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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS RECEIVED IN RELATION TO THE PUBLIC CALL UNDER THE EU4JOBS OF THE FUTURE PROJECT

**Public Calls No. 01/2026, 02/2026, 03/2026
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This document relates to the Public Calls - that is, the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants and the accompanying documentation — numbered 01/2026, 02/2026, and 03/2026, published on 23 January 2026 under the EU4Jobs of the Future project.

The International Labour Organization enabled interested parties to submit enquiries regarding additional clarifications of the call texts or procedural aspects related to the submission of project proposals. Questions could be submitted until 2 March 2026 via the email address eu4employment@ilo.org.

In accordance with the deadline for publishing official answers to the submitted questions (6 March 2026), the International Labour Organization provides, in this document, an overview of the received questions and the corresponding answers, so that they may be made available to all interested parties. This ensures the integrity and transparency of the process, as well as symmetrical access to information for all stakeholders.

After the deadline specified in the Public Call had passed, the EU4Jobs of the Future project team reviewed and analysed the questions received. Questions regarding possibilities for the individual employment of persons who fall within the categories of potential final beneficiaries, were excluded. The International Labour Organization, within the scope of its mandate, does not conduct direct employment activities for final beneficiaries, but instead implements a grant programme to which interested and qualified entities may apply in order to provide this type of support to end beneficiaries. Therefore, individuals who contacted us with such enquiries are advised to reach out to project implementers once implementation begins.

The same applies to individual requests for direct support to employers planning to hire new staff, except for questions concerning general eligibility or the approach employers should take to participate in the projects. Companies cannot apply directly to the International Labour Organization for wage subsidies or similar support, as the International Labour Organization in Bosnia and Herzegovina does not implement such programmes directly.

The EU4Jobs of the Future project team has made formal adjustments to some of the submitted questions prior to their publication, in order to standardise the formal characteristics of the enquiries (such as font, symbols, and formatting), remove elements that could reveal the identity of the person submitting the question, and exclude any additional explanations, examples, or similar content. These edits were also made to improve the efficiency and clarity of the questions.

The International Labour Organization will not respond to questions submitted after the deadline. If you have submitted a relevant query that does not appear in the list of questions and answers below, please contact us again at the same email address and resend your question, indicating that it has not previously been answered.

The overview of questions and answers is grouped according to thematic areas.

Questions & Answers

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What is the value per project? Can applications be submitted without companies? To which address should the projects be sent, or can they be sent by email?

All of the questions raised here are already addressed in the main text of the *Guidance for Applicants* under all three LOTs:

- The total grant value is defined in Section 2.1 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants of each LOT.
- Section 3.1 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants of each LOT specifies that the only mandatory partner is the public employment service and provides an indicative list of additional partners. For LOT 2 and LOT 3, Appendix 1 also requires applicants to demonstrate the intention of at least two employers/enterprises to employ beneficiaries as part of the project proposal. However, these employers do not need to be formal partners; this requirement may be met through a letter of intent or an agreement.
- Submission requirements are set out in Section 6.1 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants, which clearly states that “all documentation (the full project proposal, along with all required accompanying documents) must be submitted electronically by the specified deadline to the following email address: eu4employment@ilo.org”.

2. I would like to know whether a sole proprietor (“obrt”) is entitled to this assistance.

The question is not sufficiently clear to allow for a precise answer.

Section 1.3.1 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants states that, in order to be eligible to receive support under the project, individuals from the beneficiary groups must meet one of the following criteria: (1) Non-employed – either unemployed (not in employment and actively seeking work) or outside the labour force (not employed and not actively seeking work due to discouragement, barriers to entering the labour market, or other reasons); (2) Informally employed but seeking to transition into formal employment, and therefore either already registered or willing to register as a job-seeker with the public employment service; or (3) Exceptionally, individuals in time-related underemployment who are seeking to transition to full-time employment may also be eligible, provided they are already registered or are willing to register as job-seekers with the public employment service, and exit part-time employment in favour of a full-time position. The provision of support to time-related underemployed individuals must be well justified and thoroughly documented.

If the question refers to participation as a lead applicant or as a co-applicant (project partnership partner), then the following applies: (1) a sole proprietor cannot act as a lead applicant, as it is not a not-for-profit entity; and (2) the Call does not prohibit a sole proprietor from participating as a co-applicant.

3. Are institutions that are part of the EU4Jobs of the Future Project Steering Board eligible to participate as co-applicants under this Call.

Given the limited mandate of the Project Steering Board in relation to project implementation, the fact that the salaries of public appointees or officials cannot be funded through this project, and the project's purpose of supporting institutions in implementing employment policies, there is no barrier to institutions participating as co-applicants.

PARTNERSHIPS AND APPLICANT OR CO-APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

4. Can a civil society organisation that is currently in the process of registration apply? We have submitted the documents for registration, but we have not yet received the registration decision.

Only organisations that are formally registered may apply, whether as the lead applicant or as a co-applicant. An organisation that is still in the process of registration and has not been formally registered on the date of submission cannot be considered (the application will be excluded from further evaluation during the administrative compliance check).

5. The documentation of the Public Call states that it is necessary to demonstrate the intention of at least two companies or organisations to provide on-the-job training. Does this mean that signing a partnership agreement with those companies/organisations is mandatory, or is it sufficient to submit their statement of intent in another form?

As stated in Appendix 1, the project applicant must demonstrate the intention of companies or organisations to provide on-the-job training; therefore, it is not necessary to include these companies or organisations as formal partners. A letter of intent or an agreement between the lead applicant and the companies/organisations is sufficient. Mandatory partners are defined in Section 3.1 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants.

Please note, however, that the nature of the cooperation may influence the assessment of the applicant's demonstrated capacities, as stronger forms of collaboration (e.g. formal partnerships) are generally regarded as more robust than looser arrangements.

6. Does a chamber of commerce qualify as a social partner, or does this term refer strictly to representative employers' associations and trade unions?

Social partners are exclusively employers' associations and trade unions. They usually participate in tripartite social dialogue (typically through economic and social councils), with membership based on voluntary affiliation.

Please note that only *representative* social partners are eligible for the additional points stipulated in Sections 3.1 and 8.1 of the Public Call across all three LOTS. The representativeness of a social partner is defined in accordance with the relevant legislation:

- Articles 217-237 of the Labour Law of Republika Srpska
- Articles 137-148 of the Labour Law of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina

- The Law on the Representativeness of Trade Unions and Employers' Associations of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

7. At the application stage, it is necessary to submit offers/a detailed cost breakdown from institutional training providers. Does this mean that all providers (educational institutions, training centres, individual consultants) must already be identified at the application stage as co-applicants and sign a partnership agreement? Or is it possible, if the project is approved, to select training providers and consultants later through a public call?

