



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
REGIONAL POLICY
Policy development
Evaluation

Brussels,
REGIO.C.4./CY D(2010) 680202

Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: Call for tenders by open procedure n° 2010.CE.16.0.AT.059 – Study on the relevance and the effectiveness of ERDF and Cohesion Fund support to regions with specific geographical features – islands, mountainous and sparsely populated areas

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 **14/09/2010**, 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
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

Exact address :

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

not later than the end of working hours on **14/09/2010**. 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° 2010.CE.16.0.AT.059 - 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 (*on paper plus a CD or DVD with a copy of those documents in electronic format -word or pdf-*) 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, including supporting evidence of economic, financial, technical and professional capacity 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: 6 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 the Evaluation Unit, Regio-Directeur-C@ec.europa.eu.

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 and will be published at the internet address below.

Tendering documents are available on the website of Directorate General for Regional Policy at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/tender/tender_en.htm (including any additional information referred to above).

Potential tenderers are requested to regularly verify the internet website.

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.

10. This invitation to tender is in no way binding 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. If processing your reply to the invitation to tender involves 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 Ms Veronica Gaffey, Head of Evaluation Unit, Directorate General for Regional Policy, e-mail: regio-eval@ec.europa.eu.

Details concerning processing of your personal data are available on the privacy statement at the page

http://ec.europa.eu/dataprotectionofficer/privacystatement_publicprocurement_en.pdf.

14. You are informed that for the purposes of safeguarding the financial interest of the Union, your personal data may be transferred to internal audit services, to the 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) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 (OJ L 248 of 16.09.2002), as amended by Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1995/2006 of 13 December 2006 (OJ L 390 of 30.12.2006)

**STUDY ON THE RELEVANCE AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ERDF AND COHESION FUND
SUPPORT TO REGIONS WITH SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES – ISLANDS,
MOUNTAINOUS AND SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS**

TENDER SPECIFICATIONS

1. TITLE OF THE CONTRACT

Study on the relevance and the effectiveness of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund support to regions with specific geographical features – islands, mountainous and sparsely populated areas.

2. OVERALL PURPOSE AND CONTEXT OF THIS EVALUATION

Over the years European legislation has recognised the existence of permanent structural handicaps in development of some regions due to their specific geographical features. These permanent handicaps have been identified in three types of areas: mountainous areas, territories with low population density and island territories.

Though highly diverse in terms of geography, population and economic development, most of these regions face common challenges: insufficient access to key infrastructure facilities and other services, specialisation of local economies and dependency on imports, low population density, fragile ecosystems, etc. At the same time, due to their specific geographic features, these territories have potential for growth and important assets such as unique natural and cultural heritage, preconditions for tourism industry.

Article 158 of the Amsterdam Treaty and its annexed Declaration 30 recognised that island regions in particular suffer from structural handicaps due to their island status which permanently hamper their socio-economic development. The treaty calls for specific measures in favour of these regions to help them better integrate in the internal market.

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union reinforces these provisions by including territorial cohesion as one of its objectives. Article 174 states that *"particular attention should be paid to rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition, and regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps such as the northernmost regions with very low population density and island, cross-border and mountain regions"*.

In 2008 the European Commission adopted a Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion which refers in particular to three specific types of regions facing particular development challenges:

- Mountain regions, which are often border regions and in which more than a third of the people live in rural areas;
- Island regions, which in many cases are mountainous and more than half of the population also live in a border region; islands include 6 of the 7 outermost regions;

- 18 sparsely populated regions, all rural and almost all border regions.

A recent working paper on territories with specific geographical features distinguishes five types of specific regions based on their geographic specificities and makes clear that these categories are not mutually exclusive (border regions, mountainous regions, island regions, sparsely populated and outermost regions). It concludes that these five types of territories are too heterogeneous to establish specific programmes on the basis of geographical criteria only. It suggests that a more fine-tuned grouping is needed to design and implement European cohesion policy programmes in the specific territories².

Specific context of this contract

Although Structural Funds regulations allow significant flexibility³ and the Funds co-finance a wide range of activities in areas facing natural handicaps, concerns have been raised about the appropriateness and effectiveness of cohesion policy in islands and mountainous regions. Some stakeholders plead for higher co-financing rates and strategic policy approaches tailored for different territories according to their specific needs. Given the principle of subsidiarity and the great diversity and complexity of these territories, developing a unique European island or mountain policy is not appropriate. Most Member States concerned have set up specific actions in favour of their islands or mountainous areas along with cross-border and interregional cooperation actions. However, previous studies⁴ argue for need for development and implementation of appropriate policies that recognise the diversity and specificities of mountain and island regions. In this respect it is worth exploring the role and potential of the European Structural Funds and Cohesion policy in these territories.

