



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
REGIONAL POLICY
Policy development
Evaluation and additionality

13.03.2008*002109

Brussels,
REGIO.C.4 D/(2008) 680061

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Subject: Call for tenders by open procedure n° 2008.CE.16.0.AT.016
concerning the Ex post evaluation of INTERREG III 2000-2006
Initiative financed by the European Regional Development Fund.**

1. I enclose the call for tenders relating to the above-mentioned contract.
2. If you are interested in this contract, you should submit a tender in triplicate in one of the official languages of the European Union.
3. Bids must be submitted
 - a) either by post or by courier not later than **05/05/2008**, in which case the evidence of the date of dispatch shall be constituted by the postmark or the date of the deposit slip, to the following address:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Regional Policy, Evaluation Unit
CSM 1 – 4/123
For the attention of Ms Gaffey
B – 1049 Brussels

- b) or delivered by hand to the following address:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Regional Policy,
Evaluation Unit
CSM 1 – 4/123
For the attention of Ms Gaffey

Exact address :

avenue du Bourget, 1
B-1140 Brussels (Evere)
Belgium

not later than 16.00 on **05/05/2008**. In this case, a receipt must be obtained as proof of submission, signed and dated by the official in the Commission's central mail department who took delivery. The department is open from 08.00 to 17.00 Monday to Thursday, and from 8.00 to 16.00 on Fridays. It is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Commission holidays.

4. Tenders must be placed inside two sealed envelopes. The inner envelope, addressed to the department indicated in the invitation to tender, should be marked as follows: **"Invitation to tender n° 2008.CE.16.0.AT.016 - not to be opened by the internal mail department"**. If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across this tape.

The inner envelope must also contain two sealed envelopes, one containing the technical specifications and the other the financial bid. Each of these envelopes must clearly indicate the content ("Technical" and "Financial").

5. The specification, listing all the documents that must be produced in order to tender and the draft contract are attached.

6. Tenders must be:

- signed by the tenderer or his duly authorised representative;
- perfectly legible so that there can be no doubt as to words and figures.

7. Period of validity of the tender, during which the tenderer may not modify the terms of his tender in any respect: 12 months from the date it was submitted.

8. Submission of a tender implies acceptance of all the terms and conditions set out in this invitation to tender, in the specification and in the draft contract and, where appropriate, waiver of the tenderer's own general or specific terms and conditions. It is binding on the tenderer to whom the contract is awarded for the duration of the contract.

9. Contacts between the contracting department and tenderers are prohibited throughout the procedure save in exceptional circumstances and under the following conditions only:

Before the final date for submission of tenders:

At the request of the tenderer, the contracting department may provide additional information solely for the purpose of clarifying the nature of the contract.

Any requests for additional information must be made in writing only to the attention of Ms Gaffey.

Requests for additional information received less than five working days before the closing date for submission of tenders will not be processed.

The Commission may, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or any other clerical error in the text of the call for tenders.

Any additional information including that referred to above will be sent simultaneously to all tenderers who have requested the specification.

After the opening of tenders

If clarification is required or if obvious clerical errors in the tender need to be corrected, the contracting department may contact the tenderer provided the terms of the tender are not modified as a result.

The tendering documents are available on the WEB-site of Directorate General for Regional Policy at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/tender/tender_en.htm.

Potential tenderers are requested to regularly verify the internet web-site.

10. This invitation to tender is in no way binding on the Commission. The Commission's contractual obligation commences only upon signature of the contract with the successful tenderer.

Up to the point of signature, the contracting authority may either abandon the procurement or cancel the award procedure, without the candidates or tenderers being entitled to claim any compensation. This decision must be substantiated and the candidates or tenderers notified.

11. You will be informed whether or not your tender has been accepted.

12. If your offer includes subcontracting, it is recommended that contractual arrangements with subcontractors include mediation as a method of dispute resolution.

13. Processing your reply to the invitation to tender will involve the recording and processing of personal data (such as your name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, your replies to the questions and any personal data requested are required to evaluate your tender in accordance with the specifications of the invitation to tender and will be processed solely for that purpose by the European Data Protector Officer. You are entitled to obtain access to your personal data on request and to rectify any such data that is inaccurate or incomplete. If you have any queries concerning the processing of your personal data, you may address them to the European Data Protection Officer (<http://www.cc.cec.dataprotectionofficer/>). You have the right of recourse at any time to the European Data Protection Supervisor for matters relating to the processing of your personal data.

