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

Framework Contracts Nr 2014CE16BAT004 / 2014CE16BAT005 / 2014CE16BAT006

Service Request Nr 2015CE16BAT048

SPECIFICATIONS

1. TITLE OF THE REQUEST FOR SERVICES

Feasibility study for a potential use of budget support in the delivery of the European Structural and Investment Funds

2. BACKGROUND OF THIS STUDY

Cohesion Policy has undergone a far-reaching reform in the 2014-2020 period. The reform establishes the policy as the EU's main investment policy to deliver European priorities and puts a strong emphasis on increased effectiveness and result orientation. It put in place a range of mechanisms to simplify implementation and reduce the administrative burden for beneficiaries.

For the preparation of the policy proposals for post-2020 and related impact assessments, the Commission wishes to identify and assess alternative delivery mechanisms for cohesion policy while maintaining the objectives of the 2014-2020 reform. In this context DG REGIO has launched another study, jointly with other DGs, that will provide an overview of alternative delivery mechanisms and assess their strengths and weaknesses for the delivery of policy objectives.

The purpose of this request for services is to explore the feasibility of the application of budget support mechanisms, especially, but not exclusively, those applied in EU external aid (managed by DG DEVCO and DG NEAR), for the use of European and Structural Investment Funds (ESI Funds).

For the purposes of this study budget support is understood as a delivery mechanism which involves a transfer of financial resources to the national budget of a partner country and that will be implemented in accordance with this country's budget procedures, financial management system and public procurement system. This budgetary transfer is accompanied by intense policy dialogue, conditionalities, technical assistance and/or capacity building. Eligibility conditions generally relate to stable macro-economic frameworks, credible public policies including contribution to sustainable and inclusive economic growth, sufficiently strong national public financial management systems, budget transparency, as well as satisfactory progress in the implementation of national/sector policies and reforms strategies. The related policy dialogue is focused on broad ex-ante issues such as the macroeconomic policy framework and budget priorities and on the actual implementation of the budget and the set of reforms undertaken in the relevant sector. The focus is less on implementation procedures and controls.

Many reports and studies are available about budget support, its modalities, advantages and disadvantages, as well as evaluation and audit results (see the selection of literature in Annex 2). However, there is little work linking budget support to the ESI Funds and the EU policies implemented with their support, setting out concretely whether and how such an approach could be implemented for cohesion policy. The purpose of this study is therefore to provide a framework to assess the feasibility of the implementation of different areas of intervention currently delivered under shared management through budget support, taking account of the different institutional arrangements in EU Member States.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTRACT

3.1. Objectives of the study

The overall objective of this study is to assess the advantages and disadvantages of a potential use of budget support for the delivery of parts of the ESI Funds, and to assess the feasibility of the delivery mechanism based on budget support to cohesion policy, including its legal set-up.

The study should achieve the following specific objectives:

- A. Provide an overview of budget support as a delivery mechanism in areas related to the field of intervention of the ESI Funds, its application by the main international donors and international financial institutions (IFIs), its main strong and weak points, including key lessons learnt from evaluations and audits.
- B. Identify the elements of budget support mechanisms particularly most useful to the main policy areas supported by the ESI Funds as well as their capacity to support the achievement of ESIF policy objectives. Assess the main potential advantages from the application of these mechanisms, as well as related disadvantages and risks. Identify the policy areas, types of interventions and levels of support to which they could be most appropriate.
- C. Analyse the differences between the current delivery mode of the ESI Funds and budget support as regards regularity, legality, sound financial management and the fight against fraud. Draw conclusions on the controls, audit, performance management and anti-fraud arrangements which should be applied if budget support is used for the ESI Funds.

- D. Propose a framework for the application of budget support delivery system in ESI Funds ,
– its main features and options for consideration, including its legal set-up
- E. Assess and quantify the main potential benefits, costs and risks from the use of budget support mechanisms in ESI Funds, both in qualitative and in monetary terms.

3.2. Methodology

Objectives A to E should be addressed through:

- desk research based on a comprehensive review of the academic literature, reports, studies and evaluations, including the literature given in Annex 2 and other relevant papers;
- at least ten case studies describing the use of budget support in international aid;
- interviews with major donors budget support and IFIs, beneficiaries, experts and with the relevant Commission staff;
- a workshop with the Commission services, experts, Member States and other invited stakeholders, feeding into the final report of this project.

