

SPECIFIC TERMS OF REFERENCE

THIRD INTERIM EVALUATION OF IPA ASSISTANCE

FWC COM 2011 - LOT 1

REQUEST FOR OFFER N° 2013/330448/1

1. BACKGROUND

The IPA (Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance)¹ was established by the Council of the European Union (EU) in July 2006 as the Community's main legislative instrument under the 2007-2013 financial framework to underpin EU policy and provide financial assistance to the eight recipient beneficiaries which are candidate countries or potential candidate countries for membership of the EU. IPA consists of five components with the first two targeted to all of the IPA beneficiaries, the latter three only to the beneficiaries recognised by the EU as candidate countries:

- Component I Transition Assistance and Institution Building (TA-IB),
- Component II Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC),
- Component III Regional Development,
- Component IV Human Resources Development, and
- Component V Rural Development.

Projects under the IPA components started implementation in practice during 2009 and have been utilised across all candidates and potential candidates to the EU at that time (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo², Turkey). Results in the field are materialising, as shown by the steady progress on institution building and convergence towards European standards, and not least by the opening of accession negotiations with Montenegro and the finalisation of preparations for Croatia's accession, becoming the 28th EU Member State on 1 July 2013.

During the implementation of the instrument **two Interim Meta evaluations** were undertaken in accordance with the specific provisions laid down under each IPA component in the Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007³.

The first Interim Meta evaluation⁴ focused mainly on the IPA strategic framework (the MIPDs) and on the programming logic; mainly under Component I. It assessed how assistance was planned and programmed and provided judgements on its relevance, efficiency and effectiveness. The results and the follow-up of the evaluation were used for strengthening and streamlining programming of IPA Component I assistance; particularly the introduction of the sector approach in the MIPDs for 2011-2013.

The second interim evaluation of IPA assistance⁵ brought a consolidated analysis and assessment resulting from 7 Country Programme interim Evaluations (namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo, Turkey and Croatia) and Multi-beneficiary programmes under IPA, mainly on efficiency, effectiveness and results achieved. The evaluation provided relevant lessons learned to the Commission to enhance the programming of IPA II 2014-2020.

¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006

² This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

³ Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007

⁴ Mid-term Meta Evaluation of IPA Assistance, Contract No IPA/ 2010/231987

⁵ Interim evaluations and meta-evaluation of IPA assistance, Contract IPA/2011/277-427

Both evaluations played an important role in drafting proposals for amendments in IPA II, as they fed the programming process with reliable information, useful recommendations and lessons learned from the programming and implementation of pre-accession assistance.

From 2014 onwards, programming is framed by the IPA II instrument and governed by the IPA Regulation (IPA II)⁶. A priority for the Commission in this new Regulation is to simplify the regulatory environment and facilitate Union assistance to beneficiary countries. The simplification is pursued primarily by streamlining the component structure around principal policy areas. Under IPA II, DG Enlargement (ELARG) will take over the overall programming and the implementation of the IPA II funds for all enlargement countries, and actions will be implemented according to ELARG rules and decentralization structures, except for policy area “agriculture and rural development”, where DG AGRI will continue to supervise the management under decentralized management following the accreditation of the relevant operating structures. DG REGIO and DG EMPL will assist DG ELARG but will become fully involved only once the beneficiary country is sufficiently close to the date of accession to justify specific preparation for shared management. Linked to the streamlining of the components structure, undifferentiated access to assistance under each policy area means that beneficiary countries will no longer need to be identified separately in the legal basis of the instrument.

The new framework under IPA II also envisages that strategic decisions on the allocation of assistance are made through comprehensive Country and Multi-Country Strategy Papers covering the full period of the new financial framework (2014-2020) and reviewed once at mid-term, replacing the current system of three-year rolling indicative planning documents revised each year. The flexibility between priorities will be increased for a more result-oriented delivery of the assistance; allowing allocations to be transferred between policy areas, with the possibility to carry-over funds from one year to another, when allowed by the new Financial Regulation⁷. Further simplification results from introducing a sector-based approach to the allocation of assistance for those sectors; thus moving away from purely grant financed projects and increasing the share of assistance funded through support at sector level.

At a time when IPA I is still under implementation and the design of the new IPA is under finalisation, a third interim evaluation is planned to assess the performance of the results and impacts achieved under IPA assistance so far. The evaluation will be carried out to verify whether the instrument/programme objectives have been met and to enable further recommendations with a view to improving quality of IPA programming and implementation (predominantly under IPA II).

