



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
REGIONAL AND URBAN POLICY
Policy
Evaluation and European Semester

CALL FOR TENDERS

2014CE16BAT046

**Ex post evaluation of Cohesion Policy programmes 2007-2013,
financed by the European Regional Development Fund
(ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Cohesion
Fund (CF)
Work Package 12: Delivery system**

TENDER SPECIFICATIONS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INFORMATION ON TENDERING.....	4
1.1	Participation.....	4
1.2	Contractual conditions.....	4
1.3	Joint tenders.....	4
1.4	Subcontracting.....	4
1.5	Content of the tender.....	5
1.6	Identification of the tenderer: legal capacity and status.....	5
2	EVALUATION AND AWARD.....	6
2.1	Evaluation steps.....	6
2.2	Exclusion criteria.....	6
2.3	Selection criteria.....	6
	Economic and financial capacity criteria and evidence.....	7
	Technical and professional capacity criteria and evidence.....	7
2.4	Award criteria.....	8
2.5	Technical offer.....	8
2.6	Financial offer.....	9
3	TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS.....	9
3.1	Overall purpose and context of this evaluation.....	9
3.2	Specific context of this contract.....	10
3.3	Subject of contract.....	11
3.4	Scope.....	12
3.5	Tasks.....	12
3.6	Methodology.....	16
3.7	Work organisation.....	17
3.8	Time schedule.....	17
3.9	Deliverables.....	17
3.10	Organisation of the study.....	18
3.11	Documentation for the tenderers.....	19
4	CONTENT, STRUCTURE AND GRAPHIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE FINAL DELIVERABLES.....	19
4.1	Content.....	20
4.2	Graphic requirements.....	20
5	ANNEXES.....	21

Annex 1: Declaration of honour	21
Annex 2: Themes for Work Packages of the Ex Post Evaluation	22
Annex 3 – Initial definitions for task 4.....	23
Annex 4: Bibliography	24
Annex 5 - Quality Control: Output Quality Criteria	26
Annex 6: Template for graphic requirements.....	27

1 INFORMATION ON TENDERING

1.1 PARTICIPATION

Participation in this tender procedure is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons coming within the scope of the Treaties and to all natural and legal persons in a third country which has a special agreement with the Union in the field of public procurement on the conditions laid down in that agreement. Where the Multilateral Agreement on Government Procurement¹ concluded within the WTO applies, the participation to the call for tender is also open to nationals of the countries that have ratified this Agreement, on the conditions it lays down.

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 JOINT TENDERS

A joint tender is a situation where a tender is submitted by a group of economic operators (consortium). Joint tenders may include subcontractors in addition to the joint tenderers.

In case of joint tender, all economic operators in a joint tender assume joint and several liability towards the Contracting Authority for the performance of the contract as a whole. Nevertheless, tenderers must designate a single point of contact for the Contracting Authority.

After the award, the Contracting Authority will sign the contract either with all members of the group, or with the member duly authorised by the other members via a power of attorney.

1.4 SUBCONTRACTING

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

Tenderers must give an indication of the proportion of the contract that they intend to subcontract.

During contract execution, the change of any subcontractor identified in the tender will be subject to prior written approval of the Contracting Authority.

¹ See http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_E/gproc_e/gp_gpa_e.htm

1.5 CONTENT OF THE TENDER

The tenders must be presented as follows:

Part A: Identification of the tenderer (see below)

Part B: Evidence for exclusion criteria (see section 2.2)

Part C: Evidence for selection criteria (see section 2.3)

Part D: Technical offer (see section 2.5)

Part E: Financial offer (see section 2.6)

1.6 IDENTIFICATION OF THE TENDERER: LEGAL CAPACITY AND STATUS

The tender must include a cover letter presenting the name of the tenderer (including all entities in case of joint offer) and identified subcontractors if applicable, and the name of the single contact person in relation to this tender.

If applicable, the cover letter must indicate the proportion of the contract to be subcontracted.

In case of joint tender, the cover letter must be signed by a duly authorised representative for each tenderer, or by a single tenderer duly authorised by other tenderers (with power of attorney).

Subcontractors must provide a letter of intent stating their willingness to provide the service foreseen in the offer and in line with the present tender specification.

