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Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology

**Directorates F: Digital Transformation and Directorate H: Digital Society, Trust & Cybersecurity
F4: Digital Economy, Recovery Plan and Skills and H4: eGovernment & Trust**

CALL FOR TENDERS

Pilots on measuring eGovernment Benchmark Usability

VIGIE: 2020-0828

DRAFT ANNEX

Negotiated procedure

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1. INFORMATION ON TENDERING

1.1. Participation

Participation in this procurement procedure is restricted to the invited candidates only. The legal entities are required to be registered in the EU or for natural persons to have their domicile in the EU. Participation is also open to all natural and legal persons registered or having their domicile in a non-EU country which has an agreement with the European Union in the field of public procurement on the conditions laid down in that agreement. The rules of access to the market do not apply to subcontractors.

1.2. Contractual conditions

The tenderer should bear in mind the provisions of the draft contract which specifies the rights and obligations of the contractor, particularly those on payments, performance of the contract, confidentiality, and checks and audits.

1.3. Compliance with applicable law

The tender must comply with applicable environmental, social and labour law obligations established by Union law, national legislation, collective agreements or the international environmental, social and labour conventions listed in Annex X to Directive 2014/24/EU¹.

1.4. Joint tenders

A joint tender is a situation where a tender is submitted by a group of economic operators (natural or legal persons). Joint tenders may include subcontractors in addition to the members of the group.

In case of joint tender, all members of the group assume joint and several liability towards the Contracting Authority for the performance of the contract as a whole, i.e. both financial and operational liability. Nevertheless, tenderers must designate one of the economic operators as a single point of contact (the leader) for the Contracting Authority for administrative and financial aspects as well as operational management of the contract.

After the award, the Contracting Authority will sign the contract either with all members of the group, or with the leader on behalf of all members of the group, authorised by the other members via powers of attorney (see Annex 7).

1.5. Subcontracting

Subcontracting is a situation where a contract is to be established between the Commission and a service provider and where this service provider, in order to carry out the contract, enters into legal commitments with other legal entities for performing part of the tasks foreseen in the contract.

¹ Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC (OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 65).

Subcontracting is permitted but the contractor will retain full liability towards the Contracting Authority for performance of the contract as a whole.

Tenderers are required to identify all subcontractors whose share of the contract is above 10 % of the price of the tender or whose capacity is necessary to fulfil the selection criteria.

During contract performance, the change of any subcontractor identified in the tender or additional subcontracting will be subject to prior written approval of the Contracting Authority (please refer to article II.10 of the model service contract).

1.6. Structure and content of the tender

The tenders must be presented as follows:

Part A: Identification of the tenderer (see section 1.7)

Part B: Non-exclusion (see section 4.1)

Part C: Selection (see section 4.2)

Part D: Technical offer

The technical offer must cover all aspects and tasks required in the technical specifications and provide all the information needed to apply the award criteria. Offers deviating from the requirements or not covering all requirements may be rejected on the basis of non-compliance with the tender specifications and will not be evaluated.

Part E: Financial offer

The price must fulfil the following requirements:

A **total** fixed price expressed **in Euro** must be included in the tender. The **maximum total** amount to be paid by the Commission under the contract **must not exceed** EUR **40 000** – forty thousand Euros. Tenders with a higher total price will be rejected.

Tenderers from countries outside the euro zone have to quote their prices in euro. The price quoted may not be revised in line with exchange rate movements. It is for the tenderer to assume the risks or the benefits deriving from any variation.

The price quoted must be firm and not subject to revision.

The European Commission, pursuant to the provisions of Articles 3 and 4 of the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Union, is exempt from all duties, taxes and dues, including value added tax (VAT).

Such charges may not therefore be included in the calculation of the price quoted.

VAT exemption is granted to the Commission by the governments of the Member States, either through refunds upon presentation of documentary evidence or by direct exemption.

For those countries where national legislation provides an exemption by means of reimbursement, **the amount of VAT is to be shown separately**. In case of doubt about the applicable VAT system, it is the tenderer's responsibility to contact his or her national authorities to clarify the way in which the European Commission is exempt from VAT.

The quoted price must be a fixed amount which includes all charges (including travel and subsistence). Travel and subsistence expenses are not refundable separately.

The price must fall within the scope of this tender specifications and be broken down into unit prices and quantities for each of the following categories:

(a) Professional fees. The daily rates and total number of person-day for each member of staff working on the contract must be specified.

(b) Travel and subsistence expenses (including costs of attendance of future contractor's representative(s) at meetings and/or workshops with the Commission (as foreseen in section 2.4.3)

c) Other costs

No specific offer presentation other than the indications provided above is required.

1.7. Identification of the tenderer

The tender must include a **cover letter** (annex 2) signed by an authorised representative presenting the name of the tenderer (including all entities in case of joint tender) and identified subcontractors if applicable, and the name of the single contact point (leader) in relation to this procedure.

