



Terms of Reference:

Interreg Baltic Sea Region 2014-2020 Programme Final Programme evaluation

This document, the annexes to it, all related information and supporting documents are available on the Programme website.

Table of contents

1. PREAMBLE	1
2. BACKGROUND: THE PROGRAMME	1
3. PURPOSE AND REFERENCES.....	3
4. SCOPE AND TASKS.....	4
5. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY	9
6. INFORMATION AND DATA SOURCES	10
7. TIMELINE AND DELIVERABLES	11
8. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS	12
9. CONTRACTING, BUDGET, PAYMENT AND COPYRIGHT	12
10. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS.....	13

1. PREAMBLE

Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein (IB.SH), acting as Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat (MA/JS) of Interreg Baltic Sea Region 2014-2020 hereby opens a call for tender for the final evaluation of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region 2014-2020 Programme results and impacts.

The details about the assignment, the conditions and criteria for selection, are defined in the Terms of Reference (ToR) below.

2. BACKGROUND: THE PROGRAMME

Interreg Baltic Sea Region (hereinafter “the Programme”) is one of the 15 transnational Interreg programmes partly financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under the territorial cooperation goal of the European Union (EU). It also integrates financing of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) and national funding of the Russian Federation for Russian beneficiaries. Norway contributes with national financing to enable Norwegian partners to fully participate in the Programme as well. The eligible geographic area includes EU Member States Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden and northern parts of Germany, as well as the partner countries Norway and north-western regions of Russia. The Programme is supervised by a Monitoring Committee (MC), composed of representatives of national and regional authorities from the eleven participating countries, and the European Commission as an observer. The Monitoring Committee also acts as the Evaluation Steering Group.

The main objective of the Programme is to support integrated territorial development and cooperation for a more innovative, better accessible and sustainable Baltic Sea region. Impact in the context of the Programme is defined as increased institutional capacity of the Programme’s target groups to bring about positive change in the region based on the Programme’s intervention.



2.1 2014-2020 Programme

The 2014-2020 Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme, for which the present tender procedure for final evaluation is launched, had four priorities:

1. Capacity for innovation
2. Efficient management of natural resources
3. Sustainable transport
4. Institutional capacity for macro-regional cooperation

The Programme's first three priorities are in the focus of this evaluation. These priorities include twelve specific thematic objectives. Altogether 105 regular projects and 26 extension projects were implemented under the three priorities. The last projects finalised their activities in December 2021.

→ For more information about the projects, please see project library <https://projects.interreg-baltic.eu/>

All thematic objectives and all projects aimed to increase the **institutional capacities** of relevant stakeholders, which in turn is expected to lead to improvements to the state of regional development in the Baltic Sea region. Reflecting this aim, the system of indicators to measure achievements of the Programme was constructed, with qualitative result indicators depicting the state of institutional capacity of the target groups relevant to each specific objective.

Project platforms were a new instrument introduced to the Programme. In project platforms, a group of thematically related projects funded by the Programme or other EU funding programmes in the area work together to create synergies and increase further use and visibility of project results. The instrument reflects the Programme's ambition to contribute to capacity building in the region. Nine project platforms covering all Programme priorities were implemented within the Programme. Four platforms finalised their implementation in 2021. Five platforms will complete their activities in March 2022.

→ For more information about the project platforms, please see project library https://projects.interreg-baltic.eu/search.html?tx_bsrprojectdb_db%5Bdemand%5D%5Bcategory%5D=Project%20platforms&cHash=0460ac9711f5d824b3746e7f013ec984

→ Please get familiar with the 2014-2020 Programme and visit <https://interreg-baltic.eu/ongoing-projects/programme-2014-2020/>

2.2 2021-2027 Programme

The 2021-2027 Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme (afterwards referred to also as “the new Programme”) has four priorities:

1. Innovative societies
2. Water-smart societies
3. Climate-neutral societies
4. Cooperation Governance

The Programme's first three priorities include seven specific thematic objectives. Some of these thematic objectives represent a continuum compared to the thematic objectives, which were included in the 2014-2020 Programme. Some other thematic objectives are dedicated to new topics. As it was the case for the 2014-2020 Programme, also in the framework of the 2021-2027 Programme all thematic objectives aim to increase the institutional capacities of relevant stakeholders, which in turn is expected to lead to improvements to the state of regional development in the Baltic Sea region. The so-called core projects, which will be co-financed under priorities 1-3, are centred around **pilot activities**. Some projects in the 2014-2020 Programme implemented pilots, however, the specific requirement on pilots is introduced only with the 2021-2027 Programme.



