

Annex A

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Request for Proposal No. RFP/2018/001

For the Selection of Travel Agent(s) for the UNHCR Representation in Romania

1. Background

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Representation in Romania, invites qualified and interested Travel Agencies to submit proposals for various travel services, corporate events and other ground services.

The successful bidder(s) shall be contracted for this purpose for an initial period of two (2) years, potentially extendable for a further period of one (1) year, subject to satisfactory evaluation of performance and available resources from UNHCR.

2. Contractual Arrangements

UNHCR will award an initial two-year Frame Agreement to one or more suppliers for the performance of services, as follows:

- A. Ticketing services
- B. Events and other ground services

UNHCR recognizes the importance of confidentiality of the data provided: the proposal information and the travel itineraries and reservations of its travellers. Accordingly, the selected agency must keep confidential all dealings with UNHCR.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of UNHCR

Staff of the UNHCR Admin Unit will serve as focal point for all dealings under the Frame Agreement(s). Their main responsibilities will be as follows:

- Send requests for services to the travel agent and provision of complete, accurate and timely information to the agent enabling the latter to identify proper solutions to UNHCR's requests
- Coordinate all events that will be organised under the Frame Agreement(s)
- Ensure payment of all invoices according to the terms and conditions of the Frame Agreement(s)
- Monitor and perform periodic reviews of the supplier's performance, checking quality of the services provided, fares, rates, etc.

4. Description of Services

A. Ticketing Services

Services under Section A will mainly include, but not be limited to, air and train ticketing services. These are the most frequent means of transport used by UNHCR staff members for internal and

external travel. External travel will be by air and may include destinations all over the world; nevertheless, most external travel is intra-European.

B. Events and other ground services

Services under Section B will include, but not be limited to, conference organizing services (full package including group accommodation, meals and coffee breaks, rental of conference room, logistic equipment, etc.), local transportation, car/minivan/bus rental, hotel reservations.

5. Qualifications and Requirements of Bidders

Bidders must demonstrate that they have in place all equipment, facilities and experienced personnel necessary to carry out professional services for UNHCR.

Travel agencies must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Accredited IATA (International Air Transportation Association) Travel Agent duly licensed in Romania (only for services under Section A)
- Have a good track record of serving international organizations, EU institutions, embassies, multinational corporations
- Financial soundness
- Good company reputation, with no involvement in or suspicion of corrupt or other malicious practices
- Employs competent and qualified travel consultants, as evidenced in their Curriculum Vitae
- Maintains reliable facilities of online bookings / airline reservations (please specify what online reservation systems are in place)
- Commitment to delivery products and services in accordance to performance standards specified in this TOR

The successful bidder(s) shall assign minimum one (1) staff member to handle UNHCR requests and serve as focal point for communication purposes. The focal point(s) will have the following qualifications:

- Min. 3 years of previous experience as corporate travel consultant, specifically in the areas of ticketing and operation of airline reservation systems, plus organization of corporate events
- Availability to respond to urgent queries outside of business hours, during weekends and/or national holidays

In addition, the Frame Agreement(s) and related Purchase Orders will be managed by a Senior Manager that will be assigned by the successful bidder(s). The Senior Manager will have a supervisory role; she/he will monitor all services provided to UNHCR, will respond to any performance related questions and provide quantitative/qualitative reports. The Senior Manager will have the following qualifications:

- Min. 7 years of previous experience in a reputable travel agency, out of which min. 3 years in a managerial position
- Bachelor's Degree in management, tourism or other relevant field

In addition, the travel agency shall have a contingency replacement plan during periods of vacations and/or illness of the focal point(s) and Senior Manager assigned to UNHCR. In case of emergency (e.g. natural disasters, war), the travel agency should have a business continuity plan enabling it to support UNHCR operations and evacuations of staff, if needed.

6. Scope of Work

A. Ticketing Services

- Air ticketing

For official travel by air, UNHCR's Travel Policy provides that the standard of travel is economy class. The normal route for all travel is the most economical route available.

UNHCR will therefore request the successful travel agent(s) to provide the lowest available fares and research alternate itineraries with the same and different airlines – where possible, a minimum of three (3) flight options shall be provided for each travel request by air. UNHCR will review the options proposed by the travel agent(s), consult the traveler and select the most appropriate option – usually, the cheapest option.

UNHCR's travel policy incorporates the following basic principles:

- i) Use of economy class, with very few and rare exceptions (in Romania, UNHCR has always requested economy class tickets; if otherwise, this will be clearly specified in the request)
- ii) Selection of the lowest applicable fares and most economical routes, provided that the total additional time for the whole journey by the most economical route does not exceed the most direct route by 4 hours or more
- iii) Preference for direct route for journeys of less than 4 hours, in certain conditions
- iv) In general, UNHCR accepts low cost transportation in Europe

For all flight offers sent and/or provisional reservations made, the travel agent(s) shall clearly indicate the expiration time or ticketing issuance deadline, in order to avoid changes of fares. All flight offers shall clearly specify the type and size of luggage allowed, meals on board, etc.

The travel agent(s) shall provide travelers with relevant information on official destinations, e.g. visa requirements, security procedures, airport transfers and transportation facilities, local points of interest, currency restrictions/regulations, health precautions, weather conditions, etc. Moreover, the travel agent(s) shall promptly notify travelers of airport closures, delayed or cancelled flights, as well as other changes that might affect or would require preparations from travelers, sufficiently before the departure time.

The travel agent(s) shall advise market practices and trends that could result in further savings for UNHCR, including the use of corporate travel booking tools, group discounts, etc.

