive and consolidated economic sectors that provide decent work and income opportunities for women and men in Kosovo. The project is focused on two main sectors: Food and Natural Ingredients and Tourism.

The PPSE project contributes to innovation, consolidation, and sustainability in the Food and Natural Ingredients and Tourism sectors. Building upon the objectives, achievements, and lessons learned during the previous phase, in Phase III (2021 – 2025) the project is working to tackle private sector recovery, development, and job creation with more emphasis on youth, women and minorities.

Through the Food and Natural Ingredients sector, PPSE facilitates the scaling of product development services usage, to influence innovation and product development. Facilitating further growth of the contract farming model for both medicinal aromatic plants and fruit and vegetables sub-sectors, the aim is to expand outreach and make this model sustainable. In terms of support services such as marketing, digitalization, and e-commerce PPSE facilitates models of affordable services tailored to the needs of sector SMEs.

Through the Tourism sector, PPSE facilitates capitalization of the established offer through private-public partnerships towards improved destination management, improved tourism product offer and reinstating the sector growth trends. This is achieved in close collaboration with private stakeholders via synergies between tourism businesses, agrobusinesses, souvenir producers, farmers, tourism product owners and guides. The goal is to focus the tourism offer towards meeting the demands of the international, local, regional, and Diaspora tourists, to be achieved in cooperation with tourism stakeholders.

Over the course of 10 years, the PPSE project has closely collaborated with SMEs to facilitate the development of innovative products, high-quality services, and the adoption of sustainable business models. Our approach consistently emphasizes environmentally friendly practices and lays the foundation for transitioning business models toward the green economy. Currently, PPSE is strongly focused on supporting Kosovar SMEs, as well as business associations and public institutions, in the adoption of successful sustainable business practices and technologies within the context of the green transition and the circular economy.

### Background:

As outlined in Kosovo's National Development Strategy 2030, Kosovo strives to establish a favorable business environment and actively contribute to the development of a competitive economy focused on productive and value-added service activities. Innovation, a pivotal factor for competitiveness, and the circular economy, as a sustainable development model, will receive significant emphasis in this new economic trajectory. According to the 2030 strategy, Kosovo's economic transformation will be grounded in competitive, innovative, and environmentally sustainable enterprises, facilitating favorable conditions for increased participation of Kosovo enterprises in international markets and value chains.

In the realm of tourism, Kosovo has made notable strides in recent years, establishing a robust legislative foundation and diversifying its array of tourism offerings and services. Presently, Kosovo is dedicated to further advancing its tourism sector by aligning with the trajectory of sustainable development. This commitment is in line with the principles outlined by the World Tourism Organization regarding sustainability, as well as with the European Union's public policies emphasizing sustainable tourism development within the context of the green transition and circular economy. Moreover, it is noteworthy that tourist awareness of green tourism practices is experiencing substantial growth. Embracing sustainable initiatives will not only align with the expectations of numerous tourists but also appeal to new environmentally conscious visitors, fostering the growth and positive image of Kosovo as an attractive, sustainable travel destination.

Aligned with the strategic direction of the Government of Kosovo, which has integrated commitments to promote a green transition into national policies, and in coordination with the efforts of the donor community and development agencies, PPSE aims to leverage its extensive expertise to advance this shared goal. Our objective is to enhance the competitiveness of Kosovo's businesses by promoting sustainable practices, creating green jobs, and fostering economic prosperity within a clean environment.

Over the past decade, PPSE has made significant contributions to various green and sustainable initiatives in tourism sector. This includes interventions supporting the tourism sector through technical assistance in sustainability certifications, renewable energy, digitalization, always cultivating strong partnerships with local communities.

### Rationale of intervention:

The primary goal of this intervention is to conduct an analysis, assessing the readiness and preparedness of Kosovo's Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in tourism sector regarding their shift towards sustainability and embracing green transition practices.

This initiative aligns with Kosovo's strategic objectives outlined in the National Development Strategy 2030 and other key governmental documents, which also emphasize commitments tied to the European Union integration agenda.