In case of a joint tender, the cover letter must be signed either by an authorised representative for each member, or by the leader authorised by the other members with powers of attorney. The signed powers of attorney must be included in the tender as well. Subcontractors that are identified in the tender must provide a letter of intent signed by an authorised representative stating their willingness to provide the services presented in the tender and in line with the present tender specifications.

All tenderers (including all members of the group in case of joint tender) must provide a signed Legal Entity Form with its supporting evidence. The form is available on: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm

Tenderers that are already registered in the Contracting Authority's accounting system (i.e. they have already been direct contractors) must provide the form but are not obliged to provide the supporting evidence.

The tenderer (or the leader in case of joint tender) must provide a Financial Identification Form with its supporting documents. Only one form per tender should be submitted. No form is needed for subcontractors and other members of the group in case of joint tender. The form is available on: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/index_en.cfm

Economic operators already registered as a legal entity in the Commission's files (i.e. they are or have been contractors of the Commission) are not obliged to provide a new form, on the

condition that they confirm that no change in the information already provided has occurred. In case of doubt, we recommend submitting a new form.

Likewise, if the corresponding bank account of economic operators is already registered in the Commission's files they are not obliged to provide a new form, on the condition that they confirm that no change in the information already provided has occurred. In case of doubt, we recommend submitting a new form.

2. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

2.1. Context

Securing the successful digital transformation of public administrations in the EU is vital to ensure the success of our social and economic model, a condition for the effective functioning of the Single Market and an important element in the EU's crisis recovery strategy. In the EU's multilevel governance system and its variety of administrative organisation and powers, the digital transformation of public government needs to be achieved at all levels. At the same time common goals, objectives and benchmarks at EU level are needed to provide leadership, coordination and support to these policies at local, regional, national and EU level.

The eGovernment Benchmark is the European Commission's yearly monitoring instrument to provide insight into the use of digital technologies in the public sector. The measurement evaluates the maturity of online public services in terms of user centricity, transparency, and use of key enablers. It also brings the dimension of cross-border service delivery, which is a truly European metric.

These four top-level benchmarks are assessed on the basis of a set of eight life events. Each life event consists of a user journey representing common public services that citizens or businesses will go through. Four life events are measured each year. In even years data on the life events Business start-up, Losing and finding a job, Studying, Family life is collected; in odd years the four life events Regular business operations, Starting a small claims procedure, Moving, Owning and driving a car are considered

The data to assess these indicators are collected by Mystery Shoppers. Mystery Shoppers are citizens of each of the observed countries who are trained and briefed to observe, experience, and measure a (public service) process. Mystery Shoppers act as prospective users and follow a detailed, objective and standardised evaluation checklist. The Mystery Shopping has recently been complemented by automated open tools for the assessments of Mobile Friendliness and Cybersecurity.

The eGovernment Benchmark assessment has been in place since 2011. A first methodological update has taken place in 2016. In 2019/20 a second methodological update started, leading to an updated Method Paper in 2020². In the course of 2020 and 2021 further methodological updates are planned, focusing, in particular on the life events assessed in odd years.

In the 2017 Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment, the 32 countries of the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) committed to follow principles of user-centricity for the design and delivery of public services in their countries. It is in this respect that the Member States consulted in the course of the 2019/20 method update flagged the

² <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/979befae-f98f-11ea-b44f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-158501012>

need to revise the scope and focus of the usability sub-indicator of the User Centricity top level benchmark – as a key concept for the European collaboration on digital government.

Usability constitutes an important part of the User centricity pillar (one of the study's top-level benchmarks). Within the broader framework of the eGovernment Benchmark, usability is currently measured with reference to the existence of FAQ-pages and online support channels. There is a general agreement that the indicator as it is currently scoped falls short of fully capturing user experience and satisfaction. It has been clearly stated that new usability measures would be important enhancements of the method, well-desired and in line with key policy objectives.

The goal of this new indicator would be to measure the extent to which users are able to find specific information and complete specific service tasks. The proposed indicator would provide more demand-specific insight into user-friendly journeys. It would gain insight in the usability as experience by users, capturing the user perspective while using websites in practice. In this way, the indicator would also further give substance to for instance the 'usability' facet of the Tallinn Declaration user-centricity principles.

As reflected in the method consultation (October 2019) and Member State method workshop (February 2020), alternative ways to measure usability more Most of all, however, a valid and sound set of questions would need to be developed on which this new indicator would be based. Prior to the potential full implementation of these questions, a pilot should be carried out with a selected number of Member States, in which different questions and their combination should be tested.

2.1. Objectives, tasks, methodology

2.1.1. Objectives

The object of this procurement is to develop and validate a new measurement framework for the usability indicator of the eGovernment Benchmark assessment.

