Terms of Reference (ToR)

EXTERNAL EXPERT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MICRO-CREDENTIAL COURSES

Project: WB-Edu4Migration

Mitigating Migration Challenges in the Western Balkans: Bridging the Skills Gap for Social Care Providers via Curricula Enhancement and Micro Credential Development

1. Background:

The "WB–Edu4Migration" project, funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) program (Call: ERASMUS-EDU-2024-CBHE), addresses a critical gap in the competencies of social workers in Kosovo and Albania, particularly in their ability to effectively support migrant populations. Despite the increasing importance of migration issues in both countries, social work programs in higher education institutions have not yet fully integrated comprehensive coursework on migration studies and related topics. This educational shortfall limits social workers' capacity to understand and respond to the unique challenges faced by migrant communities, underscoring the need for targeted interventions.

The project aims to enhance the competencies of both students and practicing social workers through a multi-phased approach that includes educational reform, the development of digital micro-credential courses, and ongoing capacity-building initiatives. By addressing foundational and continuous training needs, the project seeks to equip social workers with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to effectively serve and advocate for migrant populations. Its successful implementation will lead to improved higher education curricula, flexible professional development opportunities, and empowered social workers who promote inclusive practices and positive outcomes for both migrants and host communities in Kosovo and Albania.

Project Duration: 36 months (Start: November 1, 2024)

Consortium Partners:

1. Kolegji AAB - Kosovo (XK)
2. International Business College Mitrovica - Kosovo (XK)
3. Universiteti i Gjakovës "Fehmi Agani" - Kosovo (XK)
4. Institute for Research, Education and Social Development - Kosovo (XK)
5. Universiteti i Tiranës - Albania (AL)
6. Barleti University - Albania (AL)
7. Logos University College - Albania (AL)
8. Instituti i Kulturës Rome në Shqipëri - Albania (AL)
9. UCL Erhvervsakademi & Professionshøjskole - Denmark (DK)
10. Fachhochschule Salzburg GmbH - Austria (AT)
11. Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione IULM - Italy (IT)

2. Purpose and Scope of the Assignment

Given that micro-credentials represent a relatively new approach in higher education, not all consortium members may have extensive experience in this area. The project seeks to engage an external expert with specialized knowledge in micro-credential development. This expert will bring substantial experience in designing, implementing, and evaluating micro-credential courses, ensuring that project initiatives align with best practices and industry standards. Their perspective will be instrumental in navigating the complexities of micro-credential development, particularly in adapting to the evolving landscape of education and workforce needs in Kosovo and Albania.

Key Focus Areas:

The external expert will play a critical role in supporting Work Packages 2 and 4 of the WB–Edu4Migration project. The specific focus areas are as following:

- Support the creation of practical and adaptable guidelines for integrating micro-credentials into university offerings as tools for lifelong learning.
- Work together with EU partners to develop targeted training on course design, digital pedagogy, and flexible delivery models for micro-credentials.
- Monitor the design process of micro-credential courses by WB partners, providing ongoing feedback to ensure alignment with identified needs and quality standards.
- Offer guidance and feedback during the piloting of micro-credential courses, to assess effectiveness and gather insights for improvement.
- Ensure that micro-credentials address real-world skills gaps and support the employability of social care providers working with migrant populations.

3. Timeline and Deliverables

The external expert will contribute to key activities over the course of the project implementation, in alignment with the timeline of deliverables set under Work Packages 2 and 4. The expert is expected to work in close collaboration with consortium members, particularly during the design, training, and pilot phases of micro-credential development.

Expected Timeline and Deliverables

Timeframe	Deliverable / Contribution	Working Days
Jun 2025	Contribution to WP2 – D2.3: Guidelines for Micro-Credential Development and Implementation in Kosovo and Albania (Due: 30 June 2025)	3
Aug 2025 – Nov 2025	Co-design the Training-of-Trainers (ToT) sessions for academic staff on micro-credential design (WP4 – D4.1, Due: Nov 2025)	5
Nov 2025 – Feb 2026	Continuous mentoring and feedback on the development of micro-credential courses at partner HEIs (T4.3) and oversight and input during the pilot phase of micro-credential courses (T4.4)	10
Apr – Jun 2027	Input for the final WP4 - D4.2: Report on the Development and Pilot Implementation of Micro-Credential Courses (Due: 30 June 2027)	2

Other Potential Tasks:

- Provide independent written reports and recommendations to the Project Coordinator and Project Management Committee.
- Attend consortium meetings or events as needed (remote or in-person as needed).

