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► Call for Expression of Interest

**Professional expertise in non-standard forms of employment
and platform economy in North Macedonia**

June 2025

► Background

The Ministry of Social Policy, Demography, and Youth (MSPDY) in North Macedonia is conducting qualitative and quantitative research to inform their future action in ensuring fair and equal working conditions and access to social protection for individuals engaged in non-standard forms of employment (NSFE) [<https://www.ilo.org/topics-and-sectors/non-standard-forms-employment>]. These include different employment arrangements that deviate from standard employment, such as temporary employment and service contracts; part-time and on-call work; temporary agency work and other multiparty employment relationships; free-lancers and consultants, as well as disguised employment and dependent self-employment. Non-standard employment features prominently on digital labour platforms. These groups often excluded from the social security system and subject to inadequate labour protections.

Among these are thousands of young people who rely on freelance and online gig platforms as a primary or supplementary source of income. While such platforms may offer higher earning potential and flexibility compared to traditional employment, they typically operate outside the scope of labour regulations. As a result, workers lack employment contracts and are not entitled to health or pension security, unemployment benefits, or other essential protections. The precarious nature of non-standard work often undermines young people's job security, career development, and overall well-being, thereby affecting their independence, health, and social inclusion.

Given the growing prevalence of such forms of employment among young people, the MSPDY considers it important to better understand the key dimensions of NSFE, particularly among young people in North Macedonia. In the context of the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan, this research would provide additional insights on how NSFE may become a structural challenge to the activation of those outside of the labour force and the provision of quality offers that lead to sustainable and positive long-term outcomes. In line with [ILO Recommendation No. 198](#), it will also support efforts to clarify the status of individuals in non-standard forms of employment, to prevent their exclusion from legal protections and social security entitlements due to unclear or non-recognised employment relationships.

To support evidence-based policymaking, the ILO, under the EU-ILO Technical Assistance Facility, will commission a study on the situation of young people in non-standard forms of employment, including those currently excluded from the social security system. The study will focus on mapping the population of freelance and platform workers, alongside the existing mapping of NEETs (young people not in employment, education, or training). Additional information on their numbers, characteristics, and income levels will be crucial for designing inclusive legal reforms and tailoring interventions under the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan.

1.1. Specific Objectives

Under this framework the task of the consultant shall be:

- (i) **To map and profile young individuals engaged in non-standard forms of employment, bearing in mind the possible need to determine the existence of an employment relationship**
Map the demographic, geographic, and socio-economic characteristics of youth working as freelancers, platform workers, and under undeclared temporary service contracts. This includes devising a mapping methodology that the MSPDY can continuously apply and expand on.
- (ii) **To assess the working conditions and job quality of young people in non-standard forms of employment**
Examine income levels, job stability, access to benefits, working hours, and other indicators of job quality, including health and safety.



(iii) To analyse access to and gaps in social protection coverage

Identify which branches of the social insurance system (e.g., health insurance, pensions, unemployment benefits) are currently inaccessible to this group and why.

(iv) To assess the relevance and accessibility of Youth Guarantee offers for non-standard youth workers

Understand to what extent current Youth Guarantee offers reach this population and whether the types of offers are suited to their needs.

(v) To propose recommendations for inclusive policy and legal reforms

Provide actionable guidance on how to adapt labour laws, social insurance systems, and Youth Guarantee interventions to better include young people in non-standard forms of employment.

(vi) To explore options for expanding the NEETs mapping to include precariously employed youth

Propose approaches for more accurately identifying youth at risk of social exclusion due to unstable or informal work arrangements. To generate reliable data for policy planning and monitoring.

1.2. Methodology and data

To carry out the analysis, the consultant will propose a methodology, ideally including both qualitative and quantitative research. The methodology will be agreed with ILO and the Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth.

When designing the methodology, the consultant shall take into account the following data sources and methods:

- Administrative data maintained by the Public Revenue Office;
- Administrative data on bank transactions held by the National Bank of the Republic of North Macedonia;
- Labour Force Survey data;
- Databases of freelance workers maintained by relevant Associations of Freelancers;
- Focus group discussions with representatives of the Associations of Freelancers;
- Surveys targeting identified freelance and platform workers.

The Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth shall ensure access to the aforementioned institutions and sources of data.

1.3. Expected deliverables

By the agreed timeline, the consultant shall deliver the following outputs (in English):

1. **Methodology** – enlisting the data sources, research questions, and timeline (subject to approval by the ILO and MSPDY);
2. **Detailed analytical report** – supported by set of recommendations on policy reforms, Youth Guarantee expansion, and future NEETs mapping;
3. **Processed datasets.**



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1.4. Evaluation

The received offers shall be evaluated based on the criteria, listed below:

1. Technical proposal – 70 points

1.1. **Methodology** – clear understanding of the assignment and objectives, adequacy of data sources and research methods – **30 points**

1.2. **Qualifications and experience of the consultant** – relevant background, experience in quantitative and qualitative research in the relevant topics, experience with national institutions and international organizations – **20 points**

1.3. **Knowledge of the national context** – social protection system, employment policies, Youth Guarantee – **10 points**

1.4. **Proposed timeline** – **10 points**

2. Financial proposal – 30 points



► Qualifications required

The present call for expression of interest aims at prospecting consultants and/or consulting companies with (labour) economics or econometrics background, who have the experience in conducting surveys and undertaking mapping of freelance, platform workers and individuals in other non-standard forms of employment, based on proposed and approved methodology.

The consultants interested to collaborate with the ILO in the above area of expertise are kindly requested to **submit their expression of interest by 13 June 2025** to the e-mail address simjanoska@ilo.org

Requirements:

- Minimum of 5 years of experience in the corresponding area of expertise;
- University Degree;
- Fluency in English and familiarity with professional terminology;
- Strong analytical skills and practical experience in similar type of work;
- Client-oriented approach, namely tact and ability to work with people and effective provision of services;
- Ability to manage the flow of information and adhere to deadlines and commitments;
- Bank account suitable for receiving transfers from abroad.

Consulting companies should submit the following:

- Cover letter (company overview);
- List of consultants to work on the diagnostics;
- List of references for prior experience in the relevant field;
- Proposed methodology;
- Financial offer.

Individual collaborators should submit the following:

- Curriculum Vitae;
- List of references for prior experience in the relevant field.
- Brief description indicating that they have appropriate professional knowledge and experience to participate in the mentioned project activity;
- Proposed methodology;
- Financial offer.

According to ILO rules, experts cannot be civil servants. The ILO retains the right to accept or reject any application. Selection of candidates will be done according to ILO internal procedures. Candidates will be contacted by the activity coordinator, and they will receive the terms of reference with detailed requirements and descriptions of tasks. The consultant selected for the particular assignment will sign service contract/external collaboration contract with the ILO for the specific task and for a specific duration; this by no means constitutes permanent employment by the ILO or any prospect thereof.



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► Timeline and Reporting

The assignment is expected to **start by 20 June and be completed by 31 August 2025.**

The consultant will report to the ILO Project Officer in Skopje and ILO Senior Employment Specialist based in Budapest.

The total financial liability of ILO will be paid by direct bank transfer upon satisfactory completion of work approved by the ILO.

The payment will be made in a single instalment according to the foreseen delivery timeline, based on the signed contract and invoice.

The ILO bears charges levied by its bank and the beneficiary bears the charges levied by its own bank.

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