14. You are informed that for the purposes of safeguarding the financial interest of the Communities, your personal data may be transferred to internal audit services, to the European Court of Auditors, to the Financial Irregularities Panel and/or to the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

Data of economic operators which are in one of the situations referred to in Articles 93, 94, 96(1)(b) and 96(2)(a) of the Financial Regulation¹ may be included in a central database and communicated to the designated persons of the Commission, other institutions, agencies, authorities and bodies mentioned in Article 95(1) and (2) of the Financial Regulation. This refers as well to the persons with powers of representation, decision making or control over the said economic operators. Any party entered into the database has the right to be informed of the data concerning it, up on request to the accounting officer of the Commission.



Natalija Kazlauskienė
Director

¹ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) N° 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 (OJEU L 248 of 16.09.2002), as amended by Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) N° 1995/2006 of 13.12.2006 (OJEU L 390 of 30.12.2006).

Specifications

1. Title of contract

Ex post evaluation of the INTERREG III 2000-2006 Initiative financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

2. Objectives and context of the contract

The European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy intends to undertake an ex post evaluation of INTERREG III Initiative financed by the ERDF and ISPA during the period 2000-2006 in 25 EU Member States and States on the external borders of the EU.

The evaluation will establish the impact of the INTERREG III Initiative on the development of cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation leading to harmonious, balanced and sustainable development of the whole Community area². The evaluation will be at the policy level, seeking to establish if the Initiative succeeded in fostering cooperation which enhanced the development of the Community. It will do this through the examination of programmes and some projects.

The ex post evaluation is an important instrument to inform national and regional authorities, the general public, the European Parliament and other stakeholders involved about the outcomes of the 2000-2006 generation of cohesion policy programmes and initiatives. Results and interim results of the study will be used during the forthcoming policy review of the EU budget, to influence the ongoing implementation of the Territorial Co-Operation Objective between 2007 and 2013 and for the discussion of a next programming period of cohesion policy after 2013.

The overall aim of INTERREG III 2000-2006 was to address regional challenges and opportunities through cooperation with regions in another Member State. National borders should not be a barrier to the balanced development and integration of the European territory. Three types of cooperation were concerned: cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation.

Cross-border cooperation (also known as 'Strand A') aims to bring people in border regions to work together through projects at local level, thus reducing the negative aspects of borders for citizens. The isolation of border areas can be of a double nature: on the one hand, the presence of borders cuts off border communities from each other economically, socially and culturally and hinders the coherent management of ecosystems; on the other, border areas have often been neglected under national policy, with the result that their economies have tended to become peripheral within national boundaries. The single market and EMU have been strong catalysts for changing this situation. Nevertheless, the scope for strengthening cooperation to the mutual advantage of border areas throughout the Community remains. The challenge is all the greater when the enlargement of the Community is considered, as this is increasing the number of internal borders and, progressively, is shifting the Community's external borders eastwards.

² Article 20 (1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 of 21 June 1999 laying down general provisions on the Structural Funds

Transnational cooperation ('Strand B') supports regions' cooperation in a larger zone (e.g., Baltic Sea, Alpine Space, etc.). Some issues, for example those related to the environment, are best addressed at this level.

Interregional cooperation ('Strand C') aims to foster the exchange of good practices, expertise and experiences between regions through networking.

Transnational and Interregional cooperation have a particular importance in the context of recent initiatives of DG Regional Policy. The 'Regions for Economic Change' Initiative aims to address some of the core issues facing Europe by making a stronger link between the knowledge gained through networking and cooperation programmes and the 'mainstream' ERDF programmes ('Convergence' and 'Regional Competitiveness and Employment'). DG Regional Policy will also prepare a strategy for the Baltic sea region in 2009 and possibly develop similar approaches elsewhere (Mediterranean, Danube, Alpine space).

The long experience since the first INTERREG programmes in the early 1990s shows that significant steps have been made towards joint cross-border programming and programme management in many cases. Although much development activity has taken place in border areas and these areas have certainly benefited, it has generally been more difficult to establish genuine joint cross-border cooperation. This has prevented border areas and Member States from reaping the full benefits of cooperation.

With regard to external borders and cooperation with third countries, there have been additional problems stemming from different administrative structures in countries as well as the variety of Community external policy instruments, such as PHARE, TACIS, CARDS and MEDA, and the need to coordinate these with INTERREG programmes which have different financial and operational rules. Furthermore, due to enlargement of the EU, some 20 programmes were modified and 9 new programmes were created during the 2000-2006 period. Nineteen programmes were renamed and revised as Neighbourhood Programmes, to demonstrate the additional co-operation possibilities across the external borders of the Union.