2.1.2. Tasks

The minimum requirements to be met by the tender are the execution of the following two tasks:

Task 1 Development of an Assessment Framework

This task will be based on desk research, complemented by expert interviews. The contractor will bring together different existing concepts, models, framework, guidelines and principles on user centricity, user experience and related concepts. The contractor will compare the elements considered in these frameworks with the indicators covered in the eGovernment Benchmark assessment and will only consider those that are not already included. The contractor will compare, map and integrate the different elements considered as relevant by the frameworks identified and not yet covered by the Benchmark exercise to propose a coherent, consistent and complete assessment framework on which to base a new usability indicator. The contractor will proceed to translate the items of the framework into survey questions, on which the pilots (Task 2) can be based. If there are different equally feasible ways to translate the framework into practice, the contractor may propose to include these as options to be compared in the piloting phase (Task 2).

Task 2: Piloting of Assessment Framework

The assessment framework developed in Task 1 will be piloted in 3 countries volunteering to participate among the countries represented in the eGovernment Benchmark working group (36 countries in total: 27 Member States; the UK; EEA countries and candidate countries). To

align with the existing eGovernment Benchmark methodology, duly trained mystery shoppers will be charged with applying the questionnaire developed in Task 1 to all relevant websites considered in all eight-life events. The mystery shoppers will be provided with an explicit testing methodology, advising them on how to document problems in the interpretation and application of the questionnaire items. Mystery shoppers shall also be invited to note other “usability” problems that they encounter with a website and that, in their (subjective) opinion are not sufficiently addressed by the proposed methodology.

2.1.3. Methodology

The study should be developed following a clear methodology covering all aspects of the study. Tenderers are free to propose the specific methodology, taking into account the context and objectives of the study and the following conditions:

The balance between the efforts devoted to each specific objective of the study should be reasonable and well justified. The analysis of today's situation should build on existing analysis and sources of information, including results from the current eGovernment Benchmark assessment and its methodology.

More generally, the study should be based on data from a variety of sources such as company, industry, government, trade journals and organisations, as well as market studies and academic papers. It should include information from literature reviews and discussions/interviews with technology/market experts and key stakeholders in the field of user experience design. Efficient use of available networks should be made by liaising with relevant stakeholder groups such as the eGovernment Benchmark expert group.

2.2. Duration

Duration of the tasks must not exceed the period indicated in Article I.3.3 of the model service contract.

2.3. Timetable, Deliverables and Meetings

2.3.1. Timetable:

Title	Type	Due week (at the latest)	Linked to payment
1. Inception report	Deliverable	1	No
Inception meeting	Meeting	1	No
2. Assessment framework proposal	Deliverable	4	No
Interim meeting	Meeting	4	No
3. Methodology and timing of pilots	Deliverable	4	No
4. Pilots’ results and validated	Deliverable	8	Yes

framework proposal			
Final meeting	Meeting	8	No

2.3.2. The deliverables listed below must be provided by the contractor:

1. **Inception report**, specifying the methodology, resources and objectives provided in the tender in accordance with the indications provided by the Commission during the inception meeting (see section 2.4.3 below). A draft of the report shall be made available to the Commission's services for information 2 working days before the inception meeting. The report should be finalised after the meeting taking into account all observations and comments raised at the meeting. The finalised Inception Report shall be made available to the Commission's services within 1 week after the inception meeting.
2. **Interim report: Assessment framework proposal**, which will put forward an assessment framework and concrete question items for a new usability indicator. A draft of the report shall be made available to the Commission's services 4 working days before the interim meeting in week 4 after signature (see section 2.4.3 below). The report should be finalised after the meeting taking into account all observations and comments raised at the meeting. The finalised Interim Report shall be submitted to the Commission's services within 1 week after the first interim meeting.
3. **Methodology and timing of pilots** shall be made available to the Commission's services within 4 weeks after signature.
4. **Pilots' results and validated framework proposal:** A draft of the final report shall be made available to the Commission's services for information 4 working days before the final meeting (week 8). The report should be finalised after the meeting taking into account all observations and comments raised at the meeting. The finalised Final study Report shall be made available within 1 week after the final meeting. The report shall include an assessment of the options tested in the pilots and recommendations for the indicators and question items to be included in a new eGovernment Benchmark usability indicator. The report shall be accompanied by the data collected in the pilots. These results should be provided as structured data in a machine readable format (e.g. in the form of a spreadsheet and/or an RDF file) for Commission internal usage and for publishing on the Open Data Portal, in compliance with Commission Decision (2011/833/EU). If third parties' rights do not allow their publication as open data, the tenderers should describe in the offer the subpart that will be provided to the Commission free of rights for publication and the part that will remain for internal use. The raw datasets and/or the derived indicators shall be also made available to the Commission's services by week 8 (4 working days before the final meeting).