3. SUBJECT OF CONTRACT

Subject: the objective of this study is to examine the extent to which cohesion policy interventions are and have been appropriate in mountainous, islands and sparsely populated regions⁵. The second objective is to explore policy and governance approaches and identify good practices in implementing "territorial cohesion" on the ground in the case of islands, mountainous and sparsely populated regions.

Scope: The study covers Convergence and Regional Competitiveness and Employment objectives (2000-2006 and 2007-2013) focusing particularly on 30 selected regions receiving support from European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) or the Cohesion

² Philippe Monfort, Working paper "Territories with specific geographical features", European Commission, Directorate General for Regional Policy, 02/2009.

³ Article 10, Regulation 1080/2006 on the European Regional Development Fund allows financing of investments aiming at improving accessibility, promoting and developing economic activities related and cultural and natural heritage in the specific territories for both Convergence and Competitiveness objectives.; Art.52 (f), General Regulation 1083/2006 allows modulation of contribution rates for specific territories.

⁴ Nordregio, Mountain Areas in Europe: Analysis of mountain areas in EU member States, acceding and other European countries, Final report, January 2004.

⁵ Rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition and cross-border areas are not covered by this study

Fund. The regional level of analysis will be NUTS 3⁶ and NUTS 2 level⁷. A tentative list of NUTS 3 regions belonging to the categories of islands, mountainous and/or sparsely populated can be found in the annex.

The study does not cover the outermost regions because of their special legal status and extreme remoteness/isolation. Previous studies suggest that in most cases the differences between outermost regions and other islands are so important statistically, that these territories must be considered in a separate analysis.⁸ Cyprus and Malta are also excluded from the analysis, being island-States.

Definitions: Mountainous areas are defined by the national legislation of the Member States. For the purposes of this study the definition of islands will reflect the criteria used the Eurostat publication '*Portrait of Islands*' and in the study commissioned by Directorate General for Regional Policy on island regions 2003:

- minimum surface area = 1 km²;
- minimum distance between the island and the mainland = 1 km;
- resident population \geq 50 inhabitants;
- no fixed link (bridge, tunnel, dyke) between the island and the mainland;
- no Member State capital on the island.

The sparsely populated regions are defined as NUTS3 regions with population density of less than 12,5 inhabitants per square km.⁹

3.1. Tasks

The objective of the study gives rise to a number of tasks to be undertaken by the contractor. The core tasks which must be undertaken are listed below.

Task 1: Literature review

The contractor will review the existing literature on islands, mountains and sparsely populated areas and will draw up some key features of the theoretical approach to be used in the following tasks. This includes:

- Analysis of the economic, social and territorial rationale to support islands, mountains and sparsely populated regions;
- Analysis of the assets and potential for growth for each type of territory.

⁶ The European Commission is aware of the fact NUTS3 level of analysis leaves out some regions and is not statistically representative (massifs such as the Northern Apennines and the Pyrenees, mountain ranges of the British Isles and of Cyprus are excluded from the analysis when considering only NUTS3 regions with more than 50% mountain population. *Ibid* for some insular areas). However, since this is a qualitative study based on a small number of regions, this should not undermine the findings.

⁷ Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 May 2003 on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS). OJ L 154, 21.6.2003.

⁸ Analysis of the island regions and outermost regions of the European Union, part II: the outermost regions, presented by Planistat Europe and Bradley Dunbar Ass, March 2003.

⁹ Guidelines on national and regional aid for 2007-2013 (2006/C54/05).

- Review of the obstacles that potentially can prevent these three types of territories from equal benefiting from the single market. Particular attention should be paid to accessibility to infrastructure and services including access to ICT and internal and external mobility; independently whether we analyse mountainous, islands or sparsely populated areas, obstacles to mobility is a common challenge leading to similar effects;
- Review and analysis of different territorial policy approaches including governance towards specific territories (national/regional strategies, macro-regional/local approaches, etc.) Particular attention will be paid to the role of the ERDF and its complementarity with national funds and other European funds in these three types of regions.
- A proposed list of 5 regions of each type (mountainous, island and sparsely populated) where ERDF interventions were or could be relevant in turning their geographical handicaps into a development asset. Selection criteria should be proposed in the tender documentation.