The evaluation will be carried out in compliance with article 30 of the Financial Regulation and article 18 of the Rules for Application of the Financial Regulation⁸. The results of the evaluation will be used to measure the performance of the assistance (both qualitatively and quantitatively) during a period 2007-2011 and to provide orientation on how effectively the programme objectives were accomplished by judging on the outcome and impact of interventions. The findings and conclusions shall be used in the decision making process to achieve efficient resource allocation and to provide input to the new priority settings.

6 Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II), COM(2011) 838 final 2011/0404 (COD)

7 Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002

8 Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

2.1 Global objective

The primary objective of this interim evaluation is assessing accomplishment of IPA programme objectives by judging on the performance of the attained results and impacts of IPA assistance and providing recommendations for improving the quality of IPA programming and implementation (predominantly under IPA II).

2.2 Specific objectives

1. To provide an assessment in both qualitative and quantitative terms on the performance of EU assistance; particularly its efficiency, effectiveness, impact, coherence, sustainability and value added as regards the achievement of the IPA objectives, to enable strong political, institutional and economic reforms in the beneficiary countries.

2. To provide to the Commission lessons learned and recommendations to improve current IPA assistance (where and if applicable) and programming and implementation of IPA II assistance.

The evaluation itself is more oriented on the retrospective assessment/judgement on efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the interventions, rather than on the assessment of the relevance, which will be more useful for the forward-looking evaluation.

2.3 Beneficiary and stakeholders

The beneficiaries of this interim-term evaluation will be the European Commission and the beneficiaries of IPA assistance - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Croatia⁹.

The **stakeholders** include:

- National IPA Coordinators (NIPAC), authorities and structures, responsible for management, implementation, reporting and auditing the assistance, beneficiaries of IPA assistance and other national stakeholders.
- EC stakeholders (non-exhaustive list): DG ELARG Directorate A, namely A1 (Strategy and Policy), and A3 (Inter-Institutional Unit and Planning); Directorate B, namely B1 (Montenegro), B2 (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), B3 (Turkey); C, namely unit C1 (Bosnia & Herzegovina), C2 (Serbia), C3 (Kosovo), C4 (Albania); D, namely D1 (IPA strategy and quality), D2 (Institution building, TAIEX, Twinning) and D3 (Regional Cooperation and Programmes), DG EMPL, DG REGIO, DG AGRI, EU Delegations in beneficiary countries, European Union Office in Kosovo, etc.

2.4 Requested services, evaluation questions, methodology and quality control

2.4.1 Requested services

The evaluation is an interim evaluation on IPA assistance at programme level. It will evaluate the assistance deployed under **Component I – Transition Assistance and Institution Building**,

⁹ Croatia is included in the current evaluation in its former capacity of an IPA assistance beneficiary county.

Component III Regional Development and Component IV Human Resources Development programmed during the period 2007-2011¹⁰.

During the period of the evaluation, it is expected that the implementation of the programmes 2007-2010 will have been finalised and the related results and impacts delivered will be available. As for 2011 programmes, the assistance will be mainly under implementation.

Regarding specific objective 1, the evaluation will cover assistance deployed under the

- annual national programmes for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo and Croatia for component I during the period 2007-2011 and
- multi-annual operational programmes for Components III and IV for former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Croatia in the period 2007-2011.

For FYROM, the Contractor should take into account the results, findings and recommendations, stemming from the 2nd Country Interim programme evaluation on Component I TAIB, which is contracted by the national authorities. The evaluation report is expected to be delivered in March 2014.

In the case of Turkey, the Contractor should take into account the relevant results, findings and recommendations, stemming from the 2nd Country Interim evaluation (finalised) and from the 3rd Country Interim programme evaluation on Component I TAIB, which will be contracted by the national authorities. The evaluation is expected to be delivered by the end of 2014.

Specific evaluations carried out under decentralised management in the framework of IPA III and IV should also be taken into account. The Contractor should come up with an integrated assessment; also taking into account the findings of these evaluations. A non-exhaustive list of relevant evaluations, which should be considered, is presented in the point 2.4.5 in the current ToR.