In order to prove their legal capacity and their status, all tenderers 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

The tenderer (or the single point of contact in case of joint tender) must provide a Financial Identification Form and supporting documents. Only one form per offer should be submitted (no form is needed for subcontractors and other joint tenderers). The form is available on: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/index_en.cfm

Tenderers must provide the following information if it has not been included with the Legal Entity Form:

- For legal persons, a legible copy of the notice of appointment of the persons authorised to represent the tenderer in dealings with third parties and in legal proceedings, or a copy of the publication of such appointment if the legislation which applies to the legal entity concerned requires such publication. Any delegation of this authorisation to another representative not indicated in the official appointment must be evidenced.
- For natural persons, where applicable, a proof of registration on a professional or trade register or any other official document showing the registration number.

2 EVALUATION AND AWARD

2.1 EVALUATION STEPS

The evaluation is based on the information provided in the submitted tender. It takes place in three steps:

- (1) Verification of non-exclusion of tenderers on the basis of the exclusion criteria
- (2) Selection of tenderers on the basis of selection criteria
- (3) Evaluation of tenders on the basis of the award criteria

Only tenders meeting the requirements of one step will pass on to the next step.

2.2 EXCLUSION CRITERIA

All tenderers shall provide a declaration on their honour (see Annex 1), duly signed and dated by an authorised representative, stating that they are not in one of the situations of exclusion listed in the Annex 1.

The successful tenderer shall provide the documents mentioned as supporting evidence in Annex 1 before signature of the contract and within a deadline given by the contracting authority. This requirement applies to all members of the consortium in case of joint tender.

The model declaration to be inserted in Annex is available on BUDGWEB:

http://www.cc.cec/budg/imp/procurement/doc/doc/declaration_honour/declaration-honour-en.doc

2.3 SELECTION CRITERIA

Tenderers must prove their economic, financial, technical and professional capacity to carry out the work subject to this call for tender.

The evidence requested should be provided by each member of the group in case of joint tender. However a consolidated assessment will be made to verify compliance with the minimum capacity levels.

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.

Economic and financial capacity criteria and evidence

In order to prove their economic and financial capacity, the tenderer (i.e. in case of joint tender, the combined capacity of all members of the consortium and identified subcontractors) should provide the following evidence:

- Copy of the profit & loss account and balance sheet for the last two years for which accounts have been closed,
- Failing that, appropriate statements from banks,
- If applicable, evidence of professional risk indemnity insurance;

If, for some exceptional reason which the Contracting Authority considers justified, a tenderer is unable to provide one or other of the above documents, he or she may prove his or her 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 in the tender. The Commission reserves the right to request any other document enabling it to verify the tenderer's economic and financial capacity.

Technical and professional capacity criteria and evidence

a. Criteria relating to tenderers

Tenderers (in case of a joint tender the combined capacity of all tenderers and identified subcontractors) must comply with the following criteria:

- The tenderer must prove experience in the field of theory and practice of socio-economic analysis and evaluation with at least two projects delivered in this field in the last three years.
- The tenderer must have knowledge of fundamental features of Cohesion Policy.
- The tenderer must prove capacity to draft analytical reports in English.
- The tenderer must prove experience in case studies, interviews and surveys.

Criteria relating to the team delivering the service

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

Project Manager: At least 10 years' 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 and coverage, with at least one year's experience in management of team of at least 5 people.

Language quality check: at least two members of the team should have native-level language skills in English or equivalent, as guaranteed by a certificate or past relevant experience.

b. Evidence

The following evidence should be provided to fulfil the above criteria:

- List of relevant services provided in the past three years, with sums, dates and recipients, public or private. The most important services shall be accompanied by certificates of satisfactory execution, specifying that they have been carried out in a professional manner and have been fully completed; services carried out for DG Regional and Urban Policy or DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion need not be accompanied by certificates.
- The educational and professional qualifications of the persons who will provide the service for this tender (CVs) including the management staff. Each CV provided should indicate the intended function in the delivery of the service.

2.4 AWARD CRITERIA

The tender will be awarded according to the best-value-for-money procedure. The quality of the tender will be evaluated based on the following criteria. The maximum total quality score is 100 points.

- **Quality of the proposed methodology** (50 points – minimum threshold 50%)

This criterion will assess the appropriateness of the methodology of the whole evaluation and of the specific methodology for each task including the final report, as specified below.

- **Organisation of the work** (30 points – minimum threshold 50%)

This criterion will assess how the roles and responsibilities of the proposed team and of the economic operators (in case of joint tenders, including subcontractors if applicable) are distributed for each task. It also assesses the global allocation of time and resources to the project and to each task or deliverable, and whether this allocation is adequate for the work. The tender should provide details on the allocation of time and resources and the rationale behind the choice of this allocation.

