

Call for tenders

Terms of reference

ESPON European Research Project

**“Access to affordable and quality housing for all
people”**

Technical and administrative

Terms and conditions

ESPON EGTC

07 February 2023

Implementation Framework: The Single Operation within the ESPON 2030 Cooperation Programme implemented by the ESPON EGTC. The ESPON 2030 Monitoring Committee approved the Single Operation on 26 September 2022. The Single Operation is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund via the ESPON 2030 Cooperation Programme.

This document details both the technical and administrative terms and conditions including its annexes and constitutes the dossier of this call for tenders. Its original is kept in the contracting authority's records and is the only version that is deemed authentic.

Key Information on the Procurement

Title	Access to affordable and quality housing for all people
Procedure	EU Open
Contracting authority	ESPON EGTC 11, Avenue John F. Kennedy L-1855 Luxembourg Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
Type of contract	Service contract
Duration	27 months (24 months for contract implementation + 3 months for administrative closure)
Maximum available budget	EUR 700,000 (excluding VAT)
Place of delivery	Luxembourg
Lots	This tender is not divided into lots
Variants	Not permitted
Market access	Participation in this tender is open to all economic operators established in the European Union, the European Economic Area and third countries signatories to international agreements in the field of public procurement by which the EU is bound
Tender submission method	Electronic submission via the Luxembourg Public Procurement Portal (www.pmp.lu)
Deadline for sending requests for information And/or reporting errors, omissions, ambiguities, or discrepancies	10 April 2023 at 13h59 CEST
Deadline for submission of tenders	17 April 2023 at 13h59 CEST

Table of contents

1	What is to be done? (Purpose of the contract)	5
1.1	CONTEXT	5
1.2	OBJECTIVE	9
1.3	DESCRIPTION OF TASKS	11
1.3.1	<i>Task 1: Conceptual framework</i>	11
1.3.2	<i>Task 2: Analysis of housing policies</i>	12
1.3.3	<i>Task 3: Identify the main drivers</i>	12
1.3.4	<i>Task 4: Multi-level methodological framework</i>	13
1.3.5	<i>Task 5: Analysis and mapping</i>	13
1.3.6	<i>Task 6: Preparing case studies on a variety of territories</i>	14
1.3.7	<i>Task 7: Development of recommendations</i>	14
1.4	EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND DELIVERIES	15
1.4.1	<i>Expected outputs</i>	15
1.4.2	<i>Deliveries</i>	16
1.4.3	<i>Common requirements for all deliveries</i>	19
1.5	PROJECT MANAGEMENT	19
1.5.1	<i>Mandatory meetings foreseen during the contract implementation</i>	19
1.5.2	<i>Indicative time schedule</i>	20
1.6	COMPETENCES AND SKILLS REQUIRED	21
2	Conditions of execution of the contract	22
2.1	CONTRACTUAL FRAMEWORK	22
2.2	DURATION OF THE CONTRACT	22
2.3	LOTS	22
2.4	VARIANTS	22
2.5	AVAILABLE BUDGET	22
2.6	MAIN TERMS FOR INVOICING AND PAYMENTS	22
2.7	APPLICABLE LANGUAGE	23
2.8	OWNERSHIP OF RESULTS	24
2.9	DATA PROTECTION	24
2.10	MODIFICATION OF THE CONTRACT DURING ITS TERM	24
3	General Information on the procedure	25
3.1	COMMUNICATION AND PORTAL	25
3.2	ACCEPTANCE OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE	25
3.3	REQUEST FOR INFORMATION	25
3.4	WHO CAN SUBMIT A TENDER? (INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTOR, JOINT TENDER AND/OR SUBCONTRACTING)	26
3.4.1	<i>Joint tender</i>	26
3.4.2	<i>Subcontracting</i>	27
3.4.3	<i>Participation</i>	28
3.5	SUBMISSION OF OFFERS AND DEADLINE	29
3.6	CONTENT OF THE OFFER (ADMINISTRATIVE - TECHNICAL OFFER AND FINANCIAL OFFER)	30
3.7	OPENING OF THE TENDER	33
4	Contract award procedure	33
4.1	EXAMINATION OF TENDERS	33
4.2	VERIFICATION OF NON-EXCLUSION	33
4.3	VERIFICATION OF THE SELECTION CRITERIA	34
4.3.1	<i>General information</i>	35

4.3.2	<i>Economic and financial capacity</i>	35
4.3.3	<i>Technical and professional capacity</i>	35
4.4	FINANCIAL AWARD CRITERION	35
4.5	EVALUATION OF THE TENDERS ON THE BASIS OF THE AWARD CRITERIA	36
4.6	CONTRACT AWARD AND CONCLUSION	37
5	Additional contracting information	37
5.1	CONTRACTING AUTHORITY	37
5.2	PLACE OF DELIVERY	38
5.3	OTHER CONDITIONS	38
6	Annexes	38

1 What is to be done? (Purpose of the contract)

The ESPON EGTC is launching an open call for tenders to further build up ESPON's stock of research and enhance the European territorial evidence production in the framework of the [ESPON 2030 Cooperation Programme](#). The call for tenders shall result in a European research project being implemented withing the framework of the Thematic Action Plan "[Perspectives for all people and places](#)".

1.1 Context

Access to housing is a prerequisite for living in conditions of human dignity. In this respect, housing affordability can be broadly defined as the ability of households to buy or rent adequate housing, without impairing their ability to meet basic living costs (OECD, 2021¹). However, the term "affordable housing" is interpreted in different ways, which may lead to a variety of affordable housing solutions but also to different expectations².

The EU has no direct competence in housing policy; however, it can influence it indirectly with regulations such as: the state aid, fiscal and competition laws. In terms of policy making related to affordable housing, the EU has mainly used recommendations and guidelines for national and local policymakers. Social housing is defined as a service of general economic interest (SGEI) under the current SGEI package³, exempt from state aid regulation and, therefore, Member States do not need to notify the EC of compensation for social housing.

"Affordable housing" is of great relevance to the work of the EU Urban Agenda since 2016⁴, as already noted in the Pact of Amsterdam⁵. In 2022, the UN High Level Meeting⁶ on the implementation of the UN New Urban Agenda put forward new commitments to revitalise the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. In particular, the European Union reinforced its involvement to make it as a priority to sustainable development, including Goal 11 of making "cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". In this context, it is relevant to consider the three voluntary commitments renewed in the context of the UN High Level Meeting, comprising also the New European Bauhaus⁷ that connects the European Green Deal⁸ to our living spaces and experiences "to build together a sustainable and inclusive future that is beautiful for our eyes, minds, and souls".

Affordable and quality housing is also a relevant topic in the priorities of the Territorial Agenda 2030⁹, offering "a future for all places" and calling for cooperation and coordination between places, levels of governments, policy sectors and societal groups to improve living conditions across Europe.

It is also important to take into account the existing EU instruments supporting housing affordability and quality even though their positive impact is sometimes questionable as stated in a study from the Joint Research Centre (JRC) in selected cities confirming "the assumption that housing financialization

¹ https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=1060_1060075-0ejk3l4uil&title=ENG_OECD-affordable-housing-policies-brief

² Eurostat defines the house cost overburden rate as the share of population living in households that spend 40% or more of their disposable income on housing.

³ SGEI Decision of 20 December 2011 (2012/21/EU).

⁴ <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/urban-agenda/housing> - The focus was on public housing, state aid rules and general housing policy.

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/themes/urban-development/agenda/pact-of-amsterdam.pdf

⁶ <https://unhabitat.org/hlm-new-urban-agenda>

⁷ https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index_en

⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

⁹ <https://territorialagenda.eu/>

negatively impacts housing affordability...pointing to the housing system as a complex myriad of factors that either directly or indirectly influence and reinforce each other"¹⁰. The European Investment Bank (EIB) has created a financial tool aimed at easing the pressure on housing markets in Europe. The EIB support includes "the retrofitting of existing housing and the construction of new social and affordable accommodation, ranging from housing schemes in small towns and rural areas often facing demographic challenges to development projects in large cities with very severe housing shortages"¹¹.

Moreover, the affordable housing initiative, part of the Commission's renovation wave strategy for Europe, aims "to create green buildings, jobs and improve lives. As part of this strategy, the affordable housing initiative works to make social and affordable housing facilities benefit from the renovation wave. It will guarantee local social housing projects' access to necessary technical and innovation capacity and project support"¹².

The housing affordability is also a priority for the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) "as the affordable housing crisis in the EU Member States has never been worse and it is time for action rather than more talk, and so the EU needs a specific action plan for housing. Although housing policy remains a national competence, the shortage of affordable housing in the EU requires a specific European action plan, focusing on boosting the energy performance of buildings."¹³. Therefore, the accessibility of EU financial instruments to local entities is a relevant issue to consider, for instance on how to access loans from EIB and how to build capacity on innovative financial instruments, as green bonds or social impact bonds. In the case of the green bonds, some municipalities, as Gothenburg, have been active on that. In other cases, municipalities rely on national promotional banks (some of those also only acting at local level), to expand the social and affordable housing stock.

Presently, Europe is facing a housing crisis as an increasing number of people in the EU are struggling to afford the rising costs of housing. In some large urban areas, in particular, many people find themselves in a challenging situation and are obliged to search for housing out of the city boundaries. The growing shortage of affordable housing in a large number of Member States is an undeniable factor of increasing inequalities, which becomes in return a high concern for the pursuit of territorial cohesion objectives. Also, the quality of housing is often problematic. In the EU, housing costs have risen over the last decades, as prices increased in most Member States between 2007 and 2020 at a faster pace than disposable income. Housing costs represent more than 40 % of disposable income for European citizens¹⁴. The shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine indicate that in the short and medium term the energy crisis, economic recession and job losses may further increase housing insecurity, over-indebtedness, and the risk of eviction and homelessness, and show the challenging situation of many people¹⁵. That is why the European Parliament adopted its report "Access to decent and affordable housing for all"¹⁶ recommending a number of measures to the European Commission and Member States. In particular, it encourages the Member States to increase the use of ESI Funds to guarantee social, accessible and affordable housing and it recommends the European Commission to issue an integrated strategy on public, social and affordable housing.