The final evaluation of the 2014-2020 Programme, for which the present tender procedure is launched, is relevant in view of the 2021-2027 Programme as well.

- Therefore, please get familiar with the new Programme priorities and specific objectives and visit: <https://interreg-baltic.eu/get-funding/programme-2021-2027/>

3. PURPOSE AND REFERENCES

3.1 Purpose

The purpose of undertaking the final evaluation is to **demonstrate the impact of the Programme** and the achievement of its objectives, in particular setting light on the ways **how projects achieved their aims**. The final evaluation complements the mid-term evaluation of the Programme reflecting also the changed environment for cooperation (increased use of digital tools in cooperation).

Results of the evaluation will provide important conclusions on the Programme impacts and successful approaches in the projects at the completion of the period (2014-2020). Thus, the results of the final evaluation will also provide valuable information to be considered as **lessons learnt in view of the new Programme (2021-2027)**.

In addition, the evaluation will serve as **evidence for the European Commission** when planning future policies for European territorial cooperation.

3.2 References

The final evaluation is part of the legal requirement laid out **in the Common Provision Regulation (EU) 1303/2013¹** (Art. 114): “By 31 December 2022, managing authorities shall submit to the Commission, for each operational programme, a report summarising the findings of evaluations carried out during the programming period and the main outputs and results of the operational programme, providing comments on the reported information.” The final impact evaluation shall feed into the European Commission’s ex-post evaluation (EU) 1303/2013 (Art. 57).

According to Article 54(1) of the aforementioned Regulation, the evaluations shall help to “improve the quality of the design and implementation of programmes, as well as to assess their effectiveness, efficiency and impact.”

The 2014-2020 Programme has already been evaluated, at the mid-point of its implementation. The **mid-term Programme evaluation** was carried out in 2018, reflecting the Evaluation Plan of the Programme.

The final Programme evaluation is due in 2022, following the end of most of the projects’ implementation. The final Programme evaluation is, understood as complementary to the mid-term evaluation. It should follow- up on recommendations thereby included, not re-assess what was already assessed, but rather complement making a point at the end of implementation and in view of the new Programme.

- Please get familiar with the mid-term Programme evaluation, accessible at: <https://interreg-baltic.eu/all/mid-term-evaluation-accomplished-strong-benefits-of-interreg-participation-2/>

¹ Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.



The Monitoring Committee of Interreg Baltic Sea Region decided on the thematic scope of the final Programme evaluation, on the timeline of the procurement procedure and of the evaluation work to be carried out as well as on the allocated budget. Details are provided in the sections further below and in the annexes to these Terms of Reference:

- Annex 1: Cost calculation sheet
- Annex 2: Assessment matrix
- Annex 3: Self-declaration MiLoG
- Annex 4: Declaration of Subcontractors
- Annex 5: DSGVO Datenschutzhinweis

The impact evaluation is to be conducted by external evaluators, supported by the Programme management bodies.

4. SCOPE AND TASKS

The final Programme evaluation shall entail two core tasks:

1. Monitoring and updating result indicator values
2. Evaluating the Programme impact and the ways how projects achieved their aims

The questions, which shall be addressed by the final Programme evaluation, are outlined further below. The evaluator is requested to analyse and complement the following list, by submitting a proposal on the methodology in the tender. As part of the evaluation, the topic of each agreed question shall be analysed and assessed; conclusions and recommendations shall be drawn for each.

1. Monitoring result indicator values: final update

In order to monitor the state of institutional capacity in the region throughout the Programme period, qualitative baselines (for 2018 and 2020) and target values (for 2023) were set for indicators of Programme results, in accordance with the Regulation (EU) 1303/2013 (Art. 2(b)).

The purpose of monitoring the indicator values is to capture any changes in the region in institutional capacity of the target groups for each of the Programme’s specific objective in priorities 1-3.

A monitoring was already carried out in 2018, with the mid-term Programme evaluation, another monitoring was completed in 2020 and a final one update is now requested within the scope of the Programme final evaluation. The values of the result indicators shall be collected in the context of this final evaluation **in order to conclude on the achievement of the Programme’s targets**. The Programme will include these in its final report to the European Commission in 2023.

The table below lists the result indicators, further details are to be found in the 2014-2020 Programme document, as well as in the indicators updates carried out in 2018 and 2020.