As stated in Appendix 1, the Implementing Partner shall provide financial offers or a detailed cost breakdown from training providers (including those responsible for delivering core employability courses or modules), as well as confirmation of their availability and willingness to deliver training in line with the standards outlined above. This does not mean that training providers must be included as formal partners.

Rather, the project applicant is expected to carry out a market screening exercise to identify available training providers, assess their willingness and ability to meet the minimum standards set out in Appendix 1, and obtain information on the cost of their training. This market screening supports the preparation of the labour market analysis required under Section 1.2 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants, while the cost information/offers enable the applicant to budget accurately and justify costs in the Budget Form (Form 3, Sheet 2). A letter of intent or written confirmation of preliminary availability is sufficient at the application stage. This requirement - to submit a letter of intent or written confirmation of preliminary availability - applies only when those training providers are explicitly referenced in the project proposal.

The project applicant may still select training providers during the implementation phase and may also expand or revise the initially proposed list of providers.

Please note, however, that the nature of the cooperation may influence the assessment of the applicant's demonstrated capacities. Stronger forms of collaboration (e.g. formal partnerships) are generally viewed as more robust than looser arrangements expressed through letters of intent or preliminary confirmations of availability. The weakest position would be an application that provides no indication of which training providers are available and willing to deliver training to the project's end beneficiaries.

8. As stated in the Guidelines, there is a limitation that a co-applicant may participate in a maximum of two project proposals within LOT 1. In addition, it is indicated that Public Employment Services (PES) can participate only in one project proposal under this LOT. Given the institutional nature of LOT 1 and the requirement for strong involvement of Public Employment Services in the development and institutionalisation of the Platform model, we would like to kindly ask: Is it possible for a Public Employment Service (e.g. entity-level Employment Service) to participate in more than one project proposal under LOT 1, particularly in cases where multiple consortia operate in different territories or target groups? We are raising this question because, in practice, limiting PES participation to a single proposal significantly reduces the possibility for multiple qualified applicants to submit proposals, and may constrain the territorial and institutional outreach of the programme.

There are no limitations for Public Employment Services regarding their participation in multiple project proposals or partnerships. On the contrary, Public Employment Services are exempt from such restrictions in the Public Call across all three LOTs. Specifically, Section 3.2 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants (in all LOTs) clearly states that “Public Employment Services (PES), representative social partners and relevant ministries are exempt from the limitations outlined in points 2 and 3 and may participate as co-applicants in an unlimited number of project proposals.”

9. I would like to ask for clarification regarding the social partners. Are only public institutions (such as the Cantonal Centre for Social Work Sarajevo and the municipal-level services operating under this cantonal institution) eligible for the call, or can private organisations also be included? Could you please provide guidance on this matter?

Social partners are exclusively employers’ associations and trade unions. No other public or private entities can be considered social partners. Therefore, only the involvement of *representative* social partners - i.e. representative employers’ associations and representative trade unions - will qualify for the additional 15 points specified in Section 3.1 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants (all LOTs).

If your question concerns social protection institutions (and the term “social partner” was used mistakenly), it is important to note that social protection institutions, including social work/welfare centres, are optional rather than mandatory partners. Their relevance depends on the specific approach to delivering employment or self-employment support described in Appendix 1.

It should also be emphasised that the indicative list of partners is provided in Section 3.1 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants (all LOTs), but this list is not exhaustive. Other types of partners may be included (including various private entities), provided their involvement is duly justified by a specific role or capacity required - directly or indirectly - for the delivery of any of the services or programmes outlined in Appendix 1.

10. Can a consortium or partnership member be a legal entity registered as a sole proprietorship (craft/business), provided that it has clearly defined responsibilities in the implementation of the project?

Sole proprietorship businesses are eligible project partners and can be included in the partnership as co-applicants. Due to the limitation described in the page 14 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants, for-profit entities (including sole proprietors) cannot be lead applicants.

11. In cases where multiple organisational units operate under a single legal entity (e.g. faculties within a university), how should the eligibility rule regarding the submission of applications be interpreted? Is the limitation applied at the level of the individual organisational unit, or at the level of the legal entity? In other words, if the legal entity is the official applicant, would it be possible for different organisational units within that entity to submit separate applications (with the understanding that only one could ultimately be

awarded), or would multiple submissions by the same legal entity be considered ineligible and therefore rejected?

As stated in Chapter 3.1 (Eligibility of Applicants) of the *Guidelines for Applicants*, applicants must be legal entities established and registered in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, organisational units within a legal entity (e.g. faculties within a university, where the university itself is the registered legal entity) cannot be considered eligible applicants.

Example: In the case of University X, the university is the legal entity, while individual faculties are considered organisational units within that entity. Consequently, faculties cannot submit applications independently. The university, as the legal entity, may submit a maximum of one application as a lead applicant and one application as a co-applicant per LOT, or two applications as a co-applicant per LOT. Any submission exceeding this maximum number of applications by the same legal entity will result in the automatic disqualification of all applications involving that legal entity.

12. With reference to Section 3.1 (Eligibility of applicants) of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants, which foresees the participation of businesses/employers within the Sectoral Employment Partnership, we would appreciate clarification on the following. Are publicly owned enterprises (established by municipalities, cities, cantons, entities, or the state), legally registered as separate legal entities and operating on the market, eligible to participate as co-applicants under LOT 2 and LOT 3? If eligible, may such public enterprises: provide on-the-job training under STEP 5.A (Component 2 – Skills Development), participate in the implementation of subsidised employment measures under STEP 7.B (Component 3 – Employment Support), and employ beneficiaries within the framework of the project’s employment targets?

Are there any restrictions concerning public enterprises receiving project funds for: covering on-the-job training costs, wage subsidies for employment, and workplace adaptation grants (in the case of persons with disabilities).

Publicly owned enterprises are not excluded from participating as co-applicants under the Public Call, which implies that they are eligible to assume this role. According to Appendix 1, employment subsidies are intended exclusively for private sector enterprises (STEP 7.B), while on-the-job training may be provided by either private sector enterprises or civil society organisations (STEP 5.A). Nevertheless, there are no restrictions preventing publicly owned enterprises from employing end beneficiaries (whether as project partners or in another capacity) without receiving subsidies/financial support. The exception relates to the workplace adaptation grant, as Appendix 1 does not indicate that it is restricted solely to private sector enterprises (or civil society organisations).