2.3.3. Meetings and workshops

A schedule of meetings will be agreed with the contractor for this assignment. Such meetings will be attended by representatives of the European Commission, the project manager leader and other members of the contractor's team, as required. Other knowledgeable external experts might be invited to participate by the Commission. The meetings will be chaired by a Commission representative and will take place in *Brussels, or remotely*.

The aim of the meetings will be to guide the work of the contractor. In particular, they will allow setting-up the initial orientations, review progress in critical milestones and review the deliverables of the assignment.

Within three days following each meeting, the contractor will circulate minutes of the meeting to all participants, together with copies of presentations made during the meeting or other related documents. The minutes shall be concise and concentrate on major decisions and shall list the open action points for the next reporting period.

1. Inception meeting

An inception meeting will be organised by the Commission's services at the Commission's premises in Brussels, or remotely within 1 weeks after signature of the contract by the last contracting party. The contractor will have to finalise the inception report on the basis of the outcome of the inception meeting.

Only in duly substantiated circumstances should an inception meeting be planned.

2. Interim meeting

An interim meeting during which the contractor will present the interim findings will be held within 4 weeks after signature of the contract by the last contracting party. It will be organised by the Commission's services at the Commission's premises in Brussels, or remotely. The contractor will have to finalise the interim study report on the basis of the outcome of the interim meeting.

3. Final meeting

A final meeting during which the contractor will present the final findings and proposed conclusions will be held within 8 weeks after signature of the contract by the last contracting party. It will be organised by the Commission's services at the Commission's premises in Brussels, or remotely. The contractor will have to finalise the final study report on the basis of the outcome of the final meeting.

Monthly conference calls

In addition to the meetings to be organised in Brussels, or remotely, conference calls on the state of progress of the study will take place between representatives from the contractor and the Commission.

2.4. Terms of approval of reports and deliverables

2.4.1. Study reports

After reception of each report included in section 2.3.2 above, except for the reports linked to payments, the Commission will have 8 calendar days in which:

- to approve it,
- to reject it and request a new report.

If the Commission does not react within this period, the report shall be deemed to be approved.

Where the Commission requests a new report because the one previously submitted has been rejected, this must be submitted within 8 calendar days. The new report shall likewise be subject to the above provisions.

For the terms of approval of the reports linked to payments, please refer to article I.5 of the contract.

2.5. Layout/content of the workplan

Offers should include a detailed work plan. The work plan should specify the management structure as well as the responsibility of each member of the team, including the main contractor and/or sub-contractors. It should also include the name of the organisation or the person in charge of the different countries where data have to be gathered.

The work plan should include a list of tasks to be performed, with clear and realistic phases and milestones. Resources should be clearly associated to each task, i.e. for example the estimate number of man days and travels required for each task or phase.

2.6. Intellectual Property rights

The intellectual property rights related to the services/studies are foreseen in clauses I.10 and II.13 of the service contract.

Parts of results pre-existing the contract

If the results are not fully created for the purpose of the contract this should be clearly pointed out in the tender. Information should be provided about the scope of pre-existing materials, their source and when and how the rights to these materials have been or will be acquired.

Plagiarism in the tender

In the tender all quotations or information originating from other sources and to which third parties may claim rights have to be clearly marked (source publication including date and place, creator, number, full title etc.) in a way allowing easy identification.

3. CONTENT, STRUCTURE AND GRAPHIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE DELIVERABLES

The contractor must deliver the study and other deliverables as indicated below.

3.1. Data formats

- The final data should be provided as structured data in a machine-readable format³ (e.g. in the form of a spreadsheet and/or an RDF⁴ file) for Commission internal usage and for publishing on the Open Data Portal⁵, in compliance with Commission Decision (2011/833/EU). If third parties' rights do not allow their publication as open data, the contractor should describe in the offer which subpart will be provided to the Commission free of rights for publication and which part will remain for internal use.
- The data delivered should be linked to data resources external to the scope of the study, preferably data and semantic resources from the Commission's own data portal or from the upcoming pan-European portal. The bidder should describe in the offer the approach they will adopt for data linking⁶.

³ See definitions for "structured data" and "machine readable" format in art 3 of Commission Decision (2011/833/EU) <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2011/833/oj>

⁴ <http://www.w3.org/RDF/> http://www.w3.org/standards/techs/rdf#w3c_all

⁵ <http://open-data.europa.eu/>

⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linked_data and the tutorials proposed on the Commission Open Data Portal: <http://open-data.europa.eu/en/linked-data>

- The dataset should include all the information collected in the scope of the undertaken activities-tasks. The data should be supplied in a format that is prone for third party statistical analysis, such as to derive/compute indicators (e.g. for benchmarking the Digital Agenda).
- Data will be available both as raw data and in form of indicators. The data and indicators collected or derived during the study should be delivered to the Commission in a format that complies with the DataCube vocabulary⁷. A template for both data and metadata is available on the digital-agenda-data.eu domain.
- The dataset should include the appropriate metadata (e.g. description of the dataset, definition, label and sources for the variables, notes) to facilitate reuse and publication.
- All analysis outputs (such as charts, info graphics, aggregations, etc.) should be provided in the source format (e.g. xls, psd) in order to allow easy reshaping and fitting to the European Commission's publication outlets (e.g. DESI and Digital Scoreboard⁸).