- **Quality control measures** (20 points – minimum threshold 50%)

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.

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

After evaluation of the quality of the tender, the tenders are ranked using the formula below to determine the tender offering best value for money. A weight of 0.7/0.3 is given to quality and price respectively.

score for tender X	=	$\frac{\text{cheapest price}}{\text{price of tender X}}$	*	price weighting (in absolute value)	+	$\frac{\text{total quality score (out of 100) for all award criteria of tender X}}{100}$	*	quality criteria weighting (in absolute value)
--------------------	---	--	---	-------------------------------------	---	--	---	--

2.5 TECHNICAL OFFER

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

2.6 FINANCIAL OFFER

The price for the tender must be quoted in euro. 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.

Prices must be quoted free of all duties, taxes and other charges, including VAT, as the European Union is exempt from such charges under Articles 3 and 4 of the Protocol on the privileges and immunities of the European Union. The amount of VAT may be shown separately.

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

3 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

3.1 OVERALL PURPOSE AND CONTEXT OF THIS EVALUATION

The European Commission, Directorate-Generals for Regional and Urban Policy and for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion intend to undertake an ex post evaluation of cohesion policy programmes financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund (CF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and IPA projects in Croatia during the period 2007-2013 in regions covered by the Convergence, Regional Competitiveness, Employment and European Territorial Co-operation (ETC) objectives in 28 Member States².

The ex post evaluation is an important instrument to inform national and regional authorities, the general public, the European Parliament and other stakeholders involved about the outcomes of the 2007-2013 generation of cohesion policy programmes. The evaluation will examine the extent to which the resources were used, the effectiveness and the socio-economic impact. The evaluation shall identify factors contributing to the success or failure of programmes and identify good practice³.

During the 2007-2013 programming period, a stronger focus on accountability for what has been achieved with Cohesion Policy resources has become apparent, stimulated by the publication of the ex post evaluation for the 2000-2006 period and the debate on the requirements for Cohesion Policy for the 2014-2020 period and the economic and financial crisis. This ex post evaluation will deepen the analysis undertaken on the 2000-2006 period, exploring in more depth the achievements of the policy and evaluating themes not covered before.

The regulation requires the ex post evaluation should be completed by the end of 2015. This is a special challenge, as programmes are still being implemented until the end of 2015. However, the evaluation will be well timed to contribute as well to:

- improving programme implementation of 2014-2020 programmes. The objective is to feed the fine-tuning of delivery systems by building on success factors and good

² Council regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund, referred to as General Regulation.

³ Cf. Article 49 (3) of the General Regulation.

practices identified by the evaluation. By the time of obtaining the results of this evaluation, the programmes will be up and running. However, many factors of successful implementation (e.g. procedures, human resources) may be improved in the course of implementation;

- the preparation of the framework for the next programming period (2021 onwards). The findings will feed into debate on the future policy on economic, social and territorial cohesion after 2020 as well as the impact assessment of the proposals for the next regulations.

3.2 SPECIFIC CONTEXT OF THIS CONTRACT

In total, €70 billion of ERDF and CF resources through 309 Operational Programmes and €7 billion of ESF through 117 programmes are invested involving several hundreds of thousands of projects. The policy is delivered through a system of multi-level governance under which Commission and Member States agree on a strategic framework for the interventions of Cohesion Policy, which is aimed at strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion, and incorporates EU priorities of promoting competitiveness and creating jobs. Member States and regions are responsible for project selection and implementation. Implementation is accompanied by a system of auditing by MS and Commission authorities. A feed-back loop in the form of monitoring, reporting and evaluation links the implementation back to the policy level.

The success of the policy therefore depends on the smooth functioning of such a system with a multitude of actors and several layers of programming, implementation and feed-back. The requirements are identical for all Member States, independent of their socio-economic situation or the size of funding received or speed and quality of implementation.

The performance of the delivery system is influenced by the requirements governing Structural and Cohesion Funds (herein forth “the delivery system”) on the one hand but also by the administrative capacity and quality of governance of each Member State on the other.

The expectations and legal requirements on reliability and performance have substantially increased during the 25 years of cohesion policy since its fundamental reform in 1988 as has its budget up to 2013. However, there is a continued tendency of slowing down of its rhythm of implementation. In some countries or regions, especially in those with the weakest administrative capacity, this phenomenon is a real threat to the effectiveness of cohesion policy.