¹⁰ <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC120776>

¹¹ https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/social_and_affordable_housing_overview_2020_en.pdf

¹² https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/affordable-housing-initiative_en

¹³ <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/news-media/press-releases/eu-needs-action-plan-deliver-affordable-and-decent-housing>

¹⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/digpub/housing/bloc-2b.html>

¹⁵ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0020_EN.html

¹⁶ European Parliament resolution of 21 January 2021 on access to decent and affordable housing for all (2019/2187(INI)) - <https://www.euromanet.eu/news/european-parliament-adopted-a-report-on-access-to-decent-and-affordable-housing-for-all-recommending-measures-to-member-states-and-european-commission/>

UN-Habitat estimates 3 billion people will need access to adequate housing by 2030, adding up to the need to build 96,000 new affordable homes every day to house them, in a context where shortages of land, lending, labour and materials are some of the factors fuelling the housing crisis¹⁷. The OECD¹⁸ predicts higher demand for social and affordable housing resulting from unbearable housing costs, due to rising energy costs, coupled with growing unemployment rates due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has made the vital role of housing more explicit than ever. However, the challenges vary greatly across EU countries and regions in which rich urban areas, youth, low income, single parents, elderly are the most overburdened by housing costs.

According to EUROSTAT, in the EU in 2020, 12.3% of the population in cities lived in “housing cost overburden rate”¹⁹ households, while the corresponding rate for rural areas was 7%. The highest housing cost overburden rates in cities were observed in Greece (36.9%), Germany (22.2%) and Denmark (20.3%), while in rural areas they were in Greece (23.9%), Germany (17.6%) and Bulgaria (16.4%). The housing cost overburden is higher in cities than in rural areas in all Member States, except Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia and Lithuania. In general terms, the housing crisis affects more urban and metropolitan areas where it is more difficult to find affordable housing, including for middle-income households, which leads to social exclusion and spatial segregation. Vulnerable groups are mainly: women, young people, young unemployed persons, single parents, large families, the elderly, migrants, refugees, persons with disabilities, people with physical or psychiatric illnesses, and people from marginalised communities, including Roma.

“Housing market failures compromise social cohesion in Europe, increase homelessness and poverty, and affect trust in democracy. In order to address these challenges, national and local authorities must be able to adopt adequate housing policies, in order to create conditions and support for investments in social and affordable housing; societies are ageing and undergoing demographic change and housing needs vary with age in line with changes in lifestyle or family situation; barriers to housing include lack of accessibility, safety concerns and maintenance costs; more so, the energy efficiency of housing stock has a direct impact on energy poverty and the cost of maintenance”²⁰.

Governments use a range of policy tools to make housing more affordable. Some housing support measures (such as housing allowances and social housing) tend to target low-income and other vulnerable households. Others measures aim to support homeowners (like granting subsidies and tax relief to facilitate home ownership) and are more likely to help middle-income households. Overall, there is an increase in housing projects supported by national policies but that does not always enable access to housing to those whose income is too low or just above the threshold to make them eligible for social housing.

In this context, there is a need and growing demand for analysing the access to housing affordability and quality beyond the national and regional economic indicators. By doing so, a place-based approach focused on the specificities of territories across Europe shall be used, taking also into account governance issues and the provision of renovated, energy efficient buildings referred in the European Green Deal. Regarding the latter, it is relevant to understand the cost-effectiveness of renovation and thus, if cost-neutrality is achieved after all²¹.

¹⁷ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/06/how-to-fix-global-housing-crisis/>

¹⁸ https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=1060_1060075-0ejk3l4uil&title=ENG_OECD-affordable-housing-policies-brief

¹⁹ The housing cost overburden rate is the percentage of the population living in households where the total housing costs ('net' of housing allowances) represent more than 40 % of disposable income ('net' of housing allowances). https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Housing_cost_overburden_rate&lang=en

²⁰ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0020_EN.html

²¹ If the renovation of social and affordable housing results in higher rent prices for tenants, those should be off-set by lower energy bills.

The previous ESPON programme has contributed with relevant research on housing and governance-related issues that shall be used in the framework of this service contract in order to ensure complementarity and synergies, and avoid any duplication of work:

- ESPON COMPASS - Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe - <https://www.espon.eu/planning-systems>.
- ESPON project on Territorial indicators based on big data - <https://www.espon.eu/BigDataIndicators>. Services of general interest: sentiment indicator on housing (rent/purchase).
- Big Data for Territorial Analysis and Housing Dynamics - <https://www.espon.eu/big-data-housing> which includes 10 case-study cities, covering 4 countries and one cross-border region: Geneva (Switzerland), Annecy-Annemasse, Avignon and Paris (France), Madrid, Barcelona and Palma de Majorca (Spain) and Warsaw, Lodz and Cracow (Poland).
- Big Data and Housing - Data and maps update" that addresses the dynamics of housing markets within cross-border regions while incorporating novel techniques in acquiring housing data through web scraping processes - <https://www.espon.eu/projects/espon-2020/monitoring-and-tools/big-data-and-housing-data-and-maps-update>.
- ESPON project ACTAREA - Thinking and Planning in Areas of Territorial Cooperation - <https://www.espon.eu/actarea>
- ESPON ACTAREA Tool - mapping soft territorial cooperation areas and initiatives - <https://www.espon.eu/actarea-tool>

In addition, other projects/initiatives developed by relevant organisations shall be considered in the implementation of this European research project such as (non-exhaustive list):

- OECD (2020), Housing policies for sustainable and inclusive cities: How national governments can deliver affordable housing and compact urban development - <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/d63e9434-en.pdf?expires=1669203934&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=EC82B47E5A8BCFACA8E7A0C80DC00F63>
- OECD, (2021), Building for a better tomorrow: Policies to make housing more affordable - https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=1060_1060075-0ejk3l4uil&title=ENG_OECD-affordable-housing-policies-brief
- OECD, Economics Department (2022), Changes in the geography housing demand after the onset of COVID-19: First results from large metropolitan areas in 13 OECD countries - <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9a99131f-en.pdf?expires=1669127470&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=50F1F58C8BC8C21E3511B32D4B9CFAD6>
- OECD, national and regional database on housing prices - https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=RHPI_TARGET
- OECD – housing policy toolkit - <https://www.oecd.org/housing/policy-toolkit/>
- European Parliament (2020), Policies to Ensure Access to Affordable Housing - [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/652729/IPOL_STU\(2020\)652729_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/652729/IPOL_STU(2020)652729_EN.pdf)
- European Commission, Joint Research Centre (JRC) Unit B3 Territorial Development (2020) - Who owns the city? Exploratory research activity on the financialization of housing in EU cities - <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC120776>
- European Parliament (2019), Access to decent and affordable housing for all - https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2020-0247_EN.html
- UN Economic Commission for Europe (2021), Effective policies for affordable housing in the UNCE region - https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/Housing2030%20study_E_web.pdf

- MEDIAURBAN (2017), (Affordable housing in Europe: Innovative public policies that can effectively address the housing crisis, https://www.cidob.org/en/publications/publication_series/notes_internacionales/n1_180/affordable_housing_in_europe_innovative_public_policies_that_can_effectively_address_the_housing_crisis
- Housing Europe (2021), The state of housing in Europe 2021 -- chapters 4 and 5 on housing policies in Europe - https://www.stateofhousing.eu/The_State_of_Housing_in_the_EU_2021.pdf
- Affordable Housing Initiative - part of the Commission's renovation wave strategy for Europe, which aims to green buildings, create jobs and improve lives. This strategy intends to at least double renovation rates in the EU by breaking down long-standing barriers to energy and resource-efficient renovation as well as improving reuse and recycling. By 2030, the construction sector could see 35 million renovated buildings and up to 160,000 additional green jobs. https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/affordable-housing-initiative_en.
- Housing 2030 – a joint international initiative of housing experts from over 56 governments through UNECE and UN Habitat and 43,000 affordable housing providers and neighbourhood developers represented by Housing Europe. It aims to improve the capacity of national and local governments to formulate policies that improve housing affordability and sustainability. <https://www.housing2030.org/about-housing2030/>.
- Housing Europe Observatory - point of reference for facts, figures and key trends in the field of public, cooperative and social housing across Europe - <https://www.housingeurope.eu/section-135/housing-observatory> - the State of Housing in Europe 2021.
- EU-funded projects on affordable, quality and social housing, including examples of good practices - <https://keep.eu/>. Also other programmes - <https://shape-affordablehousing.eu/> and Horizon Europe (CORDIS.EU) Examples: <https://calico.brussels/>; <https://urbanmaestro.org/>;
- JRC - Handbook of Territorial and Local Development Strategies - <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC130788#:~:text=The%20'Handbook%20of%20Territorial%20and,Stakeholders%20involved%20in%20the%20process>.
- EC DG Economic and Financial Affairs (2021) - European Economy Discussion Paper: Euro Area Housing Markets: Trends, Challenges & Policy Responses - https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/economy-finance/dp147_en_0.pdf
- "Push" - a documentary shedding light on the global phenomenon of the commodification of housing and consequent lack of affordability, with Leilani Farha (United Nations rapporteur on housing), Joseph Stiglitz, Saskia Sassen and Stig Westerdahl - <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8976772/>
- Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University – The state of the nation's housing 2022 - https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/reports/files/Harvard_JCHS_State_Nations_Housing_2022.pdf
- OECD: Can office conversion help solve the housing crisis in cities? <https://oecdcoito.blog/2021/10/29/can-office-conversion-help-solve-the-housing-crisis-in-cities/>
- Innovative approaches (example: cooperative housing in Switzerland) - <https://urbanmaestro.org>

1.2 Objective

The main objective of this European research project is to deliver high quality research to provide recommendations to policymakers at different geographical levels on how to create and provide (access to) affordable and quality housing - taking into account European policy goals related to territorial cohesion and the EU Green Deal.