The travel agency shall process duly authorized flight changes/cancellations when and as required; it shall immediately process airline refunds for cancelled travel requirements, unutilized pre-paid tickets and credit these to UNHCR as expeditiously as possible.

The agency shall send an itemised invoice to UNHCR promptly after the issuance of a ticket, specifying the name of the traveller, the itinerary and the dates. The invoice should show the breakdown of costs (airfare cost + agency fee). UNHCR would prefer to receive one invoice per ticket per traveller; this will facilitate the linking of each ticket payment to the Travel Authorization it corresponds to. UNHCR will pay the invoice within 30 days from its receipt.

- Train ticketing

Travel by train will mostly be used for internal destinations that cannot be reached by air; otherwise, where available air mode will be preferred for time saving reasons.

UNHCR will provide the travel agent(s) with the itinerary, train timetable details and name of the traveler. UNHCR's normal standard of travel by train is 1st class.

The travel agent(s) shall issue the electronic train ticket on the name of the traveler and send it by email to UNHCR. As in the case of air travel, the travel agency shall promptly notify UNHCR of any delays or cancellations of trains.

The travel agent(s) shall issue one invoice per train ticket per traveler, specifying the name, itinerary and dates, including the breakdown of costs (train ticket cost + agency fee). UNHCR will pay the invoice within 30 days from its receipt.

B. Events and other ground services

- Conference organizing services

As part of its advocacy efforts, UNHCR organises a significant number of events and seminars throughout Romania. During the past year, UNHCR has conducted seminars and workshops in Bucharest, Timisoara, Brasov, Sinaia, Giurgiu, Suceava, Galati, Baia Mare, Cluj, etc. These locations are provided with the sole purpose of exemplifying where events have taken place in the past; future events may take place in the same locations or elsewhere.

Most of UNHCR's events require all-inclusive conference packages, including rental of conference rooms, logistic equipment, meals and coffee breaks for participants, accommodation, etc. Most commonly, UNHCR has selected as venue for these large events, centrally-located hotels of 4 or 5 stars, depending on the profile of the event and its guests. UNHCR's target audiences include central and local authorities, high-ranking officials and diplomats, magistrates and legal experts, etc.

Conference organizing services may include requests to the travel agent(s) to ensure group transportation (minivan or touring, as the case may be) to/from different locations in Bucharest or to/within other destinations in Romania.

Upon UNHCR's request and based on detailed information on timeframe, nature and volume of services, the travel agent(s) shall identify at least three all-inclusive options and submit these to UNHCR for purpose of comparing and selecting the one best fit to the defined needs.

Upon UNHCR's confirmation, the travel agent(s) shall initiate and make hotel reservations and logistical arrangements accordingly. The travel agent(s) shall ensure that all services required are

satisfactorily provided by itself or the supplier sub-contracted - e.g. meeting room arrangements and setup, including, when needed, sound system, registration desk, lectern, etc., availability of functional technical equipment, interpretation facilities, arrangements for meals / coffee breaks, transportation of participants and any other services.

UNHCR will timely provide the travel agent(s) with the number and lists of participants, rooming lists, agenda and other information that may be necessary to facilitate arrangements.

- Vehicle rental

UNHCR may occasionally request the travel agent(s) to arrange transportation services, including or excluding a driver, either in-city, in-country or cross-border, by vehicle, minivan or bus. Based on the itinerary and number of travelers that will be provided by UNHCR, the travel agent(s) shall identify at least three all-inclusive options that meet UNHCR's needs and submit these to UNHCR for review and confirmation.

The travel agent(s) shall only provide UNHCR with means of transportation that are in excellent conditions, clean and in compliance with all safety requirements. The proposed driver shall have a clean track record, minimum 5 years of experience as professional driver, speak English and have a passport (for cross-border travel).

- Other ground services

Such services may include, but not be limited to, hotel reservations for individual travelers, catering services, airport transfers and arrangements for group activities/visits to local points of interest. UNHCR will only occasionally request these services and when so, nature and quantity will differ from case to case.

Upon UNHCR's request, the travel agent(s) will identify and submit to UNHCR at least three suitable offers, meeting UNHCR's needs and requirements.

7. Final remarks

For all services under Sections A and B, the travel agent(s) shall negotiate to the maximum extent possible discount rates (e.g. UN rates) or group discounts, where applicable.

For all travel services, the total costs to be paid by UNHCR to the travel agent (including the travel agency fee) must be lower than costs that would have otherwise been paid directly to the services providers. Similarly, for all hotel reservations, whether in relation to events or individual, room rates of reservations made and confirmed by the travel agent(s) shall be lower than rack rates (available at Reception desk).

In case of events organizing services, the travel agent(s) shall negotiate with the service providers the reservation and confirmation of services **without any advance payments being solicited to UNHCR.**

To the maximum extent possible, the travel agent(s) shall also negotiate with service providers the possibility to cancel a confirmed event in circumstances that could not have been foreseen by UNHCR (e.g. insufficient confirmations received, last-minute changes in the work plan of key speakers/facilitators, etc.), without charges for UNHCR. UNHCR works in a highly volatile global

environment and it has been the case when outbursts of refugee crises elsewhere in the world have triggered deployments of UNHCR Romania staff in less than 48 hours.

UNHCR shall, from time to time, evaluate and verify with other travel agencies and other industry indicators the comparability and competitiveness of the rates being given to UNHCR. UNHCR retains the right to terminate the Frame Agreement(s) with the selected travel agent(s) at any time if it finds that the latter has charged UNHCR higher rates than market standards, does not render the minimum services described in this tendering document or its performance is below satisfactory.

Bidders who will be short-listed may be invited to conduct a presentation and respond to queries of UNHCR and/or its Regional Committee on Contracts that represents the final decision body.