In order to assess administrative costs and burden (within objective E), the "Better Regulation Toolbox" accompanying the Better Regulation Guidelines¹ shall be used. The outcomes from completed and ongoing studies² should be used as a reference value for the calculation of administrative costs and burdens.

At the end of the assignment, but before the submission of the final report, the contractor and DG REGIO shall organise a workshop to present and discuss the results of the project to the other Commission's DGs, other EU institutions, Member States, some regional authorities and the other invited stakeholders. In addition to the contractor's team, the workshop will be attended by 3-4 external experts, paid for by the contractor but external to the project, to comment on the results of the project and provide input to the workshop. The Commission will provide the premises and catering for this workshop.

At least two weeks before the workshop, the consultant will prepare an issues paper summarising the results of the project and the main issues to be discussed in the workshop. Following the workshop, the contractor will write its detailed summary. The results of the workshop will feed into the final report of the project.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/docs/br_toolbox_en.pdf

² Completed studies:

- 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).

A new study on the implementation of simplification provisions in ESI Funds 2014-2020 for DG REGIO is currently being carried out.

3.3. Tasks

The study covers six tasks. The first task consists of a report setting out the methodological approach to the different elements of the study as a whole. The methodological approach will need to be agreed with the Commission before proceeding with the implementation of the other tasks. . Tasks 2-6 are aligned with objectives A to E, as described in section 3.1 above.

Task 1: Methodological report

The contractor shall submit a methodological report of max 50 pages (plus annexes).

In this report, the contractor shall set out its detailed approach to carry out all the tasks covered by this study. Among other issues, the contractor should explain in this report:

- which donors and international financial institutions using budget support will be covered in Task 2 of the assignment and which of them will be interviewed by the contractor;
- proposed selection of relevant case studies and rationale behind the selection(Task 2);
- proposed framework for the assessment of advantages, disadvantages and risks of the use of budget support in the ESI Funds(Task 3);
- the envisaged scope and approach to quantification of benefits and costs (Task 6).

Task 2: Overview of Budget Support as aid modality

The contractor shall provide a comprehensive overview of the lessons learnt from the application of budget support by International donors and IFIs (EC, UK DFID, German KfW, French AFD, USAID, World Bank etc.). This overview should be based, first of all, on the available literature on this issue (see annex 2 for a selection of literature), other reports and evaluations, which should be complemented by at least 10 interviews with donors, IFIs and beneficiaries of budget support. This task will also involve preparation of at least six case studies describing the use of budget support in international aid.

An introductory part of the overview report should provide a brief introduction to budget support, its rationale and main types of budget support.

The main part of the overview report should give a comprehensive picture of sector budget support as applied by main international donors in the areas of intervention of cohesion policy. The analysis shall cover at least the following elements:

- Amounts of total budget support and sector budget support provided by main international donors and IFIs; main sectors supported by this aid modality (quantified if possible);
- Main expectations of the donors and of the beneficiaries regarding the use of budget support, and whether they have been fulfilled;
- Impact of budget support use on achieving wider policy objectives of the donors;

- Differences between the main donors and IFIs as regards the main rules and practices of sector budget support;
- The attitudes of the authorities and other stakeholders in beneficiary countries towards budget support;
- Policy dialogue mechanisms between the donors and beneficiaries of budget support;
- Impact of administrative and institutional capacity of beneficiaries on budget support operations; technical assistance and institution building as part of budget support;
- Conditionality / eligibility rules applied in budget support schemes, and how they are followed up and implemented;
- Performance-linked or result-linked disbursements, including innovative result-based forms of budget support such as cash-on-delivery;
- Applicability to delivery at sub-national level;
- Management and audit structures, effectiveness of controls, risk management and anti-fraud arrangements; the use of targeted budget support (which enables to trace the aid in the beneficiary's budget) vs. untargeted budget support;
- Key results of the relevant evaluations and audits of sector budget support, especially of the most relevant ones for potential use in the EU;
- Evidence as regards changes in administrative costs in comparison to traditional project aid for the donors and beneficiary countries.

This overview report will be illustrated by at least ten case studies analysing the use of budget support in practice. These case studies should be as relevant as possible for cohesion policy in terms of comparability of the countries (such as middle-income countries), sectorial policies and implementation challenges. At least five case studies should describe budget support operations funded from the EU budget; and a similar number of cases funded by the other donors and IFIs. The selection of case studies will be proposed by the contractor in the methodological report for the approval of the Steering Committee.