By doing so, the research shall achieve the following aims:

- Propose a conceptualisation for “affordable and quality housing” based on the existing work and literature on this topic, considering as well the European policy goals related to territorial cohesion and sustainability. Taking into account that housing policies in Europe are very diverse, no official definition of the term “affordable housing” is universally accepted across the Member States.
- Provide a comprehensive overview of how the housing policies are delivered across the ESPON space and identify relevant mechanisms at local level for supporting housing affordability and quality.
- Identify the main drivers of (un)affordability and future trends that will shape housing markets, considering different types of territories and the impact of existing housing policies.
- Identify and analyse good practices and innovative approaches in housing policies which contribute to affordable and quality housing in Europe in different types of territories.
- Develop recommendations on how affordable and quality housing can be analysed and monitored in Europe at different levels and how the created territorial evidence could support the development and implementation of better housing policies.

Considering the main objective of this activity and the aims described above, it should provide answers to the following **policy questions**:

- How to define, from a policy point of view, affordable and quality housing (considering different types of territories and a place-based approach)?
- What public policies regarding affordable and quality housing exist in Europe and how are they designed and implemented? How is coordination ensured with other policies or regulatory/planning measures? How does the institutional map of actors active in the housing policies look like?
- How is good governance (across levels and spheres of government but also with public and private operators) contributing to the efficient housing policies? Which coordination challenges can be identified and how to solve them considering the two-fold perspective on housing policies (regulation at national level and production at local levels)?
- Which are the main drivers contributing to make housing less affordable over time and how could these be mitigated/avoided, while aiming for long-term sustainable and inclusive territorial development and quality of life at different levels? How is the pressure experienced at the local level, given the interactions between the private-driven market – public authorities – renters/owners? How can policymakers anticipate and act about the main drivers?
- Which good practices/ tools on affordable and quality housing are being implemented in different types of territories in Europe? How to design and adapt policy tools to address local conditions and to ensure coherence at different geographical and governance levels?
- What tools (e.g. financial tools, land value capture, development permitted right...) could help implementing affordable housing policies? How to build capacity on innovative financial instruments, as green bonds or social impact bonds?
- How to reconcile the need for affordable housing and no-land take policies/overcoming land constraint?

Given the complexity of the research topic, it is not mandatory to cover all the policy questions mentioned above, thus an argued selection shall be presented in the tender considering the objectives of this project and the rationale behind.

The geographical coverage of the study shall encompass all EU member countries and partner states participating in the ESPON 2030 Cooperation Programme.

1.3 Description of tasks

In pursuit of the aims outlined above, the following tasks shall be carried out within the framework of this European research project. Tenderers are requested to describe how they intend to implement them; to include in their proposal a description of their foreseen organisation and planning, to detail the proposed deliveries and to explain how the necessary resources shall be broken down between the different tasks.

These tasks provide an overall framework foreseen for the delivery of the projective objective and policy questions but can be broken down into sub-tasks or reorganised as the tenderer deems appropriate, consistent with their preferred methodological approach.

1.3.1 Task 1: Conceptual framework

Development of a conceptual framework for the European research

The aim of this task is to develop a conceptual framework for the research based on literature review and taking stock on the existing studies on this topic in order to ensure a clear added value.

Main concepts and research strategy, as well as an explanation on how the project will benefit from/use existing evidence, should already be presented in the tender. The latter shall also highlight how the findings from the previous ESPON studies and work of the key organisations such as the European Parliament, the OECD, the UN and others will be taken into account in order to achieve the objectives.

In general terms, this task aims at further elaborating the proposed conceptual framework (to be described in the offer) and should not mobilise many resources. Its purpose is to ground the research on the most appropriate concepts and definition(s) according to the objectives of this project.

As the research field can become very broad, it is important to clearly define the most important concepts and aspects of the research. This mostly concerns, but is not limited to the following:

- a) Conceptualisation of affordable and quality housing. The conceptualisation shall consider the existing definitions and adopt one that allows to perform data collection on housing and other related impact data at sub-national level in a way that it is comparable across European countries and regions including both rental housing and home ownership.
- b) Definition of the participatory process to be carried out in this study involving the steering committee and/or other stakeholders (participating, for instance, in the case studies).
- c) A clear approach on the scale and content of territorial analysis when analysing housing policies in Europe, to be able to explain the relation of housing policies to spatial planning instruments, financial investments, governance and their capacity to be adaptive to changing contexts.
- d) Definition of what are "vulnerable groups" in relation to housing affordability and quality that might lead to reconsider the term "beneficiaries" of social housing²² and how they will be integrated in the analysis.

²² As with the current cost of living crisis, not only low-income but also middle-income households won't be able to afford housing costs, as well as related energy bills.

- e) Identification of EU and national instruments supporting access to affordable and quality housing and which will be analysed in relation to the main objective of the study.
- f) Outline on what kind of data sources and methods will be used to gather or produce data.

The conceptual framework has to be developed in consultation with the ESPON EGTC and the steering committee. The tenderer should already in the tender include a draft proposal in relation to this task with a rationale and concrete suggestions on the conceptual framework to be developed during the project implementation, to be agreed during the first steering committee meeting (ca. 1 month after the kick-off meeting).

1.3.2 Task 2: Analysis of housing policies

This task aims at providing an overview of the institutional and financial frameworks for housing policies in Europe focusing on their territorial dimension (e.g.: distribution of competences among levels of government, governance practices...)

In doing so, the analysis should also consider the coordination of housing policies with other policies such as land use and climate policy initiatives and its integration in spatial planning instruments, focusing on the mechanisms supporting housing affordability and quality. In this context is important to look into different types of policies such as national financial policies (e.g. credit access, property taxation), policies affecting types of ownership (owner occupied and rental), social housing policies and policies subsidising housing finance. Moreover, the influence of EU orientations in relation to housing such as EU legislation and EU policies should be considered in this analysis.

This task should also include an analysis of government investments and expenditure on housing²³ and how these are implemented in practice. In particular, it is important to understand the amount of public investments in promoting access to affordable and quality housing. The OECD research has brought insights on the data availability and possible comparisons across Europe²⁴.

The results of this task shall be presented for all 31 European countries participating in the ESPON 2030 Cooperation Programme, in a concise way, using for instance territorial clustering, and/or showing typologies of housing policies in Europe.

The outcome of the analysis shall be reported in a textual way as well as in maps, graphs and/or interactive visualisations like storymaps, dashboards, infographics, videos (as agreed with the ESPON EGTC). The tenderer shall provide details on the nature and format of these deliveries in the technical offer.

1.3.3 Task 3: Identify the main drivers

Identify the main drivers of (un)affordability and future trends that will shape housing developments in different territories

Unaffordability is a sign of a malfunctional housing system, and it is important for policymakers to understand its causes in order to tailor appropriate actions and policies. Therefore, it is important to look at the drivers of unaffordability across different income and age groups and considering changes in the

²³Eurostat collects data on general government expenditure by economic function according to the international Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG), which should be complemented through data from existing studies and data at national level. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Government_expenditure_on_housing_and_community_amenities#Expenditure_on_housing_and_community_amenities.27

²⁴ <https://www.oecd.org/els/family/PH4-1-Public-spending-social-rental-housing.pdf>

lifestyle due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the raise of energy costs and migration trends, which have a long-term impact on housing prices.

Based on the selection and analysis of best practices, this task should identify and analyse the major trends that shaped recent housing developments at European level but also understand how the pressure is experienced at the local level, given the interactions between the private-driven market – public authorities – renters/owners. By doing so, it should identify the main drivers that have contributed to making housing less affordable over time at different geographical levels and in different types of territories (metropolitan, rural, urban...) and how these could be mitigated/avoided, while aiming for long-term sustainable, inclusive territorial development and quality of life.

The main drivers of (un)affordability, future trends and possible actions to mitigate them identified and analysed within this task need to be used when developing recommendations to policy makers for affordable and quality housing.

1.3.4 Task 4: Multi-level methodological framework

Development of a multi-level methodological framework to measure (access to) affordable and quality housing

Based on the results of task 2 and 3, this task is aimed at developing a methodology for measuring (access to) housing affordability and quality by using a place-based approach, which needs to make use of existing measurements (and data) developed by key organisations such as OECD. This methodology should determine how to measure (access to) affordable and quality housing in Europe at various territorial levels in different types of territories.

The methodology should identify indicators that capture the specificity of housing markets, using official statistics, big data and incorporate novel techniques in acquiring housing data through web scraping processes. A key element to consider is the data resulting from previous ESPON studies on this topic (mentioned above). The data work should also lead to identify what statistical data are available, which are lacking, and which data should be compiled in the future.

Specific topics to look at are: affordability across different age groups, gender, type of households, income groups in different types of territories; quality in relation to energy efficiency of the buildings.

The methodology should be divided in 2 parts in order to be applicable at different geographical levels:

1. Global methodology, applicable to a European scale considering different types of territories.
2. Locally applicable methodology to the case studies. More detailed and complete methodology that could be used at local levels where more opportunities in terms of data availability exist or can be developed.

The methodology has to be developed in consultation with the ESPON EGTC and the steering committee and involve local stakeholders participating in the case studies.

1.3.5 Task 5: Analysis and mapping

Analysis and mapping (access to) affordable and quality housing

Using the methodology developed (task 4), the service provider must perform a pan-European analysis and mapping housing affordability and quality in Europe. The access to housing affordability and quality shall be considered in relation to the “vulnerable groups” identified under task 1 (conceptual framework of the research).

The outcome of the analysis shall be reported in a textual way as well as in maps, graphs and interactive visualisations like storymaps, dashboards, infographics, videos (as agreed with the ESPON EGTC). The tenderer shall provide details on the nature and format of these deliveries already in its technical offer.

1.3.6 Task 6: Preparing case studies on a variety of territories

Considering the outcomes of task 5 and the methodological framework, five case studies on different types of European territories must be implemented providing more detailed insights into aspects which cannot be captured by the European analysis carried out. The case studies shall include diverse types of territories with distinct characteristics: socio-economic, geographic location and types of housing policies.