INTERACT (a further programme developed under Art. 53 of the Guidelines³ - INTERREG Animation Cooperation and Transfer) had a wide geographic scope covering the 25 EU Member States and neighbouring countries. Its role was to set up information and communication networks, to define information frameworks and flows, to proactively disseminate information and to stimulate exchange of experiences. Its budget (€39.5 million for 2000-2006) was cofinanced by the ERDF (71%) and national sources (29%).

Finally, at interregional level, the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON) was set up to support policy development and to build a European scientific community in the field of territorial development. Its aim was to increase the general

³ COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE MEMBER STATES of 28.4.00 laying down guidelines for a Community Initiative concerning trans-European cooperation intended to encourage harmonious and balanced development of the European territory
INTERREG III
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/guidelines/pdf/inter_en.pdf

body of knowledge about territorial structures, trends and policy impacts in an enlarged European Union. It is implemented by 25 EU Member States and the European Commission with Norway and Switzerland as full partners. Its budget (€17.5 million for 2000-2006) is cofinanced by all EU Member States (50%).

3. Subject of contract

This call for tenders is for the analysis of the impact of the INTERREG III Initiative in the 2000-2006 programming period.

It will identify and measure the contribution and specificity of these programmes according to their three dimensions:

- For Strand A (cross-border cooperation): it will evaluate the impact of this strand of the Initiative in making an effective contribution to promoting cross-border cooperation between adjacent regions and to developing cross-border social and economic centres through common development strategies
- For Strand B (transnational cooperation): it will evaluate the impact of this strand in making an effective contribution to promoting transnational cooperation involving national, regional and local authorities and a better integration within the Union through the formation of large groupings of European regions.
- For Strand C (interregional cooperation): it will evaluate the impact of this strand in helping to launch or improve the effectiveness of regional development policies and instruments through information exchange and sharing of experience and good practice. This will include evaluation of the two programmes under Article 53 of the Guidelines (ESPON and INTERACT).

The objectives of the evaluation give rise to a number of tasks to be undertaken by the evaluator. The core tasks which must be undertaken are listed below.

A. TASKS

TASK 1: POLICY AND LITERATURE ANALYSIS

With a view to basing the evaluation on a complete view of existing material in the field of territorial cooperation, this task will be twofold and will cover all three strands of the Initiative:

- (1) **Examination of political and regulatory bases of INTERREG III Initiative:**
This will require analysis of the key elements on which the Initiative was founded, the political debates that occurred during the negotiations on the 2000-2006 regulation and the contents of the Communications on INTERREG III⁴. Under

⁴ In particular:

- COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE MEMBER STATES of 28.4.00 laying down guidelines for a Community Initiative concerning trans-European cooperation intended to encourage harmonious and balanced development of the European territory INTERREG III http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/guidelines/pdf/inter_en.pdf
- and COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE MEMBER STATES of 2 September 2004 laying down guidelines for a Community initiative concerning trans-European

Tasks 3 and 5, these findings will be compared with actual implementation to see to what extent the letter of the regulation and the spirit of the original political debate was reflected within programmes.

In this respect, it is recalled that INTERREG III was governed by the 5 following principles: joint cross-border/transnational strategy and development programme; partnership and a 'bottom up' approach; complementarity with the 'mainstream' of the Structural Funds; a more integrated approach to the implementation of the Community initiatives; effective coordination between Interreg III and external Community policy instruments, especially taking account of enlargement.

- (2) **Review of the most important literature on territorial cooperation** (especially but not only in the context of European Structural Funds) in order to identify key facts, figures and theories of relevance for the analysis and understanding of programme effects. Relevant studies will be reviewed and analysed, including those published by the INTERACT and ESPON programmes by relevant 6th Framework Programme projects and other EU programmes, with an view to identifying key features of the community added value of INTERREG III and the degree to which the literature has taken on board the principles reviewed in task 1.1. Existing typologies which could be used in task 4.1 will also be collected (especially but not exclusively ESPON and INTERACT typologies).

At the end of this task, the consultant will produce a succinct analytical text of a maximum of 25 pages.

TASK 2: DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS (FACTS AND FIGURES)

The consultant will undertake the following work in relation to all three strands of INTERREG III:

- (1) **Gathering financial data from 2000-06 territorial cooperation programmes for all 81 programmes:** breakdown by category of expenditures (2 digits), sources of financing, comparison of actual expenditure with forecast (financial performance). Trends through the programming period should be analysed.
- (2) **Gathering outputs, results and impacts of 2000-06 programmes** and comparison between initially forecast values and most recent values (normally part of the latest annual report – the 2007 annual reports will be available in mid 2008; most 2008 annual reports, merged with final reports, will only be available after April 2010).
- (3) **Gathering additional information** (by desk research and e-mail questionnaires to managing authorities), e.g., further quantitative information, specific evaluations (mid-term evaluations, their updates and others), reports or studies, online documentation and so on.

