



## Evaluation of KEP AUSTRIA - Programme and Projects

### Terms of Reference

#### Background

The Central European Initiative (CEI) was established in Budapest on 11 November 1989, as the first organisation in this part of Europe for promoting regional cooperation among the countries of Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe. Since its establishment, the CEI activities have focused on fostering political and socio-economic development in the region aimed at avoiding new dividing lines in Europe. Its core mission is “Regional Cooperation for European Integration: a Bridge between Macroregions”.

The CEI membership consists of 10 EU countries and 8 non-EU countries, with a population of over 250 million: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Serbia, and Ukraine.

In promoting cooperation among its Member States, the CEI disposes of several funding instruments, one of which is the CEI Know-how Exchange Programme (KEP).

The KEP was established in 2004 as an instrument offering co-financing for projects focusing on the transfer of know-how and best practice from EU to non-EU CEI Member States. The KEP offers grants to institutions willing to share their experience with their partners in the non-EU CEI countries in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe.

At the beginning, in 2004, the KEP was supported only by the Italian government, through the Italy - financed CEI Fund at the EBRD which has so far committed more than 2.2 million EUR for 80 projects. At the end of 2007 the Austrian government decided to join the programme and KEP AUSTRIA was founded, as a specific component of the KEP together with KEP ITALY. KEP AUSTRIA is supported with funds from the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and it functions on an Agreement between the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the CEI Secretariat. It has so far contributed around 900.000 EUR for 31 projects. The budget approved for the KEP Austria Agreement 2014-2016 alone amounts to 400,000 EUR.

The management and administration of KEP AUSTRIA is carried out by the CEI Secretariat, based in Trieste, which provides administrative and conceptual support to the CEI structure. KEP AUSTRIA offers grants to projects where know-how providers from EU CEI Member States transfer specific experience, best practices and knowledge to know-how recipients from non-EU CEI Member States.

KEP AUSTRIA assists non-EU CEI Member States in getting closer to EU standards by providing effective support to organisations at national, subnational and local level, with the final goal to improve their functioning through adequate expertise and consulting services. The activities of KEP AUSTRIA usually take the form of a bilateral cooperation between a know-how provider and know-how beneficiary institution.

The projects have to fall into one of the following priority areas of the KEP, elaborated by taking into

account the country and sector strategies of International Organisations and International Financial Institutions (i.e. EBRD, OECD, UNECE, the World Bank and others). The elaboration of these areas is also the result of the external evaluation carried out in 2013. More attention has been paid to social inclusion, gender equality as follows:

1. *European Integration and related capacity building*
2. *Social and Economic Development, Inclusion and Equality*
3. *Agriculture, Environment and Climate Change*

*(for complete detailed areas see Annex 7)*

### **Purpose**

The evaluation of KEP AUSTRIA must be carried out with reference to the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) terminology. According to the OECD/DAC terminology the evaluation is “The systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project or programme, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.” (OECD DAC Glossary).

Furthermore, according to OECD DAC “An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision making process of both recipients and donors. (OECD DAC Glossary) (<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf>).

Generally speaking, the purpose of evaluations is:

- Learning from experience: With the assistance of evaluations, success and failures can be interpreted. Based on those experiences, both current and future projects and programmes can be improved.
- Deepening understanding: Evaluation is a tool for deepening knowledge and understanding of the assumptions, options and limits of development cooperation. Evaluations are intended to contribute to a comprehensive discussion and reflexion about development cooperation.

This evaluation shall assess the overall effectiveness of KEP AUSTRIA, on the basis of 5 OECD/DAC main evaluation criteria. The main aim is to provide the CEI, as managing body of the programme, as well as the donor, with an insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the programme and projects, in order to incorporate the lessons learned into the new programming period 2017-2019.

### **Objectives**

The evaluation is primarily to be carried out for the CEI, as the organisation managing the programme. In addition, it will be useful to the Austrian Development Agency, as a representative of the donor - Austria, in view of future cooperation between Austrian Development Agency and the CEI.