<i>Result indicators</i>	
1.1	Capacity of research and innovation infrastructures in the Programme area to implement measures to increase the market uptake of innovation
1.2	Capacity of innovation actors (innovation intermediaries, authorities, research institutions, enterprises) in the Programme area to implement smart specialisation strategies



1.3	Capacity of innovation actors (innovation intermediaries, authorities, research institutions, enterprises) in the Programme area to implement measures to increase uptake of non-technological innovation
2.1	Capacity of public authorities/practitioners (from water management, agricultural, forestry, fisheries etc. sectors) in the Programme area to implement measures to reduce nutrient inflows and decrease discharges of hazardous substances
2.2	Capacity of public/private actors in energy planning and supply (authorities, agencies, enterprises, NGOs in energy, waste, forestry and agricultural sector) in the Programme area to implement measures to increase the use of sustainable renewable energy
2.3	Capacity of public and private actors involved in energy planning (public authorities, energy agencies, enterprises, NGOs) in the Programme area to implement measures to increase energy efficiency
2.4	Capacity of public authorities, enterprises, and NGOs in the Programme area to implement measures to advance sustainable business opportunities for blue growth
3.1	Capacity of public and private transport actors (public authorities, logistic and transport operators, ports, intergovernmental and research org.) in the Programme area to implement measures increasing interoperability between transport modes and systems
3.2	Capacity of public / private transport actors (public authorities, logistic and transport operators) in the Programme area to implement economically efficient solutions to improve the accessibility of remote regions/regions affected by demographic change
3.3	Capacity of maritime actors (maritime admin., rescue services, authorities, shipping operators, ports, research and intergovernmental org.) in the Programme area to implement measures to increase maritime safety and security
3.4	Capacity of maritime actors (maritime admin., rescue services, authorities, shipping operators, ports, research and intergovernmental org.) in the Programme area to implement measures to reduce negative effects of shipping on the marine environment
3.5	Capacity of urban transport actors (public authorities, ports, infrastructure providers and operators) in the Programme area to implement environmentally friendly transport solutions in urban areas

Table 1: The list of result indicators for Priorities 1-3

For monitoring the institutional capacity in the region, five dimensions of institutional capacity have been defined:

- i. Enhanced institutionalised knowledge and competence;
- ii. Improved governance structures and organisational set-up;
- iii. More efficient use of human and technical resources (databases, technical solutions, small infrastructure etc.);
- iv. Better ability to attract new financial resources; and
- v. Increased capability to work in transnational environment.



Furthermore, qualitative baseline and target values for result indicators were set according to a five-point scale, in order to ensure comparability of results over the course of the funding period. The scale ranges from ‘no capacity’ (1) to ‘full capacity’ (5). In order to define baselines and targets, a wide range of thematic experts of the Baltic Sea region were involved. The experts represented the thematic fields and participating countries in the Programme. They were identified by the MC and were familiar with the target group(s) in their country and their thematic field without being directly involved in funded projects. The baseline and target values for the indicators were based on online surveys for the experts, supplemented by interviews to reflect on the results of the survey and fill remaining gaps. The same methodology should be applied also in the final monitoring of the indicators.

- See Final report analysis of projects in 2007-2013 and setting baselines and targets for the indicators 2014-2020 accessible at: https://interreg-baltic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2015.07.Final_report_Strategic_Evaluation_by_RMC.pdf

Please consider also the updates to the methodology discussed in the monitoring report 2020.

- Please refer to “Interreg Baltic Sea Region Monitoring of the state of institutional capacity in the region – update 2020 final report”, to the chapter “1.3 Methodology used for the 2020 update” describing the methodology and to chapter “1.5 Recommendations to optimise the methodology and the analysis”), accessible at: https://interreg-baltic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2020.11.05_BSR_StateOfInstitutionalCapacity2020.pdf

For what concern this evaluation task, the final Programme evaluation should serve to assess:

- **Whether target values for result indicators were achieved**
- If certain target values were not achieved, and **why**

2. Evaluating the Programme impact

The task of evaluating the Programme impact and the ways how projects achieved their aims entails **four tasks**:

- 2.1 The process of institutional capacity building under priorities 1-3
- 2.2 The influence of the type of territory on projects
- 2.3 The impact of project platforms
- 2.4. The impact of the change to online cooperation in the projects

2.1 The process of institutional capacity building under priorities 1-3

While each specific objective under priorities 1-3 is thematically different and may involve different stakeholders, they all include at their core the objective to improve institutional capacity to tackle the challenges in the region. The Programme’s intervention logic is illustrated in Figure 1: it presents the basic chain of steps through which the Programme is expected to contribute to a change in regional development. This logic is applicable to each of the specific objectives of the Programme priorities 1-3.