TASK 3: ANALYSIS OF ESPON AND INTERACT PROGRAMMES

ESPON and INTERACT programmes will be evaluated according to a methodology which should be detailed in the tender documentation, differentiated on the basis of the character two programmes. This methodology should ensure that the following questions are answered.

(1) For ESPON:

To what extent has it achieved its objectives?

Were the budget and means dedicated appropriate? What has been the efficiency of its modes of governance?

To what extent has it influenced and been helpful to other programmes and to regional policy in general? What have been the most efficient and useful tools or modes of implementation? What is the reputation of the programme?

(2) For INTERACT:

To what extent has it achieved its objectives?

Were the budget and means dedicated appropriate? What has been the efficiency of its modes of governance?

To what extent and how did it improve management and implementation of INTERREG programmes? What is the reputation of the programme?

TASK 4: DEVELOPING AN ANALYTICAL GRID AND TYPOLOGY

The consultant will develop a typology to give a full picture of the different types of INTERREG III programmes and to address for each of these categories some specific issues. The following steps will be taken:

- (1) **Existing typologies will be identified and assessed for their level of relevance** according to objective criteria to be defined (and which could be for instance their likeliness to offer a complete view of the diversity of programmes, their potential use for political or strategic purposes, or their "operationality" and "manageability", etc.). Some existing typologies make a distinction between: the degree of isolation, financial size, internal or external borders, land or maritime borders, population density, degree of experience of cooperation (all programmes); type or shape of zones, intensity of existing political initiatives (transnational programmes).
- (2) **A specific indicator will be developed to measure the "degree of inter-regionality" or the "intensity and depth of cooperation".**

This synthetic indicator will take on board particularly:

- The density of common actions/projects (percentage of joint projects/actions, relative importance of these projects/actions with regard to other projects/actions and in comparison to major local needs and challenges, etc.);

- The type of governance and nature of partnership (sector and degree of shared management, scope and depth of partnership put in place, etc.);
- The nature and location of joint projects (sector, type of actions, degree of complexity/ sophistication of cooperation actions, degree of experimentation, level of ambition, proximity to the border, etc);
- The impact of projects at the level of the overall area (effect of the joint projects / actions on the ground, for the population, etc.);
- The intensity of the shared diagnosis (how programme needs were identified and to what extent this process was joint).

This indicator should enable a distinction of up to 6 levels of intensity ranging from "very poor" to "very high". The tender documentation should specify the judgement criteria for each of features above.

A differentiation will be made between absolute and relative values so as to weight sufficiently the indicator to take into account the age of the cooperation and its degree of maturity as well as other cooperation outside the framework of INTERREG. It is expected that the oldest existing cooperative initiatives have resulted in the highest level of cooperation. However, this needs to be confirmed through this indicator.

The comparison between what could be called the "expected rate" (which includes the weight of this "historical criteria") and the "real rate" (which is the gross non-weighted value) is worth analysing in that respect. It should be expected that long term cooperation produces a higher intensity of cooperation than the contrary, but if the rate is low and the cooperation is nevertheless old, this could also be interesting to understand where and why the "expected maturity" has not been fully attained.

After setting up the indicator, all programmes will be placed on the scale both in relative and absolute values (weighted and non-weighted). The results for each component of the indicator should be presented in addition to the synthetic results.

(3) A typology will be created

To carry out this task will require the use of statistical methods, such as factor analysis, cluster analysis or other appropriate techniques. The methodology should be precisely defined in the tender documentation and adapted to the purpose, with a focus on providing communicable and easy to understand results. It will be established in a manner which will allow the matching to the largest extent possible the criteria identified in task 4.1 and the indicator identified in task 4.2.

A maximum of 6 categories will be created for the Strand A, 3 for % Strand B and 2 for Strand C. All these categories are meant to be a practical and communication tool user oriented rather than a scientific typology made for academic purposes.

The factors to be taken into account will be financial and non financial elements collected for Tasks 1 and 2 as well as the values of the synthetic indicator elaborated for task 4.2. All these factors will be mentioned explicitly in the tender documentation.