KEP AUSTRIA has been carried out in three programming periods, each covering 3 years with 31 projects supported in all: 2008-2010 with 12 projects; 2011-2013 with 10 projects and 2014-2016 with nine projects. The third programming period is coming to its conclusion on 31 December 2016. The evaluation will be useful to incorporate its results in a possible new programming period, starting in 2017.

The evaluation will evaluate the overall effectiveness of the programme, its evaluation process and the results of the projects. In addition, it will formulate recommendations with regard to the general policies and the strategic context of development cooperation in relevant recipient countries.

### Subject and focus (scope)

The evaluation will focus on the evaluation of the projects supported by KEP AUSTRIA programme. Projects supported over the last 3 years will be evaluated by analysing and studying the final narrative and financial reports of the projects. In addition, projects will be visited in field visits, in order to have a direct insight in the projects' results and benefits for the target groups.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, the evaluation will also consider the programme management aspects of the programme as well as project cycle management.

Projects supported by KEP are usually of a total value between EUR 50.000 to EUR 100.000, with a CEI co-financing of up to EUR 50.000 and up to 50% of total project value. The projects focus on exchange of experience between an organisation from an EU CEI country (know-how provider) and an organisation from a non-EU CEI country (know-how recipient). The usual project duration is from 8 to 12 months, though exceptions are made for longer-term projects if valuable.

The Priority areas of the programme fall under three main categories: I. *European Integration and related capacity building*; II. *Social and Economic Development, Inclusion and Equality*; III. *Agriculture, Environment and Climate Change* (full list is available in Annex "KEP AUSTRIA Priority Areas")

The following types of organisations are eligible to apply: all public and private sector bodies, international and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating in the public interest, national, regional and local authorities, education/research institutions, environmental organisations, Public-Private Partnerships, etc.

In principle, projects need to be implemented between at least two institutions from at least two eligible member states of the CEI. In each project there is at least one know-how provider and at least one know-how recipient. The organisation acting as know-how provider is from a CEI Member State being member of the European Union (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia). The organisation acting as know-how recipient is from one of the following CEI Member States which are not members of the European Union: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia. Applicants can also be non EU Member States.

Eligible activities include: capacity building, technology transfer, secondment of staff, consultancy services, assistance in the preparation of strategic documents, institution building, improvement of procedures and services, feasibility studies, technical assistance and other interventions which promise efficient and effective transfer of a given know-how.

### Main evaluation questions

The result of the evaluation will be an evaluation report that will have to answer the evaluation questions structured according to the 5 main evaluation criteria of the OECD/DAC. All evaluation questions must be answered by the evaluation team. The evaluation answers have to be written in a concrete, clear and easy understandable way.

The evaluation questions to be answered are contained here below, under each of the 5 evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria are taken from the international best-practice of the OECD/DAC

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<sup>1</sup> The evaluator is requested to suggest the projects/countries for the field visit in his/her offer.

(Development Assistance Committee):

1. Relevance
2. Effectiveness
3. Efficiency
4. Impact
5. Sustainability

### 1. Relevance

#### **Evaluation questions for Relevance:**

- To what extent do the concept, objectives and priorities of the KEP AUSTRIA programme comply with the needs of the recipient countries (Western Balkans and Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine)? To which extent the objectives of KEP AUSTRIA comply with the recent development policies of the recipient countries? In the light of the most recent developments, would it be necessary / advisable to adapt the focus, objectives and priorities of KEP AUSTRIA? Why yes/ Why not?
- To what extent are KEP AUSTRIA projects that were selected and implemented relevant for the recipient countries and correspond to their needs?

