



Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

Inspire policy making by territorial evidence

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ESPON EGTC

Call for tender

TERMS OF REFERENCE

**“Alps2050 – Common spatial perspectives for the
Alpine area. Towards a common vision”**

Technical and Administrative Terms and Conditions

Implementation Framework:

The Single Operation within the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme implemented by the ESPON EGTC

The ESPON 2020 Monitoring Committee approved the Single Operation on 20 November 2015

The Single Operation is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund via the ESPON 2020 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.

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1. WHAT IS TO BE DONE? (DEFINITION OF THE CONTRACT)

The ESPON activity “Alps2050 – Common spatial perspectives for the Alpine area. Towards a common vision” resulting from this call for tenders is assigned to Specific Objective 2 of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme. As such, it shall support stakeholders in taking up territorial evidence in their policy development.

The service shall develop a common spatial development vision for the whole Alpine area towards 2050, consisting of a set of common spatial perspectives. This vision should serve to strengthen territorial cooperation among Alpine countries towards sustainable development. It shall contribute to reducing obstacles to a common sustainable territorial development and to strengthening actions aiming at coping with common territorial challenges, thereby supporting the Alpine Convention, INTERREG Alpine Space and EUSALP.

The main outcome should be common spatial perspectives for the Alpine area which can indicate, based on evidence-based analysis and subsequent projections, how developments in ten fields of sustainable development (further outlined below) can influence sectors such as sustainable tourism, ecosystem functioning and biological diversity.

1.1 Context of this call for tender

The Alpine area is composed of territories with different demographic, social and economic trends and a rich cultural, linguistic and biological diversity. This diversity goes along with a variety of governance systems and traditions. The region has a strong identity and a longstanding tradition in cooperation. This unique territory has important potentials for dynamic development, but is facing major challenges at various levels including the pan-Alpine, regional and local levels as well as in cross-border areas. These challenges refer for instance to the specific geographical position, globalisation, demographic trends, climate change and its impact on the environment, biodiversity, territorial pattern of activities and living conditions. The major challenge for the Alpine area is to balance economic development and environmental protection through common innovative approaches which go beyond administrative borders and strengthen the area as a living space for people and as a natural habitat, as well as a field for sustainable economic and social activities in a sustainable way. The perimeter of spatial perspective covers the different administrative extensions of the Alpine Convention, the Interreg Alpine Space and the EUSALP.

During the German presidency of the Alpine Convention (2015-2016), the ministers responsible for territorial development of the Alpine states signed a Declaration for sustainable spatial development in the Alps¹. The Declaration identifies the following ten main challenges and topics:

- climate change, the adaptation to climate change and natural hazards,
- demographic changes and organization of work,
- transport and connectivity,

¹ http://www.alpconv.org/de/organization/conference/XIV/Documents/annex_38_de.pdf

http://www.alpconv.org/fr/organization/conference/XIV/Documents/annex_38_fr.pdf

http://www.alpconv.org/it/organization/conference/XIV/Documents/annex_38_it.pdf

http://www.alpconv.org/sl/organization/conference/XIV/Documents/annex_38_sl.pdf

- settlement structure and land use,
- saving, production, supply and storage of energy,
- tourism,
- ecosystem functioning, ecological networking and biological diversity,
- vitality of the mountain regions and their small and medium-sized towns,
- preservation of cultural and natural heritage,
- improving governance, cooperation and organizational needs.

Ministers expressed the need to develop spatial perspectives and a vision for the Alpine area. The process to build such a vision and perspectives as well as the perspectives and vision themselves would greatly contribute to policy making by helping reduce obstacles to a common sustainable territorial development as well as strengthening joint actions. The latter aim at coping with challenges for the Alpine area, taking into account the wider context of cooperation provided i.a. by EUSALP and the Interreg Alpine Space Programme.

