

**Call for Tender for subcontracting external expertise
UNI Europa EU-funded project “IMproving working conditions through gender
Perspective In Commerce”**

(I’M PINC – project number 101192210)

1. Purpose

UNI Europa is seeking external experts for three different workstreams of the new project “I’M PINC”:

- Firstly, we want to commission an academic research study to identify, analyse, recognize and address gender specific challenges and collect gender-disaggregated data with the aim to improve working conditions in the retail sector for all. The research will then assess the gender specific challenges. In addition, the research will assess findings and provide an initial reflection on guidelines for improving working conditions through a gender perspective.
- Secondly, we need an expert to professionally facilitate two national workshops for our affiliates during which we present the research findings and guidelines and exchange of best practices. In addition, the expert will develop and facilitate two days in person training for Trade union officials based on the guidelines and policy recommendations to provide support to our affiliates in their strategic decision making process, as well as in the strategies implementation, assessment and revision process when introducing a gender perspective to improve working conditions.
- Thirdly, we are looking for an expert that will elaborate policy recommendations on a gender perspective to improve working conditions and attractiveness of the commerce sector and how this should be done. That will be presented at the project final conference and that will support UNI Europa Commerce affiliates to initiate the discussion with policy makers, employers’ organizations and other relevant stakeholders on the impact on and differences in working conditions based on gender.

The external experts will also be members of the project Steering Group and will carry out their work under the supervision of project coordinator UNI Europa, and in dialogue with all the project Steering Group members.

It is possible to submit proposals to one or to several workstreams of the project.

2. Background

The two-years project “**IMproving working conditions through gender Perspective In Commerce**” organised by UNI Europa Commerce will contribute to the capacity building of trade unions and trade union representatives in Commerce to place a gender perspective on working conditions at the heart of social dialogue at all levels.

The project should explore how improvement of the quality of work could be ensured by applying a gender perspective to allowing workers to improve their access to training, work life balance, whilst providing a decent wage, fair working condition and democracy at work.

A gender perspective will help better identifying and understand the specific characteristics, unique challenges and existing disparities in this sector with a relatively high presence of women. The analysis and the assessment will then support trade unions in better addressing gender-specific challenges, including the possible negative consequences of the twin transition, and promoting gender equality, contributing to the overall improvement of working conditions and to increase the attractiveness of the commerce sector for both men and women.

The research outcomes will be presented in the two workshops providing an opportunity to UNI Europa Commerce affiliates for exchanges and networking and provide feedback on the research findings.

The recommendations, that will be launched (together with the Research and Guidelines) during the project final conference, will present the position of UNI Europa Commerce on why is essential to adopt a gender perspective to improve working conditions and attractiveness of the commerce sector and how this should be done through social dialogue and collective bargaining, also through the introduction of specific safeguards and clauses.

3. General project time schedule

Month	Task	Expert
Month 1 (January 2025)	Project start	
Months 3-15 (March 2025-March 2026)	Research	Research expert
Months 15-18 (March-June 2026)	National workshops	All experts
Months 17-22 (May-October 2026)	Training on guidelines and policy recommendations	All experts
Months 19-22 (July-October 2026)	Policy recommendation and final conference	Facilitation expert and policy expert

4. Workstreams

4.1. Workstream 1: Research

The external research expert or consortium will identify, analyze, recognize and address gender specific challenges and collect gender-disaggregated data with the aim to improve working conditions in the retail sector for all. The research will then assess the gender specific challenges using the following criteria:

- gender segregated pattern of jobs and domestic responsibilities, cultural and geographic aspects at both European and national level