13. I kindly request clarification on the following question: Is it acceptable for companies that are co-applicants, in addition to their role in providing training and capacity-building within the implementation of the project, to also carry out backstopping activities for the project, including quality management and support for the project’s M&E, on behalf of the lead applicant?

There is no provision in the Public Call that would prohibit this type of internal division of duties. The internal allocation of responsibilities and the specific roles of partners will, however, be subject to assessment in order to determine whether each partner demonstrates sufficient capacity for the roles assigned to them, whether their involvement is justified in accordance with Appendix 1, and whether the overall division of duties and responsibilities is well-designed, coherent, and efficient, among others.

14. Can a company operating in the manufacturing sector (specifically in beverage production (Section 11, Manufacturing) be considered an eligible LEP partner, provided that it meets all other eligibility criteria set out in the call for proposals?

Company of described profile is eligible project partner in the role of co-applicants. For-profit legal entities cannot be lead applicants under this Public Call regardless of their manufacturing sector. Finally, this public call does not specify the need to have project partnerships labelled and structured exclusively as local employment partnerships (LEPs).

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT RELATED QUESTIONS

15. What types of contributions may be considered eligible for the required 10% co-financing under all LOTs of this public call?

Eligible co-financing is contribution which is verifiable through accounting records (invoice paid, bank statement confirming payment, etc.). The remuneration of the project management and administration team under budget Heading 1 (e.g. salary costs) cannot be claimed as part of the applicant's own contribution under this Call. This includes all forms of compensation for project management and administrative functions, regardless of the contractual arrangement. Additional information on the treatment of different forms of co-funding is available in the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants (page 12).

16. Is the required 10% co-financing included within the maximum project budget specified for LOT 2, or must it be provided in addition to the maximum grant amount? For example, if the maximum budget for LOT 2 is USD 420,000, does this amount already include the applicant's co-financing contribution, or should the applicant provide an additional 10% on top of that amount (e.g. USD 420,000 + USD 42,000)?

Requested co-financing is to be provided in addition to the grant amount requested.

Example: If amount of grant requested from the project is 420,000 USD, the applicant needs to secure additional amount of (at least) 42,000 USD. Total amount of the project in this example would be 420,000 + 42,000 = 462,000 USD.

17. How should the co-financing contribution be managed and disbursed within the project? Is it required that all co-financing funds be transferred to the lead applicant and disbursed from that account to the final beneficiaries, or may project partners (e.g. local government institutions) provide their share of co-financing directly to final beneficiaries, for example

through self-employment grants? In addition, is it necessary for the full amount of co-financing to be available at the time of application, or may partners plan their contributions across multiple budget years during the project implementation period?

AND

The documentation states that it is necessary to secure co-financing in the amount of at least 10% of the requested grant. Do these funds have to be paid into the project sub-account, or can they be shown as an expense incurred by the co-applicant (in the name of the co-applicant)?

Financial contribution provided by co-applicants does not need to be transferred to the bank account of the lead applicant to be accepted as eligible contribution. These funds can be disbursed directly from the account of the co-applicants to end beneficiaries. However, these payments must be aligned with the overall project activity dynamics and the selection of end beneficiaries within the project. Direct link must be established between the activities in the Pathway (activation, profiling, etc.) and the payment. Payments by the co-applicants that are a part of other programmes of these institutions, which are not affected by the Pathway methodology will not be considered as acceptable co-financing. Finally, in all contractual documents (e.g. contract on subsidised employment), the project must be referenced as a basis for the payment. Lead partner will be expected to collect financial documentation from co-applicants on these payments and include it in overall financial registry.

In order to be accepted as co-financing, payment must be made during the project period. Other considerations (such as is the source of funding one or multiple budget years) are irrelevant.

18. The question refers to the evaluation criteria presented in chapter 8. Evaluation and selection of project proposals, Section 6. Budget and Efficiency of the Action: Criteria 6.2. To what extent and in what manner has the Applicant committed own financial contribution to the project's implementation, in accordance with Section 2.1? Please clarify "what manner".

This relates to the type and the aim of co-funding, as proxied by the Budget Headings. For instance, co-funding allocated under Headings 6 and 5 - which directly benefits end beneficiaries - will be valued more highly than co-funding allocated under Headings 2 to 4, which is not directly linked to beneficiary support.

19. How should exchange rate risk be managed?

The ability to manage and mitigate risks across all stages of the project implementation cycle - including those related to the budget - must be clearly demonstrated by project applicants. This capacity will be assessed in accordance with Section 8 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants. In practical terms, applicants are expected to identify and anticipate budgetary risks, conduct an appropriate analysis of these risks, and propose credible risk-management measures. In doing so, they will demonstrate sound financial-management capabilities for the effective delivery of the project.

20. Are there implicit or explicit maximum amounts per beneficiary?

The question is not entirely clear. All relevant information concerning explicit quality standards related to financial allocations is provided in Appendix 1. There are no implicit criteria in this regard. However, any proposal - both in terms of total financial allocation and per-capita costs - will be subject to operational, financial, and technical assessment during the project-evaluation process.

21. May co-financing include staff salaries, or only beneficiary-related direct costs?

This is already clearly explained in Section 2.1 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants across all three LOTs. For example, the following excerpt is taken from the LOT 2 Guidelines; however, you are advised to consult the guidelines for the specific LOT that applies to your proposal:

“Project applicants are required to provide co-funding from their own resources amounting to at least 10% of the requested grant under this programme. The remuneration of the project management and administration team under budget Heading 1 (e.g. salary costs) cannot be claimed as part of the applicant’s own contribution under this Call. This includes all forms of compensation for project management and administrative functions, regardless of the contractual arrangement. Only financial contributions that directly benefit end beneficiaries - such as wage subsidies, self-employment grants, training costs, or complementary support (e.g. travel expenses or subsistence allowances) - are eligible for additional points. Such contributions may be awarded up to 15 points, depending on the amount contributed (...)”

22. Is it possible to modify the allocation of co-financing costs initially indicated by the Lead Applicant in the project proposal? Specifically, during project implementation, may the Lead Applicant adjust which of the already approved budget items are covered through co-financing, if justified by implementation needs, provided that no new budget lines are introduced and the overall budget structure remains unchanged?

Reallocation of funds within the approved budget is generally possible. However, it requires adequate argumentation, i.e. explanation of external factors which prompted the change. If the arguments are accepted by the ILO, reallocation of funds within the existing budget is approved.

23. Given that beneficiaries receiving self-employment grants are required to provide 50% co-financing, what would be considered an acceptable method for verifying the beneficiary’s financial contribution? In particular, can only the expenses incurred after the approval of the self-employment grant be considered eligible for verification, or may the beneficiary’s contribution also be verified through expenses incurred prior to the grant approval?