The typology proposed will make a clear distinction between the three strands of the INTERREG III Initiative and will assess the extent to which the priority topics and concentration principle stressed in the 2007 Communication from the Commission on INTERREG III have been taken into account.

The main characteristics of each category will help to determine the character of the programmes in the context of task 5.

TASK 5: IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF PROGRAMMES

This core task will consist of identifying a representative sample of 16 INTERREG III programmes and carrying out more in-depth analysis on the basis of which conclusions can be extrapolated to all 79 programmes (excluding ESPON and INTERACT).

(1) Sample Definition

The sample will comprise:

- 12 INTERREG III A programmes (among 62);
- 3 INTERREG IIIB programmes (among 13);
- 1 INTERREG IIIC programme (among 4).

Any alternative breakdown should be justified in the tender documentation. The sample should also encompass a sufficient number of programmes with external borders (two programmes as a minimum).

The in-depth analysis will be carried out through desk research, complemented by field interviews with key participants in the programming process (managers, administrative representatives, local authorities, project developers, beneficiaries, applicants, evaluators, local press and media representatives, etc.). The tender documentation should detail the methodology to be used, including the balance between desk and research work, the number of interviews foreseen and with which partners and indicative questionnaires.

The in-depth analysis of the 16 programmes will be focused on two main aspects:

(2) Results and impacts in terms of effectiveness and socio-economic effects: what has been achieved?

The in-depth analysis will define what comprises territorial co-operation in the regions concerned and the intensity of that cooperation both in static and dynamic terms:

- The character of the programme analysed on the basis of:
 - in depth financial analysis of the fields of interventions (to 3 digits) ;
 - in depth analysis of a representative number of projects under the priority topics of the Initiative⁵;

⁵ Points 11, 14, 19 in the Communication from the Commission to the Member States of 28.4.00

- identification of projects with particularly strong territorial cooperation and which could be regarded as good practices to demonstrate the community added value of INTERREG programmes. 16 mini-cases studies will be drawn up (8-10 pages each) according to a format defined by the Commission. These mini-case studies should be suitable for publication on the DG REGIO Regions for Economic Change database of good practices⁶.
 - Analysis of the factors which have determined the character of the programmes , for example, political, socio-economic and administrative factors.
 - Analysis of the "degree of inter-regionality" according to the value of the indicator identified in task 4.2.
 - Analysis of the main factors that have fostered (or hampered) the integration and identification of means to promote these positive factors or overcome these burdens.
- (3) Results and impacts in terms of utility and efficiency: how has it been achieved?**

(3.1.) Evaluation of the external coherence of the programme

The consultant will undertake:

- An assessment of the degree of compliance with the political and regulatory framework initially set in 2000 including coherence with other Community policies (in accordance with the conclusions of task 1.1).
- An assessment of the degree of achievement of the goals initially set as well as the analysis of their degree of relevance with regard to local needs and their evolution.
- Analysis of the relationships with other strands of the Initiative as well as with ESPON and INTERACT programmes.
- Analysis of the articulation with the other Structural Funds programmes (demarcation, degree of complementarity or cooperation).
- Analysis of relationships with external institutions, actors and networks (public and private bodies at local/regional/national/European level) .
- Analysis of the reputation of the programmes (through appropriate opinion polling methods).

(3.2.) Evaluation of the intrinsic performance of the programme

In terms of management the evaluation will include:

- Analysis of the development and selection of projects: calls for tenders, calls for projects, dissemination modes of information, rate of selection, selection criteria, etc..

⁶ See http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation/interregional/ecochange/studies_en.cfm?nmenu=5 for examples of case studies drawn up by DG REGIO.

- Analysis and assessment of the governance and management modes including types of structures involved, functioning modes and costs, partnership, information and communication (internal/external, upstream/downstream).
- Analysis of the effectiveness of financial management systems: (N+2, financial flows and payments, existence of red tape, etc.).
- Analysis of the monitoring and evaluation system: indicators (use and reasons for degree of use), place given to evaluation issues (in particular use of auto-evaluation, innovative practices and use made of mid-term evaluation reports and their updates).

In terms of sustainability and of durability the evaluation will include:

- Identification of community added value (with a particular focus on cooperation).
- Study of the degree of stability of the programme itself (number of financial or strategic modifications and reasons).
- Analysis of the robustness/durability of the projects and of the cooperation more generally (ability to be financed outside the programme/assessment of the degree of independence on Structural Funds) and the contributing factors.
- Identification of most and least financially sustainable cooperation which is likely to be durable even without Structural Fund support and analysis of the reasons for this durability.

