

SPECIFICATIONS – INVITATION TO TENDER N° VT/2011/047

Pilot project – Social solidarity for social integration

1. TITLE OF THE CONTRACT

Pilot project – Social solidarity for social integration

Budget line 04.031400 – Pilot project: social solidarity for social integration proposed by the European Parliament.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. The Europe 2020 Strategy

The Europe 2020 Strategy,¹ launched by the European Commission in March 2010, sets out a new economic strategy to exit the crisis and prepare the EU economy for the next decade.

Europe 2020 puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities:

- Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation.
- Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy.
- Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

Five targets have been set which define where the EU should be by 2020 and against which progress may be tracked. Each Member State has been asked to translate these EU-level targets into national targets reflecting different starting points:

- 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed
- 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D
- The "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met
- The share of early school-leavers should be below 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a degree or diploma.
- The at-risk of poverty headcount should drop by 20 million.

¹ EUROPE 2020 A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth COM(2010)2020 final <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC2020:EN:HTML>

Inclusive growth – a high employment economy delivering, social and territorial cohesion.

Inclusive growth means empowering people through high levels of employment, investing in skills, fighting poverty and modernising labour markets, training and social protection systems so as to help people anticipate and manage change, and build a cohesive society. It is also essential that the benefits of economic growth spread to all parts of the Union, including its outermost regions, thus strengthening territorial cohesion. It is about ensuring access and opportunities for all throughout the lifecycle. Europe needs to make full use of its labour potential to face the challenges of an ageing population and rising global competition.

Actions within this priority will require strengthening employment, education and training policies and social protection systems by increasing labour participation and reducing structural unemployment, as well as raising corporate social responsibility within the business community.

Access to childcare facilities and care for other dependents will be important in this respect. Other key elements will be implementing flexicurity principles and enabling people to acquire new skills to adapt to new conditions and potential career shifts.

A major effort will be required to combat poverty and social exclusion and reduce health inequalities to ensure that everybody can benefit from growth. Equally important will be the ability to meet the challenge of promoting a healthy and active ageing population to allow for social cohesion and greater, sustained productivity.

2.2. The European Platform against poverty

In order to meet the targets of the Europe 2020 strategy, the Heads of State and Government adopted a series of flagship initiatives. Among these initiatives was the **European platform against poverty**² which sets out ways to help Member States move up a gear in fighting social exclusion and thus ensuring economic, social and territorial cohesion by helping the poor and socially excluded and enabling them to play an active part in society.

It identifies the following areas for action:

- Delivering actions across the policy spectrum;
- Greater and more effective use of the EU Funds to support social inclusion;
- Promoting evidence-based social innovation;
- Working in partnership and harnessing the potential of the social economy;
- Enhanced policy coordination among the Member States

² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion: A European framework for social and territorial cohesion COM (2010)758final - <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0758:FIN:EN:PDF>

Commission Staff Working paper- List of key initiatives Accompanying document to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion: A European framework for social and territorial cohesion COM(2010) 758 final - <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1564:EN:NOT>

2.3. The Open Method of coordination for social protection and social inclusion

The Open Method of Coordination for social inclusion (OMC) was launched in 2001 as a comprehensive process of coordination at EU level. Later on it was extended to pensions, health and long-term care and became the Open Method of Coordination for Social Protection and Social Inclusion.

In July 2008 the European Commission published a Communication on "A renewed commitment to social Europe: Reinforcing the Open Method of Coordination for Social Protection and Social Inclusion"³ as part of its Renewed Social Agenda.

The integration of the Social OMC into the Europe 2020 strategy provides a stronger basis for the EU to meet its social goals. The EPSCO Council conclusions of 6 December 2010 on *The Social dimension in the context of an integrated Europe 2020 Strategy*⁴ invite the Commission to support the work of the Social Protection Committee (SPC) in its areas of competence of the social dimension of Europe. The SPC is invited to ensure the monitoring of the social situation and the development of social protection policies, including an assessment of the social dimension of Europe 2020.

It is important that the instruments and tools that have been developed under the Social OMC cross-fertilise with the governance architecture of Europe 2020, to best serve the purposes of the new strategy. Thus, the Commission will continue to work with Member States and key stakeholders to foster solutions that ensure ownership, commitment and delivery.

2.4. Active inclusion

The fight against poverty and social exclusion relies heavily on the integration of those people furthest from the labour market. Persistently large numbers of people are at risk of poverty and excluded from the labour market, thus representing a considerable challenge to the objective of social cohesion and respect for human dignity enshrined in the European Union treaty.