In order to be acceptable, participation of beneficiaries in cofinancing of self-employment grants must be in a form that can be verified through proper accounting practices (invoices, bank statements, etc.). Further, purchased products and services must be listed in the approved business plan as necessary expenditures. Expenditures made less than 6 months prior to registration that are verifiable through proper documentation and listed in business plan are

considered as acceptable co-financing on the part of beneficiaries. Inclusion of second-hand equipment should be avoided (accepted in special circumstances only) as its valuation requires approval from the ILO.

It is important to notice that project applicants are required to provide co-funding from their own resources amounting to at least 10% of the requested grant (Guidelines for Applicants, page 12). This co-funding needs to be provided from project partners. Contributions from project beneficiaries cannot be considered as project co-financing in accordance with the rules of this public call.

24. Which exchange rate should be used when preparing the budget, given that the Implementation Agreement is denominated in USD?

The exchange rate used depends on the choice of the applicant. The ILO does not specify any specific exchange rate list as obligatory for this purpose. However, the exchange rates published by the Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina are acceptable choice.

25. STEP 5.A recommends that enterprises or organizations delivering on the job training contribute at least 30 per cent of the total training cost. In cases where on the job training is implemented through an employment contract, the employer pays the full salary to the training participant, and the project refunds the employer the agreed part of the salary. Therefore, we would like to clarify how this employer contribution should be reflected in the project budget. More precisely, can such employer's contribution be recorded in Column G (co financing), despite the fact that it will not appear in the bank statements of the lead implementing partner, but only in the trainee's payroll documentation?

Please note that the 30% mentioned in the question does not refer to the total training costs. It refers specifically to the beneficiary training allowance outlined in Appendix 1 for LOT 2 and LOT 3. Since this percentage represents a recommendation rather than a minimum standard, it may be counted as co-funding provided that the employers contributing to this amount are included as co-applicants (partners) in the project proposal. Own contribution can only be linked to project partners. There is no requirement for this contribution to be transferred to the lead applicant's account for it to be considered eligible own contribution (please see answers to other questions within this section for more details).

GENERAL TECHNICAL QUESTIONS

26. Verification of beneficiary status – victims of domestic violence: We kindly request clarification on how the beneficiary's status as a victim of domestic violence is formally verified, that is, what type of documentation or confirmation is considered acceptable?

During the implementation phase, this may be demonstrated through documentation issued by social protection institutions (such as social welfare centres or shelters for victims of domestic violence). Alternatively, verification may take place during STEP 4, where the beneficiary discloses their situation and a professional confirms it on the basis of an assessment. The latter approach aims to minimise re-traumatisation and avoid creating additional barriers for victims.

However, please note that both the availability of this beneficiary group and the applicant's capacity to reach, access, and effectively include them in the intervention must be clearly demonstrated. The availability of the beneficiary group should be substantiated with relevant statistical data, research, or other credible evidence. A mere statement of intent to include this beneficiary group, without robust evidence explaining how this will be achieved, will not result in the allocation of additional points.

27. We understand that training does not necessarily need to be accredited, kindly confirm that this interpretation is correct.

This is correct, but only where an accredited programme is not available in the localities or region covered by the project, or where no accredited programme exists for the specific occupation concerned. In such cases, a non-accredited programme may be used, but it should aim to align with the minimum standards for institutional training set out under STEP 5.B of Appendix 1. Any substitution of an accredited programme with a non-accredited one must be thoroughly justified - for example, by demonstrating a clear gap in the supply of accredited programmes.

28. May the same beneficiary be counted under multiple outputs (training completion, OJT completion, employment)?

From a results-measurement and reporting perspective, these outputs are treated as separate. The logic of the Employment Support Pathway clearly indicates that a single beneficiary may -and in most of the cases should - participate in several programmes and services. Consequently, one beneficiary may legitimately appear under different types of support, such as outreach, training, and employment support. These indicators are therefore not mutually exclusive.

For instance, if a beneficiary is first engaged through outreach, subsequently referred to training and successfully completes it, and is later employed, this individual would be counted under all three indicators: as a beneficiary reached through outreach, as a training beneficiary, and as an employed person.

However, double counting within any individual indicator is strictly prohibited. For example, if a person receives both institutional training and separate core/soft-skills training, they may only be counted once under the training-related indicator, as they constitute a single beneficiary receiving skills-development support. Similarly, if a person is reached through multiple outreach activities, they must still be counted as one outreach beneficiary, regardless of the number of outreach actions involving them.

29. What documentation is required for: victims of violence (is self-declaration sufficient?), persons with disabilities, Roma beneficiaries?

At the project proposal stage, no documentation is required. The availability of a specific beneficiary group, as well as the applicant's ability to reach and engage them in the intervention, should be demonstrated through relevant data, analysis, and narrative elaboration. Please refer to the answers to other related questions for further clarification.

During the project implementation phase, victims of domestic violence may be documented through relevant confirmations issued by social protection institutions or via self-declaration at STEP 4. For Roma beneficiaries, self-declaration at STEP 2 or STEP 4 is sufficient. Persons with disabilities should provide appropriate documentation confirming the assessment of disability.

30. With regard to the logical framework, specifically the column “Baseline (value and reference year),” should the baseline values refer exclusively to digitally intensive professions, or to professions in general? For example, should the baseline be stated as “0 people improved their digital work skills in 2025,” or may it also refer to broader skill improvements, such as “25 people improved their work skills in 2025”?

The proper formulation of the baseline depends on the formulation of the indicator. It is impossible to generalise the baseline value, without knowing the precise formulation of the indicator. Further, in this phase of the public call, the ILO is not in position to provide the feedback on concrete wording and/or values of specific indicators.

31. Does the ILO plan to provide training for public employment service representatives on profiling and the use of the PAMET platform during the project implementation period? If so, when is this training expected to take place, and what are its main objectives and expected outcomes?

The ILO will provide intensive technical support to selected implementing partners, as described in the chapter 4.5. of the Guidelines for Applicants. The detailed content and timing of the provision of this support will be communicated to selected partners upon the completion of the contracting procedure. The scope of information available on this topic in the chapter 4.5 of the Guidelines for Applicants is considered sufficient for the preparation of project proposals.

32. During the recent information session, it was indicated that underemployed persons (e.g. individuals employed part-time, on temporary contracts, or below their qualification level) who seek transition to better or full-time employment may be included as beneficiaries. In this regard, we kindly request clarification on the following: (1) How is the inclusion of underemployed persons formally defined within the Employment Support Pathway? (2) When such individuals are identified through project outreach, how should they be registered in cooperation with the Public Employment Services (PES)? Should they be registered as employed jobseekers? (3) Is there a specific registration category expected for reporting and monitoring purposes? (4) Under which beneficiary category should they be recorded in the logical framework and reporting system?