In a unique, fragile and yet dynamic area such as the Alpine area, a common approach to spatial development is particularly important. A vision and common spatial perspectives would facilitate and improve harmonized cross-border territorial development. They would address the need for planned and coordinated development in the ten fields identified by the Declaration (see above) – and others, if relevant – and the latter's influence on the regional economy, innovation landscape, rural areas, settlements, protection of landscapes and nature, transport and mobility as well as on quality of life. A vision and perspectives could be a foundation for further place-based cross-border and transnational cooperation and would help to identify further options for development for the Alpine area. The vision and spatial perspectives could also be used to contribute to other strategic cooperations in the Alpine area, such as Alpine Convention, EUSALP, and the Interreg Programmes.

The topic of Alps2050 is very relevant to many other European regions as a similar territorial diversity can also be found in many other mountain ranges in different countries of Europe. Some of them have established similar treaties to the Alpine Convention, e.g. the Carpathian Convention. These regions could benefit from the results of Alps2050 in order to develop their own strategies for common spatial development. In general, not only mountainous regions, but also other types of regions engaged in territorial cooperation could benefit from the outcomes of this targeted analysis.

Results from previous ESPON projects should be taken into consideration in the implementation of this targeted analysis. The most relevant results to be considered are produced by ESPON CLIMATE, ET2050, GEOSPECS, TERCO, ULYSSES, RISE, ESPON TANGO, and ESPON TEDI. Also the interim results of the ongoing projects ESPON COMPASS and Possible European Territorial Futures, as well as the first outputs of the LinkPas and ACTAREA targeted analyses should be considered. Conversely, Alps2050 would be a valuable thematic complementation to the already wide range of ESPON evidence.

Beyond the ESPON Programme, the results of other relevant initiatives such as the 2014 Strategy Development Process for the Alpine Space Programme Area² could also be used.

² <http://www.alpine-space.org/2007-2013/about-the-programme/strategy-development-for-the-alps/the-strategy-development-process/>

1.2 Objectives

The objective of this activity is the development of a vision and common spatial perspectives for the Alpine area to strengthen territorial cooperation among Alpine countries towards more effective sustainable development. The general aim of Alps2050 reflects the European priority to jointly face challenges related to balanced sustainable development as well as to contribute to the European goal of territorial cohesion.

The main outcome of the service should be:

- A territorial vision and common spatial perspectives for the Alpine area, which can (1) indicate how developments in selected thematic fields can influence sustainable territorial development and enhance territorial resilience, including ecosystem functioning and biological diversity until 2050; (2) identify broader impacts of the main developments in the selected thematic fields on different types of territories in the Alpine area (e.g. rural areas, urban areas).
- A set of maps and related data showing the current state in the Alps concerning the selected thematic fields mentioned above.
- A set of illustrations, projecting the possible development trends of the selected thematic fields until 2050.
- A set of illustrations/schematic maps showing options for policy development for each of the selected thematic fields mentioned above.
- Suggestions for more effective solutions for balanced sustainable development in the context of territorial cooperation as well as help to strengthen informal and formal cooperation between actors in a sustainable way.
- Guidelines for the development of spatial perspectives and a spatial vision that can be used beyond the geographical scope of Alps 2050 by other European transnational cooperation areas (e.g. European macro-regions).

1.3 Description of tasks

The tender should already include (1) a proposal for a conceptual and methodological framework that will be used to carry out tasks 1-4; (2) a proposal of thematic fields that the targeted analysis will be looking at in depth. The latter aspect should be based in particular on the 10 topics mentioned above in section 1.1, deriving from the Declaration for sustainable spatial development in the Alps. Likewise other important topics could derive from ongoing processes in the Alpine area, e.g. in the framework of EUSALP.

The proposed themes will be discussed at the kick-off meeting and jointly agreed upon by the steering committee.

The following tasks shall be carried out within the framework of this service contract:

Task 1: Analysis of the current state of the Alpine Area's territorial structure

Analyse the current state of the Alpine area's territorial structure related to the selected thematic fields. The aim of this task is to create an up-to-date picture of the economic, social and environmental state of the Alpine area. This should be done by zooming-in on existing ESPON evidence and breaking down relevant pan-European results for the Alpine area. The most relevant ESPON results to be considered are ESPON Climate, ET2050, GEOSPECS, TERCO, ULYSSES,

RISE, ESPON TANGO, and ESPON TeDi (all of which can be accessed on the ESPON website). In addition, the interim results of the two ongoing applied research activities ESPON COMPASS and Possible European Territorial Futures, as well as the first outputs of the LinkPas and ACTAREA targeted analyses should be considered. Other relevant project results such as the 2014+ Strategy Development for the Alpine Space (an Interreg Alpine Space project) should also be used.