The evaluation should come up with a comprehensive, qualitative and quantitative **analysis, assessment and reporting on the performance** of IPA pre-accession assistance (namely efficiency, effectiveness, impact, coherence, sustainability and value added of EU assistance) at a programme/instrument level, looking at the interventions carried out under the different components in the concerned sectors.

The emphasis of the evaluation will be on assessing the performance of the assistance at programme level within two common sectors over time (irrespective of the components under which projects are financed):

- Private Sector development/ Competitiveness
- Employment and Social policy

The objective is to review how a particular sector in a country has evolved over time and assess the influence that the IPA has had on the changes that have been observed; determining what the situation was when the IPA assistance was planned and then measuring progress against impact level

¹⁰ IPA III and IV are considered to the extent that some of the activities promoted will have to be integrated in the programming of IPA II by DG ELRG, and building on evaluations already carried out by the national authorities on the relevant Operational programmes.

indicators. Furthermore, the evaluation shall find sector findings and conclusions, valid for all beneficiary countries.

Apart from an assessment in the above-mentioned sectors, the evaluation should be focused on a third sector in the beneficiary countries, which will complement the sector assessments and generalise the findings and conclusions on the performance of IPA at a country level. The additional sector per country will be defined in the inception phase. However, the Contractor may take *indicatively* the following information on the preferred 3rd sector by countries: Horizontal Public administration reform/Civil service (Albania, Serbia), Energy (Kosovo, Serbia), Transport (FYROM). For the other beneficiary countries not specified above (Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro) the final choice of the third sector will be made at the inception phase.

The evaluators should deliver information/judgment on the achievement of the programme objectives and performance; based on the accomplishment of specific objectives under different components, and attained outcomes and impacts against benchmarks/indicators set in the programming documents. However, adequate programme level objectives and impact indicators may not always be quantified or even available. In cases where the programme level objectives and indicators (e.g. progress to accession) are not available, these limitations should be addressed and reported by the evaluator and recommendations for improvement should be provided.

The findings and conclusions, resulting from the sectors analysis and from the individual country assessments have to be aggregated and summarised into a meta assessment and presented in the final evaluation report. The evaluation report has to arrive at a common assessment, delineating the evaluation criteria (efficiency, effectiveness, impact, coherence, sustainability and value added) and to draw common or systemic findings that can be applied to the IPA in a broader context. They should be used to derive recommendations, as specified below.

Regarding specific objective 2, the evaluation shall provide useful and concrete recommendations to improve current IPA assistance (if and where relevant) and programming and implementation of IPA II assistance. The evaluation shall also provide recommendations to the Commission, specifically to the selected sectors with respect to the expected management of these policy areas by DG ELARG. Individual country assessments might be enclosed as annexes to the report. A country-cross reference, underpinning the general findings and recommendations will be welcomed.

2.4.2 Evaluation questions

The list of the evaluation questions is not exhaustive and may be further re-defined during the inception phase.

2.4.2.1. Specific objective 1: Judgement on the performance of assistance (efficiency, effectiveness, impact, coherence, sustainability and value added of EU engagement)

EQ To which extent are interventions financed under IPA efficient in terms of value-for-money when delivering outputs?

EQ To what extent are the implementation modalities efficient?

EQ To what extent are interventions financed under IPA effective in achieving results, and what possibly hampered their achievement? Had there been any factors (financial, social, political, institutional, human factor) which prevented beneficiary countries accessing the results?

EQ Were the outputs and immediate results delivered by IPA translated into the desired/expected impacts; namely in terms of achieving the strategic objectives/priorities linked to accession preparation? Can impacts be sufficiently identified/quantified?

EQ Were there relevant indicators and monitoring mechanisms to track achievement of results?

EQ Which were the relative strengths and weaknesses of the programming and implementation mechanisms under the different IPA components in the same sector?

EQ How well did the interventions, financed under different components work together to reach the EU Enlargement policy objectives and strengthen the economic and social cohesion?

EQ Were the identified impacts sustainable? Was there any positive systemic, even unforeseen impact beyond the IPA programme explicit objectives?

EQ To what extent has on-going IPA financial assistance contributed to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities linked to accession preparation? Are there any elements which (could) hamper the impact and/or sustainability of assistance?

EQ What is the additional value resulting from the EU intervention(s), compared to what could be achieved by the IPA beneficiary country at national and/or regional levels without such interventions? To what extent was IPA assistance instrumental in increasing donor coordination in the beneficiary countries and/or beneficiary country capacity in strategic planning?