Task 2: Analysis of ERDF interventions within the 15 selected regions (Objectives 1 and 2 covering 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 programming periods)

The contractor will review and analyse 15 regions which received support from the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund. This task aims to establish the ERDF and Cohesion Fund (where relevant) contribution and how it matches the needs of these regions. For the 2000-2006 period the focus should be on achieved results and the added value of the funds in the regions. For the 2007-2013 period the contractor will establish how these territories are considered in the current programmes and if there is any continuity or shift of priorities across the two programming periods. The following is required:

- Analysis of financial allocations and expenditure by priority and category of expenditure, as well as achievements against targets wherever possible. Particular attention should be paid to changes in strategies (if any) between the two programming periods.
- Examining the extent to which programmes are relevant and adapted to the specific context of islands and mountainous regions. Particular attention will be paid to the use of the existing opportunities allowed by the current legal framework for specific territories. To what extent have these territories been taken into account in programme and policy design and their implementation?
- Assessment of the extent to which ERDF complements other sources of funding (ESF, EAGGF, FIFG, EAGF, EAFRD or national funds)
- Identification of 6 cases of interesting practice that could be useful for other specific regions facing similar problems; to be further examined in the following task.

Task 3: Case studies

This task consists of carrying out in-depth analysis of 6 cases (regions) at NUTS3 level. The focus will be on analysing the relevance and the effectiveness of ERDF and Cohesion

Fund co-financed programmes and the extent to which they are adapted to the specific contexts of islands, mountainous and sparsely populated areas. This implies:

3.1 – Brief context analysis – should include analysis of the needs and challenges these territories face. The contractor will look at geographic, socio-economic, political and administrative aspects in particular (sectoral specialisation, existing policy responses/strategies at local, regional, national and European level, co-ordination between various funds, regional development strategy, co-ordination with neighbouring regions under INTERREG Community initiative, etc.) and how these have evolved since 2000.

3.2 – Relevance: To what extent are ERDF and the Cohesion Fund programmes relevant and adapted to the specific context of islands, mountainous and sparsely populated regions? Is there an appropriate geographical dimension to develop in cohesion policy programmes to meet the needs of the territories covered? What differences are notable between the two programming periods?

3.3 – Effectiveness: for the 2000-2006 period the case studies should include analysis of the utility and the achievements including a comparison with the targets set and reflection on the extent to which ERDF and the Cohesion Fund have achieved results in the analysed territories. For the 2007-2013 period progress in achieving outputs and their results should be reviewed.

3.4 – Implementation and governance: Case studies will explore how the examined regions have taken into account their territorial specificities and if an appropriate level of governance exists for these territories – local, national, transnational, macro-regional, etc? Territorial cohesion is among others, a question of governance and concerns different public authorities and different scales. The in-depth analysis of the case studies should examine this question in and try to identify governance patterns.

The case studies will use available secondary data, (relevant documents, project reports, websites etc) and interviews with key stakeholders. The tender should present a proposal for the selection, methodology and a template for the case studies. The final selection of cases will be agreed with the European Commission once the contract is signed. A pilot case study will be undertaken. The following minimum questions should be supplemented with issues coming from the literature review:

- What is the structure of the economy and how do the ERDF/Cohesion Fund areas of interventions relate to the key sectors for these territories? Are there any trends from the past and how can ERDF best fit to promote these territories in future? Analysis of potential policy areas of intervention where European Funds and ERDF in particular could add value.
- How can basic infrastructure (such as transport, health and environmental facilities) increase the capacity of local actors to take advantage of the development potential in these territories?
- To what extent have the possibilities available under the current Structural Funds framework been used? If not, give the reasons why. This involves exploring the effects of the current special legal provisions outside the ERDF

funding, e.g. exemption in competition policies for companies based in islands.

- Should policy encourage multi-sectoral approaches of economic activities or focus on a few that the region could turn into a competitive advantage (such as tourism for example or agriculture)?
- Are there any examples of co-financed projects that had positive effects on these territories and can be used as good practice examples? (e.g. knowledge intensive innovative activities aiming to change the perception of 'geographical handicap' and use it as a competitive advantage).
- From the 6 case studies, 6 examples of good practice (either a project or an approach) will be presented and analysed in an 8-10 pages "mini case study" according to the 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 practices¹⁰.