The issues identified in Task 3 as relevant for Cohesion Policy should be covered in detail in the literature review and interviews in Task 2.

Task 3: Potential value added of the use of Budget Support by the ESI Funds

Based on the lessons learnt from budget support applied by the main international donors and IFIs (reviewed in Task 2) and the contractor's knowledge of the policy areas supported by the ESI Funds, the contractor will identify the elements of budget support mechanisms particularly useful for Cohesion Policy, their capacity to support achieving ESIF policy results and will assess the main potential advantages from the application of these mechanisms, as well as the related risks and difficulties.

In order to do this, the contractor is expected to establish and apply a framework to assess the advantages, disadvantages and risks associated to the use of budget support by the ESI Funds.

This analysis should be differentiated, where it is relevant, by policy area, type of investment and by the level of budget support (national, regional, local).

The assessment framework for the use of budget support by the ESI Funds should in particular include the following criteria:

- Potential to improve the alignment between policy objectives and delivery of accountable results, allow better concentration on EU priorities, cover the link with Europe 2020 and the country specific recommendations, support the implementation of structural reforms and ensure compliance/synergies with other EU policies,
- Sound financial management (in particular economy, efficiency and effectiveness of EU funds - in line with Article 30 of Financial Regulation³, also including the delivery of results). Attention should be paid to the policy adequacy and result orientation.
- Accountability (assuming responsibility for all aspects related to ESI funds implementation, providing clear results, duly reported and communicated),
- Legality and regularity of underlying transactions (dealt with in Task 4) ,
- Aspects linked to good governance (transparency, ownership, responsiveness, flexibility to changed circumstances) of implementation;
- Potential of budget support as a simplification tool (reduced administrative costs, lower administrative burden to beneficiaries and improved cost effectiveness of controls);
- Potential to strengthen policy dialogue between the Commission, Member States and regions;
- Long-term sustainability of investment, promotion of innovative approaches;
- Broader impacts of the potential use of budget support (such as impact on multi-level governance, regional focus of EU cohesion policy, role for managing authorities, visibility of EU funds, possible changes in distribution of funds between categories of regions etc.)

As part of this task, the contractor is expected to assess in which types of investment, policy areas, for which types of beneficiaries and/or categories of Member States budget support could be particularly useful, and in which it would not be appropriate.

The assessment of the potential use of budget support in this study should be coordinated with the study on alternative delivery modes carried out in parallel. The Commission will facilitate an exchange of the relevant findings between two contractors.

Task 4: Regularity, legality, sound financial management and the fight against fraud

The Commission services have to provide assurance on the legality and regularity of budget implementation on a yearly basis.

³ 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>

In this task, the contractor will examine the differences between the implementation of ESI Funds (as an instrument delivered under shared management in EU Member States, where the EU Treaties and the *acquis* apply) and budget support (as an instrument delivered in third countries). This analysis will cover, in particular, the scope of control activities, their impact on the assurance provided by the Commission, performance management, as well as the error rates. The contractor shall also examine the differences between ESIF and implementing the budget in third countries in relation to requirements relating to public procurement, state aid, the environment, gender, anti-discrimination and the Charter on Fundamental Human Rights.

The contractor shall draw conclusions what management and control structures should be applied if budget support is used by the ESI Funds. For instance, how could stronger controls be applied given that budget support aid is normally not identifiable after its transfer to the beneficiary's budget? Is it sufficient if Member States' budgetary and management and control systems are tested/certified before transferring funds? How to ensure sufficiently sound financial management, taking into account the differences in effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the delivery systems? What audit arrangements should be applied? What anti-fraud tools can be applied by the Commission and Member States, especially if serious management deficiencies or fraud is discovered?

Task 5: A framework for the application of budget support delivery system in ESI Funds

Based on the results of Task 2 to 4, the contractor will propose a framework for the application of budget support delivery system for the ESI Funds.