2.4.2.2. Specific objective 2 - Recommendations for improving programming and implementation of IPA assistance

EQ How can programming and implementation of assistance under IPA II be enhanced to a more efficient degree and effectively achieve programme/instrument objectives?

EQ How can programming and implementation be enhanced to improve the impact and sustainability of financial assistance?

EQ Which lessons can be learned from the implementation of IPA I assistance in the dimensions explored under the above-mentioned specific objective 1 of this evaluation?

2.4.3 Methodology

The methodology should be based on DG ELARG's Evaluation guide¹¹; the SG's guidelines on good practices concerning conducting an evaluation¹², the concept of the theory-based impact evaluations on EVALSED¹³ and, if appropriate, on other quantitative methods to measure the impact and the effect of interventions.

The Contractors are invited to include an outline of their proposed methodology to undertake this assignment as part of their offer; including comments on the scope of the service, the proposed methodology, the evaluation questions and an elaboration on judgement criteria to answer the evaluation questions. The final evaluation questions and methodology for this assignment will be elaborated and agreed upon during the inception phase.

11 DG ELARG's Evaluation guide is available at http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/news_corner/key-documents/index_en.htm

12 SG's evaluation guidelines are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/evaluation/documents_en.htm

13 http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information/evaluations/guidance_en.cfm#2

Note: A methodology (not longer than 5 pages) should be submitted with the offer.

1) Inception Phase

- Start collecting and analysing the relevant documentation. Desk Review of the documents that will be subject to evaluation;
- Defining the sample of the projects and an additional sector per country which will be covered in the evaluation;
- Completion of the assessment approach and methodology; the evaluation questions, judgement criteria and indicators;
- Drafting and submitting of the inception report, which
 - summarises the objectives, scope and outputs of the evaluation,
 - defines the sectors that will be used in the sample and projects within them,
 - provides/fine-tunes the final evaluation questions, methodological approach, including the judgement criteria to be used and sources of information, samples of the questionnaires, etc;
 - presents a work-plan for the following phases.
 - presents the outline and an indicative table of contents of the final report.

The final evaluation questions, judgment criteria and indicators will be fine-tuned and agreed during the inception phase. A meeting in Brussels will take place at the beginning of the inception phase. The draft inception report will be sent to key stakeholders for comments before final endorsement by ELARG A3 Unit.

2) Desk Review

- Complete the collection of relevant documentation;
- Update the level of information by means of interviews, e-mail questionnaires or any other relevant tools with relevant actors (EC officials, Government officials, other stakeholders);
- Analyse the documentation in compliance with the evaluation questions;
- Elaboration of preliminary findings, conclusions at sector and programme level, as per the requirements in point 2.4.1 in the ToR.

3) Field Phase

- The field phase will include personal interviews in Brussels and in the beneficiary countries. The field phase will also include analysis of relevant information. Phone interviews, online questionnaires and other tools may complement personal interviews and analysis of information.
- At the end of the field work, end-of-field work meetings will be organised in Brussels to present preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations stemming from the field and desk phases.

4) Synthesis Phase

This phase will be mainly devoted to the preparation of the evaluation report based on the work done during the desk and field phases and taking into consideration the outcomes of the end-of-fieldwork meetings. The evaluator will make sure that his/her assessment is objective and balanced, affirmations accurate and verifiable, and will present findings, conclusions and recommendations following a logical cause-effect linkage. When formulating findings and conclusions, the evaluator should describe the facts assessed, the judgement criteria applied and how this led to findings and conclusions. Recommendations should address the weaknesses identified and reported. Recommendations should be operational and realistic in the sense of providing clear, feasible and relevant input for decision making. They should not be general but should address the specific weaknesses identified, while clearly indicating the measures to be undertaken. Recommendations for action will be addressed to the Commission. However, where appropriate, the evaluator should specify the role of any actor other than the Commission, including beneficiary institutions, in implementing the recommendations.

2.4.4. Quality control

Quality control by the evaluator

The evaluator should ensure an internal quality control during the implementing and reporting phase of the study. The quality control should ensure that the draft reports comply with the above requirements and meet adequate quality standards before sending them to stakeholders for comments. The quality control should ensure consistency and coherence between findings, conclusions and recommendations. It should also ensure that findings reported are duly substantiated and that conclusions are supported by relevant judgement criteria.