Task 4: Policy conclusions

The contractor should synthesise the work done under the previous tasks and draw conclusions. Policy conclusions will be drawn on the basis of the lessons learned from the previous tasks carried out. This means:

- To conclude on the ERDF/Cohesion Fund contribution and added value for these specific territories and the extent to which Cohesion policy is adapted to their needs;
- To conclude on determining factors (apart from geographic specifics) for effective policy and maximising the effects of the ERDF/Cohesion Fund interventions in particular.
 - What are the policy areas where Structural Funds should focus to maximise their effect? What should be the most appropriate areas of intervention of ERDF and the Cohesion Fund in the future programming periods for each of these types of territories?
 - What other EU policies are especially relevant to complement ERDF in mountainous, islands and sparsely populated areas?
 - What should be an appropriate scale for mountain/island policy – regional, national or EU? Sectoral or integrated?
- To highlight interesting practices and draft practical recommendations for Managing authorities on how to make optimal use of ERDF/Cohesion Fund for their specific territories.

¹⁰ See http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_en.cfm.

3.2. Methodology

The study will require a methodological approach, which the contractor should explain in their tender documentation. A combination of methodologies will be used in the study. Each of the tasks of the evaluation will require a methodological approach. Key requirements have been specified in the description of tasks above. Overall the main methodological tools will be:

- Documentary review and desk research;
- Data work, including collection of primary and secondary data and quality control;
- The core of this evaluation is the case studies in Task 3; The Commission draws the attention of tenderers to the relevance of this methodology for the evaluation. The case study should "tell the story" of the region in relation to the policy theme of the evaluation. Context dependent information and interrelationships between the various aspects should be analysed in detailed to learn about how the policy is implemented and works in practice in the particular region being examined. Analysis across the case studies should shed light on the findings generating from the previous tasks and should provide evidence-based answers to the main questions of the evaluation¹¹. Drafting good quality case studies is a challenging task involving semi-structured interviews with programme managers, intermediate bodies and other relevant stakeholders. Tenderers should specifically address this aspect in their offers and make practical suggestions.
- Other methodological approaches as appropriate (to be specified by the evaluator in the tender documentation).

For each task, the tenderer will clearly identify the methods they plan to use. The tender documents should cite the relevant literature linked to the methods for each of the tasks, in order to demonstrate in each case that the methodology proposed is in line with the state of the art. In particular the tender should specify the qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. The methodology for each task will be refined and developed by the contractor in the light of the results of task 1.

A tentative list of NUTS 3 regions that are respectively mountain, island and sparsely populated is displayed in annex I. On this basis, the tender documentation should propose 15 regions to be examined in Task 2. It will give reasons for the proposal. The definitive list will be decided by the Commission services taking due account of the contractor proposal.

3.3. Time schedule and Deliverables

The study will be executed within twelve months starting from the signature of the contract by the last contracting party. The deliverables and their timing are specified below.

¹¹ For more detailed information see the paper "Case studies in the framework of ex post evaluation, 2000-2006: expectations and experiences of the DG for Regional policy" presented at the Conference "New Methods for Cohesion Policy Evaluation: Promoting Accountability and Learning", Warsaw, 30 November / 1 December 2009.
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/evaluation2009/index_en.htm

Reports and meetings required by the Terms of Reference

End Month	Output	Meeting
0		Kick-Off Meeting with DG REGIO
1	Inception Report	Meeting with Steering Group
2	First Intermediate Report	Meeting with Steering Group
4	Second Intermediate Report	Meeting with Steering Group
5	Pilot case study	
11	Draft final Report	Meeting with Steering Group
12	Final Report	

The deliverables of this study will be:

- **Deliverable 1:** one methodological **inception report** covering all Tasks is required. A template for the mini case studies should be developed under this task.
Deadline: within one month after the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 2:** progress reports of 2 pages maximum.
Deadline: every month, except when another report is due.
- **Deliverable 3: first intermediate report** with an overview of the work carried out under Task 1, the conclusions of the literature review and the list of 5 regions for each type of territory to be analysed in the following tasks.
Deadline: within two months after the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 4: second intermediate report** with the work carried out under Task 2 and selection of six case studies.
Deadline: within four months after the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 5: pilot case study** under task 3.
Deadline: within five months after the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 6: one draft final report.** It will have the same structure of Final Report (see below) and will contain the work carried out under Task 3, five remaining case studies and 6 mini case studies.
Deadline: within eleven months after the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 7: one final report.** Final Report should be written in such a way that the information provided is easily understood. The final report will contain the answers to the evaluation questions plus a description of the context and goal, as well as the organisation and results of this evaluation and the policy conclusions under Task 4. It will contain a description of the tasks carried out and their results. A second part of the report will be dedicated to the case studies – their findings, lessons learnt, recommendations and answer the evaluation questions.
Deadline: within twelve months after the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 8: two presentations** at meetings in Brussels of the results of the evaluation to the Member States and the Commission services.
Deadline: The timetable for the presentations will be agreed during the course of the contract.