The Commission services will decide the possible dissemination of the findings and conclusions and any other information produced under this assignment.

3.2. Report format

All deliverables must be written in English.

All reports should be consistent in style (headings, margins, citations, bibliography, etc) and contain a short executive summary. The contractor is required to properly apply quotation techniques and particular care will be taken to verify improper re-use of existing material.

All reports will be submitted in electronic format (.doc, .xls, .ppt or equivalents in open formats) and in a .pdf format suitable for publication by the Commission's services on Commission websites. Exchange of advance copies as well as other non-formal communications shall take place via electronic mail.

The Commission services will decide the possible dissemination of the findings and conclusions and any other information produced under this assignment.

3.3. Content

3.3.1. Final study report

The final study report must include:

- Pilot's results and validated framework proposal. The report will include the pilot framework accompanied by thorough assessment of their full scale application of each pilot.
- The following disclaimer:

“By the European Commission, Directorate-General of Communications Networks, Content & Technology.

⁷ <http://www.w3.org/TR/vocab-data-cube/>

⁸ <https://digital-agenda-data.eu/>

The information and views set out in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Commission. The Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this study. Neither the Commission nor any person acting on the Commission's behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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In view of its publication, the final report by the contractors must be of high editorial quality. In cases where the contractor does not manage to produce a final report of high editorial quality within the timeframe defined by the contract, the contracting authority can decide to have the final report professionally edited at the expense of the contractor (e.g. deduction of these costs from the final payment).

3.3.2. Publishable executive summary

The publishable executive summary must be provided in both in English and French and must include:

- specific identifiers which must be incorporated on the cover page provided by the Contracting Authority;
- the following disclaimer:

"By the European Commission, Directorate-General of Communications Networks, Content & Technology.

The information and views set out in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Commission. The Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this study. Neither the Commission nor any person acting on the Commission's behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein."

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3.3.3. Requirements for publication on Internet

The Commission is committed to making online information as accessible as possible to the largest possible number of users including those with visual, auditory, cognitive or physical disabilities, and those not having the latest technologies. The Commission supports the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 of the W3C.

For full details on the Commission policy on accessibility for information providers, see: http://ec.europa.eu/ipg/standards/accessibility/index_en.htm

For the publishable versions of the study, abstract and executive summary, the contractor must respect the W3C guidelines for accessible pdf documents as provided at: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>.

3.4. Graphic requirements

The contractor must deliver the study and all publishable deliverables in full compliance with the corporate visual identity of the European Commission, by applying the graphic rules set out in the European Commission's Visual Identity Manual, including its logo. The graphic rules, the Manual and further information are available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/services/visual_identity/index_en.htm

A simple Word template will be provided to the contractor after contract signature. The contractor must fill in the cover page in accordance with the instructions provided in the template. The use of templates for studies is exclusive to European Commission's contractors. No template will be provided to tenderers while preparing their tenders.

4. EVALUATION AND AWARD

The evaluation is based solely on the information provided in the submitted tender. It involves the following:

- Verification of non-exclusion of tenderers on the basis of the exclusion criteria
- Selection of tenderers on the basis of selection criteria
- Verification of compliance with the minimum requirements set out in these tender specifications
- Evaluation of tenders on the basis of the award criteria

The contracting authority may reject abnormally low tenders, in particular if it established that the tenderer or a subcontractor does not comply with applicable obligations in the fields of environmental, social and labour law.

The tenders will be assessed in the order indicated above. Only tenders meeting the requirements of one step will pass on to the next step.

4.1. Verification of non-exclusion

All tenderers must provide a declaration on honour (see Annex 6), signed and dated by an authorised representative, stating that they are not in one of the situations of exclusion listed in that declaration on honour.

In case of joint tender, each member of the group must provide a declaration on honour signed by an authorised representative.

In case of subcontracting, all subcontractors whose share of the contract is above 10% or whose capacity is necessary to fulfil the selection criteria must provide a declaration on honour signed by an authorised representative.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to verify whether the successful tenderer is in one of the situations of exclusion by requiring the supporting documents listed in the declaration of honour.

The obligation to submit supporting evidence does not apply to international organisations.

A tenderer (or a member of the group in case of joint tender, or a subcontractor) is not required to submit the documentary evidence if it has already been submitted for another procurement procedure and provided the documents were issued not more than one year before the date of their request by the contracting authority and are still valid at that date. In such cases, the tenderer must declare on its honour that the documentary evidence has already been provided in a previous procurement procedure, indicate the reference of the procedure and confirm that there has been no change in its situation.