In 2008 the European Commission adopted a Recommendation containing common principles and practical guidelines for active inclusion strategies at national level.⁵ These common principles have since been endorsed by the Council (December 2008)⁶

³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - "A **renewed commitment to social Europe**: Reinforcing the Open Method of Coordination for Social Protection and Social Inclusion" COM(2008)418final
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52008DC0418:EN:HTML>

⁴ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/118244.pdf

⁵ Commission Recommendation of 3 October 2008 on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market (COM(2008) 5737). See at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:307:0011:0014:EN:PDF>.

⁶ European Council Conclusions on common active inclusion principles to combat poverty more effectively, December 17, 2008. See: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/104818.pdf.

and the European Parliament (May 2009)⁷. Social partners adopted a framework agreement on inclusive labour markets in March 2010⁸.

Comprehensive active inclusion strategies need to be designed and implemented to promote the integration of the most disadvantaged people, combining three policy strands: adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services. The aim of active inclusion strategies is to ensure that social protection policies effectively facilitate the integration into sustainable, quality employment of those who can work, while achieving the wider objective of providing a decent living standard and support for social participation to all, and in particular to those who are and will remain outside the labour market.

The right to social and housing assistance to ensure a decent existence for all those who lack sufficient resources is enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

2.5. Minimum income

The Commission Recommendation on active inclusion takes as its starting point Council Recommendation 92/441/EEC of 24 June 1992 on common criteria concerning sufficient resources and social assistance in social protection systems. It called on Member States “to recognise the basic right of a person to sufficient resources and social assistance to live in a manner compatible with human dignity as part of a comprehensive and consistent drive to combat social exclusion”.

In the 2008 Recommendation, the Commission stated that the Member States should “design and implement an integrated comprehensive strategy for the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market combining adequate income support, inclusive labour markets and access to quality services”. The Commission also recommended that “active inclusion policies should facilitate the integration into sustainable, quality employment of those who can work and provide resources which are sufficient to live in dignity, together with support for social participation, for those who cannot”.

Within the context of the European Platform against poverty (see point 2.2. above), the Commission will issue by 2012 a Communication providing an in-depth assessment of the implementation of active inclusion strategies at national level, including the effectiveness of minimum income schemes.

Key documents on active inclusion include:

⁷ European Parliament Resolution of 6.5.2009 2008/2335(INI):
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P6-TA-2009-0371>.

⁸ Framework agreement on inclusive labour markets, March 25, 2010.
http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf_20100325155413125.pdf

- Commission Recommendation 2008/867/EC:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32008H0867:EN:NOT>

- Council Conclusions of 17.12.2008:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/104818.pdf

- European Parliament Resolution of 6.5.2009 2008/2335(INI):

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&language=EN&reference=P6-TA-2009-0371>

3. SUBJECT OF THE CONTRACT

The subject of this contract is to support, through a pilot project, the constitution of a network for mutual learning and exchange of best practices on minimum income (herein after referred to as the "Minimum Income Network"). Members of the network should be national, regional and local administrations, trade unions and associations, including non governmental organisations.

The "Minimum Income Network" should aim to support the implementation of the Commission Recommendation on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market, with a special focus on the provisions concerning adequate income support.

While the Commission Recommendation refers to the social situation of people in working age, the project shall be open to knowledge-building, mutual learning and exchange of best practices about old-age income support schemes.

The gender dimension should be duly covered in all the activities of the network.

4. PARTICIPATION

Please note that:

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

Where the Multilateral Agreement on Public Contracts concluded within the framework of the WTO applies, the contracts are also open to nationals of States that have ratified this Agreement, under the conditions provided for therein. It should be noted that research and development services, which come under category 8 of Annex IIA of Directive 2004/18/EC, are not covered by this Agreement.

5. TASKS TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE CONTRACTOR AND DELIVERABLES

5.1. Geographical coverage

The contract will cover the 27 Member States of the European Union.

5.2. The Minimum Income Network

The Minimum Income Network should:

- Promote the implementation of the Commission's Recommendation on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market (2008).
- Improve knowledge and understanding of minimum income schemes, designed to support people's active participation in society and in the workforce;
- Assess the quality and the benefits of various minimum income schemes (including old-age related income schemes) taking into account social and economic impacts;
- Exchange information on minimum income schemes within EU member states and on how they perform in terms of adequacy, coverage and take-up rates.
- Identify good and unsatisfactory practices, with a special attention to reforms implemented in recent years.