### Objective:

The central focus of this assessment primarily lies in evaluating the private sector within Kosovo's tourism industry, aiming to ascertain their readiness and preparedness for the sustainability shift. It also entails a review of Kosovo's strategic documents and the regulatory framework and policies specific to this sector including funding sources.

By doing so, we aim to identify critical opportunities and define specific intervention areas that will aid Kosovo's tourism SMEs in embarking on this transformative sustainability journey. To tailor the intervention effectively, conducting a needs assessment is crucial. This assessment will delve into the

specific challenges encountered by local entrepreneurs working in the tourism sector in Kosovo. Understanding these challenges is essential for crafting targeted strategies and operational approaches that align with sustainability objectives and environmentally friendly business practices.

For this purpose, PPSE is seeking to hire an international and local consultant who will be responsible for performing these tasks, which must be completed by the end of May 2024. The expert's engagement includes up to 15 working days for international expert and up to 20 days for local expert.

### Deliverables:

1. An outline of the research report for approval. The outline should include the report's structure, research methodology, data acquisition approach (e.g., interviews and surveys), data processing, qualitative analyses, and provide details on the timeline, geographic scope, and the specific sector surveyed or interviewed among SMEs.
2. A research report on sustainable practices and policies in tourism sector. The report will encompass the following key aspects:
  - 2.1. Readiness Assessment: Evaluate the preparedness of Kosovo's private sector in tourism to initiate a transition towards sustainable practices within their business models or strategies.
  - 2.2. Government Alignment Analysis/Mapping: Analyze Kosovo's governmental plans and legislation to determine their alignment with sustainability goals in the tourism sector.
  - 2.3. Mapping organizations or institutions that are working to introduce or implement sustainable or green practices for SMEs.
  - 2.4. Policy Comparison: Compare and reference pertinent EU and international policies or strategies related to green transitions in the tourism sector.
  - 2.5. Opportunity Identification: Identify opportunities for private sector engagement and pinpoint specific innovative intervention areas that align with the objectives of the green transition and the circular economy. These interventions should be grouped in 1) activities that can be implemented within the timeline of PPSE project (November 2025) and 2) activities that will take longer than 2 years.
  - 2.6. Green Funding Options: Identifying financial support avenues for SMEs in the tourism sector, which encompass financing from the central budget of Kosovo, local governments, international development agencies, commercial banks, and other sources.
3. Preparing a presentation highlighting key research findings and recommendations.

<b>Deliverables Schedule</b>	
<b>Week</b>	<b>Deliverable</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	Outline of the research report for approval
4 <sup>th</sup>	Preliminary research report
6 <sup>th</sup>	Revised research report
7 <sup>th</sup>	Final Report
7 <sup>th</sup>	Presentation highlighting key research findings and recommendations

### Requirements:

To be eligible for the service, the consultant must satisfy the following requirements:

- Demonstrated expertise and experience in sustainable tourism and project development.
- In-depth knowledge of sustainability trends, best practices, and emerging technologies in the specified sector.
- Familiarity with Kosovo's legislative framework and policies related to private sector development.
- Knowledge of policies and strategies related to green transition, specifically in sustainable tourism.

### Timeframe:

The service is expected to be conducted from April until May 30, 2024.

### Reporting and communication:

The consultant shall provide progress reports on a regular basis and attend meetings as required. Communication shall primarily be through electronic correspondence and in-person meetings.

### Selection process:

Interested consultants are invited to submit their proposals by March 15, 2024.

### Evaluation criteria:

Evaluation will consider relevant experience, proposed methodology, understanding of the project, approach to research, and financial proposal.

### Contact information:

For inquiries and proposal submissions, please contact: [lulzim.krasniqi@swisscontact.org](mailto:lulzim.krasniqi@swisscontact.org), and [ppseinfo@swisscontact.org](mailto:ppseinfo@swisscontact.org).