This framework will include at least the following elements:

- Scope of budget support: in which policy areas investment types, categories of countries or regions it should be applied, and in which it does not seem to be appropriate; maximum/minimum size of budget support allocations;
- Ways to guarantee alignment with EU policies, ensure the link with the European Semester and the country specific recommendations,
- To what level (national/regional/local budgets) should EU funds be transferred?
- Programming of budget support;
- Eligibility criteria for budget support (if any) and the use of conditionalities;
- Policy dialogue modalities;
- Monitoring and evaluation (including data gathering), performance framework, design of output- or result-linked disbursements, fixed and variable tranches;
- Detailed mechanism of transfers to national/regional/local budgets, payments schedule; the impact on payments over the MFF and in the yearly budget procedure;
- Financial management, control, audit and anti-fraud arrangements; the scope of the Commission's assurance on legality and regularity (conclusions from Task 4);

- Visibility of EU funds provided as budget support.

The proposed framework should take account of the fact that a large part of the ESI Funds are currently delivered at a sub-national level.

This preliminary framework budget support should include, where appropriate, several options as regards key issues.

While designing the system of budget support for the ESI Funds, the contractor should take into account the experiences of the simplification measures already applied, in particular of Joint Action Plans⁴. These consist of a group of projects where payments of EU funds are directly linked to the respect of specific milestones, outputs and result targets. They were introduced as an option in 2014-2020 period, but their actual uptake is limited. The use of new provisions simplifying ESIF, including Joint Action Plans, is analysed in detail in another study carried out in parallel.

This task involves also identifying the main elements of a legal framework for the introduction of budget support delivery system for the ESI Funds as one of delivery modes. The proposed framework should be in conformity with the EU Financial Regulation, its Rules of Application and other EU financial rules. The key legislative changes that would be required to the Common Provisions Regulation and the other ESIF legislation should be indicated.

A preliminary version of Task 5 will be submitted to and discussed with the Commission services as part of the 2nd Interim report. The Commission will provide feedback and validate the options which should be retained for further analysis.

This design will be complemented by an analysis of the main benefits and costs (Task 6)

Task 6: Assessment of the main benefits and costs of the use of Budget Support in the ESI Funds

The contractor should identify the main benefits and costs of selected options regarding potential use of sector budget support by the ESI Funds and assess them both in qualitative and, where possible, in quantitative and monetary terms. This analysis should be broken down by relevant policy areas. It should also identify any potential risks associated with options provided. This analysis should be in line with the procedures described the Better Regulation Guidelines and the accompanying Better Regulation Toolbox,

The qualitative analysis should be broad and cover various economic, social, institutional and, if relevant, environmental impacts of the new system on various stakeholders.

⁴ Common Provisions Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, article 104 to 109

As regards the quantitative part of analysis, the study should at least quantify the potential for the reduction of administrative workload and costs for the Commission, public administration at national and regional level and administrative burdens for beneficiaries. The outcomes from completed and ongoing studies should be used as a reference value for the calculation of administrative costs and burdens (see section 3.2 on methodology).

When assessing the potential for reduction of administrative costs and burden, the contractor should take into account the experiences of budget support in EU external aid, other donors (Task 2) and IFIs, but also similar mechanisms in some Member States which channel national funds to regional and local authorities.

The analysis of cost and workload reduction potential should cover not only the total impacts but also be broken down by category of cost (for instance costs of programming, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, audits etc.) and by groups of stakeholders bearing ESI Funds costs. It should also indicate the costs of training and capacity building related to the potential transfer to budget support in ESI funds. A special case of Member States and regions receiving small amounts of funds (some regions in more developed regions) should also be analysed.

3.4. Deliverables

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. **Three Interim reports:**
 - a. first interim report covering task 2 and 3;
 - b. second interim report covering task 4 and 5
 - c. third interim report covering task 6.
3. **Draft final report:** covering tasks 2 to 6 as well as an executive summary.
4. **Workshop papers :**
 - a. an issues paper before the workshop;
 - b. a detailed summary of the workshop.
5. **Final report:** it shall include the final report itself (no more than 150 pages plus annexes) addressing all the specific objectives (A-F) of the study. 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, key words to facilitate web referecing of the study. It should finally include a power-point summarising the results and conclusions.

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 below. 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 and a workshop to be held 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.