A tenderer (or a member of the group in case of joint tender, or a subcontractor) is not required to submit a specific document if the contracting authority can access the document in question on a national database free of charge.

4.2. Selection criteria

Tenderers must prove their legal, regulatory, economic, financial, technical and professional capacity to carry out the work subject to this procurement procedure.

The tenderer may rely on the capacities of other entities, regardless of the legal nature of the links which it has with them. It must in that case prove to the Contracting Authority that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary for performance of the contract, for example by producing an undertaking on the part of those entities to place those resources at its disposal.

The tender must include the proportion of the contract that the tenderer intends to subcontract.

4.2.1. Declaration and evidence

The tenderer(s) (and each member of the group in case of joint tender) and subcontractors whose capacity is necessary to fulfil the selection criteria must provide the declaration on honour (see Annex 6), signed and dated by an authorised representative, stating that they fulfil the selection criteria applicable to them individually. For the criteria applicable to the tenderer as a whole the tenderer (sole tenderer or leader in case of joint tender) must provide the declaration on honour stating that the tenderer, including all members of the group in case of joint tender and including subcontractors if applicable, fulfils the selection criteria for which a consolidated assessment will be carried out.

This declaration is part of the declaration used for exclusion criteria (see section 4.1) so only one declaration covering both aspects should be provided by each concerned entity.

The Contracting Authority will evaluate selection criteria on the basis of the declarations on honour. Nevertheless, it reserves the right to require evidence of the legal and regulatory, financial and economic and technical and professional capacity of the tenderers at any time during the procurement procedure and contract performance. In such case the tenderer must

provide the requested evidence without delay. The Contracting Authority may reject the tender if the requested evidence is not provided in due time.

A tenderer (or a member of the group in case of joint tender, or a subcontractor) is not required to submit the documentary evidence if it has already been submitted for another procurement procedure and provided the documents were issued not more than one year before the date of their request by the contracting authority and are still valid at that date. In such cases, the tenderer must declare on its honour that the documentary evidence has already been provided in a previous procurement procedure, indicate the reference of the procedure and confirm that there has been no change in its situation.

A tenderer (or a member of the group in case of joint tender, or a subcontractor) is not required to submit a specific document if the contracting authority can access the document in question on a national database free of charge.

4.2.2. Legal and regulatory capacity

Criterion L1	Capacity to pursue the professional activity necessary to carry out the work subject to this call for tenders
Evidence L1 (to be provided on with the offer)	Declaration or certificate of inclusion in a trade or professional register, or a sworn declaration or certificate, membership of a specific organisation, express authorisation, or entry in the value added tax (hereinafter ‘VAT’) register ⁹

⁹ For private entities:

- a proof of registration, as prescribed in their country of establishment, on one of the professional or trade registers or any other official document showing the registration number;
- if the above documents do not show the VAT number, a copy of the VAT registration document, where applicable

For individuals:

- a legible copy of his or her identity card or passport;
- where applicable, a proof of registration, as prescribed in the individual's country of establishment, on one of the professional or trade registers or any other official document showing the registration number;
- if the above documents do not show the VAT number, a copy of the VAT registration document, where applicable.

For public entities:

- a copy of the resolution decree, law, or decision establishing the entity in question or failing that, any other official document attesting to the establishment of the entity;
- if the public entity has completed a VAT registration number in the legal entity form, an **official document showing the VAT number**.

4.2.3. Economic and financial capacity criteria

The tenderer must have the necessary economic and financial capacity to perform this contract until its end. In order to prove their capacity, the tenderer must comply with the following criterion:

Criterion F1	Annual turnover of the last two financial years, for which the accounts have been closed, above EUR 300 000; this criterion applies to the tenderer as a whole, i.e. the combined capacity of all members of a group, in case of a joint tender.
Evidence F1 (to be provided on request)	- Copy of the profit and loss accounts for the last two years for which accounts have been closed from each concerned legal entity; - Failing that, appropriate statements from banks.

If, for some exceptional reason which the Contracting Authority considers justified, a tenderer is unable to provide one or other of the above documents, it may prove its economic and financial capacity by any other document which the Contracting Authority considers appropriate. In any case, the Contracting Authority must at least be notified of the exceptional reason and its justification. The Commission reserves the right to request any other document enabling it to verify the tenderer's economic and financial capacity.

4.2.4. Technical and professional capacity criteria and evidence

With respect to the criteria listed in sub-sections A and B below (e.g. relevant expertise of the tenderer and other applicants, management capability), in case of participation of group members, e.g. local affiliates of international companies, documentary evidence of the entire group (e.g. list of contracts, etc.) will only be taken into account if a specific written endorsement of the participation by the local affiliate and/or mother company is provided.