A hard copy and an electronic version of the Inception Report and each Interim Report are required. For the Final Report, three hard copies and an electronic version (three CD, Word format and PDF format or equivalent application compatible with MS Office) are required. The Commission will provide details for the layout of the reports.

The evaluator will provide presentation material for the Final Report in English (PowerPoint or equivalent application compatible with MS Office) for the use of Commission services.

All reports need to be delivered in English. **Tenderers should note that a high standard of written English and capacity for clear and concise expression of complex ideas is required in all deliverables.** An executive summary of the Final Report specified above will be delivered in English, French and German.

The contractor should make provisions for the presentation of the results of the evaluation to the Member States and the Commission services (three meetings in Brussels).

The quality of the evaluation will be assessed by the Commission services using the quality criteria from the Evalsed: the resource for the evaluation of socio-economic development:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/evalsed/index_en.htm.

The assessment of the quality will be published by the Commission.

3.4. Organisation of the study

The study 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 with representative of the different Directorates General involved. The evaluator will provide documentation for and attend three meetings of the steering group. It is anticipated that the meetings will take place in order to discuss the inception report, the interim report and the final report.

The Commission will provide the contractor with the following documents for the 15 selected regions: for the 2000-2006 programming period: operational programmes; mid-term evaluations and updated mid-term evaluations; latest annual reports or closure reports; for the 2007-2013 period – operational programmes, ex ante evaluations, latest Annual implementation reports.

4. PARTICIPATION IN THE TENDERING PROCEDURE

The competition is open to any physical person or legal entity coming within the scope of the Treaties and any other physical person or legal entity from a third country which has concluded with the European Union a specific agreement in the area of public contracts, under the conditions provided for in that agreement.

The Multilateral Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA) concluded within the WTO applies and the contract is open to nationals of States that have ratified this Agreement, under the conditions provided for therein. The GPA does not cover all contracts awarded by the EU Institutions. Appendix I to the GPA sets out which contracts are covered. The full text of the GPA and its appendices can be found on http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/gproc_e/gp_gpa_e.htm

As a rule subcontracting is allowed.

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

5. VISITS TO PREMISES OR BRIEFING

Not applicable.

6. VARIANTS

Not authorised.

7. VOLUME OF CONTRACT

€250,000 maximum (lump sum, including fees, travel expenses and other costs).

8. 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 Union, the Union is 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 must include a separate estimate for travel and subsistence expenses. This estimate must be based on the standard Commission rules (published on Inforegio). 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. These expenses must be included in the price quoted.
- Costs incurred in preparing and submitting tenders are borne by the tenderers and cannot be reimbursed.

9. 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 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 inception report.

A second interim payment equal to 40 % 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.

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 previous deliverables, and the organisation of the report's presentations.

10. CONTRACTUAL TERMS AND GUARANTEES

For the contractual terms, see the draft contract published on Info regio.

Guarantee: Not applicable

11. CRITERIA

Exclusion criteria

A. Exclusion from participation in the procedure:

Tenderers are excluded from participating in a procedure if

- (a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- (b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- (c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authorities can justify;
- (d) they have not fulfilled their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established, or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be carried out;

- (e) they have 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 European Union's financial interests;
- (f) they have, following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the European Union's budget, been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

Evidence:

1. Tenderers shall provide *a declaration* on their honour*, duly signed and dated, stating that they are not in one of the situations described above.
2. The tenderer to whom the contract is to be awarded shall provide, within 10 days preceding the signature of the contract, the evidence referred to in the following paragraph, confirming the declaration referred to in the previous paragraph.
3. The contracting authority will accept, as satisfactory evidence that the tenderer to whom the contract is to be awarded is not in one of the situations described in points a), b) or e), an extract from the judicial record or, failing that, an equivalent document issued by a judicial or administrative authority in the country of origin or provenance, showing that those requirements are satisfied.

The contracting authority will accept, as satisfactory evidence that the tenderer is not in one of the situations described in point d), a certificate issued by the competent authority of the Member State concerned.

