**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Call for Expert(s) to Conduct Situation Testing on Gender-based Discrimination
in the Labor Market**

1. **BACKGROUND**

The Kosovar Gender Studies Center (KGSC) was founded in 2003 and has since become a leader in conducting research on gender issues and developing gender studies in Kosovo. Kosovar Gender Studies Center, as an organization whose mission is to integrate the gender perspective into all analyses, programs, and policies of all sectors of Kosovar society, has been a voice since its establishment at the central and local level, in the production of contextualized feminist knowledge, documenting the history of political activism of women, and the promotion of feminist activism among younger generations. The mission of the Kosovar Gender Studies Center (KGSC) is the integration of the gender perspective in all spheres of life, as well as the development and implementation of inclusive public policies through advocacy based on gender analysis.

Kosovar Gender Studies Center (KGSC), in partnership with Kosovar Stability Initiative (IKS), is implementing the project “Advancing Gender Equality and Diversity through Elimination of Gender-Based Discrimination at Workplace”, funded by the European Union, managed by the European Union Office in Kosovo. The main aim of the project is to identify some of the current struggles and challenges in organizing the labor market in Kosovo from the prism of human rights on gender-based discrimination. By identifying the main issues, the proposed action will also list the most appropriate public policies and strategies for the key actors for interventions in the labor market with the purpose of enhancing current norms and practices at work, with an emphasis on underprivileged social groups. The proposed action targets the more sensitive social groups in Kosovo, which stand at the bottom of the social and economic hierarchy, and gives a stance in including and respecting their rights, as a precondition of Kosovo to fulfill EU Accession processes. To achieve this, the specific objectives of the project are committed to:

* O1: Improve gender perspective in EU accession documents.
* O2: Increase the engagement of women’s organizations in the EU Integration process.
* O3: Inform and engage society in Gender and EU Integration discourse.

One of the key activities of this project is to conduct **evidence-based situation testing** aimed at assessing and documenting instances of **gender-based discrimination** in the labor market in the private sector in Kosovo. Situation testing is a widely recognized method to uncover hidden or systemic discrimination by comparing the treatment of two individuals, one belonging to a protected or marginalized category (e.g., women, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, LGBTQI+ communities) and the other a control individual without such characteristics. This method allows stakeholders to collect objective, experience-based evidence of discriminatory behavior.

1. **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this assignment is to design, coordinate, implement, document, and present the findings of situation testing to detect and document gender-based discrimination in the private sector in Kosovo.

1. **SCOPE OF WORK**

**Activity 6.1: Preparation for Situation Testing**

* Design specific test scenarios relevant to common workplace discrimination cases.
* Recruit testers and control testers from the appropriate target groups (e.g., women, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, LGBTQI+ community).
* Develop and deliver a short training program for testers covering their role and responsibilities, use of scenario scripts and questionnaires, ethical considerations, consent, and confidentiality, and legal safety.

**Activity 6.2: Conducting the Situation Tests**

* Coordinate the implementation of paired tests in agreed private sector settings.
* Oversee the administration of scenarios and ensure all testers follow procedures.
* Collect and assess responses through structured questionnaires filled out immediately after each test.
* Evaluate test results to determine whether discrimination occurred.

**Activity 6.3: Documentation and Reporting**

* Document the entire testing process, including methodology and scenarios used, locations/sectors tested, summary of findings, and ethical safeguards.
* Ensure testers' identities are protected using pseudonyms or coded identifiers.
* If necessary, consult with legal experts to ensure documentation is in line with Kosovo’s legal and human rights standards.
* Submit a comprehensive final report (max. 25 pages + annexes) and prepare a summary PPT presentation of findings.

**Activity 6.4: Presentation of Findings**

* Participate in a conference organized by KGSC to present the findings.
1. **DELIVERABLES**

The selected expert(s) will be responsible for delivering the following in a timely, ethical, and professional manner, ensuring clarity, accuracy, and alignment with the project’s objectives:

* Inception report including methodology, proposed test scenarios, training plan, and ethical safeguards.
* Tester recruitment and completed training program.
* Completed situation testing with detailed logs and evaluation.
* Final report and PowerPoint presentation.
* Participation in the conference.
1. **DURATION AND TIMELINE**

The assignment is expected to begin in **September, 2025** and be completed within **2-3 months** from the signing of the contract, including fieldwork, analysis, and reporting.

1. **REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

Applicants must demonstrate a strong mix of technical, contextual, and ethical competencies to design and implement high-quality situation testing. The minimum qualifications include:

* A university degree (Bachelor’s or higher) in a relevant field such as sociology, psychology, human rights, gender studies, law, public policy, or social sciences. A Master’s degree is an asset.
* At least 3 years of professional experience conducting field research or monitoring and evaluation assignments.
* Demonstrated ability to develop and apply qualitative and/or mixed-method research methodologies.
* Proven experience in preparing structured questionnaires, conducting interviews, and synthesizing data for reporting purposes.
* Strong understanding of gender equality, anti-discrimination legislation, and labor market dynamics in Kosovo.
* Knowledge of intersectionality and the multiple forms of discrimination faced by marginalized groups such as women, ethnic minorities, LGBTQI+ persons, and persons with disabilities.
* Familiarity with EU non-discrimination standards, human rights instruments, and relevant national legal frameworks.
* Experience designing or conducting situation testing or similar covert assessment methods is a significant advantage.
* Ability to develop realistic test scenarios that reflect local labor market conditions and discriminatory risks.
* Demonstrated ability to conduct sensitive research ethically, ensuring confidentiality, informed consent, and participant safety.
* Understanding of privacy and data protection regulations in Kosovo and how to anonymize data responsibly.
* Excellent analytical and writing skills in Albanian and/or English, with the ability to draft concise and impactful reports.
* Strong interpersonal skills, particularly when working with vulnerable populations.
* Ability to present findings clearly to non-technical audiences, including stakeholders from government, civil society, and international partners.
* Ability to work independently and deliver results within tight deadlines.
* Availability during the full period of the assignment.
1. **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The situation testing must be conducted in line with ethical standards, ensuring:

* Informed consent (where applicable).
* Anonymity and confidentiality.
* Avoidance of harm to testers or third parties.
* Compliance with national laws and data protection standards.
1. **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Interested candidates should submit the following:

* Expression of Interest (1–2 pages);
* Technical proposal outlining methodology and timeline;
* Financial proposal (in EUR);
* CV(s) of expert(s);
* At least two references of similar work in the past.

Applications should be sent to **qksgj\_kgsc@yahoo.com** by **24 August, 2025**, at **17:00** with the subject line “**Application for Conducting Situation testing – [name and surname]**”.

Any application submitted after the deadline specified above or does not follow the instructions mentioned will not be considered.

1. **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Applications will be evaluated based on:

* Relevance and quality of the methodology;
* Experience of the applicant(s);
* Cost-effectiveness of the financial proposal;
* Commitment to ethical standards;
* Understanding of gender-based discrimination and Kosovo’s context.
1. **CONTRACT**

Kosovar Gender Studies Center will sign a contract with the selected expert/s, which will include information on the activities to be carried out, the contract value, the modalities of payment, and reporting