Finally, this task should identify the main factors and drivers that led to the current territorial structure of the Alpine area.

Task 2: Development of spatial perspectives for the Alpine area and a vision 2050

On the basis of the outcome of task 1 develop different potential spatial perspectives for the Alpine area. The perspectives shall shed light on possible different impacts of the defined topics on the Alpine area. They should serve as tools to build a vision towards 2050, which will be used by policy makers in practice to improve governance and cooperation in the Alpine area.

In the framework of this task, the main territorial challenges and topics to be considered by the service provider are those listed in the Declaration and other relevant topics.

With the main development factors (deriving from task 1) in mind, an investigation should be carried out on the likely spatial development of the Alpine area towards 2050 concerning the selected topics as mentioned above. In relation to supporting this vision development, the analysis should make use of a proactive (roll-backwards) methodology having a point of departure in a future situation (2050) defined by the Protocol “Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development” of the Alpine Convention and the Declaration for sustainable spatial development in the Alps. The final Alps2050 vision needs to have a sense of realism and take into account existing territorial specificities and potentials to ensure its uptake by policymakers.

The process of developing the spatial perspectives and the vision should have a strong participatory character, actively involving the stakeholders from the Alpine area relevant for this targeted analysis (and potentially others if needed).

Task 3: Proposals of policy measures leading towards the vision 2050 for each of the selected main topics and for effective solutions for balanced sustainable development in the context of transnational cooperation

Develop proposals for integrated policy measures (i.e. related to the selected topics) for achieving the desired future spatial development as described in the Alps2050 vision. The proposed policy recommendations need to take account of the existing governance contexts in the Alpine area on regional, national and transnational level. The Alps2050 vision developed in the framework of Task 2 could serve as a “Leitbild” for policy makers in the Alps to steer the development of their macro-region in the desired way.

Proposals for policy measures should aim at having a positive impact on the development of the selected thematic fields. As in Task 2 a strong involvement of relevant stakeholders from the Alpine is expected from the service provider.

Task 4: Development of guidelines for setting up spatial perspectives and a vision in transnational cooperation areas

Based on the results of tasks 1-3, develop general guidelines for setting up spatial perspectives and a vision for territorial development that can be used in other transnational cooperation areas, i.e. not only the Alpine area. Define in the guidelines the generic steps that need to be taken and aspects to be considered to be able to develop spatial perspectives and a vision that can be meaningful for the relevant stakeholders.

The fulfilment of these tasks shall be carried through in line with the specific context and objectives described in section 1.1 and 1.2.

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 Mandatory meetings foreseen for the contract implementation:

The kick-off meeting will consist of a general dialogue regarding the objectives and tasks of the study. The service provider will receive guidelines 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. This meeting will be organised by the ESPON EGTC and take place at the EGTC's premises in Luxembourg.

The kick-off meeting will also be the first occasion for the steering committee, which will be supervising the implementation of the activity, to convene. The steering committee will consist of representatives of all stakeholder institutions, the responsible project expert from the ESPON EGTC and at least one representative of the service provider. The steering committee will review all deliveries of the service provider and give guidance in carrying out the analytical activity.

The Indicative Time Table (1.5) outlines the other meetings previewed during the service implementation. These meetings will be organised by the ESPON EGTC and will normally take place at the EGTC's premises in Luxembourg, via teleconference or in one of the stakeholder territories, if the steering committee decides so. The service provider shall ensure participation (at least with one team representative) in all of the meetings.

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.

1.4.2 Deliveries

Delivery 1: The first delivery should include:

- Brief description of conceptual and methodological framework to be applied including the selection of relevant topics to be analysed.
- Overview of qualitative and quantitative data and other documentary sources to be collected and used. Plan for overcoming potential challenges in relation to data collection, data harmonisation and missing data.
- First results of the analysis of the Alpine area's current territorial structure.
- First overview on main factors and drivers that led to the current territorial structure of the Alpine area.