Overall, the objective of this task is twofold:

- To identify and analyse good practices with innovative examples on affordable and quality housing that could inspire/be transferred to other territories in Europe, in particular be used in the development of recommendations (as described in task 7).
- To test the methodology developed (task 4) and apply any adjustments to it, if needed.

The service provider is expected to propose relevant selection criteria and, based on the latter, a proposal for case studies. The proposal shall ensure that stakeholders responsible for housing policies are actively involved in the implementation of the related case studies and that the results bring a clear added value to their work when designing and implementing housing policies.

Tenderers may put forward in their technical proposal a tentative list of criteria, that would need to be further elaborated, discussed and agreed with the ESPON EGTC. In any case, the final decision on both, the selection criteria and case studies will be subject of discussion and approval by the ESPON EGTC.

By implementing case studies, the service provider shall carry out interviews with key stakeholders that will complement the quantitative analysis and provide in depth understanding of the housing policies currently in practice.

The outcome of the case study analysis shall not necessarily be a case study report but interactive visualisation material. The exact format of the related deliveries shall be defined in agreement with the ESPON EGTC.

1.3.7 Task 7: Development of recommendations

Development of recommendations: how to make housing more affordable and sustainable (higher quality)?

This task constitutes the conclusive part of this project, and it is aimed at providing recommendations to policymakers at different geographical levels on how to create and develop (access to) affordable and quality housing to boost people's quality of life taking into account European policy goals related to territorial cohesion and the Green Deal.

Housing policies have to deal with huge economic and social challenges, which have been intensified by the COVID and the energy crisis, and this will require adaptation and flexibility in policies. Therefore, the main aim of this task is to capitalise on the results of the previous tasks and to develop a handbook/guidance for policymakers on how to improve housing affordability and quality in their territories by considering the following aspects:

- Access to financing and cohesion mechanisms - flexibility regarding EU financial instruments, considering a shift from emergency measures towards long-term investments.

- Better understanding – of housing market dynamics based on the drivers of unaffordability (task 4) and on cross-sectoral and multi-level cooperation.
- Place based and integrated policies - good governance practices and relation to spatial planning instruments at national, regional and local levels.

In doing so, the following questions should be addressed (indicative list):

- How an integrated EU approach to affordable and quality housing fits to the structure of EU funds and national budgets? How greater synergies between existing instruments can be developed?
- How to ensure that EU financial instruments become more accessible to local entities? How to increase the capacity building at local level and promote good governance practices on affordable and quality housing?
- How local authorities can use the tools at their disposal to maximise the supply of affordable housing according to their local housing needs and circumstances? Can territorial delivery mechanisms such as Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) and Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) be considered and used in this regard?
- How can soft territorial cooperation approaches (as explained in ESPON ACTAREA) offer opportunities to establish partnerships/cooperation among territorial actors and shape housing policies beyond administrative boundaries?
- Which elements to take into account in the design of integrated and place-based housing policies?
- How can policy makers anticipate and act about the main drivers for housing unaffordability in their territories and future trends?
- Which good/innovative practices can be identified to raise awareness of the relation between different policies, good governance, planning instruments and other functions that produce solutions which best reflect the local contexts and population's needs?

This task has to be developed through a participatory process involving stakeholders from the case studies and the Steering Committee (including the ESPON EGTC).

The offer submitted shall include ideas on how to implement and present the outcomes of this task.

1.4 Expected outputs and deliveries

The following outputs and deliveries shall be provided covering the tasks of the requested service as specified above in section 1.3.

1.4.1 Expected outputs

The main outputs of the service shall be:

- An internal communication plan focused on the project governance, relation and implementation of the various tasks (not to be understood as sequential), participatory approach, flow of information, inputs expected from the advisory group, time plan, contingency measures to deal with potential challenges.
- A (policy) conceptual framework defining affordable and quality housing.
- A compendium on housing policies in ESPON countries
- A multi-level methodological framework describing how to measure housing affordability and quality considering an integrated place-based approach with a special focus on the identified 'vulnerable groups'.

- Pan-European analysis on housing affordability and quality and case studies on different types of territories.
- A guide or handbook aimed at national, regional and local policy makers on how to promote and implement affordability and quality housing in their territories, including the presentation of selected good practices, recommendations from task 7 and suggestions from task 8.

1.4.2 Deliveries

The technical offer shall include a description of the format and the content of all deliveries according to the methodological concept the tenderer proposes to implement. The technical offer shall also indicate to which task(s) each delivery is referring to.

The tenderers are requested to submit at least 4 predefined deliveries, linked to foreseen payments in the contract (3 interim and 1 final payment):

- One inception delivery
- Two progress reports
- One final delivery

The table presented in section 1.5 below indicates the time schedule for these 4 predefined deliveries.

The technical offer shall indicate the time schedule for all other intermediary deliveries proposed by the tenderer.

During the contract implementation, based on the project's progress, risk assessment, stakeholders' inputs and service provider's performance, the contracting authority may request an adaptation of the time schedule and the content of the proposed intermediary deliveries.

1.4.2.1 Predefined deliveries

1. An inception delivery containing at least:

- Report (approximately 30 pages, excluding annexes) including:
 - Description of the conceptual framework to be applied, including the definition of the most important concepts and aspects of the research.
 - Internal communication plan, in particular project governance, flows of information, composition of the SC, participatory approach with the SCM and stakeholders related to the case studies.
 - Proposal for the selection criteria to identify case studies and relevant stakeholders to be involved.
 - Overview and evaluation of validity and reliability of data and data sources to be used. A plan for overcoming potential challenges in relation to data collection and missing data.
- Work plan presenting the next steps foreseen in the project's implementation, including meetings with selected target groups
- Description of the format and content of the next intermediary deliveries.

2. A final delivery containing at least:

- Final main report (40 to 80 pages), reflecting the main outcomes of the project to be delivered in the form as agreed with the EGTC, including at least the following elements:
 - Concise and high communicative answers to the policy questions addressed during the project implementation.
 - Compendium of housing policies in ESPON countries.
 - A short, simple and concise explanation of the policy and multi-level methodological framework defining and measuring affordable and quality housing.
 - Key observations related to the European analysis and to the case studies carried out.
 - A guide or handbook for policy makers, including good and innovative practices on affordable and quality housing.
- Scientific annexes, including the methodology and the research results, data gathering, data development, challenges occurred, and ideas for future research.
- Elaborated case studies – delivered in the form as agreed with the EGTC.
- Presentation of the research results in the format and specific form agreed with the ESPON EGTC²⁵ and – whenever related to maps and other interactive forms of data visualisation - compatible with the environment of the ESPON Portal.
- Data, maps and figures:
 - Source files for the maps and figures (incl. map project/design and vector formats).
 - Shapefiles, geodatabase(s), for all the static and interactive web-maps, dashboards or apps.

²⁵ This involves the concise and easy-to-grasp summary of overall research findings in an analogue or digital format by means of (a non-exhaustive list of forms): policy brief, infographics, dashboard, story map, simple video clip, apps, etc.)

- Data gathered according to the ESPON metadata template, corresponding to the principles of ESPON data strategy and integration of the collected data in the ESPON database, in cooperation with the ESPON EGTC.

3. Two progress reports

In addition to the above, the service provider will be requested to submit two progress reports, corresponding to foreseen interim payments in the contract.

Those brief reports (max. 10 pages) shall provide an overview on the progress of the implementation of the project, highlighting the status of the different tasks and the challenges and risks associated for the good achievement of the research. Furthermore, the reports shall list the meetings held and the intermediate deliveries submitted between the progress reports.

The service provider will receive written feedback from the ESPON EGTC on each mandatory delivery (inception, final and progress reports) including approval or request for revision and/or addressing identified challenges (indicatively within two weeks after receiving them and one month for the final delivery).

1.4.2.2 Intermediary deliveries

In addition to the predefined deliveries, service providers are expected to provide intermediary deliveries. These can take different forms, depending on the profile and content of the requested tasks. Their exact quantity, format and content shall be proposed in the technical offer, then agreed between the ESPON EGTC and the service provider at the kick off meeting. They shall be submitted on a scheduled basis corresponding to the progress of the implementation of the different tasks described above (see sections 1.3).

While leaving freedom to the tenderers to define the intermediary deliveries in their technical offer, the compulsory element of the intermediary deliveries are: the data resource that shall be steadily acquired processed and submitted to the ESPON EGTC, a detailed overview of the data collection process and data structure, and adjustments related to the data strategy when necessary (see dedicated section about data delivery process below).

The service provider will receive feedback from the ESPON EGTC on each delivery.

1.4.2.3 Data delivery process and digital deliveries

Data and data visualisations are an integral part of all the above-mentioned deliveries. When it comes to data deliveries, it is important to document and provide associating metadata and all the data possible that would allow to reproduce the results. It is important to keep the potential reuse of data in mind when collecting and structuring them, therefore, detailed spatiotemporal granularity is important. Visualisations need to be adapted both for static representation in reports as well as interactive web-based content. The project is expected to deliver both static and interactive web-based maps and figures, when relevant also dashboards, applications or similar, suitable for ESPON website and Portal²⁶.

The delivery of data and (web)maps and/or any other relevant interactive content mentioned above shall be delivered and integrated throughout the implementation of the project as they are completed, finalised and agreed with the ESPON EGTC.

ESPON Portal is built upon a software system for web-based GIS, powering mapping and visualization, analytics, and data management. It is the backbone for creating and running the interactive web-maps, data stories, dashboards and any custom GIS applications the project may propose or what ESPON may request. Hence, all proposed/requested interactive visualisations or solutions must be compatible with the system. Access to the environment can be provided by ESPON.

²⁶ <https://gis-portal.espon.eu/arcgis/apps/sites/#/espon-hub>

1.4.3 Common requirements for all deliveries

All deliveries should be delivered in electronic (editable) format and the text – whatever the format of the delivery, as relevant, should have gone through a thorough language check, preferably by an English native speaker. ESPON EGTC will provide the generic templates for the maps, however, the service provider shall adjust the templates if necessary, depending on the geographic extent or the relevant peculiarities.