Where no such document or certificate is issued by the country concerned and for other cases of exclusion referred to in cases c) and f) above, 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 or her country of origin or provenance.

These documents or certificates must be valid on the closing date for receipt of tenders, and in any case, they must have been delivered less than 12 months before this closing date.

Depending on the national legislation of the country in which the tenderer is established, the documents referred to in points 1 and 3 above must relate to legal persons and natural persons including, where considered necessary by the contracting authority, company directors or any person with powers of representation, decision-making or control in relation to the tenderer.

B. Exclusion from award of the contract:

No contract will be awarded to tenderers who, at the time when contracts are being awarded under this procedure:

- a. have a conflict of interest. The Commission must ensure that the tenderer does not, at the time of submitting a tender, have any conflict of interest in connection with this call for tenders, a conflict of interest possibly arising in particular as a result of

* The model declaration on honour published with this call covers all exclusion criteria.

economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional ties, or any other relevant connection or shared interest. The Commission reserves the right to assess whether a conflict of interest exists.

To that end tenderers are asked to state whether their payroll, staff or shareholders include:

- any former European officials, contract staff, temporary staff or auxiliary staff who have worked for the European Union in the last three years preceding this call for tenders;
- any European officials on leave;
- any former agents on secondment within the European institutions having worked to the European Union during three years preceding this call for tender;
- any former trainees who have completed a placement at the EC during the year preceding this call for tenders.

Tenderers are also asked to declare:

- that they have not made and will not make any offer of any type whatsoever from which an advantage can be derived under the contract;
 - that 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 the award of the contract;
 - that they will inform the contracting authority, without delay, of any situation constituting a conflict of interest or which could give rise to a conflict of interest.
- b. have been guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the contract procedure or have failed to supply that information.

Evidence:

The contracting authority will accept, as satisfactory evidence that the tenderer is not in one of the situations described in points B. a) and b), a **declaration* on their honour** signed by the tenderer. However, the Commission reserves the right to verify the information.

* The model declaration on honour published with this call covers all exclusion criteria.

C. Tenders submitted by consortia or groups of service providers – tenders involving subcontracting

Where the tender is submitted by a consortium or by a contractor intending to subcontract part of the work or have it performed by another economic operator, the exclusion criteria defined above have to be fulfilled by each economic operator involved in the tender.

Evidence:

In the case of tenders submitted by consortia or groups of service providers, every economic operator in the tender must provide a declaration on honour to prove that none of the exclusion criteria for participation or award of contracts applies to it.

The tenderer to whom the contract is to be awarded shall provide, within 10 days preceding the signature of the contract, the evidence referred to above, confirming the declaration on honour for every economic operator part of the consortia or groups of service providers.

In the case of tenders involving subcontracting, the tenderer to whom the contract is to be awarded shall provide, within 10 days preceding the signature of the contract, the evidence referred to above for the exclusion criteria for participation or award of contracts, confirming the declaration on honour for every subcontractor for which the Commission will request it.

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

The tenderers must prove that they have the economic and financial capacity to carry out the tasks set out in the Tender Specifications throughout the duration of the contract.

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;
- 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) The educational and professional qualifications of the service provider or contractor and/or those of the firm's managerial staff and, in particular, those of the person or persons responsible for providing 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 one providing a high level of quality (for which it will be given a mark) 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 (20%)
- Appropriateness of the methodology (economic analysis, case study methodology), (50 %)
- Quality of planning of human resources and work organisation (30 %)

12. TENDERS

General comments

Tenderers must include in their replies

- all the information and documentation needed to enable the contracting authority to appraise tenderers/tenders on the basis of the exclusion, selection and award criteria;

- the price;
- any other information and documentation required in the tendering documents.

Tenders may be written in any of the official EU languages.

Tenders from the consortia of companies or groups of service providers must specify the role, qualifications and experience of each member or group, and submit all the applicable documents required in the tendering documents.

The previous provisions also apply to any subcontractors that may be involved in the tender.

In case of tenders involving subcontractors, a letter of intent must be supplied by each subcontractor stating its unambiguous undertaking to collaborate with the tenderer if he wins the contract and the extent of the resources that it will put at the tenderer disposal for the performance of the contract.

13. OPENING OF TENDERS

Tenders will be opened on **21/09/2010** at **14:00** at CSM1 9/020, DG Regional Policy, rue Père de Deken, 23, 1040 Brussels. Tenderers may be present at the opening of tenders. Each tenderer may take part or send a representative.