5.3. Deliverables

- (1) Development of platforms or fora in at least five Member States to foster debates and discussions and produce quality information materials related to the specific objectives outlined above.
- (2) A work package of deliverables will be expected from each individual platform along with a common work package of deliverables resulting from the trans-national work between the five platforms concerned.
- (3) Conferences in all Member States which would build on and use the materials developed in the five Member States where platforms/fora exist. Each conference should include at least 40 participants. All the related costs will be born by the Contractor.
- (4) Development of a European-level forum which would collate the information emerging from the work in the Member States and:
 - host, at mid-term of the contract, a European-level conference to gather together the learning from within the Member States
 - present suggestions for enhancing EU-level coordination in the field of minimum income schemes.
- (5) Survey of methodologies for establishing adequacy of minimum income schemes, such as the "reference budgets", with a view to reaching common definitions and criteria for adequacy.
- (6) Survey of practices to improve the quality, the effectiveness and take up of minimum income schemes, including the reduction of stigmatisation and the capacity to be conducive to labour market integration.

5.4. Quality control and assessment

The contractor should ensure that the activities undertaken and deliverables are of the highest quality. The contractor is requested to carry out an annual evaluation of the activities focusing on:

- The organisation of the activities;
- The quality of the deliverables, as set out in point 5.3 above.
- The effectiveness of the communication/dissemination activities linked to the deliverables.

6. PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

The tenderer should have:

- a proven track record and expertise on addressing the issue of minimum income;
- the ability to engage relevant EU and national actors, including the direct engagement of people who access or would benefit from accessing minimum income schemes;
- the ability to engage a wider public in the discussion on the importance of adequate minimum income schemes for society and in particular for those people directly concerned..

Additional requirements: see under "Selection Criteria"

7. TIME SCHEDULE AND REPORTING

Additional requirements (specific deadlines for the performance of tasks):

7.1. Time schedule

The contract will have a duration of 24 months, and should not begin later than the first semester of 2012.

7.2. Reporting

In addition to the specific reports required by each task above-mentioned, the contractor should prepare:

- an **inception report**, to be submitted within 3 months as from the contract signature. It should include a detailed explanation of the first findings, and the identification of the Member States (minimum five) in which the platforms/fora will be developed;
- an **interim report**, to be submitted at the latest 1 year after the project start. It should detail the state of play in the different activities covered by the contract;

- a **final report**, to be submitted at the latest at the end of the contract period. It should include a post-project sustainability plan for the European-level forum and the EU platforms/fora.

All reports should be submitted in English and include for the time period concerned:

- a complete description of the work done;
- a presentation of the results obtained;
- an assessment of the activities and recommendations to improve management procedures;
- any comments, suggestions or recommendations judged useful or necessary by the contractor.

8. PAYMENTS AND STANDARD CONTRACT

According to Article I.4 of the draft contract:

"Payments under the Contract shall be made in accordance with Article I.4 of the draft contract. Payments shall be executed only if the Contractor has fulfilled all his contractual obligations by the date on which the invoice is submitted. Payment requests may not be made if payments for previous periods have not been executed as a result of default of negligence on the part of the Contractor".

Pre-financing

Following signature of the Contract by the last contracting party, within 30 days of the receipt by the Commission of a request for pre-financing with a relevant invoice, a pre-financing payment equal to 10% of the total amount referred to in Article I.3.1 of the draft contract shall be made.

Interim payments

A request for a **first interim payment** by the contractor shall be admissible if accompanied by:

- an inception report, submitted within 3 months of contract signature date (see point 7.2 above);
 - the relevant invoice,
- provided the report has been approved by the Commission.

The Commission shall have 60 days from receipt to approve or reject the report, and the contractor shall have 30 days in which to submit additional information or a new report.

Within 30 days of the date on which the report is approved by the Commission, an interim payment corresponding to the relevant invoices, up to maximum 20% of the total amount referred to in Article I.3.1 of the contract shall be made.

A request for a **second interim payment** by the contractor shall be admissible if accompanied by:

- an interim technical activity report, submitted at the latest one year after signature of the contract (see point 7.2 above);
 - the relevant invoice,
- provided the report has been approved by the Commission.

The Commission shall have 60 days from receipt to approve or reject the report, and the contractor shall have 30 days in which to submit additional information or a new report.

Within 30 days of the date on which the report is approved by the Commission, an interim payment corresponding to the relevant invoices, up to maximum 30% of the total amount referred to in Article I.3.1 of the contract shall be made.

