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**Competitive Multiple Framework Service Contracts
for the provision of Studies related to the Impact assessment related to the future
development of Cohesion Policy and the ESI Funds (Lot 1)**

Framework Contracts Nr 2014CE16BAT004/2014CE16BAT005/2014CE16BAT006

Service Request Nr 2015CE16BAT063

Specifications

1. TITLE OF THE REQUEST FOR SERVICES

Effective and efficient delivery of European Structural and Investment Funds investments – Exploring alternative delivery mechanisms

2. BACKGROUND

For the period 2014-2020 the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Cohesion Fund (CF), European Social Fund (ESF), European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) have been regrouped to become the European Structural and Investment (ESI) funds and placed under a common regulatory and strategic framework. All of these funds are implemented under shared management¹. As part of the 2014-2020 reform, investments under these Funds have been strongly linked to EU priorities relevant for the policy areas covered by the ESI Funds and a number of measures to increase their effective implementation and result orientation have been introduced. Moreover, a strong emphasis in the renewed regulatory framework² was placed on the need to simplify and

¹ A method defined for EU budget implementation in the Financial Regulation art 59 ((EC, Euratom) 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:298:0001:0096:EN:PDF>

² The regulatory framework for the 2014-2020 programming period comprises the following Regulations:

- Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Cohesion Fund (CF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European

improve the delivery mechanisms of the ESI Funds and to reduce the administrative burden for beneficiaries and the administrative costs for Member States managing the funds.

At the same time, there is a need to enhance the **performance/result-orientation** of the **EU budget** and demonstrate its **value added** for the achievement of the policy objectives at the EU level, taking account of the principles of performance-based budgeting. Performance-based budgeting builds on the relationship between fund allocation and the results achieved against pre-defined policy objectives, both ex-ante (in the resource allocation phase) and ex-post (during implementation and control). The basic concept of performance-based budgeting (PBB) is thus the capacity to link budget outcomes with outputs while staying accountable and ensuring an effective spending policy delivery at a reasonable cost³.

Simplification is also a building block of the Better Regulation agenda⁴. Progress on simplification related to EU spending programmes is monitored through an Administrative Simplification Scoreboard, regularly published by the Commission. Proportionality, which allows the delivery of policy objectives at reasonable costs is another key element in this context. The **current delivery mechanisms** for the ESI funds are in some instances perceived as being too **costly** and **burdensome**, in particular in Member States with low per capita financial allocations. The level of detail of control, reporting and monitoring arrangements and decision making procedures for the implementation of the programmes are frequently identified in this context. Therefore, the question can be raised whether there is scope for greater differentiation and proportionality in the implementation of the ESI Funds.

The **purpose** of the study is therefore to assess whether the achievement of EU priorities through the investments from the ESI Funds could be enhanced through the use of alternative delivery mechanisms. For the purposes of the study, a delivery mechanism is understood as the set of processes and procedures required to achieve the defined policy objectives and regulate tasks relating to the implementation of the EU budget, and, where appropriate, the relationship between the body which is accountable for the

Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (hereafter CPR).
- Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal (referred to as ETC Regulation).
- Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Regional Development Fund and on specific provisions concerning the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 (hereafter ERDF Regulation).
- Regulation (EU) No 1300/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the Cohesion Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1084/2006 (hereafter CF Regulation).
- Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Social Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006 (hereafter ESF Regulation)
- Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 (hereafter EARDF Regulation).
- Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2328/2003, (EC) No 861/2006, (EC) No 1198/2006 and (EC) No 791/2007 and Regulation (EU) No 1255/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council (hereafter EMFF Regulation).

³ *Government Performance Lessons and Challenges*, T. Curristine, *OECD Journal on Budgeting* vol. 5 n.1, p14

⁴ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. *Better regulation for better results - An EU agenda*; Strasbourg, 19.5.2015 COM(2015) 215 final

implementation of the EU budget and the bodies to which implementation tasks have been delegated. In this context, the study should assess policy adequate and result oriented⁵ delivery mechanisms against the following five key criteria: **accountability** (assuming responsibility for all aspects related to ESI funds implementation, providing clear results, duly reported and communicated), **sound financial management** (in accordance with the elements provided for in Article 30 of Financial Regulation⁶, also including the delivery of policy relevant results and the speed of implementation), **legality and regularity** of underlying transactions, aspects linked to **good governance** (transparency, ownership, responsiveness, including flexibility to changed circumstances)⁷ of implementation and **simplification** (administrative cost to administration, administrative burden to beneficiaries and cost effectiveness of controls). The contractor should assess how other alternative delivery mechanisms could be applied to investments under the ESI Funds or to parts thereof, and to which extent these could be the basis for differentiated approaches. Finally, the study should assess options and analyse their impact in terms of their effectiveness, efficiency and economy, and in particular on the delivery of policy-relevant results.