4. Profile and Qualifications

The external expert should possess a strong background in higher education innovation, specifically in the design and implementation of micro-credentials and lifelong learning programs. Experience in the social sciences, migration studies, or social work education will be considered a strong asset. The expert must demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively in multicultural and multi-institutional environments, particularly within the context of Erasmus+ capacity-building projects.

Essential Qualifications:

- Advanced degree (Master's or PhD) in Education, Curriculum Development, Social Sciences, Migration Studies, or a related field.

- Proven experience in the design, implementation, and evaluation of micro-credential courses within higher education or professional training contexts.

- Knowledge of European frameworks for micro-credentials, such as the European Approach to Micro-Credentials and EQF/NQF alignment.

- Demonstrated experience with Training of Trainers (ToT) programs and capacity-building for academic staff.

- Strong familiarity with lifelong learning policies, digital learning strategies, and innovative pedagogical practices.

- Excellent analytical and writing skills, with a track record of producing high-quality guidelines, training materials, or evaluation reports.

- Ability to provide strategic and operational feedback on curriculum development processes.

Desirable Qualifications:

- Experience working on EU-funded projects, particularly Erasmus+ CBHE or similar international capacity-building initiatives.

- Knowledge of the higher education landscape in the Western Balkans, particularly in Kosovo and Albania.

- Experience in migration-related education and social care training.

- Ability to communicate and collaborate effectively with academic and administrative staff across institutions.

- Willingness to travel to partner countries if necessary, or attend meetings remotely.

5. Coordination and Reporting

- The expert will report to the Project Coordinator and the Project Management Committee.
- Communication will be primarily through written reports.
- The expert may be required to attend project meetings or events as necessary (remotely).

5. Application Process

Qualified candidates are invited to submit their application documents via email to the WB-Edu4Migration Project Coordination Team at projects@universitetiaab.com no later than **10 June 2025** with the subject **"Edu4Migration - Application for Consultancy Service for Micro-credentials".**

The application should include:

- A detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV) highlighting relevant academic and professional experience, especially in the areas of micro-credential development, curriculum design, and training delivery.

- A portfolio or list of past assignments related to micro-credentials, training programs, or Erasmus+/EU-funded education projects (if available).

- A methodological approach (maximum 2 pages) describing how the applicant plans to carry out the assignment, including proposed tools, phases, and work methods.

- A financial offer (in EUR), indicating the total fee (bruto) based on the expected timeline and deliverables (for 20 working days).

6. Selection Process

- Applications will be evaluated based on the relevance of qualifications, clarity and feasibility of the proposed methodology, cost-effectiveness of the financial offer, and previous experience with similar assignments.

Evaluation Criteria	Points	Explanation
1. Curriculum Vitae (CV)	30 points	Relevance and depth of academic and professional experience in micro-credentials, curriculum design, training delivery, and EU-funded education projects.
2. Portfolio	20 points	Demonstrated experience in developing or contributing to micro-credential courses, ToT programs, or related deliverables. Quality and impact of past work.
3. Methodology	30 points	Clarity, coherence, and feasibility of the proposed methodology. Relevance of proposed tools, phases, and work methods to the scope of this assignment.
4. Financial Offer	20 points	Cost-effectiveness in relation to the scope of work and proposed timeline. Balanced pricing and justification of total fee.

Minimum threshold for selection: 70 points

Note: Only candidates who score above the threshold will be considered for contracting and might be subject to the interviewing process. In the event of equal scores, preference will be given to the most cost-effective offer and/or prior relevant experience in the Western Balkans region. The selected expert will be notified by and contracted by the lead institution (AAB College) under the terms of the ToR,

For any questions or requests for clarification regarding this call, please contact us at: projects@universitetiaab.com We encourage all interested applicants to reach out before the submission deadline if any aspect of the Terms of Reference or application process is unclear.