1.5 Project management

1.5.1 Mandatory meetings foreseen during the contract implementation

The service provider shall ensure participation (at least one team representative) in all mandatory meetings mentioned below. Costs related to these meetings need to be included in the financial offer for this service. No other expenses will be paid by the contracting authority to the service provider.

Most of these meetings are held online. In the case of a physical meeting (up to 4 physical meetings shall be organised during the lifetime of the project), they normally take place at the ESPON EGTC's premises in Luxembourg. However, meetings may also take place at other suitable locations, upon agreement between the service provider and the ESPON EGTC.

Kick-off meeting

It will consist of a general presentation and dialogue regarding the objectives and tasks of the activity. The kick off meeting will also address more precisely the organisation of the project and the plans for the intermediary deliveries. The service provider will receive guidelines on how to use the ESPON portal interface for data delivery and digital deliveries, on how to design the maps in line with the main elements of the ESPON layout, as well as all relevant information concerning the proper application of the ESPON Corporate Identity.

Coordination meetings

Project coordination meetings are organised to discuss the progress on the implementation of the service contract, the deliveries submitted and to provide feedback. They take place on a regular basis (e.g. monthly basis or more frequently if deemed necessary) by a common agreement between the service provider and the ESPON EGTC. Their agenda and duration are agreed in advance. Written minutes are prepared by the service provider to document key decision points and shared with the ESPON EGTC after each meeting.

Steering Committee meetings

Partnership and cooperation are central to the implementation of ESPON European research projects and are prerequisites for ensuring useful results and effective policy uptake. The successful accomplishment of the objectives of this project will be achieved by proactive participation between selected stakeholders, the ESPON EGTC and the service provider at every stage of the implementation.

To allow for a framework that facilitates successful cooperation, a Steering Committee shall be established for the lifetime of this European research project. The main purpose of the Steering Committee is to ensure the involvement and active participation of stakeholders in the implementation and steering of the project and to safeguard the policy relevance of project outputs for the stakeholders.

The goals of the Steering Committee meetings are, as follows:

- To closely follow and advise the implementation of the research, making sure that it meets both research objectives and policy demands,
- To discuss and give feedback to deliveries from the service provider and provide guidance for the subsequent steps of the research and service contract implementation;
- To discuss and agree upon how to deliver - at each stage of the implementation – the results of the research to selected target groups.

The composition of the Steering Committee is defined by the ESPON EGTC and communicated to the service provider. It comprises at least stakeholders of the territories for which case studies are expected, the service provider and the ESPON EGTC. Other external stakeholders (e.g. representatives of the [ESPON Monitoring Committee](#)) and/or relevant organisations may also take part in the Steering Committee.

Indicatively, four steering committee meetings shall be foreseen.

- The first one shall take place ca. 1 month after the kick-off meeting, preferably as a physical meeting.
- The timing and location of the other Steering Committee meetings will be discussed and agreed during the kick-off meeting and may be amended during the project implementation.

1.5.2 Indicative time schedule

The table below presents the indicative time schedule for the predefined deliveries and kick-off and steering committee meetings.

The exact deadlines for the predefined deliveries as well as indicative time schedule for all other intermediary deliveries and for coordination and steering committee meetings will be agreed during the kick-off meeting.

The minutes of the kick-off meeting containing a record of the agreed dates will be signed by the representatives of both the service provider and the ESPON EGTC and will be subject to article 4 - “Performance of the contract and subcontracting” of the service contract.

Meetings	Predefined deliveries	Indicative deadline ²⁷
Kick-off		As soon as possible (and normally within 2 weeks) after the award of the contract
	Inception Delivery	T +1 months
1st Steering Committee		T + 2 months
	Progress report 1	T + 6 months
2nd Steering Committee		T + 9 months
	Progress report 2	T + 12 months
3rd Steering Committee		T + 15 months
	Final Delivery	T + 22 months

²⁷ The letter "T" in this table stands for the date of the kick-off meeting. Timeframes are indicative.

Meetings	Predefined deliveries	Indicative deadline ²⁷
Final Steering Committee		T + 23 months

1.6 Competences and skills required

The service provider must have proven, European/transnational scale research expertise and multidisciplinary experience relevant to contract matter in order to ensure the successful implementation of the service. The competence and experience of the service provider within the fields outlined below shall be clearly demonstrated and documented, as requested in Sections 3 and 4.

- Proven experience in studies addressing territorial development issues, including experience from policy-relevant and comparative analyses, preferably with a European or transnational coverage and including multi-disciplinary approaches.
- At least three of the proposed team members of the service provider shall have at least five years of experience and academic background in the field of expertise and knowledge related to territorial analysis, governance and housing policies.
- Advanced GIS and web-based GIS, and data visualisation skills (QGIS, ArcGIS or equivalent) to carry out the necessary analytical work on the data resource, configure ESPON mapping templates when necessary, and present the research results in the digital format both in static and interactive manner by means of the forms agreed with the ESPON EGTC (e.g. maps, figures, webmaps, dashboards, story maps, infographics, simple video clips, apps, etc.
- Advanced data management, data quality checking, statistics, statistical programming skills (R, Python or equivalent). ESPON emphasises the importance of data quality, and highlights the complexity of data sourcing, harmonisation, data gap filling, especially when dealing with innovative, non-conventional or multitude of sources.
- At least one member with a communication/journalistic background and experience in visualizing and presenting research findings in an easy-to-grasp way.
- Team members shall demonstrate a very good linguistic ability to draft and communicate research findings in high-quality English.

2 Conditions of execution of the contract

2.1 Contractual framework

By order of priority, the conditions of performance of the contract are governed by:

1. These Terms of reference with all its appendices and annexes
2. The draft model service contract
3. The contract notice
4. All responses and corrections provided during the tendering process
5. The successful tenderer's tender with all its annexes as accepted by the ESPON EGTC

These documents constitute the complete procurement documents for this call for tenders. However, Economic operators are invited to regularly check the Luxembourg Public Procurement Portal website where any additional information or clarifications concerning this procedure will be made available.

The contract shall be concluded by the signature of the contracting authority on the service contract.

By submitting a tender, tenderers accept in full all the clauses of the Terms of reference and its annexes. Under no circumstances, and under penalty of exclusion, is the tenderer permitted to modify the Terms of reference or any of its annexes. The application of the tenderers' general or special conditions is excluded.

2.2 Duration of the contract

The contract is expected to be signed in the first half of 2023 and shall have a duration of 27 months, 24 months for the implementation of the service contract and 3 months for the administrative closure.

The contract duration may be extended in case of modification of the contract (c.f. §2.10).

2.3 Lots

The contract consists of one single lot.

The nature of the services to be provided within the context of this tender does not justify the need to split the market.

2.4 Variants

Variants are not accepted.

2.5 Available budget

The maximum available budget for this contract is **EUR 700,000.00 (seven hundred thousand Euros)**, EXCLUSIVE of VAT but inclusive of all other taxes, disbursements, travel, accommodation and delivery costs.

2.6 Main terms for invoicing and payments

Payments will be executed only if the selected service provider has fulfilled all its 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 or negligence on the part of the service provider.

The payments to the service provider will be made as follows:

- Three interim payments for service provisions related to predefined deliveries n°1, 2 and 3 shall be admissible. These interim payments shall amount to respectively a maximum of 30%, 20% and 30% of the total contracted value, excluding VAT.

Interim payments will be processed upon submission of related invoices and after formal approval of the relevant contractual obligations by the contracting authority.

- One final payment of the balance of the contract value will be processed once all requested deliveries have been approved by the contracting authority, accompanied by the relevant invoice.

The payment will be made by bank transfer within 30 days after the approval of the deliveries and the presentation of the invoice.

ELECTRONIC INVOICES

Please note that by the time of the contract implementation all companies must issue and transmit electronic invoices complying with:

- the latest European standard; and
- one of the following 2 formats:
 - XML UBL (Universal Business Language), as defined by ISO/IEC 19845:2015, and maintained by the non-profit organisation OASIS Open;
 - XML UN/CEFACT CII (Cross Industry Invoice), developed by UN/CEFACT based on the XML 16B (SCRDM — CII) schemas.

Use of the Peppol⁶ network

Tendering authorities and entities **must use the Peppol** (Pan-European Public Procurement OnLine) network to automatically receive electronic invoices. The network can also be used to automatically issue and send electronic invoices.

Economic operators have a **range of options** in order to be able to issue and send compliant electronic invoices through Peppol:

- renting a Peppol access point from one of the numerous specialist service providers⁷ already active in this field;
- establishing their own Peppol access point: for organisations of a certain size which have:
 - their own, experienced IT department; and
 - sufficient resources;
- using one of the invoicing and accounting tools (ERP software) that offers Peppol invoicing by default.

2.7 Applicable Language

Pursuant to Article 10 of ESPON EGTC' statutes, the official language of ESPON EGTC is English. Therefore, the tender, all oral and written communication, all activities during the execution of the contract, as well as all services delivered must be in English language.

2.8 Ownership of results

Unless otherwise provided in the present service contract and its annexes, ownership, title, industrial and intellectual property rights resulting from the operation, results, reports and other documents related to the implementation of the present service contract shall be solely owned by the ESPON EGTC. They may use, publish, assign or transfer them as they see fit, without limitation, except where industrial or intellectual property rights exist prior to the service contract related to this tender.

Notwithstanding the provisions of the previous paragraph, the service provider and the ESPON EGTC shall find individual arrangements in cases where the intellectual property rights already exist and are owned by third parties.

The service provider acting in its own name and potentially on behalf of joint tenderers or subcontractors, will not invoke any intellectual property rights, including copyrights and sui generis database rights, in relation to his contribution to the ESPON database.

Any commercial use of the results by the service provider (or, if relevant, by any of the joint tenderers or subcontractors) is prohibited.