- Plan for developing spatial perspectives for the Alpine area as well as a vision 2050.
- Plan for activating stakeholders for the participatory processes within Tasks 2 and 3.

Delivery 2: The second delivery should include:

- Interim report (max. 30 pages) including:
 - Final results of the analysis of the Alpine area's current territorial structure, incl. maps.
 - First overview on spatial perspectives for the Alpine area and on Alps2050 vision.
 - First overview on elements for guidelines for setting up spatial perspectives in transnational cooperation areas.
- Power point presentation (max. 20 slides) including:
 - The main results of the completed tasks to communicate in a simple and easy way the main findings, focused on the main needs of the stakeholders.

Delivery 3: Draft final delivery

- Draft executive summary (max. 4 pages) including:
 - Conclusions and policy recommendations based on the stakeholders' knowledge need.
- Draft main report (max. 50 pages) including:
 - Summary of current state of the Alpine area's territorial structure.
 - Summary of spatial perspectives for the Alpine area in the selected themes and description of the Alps2050 vision.
 - Relevant illustrations projecting the selected themes as a base for discussion on further action.
 - Proposals for policy measures for the selected topics in the context of transnational cooperation.
 - Relevant illustrations showing options for policy development for the selected topics.
 - Summary of guidelines for setting up spatial perspectives in transnational cooperation areas.
- Draft scientific report including:
 - Everything that has to be known to make the study repeatable and verifiable.
 - Description of the spatial perspectives and the Alps2050 vision.
 - Description of the participatory process with relevant stakeholders.
 - Proposals for further research in the subject area of the activity.
- Draft synthesis report (max. 8 pages) including:
 - Main results of the targeted analysis and policy recommendations
 - Content to be discussed and agreed with the ESPON EGTC
- Draft website content (max. 12 pages) showcasing the key results and insights of the main report, based on guidelines and templates to be provided by the ESPON EGTC.

Delivery 4: A final delivery should include:

- Final versions of the draft reports included in the draft final delivery (see above).

- Data gathered according to ESPON metadata template.
- Maps and illustrations included in final delivery reports (in vector format) and related geodatabase.
- Proof of the integration of data used in the framework of the activity into the ESPON database.
- A power point presentation (max. 30 slides), made up of the main components of the main report, including the key maps and results of the study, to be agreed with the ESPON EGTC after Delivery 3.

All deliveries should be delivered in electronic format (pdf and doc) and should have gone through a thorough language check, preferably by an English native speaker.

1.5 Indicative time schedule

The service provider is envisaged to deliver according to the following timetable:

Delivery	Delivery description	Indicative deadline³
	Kick-off meeting	As soon as possible and up to 4 weeks after the award of the contract.
D1	Inception delivery	T + 2 months
	Meeting or teleconference	T + 3 months
D2	Interim delivery	T + 5 months
	Meeting or teleconference	T + 6 months
D3	Draft final delivery	T + 9 months
	Meeting or teleconference	T + 10 months
D4	Final delivery	T + 12 months

The contracted service provider will receive written feedback from the ESPON EGTC, including the compiled stakeholders' feedback, on each of the aforementioned deliveries within four weeks after receiving the deliveries, including advice on the further direction of the work. Requested amendments shall be carried out by the contractor on the basis of the remarks made by the ESPON EGTC and the stakeholders on the deliveries. In addition, regular contacts by phone and/or via emails are envisaged between the service provider and the EGTC in order to progress and monitor the implementation of the service contract.

³ The letter "T" in this table stands for the date of the kick-off meeting.

1.6 Implementation and governance of activity

Partnership and cooperation are key principles during the implementation of targeted analyses and are prerequisites for ensuring useful results and meeting stakeholders' original demand. This applies to both, the partnership between the ESPON EGTC and stakeholders, as well as between the service provider's team members and the stakeholder representatives. In order to allow for a framework that facilitates cooperation, a steering committee is set up for the lifetime of the targeted analysis. The main purpose of the steering committees is to follow and advise the implementation of the targeted analysis, making sure that each activity achieves the predefined objectives.