The possibility of including underemployed persons was not mentioned solely during the information session; it is clearly stated in the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants (Section 1.3.1) for all three LOTS:

“Exceptionally, individuals in time-related underemployment who are seeking full-time engagement may also be eligible, provided they are ready to transition from part-time underemployment to full-time self-employment (not as an additional activity to complement an

existing part-time job). The provision of support to time-related underemployed individuals must be well justified and thoroughly documented.”

This provision applies only to time-related involuntary underemployment and constitutes one of the four eligible labour-market entry statuses under the Public Call.

Concerning Question 1: Under-employed persons are expected to be included in the Employment Support Pathways following the same principles that apply to all other beneficiary groups. Their eligibility and the type of support to be provided will be determined under STEP 4, based on an individual assessment.

Concerning Questions 2 and 3: Beneficiaries should be registered as employed jobseekers, as this status exists and is recognised/applied by public employment services.

Concerning Question 4: Under-employment is treated as a labour-market entry status (alongside unemployment, inactivity, and informal employment), not as a beneficiary group. Please refer to Section 1.3.1 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants for further details. This status will be recorded in PAMET; however, for reporting purposes related to beneficiary groups, under-employed individuals will be reported under whichever beneficiary group they belong to (e.g. under-employed Roma, under-employed women, etc.).

33. Under what circumstances may a beneficiary proceed directly from STEP 4 to STEP 7?

In cases where it is determined that no additional support is required to address labour-market barriers - for example, where a beneficiary does not face motivational challenges, does not belong to groups affected by prejudice, discrimination, or stigma, and does not lack occupational or core/soft skills relevant to employment or self-employment in green jobs or digitally intensive occupations — the beneficiary may be referred directly to STEP 7. However, such cases should be rare and may indicate inadequate targeting during STEP 1 and STEP 2. This scenario is primarily applicable to beneficiaries being referred to self-employment.

34. Which combinations of STEP 5 and STEP 7 measures are permitted?

Please refer to Appendix 1, as the answer to this question is provided there.

35. Is only a formal employment contract recognised as employment?

Under EU4 Jobs of the Future project, only formal employment is recognised as employment. The project does not condone or support informal employment, as it does not constitute decent work.

36. Is self-employment (registered business) recognised under employment indicators?

YES, in the context of employment indicators the self-employment status is considered equal to the status of employment.

37. What is the minimum duration of employment required for counting toward results?

Employment status is being examined at several points in time during the implementation (the end of reporting periods for progress reports). The final employment status is being determined for all end beneficiaries on the last day of the project period. In this context, general rule on minimum duration of contracts is not specified. However, rules are set in case of specific steps of the Employment Support Pathway (e.g. minimum duration of the contract is set for the subsidised employment). Each such rule is elaborated in the Appendix 1.

38. Does legal employment abroad count toward employment indicators?

Employment outside of the labour market of Bosnia and Herzegovina is not considered as acceptable result and cannot be reported as such in employment indicators of the project under this Public Call.

39. How should six-month retention be verified?

Question is unclear. If it relates to the requested retention of employed persons in the context of subsidized employment (STEP 7.B), it is to be verified via JS3100 forms in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 1002 forms in Republika Srpska. If competent PES for the project area has access to the information system of the Tax Authority and is willing to confirm the retention, the official PES confirmation is considered as acceptable verification.

If this refers to one of the monitoring indicators, Appendix 1 clearly states that it will be monitored by the ILO project team (using the project's own monitoring capacities).

40. Are there mandatory minimum quotas for specific beneficiary groups?

In the context of LOT 1, the precise quotas are not specified. However, applicants are expected to elaborate on diversification of the target group in order to qualify for awarding of up to 15 extra points during the project proposal evaluation.

In the context of LOT 2, the precise quotas are specified and explained under the *Chapter 1.3.1. Target beneficiary groups* of the *Guidelines for applicants* (pages 8-10).

41. The Guidelines recommend that enterprises contribute at least 30% of the training allowance costs, although the grant may cover up to 100%: Is this 30% contribution mandatory or only recommended? Does absence of employer co-financing affect evaluation scoring?

Appendix 1 under LOT 2 and LOT 3 clearly states that this is recommended, not mandatory: "Although the grant may cover 100 per cent of these costs, it is recommended that enterprises or organisations delivering the training contribute at least 30 per cent."

Employer contributions to this and other cost categories are typically evaluated more favourably than their absence, as such contributions demonstrate employers' willingness to hire the beneficiaries, their commitment to the training process, and their genuine need for the workforce.

42. For non-accredited courses: Is 100 training hours the absolute minimum? May shorter modular formats be considered if aligned with labour market demand?

Appendix 1 states that “any deviation from these requirements must be adequately justified” with regard to the minimum standards for occupational training. This implies that proposing a shorter training duration is possible; however, such a deviation must be strongly justified and will be subject to rigorous assessment.

43. The Pathway indicates that at least 70% of training time should be spent within an institution, but also states that time may vary depending on context: Who determines whether deviation from this rule is justified? Is online or hybrid delivery acceptable? If prior approval is required, at which stage should this be requested and what is the expected timeframe?

During the project proposal evaluation phase, evaluators assess whether any deviation is justified, based on the explanation provided and their technical expertise. If a deviation arises during implementation, it is reviewed (prior to being put into practice/implemented) and either approved or rejected by the project team.

A fully online delivery mode is not acceptable under any circumstances, except where supplementary online learning resources are provided in addition to the core training. Hybrid delivery is permitted for digital skills courses under LOT 3, as explicitly stated in Appendix 1. In exceptional cases, hybrid delivery may also be proposed for occupational training if there is a strong and well-substantiated justification (“Any deviation from these requirements must be adequately justified,” as noted in Appendix 1). However, such proposals will be subject to rigorous assessment and may ultimately be rejected.

44. Must exact training programmes be listed in the proposal, or is a structured catalogue of aligned training options acceptable?

The assumption is that the question refers to occupational training programmes under LOT 2 and LOT 3. It is possible not to specify the exact training programmes; however, the applicant’s ability to identify and clearly present the proposed training programmes is part of the assessment. High-level details are generally valued less favourably than well-developed specific information.

45. Is there a prescribed minimum group size for training?

If the question refers to Component 2 (STEP 5.A and STEP 5.B), this requirement is not prescribed; otherwise, it would have been explicitly stated in Appendix 1.