TASK 6: MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the previous tasks, the evaluator will draw conclusions on the impact of INTERREG III and make policy recommendations for the present Objective 3 (all three strands plus ESPON and INTERACT) and for their future.

This means particularly, for the Initiative in general as well as for each of its three strands:

- To conclude on the impact of the three strands of INTERREG III on economic and social cohesion in the Community through cross-border, transnational and inter-regional co-operation and balanced development of the Community territory;
- To identify factors that lead to effective cooperation, real community added value and important socioeconomic leverage effects;
- To review the contribution of INTERREG III to Community policies, particularly in relation to the environment, transport and innovation;
- To examine how to transfer good practices to mainstream programmes;
- To review the extent to which weaknesses identified have been addressed already in the provisions on the Territorial Cooperation Objective in the 2007-2013 period;
- To propose recommendations for the Commission and Member States to improve the effectiveness of the current Territorial Cooperation Objective; and

- To propose policy recommendations for the future with a view to maximise the impact of cohesion policy.

B. METHODOLOGY

Each of the tasks of the evaluation will require a methodological approach, which the evaluators should explain in their tender documentation. Key requirements have been specified in the description of tasks above. They include

- Literature review and desk research – including evaluations undertaken for the Commission, mid-term evaluations and their up-dates, annual reports,
- Key stakeholder interviews with policy makers and experts, national and regional administrations, research institutions in the respective fields. Interviews with key stakeholders, including programme and project managers, national level administrations, enterprises, leading research institutions in the respective fields. In some cases, project visits will be necessary.
- The tender should detail the methodology proposed to generate the typology and to carry out the in-depth analysis of programmes. In particular the tender should specify, from the point of view of their cost, the qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques; questions which the case studies must answer; and the framework for the report.
- Other methodological approaches as appropriate (to be specified in the tender documentation).

The bibliography in the annex identifies some studies to be used - beside others - by the evaluator.

C. TIME SCHEDULE AND DELIVERABLES

The duration of the contract is 16 months starting from its signature.

Reports required by the Terms of Reference					
Deliverable	Month after signature				
	1	6	10	14	16
Inception Report	X				
First Intermediate Report		X			
Second Intermediate Report			X		
Draft Final Report				X	
Final Report					X

The deliverables of this study will be:

- **Deliverable 1:** one methodological **inception report** covering all Tasks is required.
Deadline: one month after the signature of the contract.

- **Deliverable 2:** progress reports of 2 pages maximum.
Deadline: every month.
- **Deliverable 3:** one first **intermediate report** with an overview of the work carried out so far and tasks 1, 2, 3 and 4 achieved.
Deadline: six months after the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 4:** one second **intermediate report** with an overview of the work carried out so far and tasks 5 achieved.
Deadline: ten months after the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 5:** one **draft final report**.
Deadline: fourteen months after the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 6:** one **final report**.
Deadline: sixteen months after the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 7: four presentations** at meetings in Brussels of the results of the evaluation to the Member States and the Commission services.
Deadline: The timetable for the meetings will be set up during the contract.

A hard copy and an electronic version of each interim report are required. For final reports three hard copies and an electronic version (three CD, word format and pdf format) are required. The Commission will provide details for the layout of the reports.

The evaluator will provide presentation material for each of the final reports in English (PowerPoint) for the use of Commission services.

All reports need to be delivered in English. The synthesis report specified above will be delivered in English, French and German.

The contractor will present the results of the evaluation to the Member States and the Commission services (4 meetings in Brussels).

The quality of the evaluation will be assessed by the Commission services using the quality criteria from the GUIDE to the evaluation of socio-economic development. These can be found in Part 2 of the GUIDE at www.evaled.info. The assessment of the quality will be published by the Commission.

D. ORGANISATION OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation will be organised on the basis of a single contract with the Directorate General for Regional Policy. As part of the tender documentation, the evaluator should identify the team to be involved, describe their skills and qualifications and quantify the input of each member of the team in terms of days and explain the distribution of tasks between the different evaluators involved. The contractor has to prove that the teams have the capacity to work in the different fields and languages needed.

DG REGIO will establish a Steering group representative of the different Directorates General involved. The evaluator will provide documentation for and attend 4 meetings of the steering group. It is anticipated that the meetings will take place in order to discuss the inception report, the intermediate reports and the draft final report

The evaluator in consultation with DG REGIO will identify a maximum of 3 experts in the fields concerned by the evaluation who will provide additional expert input to the evaluation. The evaluator should include in his tender the cost of 3 experts attending 3 meetings in Brussels during the course of the evaluation.

