BEIS are considering publishing an invitation to tender (ITT) on research to deepen our understanding of relative economic significance of different forms of business mobility in the UK. We are contacting you as suppliers on the xx framework to gauge the level of interest there may be in bidding for this opportunity. Please see attached for a provisional specification of the research we are considering.

We would be grateful if you could let us know whether you might be interested in bidding for an ITT along the lines of the specification attached. The ITT would be published towards the end of this year and open until mid-January. The research would need to take place from end Jan- end March.

Grateful if you could confirm by COP Fri 25th November.

Many thanks

**Section 4 – Specification**

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| 1. **Background** |
| **Introduction**  **Scope of the tender**  BEIS is seeking to commission a report exploring the relative economic value of different forms through which business mobility and Mode 4 trade activities are undertaken by UK businesses, in order to develop better understanding of the relative importance of different forms of business mobility to the UK economy.  This project is likely to include literature review as well as data analysis and stakeholder engagement. The project will also develop options for future research in this space.  BEIS is seeking final outputs by the end of March 2023.  **Background to business mobility and Mode 4**  The terms under which UK firms and professionals can send staff/travel abroad and bring individuals into the UK from overseas is an important consideration for the UK’s trading arrangements with other countries and the UK economy as whole. As such, we continue to seek better understanding on the needs of UK businesses with respect to business mobility and understand the economic impact of different types of business mobility.  Business mobility in this context is an umbrella term to describe the temporary movement of people across geographic boundaries for work/business purposes. Mode 4 services trade refers to the category of service trade found within WTO GATS modes of supply taxonomy and refers to services traded by individuals of one WTO member through their presence in the territory of another. It covers employees of services firms and self-employed service suppliers. The categories of activity captured within Mode 4 may be narrower than the activities internally considered within the scope of business mobility[[1]](#footnote-2).  Business mobility considerations that may or may not be captured within the Mode 4 taxonomy:   * **Short term business visitors**: Individuals who are not resident in a country for tax purposes, but who make business trips to that country subject to duration limitations. * **Independent professionals:** Self-employed persons who are present in a country to supply a service to a local client pursuant to a service contract. * **Contractual service suppliers:** employees of a service supplier without a commercial presence in a country, who are present in said country to provide a service pursuant to a service contract concluded between their employer and a local client. CSS receive their remuneration from their employer, and not from the client; they are "natural persons of a country who are employed by a service supplier of a country". * **Inter-corporate transfers:** employees of a service supplier that has a commercial presence in another country, and who are transferred to the affiliate in that country. * **Intra-company graduate transfer:** a form of inter-corporate transfer visa for transfers as part of a graduate training programme for a managerial or specialist role * **Business visitors for establishment purposes:** Employees of a service supplier who are seeking entry into another country for the purpose of setting up a commercial presence or of negotiating the sale of a service on behalf of an enterprise. * **Youth mobility schemes** – Schemes allowing eligible individuals, primarily based on an age criteria to work within a country for defined period. * **Secondees**: Employees of a company in a different territory who are transferring to a branch of a different company. * **Investors**: people entering a different territory to invest in capital beyond establishment purposes. * **Professionals**: people entering a territory to exercise a professional occupation. This can include being directly hired by a company in the destination country[[2]](#footnote-3).   This list is not meant to be exhaustive and additional forms of business mobility may not be captured. |
| 1. **Aims and Objectives of the Project** |
| **Overall aim**  The overall aim of this project is to develop a firm evidence base in determining the relative importance of different forms of business mobility for UK businesses and the UK economy, (explicitly in comparison to each other, rather than seeking evidence on the overall importance of business mobility to services trade), within the context of UK bilateral services trade and domestic economic activity in the UK, and provide evidence to inform which categories of business mobility should be prioritised in future free trade agreements and policy thinking.  As part of this, the project will seek to explore the factors that may lead to different forms of mobility being more important in future trading relationships with specific countries and which forms of mobility are more important for specific industries.  It should also seek to identify where any business mobility activities do not fit into Mode 4 service categories and explore the economic importance of these activities with respect to the UK.  The project should also seek to develop options for further primary research in this area to further explore questions relating to business mobility.  **Key research questions**  The project should seek to answer the following questions from a sectoral and size of business perspective:   1. Which forms of business mobility are most important to the UK economy? 2. How do the different forms of business mobility add value to the UK economy? 3. How do UK firms use the different forms of business mobility? 4. What characteristics and conditions affect the relative importance of different forms of business mobility in a specific country (i.e., distance, language, existing trade relationships)? 5. What are the most significant barriers and enabling factors that affect the different forms of mobility? 6. What mobility activities are there that fall outside of the WTO Mode 4 definitions and how important are these activities to the UK economy? |