These growing expectations and strengthened legal requirements have also increased the requirement for the Commission to be accountable to the European Court of Auditors, the European Parliament and the public in general for the correct expenditure of EU Funds, even when their delivery is the responsibility of national or regional authorities. Increasingly, this accountability extends also to the performance of the policy. This creates requirements for the Commission to be able to provide assurance on expenditure and, increasingly, on performance.

In order to meet the requirements for the delivery of Cohesion policy and to improve capacity to deliver effective programmes, the hiring of additional staff, training measures,

IT systems, studies, advice and assistance for regional and local authorities and networks within and across Member States are supported by the programmes (“technical assistance”).

In December 2013 the legislative package for the programming period 2014-2020 entered into force. (Official Journal of the European Union, L 347, 20 December 2013). This set of regulations introduced important changes in the objectives and delivery system of the policy. It is likely that the new regulations will influence the perceptions and expectations of stakeholders in relation to the delivery system of the policy, although this evaluation is of the 2007-2013 delivery system.

3.3 SUBJECT OF CONTRACT

The evaluation will analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery system of cohesion policy for the 2007-2013 period and identify the main success factors that support accountable implementation of a policy that is legal and regular, which delivers results in a timely and responsive manner at reasonable cost to national administrations and beneficiaries:

- **Accountability** means that Managing Authorities, Member States and the European Commission must be able to account for the resources spent under the policy and the results achieved. The European Commission is required to be accountable to the European Court of Auditors and the European Parliament and citizens in general.
- **Legality and regularity** are identified through irregularities and the error rate. In accordance with Articles 310 to 325 of the TFEU and the Financial Regulation, the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the Annual Accounts of the European Union has to be ensured, including payments by the cohesion funds. Irregularity is "any infringement of a provision of Community law resulting from an act or omission by an economic operator which has, or would have, the effect of prejudicing the general budget of the European Union by charging an unjustified item of expenditure to the general budget" (General Regulation).
- **Delivery of results** should mean the achievement of OP targets (Article 37 of the General Regulation. However, experience shows that objectives of programme priorities are often not explicit and not reflected in targets set. This makes judgement on the delivery of results a complex exercise.
- **Timeliness** means that the implementation of the programme follows the schedule as set out by the financial table of the OP. Timely implementation is associated with high absorption rates and early closure of programmes.
- **Responsiveness** means that the implementation of agreed programmes can be sufficiently flexible to meet changing needs over the duration of the programming period.
- **Reasonable cost** means that the financial and administrative resources employed by the authorities and the beneficiaries in the implementation of the funds are proportional to the amount of funding. This is associated with the simplicity of EU and national legislation and their interplay.

The objective is to understand expectations of different stakeholders of the various elements of the delivery system, how these were implemented in practice and to identify the main factors of success or failure. The analysis will relate to the set-up and implementation of the delivery system 2007-2013 and will explore potentially more effective and efficient solutions, including solutions differentiating between programmes and Member States.

The evaluation will also review the effects of technical assistance on the capacities of national and regional authorities to implement the funds in selected MS.

3.4 SCOPE

The delivery system of Cohesion Policy, in the context of different implementation capacities in Commission and selected Member States, including IPA activities in Croatia. Capacity building, financed by technical assistance of the Commission.

For the purpose of this evaluation the delivery system is defined by its constituting elements for the 2007-2013 period: programming, project selection, compliance with EU and national law (with a focus on public procurement), financial management and control, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. Programming includes the work of the European Commission and the Member States on Community strategic guidelines, National Strategic Reference Frameworks and operational programmes. The main focus of the evaluation is on the operational programme level and how it translates the strategic guidelines into results delivered by the policy. Partnership, involving stakeholders external to the public authorities responsible for the programmes, plays an important role in programming and monitoring in particular.

3.5 TASKS

Task 1: Tasks of delivery system 2007-2013

Under Task 1 the contractor will explore the following questions, preparing task 2:

- What are the main elements of the legislative framework relating to the delivery system of cohesion policy in relation to programming, project selection, compliance with EU and national law, financial management and control, monitoring, evaluation and reporting?
- What was the underlying rationale for the inclusion of these elements in the legislative framework from the perspective of the main actors (legislator, Commission in its supervisory role, national authorities (audit, certifying and managing authorities) and beneficiaries) taking into account the need to implement and be accountable for a policy that is legal and regular and which deliver in a timely manner at reasonable cost to national administrations and beneficiaries?
- How well did these individual elements of the delivery systems meet the expectations of the different actors as they were implemented during the 2007-2013 period? What were the strengths and weaknesses?
- For each of the different elements, what were the main conceptual and practical problems? Were there missing or superfluous features? What was the role of the partnership principle in each of these elements?