Appendix

Annex 1: Tentative list of NUTS 3 regions included in the three examined categories of specific territories

<i>Code</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Mountain</i>	<i>Island</i>	<i>Sparely populated</i>
BG315	Lovech	✓		
BG322	Gabrovo	✓		
BG343	Yambol	✓		
BG412	Sofia	✓		
BG413	Blagoevgrad	✓		
BG414	Pernik	✓		
BG415	Kyustendil	✓		
BG424	Smolyan	✓		
BG425	Kardzhali	✓		
CZ041	Karlovarsky kraj	✓		
CZ051	Liberecky kraj	✓		
DK014	Bornholm		✓	
DE114	Goppingen	✓		
DE125	Heidelberg, Stadtkreis	✓		
DE12A	Calw	✓		
DE12C	Freudenstadt	✓		
DE137	Tuttlingen	✓		
DE139	Lorrach	✓		
DE13A	Waldshut	✓		
DE141	Reutlingen	✓		
DE143	Zollernalbkreis	✓		
DE215	Berchtesgadener	✓		
DE21D	Garmisch-Partenkirchen	✓		
DE21F	Miesbach	✓		
DE224	Deggendorf	✓		
DE225	Freyung-Grafenau	✓		
DE229	Regen	✓		
DE24A	Kronach	✓		
DE27E	Oberallgau	✓		
DE71B	Odenwaldkreis	✓		
DEB15	Birkenfeld	✓		
DEB16	Cochem-Zell	✓		
DEB19	Rhein-Hunsrück-Kreis	✓		
DEB22	Bernkastel-Wittlich	✓		
DED14	Annaberg	✓		
DED18	Mittlerer Erzgebirgskreis	✓		
DED1B	Aue-Schwarzenberg	✓		

Source: Working paper on Territories with specific geographical features, Philip Monfort 2009

<i>Code</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Mountain</i>	<i>Island</i>	<i>Sparely populated</i>
DEG03	Jena, Kreisfreie Stadt	✓		
DEG04	Suhl, Kreisfreie Stadt	✓		
DEG0B	Schmalkalden- Meiningen	✓		
DEG0E	Hildburghausen	✓		
DEG0F	Ilm-Kreis	✓		
DEG0H	Sonneberg	✓		
DEG0I	Saalfeld-Rudolstadt	✓		
GR115	Kavala	✓		
GR131	Grevena	✓		
GR132	Kastoria	✓		
GR133	Kozani	✓		
GR134	Florina	✓		
GR212	Thesprotia	✓		
GR213	Ioannina	✓		
GR221	Zakynthos		✓	
GR222	Kerkyra		✓	
GR223	Kefallinia	✓	✓	
GR224	Lefkada	✓		
GR231	Aitolokarnania	✓		
GR243	Evrytania	✓	✓	✓
GR244	Fthiotida	✓		
GR245	Fokida	✓		
GR252	Arkadia	✓		
GR411	Lesvos		✓	
GR412	Samos	✓	✓	
GR413	Chios		✓	
GR421	Dodekanisos		✓	
GR422	Kyklades	✓	✓	
GR431	Irakleio		✓	
GR432	Lasithi		✓	
GR433	Rethymni		✓	
GR434	Chania		✓	
ES112	Lugo	✓		
ES113	Ourense	✓		
ES211	Alava			
ES220	Navarra	✓		
ES242	Teruel	✓		✓
ES411	Avila	✓		
ES417	Soria			✓
ES423	Cuenca			✓
ES424	Guadalajara	✓		
ES531	Eivissa y Formentera		✓	

<i>Code</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Mountain</i>	<i>Island</i>	<i>Sparely populated</i>
ES532	Mallorca		✓	
ES533	Menorca		✓	
ES614	Granada	✓		
ES616	Jaen	✓		
FR621	Ariege	✓		
FR622	Aveyron	✓		
FR712	Ardeche	✓		
FR715	Loire	✓		
FR717	Savoie	✓		
FR718	Haute-Savoie	✓		
FR722	Cantal	✓		
FR723	Haute-Loire	✓		
FR724	Puy-de-Dome	✓		
FR814	Lozere	✓		
FR821	Alpes-de-Haute-Provence	✓		
FR822	Hautes-Alpes	✓		
FR831	Corse-du-Sud	✓	✓	
FR832	Haute-Corse	✓	✓	
ITC13	Biella	✓		
ITC14	Verbano-Cusio-Ossola	✓		
ITC20	Valle d'Aosta/Vallee d'Aoste	✓		
ITC43	Lecco	✓		
ITC44	Sondrio	✓		
ITD10	Bolzano-Bozen	✓		
ITD20	Trento	✓		
ITD33	Belluno	✓		
ITE42	Rieti	✓		
ITF11	L'Aquila	✓		
ITF21	Isernia	✓		
ITF22	Campobasso	✓		
ITF32	Benevento	✓		
ITF34	Avellino	✓		
ITF35	Salerno	✓		
ITF51	Potenza	✓		
ITF61	Cosenza	✓		
ITF63	Catanzaro	✓		
ITF64	Vibo Valentia	✓		
ITG11	Trapani		✓	
ITG12	Palermo		✓	
ITG13	Messina		✓	
ITG14	Agrigento		✓	
ITG15	Caltanissetta		✓	
ITG16	Enna		✓	