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| 1. **Suggested Methodology** |
| **Undertake literature review of business mobility**   * Identify, review and analyse relevant literature across academic and grey literature relating to business mobility. This will include literature relating to trade in services, trade rules and regulations, free trade agreements and business models and practices. Additional evidence from stakeholders such as case studies would be beneficial. * Develop conclusions and hypotheses on the relative importance of different forms of mobility and the factors that determine importance in different trade contexts. * Develop database with categorised literature and literature summaries, thematic grouping and key conclusions. * Develop taxonomy of different forms of business mobility.   **Undertake data analysis of UK businesses demographics to identify how the composition of the UK economy may affect the relative importance of different forms of business mobility**   * Identify relevant datasets to categorise the UK business population with respect to business mobility needs, such as the Inter-Departmental Business Register, Annual Population Survey, International Passenger Survey and Annual Business Survey. * Conduct primary research through engagement with stakeholders to gain insights from businesses and other key groups. * Apply insights from the data to determine meaningful characteristics where mobility needs and benefits differ between different UK businesses to identify which areas of the UK economy have specific issues with respect to different business mobility needs, based on identified characteristics such as business size, sector and geographic location. * Develop hypothesis on which type of business mobility are more relevant given the composition of the UK economy.   **Develop written report and options for future research**   * Combine insights for literature review and data analysis to produce written report with respect to the six key research questions. * Develop and write up options for future research to further explore, based on the key research questions previously identified and key issues arising from the research. |
| 1. **Deliverables** |
| **Interim Outputs**   * Weekly updates on progress against project plans and updates on deliverables * Interim outputs including, detailing search terms lists, appraisal templates, database design, draft data analysis outputs. * Draft final report for BEIS sign off.   **Database of literature reviewed**   * A spreadsheet setting out systematic analysis of literature relating to the different forms business mobility, including all thematic analysis, literature summaries and key findings.   **Final report**   * **A final report detailing the methodology and findings from the literature review and the data analysis including:**   + Key findings, hypothesis and conclusions relating to the six main research questions.   + Taxonomy of different forms of business mobility, setting out how different categorisations exist and where these overlap, with explicit consideration of existing Mode 4 categories.   + Detailed methodological notes on the data analysis of how sector composition may affect relative importance of different forms of business mobility.   + Clear write-up of options for future research, including key research questions and proposed design of questions for future business surveys.   + A presentation of key findings and summary documents.   **Quality assurance documentation**  All those potentially interested should describe the quality assurance processes that will be applied to different activities and outputs associated with this project. A summary outlining these processes is expected. Where the bidder intends to provide additional outputs relating to quality assurance, they should detail these in their bid.  **Suggested timeline of deliverables (Jan – end March)**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Timelines** | **Activities/ Deliverables** | | W1 | Agree PID and overarching methodological approach | | W2-W5 | Undertake desk research and data analysis | | W6-W7 | Write up draft report | | W7 | Share report for comment | | W8- W9 | Review and finalise report | | W10 | Deliver final report and presentation | |
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1. <https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/FE_Search/FE_S_S009-DP.aspx?language=E&CatalogueIdList=108652> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. See USMCA for an example of this category. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)