46. Are there additional trainer qualification requirements beyond national accreditation standards?

If the question refers to Component 2 (STEP 5.A and STEP 5.B), this requirement is not prescribed; otherwise, it would have been explicitly stated in Appendix 1. For trainers delivering self-employment training/coaching, the following requirements are prescribed across all three LOTs, with only minimal differences between them (please refer to Appendix 1 for the relevant LOT): For certified SIYB, GET Ahead, a valid certificate combined with reasonable experience in delivering training shall be considered sufficient. For all other trainers, a minimum of three years' experience in business start-up training is required, including expertise in some or all of the following areas, depending on the specific training or coaching module/session to be delivered: business planning; finance and accounting; business and commercial legal frameworks; marketing and sales for small enterprises.

47. The requirement to prove intent of at least two enterprises to provide OJT: Does this apply per occupation, per location, or per project? Is proof from two enterprises sufficient for the entire project?

The requirement is a minimum of two per project.

48. Is seasonal organisation of OJT acceptable, provided duration (3–6 months) and minimum weekly hours are respected?

This question is not clear. If it refers to on-the-job training linked to seasonal employment, it should be noted that seasonal jobs are generally discouraged, as they do not ensure sustainability and are not considered to constitute decent employment.

49. Must employment after OJT be with the same employer for it to count toward indicators?

No, any attributable employment - regardless of the employer - may be counted under the employment indicator. If a beneficiary completes on-the-job training and subsequently uses the acquired skills to secure employment with another employer, whether voluntarily (by choice) or because the employer who provided the on-the-job training did not offer employment, this may still be counted under the relevant indicator. The key requirement is that the employment can be attributed to the project intervention (for example, the beneficiary is employed in the same or a similar occupation for which they were trained, or their employability was enhanced through the Employment Support Pathway leading to employment). The ILO project team will provide guidance to selected project implementers on how to assess and document attribution.

50. How should changes in beneficiary status with PES during OJT be handled, especially in case of regulatory changes?

The question is unclear. The use of an employment contract or earning income above the threshold prescribed by a specific administrative unit, may result in a beneficiary being removed

from the PES unemployment registry; however, this outcome is expected. If an employment contract is not used, but an occupational training programme has been implemented, the project implementer may consider strategies to minimise the risk of a beneficiary being removed from the PES registry, in line with applicable laws and rules, in cases where there is no guarantee of employment at the end of the process. Nevertheless, responsibility for managing this risk lies with each individual project implementer.

51. Workplace adaptation grant: (1) Is the USD 1,500 grant strictly limited to physical workplace adaptation, or may it also cover temporary or part-time financing of a personal assistant where necessary for effective job performance? (2) If an employer receives significant co-financing from a public disability fund, may project funds still be used as complementary financing? May they be used for support services (e.g. assistant), provided there is no double financing?

Concerning Question 1: Funding may be directed towards the engagement of a personal assistant, provided that there is a credible and well-substantiated plan from the employer to maintain this function after the grant period ends.

Concerning Question 2: There is no restriction regarding matching funds, as long as there is no double financing and expenses are well-justified.

TECHNICAL ISSUES, LOT 1 (JOBS OF THE FUTURE PLATFORM)

52. Is Public Employment Institute of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina mandatory partner in projects submitted under the LOT 1.

Support available under LOT 1 will be distributed between two projects: one to be implemented in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Focus Area 1), and one in Republika Srpska and Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Focus Area 2). As indicated above, Brčko District of BiH is therefore expected to be included in projects under both focus areas.

However, the Call does not prescribe a precise territorial distribution of activities within each focus area (e.g. projects are not required to directly work with end beneficiaries in specific cantons of the Federation of BiH). Instead, implementing partners are expected to demonstrate the capacity to ensure that self-employment support services are made available as widely as possible across the respective focus area.

In this context, the inclusion of stakeholders from the Brčko District of BiH will be positively considered during project evaluation. Should the project include end beneficiaries from Brčko District of BiH within activities implemented under Intervention Package 2 (especially activity 2.1.1.), the Public Employment Institute of Brčko District of BiH must be included as a mandatory partner, as it is the only institution authorised to implement activities 2.1.1.b and 2.1.1.c as defined in the Intervention Specification.

53. Guidelines for applicants and Intervention specification for LOT 1 suggest that SIYB master trainers need to be included (under Activity 1.3.3 Delivery of targeted capacity-building modules). Will ILO negotiate with certified master trainers and does their engagement need to be budgeted in the application by the applicant?

At present, the ILO plans to establish appropriate arrangements with SIYB Master Trainer(s) and cover the associated costs. Accordingly, applicants under LOT 1 are not required to include these costs in their project budgets.

54. Should the applicant for LOT 1 include in the budget the development of a "digital knowledge platform (e.g. a web-based portal)" or is this something that the ILO will prepare?

Digital knowledge platform, aimed to enable efficient sharing of know-how in relation to the self-employment support provision, is to be included in project activities and adequately budgeted. The ILO will participate in its development during the project implementation through technical assistance, as part of the co-creation process. However, in the project preparation phase, applicants are expected to present their plan (including allocation of adequate financial resources) for the implementation of this activity.

55. Can it be considered project co-financing if a project partner, other than the lead partner, contributes a portion of the grant funds allocated for self-employment support directly to the end beneficiary, provided that this arrangement is foreseen and budgeted in the project application?

Yes, such a financial contribution may be considered project co-financing, provided that the support is delivered in line with the Intervention Specification.

Example 1: IF the end beneficiary participates in all sub-activities under Activity 2.1.1, AND the beneficiary's business plan is evaluated in accordance with the Intervention Specification AND approved for financing through the project selection process, AND the grant is awarded based on the results of the project evaluation process by any of the project partners, AND the grant agreement explicitly specifies the project as the basis for the award of funds, THEN the financial contribution of the partner, provided in the form of a grant to the project's end beneficiary, is considered to be eligible co-financing.

Example 2: The project implements Activity 2.1.1 in accordance with the Intervention Specification. At the same time, but independently of the project, one institutional partner (e.g. a municipality or Public Employment Service) implements its own regular annual incentive programme. This programme is not influenced by the project, and its procedures remain the same or similar to those applied in previous years (i.e. they are not aligned with the procedures defined by the project). In this case, such financial support is NOT considered eligible co-financing, as it represents a parallel activity of the partner with no methodological link to the approach defined in the Intervention Specification.

56. What is the page limit for the section "Project Relevance" under LOT 1? The Content section (page 2) specifies a maximum of 4 pages, while the Form (page 5) indicates a maximum of 6 pages for the same section.