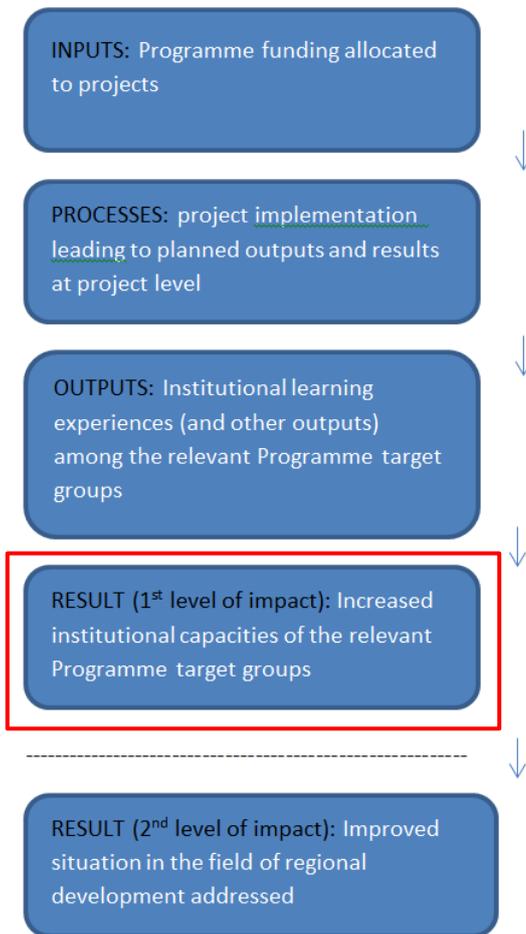


Figure 1: The intervention logic underpinning priorities 1-3

In the mid-term Programme evaluation in 2018, the impact of projects in reaching the Programme’s specific objectives under priorities 1-3 was evaluated with the focus on how the Programme interventions affected the relevant target groups and whether the project outputs and results led to institutional learning experiences among the relevant target groups. The evaluators found the generation and adoption of new knowledge to be the main benefit from the participation in Interreg projects. Now the objective of the final evaluation is to analyse **how** projects in Programme priorities 1-3 have increased institutional capacities of the relevant Programme target groups through the produced outputs and joint learning experiences.

The final Programme evaluation should find out:

- Which were the **success factors** maximising the institutional capacity building process within the project partner organisations and among target groups outside the project partnership? Which were the **hindrances** setting challenges to the institutional capacity building process? Which **type/s of activities supported** the learning process to develop into institutional capacities?
- **How** were the results of **pilot activities** in specific locations generalised and transferred? How did the transfer and uptake work in locations other than the one where pilot activities were implemented?
- Did **different types of organisations** have **different roles** in the capacity building process and in the generalisation and transfer of results from pilot activities?



2.2 The influence of the type of territory on projects

The evaluation should bring further understanding about where the project partners are located and whether this affects the project topics and activities. The specificities of the countries in the Baltic Sea Region, in terms of administrative territorial structures, should be taken into account.

This evaluation task aims in particular to assess the following:

- What is the **share of project partners located** in rather economically stronger metropolitan and other **central areas**, and what is the share of project partners located in economically weaker **rural areas**? Are there **white spots**, meaning territories which are not involved or targeted in projects. What could be the **reasons for eventual uneven participation** from different types of territories?
- Did territoriality (location of project partners) **impact on the topics** and activities in projects?
- Which were the **success factors** in involving economically weaker rural areas in the projects?

The geocoded database with NUTS-IDs and urban-rural classification will be provided by the MA/JS.

2.3 The impact of project platforms

Project platforms were a new type of projects in the context of the 2014-2020 Programme as mentioned above.

The final Programme evaluation should serve to assess this particular type of projects, compared to single (regular) projects:

- **How** did the **capacity building process** work through the platforms? Did project platforms help to reach further organisations beyond the ones of the single projects involved in the project platform? **How** did project platforms **reach beyond** the organisations of the **partnerships**?
- **What** was the **role of public authorities** in project platforms' implementation? How could their role be strengthened?
- **How successful** were project platforms in **influencing policy changes** (e.g. new/amended policy documents, strategies, initiated new legislation, changes in the procedures) e.g. with reference to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region?
- What was the **added value of project platforms** in bringing together projects **from different funding sources** (e.g. Interreg programmes, BONUS, Connecting Europe Facility, Horizon Programme)?

