



Request for Proposals (RFP): Research Project on Developing Comprehensive E-commerce Law Framework for Armenia

Purpose: To conduct a research project that identifies the existing gaps and needs for the development of a comprehensive e-commerce law in Armenia, by developing practical policy recommendations and a framework for its formulation.

Application Deadline: September 25, 2024

Funding Ceiling: \$9,000

Project Implementation Period: October, 2024 – December, 2024

Background

E-commerce has been rapidly growing worldwide, transforming how businesses operate, and consumers shop. In Armenia, the rise of digital platforms and online transactions have created new opportunities and challenges. However, the current legal framework may not fully address the complexities of e-commerce, which could hinder growth, innovation, and consumer protection. To foster a robust e-commerce ecosystem, it is crucial to understand the gaps and needs in the existing regulatory landscape.

Under this Terms of Reference (ToR), the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) in cooperation with the RA Ministry of High-tech Industry is seeking for an organization to conduct research on the gaps and needs for establishing a comprehensive e-commerce law in Armenia. The research will provide evidence-based recommendations for developing a legal framework that supports the sustainable growth of e-commerce in the country.

About CIPE

The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) strengthens democracy around the globe through private enterprise and market-oriented reform. CIPE is one of the four core institutes of the National Endowment for Democracy and an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Founded in 1983 and based in Washington DC, CIPE has worked with business leaders, policymakers, and civil society to build the institutions vital to a democratic society. CIPE is active in over 80 countries with a worldwide network of private sector partners, field offices, and representatives in 30 countries, including across Europe and Eurasia. In 40 years, CIPE has carried out more than 2,000 projects in over 100 countries. CIPE's key program areas include enterprise ecosystems, democratic governance, business advocacy, women's economic empowerment, and anti-corruption & ethics.

Scope of Work

The primary objectives of the proposed research are:

- Benchmarking:** To compare Armenia's existing regulations with those of other countries with advanced e-commerce laws to identify best practices and potential areas of improvement.
- Identifying Existing Gaps:** To analyze the current legal and regulatory framework related to e-commerce in Armenia and identify gaps that may hinder its development.



3. **Assessing Needs:** To assess the needs of various stakeholders, including businesses, consumers, and regulatory bodies, for a comprehensive e-commerce law.
4. **Policy Recommendations:** Based on the findings, to develop practical policy recommendations and architecture for the formulation of a new e-commerce law that addresses the identified gaps, meets stakeholder needs and complies with EU best practices and EU directives on e-commerce.

To achieve above-mentioned objectives, the selected company is expected to fulfill the following tasks:

1. **Comparative Analysis:** Conduct a comprehensive review of RA laws, regulations, policies, and guidelines related to e-commerce, including consumer protection, data privacy, electronic transactions, and cybersecurity. Analyze Armenia's legal framework against best practices from countries with well-established e-commerce laws, identifying potential models and approaches that could be adapted to the Armenian context.
2. **Stakeholder Need Assessment:** Identify and engage key stakeholders in the e-commerce ecosystem, such as government bodies, minimum 3 big, leading e-commerce businesses, business membership organizations, consumer groups, financial institutions, and legal experts. Through at least 15 interviews and 3 focus groups determine the specific needs of stakeholders for an effective e-commerce regulatory framework, focusing on areas such as legal certainty, consumer rights, commercial relations, commercial confidentiality, data protection, taxation, dispute resolution, and cross-border trade.
3. **Gap Analysis:** Analyze the data gathered through desk research and stakeholder consultations (at least 15 interviews and 3 focus groups) to identify gaps in the current legal framework, their impact on e-commerce operations and growth in Armenia, and potential policy and legislative amendments.
4. **Report Preparation:** Prepare a detailed report outlining the findings, conclusions, and policy recommendations for developing a comprehensive e-commerce legislation in Armenia. The report should include an executive summary, methodology, key findings, and strategic recommendations for developing e-commerce law framework in Armenia (if such necessity is confirmed through research). Recommendations should be in line with EU best practice and European Directive 2000/31/EC of the Parliament and the Council of June 8, 2000, on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the internal market (Electronic Commerce Directive).

Deliverables

The selected company is expected to provide the following deliverables:

1. **Inception Report:** A detailed work plan, including the research methodology, stakeholder engagement plan, and timeline, to be submitted within 10 days of the project start.
2. **Interim Report:** A progress report detailing preliminary findings from the desk review to be submitted halfway through the project timeline.



3. **Draft Final Report:** A comprehensive report, including needs assessment, comparative analysis and gap analysis, and initial recommendations, to be submitted three weeks before the end of the project.
4. **Final Report:** A finalized report incorporating feedback from CIPE, RA Ministry of High-tech Industry and key private sector stakeholders, to be submitted at the end of the project.
5. **Presentation of Findings:** A presentation of the key findings and recommendations to RA Ministry of High-tech Industry and CIPE.

Submission Requirements

Only registered consulting businesses and nonprofits with relevant experience are eligible to apply. The applicant should provide the following documentation:

- A cover letter that describes the organization’s detailed approach to the assignment, including research conceptual framework, methodology and sampling strategy.
- Documentation of the organization’s key qualifications and resumes of key personnel, demonstrating experience in legal research, with a particular focus on e-commerce or digital economy regulations.
- Budget quote, outlining the suggested expenses in USD. Budget amount may not exceed USD 9000.

Only applications submitted in English will be considered. For full consideration, applications should be submitted by September 28, 2024, to Anna Goltermann, Program Officer for Europe and Eurasia (agoltermann@cipe.org) and Mane Torosyan, Program Officer for Armenia (mtorosyan@cipe.org). Please indicate “Research on E-commerce Legislation in Armenia” in the subject line of your email application. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

Note: Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Contact

Questions may be directed to Mane Torosyan, Program Officer, mtorosyan@cipe.org.