Quality control by the Commission

The reports shall undergo two external reviews: the first drafts shall be reviewed in parallel by an advisory Reference Group.

The Reference Group will have the following main responsibilities:

- Guiding the experts during the planning and implementation of the evaluation;
- Assisting the evaluation manager (DG ELARG A3 Unit) in implementation of activities;
- Providing an assessment of the quality of the work of the consultant; including endorsement of the inception report, interim report and the final report.

The Reference Group will include representatives from DIR A, B, C and D of DG Enlargement and other EC's services, DGs (DG EMPL, DG REGIO, DG AGRI), if necessary.

The final (second) draft shall be reviewed by the Inter-Institutional and Planning Unit (A3), taking into account the comments made by the reference group, different stakeholders and how the evaluators have handled these comments. Once this process is completed, the A3 Unit will decide on the endorsement of the reports for distribution to stakeholders, and later presentation by the evaluator.

2.4.5. Sources of information

Sources of information to be used by the evaluators include:

- Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA);
- Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II), COM(2011) 838 final 2011/0404 (COD);
- EU programming and planning documents – Annual Enlargement strategy papers, Progress reports, MIFFs, MIPDs, Financing Agreements, Country Strategy papers, Annual and Multi-Annual Sector programmes, etc.
- IPA annual reports, monitoring reports;
- 1st round country programme interim evaluations and IPA Meta evaluation (available at http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/financial_assistance/phare/evaluation/20110912_meta_eval_final.pdf);
- 2nd round country programme interim evaluations and IPA Meta evaluation (available at http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/financial_assistance/phare/evaluation/2013/ipa_interim_meta_evaluation_report.pdf);
- Interim Evaluation of the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013 and Evaluation Works on Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators of the Measures FYROM 2007-2011;
- Interim Evaluation of the Operational Programme for Regional Development FYROM 2009-2011;
- Interim evaluations of IPA Components III and IV in Turkey covering the period 2007-2011;
- Evaluation of European Commission to Private Sector Development in Turkey;
- Interim Evaluation of IPA I in Turkey for years 2007-2009;
- Country Programme Interim Evaluation Croatia TAIB programmes (2007-2010);
- Interim Evaluation Report IPA OP Human Resources Development 2007-2013 Croatia;
- Interim Evaluation Report IPA OP Regional Competitiveness 2007-2011 Croatia;
- Interim Evaluation Report IPA OP Transportation 2007-2013 Croatia;
- Interim Evaluation Report IPA OP Environment 2007-2013 Croatia;
- Interviews and other survey methods, publications, surveys and reviews;
- Any other source of information the evaluators consider relevant (including assessment of the World Bank, ETF, etc);

Programming and strategic documentation, evaluations, undertaken by European Commission can be found on DG ELARG, DG REGIO and DG EMPL internet site. Other relevant documents are located either on the web or from the EC's services and beneficiaries.

2.4.6. Risk and assumptions

Risks and assumptions cannot be listed exhaustively. It is assumed that services within both the Commission and the implementing authorities of the beneficiaries accept evaluation as an integral part of the project management cycle and are committed to provide the necessary information, and will subsequently act on recommendations and findings, as well as provide the follow-up information to the Commission.

The following are additional relevant assumptions for the above evaluations:

- Monitoring data is available on time and provide sufficient and adequate information;
- Access to requested documentation and information on the programmes is ensured by the Commission and the beneficiaries;
- All staff of EU Delegation, beneficiaries and implementing parties are regularly informed on objectives and methods of this evaluation, in order to ensure their full cooperation.

In the event that one or several of the above assumptions prove to be untrue, the evaluator should immediately inform the Contracting Authority. The evaluators will also report any limitations to the evaluations due to insufficient collaboration from key stakeholders.

2.5 Required outputs

The results to be achieved by the Consultant are as follows:

1. To deliver an inception report, which must include the criteria mentioned in p. 2.4.3 and will be specified in the inception phase;
2. An interim report has to be produced after completion of the desk and field research and should, to the extent possible, include some preliminary findings and conclusions. The report should include an overview of the status of the evaluation project; a description of problems encountered and solutions found; a summary of initial findings and results of the data gathering; an assessment of the data, and whether it meets expectations and will provide a sound basis for responding to the evaluation questions.
3. To deliver a final evaluation report at a programme/instrument level; analysing and consolidating relevant findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from the analysis of the evaluation questions and as per the defined scope of the evaluation (specified in p.2.4.1). Individual country assessments might be enclosed as annexes to the report.
4. To debrief the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation to relevant Commission services and beneficiaries of assistance (one or maximum two debriefing meetings). The results shall be presented before the members of IPA Committee in Brussels.