The steering committee is made up of representatives from the lead stakeholder, the partner stakeholders and the ESPON EGTC. Other stakeholders and/or umbrella organisations can take part in the steering committee as observers if the stakeholders behind the project wish so. The ESPON EGTC is represented by the project expert in charge of the targeted analysis.

The German Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure is the lead stakeholder in this targeted analysis. The other partners in the stakeholder consortium are:

- Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention;
- Federal Office for Spatial Development, Switzerland;
- Federal Chancellery, Department IV/4 Coordination, Spatial Planning and Regional Policy, Austria;
- Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Directorate for Spatial Planning, Construction and Housing, Slovenia;
- General Commission for Territorial Equality, Unit Building Territorial Development Capacities, France;
- Office of Construction and Infrastructure, Liechtenstein;
- Ministry for Infrastructure and Transport, Division Territorial Development, Planning and International Projects, Italy.

The representatives of the Alpine countries on national level and members of the ad hoc expert group on Spatial Planning of the Alpine Convention as participating stakeholders are the ideal partners in this project. This platform could also be used to support the targeted analysis with knowhow on spatial development in the Alpine area, and to establish contacts and exchange with other actors.

Throughout the lifetime of the Alps2050 activity it is planned to involve organisations that may play a role as information sources. The International Commission for the Protection of the Alps (CIPRA), as the most relevant umbrella organisation in the Alpine area will act as facilitator of contacts between stakeholders and civil society, and will help to disseminate project results to relevant groups of civil society. CIPRA International has also expertise on a variety of topics related to sustainable development in the Alps. Furthermore, CIPRA International is in an active dialogue with Alpine policy makers on national level, through participation in various projects, and is responsible for the Association Alpine Town of the Year, and as such is very close to policy-makers in Alpine towns.

The objective of the steering committee is:

- To ensure the involvement and active participation of stakeholders in the implementation and steering of the project;
- To safeguard the policy relevance of the targeted analysis' outputs for the stakeholders;

- To facilitate the information and data flow between the service provider's team, of which at least one representative should always be present at steering committee meetings, the group of stakeholders and the ESPON EGTC.

The role of the steering committee is:

- To discuss and give feedback to deliveries from the service provider and provide guidance to the latter for the next steps of service implementation;
- To discuss and agree upon dissemination activities, particularly after the finalisation of the analytical work by the service provider.

Steering committee meetings are organised by the ESPON EGTC 3-4 times during the lifetime of a targeted analysis. They are normally organised as part of the commenting process of deliveries and can take the form of either physical meetings or teleconferences. The motivation for initiating a meeting can differ in specific circumstances. At the latest three weeks before the meeting, the EGTC sends out an invitation to all participants including a draft agenda with the date, time and place of the meeting. The EGTC chairs the meeting together with the lead stakeholder, and takes minutes focusing on conclusions. The draft minutes will be sent to all participants in the meeting within five working days after the meeting. Comments to the draft minutes can be made within two working days. The minutes cannot replace stakeholders' feedback to a service provider's delivery.

The EGTC project expert communicates solely with the lead stakeholder. The latter is responsible for sharing relevant information of that communication with all partner stakeholders. Stakeholders and service providers should at all times include the EGTC's project expert in the information flow whenever there is communication between the former two parties.

Whenever the service provider submits a delivery to the ESPON EGTC, the EGTC project expert passes it on to the lead stakeholder, asking for written comments from the stakeholder consortium. The lead stakeholder ensures the compilation of all stakeholder comments in one document. This might also imply that potentially conflicting comments delivered by different stakeholders will have to be dealt with so that one common position is presented in the compilation of stakeholder comments. The lead stakeholder sends the compiled stakeholder comments to the EGTC project expert within 10-15 working days upon reception of the delivery in question. The EGTC project expert integrates the stakeholder comments in the written feedback that is provided to the service provider on each delivery.