2.9 Data protection

Regarding the processing of personal data by ESPON and in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation), please consult the legal notice in the ESPON's website:

<https://www.espon.eu/legal-notice>

2.10 Modification of the contract during its term

A modification of the contract may be requested by the ESPON EGTC to the contractor when it becomes necessary during the contract's implementation. This modification shall be done in accordance with article 43 of the Luxembourg Law on Public Procurement of the 8th of April 2018.

3 General Information on the procedure

3.1 Communication and Portal

Written communication and submissions may only take place through the Portal under requirement of Luxembourg Law. This is the online platform for public tenders in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (<https://pmp.b2g.etat.lu>). Publication on Tenders Electronic Daily (TED) also takes place through the Portal.

As the Portal is currently available in French language only, notifications to economic operators may be sent in French, but **the message content will always be in English language**. Economic operators are advised to regularly check their spam folders.

Any economic operator using the Portal is deemed to have read and accepted the provisions and conditions of the terms of use of the Portal as laid down by the Ministerial Decree of 18 January 2021²⁸.

3.2 Acceptance of the Terms of reference

By submitting a tender, the economic operator acknowledges that it has gathered all the information required to draft a valid tender, i.e., that it was able to acquaint itself with the challenges and specific features of the services to perform or deliver and has taken them into account in drafting its tender to participate in the Call for tenders.

3.3 Request for information

Tenderers are advised to consult the Frequently Asked Questions available on the ESPON website at the following link: <https://www.espon.eu/participate/calls/faq>

Any request for information shall be sent via the Portal at the latest by the date indicated in "Key information on the Procurement Procedure" section of the present Terms of reference. All economic operators will be answered simultaneously via the Luxembourgish Public Procurement Portal. As the Portal is currently available in French language only, notifications to the tenderers may be sent in French, but the message will always be in English language. Tenderers are advised to regularly check their spam folders.

Any request for information must be made in writing to the Luxembourgish Public Procurement Portal (www.pmp.lu) via the link provided in the contract notice.

Eventually, questions can be addressed by e-mail to: tenders@espon.eu.

Reporting of errors, omissions, ambiguities, or discrepancies

Any errors, omissions, ambiguities, or inconsistencies in the Terms of reference shall be reported to the contracting authority via the Luxembourgish Public Procurement Portal within the time limit indicated in "Key information on the Procurement Procedure" section of the present Terms of reference.

Any clarifications, rectifications or modifications provided in application of the preceding paragraph will be published exclusively via the Luxembourgish Public Procurement Portal.

In this context, a proactive approach is expected from the tenderers.

A behaviour of accepting the clauses of the Terms of reference by submitting a tender without any notification pursuant to the present clause, whilst raising subsequently possible ambiguities,

²⁸ [Règlement ministériel du 18 janvier 2021 instituant les conditions d'utilisation du portail des marchés publics. - Legilux](#)

inaccuracies, unlawfulness, or other irregularities of the Terms of reference in the context of a review procedure shall be considered as an inconsistent and contradictory attitude being contrary to the principle of good faith. In that event, tenderers are inadmissible to challenge the substance of the rights and obligations arising out of the Terms of reference.

3.4 Who can submit a tender? (Individual contractor, joint tender and/or subcontracting)

Economic operators may submit its tenders as a sole contractor, as joint partners or as a natural person acting on his/her own behalf.

Each tender shall include the duly completed European Single Procurement Document(s) (ESPD) (see Annex A).

Common **mistakes in filling in the ESPD**, as observed in previous calls, are as follows:

- To leave in blank the insured amount of professional risk indemnity (section IV.5) without specifying the amount or at least indicating “not applicable” together with the justification (i.e. excepted public entity, a certain legal provision, etc.)
- Not to indicate the proportion the economic operator intends to subcontract (section IV.10), even if the economic operator declared his intention to subcontract in a previous section of the ESPD (Section II.D)
- To indicate the same number for average annual manpower as for annual managerial staff, which is inconsistent (section IV.C.8)
- Not to sign or date the concluding statement (Part VI)
- To include the wrong procurement title

3.4.1 Joint tender

A **joint tender** is a situation where a tender is submitted by a group of economic operators (natural and/or legal persons). Joint tenders may include subcontractors in addition to the members of the group. Joint tenders will be treated in the same way as any other type of tender, each will be assessed for their own merits in relation to the criteria and the evaluation procedure set out in these terms of reference.

1) Liability

In case of a joint tender, the designated duly authorized representative of the consortium or the representative of the legal entity will be the sole contractor and will hold the sole liability towards the contracting authority for the implementation of the contract.

2) Form of the joint tender

If a joint tender is proposed by the tenderer with one or several partners and the organisation has already set up a consortium or a legal entity, this fact should be mentioned in the field “*is the economic operator participating in the procurement procedure together with others?*” (included in **Part II**, “information concerning the economic operator”, **section A** of the ESPD (Annex A), together with any other relevant information in this context.

If this step has not yet been taken, the tenderer should be aware that if the contract is awarded, the contracting authority will require giving a legal status to the collaboration before the contract is signed.

This collaboration can take the form of:

- an entity with legal personality recognised by EU Member States and ESPON Partner States (i.e. Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland);
- Or, given the nature and scope of the contract and the principle of sound financial management of public funds under which ESPON EGTC conducts its procurement procedures, the contracting authority requires **signature by all the partners of a “power of attorney”** to the designated duly authorized representative of the consortium. The power of attorney should designate contracting rights and sole liability of one of the partners in the consortium towards the contracting authority and any other relevant right. The duly authorized representative of the consortium and its partners will be responsible for organizing internal partnership relations concerning the liability among each other.

If a **joint tender** is submitted, the **ESPD (Annex A) with all required information (i.e. duly completed Parts II, III, IV and VI) must be provided by each partner**. Missing documents may lead to the exclusion and/or to the non-selection of the tender.

Also, in case of a joint tender, each economic operator must indicate its **share of the contract in the Annex D**.

Please note that in case of a joint tender where an economic operator relies on the capacities of another to meet the selection criteria: the tenderer may need to provide relevant information (included in **Part II** “information concerning the operator”, **section C** “Information about reliance on the capacities of other entities” of the ESPD).

In this respect, the tender evaluation detailed in section 4 below for joint tenders will be made in relation to the **combined** capacities of the economic operators in relation to the requirements laid down in these ToR.

3.4.2 Subcontracting

Subcontracting is defined as the situation where a contractor assigns part of the obligations and tasks under a contract to another party known as a subcontractor. Subcontracting can be either structural or punctual.

In case of subcontracting, the ESPON EGTC does not have a direct contractual link with the subcontractor(s). The lead contractor will remain solely and fully responsible for the delivery of all products and services under the contract.

Accordingly, the contracting authority will treat all contractual matters (e.g. payment) exclusively with the main contractor, regardless whether the tasks are performed by a subcontractor or not. Under no circumstances, the main contractor can avoid liability towards the contracting authority on the grounds that the subcontractor is at fault.

During the contract execution, the change of any subcontractor contributing to the technical performance of the contract and identified in the tender will be subject to prior written approval of the contracting authority.

Please note that in case of a submission of a tender with subcontracting, the contracting authority requires the lead tenderer to indicate the subcontractors and their share of the contract in **Part IV: Selection Criteria, (C): Technical and professional ability, (10) The economic operator intends possibly to subcontract the following proportion (i.e., percentage) of the contract**, of the ESPD (Annex A).

As for the nature of subcontractors, there are two options:

1) Structural subcontracting

Structural subcontractors are those **on whose capacity the tenderer relies** (i.e., subcontractors providing key experts).

Such subcontractors should be identified in the field **Part II: Information concerning the economic operator, A: Information about the economic operator**, field *“is the economic operator participating in the procurement procedure together with others?”* of the ESPD (Annex A), together with any other relevant information in this context.

The tenderer should **answer “yes”** in the field *“does the economic operator rely on the capacities of other entities in order to meet the selection criteria set out under Part IV below?”* in **Part II: Information concerning the economic operator, C: Information about reliance on the capacities of other entities** of the ESPD (Annex A).

These subcontractors must provide a complete ESPD (Annex A) with all required information (i.e., duly completed Parts **II, III, IV and VI**).

Missing documents may lead to rejection of the tender.

2) Punctual subcontracting

Punctual subcontracting are those subcontractors **on whose capacity the tenderer does not rely**:

Such subcontractors should be identified in the field *“Does the economic operator intent to subcontract any share of the contract to third parties?”* included in **Part II: Information concerning the economic operator, D: Information concerning subcontractors on whose capacity the economic operator does not rely on** of the ESPD (Annex A).

These subcontractors must provide a duly completed ESPD comprising **Parts II, III and VI**.

Missing documents may lead to rejection of the tender.

Please note that such subcontractors will **not** be considered when assessing the selection criteria (see Section 4.3 below).

3) Tenders involving subcontracting shall be assessed as follows:

1. The **exclusion criteria** will be assessed individually in relation to the tenderer and to each subcontractor.
2. The **selection criteria** will be assessed in relation to the tenderer and possible subcontractors as a whole.
3. The **award criteria** will be assessed in relation to the tender.

3.4.3 Participation

Participation in this Call for tenders is open to all economic operators established in the European Union, the European Economic Area and third countries signatories to international agreements in the field of public procurement by which the EU is bound.

3.5 Submission of offers and deadline

All tenders must be submitted electronically and in English language **at the latest by**

17 April 2023 at 13h59 CEST.

Tenders must be submitted electronically. All tenders sent by other means (e.g. paper versions or electronic versions submitted by e-mail) will be automatically rejected.

In case you experience any technical issue when submitting your offer or with the electronic signature, please notice that the PMP helpdesk working hours are 9:00-11:30 14:00-17:00.

The submission of a tender is made according to the provisions of the national (Luxembourg) modified Regulation of the 27th of August 2013 on the use of electronic means in public procurement procedures²⁹ and it is done via the Luxembourg Portal of Public Procurement (PMP, www.pmp.lu). Please note that the PMP is currently only available in French language. A user guide in English language on the Luxembourgish Public Procurement Portal is available here: <https://www.espon.eu/participate/calls/faq>.