Payment of the balance

The request for payment of the balance of the Contractor shall be admissible if accompanied by:

- the final technical report in accordance with the instructions laid down in Annex I of the draft contract,
- the relevant invoices.

The report will have to be approved by the Commission prior to this payment. The Commission shall have 60 days from receipt to approve or reject the report. If the report is not approved, the Contractor shall have 30 days in which to submit additional information or a new report.

Within 30 days of the date on which the report is approved by the Commission, payment of the balance of the total amount referred to in Article I.3.1 of the draft contract shall be made.

Performance guarantee

Not applicable.

In drawing up the bid, the tenderer should take into account the provisions of the standard contract comprising the "General terms and conditions applicable to service contracts".

9. PRICES

The maximum price for this pilot project is 1.000.000,00 €.

Under the terms of articles 3 and 4 of the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Union, the latter are exempt from all charges, taxes and duties, including value added tax; such charges may not therefore be included in the calculation of the price quoted. The amount of VAT is to be indicated separately.

The price must be stated in EUR(€), net of VAT (using, where appropriate, the conversion rates published in the C series of the Official Journal of the European Union on the day when the invitation to tender was issued), and broken down according to the model in annex III included in the attached standard contract.

Part A: Professional fees and direct costs

- Fees, expressed as the number of person-days multiplied by the unit price per working day for each expert proposed (including the days of participation in meetings / seminars).
- Direct costs include
 - Travel and subsistence costs of the Minimum Income Network members;
 - Costs related to the deliverables of the MI Network as set out under point 5.3 above;
 - Costs related to quality control and assessment;
 - Any unavoidable expenses necessary to the achievement of the Contract.

Part B: Reimbursable expenses

- Contingencies, if any (maximum 3 % of part A)

Contingencies are subject to prior approval by the Commission.

Total price= Part A + Part B

It should be noted that if some activities do not take place, the final contract price would decrease accordingly. Consequently, a detailed budget clearly identifying each task must be provided.

10. GROUPING OF ECONOMIC OPERATORS OR CONSORTIA

Tenders can be submitted by grouping of service providers/suppliers who will not be required to adopt a particular legal form prior to the contract being awarded, but the consortium selected may be required to assume a given legal form when it has been awarded the contract, if the change is necessary for proper performance of the contract⁹.

⁹ These entities can take the form of an entity with or without legal personality but offering sufficient protection of the commission's contractual interests (depending on the Member State concerned, this may be, for example, a consortium or a temporary association).

However, a grouping of economic operators must nominate one party to be responsible for the receipt and processing of payments for members of the grouping, for managing the service administration, and for coordination. The documents required and listed in the following points 11 and 12 must be supplied by every member of the grouping.

Each member of the grouping assumes a joint and several liability towards the Commission.

11. EXCLUSION CRITERIA AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- 11.1. Bidders must provide a declaration on their honour, duly signed and dated, that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 93 and 94a) of the Financial Regulation.

Those articles are as follows:

"Article 93

Applicants or tenderers shall be excluded if:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of res judicata;
- c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- d) they have not fulfilled their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established, or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgement which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Union's financial interests;
- f) they are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 96(1)¹⁰.

The contract has to be signed by all members of the group, or by one of the members, which has been duly authorised by the other members of the grouping (a power of attorney or sufficient authorisation is to be attached to the contract), when the tenderers have not formed a legal entity.

¹⁰ "Article 96(1): the contracting authority may impose administrative or financial penalties on the following:

(a) candidates or tenderers in the cases referred to in point (b) of Article 94;

(...)

Article 94:

Contracts may not be awarded to candidates or tenderers who, during the procurement procedure:

(a) are subject to a conflict of interest;

(b) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the procurement procedure of fail to supply this information(...)"

- 11.2. The tenderer to whom the contract is to be awarded shall provide, within a time limit defined by the contracting authority and preceding the signature of the contract, the evidence referred to in Article 134 of the Implementing rules, confirming the declaration referred to in point 1 above.

Article 134 of the Implementing Rules - Evidence

§3 The contracting authority shall accept as satisfactory evidence that the candidate or tenderer to whom the contract is to be awarded is not in one of the situations described in point (a), (b) or (e) of Article 93(1) of the Financial Regulation, a recent extract from the judicial record or, failing that, an equivalent document recently issued by a judicial or administrative authority in the country of origin or provenance showing that those requirements are satisfied. The contracting authority shall accept as satisfactory evidence that the candidate or tenderer is not in the situation described in point (d) of Article 93(1) of the Financial Regulation, a recent certificate issued by the competent authority of the State concerned.

