

Section 5. Terms of Reference

RFP No.: 22/02533 Re-advertisement / Selection of a sociological company to conduct a thematic opinion poll "Public Opinion Barometer in the field of energy issues"

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GENERAL INFORMATION

The overall objective of the Programme "Addressing the impacts of energy crisis and initiating solutions toward energy security and addressing energy poverty" (FPI Programme) is to assist the Government of Moldova to tackle the current energy crisis and energy poverty in addressing prioritized systemic elements in the energy sector to cope with potential future energy crisis.

Specific objectives are to support the Government of Moldova to:

1. put in place the legal and regulatory framework in the energy sector with mainstreamed social and climate considerations in line with the EU requirements;
2. strengthen the capacities of the energy-related actors and enhancing institutional coordination mechanisms to address and avert risks entailed in recent and potential future energy crisis;
3. increased awareness and communication among the population to adopt the best energy saving practices and measures and to encourage the use of renewables;
4. operationalize nation-wide energy programmes and demonstrate solutions to increase energy affordability in residential and public buildings, targeting specifically the most vulnerable and affected groups of population.

As a party to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and as a contracting party to the Energy Community Treaty (CEn), the Republic of Moldova assumed a series of commitments in the areas of climate and energy. Recent years' international developments, widely accepted by the expert community, decision-makers and civil society, lead towards a convergence of these two areas on the dimension of combating negative effects of climate change by cutting greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). Energy sector is the main source of GHG emissions in the Republic of Moldova, accounting for almost two thirds of direct net GHG emissions¹. Therefore, efficient coordination of all stakeholders participating in the process of drafting strategic documents is essential for assuring coherence of the national public policies frameworks on climate and energy.

On 18 November 2015, the European Commission adopted a Communication stating that integrated national energy and climate plans, addressing all five key dimensions of the energy union, are crucial tools for the implementation of the Energy Union Strategy and for the development of more strategic energy and climate policy planning.

In November 2018, the Energy Community Ministerial Council adopted the [Recommendation 2018/01/EnC-MC](#), recognizing, that the development of integrated national energy and climate plans by the Contracting Parties would support the attainment of the long-term energy and climate policy objectives, reduce the administrative burden and enhance transparency while promoting investor certainty in the region.

The adoption of Governance Regulation 2018/1999 on 30 November 2021 marked the next step. Adopted and adapted by [Decision 2021/14/MC-EnC](#), the Regulation sets common rules for planning, reporting and monitoring on energy and climate policies and targets. In particular, the Contracting Parties will be required to submit National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs).

¹ <http://clima.md/lib.php?l=ro&idc=264&>

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According to the article 3 of the consolidated Governance Regulation, by 30 June 2024, and subsequently by 1 January 2029 and every ten years thereafter, each Contracting Party shall notify to the Energy Community Secretariat an integrated national energy and climate plan. The integrated national energy and climate plan shall consist of the sections set out in paragraph 2 of the Article 3 and in Annex I of the Regulation. The first plan shall cover the period from 2025 to 2030, taking into account the longer term perspective. The subsequent plans shall cover the ten-year period immediately following the end of the period covered by the previous plan. NECP should lay down the pathway to achieve targets set for 2030 regarding the increase of renewable energy in overall energy consumption, increased energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Further, the NECPs should also include a perspective until 2050 in order to ensure consistency with long-term relevant policy objectives at EU, UNFCCC and Energy Community level.

Moldova has started to develop its NECP with the support of Project "Support for the modernization of the energy sector in the Republic of Moldova (STARS)" funded by the European Union. STARS supported the development of Energy Dimension's related components of the NECP, while the Decarbonisation Dimension (non-energy part) and Dimension of Research, Innovation and Competitiveness were not covered and no particular activities were performed for the development of the last two mentioned Dimensions.

Currently, with the support of EU High Level Advisers Mission², the modelling exercise, that covers the Energy Dimension of the NECP, is ongoing.