- How did the interaction of European regulation with national regulation affect legality and regularity, accountability, result orientation, timeliness, responsiveness, administrative costs to Member States and beneficiaries?
- To what extent do the arrangements for the period 2014 to 2020 provide continuity (or not) with those of the 2007-2013 period?

This will be done by:

- Desk research on the legal framework of the delivery system
- Literature review, including academic and “grey” literature, evaluations undertaken by the Commission or Member States, other ad hoc reports produced by Commission or Member States
- Discussions with the Commission.

Based on this, the contractor will provide a concise outline of each of the elements and, to the degree possible under this Task, propose a draft judgement on the performance of each element of the delivery system in relation to the criteria of legality and regularity, accountability, result orientation, timeliness, responsiveness and administrative costs to Member States and beneficiaries.

The tender should mention examples of significant parts of literature which will be reviewed and include a sketch of an outline for each element of the delivery system (not more than a one and a half pages each). The tender should also develop a first sketch of how the criteria of legality and regularity, accountability, result orientation, timeliness, responsiveness, administrative costs should be defined and operationalized for each element.

Task 2: Interviews, structured discussions and survey

Using the outlines for each element, the contractor will design and run interviews with the Commission and telephone interviews with all managing authorities of Convergence and Competiveness programmes (and other authorities when necessary) to deepen the analysis of Task 1 and to test and validate the draft judgements set out in the outlines. This should focus particularly on how effective and efficient or not the 2007-2013 delivery system has been in comparison to the expectations of different stakeholders. In most cases it will be necessary to run several interviews per programme in order to interview the appropriate person. The number of interviews should not exceed 1,300.

The contractor will organise structured discussions in all Member States (or groups of Member States) to deepen the findings of the interviews. A separate discussion for ETC programmes will be organised in Commission premises in Brussels.

In addition, the contractor will organise a web-based survey to explore the questions set out under Task 1. The survey will be drawn to the attention of all management authorities. A sample of beneficiaries will be asked to respond to the survey, especially to explore their perception of the delivery system. The survey will be open to any other interested parties.

The survey, the interviews and discussions should be designed in a way to clearly distinguish and identify the extent to which the European regulation and national regulation, as well as their relationship (sometimes involving so-called "gold-plating") have affected legality and regularity, accountability, result orientation, timeliness, responsiveness, administrative costs to Member States and beneficiaries.

Interviews and the survey will be administered in the languages spoken in the respective Member States. Structured discussions will also take place in the national language.

The tender should include a draft of interview/survey questions for one of the elements of the delivery system. It should outline mechanisms to ensure a high response rate, how the survey will be adapted to different stakeholders and how to analyse the results, taking account of the different perspectives of the different stakeholders responding. The tender can suggest additional methods as appropriate.

An interim report will present the findings of Task 2 and the methodology for the case studies under Tasks 3 and 5, adapted as necessary to reflect the findings of this Task.

Task 3 Case studies in selected Member States

Task 3 will test through in-depth discussion in certain Member States and regions whether the analyses undertaken in task 2 are well grounded.

The contractor will carry out case studies in selected Member States: in Romania or Bulgaria, in Poland, and another six Member States, of which at least three in Competitiveness regions or Member States (to be suggested by evaluator at the end of Task 2). The selection of Member States should cover different implementation set-ups (e.g.: national programmes centrally delivered, regional OP, national programmes regionally delivered) of both ERDF/CF and ESF OP).

The work in each selected Member State will focus on validating and deepening the analysis in Task 2. It should also review the extent to which stakeholders in the Member States perceive that weaknesses identified in the 2007-2013 period have been addressed in the 2014-2020 delivery system. The tender should include a methodology for this Task (including e.g., desk work needed, the number and type of key stakeholders in Member States to be involved, form of involvement). The analytical structure mentioned in annex 3 should be used when appropriate.

The case studies should explore whether use was made of simplified cost options and their the effectiveness⁴.

An approximate work volume on the ground of 10-15 days in each Member State should be envisaged. The evaluator will deliver short reports for each Member State and a summary. A pilot case study should be completed in advance of the others and submitted to the European Commission for feedback and possible adjustment of the case study methodology.

Task 4 Identifying improvements to enhance effectiveness and efficiency

Based on the findings of Tasks 1- 3, the contractor will draw up a set of options to identify possible ways to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery system. The objective of these options will be to improve legality and regularity, result orientation, timeliness, responsiveness, and administrative costs to Member States and beneficiaries taking account of the potential trade-offs between these objectives.