Where the document or certificate is not issued in the country concerned, it may be replaced by a sworn or, failing that, a solemn statement made by the interested party before a judicial or administrative authority, a notary or a qualified professional body in his country of origin or provenance.

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

See annex I (which may be used as a checklist) for the supporting documents accepted by the European Commission to be provided by applicants, tenderers or tenderers to whom the contract will be awarded.

(b) contractors who have been declared to be in serious breach of their obligations under contracts covered by the budget (...)"

- 11.3. The contracting authority may waive the obligation of a candidate or tenderer to submit the documentary evidence referred to in article 134 of the Implementing Rules if such evidence has already been submitted to it for the purposes of another procurement procedure launched by DG EMPL, and provided that the issuing date of the documents does not exceed one year and that they are still valid.

In such a case, the candidate or tenderer shall declare on his honour that the documentary evidence has already been provided in a previous procurement procedure and confirm that no changes in his situation have occurred.

12. SELECTION CRITERIA

The candidates will be selected on the basis of their financial and economic capacity and their technical capacity.

a) *Economic and financial capacity* to carry out the tasks set out in the tender specifications must be demonstrated with the provision of the following documents by the tenderer:

- a proof that the yearly turnover (of the tenderer, or of all the members of the consortium together) in the last two financial years for which accounts have been closed is equivalent to at least twice the value of the contract (minimum 2.000.000,00 €);
- the balance sheets and profit and loss accounts for the last two financial years for which accounts have been closed. Where the relevant company law requires these financial statements to be audited, the audit statements should be included;
- a bank declaration providing evidence of good financial standing.

If, for some exceptional reason which the contracting authority considers justified, the tenderer or candidate is unable to provide the references requested by the contracting authority, he may prove his economic and financial capacity by any other means which the contracting authority considers appropriate.

b) *Technical and professional capacity*:

- The members of the core team of the MI network should have :
 - a high level of expertise in the field of social inclusion;
 - strong work experience in managing similar activities;
 - good organisational and coordination skills;
 - And should be at least level II experts.
- The members of the teams involved in the production of the deliverables should show experience in similar activities and should

ensure an optimal coverage across the countries participating in the project

- The members of the teams should have no-conflict of interest and should be independent. A conflict of interests arises where one's ability to perform his/her duties impartially and objectively is impaired because of family or emotional ties, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other pertinent connection or common interest with national authorities.

Means of proof required:

- Details of educational and professional qualifications of the Project Director (CVs) and of the main members of the core team
- A list of the works carried out by the organisation(s) involved in the partnership in the last five years.

13. AWARD CRITERIA

The contract will be awarded to the bid offering the best price/quality ratio, taking account of the following criteria:

a) Quality and consistency of the tender

- The degree of understanding of the nature of the assignment, its context and results to be achieved (20 %);

b) Quality of the bid and the proposed methodological approach

- Quality of the bid and of the methodology proposed for organising the functioning of the MI network and facilitating the production of the deliverables (30%).
- Quality of the bid and the methodology proposed for the preparation of the deliverables and the quality assurance of the latter (30%).
- Structure of the team and allocation to tasks, and ability to complete the work well within the time available (20%).

Please note that the contract will not be awarded to any bid that receives less than 70% in the award criteria. The points total will then be divided by the price, with the highest scoring bid being chosen.

14. CONTENT AND PRESENTATION OF BIDS

14.1. Content of bids

Tenders must include:

- All information and documents necessary to enable the Commission to appraise the bid on the basis of the selection and award criteria (see point 12 and 13 above);
- A bank ID form duly completed and signed by the bank;
- A "legal entity" form, duly complete;
- The price;
- The detailed CVs of the proposed experts;
- The name and function of the contractor's legal representative (i.e. the person authorised to act on behalf of the contractor in any legal dealings with third parties);
- Proof of eligibility: tenderers must indicate the State in which they have their registered office or are established, providing the necessary supporting documents in accordance with their national law.

14.2. Presentation of bids

Bids must be submitted in triplicate (i.e. one original + two copies and an electronic copy of the technical part of the bid (CD-Rom));

They must include all the information required by the Commission (see points 10, 11, 12 and 13 above);

They must be clear and concise;

They must be signed by the legal representative;

They must be submitted in accordance with the specific requirements of the invitation to tender, within the deadlines laid down.

15. VALIDITY OF BIDS

Bids should be valid for 9 months after date of submission.