### 2. Effectiveness

#### **Evaluation questions for Effectiveness:**

- To what extent were the objectives of KEP AUSTRIA achieved as stated in the intervention logic of the project (also see points under KEP Austria Priority Areas for 2014-2016)? What factors were crucial for achieving or not achieving these objectives?
- To what extent has KEP AUSTRIA contributed to the know-how transfer between the EU countries and non-EU countries of the CEI? Has KEP AUSTRIA contributed to an effective improvement of knowledge and institution building of the recipient countries?
- How effective is the KEP AUSTRIA programme as a whole including the selection of projects? How effective is the general design of the programme and the intervention logic? Does the programme fit its purpose?
- What is the real contribution/added value that KEP AUSTRIA projects provided to the recipient countries?
- To what extent were environmental and gender issues taken into consideration?

### 3. Efficiency

#### **Evaluation questions for Efficiency:**

- Were the financial, human and institutional resources used efficiently? Issues to be addressed:  
a) Programme management (tasks and responsibilities of staff working on KEP AUSTRIA, coordination and cooperation with Austrian Development Agency); b) Process of project selection; c) Projects reporting and monitoring.
- If applicable, were all items purchased under these projects used as planned?

### 4. Impact

#### **Evaluation questions for Impact:**

- What has happened as a result of the KEP AUSTRIA programme and KEP AUSTRIA projects?

Analyse and illustrate positive and negative, intended and unintended effects. Analyse and illustrate the technical, economic, social, cultural, political and ecological effects.

- What real difference has KEP AUSTRIA made to the recipient countries? How are the lives of people and/or institutions improved?
- What would the development have been like without the existence of KEP AUSTRIA? What is so specific about KEP AUSTRIA that cannot be achieved with other similar programmes?
- How many people (women, men, girls, boys) have been affected?

## 5. Sustainability

### Evaluation questions for Sustainability:

- To what extent will the results and effects of KEP AUSTRIA projects continue after the projects have ended?
- To what extent did KEP AUSTRIA strengthen the ability of the recipient countries towards the efforts of capacity building and EU integration?
- To what extent are the organisations involved in the projects that were supported prepared and willing to maintain the effects of the projects in the long run?
- Which factors can improve the self-sustainability of the interventions and the projects in the future?

## Evaluation approach and methods

The evaluation is structured into different phases described below:

### Signing of the contract

At the signing of the contract all relevant documents concerning the project and programme to be evaluated will be delivered ("desk study").

### Introduction workshop

Following the signing of the contract, the contractor will organise an introduction workshop for the evaluation team. During this workshop, subject specific information as well the Terms of Reference will be jointly discussed, in order to clarify content-related facts right at the beginning of the evaluation. Following the introduction workshop, the evaluation team will intensively study all documents (case study) and the terms of reference, in particular the evaluation questions.

### Inception report and Inception workshop

Following the previous phase, the evaluation team will prepare the inception report. The inception report must contain detailed questions, hypotheses and indicators to the individual evaluation questions. In the inception report, the Evaluation questions will be integrated with further sub questions. For the presentation of the inception report, a workshop will be organised in order to discuss methodological details and the questions which have occurred. Following the workshop, suggestions are included in the inception report by the evaluation team, which is presented to the contractor for approval.

### Draft and Final evaluation report

The evaluation team is permitted to start the work and the field missions only after the inception report has been officially approved by the contractor. At that point the evaluation will be carried out based on the thorough analysis of the documentation received. The evaluation will also include field visits within projects.

For the purpose of presenting the final draft evaluation report, a workshop will be organised by the contractor to make it possible that the report can be discussed in detail. Comments made during the workshop must be captured by the evaluation team. Additional comments before or after the workshop are also to be considered by the evaluation team and included by them in the final report. After comments are incorporated by the evaluation team, the final evaluation report will be sent to the contractor and ADA. Finally, the contractor checks whether all comments have been included in the final report. If the report is approved positively, the contractor will approve it. The criteria used for the assessment of the quality of the evaluation report are contained in the chapter "Reports".