The evaluator will be expected to attend progress meetings with the Evaluation Unit of DG REGIO reviewing the progress of the study and resolving any problems arising. These meetings will be arranged according to needs arising.

The contractor will produce monthly progress reports (2 pages maximum).

The Commission will provide the following documentation or access to them at the premises of the Commission: Operational Programmes, mid-term evaluations and their updates and 2007 Annual Implementation Reports. These documents are usually available in the language of the Member State concerned only. Most of the documentation from the Member States acceding in 2004 is available in English.

4. Participation in the tendering procedure

Participation in tendering procedures is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons coming within the scope of the Treaties and to all natural and legal persons in a third country which has a special agreement with the Communities in the field of public procurement on the conditions laid down in that agreement.

Where the Plurilateral Agreement on Government Procurement concluded within the WTO applies, the contracts are also open to nationals of the countries that have ratified this Agreement, on the conditions it lays down. In that connection, it should be noted that the services under Annex I-B to Directive 92/50/EEC and the R&D services listed in category 8 of Annex I-A to that Directive are not caught by the Agreement.

As a rule subcontracting is allowed.

Consortia of economic operators are authorised to tender or be candidates.

5. Documentation for tenderers

Bibliography annexed.

6. Visits to premises or briefing

Not applicable.

7. Variants

Not authorised.

8. Volume of contract

€ 1.300.000 maximum (lump sum, including fees, travel expenses and other costs).

9. Price

The attention of the tenderer is drawn to the following points in relation to the price:

- The price quoted must be fixed and not subject to revision.
- Under Articles 3 and 4 of the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Communities, the Communities are exempt from all charges, taxes and dues, including value added tax; such charges may not therefore be included in the calculation of the price quoted; the VAT amount must be indicated separately.
- The price tendered must be all-inclusive and expressed in euros, including for countries which are not part of the euro zone. For tenderers in countries which do not belong to the euro zone, the price quoted may not be revised in line with exchange rate movements. It is for the tenderer to select an exchange rate and assume the risks or the benefits deriving from any variation.
- The price quoted may include a separate estimate for travel and subsistence expenses. This estimate must be based on the standard Commission rules (see annex). It must include any travel necessary to meet the contracting authority, and represents, at all events, the maximum amount of travel and subsistence expenses payable for all services under the contract. These expenses must be included in the price quoted.
- The same principle applies to any specific expenditure incurred in the performance of the contract, such as the cost of translating reports into the languages indicated in the specification.
- Costs incurred in preparing and submitting tenders are borne by the tenderers and cannot be reimbursed.

10. Terms of payment

The Contractor shall submit requests for all payment, expressed in euros, to the Commission.

Payments under the contract shall be made as follows:

- **A first interim payment** equal to 20 % of the total amount within 30 days of the date on which a valid request for payment is registered following approval by the Commission of the inception report as specified above.
- **A second interim payment** equal to 25% of the total amount within 30 days of the date on which a valid request for payment is registered following approval by the Commission of the first intermediate report as specified above.
- **A third interim payment** equal to 25% of the total amount within 30 days of the date on which a valid request for payment is registered following approval by the Commission of the second intermediate report as specified above.
- **Payment of the balance** equal to 30 % of the total amount within 30 days of the date on which a valid request for payment is registered following approval by the Commission of the final report and the organisation of the report's presentations.

11. Contractual terms and guarantees

- For contractual conditions, see the contractual conditions in the attached draft contract.

- Guarantees: A performance guarantee equal to 10 % of the total amount of the contract shall be issued by a bank, an authorised financial institution or a third party in favour of the Commission and shall be released after payment of the balance.

12. Criteria

Exclusion criteria

Candidates or tenderers shall declare with a **declaration on honour** that the company or organisation that he/she represents / he/she:

- a) is not bankrupt or being wound up, is not having its affairs administered by the courts, has not entered into an arrangement with creditors, has not suspended business activities, is not the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, and is not in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) has not been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of *res judicata*;
- c) has not been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authorities can justify;
- d) has fulfilled all its obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions and the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established, with those of the country of the contracting authority and those of the country where the contract is to be carried out;
- e) has not been the subject of a judgement which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) is not a subject of the administrative penalty for being guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the procurement procedure or failing to supply an information, or being declared to be in serious breach of his obligation under contract covered by the budget.