- risks and opportunities from a gender perspective when it comes to the twin transition to secure gender equality and to not leave anyone behind
- the risks with having a “gender-neutral” approach
- the impact of notion of differences between men and women and the link to gender-segregated work places
- analyse data disaggregated by gender to identify differences, disparities, and trends due to gender.
- the extent of occupational segregation:
 - horizontal segregation: the concentration of women and men in different job roles
 - vertical segregation: the concentration of men and women in different job levels
- pay equity and the gender wage gap, identify and analyse causes to differences in wages, salaries, bonuses, and other forms of compensation due to gender
- access to career advancement opportunities due to gender including promotion rates, leadership positions, training programs, access to training and development resources
- work-life balance policies and practices within the company, sector, examining the availability of flexible working arrangements, parental leave policies, childcare support, and other initiatives aimed at supporting employees' personal and professional responsibilities
- the impact of working conditions on the health and safety due to gender, considering factors such as physical health risks, arduous work, ergonomic considerations, violence and harassment psychosocial well-being, etc.
- workload distribution and job design to identify any gender-related disparities in job tasks, responsibilities, and expectations, including the division of labour and allocation of challenging or high-profile assignments
- intersectional factors such as race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability, and socioeconomic recognizing that individuals may experience multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantage
- fair working conditions from a gender perspective
- democracy at work from a gender perspective
- irregular working hours, involuntary part-time work, replacement of open-ended contracts with more precarious, staff redundancy and/or deterioration in working conditions due to gender
- interconnectedness between work, gender, and environmental sustainability
- the impact on recruitment
- risks and possibilities for the Twin transition
- legal and ethical obligations at all levels existing collective agreement noting the importance of a gender perspective or negotiated with a gender perspective
- existing collective agreement noting the importance of a gender perspective or negotiated with a gender perspective

and provide a reflection on what would constitute recommendations for a trade union approach on recognizing the importance and relevance of an gender perspective in on all conceivable topics and issues involving social partners at company, national and European level by

collecting information and best practice about. The research should then assess findings and provide an initial reflection on guidelines for improving working conditions through a gender perspective.

4.1.1 Task description

The research activity will have the following objectives:

- Initial desk research leading to a proposal for approach and evaluation criteria;
- In cooperation with the Steering group, discuss and finalize criteria that allow for a comparison of national legal frameworks. Data to develop principles and a common understanding and awareness of the differences due to gender at the work place and in the sector, to understand and address the discrepancies when it comes to working conditions from a gender perspective in the retail ecosystem
- Desk research: Collect information on what currently exists online with the identified key topics;
- Gather information on solutions, best practices, and activities already in place at sectoral and national level. Identify the sectoral stakeholders who are relevant and can contribute to the project's activities and objectives;
- Run two focus groups with selected UNI Europa affiliates: explore the key issues, confirming or refuting pre-existing beliefs and the research results to limit the scope of the research and to focus on relevant information;
- Prepare draft structure of report and guidelines and discuss with steering group;
- Prepare presentation for steering group;
- Prepare draft report, implement feedback of at least two review rounds;
- Prepare final research report and guidelines collating research findings and outcomes.
- Contribute to the training on the guidelines and policy recommendations

The working paper on Focus groups is 10 pages long translated into 5 languages, the research is about 20 pages long, and the guidelines and the conclusion are 4 pages more in English (digital format), with professional layout and graphics.

4.1.2 Payments and standard contract

The payments for this work will be made as follows:

- 40% upon signing the contract (month 3 – March 2025);
- 40% following the mid-term evaluation of the project (month 12 – March 2026);
- 30% upon presentation of the report at the final conference (month 22 – October 2026).

4.1.3 Price

The maximum price for this workstream will be **62.000 EUR**, VAT included.

The expert is expected to organise all project related travel and accommodation themselves and to cover the costs through this budget (two focus group meetings, two workshops, final conference).

4.1.4 Selection and award criteria

The contract will be awarded to the Tenderer whose offer represents the best value for money – taking into account the following criteria:

Selection criteria:

- Excellent English speaking and writing skills

Award criteria:

- Quality and relevance of the proposed methodological approach in terms of (1) literature collection, (2) analysis and (3) result presentation;
- Expertise, knowledge and experience in the areas of research;
- Experience in working with trade unions;
- Record of producing similar reports;
- Record demonstrating experience of supporting similar projects.

4.2. Workstream 2: Workshops, training and final conference facilitation

UNI Europa will contract an external facilitator to support the design and facilitation of the two sectoral workshops, the training on guidelines and policy recommendation and the final conference.

Engaging an experienced facilitator will help UNI Europa to better conceive the thematic workshops, training and final conference using the appropriate tools and a participatory methodology to run the meetings and focus on meaningful and quality-oriented discussions. The External Expert should encourage the exchange of good practice, learning and training among participants.