This study is a part of a series of studies the Commission is launching to prepare the impact assessment for the post-2020 legislative proposals⁸: a study assessing the impact of the new simplification elements on administrative burden and costs has already been launched; and studies on the co-ordination and harmonisation of the ESI Funds and other EU Instruments and on improving the take up and effectiveness of financial instruments are being prepared in parallel. Furthermore, a feasibility study on budget support is planned. In addition, there is also a specific work package dedicated to the analysis of the delivery system as part of the ongoing *ex-post* evaluation for the 2007-2013 programmes.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTRACT

3.1. The overall objective of the study

The **overall objective of the study** is to explore to what extent alternative delivery mechanisms could improve the implementation of the ESI Funds and their contribution to the achievement of the EU policy objectives in the framework of a result-oriented EU budget.

The study should meet the following **specific objectives**:

A. Identify and assess the **strengths and weaknesses** of the current ESI Funds **delivery mechanisms** in respect of accountability, sound financial management, legality and regularity, aspects of good governance and simplification.

B. Identify **other policy adequate** result-oriented **delivery mechanisms**, which are not currently used in the context of ESI Funds, that could **address the weaknesses** identified under specific objective A, while **building on the strengths** of the existing approach, and assess to what extent these mechanisms could be the bases for differentiated approach to the implementation of the ESI funds in different thematic fields.

⁵ **Policy adequacy** reflects the suitability of the delivery mechanism to ensure the implementation of the objectives of the EU policy areas supported by the ESIF) and **result orientation** reflects the suitability to maximise the results relevant for a defined EU policy

⁶ Financial Regulation – FR; Reg. (EC, Euratom) 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:298:0001:0096:EN:PDF>

⁷ In context of Interreg/CBC, joint management of programmes should be taken into account

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index.cfm/en/information/publications/studies/2014/studies-on-the-integration-of-new-regulatory-elements-in-the-programming-process

C. Identify a limited number of policy adequate and result oriented **options** for the delivery of the ESI Funds **to address the weaknesses** identified while **building on the strengths** of the existing approach, and set out how these could be applied to investments under the ESI Funds.

D. Analyse the **potential impacts** of **selected options** in terms of their effectiveness, efficiency and economy on the delivery of policy objectives taking into account accountability, sound financial management, legality and regularity, aspects of good governance and simplification.

3.2. Methodology

Objectives A to C should be addressed through:

- desk research based on existing documentation (reports, including relevant reports from the European and national courts of auditors and the European Parliament, previous and ongoing studies, evaluations incl. ex-post evaluation 2007-2013) and academic literature;
- case studies presenting other alternative delivery mechanisms;
- interviews with managing authorities and national coordinating bodies and representatives of Commission services;
- workshops with Commission representatives, academia, international institutions and/or other relevant bodies.

To assess administrative costs and burden, the toolbox for impact assessments as set out in Chapter VIII of the Better Regulation Guidelines⁹ shall be used. The outcomes from completed and ongoing studies should be used¹⁰ as a reference value for reasonable administrative cost and burden.

3.3. Tasks to be carried out by the contractor

The study covers five tasks. The first task consists of a report setting out the methodological approach to the different elements of the study as a whole. It needs to be agreed with the Commission before proceeding with work on the other tasks. Tasks 2-5 correspond each to one of the objectives of the study set out in section 3.1.

Task 1: Methodological report

The consultant shall submit a methodological report of max 50 pages (plus annexes), reflecting its understanding of the objectives of the study setting out the approach and methodology to carry out the different tasks in an effective and efficient way to provide quality outputs. Furthermore, the report should also draw links to the other relevant studies indicated in section II.

The methodological report should set out a framework for the selection and analysis of policy adequate and result oriented delivery mechanisms taking all ESI Funds appropriately into account. The framework should include the main features of the delivery mechanisms and provide an approach to determine alternative mechanisms.