The discussion paper will focus on practical changes for each element, setting out their strengths and weaknesses and possible trade-offs. The options presented for each of the

⁴ Article 7.4 of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 as amended by Regulation (EC) 397/2009 and Article 11(3) (b) of Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council as amended by Regulation (EC) No 396/2009

elements should take into account the possibility to differentiate between regions, Member States or sectors. The analysis should suggest in which contexts the different approaches might be most appropriate. The options will form the basis for discussion with the steering group.

Task 5 Assessment of capacity building financed by Technical assistance

This Task will review the performance of administrative capacity building financed by technical assistance in selected Member States.

As a first step, the evaluator will meet Directorates General for Regional and Urban Policy and Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion to identify relevant issues concerning the use of technical assistance as a means of improving the delivery system in selected Member States (Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Poland, Italy, the Czech Republic and Slovakia) from the point of view of Commission services. The perceptions of the European Commission will then be confronted with the needs for improvement of the delivery system emerging from tasks 2 and 3.

In a second step, case studies on the national Technical assistance programmes in the selected Member States will deepen the review, looking specifically into the success or failure of capacity building measures. The evaluator will at a minimum record how much was spent on which issues, if these issues match the challenges emerging identified in step 1 of this task, explore existing evidence on the effectiveness of the programmes (reports, evaluations, academic research) and deepen the analysis with other appropriate methods. The offer should provide a first sketch of such methods.

The selected Member States and Commission services shall be consulted on the case study findings. All case studies shall be finished 12 months after the signature of the contract. The evaluator will deliver short reports for each case study and a summary across all case studies.

Task 5 will run concurrently with Tasks 3 and 4 but will be completed a month later.

Task 6 Final report

A final report will pull together findings of all tasks. The offer should include a draft table of contents. The report should include two good practice examples for each of the elements of the delivery system. These should be written up as mini-case studies annexed to the report⁵.

Key question to be answered should include at least:

- What was the rationale for the legal provisions relating to the elements of the delivery system?
- How well did the individual elements meet expectations? What were the strengths and weaknesses?

⁵ Mini-case studies should be based on a suitable adapted mini-case study methodology, see: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/regions_for_economic_change/doc/evaluation_brochure_062008_en.pdf

- Within the different elements, what were the main success factors? What were the conceptual and practical problems? Were there missing or superfluous features?
- What are possible ways to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the elements of the delivery system (e.g. radical simplification, incremental simplification, customisation to various types of delivery systems)?
- What was the performance of administrative capacity building financed by technical assistance?

In responding to these questions, given that in 2007-2013 the ESF and ERDF/CF were delivered through different programmes, the report will clearly identify how the findings apply to each fund.

3.6 METHODOLOGY

A combination of methods will be used in this evaluation, some of which have been signalled in the tasks description above. They include:

- Literature review
- Desk research – including evaluations undertaken for the Commission and Member States,
- Case study methodology (see Gaffey (2009), in bibliography)
- Interviews with Member States, Managing Authorities and other actors where necessary,
- Web-based survey
- Other methodological approaches as appropriate, to be specified in the tender documentation.

The tender documentation should outline how these methods will be combined to deliver the various tasks and answer the evaluation questions. The tender should analyse the major challenges foreseen in this contract and outline strategies to tackle them.

3.7 WORK ORGANISATION

As part of the tender documentation, the team to be involved in this evaluation should be identified, describing their skills and qualifications, quantifying the input of each member of the team in terms of days and explaining the distribution of tasks between the different team members involved. The attention of tenderers is drawn to the need for strong co-ordination, guidance and quality control which will be needed for the successful delivery of this contract.

3.8 TIME SCHEDULE

The duration of the tasks is 15 months, starting from the signature of the contract. The deliverables and their timing are specified below.