With respect to the criterion relating to the team members, any team member who is not directly employed by the legal entity (or one of the entities in case of a joint tender) submitting the tender is considered as a subcontractor. In such case either his employer, even if this is a local branch of the same global company, should be declared as a subcontractor or he is to be considered to participate as independent expert. In both cases the forms requested in Annex 1) need to be provided.

A. Criteria relating to tenderers

Tenderers (in case of a joint tender the combined capacity of all members of the group and identified subcontractors) must comply with the criteria listed below. The evidence must be provided only on request.

The project references indicated below consist in a list of relevant services provided in the past three years, with the sums, dates and clients, public or private, accompanied by statements issued by the clients.

Criterion A1:	The tenderer must prove experience in the field of: Social research methodology and methods including quantitative techniques
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	such as surveys as well as qualitative research approaches.
Evidence A1 (to be provided with the offer)	The tenderer must provide references for at least 2 contracts or relevant services with sums, dates and recipients, public or private, accompanied upon request by statements issued by the clients and performed in the past three years with a minimum value for each contract of € 50 000.

Criterion A2	The tenderer must prove capacity to draft reports in English.
Evidence A2 (to be provided with the offer)	The tenderer must provide one document of at least 10 pages (report, study, etc.) in this language that it has drafted and published or delivered to a client in the last two years. The verification will be carried out on 5 pages of the document.

Criterion A3	Management capability: Experience in project management, including overseeing project delivery, quality control of delivered service, client orientation and conflict resolution experience in project of a similar size (at least € 100 000) and coverage (at least 3 countries covered), with experience in management of team of at least 10 people).
Evidence A3 (to be provided with the offer)	List of at least three contracts of a value of at least 100 000 EUR each, performed by the tenderer(s) (including subcontractor(s), (if any) in the past five years. Short description of the measures employed to ensure the quality of the services for each of the listed contracts. Statement of the average annual manpower and the number of managerial staff of the service provider or contractor in the last five years.

Criterion A4	Geographical coverage: The tenderer must prove its capacity to ensure a good geographical coverage of the services to be provided.
Evidence A4 (to be provided with the offer)	Information about at least one contract of a value of at least 80 000 EUR performed by the tenderer(s) (including subcontractor(s), if any) in the past five years with a geographical coverage similar to the one requested.

B. Criteria relating to the team delivering the service:

The team delivering the service should include, as a minimum, the following profiles.

Evidence will consist in CVs of the team responsible to deliver the service. Each CV should indicate the intended function in the delivery of the service.

The Europass curriculum vitae template¹⁰ shall be filled in by each person involved in the execution of the tasks foreseen in the tender. Please make sure the precise contractual link with the tenderer is clearly indicated.

Criterion B1	<u>A Project manager</u> with at least five years of experience in managing projects of similar size (at least 100 000 EUR) and with experience in management of team of at least five people.
Evidence (to be provided with the offer)	Concise but informative curricula vitae, with the educational and professional qualifications.

Criterion B2	At least two <i>of the team</i> members of the team should have at least C1 level in the Common European Framework for Reference for Languages ¹¹ in English
Evidence (to be provided with the offer)	CV, a language certificate or past relevant experience.

Criterion B3	<u>Expert in</u> social research methodology and methods including quantitative techniques such as surveys as well as qualitative research approaches, ideally with experience in studying topics related to the digital transformation of society. At least one professional with 8 years professional experience or two professionals with 5 years professional experience on the subject matter. At least one professional should have at least 3 years of experience in topics related to the digitalisation of public services or related fields.
Evidence (to be provided with the offer)	Concise but informative curricula vitae, with the educational and professional qualifications.

Criterion B4	At least two of the team with proven experience of 4 years in data collection and data collection techniques.
Evidence (to be provided with the offer)	CV shall be filled in by each person involved in the execution of the tasks foreseen in the tender. Please make sure the precise contractual link with the tenderer is clearly indicated.

¹⁰ Available at <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/documents/curriculum-vitae>

¹¹ See http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Cadre1_en.asp

Criterion B5	Collectively in the team (and/or the network used for the data collection), at least 1 person per country should have knowledge of the language(s) spoken in the country) that are selected for the pilot. In total 3 countries out of the 36 countries represented in the eGovernment Benchmark working group will be selected – to be defined by the Commission in collaboration with the contractor.
Evidence (to be provided on request)	A language certificate or past relevant experience.

Continuity of the service: the tenderers shall confirm the continuity of the team possessing the profile and qualifications mentioned above for the whole duration of the execution of the tasks. They shall inform the contracting authority without delay of any modification occurring in the team delivering the service.

4.3. Award criteria

The contract will be awarded based on the most economically advantageous tender, according to the 'best price-quality ratio' award method. The quality of the tender will be evaluated based on the following criteria. The maximum total quality score is 100 points.