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/docs/swd_br_guidelines_en.pdf

¹⁰ Planned Study on Simplification";

- Regional governance in the context of globalisation – reviewing governance mechanisms & administrative costs. Administrative workload and costs for Member State public authorities of the implementation of ERDF and Cohesion Fund", DG Regional Policy (June 2010);
- "Measuring the impact of changing regulatory requirements to administrative cost and administrative burden of managing EU Structural Funds", DG Regional Policy (July 2012).

Different thematic objectives, ESI funds and goals should be addressed appropriately in this framework.

Concerning the assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of different delivery mechanisms, an assessment grid with common criteria should be provided as part of the methodological report. The consultant is expected to clarify his understanding of the criteria specified in the ToR and to provide an approach to operationalise them for the purpose of the study. The grid should provide the possibility to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the delivery mechanisms by main thematic fields¹¹ and types of investment by the ESI funds (such as infrastructure, SMEs, research and innovation, investments in human capital, capacity building, networking, environment, climate change adaptation, social inclusion etc) as well as taking into account the broader policy context of the European Semester, notably in relation to structural reforms and country specific recommendations. The methodological report should clearly identify the EU and non-EU instruments that will be examined under task 3.

With a view to exploring the scope for greater proportionality, the methodological report should set out a methodology and a framework for assessing the possibilities for differentiated use of delivery mechanisms. The framework should take into account the notion of risk and identify potential dimensions on the basis of which differentiated approaches could be applied as set out above.

With regard to interviews the methodological report should in particular explain how interviewees will be selected to ensure the coverage of a representative sample of programmes (including mono- and multifund programmes) and thematic fields. The sample of programmes should cover all 28 Member States and ensure a representative coverage of programmes and thematic fields financed by the ERDF, the ESF, the CF, and the EAFRD. Interviews may be handled on site or via phone calls in the relevant languages. Draft questionnaires to be used for these interviews and a description of the planned methodologies for analysing their results should be provided in an annex. The methodological report should in particular explain the methodology for their selection and analysis of case studies.

Finally, the methodological report should explain how the workshops will be organised and conducted. For the workshop concerning the identification of options under task 4, the methodological report shall contain a proposal for academic experts to be involved, ensuring an adequate coverage of experts in the field of performance based budgeting and the implementation of the ESI Funds.

Task 2: Identify and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the current ESI Funds delivery mechanisms in respect of accountability, sound financial management, legality and regularity, aspects of good governance and simplification.

The contractor is expected to analyse the architecture, processes and tools of the current delivery systems of the ESI Funds in the main thematic areas of Funds in the context of result-oriented EU budget and shared management to identify and assess their strengths and weaknesses based on the assessment grid developed under task 1. This would also include the analysis of delivery mechanisms such as simplified cost options, global grants, joint action plans and financial instruments. They will thus assess the strengths

¹¹ 'Thematic fields' means the thematic objectives supported by the ESI Funds in the 2014-2020 programming period as set out in Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

and weaknesses against the criteria of accountability, sound financial management, legality and regularity, the aspects related to good governance and simplification.

This task shall be carried out through desk research based on existing documentation (reports, studies, evaluations- including in particular the work package on the delivery systems included in the ex post evaluation of the 2007-2013 programmes) and academic literature. In addition, the contractors shall take account of relevant reports from Commission services, the Court of Auditors and the European Parliament and national bodies, including national audit bodies. The desk research shall be complemented with 70 to 80 interviews with a representative sample of managing authorities and national coordinating bodies responsible for implementing programmes financed by the ERDF, ESF, CF and the EAFRD. 20 interviews should be carried out with representatives of the Commission services.

Task 3: Identify other policy adequate result-oriented delivery mechanisms, which are not currently used in the context of ESI Funds, that could address weaknesses identified under specific objective A, while building on the strengths of the existing approach, and assess to what extent these mechanisms could be the bases for differentiated approaches to the implementation of the ESI Funds in different thematic fields.

The contractor is expected to explore other **results-oriented** delivery mechanisms, which are not currently used in the context of ESI funds, that could address the weaknesses identified, while building on the strengths established under Task 2. The contractors should identify the strengths and weaknesses of these other delivery mechanisms based on the assessment grid developed under task 1. Other delivery mechanisms analysed should include budget support¹², block grants, conditional payments or payments by outputs or results, broader delivery through financial instruments (for example equity financing)¹³ use of tools for risk management, approaches to the application of state aid. In this context, the contractor should examine delivery mechanisms used at EU level in different policy areas in shared management and other management modes. It should also look at mechanisms used by other international institutions such as the World Bank, the European Bank for reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the European Investment Bank (EIB) and at national level in larger countries which could be applied in the context of shared management.