Reports and meetings required by the Terms of Reference

End Month	Output	Meeting
0		Kick-Off Meeting with DGs REGIO and EMPL
Within 1 month	Inception report	Meeting with Steering Group
Within 3 months	First interim report	
Within 7 months	Second interim report	
Within 10 months	Third interim report	Meeting with Steering Group
Within 11 months	Fourth interim report	
Within 13 months	Draft final report	Meeting with Steering Group
Within 15 months	Final report	

3.9 DELIVERABLES

The deliverables of this study will be:

- **Deliverable 1:** one methodological inception report covering all Tasks.
Deadline: within one month after the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 2:** the first intermediate report presenting the results of Task 1.
Deadline: within three months of the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 3:** the second interim report presenting the results of Task 2.
Deadline: within seven months of the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 4:** the third interim report, presenting the case studies undertaken under Task 3 and the discussion paper developed under Task 4
Deadline: within ten months of the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 5:** the fourth interim report, presenting the case studies under Task 5.
Deadline: within eleven months of the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 6:** the draft final report responding to Task 6.
Deadline: within thirteen months of the signature of the contract.
- **Deliverable 7:** one final report.
Deadline: within fifteen months of the signature of the contract.

All deliverables should identify Fund specific issues where relevant.

Besides the above mentioned deliverables, the contractor will submit a progress report of 2 pages maximum every month.

A hard copy and an electronic version of each report are required. For final reports one hard copy 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 contractor will provide presentation material for each of the reports in English (PowerPoint or equivalent application compatible with MS Office) for the use of Commission services.

All reports will 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 may be invited to present the results of the evaluation to the Member States and the Commission services (three meetings in Brussels). The travel costs for these presentations will be paid separately.

The quality of the evaluation will be assessed by the Commission services using the quality criteria set out in annex 5. The assessment of the quality will be published by the Commission.

3.10 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

There will be a single contract with the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy for this evaluation.

As part of the **tender documentation**, the tenderer should identify the members of the core team and experts responsible for the Member State work. Effective planning of the fieldwork is essential and this should be reflected in the days allocated to the core team as well as the Member State experts. The person responsible for the quality of the content of each deliverable (including proper editing of the draft final report in terms of its content) should be identified. In addition the tender documentation should describe for each member of the team his/her skills and qualifications and quantify the input in terms of days and explain the distribution of tasks between the different team members involved. The tenderer should prove that their team has the capacity and knowledge to work in the fields of expertise required and in the languages which may be needed for the analysis and interviews.

The contractor will propose in the tender 3 independent external experts to give advice throughout the evaluation and comment on the deliverables. These experts should have in-depth knowledge of the fields relevant to this evaluation. The Commission will make the final choice of experts.

The Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy in association with the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion will establish a steering group representative of the relevant Directorates of the Directorates General as well as other interested Directorates General. The contractor 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 third intermediate report and the draft final report.

The contractor will be expected to attend a kick-off meeting, the steering group meetings plus up to four progress meetings with the Evaluation Units of the Directorate Generals for Regional and Urban Policy and for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion in Brussels reviewing the progress of the study and resolving any problems arising. These meetings will be arranged according to needs arising.

3.11 DOCUMENTATION FOR THE TENDERERS

- List of themes to be covered by work packages in the 2007-2013 Ex post evaluation in Annex 2

- Bibliography in Annex 4

The quality of the evaluation will be assessed by the Commission services using the quality criteria set out in Annex 5. The assessment of the quality will be published by the Commission.

4 CONTENT, STRUCTURE AND GRAPHIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE FINAL DELIVERABLES

All studies produced for the European Commission and Executive Agencies shall conform to 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 logo⁶.

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

Pdf versions of studies destined for online publication should respect W3C guidelines for accessible pdf documents. See: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>

4.1 CONTENT

➤ Final study report

The final study report shall include:

- an abstract of no more than 200 words and an executive summary of maximum 6 pages, in English, French and German;

⁶ The Visual Identity Manual of the European Commission is available upon request. Requests should be made to the following e-mail address: comm-visual-identity@ec.europa.eu

- the following standard disclaimer:

“The information and views set out in this [report/study/article/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.”

- specific identifiers which shall be incorporated on the cover page provided by the Contracting Authority.

- **Publishable executive summary**

The publishable executive summary shall be provided in English, French and German and shall include:

- the following standard disclaimer:

“The information and views set out in this [report/study/article/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.”

- specific identifiers which shall be incorporated on the cover page provided by the Contracting Authority.

4.2 GRAPHIC REQUIREMENTS

For graphic requirements please refer to the template provided in the Annex 6. The cover page shall be filled in by the contractor in accordance with the instructions provided in the template. For further details you may also contact comm-visual-identity@ec.europa.eu.