Successful accomplishment of Alps2050 main goals will be achieved to a large extent by proactive participation of the stakeholders at every stage of the implementation. Stakeholder involvement started off with the definition and development of the specific theme for this targeted analysis. Authorities of all stakeholder institutions are determined to support the work on the targeted analysis, providing necessary documents and data they possess. As some of the crucial documents to be considered for this project are only available in the national languages, potential service providers tendering for this activity should dispose of the necessary language skills. The stakeholders' authorities will secure a friendly environment for the service provider's work and make sure that proper procedures are in place to facilitate data collection and necessary involvement of departments responsible for issues covered by the activity. The stakeholder authorities will make the targeted analysis and its main goals well known to the stakeholder authorities' employees to motivate them to cooperate with the service provider.

Given that the lead stakeholder is a national authority and has very good access to data and expertise on the topic, it will actively support the contractor by providing (or helping by collecting) necessary data and documents, as well as various contacts necessary for the implementation of the targeted analysis. The lead stakeholder plans to (co)organize various events

in cooperation with other stakeholders in the Alpine area, e.g. Minister Conference of Alpine Convention.

Partner stakeholders will actively support the implementation of Alps2050 by providing data, information and contacts needed, as well as providing general support to the service provider. Partner stakeholders will remain in close contact with the lead stakeholder and will support its work and activities, e.g. through the contribution to the organisation of events/meetings. Considerable involvement in the dissemination of the project results, especially within partner stakeholders' countries, by the participating stakeholders is also foreseen.

The ESPON EGTC will bear the contractual responsibility for the Alps2050 targeted analysis.

To ensure coordination and communication across the partners from the start, the ESPON EGTC will convey a kick-off meeting with the service provider that should coincide with the first steering committee meeting. At this occasion, the participants in the steering committee will agree upon a schedule and the locations for further meetings throughout the lifetime of the activity.

1.7 Stakeholders' envisaged use of the targeted analysis

The outcome of this targeted analysis will be crucial for strengthening territorial cooperation among Alpine countries towards sustainable development.

Stakeholders will make use of the expected outcome in the following ways:

- For exploring elements of alignment of planning policies and better informed decision-making;
- For further development of mechanisms of cross-border consultation;
- As a continuous cross-border dialogue among planning authorities and stakeholders.

The results should not only serve the participating stakeholders but should directly contribute to the discussions with the European Commission about the framing of the Interreg Alpine Space Programme and other Programmes (Cross-Border Cooperation, rural development, etc.) post 2020. In addition, the outcome of Alps2050 will contribute to the joint work of Alpine countries and regions towards a better implementation of the EUSALP. The results will enable the stakeholders to better structure the discussion within the Action Groups 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the EUSALP and to concretely design the future alignment of the strategy within the Alpine countries and other programmes such as Interreg Alpine Space. Furthermore, the Alpine Convention, through the involvement of the Permanent Secretariat as a stakeholder in this targeted analysis, will be able to directly benefit from the perspectives in the elaboration of the Multi-Annual Work Programme of the Alpine Conference post 2022. The common perspectives for sustainable territorial development are useful also for other non-Alpine regions as good practice examples or guidelines.

1.8 Competences and skills required

The service provider should have the following specialised expertises, experiences and competences as part of the service provision:

- Proven experience from European projects and studies of territorial development issues, including experience from policy-relevant and comparative analyses with a European coverage and/or transnational multi-disciplinary research activities. The track record should cover the past 3 years.

- Good knowledge in European territorial policy development and publicly available European territorial evidence as a basis for policy making at EU and/or other administrative levels related to territorial development and cohesion.
- Good knowledge or proven experience on territorial policies, strategies and programmes of the Alpine area.
- Affinity with translating scientific knowledge and results into concrete messages suitable for policymakers at European, national and regional levels, including broad policy directions and specific policy measures based on evidence.
- Specialised technical expertise and knowledge related to data collection, GIS and mapping European territorial trends.

More than half of the proposed team of experts shall have at least three years of experience and academic background in the field of European territorial development issues in relation to the topic of this service contract, and experience in territorial analysis at international level. The service provider must have proven multidisciplinary skills and European/transnational knowledge, expertise and experience relevant to the subject of the contract and required for the successful implementation of the service. The service provider has the possibility to sub-contract partners. Team members shall demonstrate a very good linguistic ability to communicate and draft texts of high quality standard in English. The competence and experience of the service provider within the fields outlined above shall be clearly demonstrated and documented, as requested in sections 3 and 4 of these terms of reference.