The contractor is also expected to set out on which basis the use of these delivery mechanisms could be differentiated. In this context the contractor is expected to identify under which circumstances the use of a particular delivery mechanism could be more efficient and effective taking account of the assessment grid, related risks and the specificities of different ESI Funds. The analysis shall explore the scope for differentiated approaches and the related bases, notably in relation to thematic fields/policy areas, type of investment, type of project (eg. innovative projects), type of project expenditure (direct vs indirect costs), the level of funding allocated, administrative capacity or the main type of beneficiary, target population and degree of flexibility to address unforeseen circumstances.

The study should identify advantages and disadvantages of differentiated approaches in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the EU policy delivery. In addition, it should assess their capacity to be in line with the principle of performance-based

¹² There is another study planned to explore this mode more closely

¹³ An other parallel study is to explore the use of innovative financial instruments in the Member States as well as their potential impact on beneficiaries' access to finance

budgeting. The consultant should present the differentiated approaches explored in a systematic framework.

This task shall be carried out through desk research based on existing documentation (reports, studies, evaluations) and academic literature.

In addition, 15-20 case studies analysing the use of other delivery mechanisms in the main thematic fields and types of ESI Fund investments (such as infrastructure, capacity-building, innovation, research, SME support, investments in human capital, environment, climate change adaption networking, social inclusion etc.) should be presented.

Two workshops involving the Commission, the World Bank, the OECD and other relevant bodies will be held in Brussels to discuss the delivery mechanisms identified under this task and the case studies.

Task 4: Identify a limited number of policy adequate and result oriented options for the delivery of the ESI Funds to address the weaknesses identified while building on the strengths of the existing approach, and set out how these could be applied to investments under the ESI Funds.

The contractor is expected to set out a limited number of policy adequate and result oriented options for the delivery of the ESI Funds, based on outputs of previous tasks (2 and 3), to address weaknesses identified while building on their strengths as indicated under task 2. These options should reflect the specificities and missions of the Funds, as set out in the Fund-specific regulations. Identification of options should be undertaken in line with the Commission's Better Regulation Guidelines¹⁴. A baseline option ("changing nothing") should be also briefly described. A set of identified relevant options should be identified for the ESI Funds which take into account possibilities for differentiated approaches while being in line with the principle of performance-based budgeting.

This task shall be carried out through desk research based on existing documentation (reports, studies, evaluations) and academic literature. The options developed will be discussed with the Commission and academic experts in a workshop in Brussels. In agreement with the Commission the most relevant ones will be retained for analysis of impacts in the next task.

Task 5: Analyse the potential impacts of selected options in terms of their effectiveness, efficiency and economy on the delivery of policy objectives taking into account accountability, sound financial management, legality and regularity, aspects of good governance and simplification.

Based on the assessment grid, the contractor is expected to identify and assess all potential impacts, advantages and disadvantages of the selected options for the delivery of the ESI Funds (agreed with the Commission in Task 4 following the feedback collected through the workshop). The selected options should be analysed and compared to the baseline option. The assessment should follow the procedure described in section 2.5 and 2.6 of the Better Regulation Guidelines¹⁵, including four steps: 1) identification of all potential impacts; 2) selection of the significant impacts; 3) assessment of the most significant impacts; 4) comparison of the options. Based on the framework of criteria established in task 1, the analysis should include a qualitative assessment of changes in the administrative costs of the implementation process while ensuring strategic alignment

¹⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/toc_guide_en.htm

¹⁵ See footnote 13.

and the delivery of results, regularity and legality of expenditure, a reduction of administrative burden on beneficiaries¹⁶, tolerable risk of errors and the respect of the principle of performance-based budgeting. It should also identify any potential risks associated with options provided. The analysis of the impact should be differentiated, where appropriate, by thematic field and between the EU level, the national/regional level and the beneficiary level.

