

REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA
Ministry for Regional Development and Public Works
TERMS OF REFERENCE
HIGHWAY ADVISER

Background

Bulgaria's road network extends over 19,000 kilometers of national (republican) roads managed by the Road Infrastructure Agency (RIA), under the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW), and more than 21,000 kilometers of local and municipal roads. The MRDPW has responsibility for road strategy formulation and for the oversight of RIA, and it is therefore responsible for the final outcome of road programs. Under the Operational Program for Transport (OPT) funded from the European Union (EU) Cohesion Fund, RIA has about EUR 1 billion available over the period 2007-2013 to finance mainly new motorways on the TEN-T network. Under the Operational Program for Regional Development (OPRD), also funded by EU, another EUR 450 million is available for road projects supporting regional development. In addition, the process of compiling the pipeline of projects for EU funding for the period 2014-2020 needs to start soon. It has become necessary to seek strategic advice to the MRDPW on the management of road sector infrastructure and on the implementation of large road infrastructure programs, through the provision of strategic advice to high level policymakers and managers.

Objectives

The objective of the present consultancy assignment is to strengthen policy making in the road sector in Bulgaria, through the provision of strategic advice to high level policymakers at MRDPW. The Highway Adviser will provide strategic advice on road sector organization, including strategy and policy formulation, organizational arrangements, sector financing, and large road investment program development. She/He will closely advise the MRDPW on planning, programming and budgeting with particular focus on timely and full utilization of all available funds, and especially EU funds. Key indicators for the success of this assignment will be the progress in the planning, programming and utilization of EU grants available to the road sector in Bulgaria, and the development of competencies within sector stakeholder organizations to effectively manage the road sector.

Specific Tasks of the Assignment

Although the principal content of the assignment will cover mainly the two activities described below, new tasks may appear in response to political, social and technical circumstances and requirements. The Adviser will need to be adaptable to changes in conditions and the assignment, possess intellectual flexibility and remain capable to operate also in unpredictable circumstances. The key activities under the assignment will be undertaken under the following tasks:

Task 1: Road Sector Policy. The Adviser will provide advice on strategy and policy formulation and on strengthening the institutional organization of the sector and on reporting and oversight of the government's investment programs. She/He will carry out specific assignments from the MRDPW, including but not necessarily limited to activities within the following topics:

- Government policy and strategic directions for the sector.
- Roles and Responsibilities of MRDPW, RIA and their interactions.
- Review specific reports addressing policy and programming issues and provide comments.
- Allocation, review and monitoring of the road budget and funds on the principal functions and programs of RIA for the forthcoming year and future years, including the freedoms and flexibilities available to RIA management to redeploy resources between functions and programs.
- Support the MRDPW in its presentation and reporting on its programs vis-à-vis the government and the parliament.
- Performance assessment and indicators of the road sector and RIA.

Task 2: EU-funded programs. The Adviser will provide management advice to the MRDPW and RIA in cooperation with relevant government entities. The Adviser shall review the overall quality of outputs and performance in the delivering of EU-funded projects. Such evaluation will include the review of the work of the consulting firms providing project preparation and management services. She/He will also liaise with JASPERS program and the EU with regard to the utilization of EU funds. She/He will address the following issues and carry out other assignments as needed and requested by the MRDPW:

- Provide advice related to strategic prioritization for 2014-2020 planning period under the EU-funded programs, and provide guidance on organizational decisions.
- Organization of MRDPW and RIA for the timely delivery of the EU funded road programs.
- Review and report on the quality of the work of the project management consulting firm hired to support the implementation of road investment programs.
- Share experience and transfer knowledge on large road investment programs, particularly those funded by the EU.
- Review draft EU applications for large road investment programs and provide comments when requested. In coordination with JASPERS, make sure that all documents produced by consulting firms are consistent with EU regulations to speed up EU program implementation.
- Review the impact of procurement practices on the implementation of current and future programs.

Reporting and Duration

The Adviser will work closely with MRDPW's Senior Officials, as well as with the Coordination, Communication and Monitoring Unit in the MRDPW. The Adviser will report on a daily basis, upon request, to the MRDPW or his designate(s). The assignment is expected to span over a period of 24 months in Sofia.

Deliverables

One month after her/his appointment the Adviser shall provide a concise Inception Report summarizing her/his approach to the task and a tentative work plan, which will be approved by the MRDPW. The adviser will prepare and submit a short quarterly report summarizing achievements and contributions for each quarter and updating the work plan, for review and approval by the MRDPW. It is also expected that over the duration of the assignment, the Adviser is expected to summarize her/his recommendations, in short notes or reports as appropriate, and consistent with the tasks and in response to the Minister's (or his designates') requests. All reports should be in electronic format.

Qualification requirements

Compulsory

The Adviser shall have managerial experience from a Road Administration or a Ministry of Transport (or equivalent), including experience with EU funds, i.e. knowledge of processes under EU programs, and on the preparation and implementation of EU funded projects. She/He shall have experience in developing road programs and managing their delivery using different means of service delivery (procurement and financing), throughout the entire project cycle. The total work experience in the road sector should be at least 20 years. The Adviser should not be proposed by a firm, which currently carries out consultancy work in RIA. She/he shall have good knowledge of the English language, speaking and writing.

Advantage

It would be an advantage if the Adviser also had 'hands-on' experience in design, construction and supervision of highway projects.

Resources

The Adviser will be provided office, telecommunication, and interpretation facilities at the MRDPW. The Adviser is responsible for arranging her/his housing and means of transport.