5 ANNEXES

Annex 1: Declaration of honour

See separate document

Annex 2: Themes for Work Packages of the Ex Post Evaluation

No.	Work package
0	Data collection and quality assessment
1	Synthesis
2	Small and medium-sized enterprises, innovation, ICT
3	Financial instruments for enterprise support
4	Large enterprises
5	Transport
6	Environment
7	Modelling the effects of transport projects
8	Energy efficiency
9	Culture, Tourism
10	Urban development and Social Infrastructure
11	European Territorial Cooperation
12	Delivery system
13	Geography of expenditure
14	Macroeconomic models
15	Human capital - ESF
16	Social inclusion – ESF
17	Access to employment – ESF

Annex 3 – Initial definitions for task 3

Structure relates to the clear assignment of responsibilities and tasks to institutions, or better at the level of departments or units within these institutions. This assignment refers to a range of Structural Funds tasks, including management, programming, implementation, evaluation & monitoring and financial management & control. Structure also relates to supervisory and ancillary bodies, such as Monitoring Committees, auditing tasks, partnership, etcetera.

Human resources relate to the ability to detail tasks and responsibilities at the level of job descriptions, to estimate the number and qualifications of staff, and to fulfil the recruitment needs. Securing the timely availability of experienced, skilled and motivated staff is a key success factor in the management of the Structural Funds. Clearly, the conditions within the administrative system need to be favourable towards recruiting and retaining such professionals.

Systems and tools relate to the availability of instruments, methods, guidelines, manuals, systems, procedures, forms, etcetera. In brief, these are all job-aids that can enhance the effectiveness of the functioning of the system. Systems and tools enable organisations to transform tacit and implicit knowledge (within the heads of individual people) into explicit knowledge that can be shared across organisations. Systems and tools therefore make organisations less vulnerable (e.g. when key staff is leaving), reduce the risk of malfunctioning and enhance overall effectiveness. Effective management of the Structural Funds requires that the above dimensions be taken into account: structure, human resources, systems and tools. Together these provide complementary elements of the management capability grid.

Source: Boeckhout, S., Boot, L. et al, (2002), Key indicators for Candidate Countries to Effectively Manage the Structural Funds, Final Report, NEI, Rotterdam, February, 2002. Study for DG Regional Policy

Annex 4: Bibliography

- Boeckhout, S., Boot, L. et al, (2002), Key indicators for Candidate Countries to Effectively Manage the Structural Funds, Final Report, NEI, Rotterdam, February, 2002. Study for DG Regional Policy
http://www.evaluate.cz/dokumenty/hodnot_zpr_eu/souhrnna_studie.pdf
- European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy (2012): Measuring the impact of changing regulatory requirements to administrative cost and administrative burden of managing EU Structural Funds (ERDF and Cohesion Funds)
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/measuring/measuring_impact_report.pdf
- Euréval (2011): Evaluation of the capacity of the ESF delivery systems to attract and support OP target groups
www.ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7004&langId=en
- Expert assessment of the situation in the field of co-financing salaries from structural Funds in 2007-2013 (forthcoming), study carried out for DG REGIO
- Evaluation of JASPERS, 2013. Study carried out for DG REGIO
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/pdf/eval2007/jaspers_evaluation/final_report_131212.pdf
- Position of the Commission Services on the development of Partnership agreement and programmes
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/future/index_en.cfm
- ESF Expert Evaluation Network: Final synthesis report: Main ESF achievements, 2007-2013
- Ex Post Evaluations of the 2000-2006 Programming period, work package 11, management and implementation:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/expost2006/wp11_en.htm
- European Task Force for Greece: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/
- Gaffey (2009) “Case studies in the framework of ex post evaluation 2000-2006: expectations and experiences of the DG for Regional Policy”
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/conferences/evaluation2009/abstracts/gaffey.doc
- Leeuw for DG Regional Policy: Guidance on theory-based evaluation.
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information/evaluations/pdf/impact/theory_impact_guidance.pdf

Metis GmbH (2012): Evaluation of the reaction of the ESF to the economic and financial crisis www.ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7671&langId=en

- Panteia and London School of Economics for DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: Preparatory study for the ex post evaluation of ESF 2007-2013

Commission guidance documents

Evaluation during the programming period

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/2007/working/wd5_ongoing_en.pdf

Reporting on core indicators

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/2007/working/wd7_indicators_en.pdf

Annex 5 - Quality Control: Output Quality Criteria

- Meeting needs as laid out in Terms of Reference
- Relevant scope and coverage
- Defensible design and methods
- Reliable data used
- Sound analysis
- Credible results that relate to analysis and data
- Impartial conclusions showing no bias and demonstrating sound judgement
- Clear report with executive summaries and annexed supportive data

Annex 6: Template for graphic requirements

See separate document