The decision 1/CP.21 requests those Parties whose intended nationally determined contribution pursuant to decision 1/CP.20 contains a time frame up to 2030 to communicate or update by 2020 these contributions and to do so every five years thereafter pursuant to Article 4, paragraph 9, of the Paris Agreement.

Thus, Republic of Moldova presented, on March 2020, to the Secretariat of the UNFCCC its second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC2)³. According to it, Republic of Moldova intends to achieve more ambitious GHG emissions reduction targets. The country's new economy-wide unconditional target is to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 70 per cent below its 1990 level in 2030, instead of 64-67 per cent as committed in NDC1. As to the new economy-wide conditional target, instead of 78 per cent as committed in NDC1, the reduction commitment expressed above could be increased in NDC2 up to 88 per cent below 1990 level, provided a global agreement addressing important topics including low-cost financial resources, technology transfer, and technical cooperation, accessible to all at a scale commensurate to the challenge of global climate change, is insured. The Republic of Moldova has included in its updated NDC the adaptation component in line with Articles 2.1 and 7.1 of the Paris Agreement and Katowice Rulebook (COP 24). According to it, the adaptation priority sectors are agriculture, water resources, forestry, human health, transport and energy.

Further, the Moldova's LEDES 2030 was updated. It transposes into national policy planning framework the GHG emissions reduction targets assumed via updated NDC under the Paris Agreement. Draft updated LEDES 2030 establishes GHG emissions reduction targets for 7 sectors. Among others, for energy sector, it plans a 81% (unconditional scenario) 87% (conditional scenario) reduction of GHG emissions comparing with 1990. Currently, draft updated LEDES 2030 is subject of SEA procedure. After SEA Report is approved, draft updated LEDES 2030 will be promoted for approval by Government.

During 2021 year, a study was conducted with the aim to ensure the coherence of the national climate and

² <https://eu-advisers.md/#:~:text=The%20overall%20objective%20of%20the,Deep%20and%20Comprehensive%20Free%20Trade>

³ https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Republic%20of%20Moldova%20First/MD_Updated_NDC_final_version_EN.pdf

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energy policy framework developed in the frame of Republic of Moldova's commitments under UNFCCC and Energy Community Treaty. The necessity of this study arises from the fact that the GHG emissions reduction targets for the Energy Sector, established under NDC2/updated LEDS 2030 and those calculated under the STARS project, could potentially be different. The study identified the causes and formulate the recommendations to overcome this situation. Energy Community Secretariat and European Commission recommend that targets under these planning documents need to be aligned.

In this context, UNDP Moldova is seeking to hire a company/organization to support Government of the Republic of Moldova to define its National Energy and Climate Plan.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The main purpose of the study is to examine the topic of "energy issues" both in terms of public policies and the perception of the population of the Republic of Moldova, for the development of proposals for intervention on this topic. The results of the sociological study can be used to develop effective mechanisms of public communication. Based on the information collected, will be developed a Roadmap with an action plan for communication with the population to exclude deficiencies that determine the effectiveness of interventions in this area by public authorities, donors, civil society.

The result of the research will be a comprehensive report, which must include the following domains:

- Citizens' perception of energy issues in relation to other topics.
- Degree of information of the population on the components of tariff formation, applied procedures and contractual energy supply agreements
- Perception of the future of the energy transition to clean energy sources
- The extent to which citizens feel informed about capacity building measures and instruments for energy consumers to increase energy efficiency and renewable use

KEY DELIVERABLES AND INDICATIVE TIMEFRAME

The selected Contractor is expected to provide the following deliverables according to the schedule below:

Deliverable	Target Date
Deliverable 1. Activity Plan and Methodology for the assignment submitted and coordinated.	2 weeks after contract signature
Deliverable 2. Design of the sample to be interviewed	4 weeks after contract signature
Deliverable 3. Formatting and piloting the questionnaire	4 weeks after contract signature
Deliverable 4. Data collection: conducting the survey and conducting focus groups	3 weeks since submission of Deliverable 3
Deliverable 5. Research report and presentation of preliminary data of the public survey.	2 weeks since submission of Deliverable 4
Deliverable 6. Public presentation of the survey results at a press conference / round table with the FPI team and representatives of	2 weeks since submission of Deliverable 5

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State Institutions	
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Note: The indicated tentative timeframe has been estimated as being sufficient/feasible for the envisaged volume of work to be completed successfully and is proposed as a guideline for the duration of the assignment. The provision of the envisaged deliverables approved by UDNP shall be the only criteria for Contractor's work being completed and eligible for payment/s.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The contractor company shall ensure timely delivery of outputs. The sociological company is responsible for the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, maintaining a close collaboration and a continuous communication with Manager and Team Leader for Component 3. The obligations and responsibilities of the company are the following:

- Collaboration with FPI representatives and experts in order to develop a comprehensive questionnaire;
- Conduction of the opinion poll and focus groups in accordance with the requirements described above;
- Elaboration and discussion with the FPI representatives the framework and the sample, according to the requirements presented above;
- Elaboration of the content of the screening card and the survey questionnaire (research tool) in close consultation with the experts;
- Translation of the research tool into Russian;
- Testing of the research tool;
- Advance coordination with the Project Manager the manner, period and realization of the actual data collection.
- The company will guarantee that the way of data collection will ensure their quality, integrity and feasibility. The company will establish and communicate the quality assurance mechanisms according to which 5% of the total answers random verification led randomly;
- The company will present the collected data on electronic support, in the format previously agreed with the REIT representatives;
- The company will prepare a brief report in which it will present the study methodology and other relevant details previously agreed with the FPI.
- The company will maintain the confidentiality of data related to methodology, questionnaires, research results that will be subject to copyright.

PAYMENT

The payment for services will be made in tranches upon submission of deliverables stated in deliverable table. All deliverables shall be endorsed by the Project Manager within 14 calendar days from their submission.

Deliverable	Target Date
1. Deliverable 1. Activity Plan and Methodology for the assignment submitted and coordinated.	10%
2. Deliverable 2. Design of the sample to be interviewed	50%
3. Deliverable 3. Formatting and piloting the questionnaire	
4. Deliverable 4. Data collection: conducting the survey and conducting focus groups	
5. Deliverable 5. Research report and presentation of preliminary data of	

the public survey.	40%
6. Deliverable 6. Public presentation of the survey results at a press conference / round table with the FPI team and representatives of State Institutions	

SUBCONTRACTING

The subcontracting of services is not allowed.

QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED

The minimum qualifications required for the bidder are set up as following:

- Experience of at least 5 (five) years in conducting sociological research at national level
- Have at least 5 (five) years of relevant experience in conducting qualitative and quantitative surveys (e.g. market research / general population and business-to-business, social polling, political surveys, and other related opinion surveys).
- Have implemented at least 5 (five) public opinion surveys conducted at the national level (with at least 1,000 respondents) in the last 4 (four) years.
- Highly qualified experts with extensive experience in organizing sociological research (CVs will be included in the offer);
- Communication and interpersonal skills necessary for a good collaboration

PROPOSED WORKING METHODOLOGY FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONDUCTING THE SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

The general parameters for carrying out the quantitative study are the following:

- The sample must correspond to the principle of representativeness for the adult population of and comprise at least 1300 persons;
- The type of sample will be one: stratified, probabilistic, two-stage. The sample will follow the methodology commonly used in the surveys in the Public Opinion Barometer series, with the following benchmarks:
 - Stratification criteria: geographical regions (districts), residential environment (urban / rural), size of localities (2 types of urban localities, by size, respectively 3 types of rural localities, by number of inhabitants)
 - The volumes of the layers will be calculated based on the latest available statistical data. To the extent permitted by the data, the adjustment will be made with migration indices (population temporarily abroad)
 - Number of interviews per sampling point: preferably 8, exceptionally maximum 10
 - Stages of random selection: locality (table of random numbers), household (random road method) and person (nearest birthday method)
 - No locality replacements will be made, except for force majeure (floods, inability to reach the locality due to weather conditions, etc.)
 - For households, the method of the three visits on three different dates will be used. In case of refusals to answer, the probabilistic selection will be continued with the same statistical step.
- The selected company will design the sample using the latest available sampling frames and landmarks.
- The sociological company will assume the translation of the research tools according to the language in which the data will be collected.