The Inception report will detail the third sector, which will be analysed and defined per country; final methodology, judgement criteria to be used and sources of information, timetable of the assignment and documents required and tentative contacts to be met, in deemed necessary.

The Final Report shall include: an overview, an executive summary, main section, conclusions and recommendations and annexes. The final report should specifically answer each of the evaluation questions as per section 2.4.2 and address the scope defined in 2.4.1. The content and the format of the final report shall be elaborated and approved in the inception phase. The Contractor should provide an abstract of no more than 200 words and, as a separate document, an executive summary

of maximum 6 pages; both in English and French. The purpose of the abstract is to act as a reference tool helping the reader to quickly ascertain the evaluation's subject. An executive summary is an overview, which shall provide information on the (i) purpose of the assignment, (ii) methodology / procedure / approach, (iii) results /findings and (iv) conclusion and recommendations. The Final report should be usable for publication.

The final activity report (in 3 hard copies and in electronic version) should bear record of the assignment and be submitted at invoice intervals to the European Commission. It should describe in a concise and structured way, how the above-described “required services” have been fulfilled (max 8 pages). In annex, it will include all requested information and analysis as necessary.

The reports shall be presented in the English language.

3. EXPERTS PROFILE OR EXPERTISE

3.1 Profile and expertise required

It is assumed that the contract requires the following experts: **3 senior experts (one of them Team Leader) and a pool of maximum of 4 junior experts.**

The minimum qualifications of the **Team Leader (senior expert 1)** include:

Qualification and skills:

- At least a Master degree Academic level (preferably in preferably in field of Economics, Finance, Law, Social science) or equivalent professional experience of a minimum of 10 years;

General professional experience:

- Minimum of 10 years post-degree relevant professional experience in evaluation, policy design, project management, sound financial management, audit, monitoring or academic research in programmes, instruments, projects;

Specific professional experience:

- At least 3 years of this to be on evaluation of programmes, instruments, activities, etc.
- Experience as a project Team Leader in at least 1 evaluation (ex-ante, interim, ex-post, thematic, etc);
- At least 3 years in a team leadership and drafting reports;

The minimum qualification of **senior expert 2** includes:

Qualification and skills:

- At least a Master degree Academic level (preferably in preferably in field of Economics, Finance, Law, Social science) or equivalent professional experience of a minimum of 10 years;

General professional experience:

- Minimum of 10 years post-degree relevant professional experience in evaluation, policy design, project management, sound financial management, audit, monitoring or academic research in programmes, instruments, projects;

Specific professional experience:

- At least 3 years of this to be on evaluation of programmes, instruments, activities;
- Experience in drafting reports.

The minimum qualification of **senior expert 3** includes:

Qualification and skills:

- At least a Master degree Academic level (preferably in preferably in field of Economics, Finance, Law, Social science) or equivalent professional experience of a minimum of 10 years;

General professional experience:

- Minimum of 10 years post-degree relevant professional experience in evaluation, policy design, project management, sound financial management, audit, monitoring or academic research in programmes, instruments, projects;

Specific professional experience:

- At least 3 years of this to be on evaluation of programmes, instruments, activities;
- Experience in drafting reports.

A pool of **junior experts** includes (a maximum of 4 junior experts):

Qualifications and skills:

- At least Master degree Academic level (preferably in the field of Economics, Finance, Law, Social science, Public administration) or equivalent professional experience of 5 years ;

General professional experience:

- Minimum of 3 years relevant professional experience in evaluation, policy design, project management, sound financial management, audit, monitoring or academic research in programmes, instruments, projects;

The minimum requirement for the team as a whole are:

- All experts must be proficient in English.
- At least two members should have a very good knowledge of the local context and of the Enlargement policy and functioning of the IPA instrument,
- At least two of them should be experienced in performing a minimum of 2 evaluations of programmes, instruments, activities (ex-ante, interim, ex-post, thematic, etc);
- At least two members of the team should have professional experience of minimum 3 years in the Western Balkans.