4.2.1. Task description

The facilitation expert is expected to:

Two National Workshops:

- Support the steering group and project secretariat in the preparation and organisation of the two national workshops (agenda, speakers, follow-up, debriefs);
- Coordinate with the steering group and the other experts (online attendance at steering group meetings can be an option);
- Identify and liaise with speakers and prepare workshop agendas, including presentation of research findings by the external researcher and harvesting for the further elaboration of policy recommendations by the policy expert;
- Prepare and facilitate the two sector workshops with the aim of providing a networking and capacity building platform. The workshops will be one-day events and take place in-presence. The workshops will be organised for a group of about 25 people and will take place in different European cities

Training on guidelines and policy recommendations:

- Prepare and facilitate the training with the aim of providing a networking and capacity building platform. In depth training base on Guidelines. The training will be a two-days events and take place in-presence. The training will be organised for a group of about 30 people and will take place in Brussels.

Final conference:

- Liaise with the policy expert to plan the program of the conference. Identify and liaise with speakers and prepare conference agenda, including the presentation of the report, guidelines and policy recommendations.
- Prepare presentations, ensure participation, provide networking and capacity building platform.

The participants of the workshops and the training will be trade union officials and shop stewards from national/sectoral trade union organisations affiliated to UNI Europa Commerce. The final conference will provide a platform among UNI Europa and Global Commerce affiliates, as well as with the wider network of industry stakeholders, European Trade Union Federations and EU decision-makers.

4.2.2. Payments and standard contract

The payments for this work will be made as follows:

- 30% upon signing the contract (month 3 – March 2025);
- 40% following the mid-term evaluation of the project (month 12 – March 2026);
- 30% upon the final conference (month 22 – October 2026).

4.2.3. Price

The maximum price for this workstream will be **13.000 EUR**, VAT included.

The expert is expected to organise all project related travel and accommodation themselves and to cover the costs through this budget. (two workshops, final conference).

4.2.4. Selection and award criteria

The contract will be awarded to the Tenderer whose offer represents the best value for money – taking into account the following criteria:

Selection criteria:

- Excellent English speaking and writing skills

Award criteria:

- Expertise, knowledge and experience in the topic;
- Experience in working with trade unions;
- Record of facilitating similar workshops and conferences;
- Record demonstrating experience of supporting similar projects.
- Proposed methodology for facilitation and moderation;
- Demonstrated ability to think creatively & ability to reduce complexity of research for communication to a wider audience.

4.3 Workstream 3: elaborate policy recommendations

Another external expert is needed to support the steering group in the drafting process for the policy recommendations which will present the position of UNI Europa Commerce on why it is essential to adopt a gender perspective to improve working conditions and attractiveness of the commerce sector and how this should be done through social dialogue and collective bargaining, also through the specific safeguards and clauses. The Policy recommendation will also serve as a base to initiate the discussion with policy makers, employers' organizations and other relevant stakeholders on the impact on and differences in working conditions based on gender.

4.3.1 Task description

The external expert is expected to:

- Attend steering group meetings (online attendance can be an option);
- Attend the two workshops (for details see workstream 2)
- Attend the training
- Draft policy recommendations based on the two project workshops and the training.
- Plan the program of the conference and identify and liaise with speaker and prepare the conference agenda, including the presentation of the report, guidelines and policy recommendations (liaise with the facilitation expert)
- Present the policy recommendations at the final conference.

The Policy recommendations is 4 pages in English (digital format), with professional layout and graphics and to be translated into 8 languages;

4.3.2 Payments and standard contract

The payments for this work will be made as follows:

- 30% upon signing the contract (month 3 – March 2025);
- 40% following the mid-term evaluation of the project (month 12 – March 2026);
- 30% upon presentation of the policy recommendations at the final conference (month 22 – October 2026).

4.3.3. Price

The maximum price for this workstream will be **15.000 EUR**, VAT included.

The expert is expected to organise all project related travel and accommodation themselves and to cover the costs through this budget. (two workshops, final conference).

4.3.4 Selection and award criteria

The contract will be awarded to the Tenderer whose offer represents the best value for money – taking into account the following criteria:

Selection criteria:

- Excellent English speaking and writing skills

Award criteria:

- Expertise, knowledge and experience in the topic;
- Experience in working with trade unions;
- Record of producing similar documents;
- Record demonstrating experience of supporting similar projects;
- Proposed methodology;
- Evidence of experience in working in similar projects.

5. Procedure and presentation of the bids (for all workstreams)

It is possible to submit proposals to one or to several workstreams of the project.

Interested parties must submit their proposals, no later than **Thursday 20 February 2025** to:

Nikoletta Kiss
UNI Europa Commerce
Project Coordinator
nikoletta.kiss@uniglobalunion.org

The selection process will be completed by the end of February 2025.