3.4. Required deliverables, including their description and quantities

The contractor is expected to provide the following deliverables:

1. **Methodological report:** a report (max 50 pages plus annexes) describing the methodology that will be applied to the study.
2. **Interim reports:** one intermediate report covering Task 2; a second intermediate report containing annexes with each case study covering Task 3, and the third interim report to cover Task 4.
3. **Draft final report:** it shall consist of an executive summary and the draft report itself covering Tasks 5.
4. **Final report:** it shall include the final report itself (no more than 50 pages plus annexes) addressing all the specific objectives (A-D) of the study as well as the final version of the database mentioned before. It shall also include an abstract of no more than 200 words, a publishable executive summary of maximum 6 pages, both in English and French and key words to facilitate web referecing of the study. It should finally include a self-explanatory power-point summarising the results and conclusions.

3.5. Composition of the team

As part of the tender documentation, the team to be involved in this study should be identified, describing their skills and qualifications concerning the concept of performance based budgeting and its operationalisation 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.

3.6. Duration of the contract

The execution of the tasks shall not exceed 15 months starting from the entry into force of the contract.

4. AWARD CRITERIA

The Specific Contract will be awarded to the tender that is the **most economically advantageous**. This will be determined in the light of the price and the quality of the tender.

The tenders will be ranked with the following formula so as to determine the most economically advantageous bids.

- **Weighting for quality: 50**
- **Weighting for price: 50**

¹⁶ Baseline for the assessment will be taken from the deliverables of study on simplification.

The successful tenderer will be the tenderer with the lowest ratio of total cost to the quality mark achieved (cost/points).

The quality will be determined on the basis of the four award quality criteria below:

- 1) quality of the methodology proposed (max 50 points) to address each task;
- 2) organisation proposed to respond in terms of timing and quality to the request for required missions (max 30 points);
- 3) the composition of the team proposed to respond to the overall scope of the contract (max 20 points).

4.1. BUDGET

The maximum amount of the contract is EUR 620,000 €

5. CONTENT AND PRESENTATION OF BIDS

5.1. 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.

5.2. Financial offer

Prices for Specific Contracts will be presented as a lump-sum on the basis of the expert prices and fixed travel and subsistence costs established according to the price schedules annexed to the Framework Contract and the clarifications on financial offers provided by the letter ARES(2014)3738471 of 11.11.2014. No separate reimbursable expenses will be accepted.

The financial offer must be submitted in the template provided in annex.

6. FORMAT OF THE SPECIFIC CONTRACT

The Specific Contract will be drawn up in accordance with the standard format as in the Framework Contract). The contract will come into force the day of its signature by the contracting authorities for the individual assignment. The breakdown of the prices, the Specific Terms of Reference as well as the offer, form an integral part of the Specific Contract. Any expense incurred by the Contractor before the date of signature of the Contracting Authorities is not eligible for funding.

7. ASSIGNMENT IMPLEMENTATION

The Contractor, who is notified that his offer is accepted in the form of a Specific Contract, is responsible for all administration in relation to the assignment. He must ensure that all logistic aspects of the assignment are correctly carried out. The Contractor is also responsible for all administrative aspects such as contracting the experts, provision of insurance etc. Ensuring the quality of the assignment is one of the key responsibilities of the Contractor as he is fully responsible for the quality of the reports or/and other outputs required. These documents will be delivered physically by and under the responsibility of the Contractor. In the case of a consortium, quality control is the ultimate responsibility of the leading partner.

8. MEETINGS WITH THE COMMISSION

A kick-off meeting will be organised between the Contractor and the Commission at the early stage of the each project implementation. In addition to this there will be one meeting following the submission of the methodological report, one meeting after the submission of each interim reports and a last one following the submission of the draft final report. See point 3.4 and table below with regard to timing of meetings.

The participation of the Contract Manager will be required in any of the meetings organised. The meetings will take place in Brussels at Commission premises. Video conferences could be also organised.

The costs of managing the contract by the Contractor, as well as the travel costs related to the kick-off meeting with Commission will be carried out with no additional charge and are understood to be incorporated in the offer.

End month*	Deliverable/Meeting	Output
0	M1	Kick-off meeting with the Commission services
1,5	D1	Tasks 1 (methodological report)
2	M2	Meeting to discuss the methodological report
9	D2	First interim report covering tasks 2
9.5	M3	Meeting to discuss the 1 st interim report with the Commission services
10.5	D3	Second interim report covering task 3
11	M4	Meeting to discuss the 2 nd interim report with the Commission services
12	D4	Third interim report covering task 4
12.5	M5	Meeting to discuss the 3 rd interim report with the Commission services
13	D5	Draft final report (covering tasks 5)
13.5	M6	Meeting to discuss first draft final report with the Commission services
14	D6	Final report
14+1		Oral presentation of final report

**starting from the entry into force of the contract*

9. PUBLICATION AND DELIVERABLES

All the different deliverables shall be submitted in English in an easily accessible style. French versions have to be provided for the Executive Summary and the abstract only. Detailed information on the format is provided at point 11.8 in the Specifications for the Competitive Multiple Framework Services Contract.