The limit is 6 pages, as specified in the form (page 5). Once the content section is updated, it will also reflect the 6-pages limit.

57. Could you please clarify whether, under LOT 1, all ten Cantonal Employment Services and the Employment Institute of Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina are required to be included as project partners (i.e. to sign the declaration and partnership agreement)? Alternatively, should the partnership structure reflect only the geographical area in which the pilot activities under LOT 1 will be implemented, which may not necessarily include all cantons?

The mandatory participation of public employment services relates to the implementation of activity 2.1.1. (especially sub-activities 2.1.1.b and 2.1.1.c) from the Intervention Specification. The participation of public employment services is requested for all areas in which these activities will be implemented, and end beneficiaries supported. Other public employment services and/or institutes are not considered mandatory partners.

Example: Public Employment Service of the Canton X is not mandatory partner if direct support to end beneficiaries under the activity 2.1.1. will not happen in Canton X.

58. Could you please clarify whether there is any limitation on the number of LOT 1 project proposals in which a Public Employment Service (PES) may participate as a co-applicant?

The number of applications in which any public employment service can participate as co-applicant is NOT limited. Any PES can participate as a co-applicant in unlimited number of project proposals. As specified in the Guidelines for Applicants (page 14).

“Public Employment Services (PES), representative social partners and relevant ministries are exempt from the limitations outlined in points 2 and 3 and may participate as co-applicants in an unlimited number of project proposals.”

TECHNICAL ISSUES, LOT 2 (ACTIVATION & EMPLOYMENT IN GREEN JOBS)

59. How should the total number of beneficiaries participating in institutional training be interpreted? Does this number include beneficiaries who participate in self-employment training, or are these categories of beneficiaries counted and reported separately?

This indicator may include beneficiaries participating in self-employment training programmes, as such comprehensive training supports the development of a broad range of entrepreneurial skills. In addition, beneficiaries referred to self-employment at STEP 4 will not always require additional or new vocational skills and will not necessarily proceed to STEP 5. **Note:** This logic does not apply to job-search training under STEP 7.A; participants in job-search training cannot be counted under this indicator.

60. With regard to the requirement that at least 50% of revenues derive from green products/services or green processes: Is it acceptable that verification be provided through a signed declaration by the employer confirming that 50% or more of revenues originate from green activities, or that the enterprise primarily operates in a green sector?

At the project application stage, a signed declaration, accompanied by an explanation of the products, services, or processes from which the revenue is generated, will be sufficient. This explanation should clearly specify the relevant revenue sources and provide a high-level disaggregation of green products, services, or processes, together with the figure on cumulative share of green-related revenues within total revenues. This declaration will be subject to further scrutiny during the field verification phase, and additional evidence may be requested. While we encourage applicants to substantiate their case as comprehensively and convincingly as possible, such a declaration will meet the minimum requirement.

61. The Call requires that at least 50% of the employer's current (or projected, in case of self-employment) revenues derive from green products/services or green processes. In this context, we kindly request clarification on: (1) What documentation is considered acceptable proof that: an enterprise produces green products/services; or is transitioning to greener processes?; (2) How should the 50% revenue threshold be demonstrated in practice? Would acceptable proof include: audited financial statements, revenue breakdowns prepared internally, business plans with financial projections (for self-employment), tax filings, internal accounting reports, or other formal declarations supported by documentation?; (3) Is third-party certification (ISO 14001, EMAS, EU Ecolabel, organic certification, etc.) mandatory, recommended, or optional?; (4) Where official documentation does not exist, would the ILO consider the following acceptable: employer self-declarations signed by the legal representative, technical descriptions of production processes, environmental policies and internal procedures, invoices or contracts demonstrating green characteristics, documentation of investment in energy-efficient or environmentally friendly equipment?

At the project application stage, a signed declaration, accompanied by an explanation of the products, services, or processes from which the revenue is generated, will be sufficient. This explanation should clearly specify the relevant revenue sources and provide a high-level disaggregation of green products, services, or processes, together with the figure on cumulative share of green-related revenues within total revenues. This declaration will be subject to further scrutiny during the field verification phase, and additional evidence may be requested. While we encourage applicants to substantiate their case as comprehensively and convincingly as possible (e.g. audited financial statements, etc.), the aforementioned declaration will meet the minimum requirement.

Concerning self-employment, this should be clearly reflected in the business plan.

Regarding sub-questions 3 and 4, certificates are not mandatory to demonstrate meeting the 50% threshold; however, they are considered an advantage.

62. We kindly request clarification on: a) What documentation is required to demonstrate that the supported role: is directly linked to the design, production, sale, or implementation of a green product/service/process; and is not merely a supporting function (e.g. HR, accounting)? b) How should applicants demonstrate that the role requires green-specific skills that distinguish it from comparable roles in the non-green economy? Would job descriptions, employment contracts, training curricula, competence assessments, and employer declarations be considered sufficient?

A job description constitutes sufficient evidence, as it allows for an easy determination of how the job position relates to the value chain. No additional proof regarding employment will be required. For training activities, the training curriculum serves as adequate evidence. Both requirements apply to the project implementation stage. At the project proposal preparation stage, applicants should provide a descriptive explanation of the occupations or job profiles to be targeted through training and employment support, as detailed job descriptions are not expected (and usually cannot be provided) at this stage.

With regard to the question, ‘How should applicants demonstrate that the role requires green-specific skills that distinguish it from comparable roles in the non-green economy?’, it should be noted that no such demonstration is required. Compliance with the overall definition of a green job is ensured by the combination of the three criteria set out in Section 9 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants under LOT 2. In the context of training programmes, it is possible that the skills acquired may also be applicable in non-green economic activities; however, the guidance provided throughout the Employment Support Pathway should ensure that end beneficiaries are matched with green jobs, as defined by the three criteria in Section 9, irrespective of the broader applicability of the skills acquired.

63. Given the limited availability of state-issued certifications and official environmental documentation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we kindly ask: Was this institutional context taken into consideration during the design of this intervention? What level of documentation does the ILO consider proportionate and acceptable for monitoring and audit purposes in this regulatory environment? At which stage does the ILO expect full documentary proof (proposal stage, contracting stage, or implementation stage)?

The reference to certification appears solely in relation to the tourism sector in Section 9 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants under LOT 2 (and the corresponding requirement in LOT 1); this requirement does not apply to the other sectors listed in Section 9. The presence of eco-certificates within the tourism sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina was verified and confirmed during the preparation of the Public Call, although such certificates are not necessarily widely used.