In order to submit a tender, the economic operators need to:

a) Create an account on the Luxembourg portal of public procurements (PMP)

The economic operators must create an Enterprise account in the PMP – www.pmp.lu

The configuration and internet browsers recommended according to the PMP can be found on the PMP website³⁰:

To create an account in the PMP, (www.pmp.lu) the economic operators have 3 options:

1. By the creation of a username/password to login
2. Registration by using a LUXTRUST product
3. Registration via Luxembourg ID or eIDAS³¹

If the economic operator opts for options 2. or 3., the authentication procedure can be made by using a LUXTRUST product (smart card or signing stick, issued by the Luxembourg relevant authorities), or with a recognised eID card.

The procedure to obtain a LUXTRUST product is described at the following website: <https://www.luxtrust.lu/>.

Please note for the economic operators outside Luxembourg that the procedure to obtain a LUXTRUST product can be longer (**approximately 4 weeks**). Information regarding the procedure can be found at the following link <https://www.luxtrust.lu/en/simple/206>.

b) Submit the electronic tender

The tender can be submitted as PDF, Word and Excel files.

²⁹ (Règlement grand-ducal du 27 août 2013 relatif à l'utilisation des moyens électroniques dans les procédures des marchés publics modifiant le règlement grand-ducal modifié du 3 août 2009 portant exécution de la loi du 25 juin 2009 sur les marchés publics et portant modification du seuil prévu à l'article 106 point 10° de la loi communale du 13 décembre 1988).

³⁰ <https://pmp.b2g.etat.lu/?page=commun.PrerequisTechniques&calledFrom=entreprise>

³¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-building-blocks/wikis/display/EIDCOMMUNITY/Overview+of+pre-notified+and+notified+eID+schemes+under+eIDAS>

Tenders submitted electronically must also be electronically signed by the economic operator, respectively by his representative, through an electronic signature as foreseen by the modified Luxembourg Law modified of the 14th of August 2000 on electronic trade³².

The electronic signature to be used can be a LuxTrust or any other qualified certificates of the Trusted List of EU Commission (<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/tl-browser/#/>). The Luxembourg Portal of Public Procurement allows for economic operators to test if their electronic signature is valid and can be used to submit a tender at the following address:

<https://pmp.b2g.etat.lu/index.php?page=commun.VerifierSignature&callFrom=entreprise>

Economic operators must electronically sign their tender:

- Either by electronically signing, at least, the ESPD of the consortium leader;
- Or by electronically signing the whole tender directly via the Luxembourg Public Procurement Portal which offers that option at the moment of submission.

If an economic operator does not have a valid electronic signature certificate, he/she will need to request one from the authorised institutions. The procedure to obtain an electronic signature certificate can take some time.

The tenders must be submitted at the latest by the deadline indicated in the present terms of reference.

The electronic submission of tenders leads to an acknowledgment of receipt, issued automatically by the PMP, which states the date and hour of submission. Any tenders that may be submitted or for which the acknowledgement of receipt may be issued after the above-mentioned deadline will not be considered.

3.6 Content of the offer (administrative - technical offer and financial offer)

A tender **must** be duly signed by the tenderer or its duly authorised representative and **must** be composed of the following three files:

- 1) File 1 – Administrative part
- 2) File 2 – Technical Offer
- 3) File 3 – Financial Offer

Tenderers are requested to structure their tender and submit the requested documentation as presented in the table below which serves both as a table of content and a checklist for documents to be submitted.

FILE n°1 – ADMINISTRATIVE PART

Please include your documents in the following order, as relevant and per partner/subcontractor:

³² <http://data.legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/2000/08/14/n8/jo>

N°	Document	Refer to Section of ToR and/or Annex	Single tenderer or Main tenderer in a joint tender	Other partners in a joint tender	Sub-contractor (see Section 3.4.2)
Section 1 General					
1	a. Annex A: European Single Procurement Document (ESPD) two versions: - One copy duly electronic signed - One copy duly filled in excel format b.	Section 3.4 & Annex A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	c. Annex E - List team members and economic operators	Annex E	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
3	<i>Only if applicable:</i> If you intend to employ or contract the services of previous ESPON EGTC staff for this tender, please add a note justifying how their involvement in preparing this procurement procedure is not capable of distorting competition.	n/a (no template provided)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p align="center">FILE n°2 –TECHNICAL OFFER (approximately 30 pages excluding annexes) <u>Please include your documents in the following order, as relevant:</u></p> <p>The technical offer must cover all aspects and tasks required in the technical specification and provide all the information needed to facilitate the subsequent evaluation of tenders against the technical award criteria (see Section 4). Offers deviating from the requirements or not meeting all requirements may be excluded on the basis of non-conformity with the terms of reference and will not be evaluated. The contracting authority will <u>reject</u> tenders where no technical offer is included.</p>					
N°	Document/Chapters	Refer to Section of ToR and/or Annex	Single tenderer or Main tenderer in a joint tender	Other partners in a joint tender	Sub-contractor
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A description (approximately 5 pages) of the concept for addressing the research and the policy needs and description of how objectives will be achieved. Rationale on the selection of the policy questions included in the ToR to be addressed 	Section 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	n/a	n/a
2	A description (approximately 20 pages) of the specific approaches and methods to be applied, the rationale behind, the sources and data to be used, the added value of the expected outcomes and the proposed deliveries (format, content) for each task: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft proposal on the conceptual framework for the European research (tasks 1, 3 and 4) Draft proposal on the format and content of the compendium on housing policies (task 2) 	Section 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	n/a	n/a

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First ideas and rationale on the selection criteria for identifying case studies • Ideas on the visualisation elements to be developed under task 5 • Description of the approach for engaging with stakeholders and ensuring policy uptake and the guidance/handbook for policymakers (tasks 7 and 6) • Description of the data strategy, including main sources and data to be used and collected. 				
3	<p>Description outlining the intended organisation, milestones and management of the work including (approximately 5 pages)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed work plan and timetable in relation to the content of the deliveries proposed. • Allocation of human resources by task and by partner (details should be provided as part of the technical offer and not only in Annex D). • Approach to ensure effective project management, quality review and risk assessment. 	Section 1 & Annex D	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	n/a	n/a

FILE n°3 – FINANCIAL OFFER

The contracting authority will reject tenders where no financial proposal is included.

N°	Document	Refer to Section of ToR and/or Annex	Single tenderer or Main tenderer in a joint tender	Other partners in a joint tender	Sub-contractor
1	Financial Offer (original dated, signed and stamped by the authorised representative of the tenderer)	Section 2 & Annex B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	n/a	n/a

The tenderer shall submit a price covering the services in EURO using the financial offer template provided (see **Annex B**). Annex B must be signed by the tenderer's representative and the template must not be modified.

The price must include all the costs associated as well as the travel and accommodation costs for meetings, and the pertinent delivery costs to the ESPON EGTC, if any. No other expenses will be paid by the contracting authority. **Travel, accommodation and subsistence costs cannot be higher than 10% of the total costs of the tender.**

No indexation of the price is allowed. The price quoted must be firm and not subject to revision. Tenderers from countries outside the Euro zone have to quote their prices in Euro. A price quoted may not be revised in line with exchange rate movements. It is for the tenderer to select an official exchange rate and assume the risk or the benefits deriving from any variation.

The contracting authority will reject offers where the price for services is not provided. The lack of prices for any of the assignment types mentioned in the price list will invalidate the offer. No financial guarantee is required for this contract.

Tenders not including the necessary evidence may be rejected. However, the contracting authority reserves the right to request clarifications or additional evidence in relation to the exclusion and selection stages after the opening within a time limit stipulated in its request. If clarification is required, the contracting authority may contact the tenderer to obtain further explanations and/or additional evidence, provided that, and only if, the tender is not modified as a result. **The contact person designated by the tenderer in Annex A will be the recipient of clarifications and additional evidence request. Therefore, the tenderer must ensure the correctness of contact details (in particular of email addresses) given therein.**

3.7 Opening of the tender

The tenders received in due time and place will be opened immediately after the submission deadline mentioned above at the premises of the ESPON EGTC, 11, avenue John F. Kennedy L-855 Luxembourg.

The opening of tenders shall take place in non-public session but the minute of the opening session will be provided to tenderers having submitted a request to the contracting authority by email at tenders@espon.eu.

4 Contract award procedure

4.1 Examination of tenders

The evaluation is based solely on the information provided in the submitted tender. It involves the following:

- Verification of non-exclusion of tenderers on the basis of the exclusion criteria;
- Verification of tenderers documentation on the basis of selection criteria;
- Evaluation of tenders on the basis of the award criteria.

Tenders are considered not to comply with the call specifications and shall be rejected if they:

- do not comply with the minimum requirements laid down in the Technical Specifications.
- propose a price above the fixed estimated expenditure;
- submit variants when the Terms of reference does not allow them.

In all the above-mentioned cases, the rejection grounds are not related to the award criteria and, therefore, there is no evaluation as such. Tenderers will be informed of the rejection grounds without being given information on the content of the tender other than the non-compliant elements.

Where the information or documents to be submitted by tenderers are or appear to be incomplete or erroneous or where certain documents are missing, the ESPON EGTC may carry out verifications and clarifications as provided for in article 80 RGD LMP.

4.2 Verification of non-exclusion

Participation in this call for tenders is open **only** to tenderers who fully meet the requirements laid out in **Part III: Exclusion grounds of the ESPD (Annex A)**, which must be duly completed and submitted.

Tenderers are advised that, in case of contracting, supporting documents proving the statements made in the ESPD must be submitted. Please note that in line with Article 90 of the modified national (Luxembourg) Regulation of 8th April 2018 implementing the Law of 8th April 2018 on Public Procurement the following supporting documents must **be dated of within three months preceding the submission deadline of the tender**:

- A certificate issued by the competent authority in the Member State or country where the economic operator is established stating that it is **not** in breach of its obligations related to the payment of **taxes** and **social security contributions**.

Tenderers are advised, accordingly, to be in possession of **properly dated** documents regarding these criteria when submitting the tender.