1. Quality of the proposed methodology and tools for performing the task (maximum score: 60 points)

Under this criterion the quality and appropriateness of the methodology and tools as described in the tender and the specific methodology envisaged for each task will be assessed. The quality and appropriateness will be assessed against the completeness, clarity and relevance of the proposed approach as regards the tasks set out in the technical specifications.

1. Sub-criterion 1.1: Appropriateness of technical approaches to address the work requested
2. Sub-criterion 1.2: Completeness and effectiveness of the proposed approach (max. 10 points).
3. Sub-criterion 1.3: Appropriateness of the scheme proposed for the interactions with the eGovernment contact points.

Tenderers should provide a description of the methodologies and multidisciplinary approaches proposed for undertaking the tasks. They should list in particular the tools and methods envisaged. This description must be as precise as possible. To this purpose, they could also mention the tools used in the past by them or by members of the consortium and present the concepts or theories followed.

2. Organisation of the work and resources (maximum score: 20 points)

This criterion will assess how the roles and responsibilities of the proposed team and of the different economic operators (in case of joint tenders, including subcontractors if applicable) are distributed to carry out the task. The tender should provide details on the allocation of time and human resources and the rationale behind the choice of this allocation. Details should be provided as part of the technical offer. It is not a budget requested as part of the financial offer.

Sub-criterion 2.1: Feasibility to meet the objectives specified in the tender specifications outlined by a workplan or timetable

Sub-criterion 2.2: Adequacy and appropriateness of the overall allocation of time and resources to the study and to each task or deliverable, as well as the level of direct participation of senior staff in performance of the tasks required under these tender specifications and specifying clearly the identity, roles, activities and responsibilities of subcontractor(s)

3. Quality control measures (maximum score: 20 points)

Tenderers should provide a quality plan, to specify how they intend to control and ensure high quality and effective monitoring of the services and works they may be required to supply to the Commission in execution of the contract. This criterion will assess the quality control system applied to the service foreseen in this tender specification concerning the quality of the deliverables, the language quality check, and continuity of the service in case of absence of the member of the team. The quality system should be detailed in the tender and specific to the tasks at hand; a generic quality system will result in a low score.

Sub-criterion 3.1: Adequacy of the quality control system applied to the service foreseen in the tender specifications. This could include among others:

- quality of all information supplied to the contracting authority,
- quality of the deliverables (e.g. errorless and complete reports, documents and files),
- language quality check,
- data quality check, including among others cleaning up, addressing data gaps etc.,
- anticipation and mitigation measures of problems in the contract execution (e.g. in the interpretation of the questions for the developed framework and in the course of the pilot); and
- continuity of the service in case of absence of a member of the team.

(the points above are examples/requirements for assessing the sub-criterion. Other quality control measures could also be introduced)

Tenders must score minimum 50% for each criterion, and minimum 60 % in total. Tenders that do not reach the minimum quality levels will be rejected and will not be ranked.

4.4. Ranking of tenders

The contract will be awarded to the most economically advantageous tender, i.e. the tender offering the best price-quality ratio determined in accordance with the formula below

Score for tender X	=	$\frac{\text{cheapest price}}{\text{price of tender X}}$	*	total quality score (out of 100) for all criteria of tender X
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The tender ranked first after applying the formula will be awarded the contract.

5 Payment and standard contract

Payments under the contract shall be made in accordance with articles I.5 and II.21 of the model contract attached, provided that the contractor has fulfilled all his contractual obligations.

The invoice shall be submitted in electronic format using the e-prior communication platform.

Further instructions/guidance documents to assist contractors in sending the electronic invoice will be communicated by the Commission after the award contract.

6 Additional provisions

Changes to tenders will be accepted only if they are received on or before the final date set for the receipt of tenders.

No information of any kind will be given on the state of progress with regard to the evaluation of tenders.

7 Liquidated damages

Please refer to article II.15 of the model contract

8 No obligation to award the contract

Initiation of a tendering procedure imposes no obligation on the Commission to award the contract. Should the invitation to tender cover several items or lots, the Commission reserves the right to award a contract for only some of them. The Commission shall not be liable for any compensation with respect to tenderers whose tenders have not been accepted. Nor shall it be so liable if it decides not to award the contract.

9 Results

The results of the service must be forwarded to the European Commission in Brussels. The copyright will belong to the Commission; the Commission will in particular have the right to publish the results, including the structured final data.

If the result is not to be fully created for the purpose of the contract it is to be clearly pointed out in the tender. There should be information provided about the scope of pre-existing materials, their source and when and how right to have them have been acquired.

The provisions on the use of the results and ownership of the results can be found in the Model Service Contract (Article I.10 Exploitation of the results of the contract and Article II.13 Intellectual Property Rights).