It can be estimated that the whole evaluation process, from the contract awarding to the approval of the final report will take about 2 and a half months, with a total involvement of 30 full working days from the evaluation team, including field visits.

#### **Tentative timetable**

Invitation to submit offers	15 July 2016
Deadline for presenting offers	16 August 2016
Signing of the contract/introduction workshop	Beginning of September 2016
Inception report and Inception workshop	Second half of September 2016
Draft evaluation report	Mid October 2016
Final evaluation report	November 2016

#### **Evaluation team**

The evaluation team will consist of two persons having different professional qualifications, taking into account gender balance. The evaluation team must have expertise in the following areas:

- Knowledge and requires a very specific content-related knowledge, such as the knowledge of the region involved – the recipient countries of KEP AUSTRIA (Albania, Belarus Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia, Ukraine )
- Knowledge of the KEP AUSTRIA sectors concerned (please see Annex "KEP AUSTRIA priority areas").
- Must have conducted at least three evaluations in the concerned sectors. This knowledge needs to be proven in the CVs and in the offer.
- Experience with evaluating this type of co-financing instrument
- Expertise as an evaluation team leader (at least one person)
- All team members must have fluency in English language.

The independence of the evaluators is of fundamental significance. In terms of an evaluator's credibility, the latter has to be independent from the organisation implementing the project/programme as well as possible local partners.

The offer submitted will have to contain the CVs of the individual evaluators. It must be clearly visible in the offer which of the evaluators will act as team leader. In addition to the evaluators' CVs, a list of past evaluations carried out must also be provided.

## Reports

The evaluation process will comprise the elaboration of three reports: Inception report, Final draft evaluation report and Final report. All reports shall be written in English. The reports shall not exceed 30 pages, excluding annexes etc. All reports need to be structured according to the OECD/DAC criteria and the evaluation questions.

For the purpose of the quality assessment of the report, the following criteria will be used:

- Were the terms of reference fulfilled and is this reflected in the report?
- Does the report contain a comprehensive and clear summary?
- Is the report structured according to the OECD/DAC criteria and the evaluation questions?
- Are cross-cutting issues (e.g. poverty, gender, environment) indicated in the report separately?
- Does the report describe and assess the intervention logic (e.g. logframe)?
- Are the conclusions and recommendations based on findings clearly stated in the report, and are they derivable from the latter?
- Does the report clearly differentiate between conclusions, recommendations and lessons learnt?
- Is it comprehensible how the evaluators have achieved their findings?
- Are the recommendations and lessons learnt realistic and is it clearly expressed to whom the recommendations are addressed to?
- Are the methods and processes of the evaluation sufficiently documented in the evaluation report?
- Were the most significant stakeholders involved consulted?
- Were the most important documents taken into consideration, and is the content of the latter reflected in the report?
- Does the report present the information contained in a presentable and clearly arranged form?
- Is the report free from spelling mistakes and unclear linguistic formulations?
- Can the report be distributed in the delivered form?

## Coordination/Responsibility

The evaluation team will be responsible for carrying out the evaluation and producing the evaluation report that meets the international standards.

### Managing authority:

Central European Initiative - CEI  
Executive Secretariat  
via Genova 9  
34121 Trieste

### Contact person:

KEP AUSTRIA Office  
Ms. Tania Pibernik  
Tel. +39 040 7786 721  
E-mail: [kep.austria@cei.int](mailto:kep.austria@cei.int)

## Annexes

- ANNEX 1 - Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of KEP AUSTRIA Programme and Projects



- ANNEX 2 - Self certification template to be submitted
- ANNEX 3 - KEP AUSTRIA Call for Proposals 2015
- ANNEX 4 - KEP AUSTRIA Rules and Procedures
- ANNEX 5 - KEP AUSTRIA Expression of Interest (STEP 1)
- ANNEX 6 - KEP AUSTRIA Application form (STEP 2)
- ANNEX 7 - KEP AUSTRIA Priority Areas