Each deliverable will be examined by the Commission (a DG REGIO-led steering group), which may ask for additional modifications or propose changes in order to redirect the work if necessary. Deliverables must be approved by the Commission.

The specific deadline for each deliverable is specified above. The study envisages several meetings in Brussels with the steering group in relation to the deliverables.

After the approval of the final report by the European Commission, the contractor will be expected to give an oral presentation of its final report, highlighting its main results and conclusions. This presentation will take place in Brussels and within Commission premises.

The contractor is expected to attend 6 meetings at the Commission premises for kicking off the project and discussing the deliverables with the members of Commission staff (Steering Group). These meetings will be organised by the Commission.

Rights concerning the deliverables (reports, studies, impact assessments) foreseen and those relating to their reproduction and publication will remain property of the European Commission. No document based in whole or in part upon the work performed under the contract resulting from this invitation to tender may be published, except with the prior formal written approval of the European Commission.

Please note that all studies produced for the European Commission 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 logo¹⁷.

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/>

The final reports as well as the draft and interim report(s) shall be submitted in English.

An electronic version of all reports (including draft/interim versions) will be required both in Word and PDF format.

9.1. 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, both in English and French, and key words to facilitate web referencing of the study.
- 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.

¹⁷ 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

9.2. Publishable executive summary

The publishable executive summary shall be provided in both in English and French 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.

9.3. Graphic requirements

For graphic requirements please refer to the template published with these specifications on the Inforegio website. 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.

10. QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF SPECIFIC CONTRACTS

Once the work has been concluded and the service delivered, the Contractor will submit to the Commission a "proof of delivery", which will then be signed by the Commission as proof of receipt of each product delivered.

The quality of outputs of each specific contract will be subject to a written quality assessment according to the grid below. The grid may be adapted in accordance with the Commission's evaluation standards.

Quality indicators for the evaluation of the delivered work:

- Understanding of the requirements for the deliverable (40%)
- Completeness of the deliverables (40%)
- Respect of deadlines (20%).

Underperformance and reduction of payments

The quality of the output of the Specific Contract will be assessed as a function of the above quality indicators, up to a maximum of 100 points. If it scores less than 60% based on these quality indicators, it will be rejected for underperformance. In this case, the following will apply:

- **Step 1:** the Commission provides an overview of the failings and a reasonable deadline for remedy and notifies the Contractor accordingly.
- **Step 2:** if no satisfactory remedy is found, within the deadline set by the Commission (satisfactory is defined by at least 70% based on the quality indicators listed above), the Commission will notify the Contractor of a reduction of payments of *up to* 100%, proportional to the scale of the failure, as follows:
 - if the quality score is between 0% to 20%, a reduction of 100% will apply;

- if the quality score is between 21% to 40%, a reduction of 70% will apply;
- if the quality score is between 41% and 50%, a reduction of 50% will apply;
- if the quality score is between 51% and 60%, a reduction of 40% will apply;

In addition to the reduction of payment and in view of the manifest underperformance of the Contractor, the Commission will contact the Contractor whose offer ranked in the second place for the award of the Specific Contract.

11. TERMS OF PAYMENTS

Payments shall be done following the payment terms stipulated in Article 1.4. of the framework contract.

Annex – Templates for the submission of financial offer

	Junior Expert	Senior Expert	Contract Manager	Administrative assistant	Mission and other direct costs	TOTAL
<i>Number of working days</i>		
<i>Fees (€)</i>	... €	... €	... €	... €		... €
<i>Number of missions to Brussels⁽¹⁾</i>					... missions	
<i>Travel cost to Brussels</i>					... €	
<i>Daily and accommodation allowance</i>				 days	
					... €	
<i>Total missions cost</i>						... €
<i>Total cost</i>						... €

⁽¹⁾ The number of missions indicated should be the sum of the number of staff multiplies by the number of meetings proposed (e.g.: 3 people coming on 5 meetings in Brussels + 2 people coming on 2 meetings → 19 missions).