End month*	Deliverable/Meeting	Output
0	M1	Kick-off meeting with the Commission services
1	D1	Tasks 1 (methodological report)
1.5	M2	Meeting to discuss the methodological report
3.5	D2	First interim report covering tasks 2 and 3
4	M3	Meeting to discuss the 1 st interim report with the Commission services
6	D3	Second interim report covering task 4 and 5
6.5	M4	Meeting to discuss the 2 nd interim report with the Commission services
9	D4	Third interim report covering task 6
9.5	M5	Meeting to discuss the 3 rd interim report with the Commission services
10.5	D5	Draft final report (covering tasks 2 to 6)
11	M6	Meeting to discuss first draft final report with the Commission services
11.5	D6	Issues paper for the workshop
12	W1	Workshop
13	D7	Final report
14		Oral presentation of final report

*Starting from the entry into force of the contract

A hard copy and an electronic version of draft versions of reports are required. For the final report three hard copies and an electronic version (three CDs, Word format and PDF format or equivalent application compatible with MS Office) are required.

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, 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.

In accordance with the specifications set out in the framework contract, the team should include members with an expertise in the areas covered by the ERDF, the CF, the ESF and for multi-fund programmes.

The qualifications of some members of the team indispensable for this specific request include:

- Development or management of development aid, including in-depth knowledge and previous work on budget support;
- Legal issues, control and audit of ESI funds;
- Financial transfers between national and regional budgets in Member States;
- Cost-benefit analysis, analysis of administrative costs and burdens.

3.6. Duration

The execution of the tasks shall not exceed 14 months starting from the day of the entry into force of the contract by both parties.

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.

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 three award quality criteria below:

- quality of the methodology proposed (max 40 points) to address each task;
Tenderers should provide a synthetic and exhaustive description of the approaches they intend to use for this study and the methods they intend to follow. This description should be detailed to the level of the different tasks to be covered. The work packages envisaged shall be precisely described, including elements such as the sources of information, collection of data and analytical tools employed.
- organisation proposed to respond in terms of timing and quality to the request for required missions (max 20 points);

Tenderers should provide a synthetic and exhaustive description of the approaches they intend to use towards project management. It should also describe the global allocation of time and resources to the project and to each task and the rationale behind the choice of this allocation.

- the composition of the team proposed to respond to the overall scope of the contract (max 40 points).

The description should provide details on how the roles and responsibilities of the proposed team and of the economic operators (including joint tenders and subcontractors if applicable) are distributed for each task and how the work of different team members or sub-teams will be coordinated. The contractor should also describe how the qualifications needed for this specific request (see section 3.5) are reflected in the composition of the team proposed for this assignment.

5. BUDGET

The maximum amount of the contract is EUR 520.000.

6. CONTENT AND PRESENTATION OF BIDS

6.1. 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.

6.2. 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. No separate reimbursable expenses will be accepted.

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

7. 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 authority 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.

8. ASSIGNEMENT 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.

All documents and information provided for the execution of this contract, as well as the results of this contract, must be kept confidential (Cf. Art II.5 of the Framework Service Contract) unless agreed otherwise with the Commission.

9. MEETINGS WITH THE COMMISSION

A kick-off meeting will be organised between the Contractor and the Commission at the early stage of the 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 the interim report and a last one following the submission of the draft final report. See point 3.3 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.

After the approval of the final report by the European Commission, the contractor will be expected to give an oral presentation of this report in Brussels within Commission premises.

The costs of managing the contract by the Contractor, as well as the travel costs related to all the meetings with Commission (including the workshop and the oral presentation of the final report) will be carried out with no additional charge and are understood to be incorporated in the offer.

10. PUBLICATION AND DELIVERABLES

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 logo⁵.

⁵ 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

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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.

10.1. Final Study Report

The final study report shall include:

- an abstract of no more than 200 words, an executive summary of maximum 6 pages, both in English and French, and key words to facilitate web referecing 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.

10.2. 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.

10.3. 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.

11. 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;

12. TERMS OF PAYMENTS

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

- The first interim payment of 30% will follow the reception of the methodological report (D1).
- The second interim payment of 20% will follow the reception of the first interim report (D2).
- The third interim payment of 20% will follow the reception of the third interim report (D4).
- The balance payment will follow the approval by the Commission of the final report (D7).

Annex 1: Template 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</i>						
<i>Travel cost to Brussels</i>					... €	
<i>Daily and accommodation allowance</i>					... €	
<i>Total missions cost</i>						... €
<i>Total cost</i>						... €

Annex 2: Literature on Budget Support (selection)

- ADE (2014), Evaluation conjointe des opérations d'appui budgétaire au Maroc, Rapport final
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