- The team as a whole should have professional experience of minimum 3 years in each of the following areas: private sector development/competitiveness; human resource development, public administration reform, energy, transport, regional development.
- Knowledge of one or more of the languages of the beneficiary countries will be an asset for more than one team member.

CV(s) of the Quality control and backstopping team members should be presented as part of the offer, in compliance with the Guidelines of the Framework Contract COM 2011 (point 2.2.3.12) and Global ToR for Io1 under FWC COM 2011.

3.2 Number of requested experts per category and number of man-days per expert

The experts will be expected to be available for the whole duration of the assignment. It is expected that the assignment will require **330 working days**.

Expert	Working days
Senior expert 1 (Team leader)	70
Senior expert 2	60
Senior expert 3	60
Junior experts (a pool of max 4 experts)	a total of 140

3.3 Working language

The main working language of the assignment is English.

3.4 Conflict of interest

The contractor is responsible for carrying out an independent evaluation. Evaluators must be strictly neutral. Conflicts of interests must be avoided. The experts carrying out the evaluation shall have no involvement with the projects and the institutions involved in this exercise. More specifically, the experts must fulfil the following criteria:

- No previous involvement in programming and/or implementation of assistance which will be evaluated as part of evaluation;
- During the implementation of this assignment, no involvement in any projects (from EU or other sources) under the responsibility of the beneficiary institutions involved in the evaluation.

The offers including one or more experts not meeting the above independence criteria, will be rejected. The Contracting Authority requests the signed objectivity confidentiality and conflict of interest declaration to be submitted with the contractors' offers.

4. LOCATION AND DURATION

4.1 Starting period

The study is expected to start in **January 2014** and to be finalized in April 2015.

4.2 Foreseen finishing period or duration

The expected duration of the assignment is **16 (sixteen) calendar months**.

4.3 Planning

The planning by the end of the inception phase should indicate the tentative dates and duration of the field work, and the remaining milestones of the evaluation.

A suggested outline is presented below.

Phase/Activity	Month
Kick-off meeting (Brussels)	January 2014
Draft Inception Report, comments provision and revision	February – March 2014
Desk review	March - May 2014
Field phase	May - September 2014
Interim report, comments provision and revision	October – November 2014
Synthesis phase	December 2014- January 2015
Elaboration of the Draft Report, and submission to the Reference Group	February 2015
Incorporating stakeholders' comments and submission of the final Report to ELARG A3	March 2015
Debriefing of the final Report in Brussels	April 2015

4.4 Location of assignment

The assignment will be performed at the consultant's offices. A maximum of 12 trips are expected to take place to Brussels. Meetings in Brussels will take place at the beginning, at the end of field meeting, and at the end of the assignment, with the presence of the team leader (other experts as appropriate) and the Contractor. An interim meeting can be planned if appropriate. The countries to visit and the conditions of the field missions should be agreed upon with Commission services in advance.

5. REPORTING

5.1 Content

The content of the reports is explained in p.2.5 in ToR.

5.2 Language

The language of the report shall be English.

5.3 Submission/comments timing

The draft Inception Report will be submitted by the end of February 2014. DG ELARG will take two weeks to comment on the report and the contractor is expected to submit the final revised version of the Inception Report by the end of March 2014.

The interim report has to be submitted to ELARG in October 2014. DG ELARG will take two weeks to comment and the contractor is expected to submit the final revised version of the report in November 2014.

The draft Final Report will be submitted to ELARG in February 2015. DG ELARG will take two weeks to comment and the contractor is expected to submit the final revised version of the Report in March 2015.

An activity report (in 3 hard copies and in electronic version) should bear record about the assignment and is to be submitted at invoice intervals to the European Commission. It should describe in a concise and structured way how the above-described “required services” have been fulfilled (max 8 pages). In annex, it will include all requested information and analysis as necessary.

A debriefing meeting of the final Report shall be planned in Brussels in April 2015. If necessary, an end of field meeting/ debriefing meeting may be organised in one of the beneficiary countries.

5.4 Number of reports copies

The draft inception, the draft interim and the draft final evaluation report will be submitted to the DG ELARG project manager in electronic form by e-mail. Upon their revision and acceptance, 3 hard copies of each report will be delivered to the EC.