The contracting authority may, where appropriate, ask tenderers to provide with supporting documents and may also, when having doubts concerning the personal situation of tenderers, request from the competent authorities any information it considers necessary to clarify its doubts.

Where the information concerns a tenderer established in a State other than the one of the contracting authority, the latter may seek the cooperation of the competent authorities. Having regard for the national laws of the State where the tenderers are established, such requests shall relate to legal and/or natural persons, including, if appropriate, company directors or/and any person having powers of representation, decision, or control in respect of the tenderer.

A tenderer shall be excluded if the provisions of the article 29 of the national (Luxembourg) Law of 8 April 2018 on Public Procurement are not fulfilled.

Furthermore, tenderers should take into full consideration that:

- none of the team members proposed in the offers shall have any prior knowledge of the Terms of reference whatsoever (i.e., being involved in their commenting, consultation process with the stakeholders, drafting, etc.), have advised ESPON EGTC or otherwise been involved in the preparation of the procurement process. In such case, the tender may be excluded in accordance with article 13 of the national (Luxembourg) Law of 8 April 2018 on Public Procurement;
- not providing the declaration of no conflict of interest by the tenderer or by the Service Provider, before or after the award of the contract, may lead to the exclusion of the tenderer or of the Service Provider or to the termination of the contract;
- in case the contracting authority acquaints itself with a situation calling into question the autonomous and independent nature of a tender, it shall request the parties to provide information and evidence in rebuttal. In case distortion of the market is detected, tenderers involved shall be excluded accordingly.

4.3 Verification of the selection criteria

Tenderers must prove their legal, regulatory, economic, financial, technical and professional capacity to carry out the work subject to this procurement procedure.

Tenderers must be in a stable financial position and have the economic and financial capacity to guarantee continuous and satisfactory performance throughout the envisaged lifetime of the contract. In addition, the tenderers are required to have sufficient technical and professional capacity to perform the tasks outlined in these Terms of reference.

To this end, the following information must be provided in the ESPD:

4.3.1 General information

Please provide the information required in “Part II: Information concerning the economic operator” of the ESPD (Annex A).

4.3.2 Economic and financial capacity

Please provide the information required in Part IV(B)(1a, 1b, 2a, 3 and 5) of the ESPD (Annex A). All related information has to be provided for the **last three financial years**.

The tenderer must be in a stable financial position and **the total turnover of the tenderer (or the consortium, see Section 3.4) for the last three financial years (see Part IV(B)(1b) of the ESPD (Annex A)) must equal or exceed 75% of the maximum available budget for this contract as stated in these Terms of reference.**

Please note that an economic operator may, when appropriate and for a specific contract, rely on the capacities of another entity not taking part in the tendering process to meet the selection criteria. (art. 33 of the Law on Public Procurement of 8 April 2018).

4.3.3 Technical and professional capacity

Tenderers must have the appropriate technical and professional ability to carry out the tasks required for this call for tenders, as described in section 1.6, by providing the required information in Part IV (C) of the ESPD (Annex A).

- a) A list of the relevant services successfully conducted during at least the last three years, including a description of work, indicating the budgets, dates and recipients, whether public or private. (Part IV(C)(1b) of the ESPD)
- b) the professional capacity and size of the company (Part IV(C)(8) of the ESPD)
- c) The team members who are proposed to carry out the tasks requested must demonstrate professional experience and background in the field of the services requested. Relevant specific information on the competencies and skills are detailed in Section 1.
 - Please attach detailed CVs of all team members proposed for the assignment to the ESPD (Annex A), taking into account the minimum expertise requirements detailed in this paragraph as well as in Section 1. The ESPON EGTC strongly recommends submitting the CVs in the EU CV format³³. It should be clearly indicated by using the table in Annex E which profile requirements/competencies are met by which member of the team.
 - Please complete Annex E ‘list of all team members’ (one single list for all partners/subcontractors if relevant) involved in the implementation of the contract for whom CVs are submitted.

4.4 Financial award criterion

The value of the financial proposal (calculated in accordance with the scenario and the financial proposal supplied in Annex B) will be evaluated according to the best value for money principle.

The lack of providing a price in the financial proposal will invalidate the offer. Tenders with a financial offer that exceeds the total budget available **and/or where travel, accommodation and subsistence costs exceed 10% of the total costs (see Section 3.4 above)** will not be selected for the evaluation on the basis of the award criteria and will be excluded.

³³ For the template please see <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>

Calculation mistakes and discrepancies with the price per unit, if any, will be corrected by the evaluation committee based on the price per unit provided by the tenderer and the confirmation of the tenderer will be requested.

Abnormally low tenders:

To avoid offers with abnormally low prices that could jeopardize the correct delivery of the services, if the price proposed in a tender appears to be abnormally low compared to the arithmetic average of all the technically compliant tenders (15%), the contracting authority will request, in writing, the necessary clarifications and elements as appropriate and in accordance with Article 88 RGD³⁴.

4.5 Evaluation of the tenders on the basis of the award criteria

Only the tenders meeting the requirements of the exclusion and selection criteria are evaluated in terms of quality and price. The assessment of the technical quality is based on the ability of the tenderer to meet the purpose of the contract, as described in the technical specifications.

The following evaluation criteria shall be used to determine the technical merit of the offers, producing a total score of maximum 100 points:

No	Qualitative award criteria	Weighting (maximum points)
1	Level of understanding of the tasks and services to be carried out The degree to which the tenderer shows the capacity to understand the research and the policy needs and the added value of the proposal, will be assessed under this criterion.	25
2	Quality and appropriateness of the proposed methodology and research approach The tenderer must demonstrate the capacity to answer the policy questions and to deliver the expected outputs. The degree to which the tenderer manages to combine scientific rigour and policy relevance will be assessed under this criterion. Furthermore, under this criterion the capacity of the tenderer to deliver new territorial evidence, to carry out innovative research methods, and produce outputs in various visualisation formats and forms will be assessed.	50
3	Organisation, planning, and management of the service contract The distribution of the roles and responsibilities for each task among the proposed team will be assessed under this criterion. The global work plan, the articulation of tasks and the allocation of time and resources to each task and delivery will also be assessed. Actual risk assessment will also be taken into account.	25
	Total number of points	100

³⁴ [Règlement Grand-Ducal du 8 avril 2018 portant exécution de la loi du 8 avril 2018 sur les marchés publics et portant modification du seuil prévu à l'article 106 point 10° de la loi communale modifiée du 13 décembre 1988](#)

In order to guarantee a minimum threshold of quality, offers that do not reach a minimum score of **50** points at the end of the technical evaluation **will not be considered in the best price-quality ratio assessment** and will therefore be rejected.

The contract is awarded to the tenderer submitting the tender that offers the most economically advantageous tender assessed on the basis of the best price-quality ratio as represented by the highest score (i.e. the highest X) by weighting the price and the quality respectively, by applying the formula below:

$$X = \left(\frac{\text{Cheapest price excl. VAT}}{\text{Price of tender X excl. VAT}} * 100 * 30\% \right) + (\text{technical evaluation score of tender X} * 70\%)$$

4.6 Contract award and conclusion

Before awarding the contract, the contracting authority will require the tenderer to which it has decided to award the contract to submit up-to-date supporting documents in accordance with the requirements of the present Terms of reference and with Article 31 of the Law on Public Procurement of 8 April 2018 and, where appropriate, Article 32. The contracting authority may invite economic operators to supplement or clarify the certificates received.

Initiation of a tendering procedure imposes no obligation on the contracting authority to award the contract. Fulfilment of the conditions of the call for tenders imposes no obligation on the contracting authority to award the contract. The contracting authority shall not be liable for any compensation with respect to tenderers whose tenders have not been accepted. Nor shall it be liable if it decides not to award the contract. Expenditure on preparing and submitting tenders is non-refundable.

The economic operator whose tender is ranked first is deemed to have submitted the most economically advantageous tender based on the best quality-price ratio is in principle awarded the contract.

Prior to any award decision, the ESPON EGTC shall carry out the necessary documentary checks as described in the Terms of reference.

The ESPON EGTC shall inform unsuccessful tenderers via the Luxembourgish Public Procurement Portal of the reasons why their tender has not been selected, in accordance with Article 193 RGD35.

The successful tenderer shall be notified via the Luxembourgish Public Procurement Portal. The conclusion of the contract with the successful tenderer shall take place at the earliest after a standstill period of 10 days.

The competent court to hear pre-contractual appeals is the Administrative Court. For post-contractual appeals, the competent court is the District Court³⁶.

5 Additional contracting information

5.1 Contracting authority

Contracting authority: the ESPON EGTC has been established on the 9th of January 2015 based on Regulation (EC) 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006, as amended, to undertake the role of the Single Beneficiary of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme, the ESPON 2030 Cooperation Programme and the potential subsequent approved ESPON cooperation programmes.

³⁵ [Règlement Grand-Ducal du 8 avril 2018 portant exécution de la loi du 8 avril 2018 sur les marchés publics et portant modification du seuil prévu à l'article 106 point 10° de la loi communale modifiée du 13 décembre 1988](#)

³⁶ [loi du 10 Novembre instituant le recours en matière de marchés publics](#)

ESPON EGTC

Attn: Director

11, avenue John F. Kennedy L-1855 Luxembourg

Tel: +352 20 600 280 / Fax: +352 20 600 280 01 / E-mail: tenders@espon.eu

The ESPON EGTC is the contracting and awarding authority of the present contract.

5.2 Place of delivery

All services shall be delivered by default to Luxembourg, unless mentioned in Section 1 or agreed with the ESPON EGTC.

5.3 Other conditions

The material provided for the preparation of the tender can only be used for the preparation of the tender and has to be kept confidential. All the documents submitted by tenderers will be kept by the contracting authority for archive purposes. These documents will be considered as confidential.

6 Annexes

Annex A – European Single Procurement Document (ESPD)

Annex B – Financial offer template

Annex C – Draft service contract

Annex D – Allocation of human resources

Annex E – List team members and economic operators