In addition, candidates or tenderers shall declare **on their honour**:

- g) they have no conflict of interest in connection with the contract; a conflict of interest could arise in particular as a result of economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional ties or any other relevant connection or shared interest;
- h) they will inform the contracting authority, without delay, of any situation considered a conflict of interest or which could give rise to a conflict of interest;
- i) they have not made and will not make any offer of any type whatsoever from which an advantage can be derived under the contract;
- j) they have not granted and will not grant, have not sought and will not seek, have not attempted and will not attempt to obtain, and have not accepted and will not accept any advantage, financial or in kind, to or from any party whatsoever, constituting an illegal practice or involving corruption, either directly or indirectly, as an incentive or reward relating to award of the contract.
- k) that the information provided to the Commission within the context of this invitation to tender is accurate, sincere and complete.

l) that in case of award of contract, they shall provide the evidence that they are not in any of the situations described in points a, b, d, e above.

For situations described in (a), (b) and (e), production of a recent extract from the judicial record is required or, failing that, a recent equivalent document issued by a judicial or administrative authority in the country of origin or provenance showing that those requirements are satisfied. Where the Tenderer is a legal person and the national legislation of the country in which the Tenderer is established does not allow the provision of such documents for legal persons, the documents should be provided for natural persons, such as the company directors or any person with powers of representation, decision making or control in relation to the Tenderer.

For the situation described in point (d) above, recent certificates or letters issued by the competent authorities of the State concerned are required. These documents must provide evidence covering all taxes and social security contributions for which the Tenderer is liable, including for example, VAT, income tax (natural persons only), company tax (legal persons only) and social security contributions.

For any of the situations (a), (b), (d) or (e), where any document described in two paragraphs above is not issued in the country concerned, it may be replaced by a sworn or, failing that, a solemn statement made by the interested party before a judicial or administrative authority, a notary or a qualified professional body in his country of origin or provenance.

By signing this declaration, candidates or tenderers shall acknowledge that they have been acquainted with the administrative and financial penalties described under art 133 and 134 b of the Implementing Rules (Commission Regulation 2342/2002 of 23/12/02), which may be applied if any of the declarations or information provided prove to be false.

Selection criteria

Legal position – means of proof required

- a) Where the tenderer needs a specific authorisation or must be a member of a specific organisation in order to provide the services concerned in his country of origin, he must prove that he holds this authorisation or that he belongs to this organisation.
- b) The tenderer is required to furnish proof of his enrolment on the professional or trade register, or a sworn statement or certificate in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Member state in which he is established.

Economic and financial capacity – means of proof required

Proof of financial and economic standing must be provided by one or more of the following:

- bank declarations;
- balance sheets or summarised balance sheets;
- a statement of general turnover or turnover relating to the services in question, covering the last three financial years.

Technical capacity – means of proof required

Technical capacity will be assessed on the basis of expertise, knowledge, efficiency, experience and reliability in the following areas:

- The theory and practice of socio-economic analysis and evaluation;

- Knowledge of fundamental features of cohesion policy;
- Knowledge of fundamental features of regional cooperation policy in the EU (with regard to its three dimensions).
- The drafting and presentation of analytical reports;
- The manipulation and analysis of data;
- Capacity to deliver texts of good quality in English.

Proof of the above may be furnished by means of:

- i) Academic and professional qualifications held by the service provider and, in particular, by the person(s) to be responsible for the services;
- ii) Main services provided over the past three years, together with details of values, dates and public or private recipients involve;
- iii) Tenderer's average annual manpower and number of managerial staff over the past three years;
- iv) Technical plant and equipment, office-automation and computer equipment available to the tenderer for performing the services;
- v) Company's study and research facilities;
- vi) Proportion of the contract which the tenderer may intend to subcontract.

Award criteria

The contract will be awarded to the tender that is **most economically advantageous**. This will be determined in the light of the price and the quality of the tender. The successful tender will be the tender with the lowest ratio of total cost to the quality mark achieved. Tenders with a mark below 50% of available quality points will not be considered. The quality of the tender will be assessed as a function of the following criteria:

- Understanding of the Terms of Reference and and appropriately expanding it to the tasks (20%);
- Appropriateness of the methodology (including the approach to gathering and analysing data and the development of the typology and the methodology for indepth analysis of programmes) (50 %);
- Quality of planning of human resources and work organisation (30 %)

13. Tenders

General comments

- The tender consists of all the documents referred to in this section.
- It may be drafted in any of the official languages of the European Union.
- Tenders from consortiums of firms or groups of service providers must specify the role, qualifications and experience of each of the members or of the group.
- Proof of eligibility, a declaration that there are no conflicts of interest, and documents on exclusion and selection criteria must be supplied by each member of the consortiums of firms or groups of service providers submitting a single tender.

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