All electronic versions have to be submitted in a format compatible with MS Office software.

The EU reserves the right to request additional revisions of the reports, if this is deemed necessary in order to reach an appropriate outcome and quality control requirements.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Other authorised items to foresee under ‘Reimbursable’

Travel and per diem costs may be included in the reimbursable costs if justified by the methodology. For the purpose of making an offer, the following travel information should be taken into consideration:

- International travel to Brussels, (in case the expert is based outside of Belgium): max 12 return trips;

- Per diems in Brussels, (max 12, in case the expert is based outside of Belgium);
- International travel to Western Balkans, Turkey and Croatia: max 16 return trips;
- Per diems in Western Balkans, Turkey and Croatia max 56;
- International travel within the WB region max 10.

The framework contractor will make sure that the experts are covered by an appropriate travel insurance (i.e. that covers medical repatriation). In the event that the totals for a particular line in the budget will/could be impacted as a result of any circumstances not foreseen in these terms of reference (inter alia implementing modalities agreed with the EU task manager), the contractor must alert the EU task manager. In any case, should any modification be required to the budget agreed at contract signature, these will have to be properly justified, and will be subject to the ex-ante written approval in line with the general conditions (Art.20).

Operational conditionality for intermediary payment if any

N.A

Tax arrangements

Taxes, including VAT and other duties are exempted from the EU financing.

Others

The contract will be **GLOBAL PRICE**.

IMPORTANT REMARKS:

- During all contacts with stakeholders, the consultant will clearly identify him/herself as independent consultant and not as official representative of the European Commission. All reports shall clearly indicate the number of the contract on the front page and on each of the pages and carry the following disclaimer: “This report has been prepared with the financial assistance of the European Commission. The information and views set out in this [report] are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Commission. The Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this study. Neither the Commission nor any person acting on the Commission’s behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein”. The report shall apply EC Visual Identity.
- In accordance with Article 14 of the General Conditions of the Contract, whereby the Contracting Authority acquires ownership of all results as part of the current assignment, these results may be used for any of the following purposes:
 - (a) use for its own purposes: making available to the staff of the contracting authority, making available to the persons and entities working for the contracting authority or cooperating with it, including contractors, subcontractors whether legal or natural persons, Union institutions, agencies and bodies, Member States' institutions, installing, uploading, processing, arranging, compiling, combining, retrieving, copying, reproducing in whole or in part and in unlimited number of copies,
 - (b) distribution to the public: publishing in hard copies, publishing in electronic or digital format, publishing on the internet as a downloadable/non-downloadable file, broadcasting by

any kind of technique of transmission, public presentation or display, communication through press information services, inclusion in widely accessible databases or indexes, otherwise in any form and by any method;

(c) modifications by the contracting authority or by a third party in the name of the contracting authority: shortening, summarizing, modifying of the content, making technical changes to the content necessary correction of technical errors, adding new parts, providing third parties with additional information concerning the result with a view of making modifications, addition of new elements, paragraphs titles, leads, bolds, legend, table of content, summary, graphics, subtitles, sound, etc, preparation slide-show, public presentation etc, extracting a part or dividing into parts, use of a concept or preparation of a derivate work, digitisation or converting the format for storage or usage purposes, modifying dimensions, translating, inserting subtitles, dubbing in different language versions:

(d) rights to authorise, license, or sub-license in case of licensed pre-existing rights the modes of exploitation set out in any of the points (a) to (c) to third parties.

Where the contracting authority becomes aware that the scope of modifications exceeds that envisaged in the contract or order form, the contracting authority shall consult the contractor. Where necessary, the contractor shall in turn seek the agreement of any creator or other right holder. The contractor shall reply to the contracting authority within one month and shall provide its agreement, including any suggestions of modifications, free of charge. The creator may refuse the intended modification only when it may harm his honour, reputation or distort integrity of the work. All pre-existing rights shall be licensed to the Contracting Authority. The contractor shall provide to the contracting authority a list of pre-existing rights and third parties' rights including its personnel, creators or other right holders.

- The evaluation questions and methodology for this assignment may need to be further elaborated by the evaluator in the inception report.
- Attention is drawn to the fact that the European Commission reserves the right to have the reports redrafted as many times as necessary, and that financial penalties will be applied if deadlines indicated for the submission of reports (drafts and final, in hard and electronic copy) are not strictly adhered to.