Applicants may propose alternative means of verification, provided that the reasons for the absence of certification are convincingly explained in the project proposal and the proposed alternative is deemed suitable, reliable and feasible. This will be subject to further assessment; however, well-justified alternative solutions will be duly recognised.

Regarding proof of certification, it will be required at the contracting stage for those employers named in the project proposal (whether as partners or as employers who have expressed an intention to hire beneficiaries through a letter of intent or similar document), if the proposal indicates that they hold specific certificates. During the implementation phase, any additional

employer benefiting from the intervention (e.g. wage subsidies or the delivery of on-the-job training) is expected to undergo individual scrutiny following the same approach.

64. In sectors where formal eco-certification is rare or non-existent (e.g. tourism in certain regions): Is it sufficient to clearly justify the green relevance of the activity in the proposal and support it with labour market and sector analysis? Would the absence of formal eco-certification negatively affect eligibility or scoring if properly substantiated?

The reference to certification appears solely in relation to the tourism sector in Section 9 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants under LOT 2 (and the corresponding requirement in LOT 1); this requirement does not apply to the other sectors listed in Section 9.

The presence of eco-certificates within the tourism sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina was verified and confirmed during the preparation of the Public Call, although such certificates are not necessarily widely used.

Applicants may propose alternative means of verification, provided that the reasons for the absence of certification are convincingly explained in the project proposal and the proposed alternative is deemed suitable, reliable and feasible. This will be subject to further assessment; however, well-justified alternative solutions will be duly recognised.

As this represents the second-best option, it may receive a lower score, but it will not be deemed ineligible. The final score will depend on the assessment of the counterfactual, where relevant (e.g., whether certified businesses can be identified within the region-(sub)sector), the quality of the explanation provided and the robustness of the proposed alternative validation methods, and similar factors.

65. Where environmental certification exists which one are mandatory, recommended, or optional? In the absence of formal certification, would the following be considered acceptable documentation?

Regarding the first part of the question, there is no list of mandatory, recommended, or optional certificates. The certificates proposed will be subject to technical assessment and evaluated accordingly. However, there is no predetermined list of certificates that are required or suggested; if such a list existed, it would have been included in Section 9 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants.

The second part of the question appears to be incomplete or unfinished.

66. What documentation is required to demonstrate that the employer operates within an eligible ISIC sub-sector? Would official company registration documents indicating activity codes suffice?

The certificate of registration typically contains this information, and it is sufficient for verification purposes. A crosswalk between the classification system used by the relevant administrative unit and the ISIC is required, as defined by Section 9 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants; this can be provided within the main body of the project-proposal document.

67. In case of proposing a sector not explicitly listed, what level and type of evidence (labour market analysis, environmental impact data, sector studies, etc.) would be required to justify eligibility?

This is left to project applicants to justify, without restrictions on the types or sources of data used, provided they can demonstrate that the sub-sector may be considered green or green-potential, and that there is a reasonable level of demand for a workforce relating to the core functions within the value chain. The robustness of the justification and the quality of the supporting data will be assessed by the evaluators.

Please consider consulting the ILO Guidelines for Green Employment Diagnostics for a Just Transition (the methodology referenced in Section 9 of the Guidelines for Project Proposal Applicants), as it may offer useful guidance for undertaking the analysis and preparing the justification. This methodological document is publicly accessible on the ILO website.

TECHNICAL ISSUES, LOT 3 (ACTIVATION & EMPLOYMENT IN DIGITALLY INTENSIVE OCCUPATIONS)

68. I would like to inquire whether it is possible to organize the individual sessions with users from Steps 4, 5, and 6 of the “EU4Employment in Bosnia and Herzegovina IPA 2021 – Harnessing the Green and Digital Transitions” program, LOT 3: Activation and Employment in Digitally-intensive Occupations/Jobs, online or in a hybrid format (online and in-person).

Face-to-face support should always be prioritised, particularly in relation to STEP 4. Online support may be offered only in exceptional circumstances where a clear and robust justification can be provided - for example, where on-site support cannot reasonably be delivered to some beneficiaries for well-substantiated reasons. Project applicants are strongly discouraged from designing proposals that rely exclusively on online service delivery, as such an approach will be subject to scrutiny and online provision will be regarded as a lower-quality offer.

69. What is the practical meaning of the percentage of digital intensity (task-based share, statistical classification, or other)?

This question is unclear. The digital intensity of a specific occupation is determined by assessing the extent to which digital technologies are used to carry out typical or standard tasks within that occupation. It is expressed as the proportion of tasks that rely on digital technologies in relation to the total work performed in that occupation. This methodology provides a basis for identifying occupations that are digitally intensive, or that have the potential to become digitally intensive. For the purposes of this Call, the threshold has been set at 50%, taking into account that the project aims to support a wide range of sectors and occupations that rely - or are expected to rely - on digital technologies and the corresponding skills.

70. The documentation states that institution-based training shall be offered to (i) beneficiaries who completed elementary education only and lack vocational skills for working in a specific occupation; (ii) beneficiaries who completed non-TVET secondary education (e.g. gymnasium) and need to acquire occupation-specific skills, and (iii) beneficiaries who completed secondary TVET or higher education in occupational areas not in demand in the labour market and need reskilling to improve their employability and/or enter digitally-intensive occupations. In addition, institution-based training may also be provided to beneficiaries who already possess well-developed vocational/technical skills in a specific occupation but require upskilling in the use of digital technologies.

Does this mean that all trainings must be focused exclusively on digital skills that complement the technical skills for a specific occupation? Or is it allowed to organise trainings for basic/general IT skills, considering that some target groups often lack even basic digital knowledge and may represent the largest share of unemployed people at the local-community level?

Could you define what the minimally acceptable training in terms of digital skills is under this call, for example for the occupation Economist?

As stated in Appendix 1, under LOT 3, STEP 5.B, “courses covering only basic or generic IT skills should be avoided; instead, the focus should be on digital skills that complement and align with the technical skills required for a specific occupation.”

In this regard, it is not strictly prohibited to organise basic digital-skills training, provided there is a strong and well-substantiated justification demonstrating that certain beneficiaries lack even the most fundamental digital competencies, which in turn prevents them from accessing employment opportunities. However, it is not recommended that training programmes focus solely on this category of digital skills, as such courses typically do not significantly improve employability or employment prospects. Consequently, their cost-effectiveness may be deemed inadequate.

We are unable to provide examples tailored to individual occupations, as it is the responsibility of project applicants to conduct the necessary research and to understand both the occupations and the labour-market context they intend to target. Nonetheless, for the occupation mentioned, a basic desk-based labour-market review would offer valuable insights and help determine the type and level of digital skills that would be appropriate.