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➤ The data will be entered into a database. The model of the database will be made by the selected company. The database will be cleaned and labeled and will become one of the expected results of the contract. In the database, the open-ended questions will be presented both as they were collected from the field and with their coded variants.

The general parameters for conducting the qualitative study are the following:

➤ Focus groups

- 5 focus groups
- Maximum duration 2 hours
- Regional distribution: 3-4 districts
- 5-10 participants in each group discussion

➤ The localities where the interviews will be applied (individual or group) will be selected from those included in the survey sample, through a method agreed by the company and the team of experts to ensure diversity depending on the degree of development of the locality.

➤ The interview and focus group guides will be designed by the sociological company and will be coordinated with the team of FPI.

Stages of the study:

1. Research preparation

- a) Sample of the design. It will be validated by the team of experts;
- b) Formatting the questionnaire. The company will provide the questionnaire in Romanian, which will be agreed with the team of experts. The selected company will format it in the patterns commonly used by its operators, including cards and other visual instruments, if applicable;
- c) Piloting the questionnaire. 20 questionnaires will be pre-tested, 10 in urban areas and 10 in rural areas. People selected for the interviews will be of different ages and different levels of education. At the end of the pre-test, the selected company will make a short report in which it will discuss the possible design errors of the questionnaire (duration, language, difficulty of understanding, etc.);
- d) Feedback on interviews;
- e) Improving the questionnaire according to the result of piloting in agreement with the team of experts;
- f) Translation of the questionnaire into Russian;
- g) Formatting and preparing the questionnaire for printing;
- h) Multiplication of questionnaires, taking into account the minimum volume of the sample (1300). The questionnaires will be printed in Romanian and Russian, based on the respective quotas of the populations speaking these languages in the country, so that all respondents have the opportunity to choose one of the versions;
- i) Preparation of the database model;
- j) Operator training. It is preferable that the training of operators be done in one day, centrally, with the participation of the experts.

2. Data collection

Survey:

- a) application of the questionnaire at national level;
- b) entering questionnaires in the database;
- c) correction and labeling of the database, calculation of the weighting variable (if necessary);

Making focus groups:

- a) Recruitment of focus group participants;
- b) Focus group focus;
- c) Audio recording of focus groups;
- d) Shorthand discussions;

3. Research report and presentation of preliminary data of the public survey

- a) Statistical analysis of preliminary data, depending on the variables indicated by the team of experts;
- b) Elaboration of the statistical report, which will include the analysis of frequencies, correlations according to the variables indicated by the team of experts. The statistical report will also include a description of the research process, how to prepare the sample, the results of the piloting, the problems faced by the company during the research and how to overcome them;
- c) Presentation of data in tabular form and diagrams;
- d) Preparation of the methodological report, which will include: sampling sheets, list of operators who participated in the research, internal control report, description of possible problems encountered in the field, analysis of refusals to answer and statistical analysis of non-answers to questions from questionnaire. The report will be as concise as possible.

APPLICATION

Interested entities must submit Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan and price offer containing:

- Detailed description of the enterprise (experience, human resources, managerial and technical capabilities, etc.);
- Copy of registration documents;
- Company's portfolio with the indication of similar implemented projects;
- References about experience in statistical analysis of data collected and reporting for the last 5 years;
- CVs of key personnel involved in the project;
- Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan
- Detailed financial offer.