<i>Code</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Mountain</i>	<i>Island</i>	<i>Sparely populated</i>
ITG17	Catania		✓	
ITG18	Ragusa		✓	
ITG19	Siracusa		✓	
ITG25	Sassari		✓	
ITG26	Nuoro	✓	✓	
ITG27	Cagliari		✓	
ITG28	Oristano		✓	
ITG29	Olbia-Tempio		✓	
ITG2A	Ogliastra	✓	✓	
ITG2B	Medio Campidano		✓	
ITG2C	Carbonia-Iglesias		✓	
AT122	Niederosterreich-Sud	✓		
AT211	Klagenfurt-Villach	✓		
AT212	Oberkarnten	✓		
AT213	Unterkarnten	✓		
AT221	Graz	✓		
AT222	Liezen	✓		
AT223	Ostliche Obersteiermark	✓		
AT225	West- und- Sudsteiermark	✓		
AT226	Westliche Obersteiermark	✓		
AT313	Muhlviertel	✓		
AT314	Steyr-Kirchdorf	✓		
AT315	Traunviertel	✓		
AT321	Lungau	✓		
AT322	Pinzgau-Pongau	✓		
AT323	Salzburg und Umgebung			
AT331	Auserfern	✓		
AT332	Innsbruck	✓		
AT333	Osttirol	✓		
AT334	Tiroler Oberland			
AT335	Tiroler Unterland	✓		
AT341	Bludenz-Bregenzer Wald	✓		
AT342	Rheintal-Bodenseegebiet	✓		
PL215	Nowosą decki	✓		
PL225	Bielski	✓		
PL517	Wał brzyski	✓		
PT115	Tamega	✓		
PT117	Douro	✓		
PT118	Alto Tras-os-Montes	✓		
PT164	Pinhal Interior Norte	✓		
PT165	Dao-Lafoes	✓		

<i>Code</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Mountain</i>	<i>Island</i>	<i>Sparely populated</i>
PT166	Pinhal Interior Sul	✓		
PT167	Serra da Estrela	✓		
PT168	Beira Interior Norte	✓		
PT16A	Cova da Beira	✓		
RO112	Bistrița-Năsăud	✓		
RO113	Cluj	✓		
RO114	Maramureș	✓		
RO122	Brașov	✓		
RO123	Covasna	✓		
RO124	Harghita	✓		
RO423	Hunedoara	✓		
SI013	Koroška	✓		
SI014	Savinjska	✓		
SI015	Zasavska	✓		
SI018	Notranjsko-kraška	✓		
SI022	Gorenjska	✓		
SI023	Goriška	✓		
SI024	Obalno-kraška	✓		
SK031	Žilinský kraj	✓		
SK032	Banskobystrický kraj	✓		
SK041	Prešovský kraj	✓		
FI131	Egtelä-Savo			✓
FI133	Pohjois-Karjala			✓
FI134	Kainuu	✓		✓
FI1A3	Lappi	✓		✓
FI200	Aland		✓	
SE312	Dalarnas län			✓
SE321	Västernorrlands län			✓
SE214	Gotlands län		✓	
SE332	Norrbottnens län	✓		✓
UKJ34	Isle of Wight		✓	
UKL15	Central Valleys	✓		
UKM61	Caithness & Southern and Ross a Cromarty			✓
UKM63	Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh, Arran & Cumbrae and Argyll & Bute			✓
UKM64	Eilean Siar (sparsely populated)		✓	✓
UKM65	Orkney Islands		✓	
UKM66	Shetland Islands		✓	
MT002	Gozo and Comino	✓	✓	

Annex II: Indicative Bibliography

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