2.4 The impacts of the change to online cooperation in the projects

The shift to intensive use of digital tools and online cooperation within the project partnerships was one of the consequences of the covid19 pandemic. The shift was a major factor in 2014-2020 Programme implementation and it is expected that digital tools and online cooperation will play a major role in the projects of the future Programme as well. Therefore, the impacts of this shift should be evaluated. The impacts of the pandemic as such should not be part of the evaluation, but the evaluation should focus on the impacts of the switch to digital tools and online cooperation replacing and complementing instead travelling and face to face-to-face meetings.

This evaluation task should therefore serve to assess:

- What was the impact of the shift to digital tools and online mode of cooperation **on the cooperation among project partners**? **How** did the online cooperation within the partnership work? What were the core **impacts, challenges**, but also **advantages** for the project partnership?





- **What was the impact of the “online-shift” on the capacity building process**, including the **piloting activities** in the projects? Can some recurrent pattern of impacts be identified?
- Which changes due to the “online-shift” turned out as successful, advantageous for projects and could be considered as **good practices to keep in the future**?

5. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluator shall select the methodology that he/she considers the **most appropriate in achieving the aim of the evaluation and its tasks**. The methodology shall reflect existing information sources, the need to search for additional information as well as the scope of the planned interventions. An overview of the intended methods and techniques of the evaluation, including the planning and structuring of the evaluation, conducting interviews and surveys, and data collection and analysis of the information shall be provided in the submitted tender.

The proposed methodology mix should consist of both **desk-based research** and **interviews** with relevant stakeholders. Targeted interviews are considered important and should include representatives of the Programme management bodies, lead partners and project partners, end users and/or multipliers of project outcomes, coordinators of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region among others.

Furthermore, the evaluator is requested to conduct **case studies**, to assess the questions listed in chapter 4, above. For what concerns case studies, the evaluation methodology should reflect the following requirements:

- *For the task 2.1 of evaluation of “The process of institutional capacity building under priorities 1-3”:*

10 to 12 case studies should be selected.

In the selection of case studies, due consideration should be given to the specific objectives, which were not investigated within the framework of the mid-term impact evaluation (2.2 Renewable energy, 3.3 Maritime safety, 3.5 Environmentally friendly urban mobility), and in addition to further specific objectives relevant in the view of the thematic focus of the new Programme (1.3 Non-technological innovation, 2.1 Clear waters, 2.3 Energy efficiency, 2.4 Resource-efficient blue growth, 3.4 Shipping). In the selection of case studies priority should be given to projects which had pilot activities.

- *For the task 2.2 of evaluation of “The influence of the type of territory on projects”:*

2 to 3 selected case studies should be selected.

The selection of projects and partners for the case studies should pay due regard to all the countries participating in the Programme. Priority should be given to areas not often involved in Interreg Baltic Sea Region projects and to projects with pilot activities.

- *For the task 2.3 of evaluation of “The impact of project platforms”:*

4 to 5 case studies should be selected.

- *For the task 2.4 of evaluation of “The impact of the change to online cooperation in the projects”:*

8 to 10 case studies should be selected.

As far as possible it is recommended to use the same project cases for different evaluation tasks. The MA/JS should be consulted on the selection of the case studies.

The evaluator shall describe the methodology including the envisaged format of presenting the results in detail in an inception report.



As part of the evaluation (not at the stage of the tender submission), the evaluator is requested to provide:

- All **“raw” data collected**, in compiled and ordered format, which allows for further research and use by the MA/JS as well as by the countries participating in the Programme. The source of data should also be duly tracked and provided to the MA/JS with the data.
- The **evaluation itself** (the analysis and report which the evaluator will produce, as based on the collected data, in order to fulfil the evaluation tasks described above).

The evaluation **text** shall be complemented, for each evaluation task, by **tables, diagrams, charts, maps and other graphic visualisation** (as most appropriate to the specific content of the specific evaluation task), which should serve to depict in a more comprehensive, concise and easier to understand way the content of the evaluation and which the MA/JS could use for communication purposes.

6. INFORMATION AND DATA SOURCES

The **existing** key sources, which the evaluator shall refer to, are the following:

- 2014-2020 Cooperation Programme of Interreg Baltic Sea Region (Programme document: https://interreg-baltic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/BSR_Cooperation_Programme.pdf)
- 2021-2027 Cooperation Programme of Interreg Baltic Sea Region (Programme document: https://interreg-baltic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Programme_snapshot_2021TC16FFTNO03_1.0_en-with-disclaimer.pdf ; Information on priorities and objectives: <https://interreg-baltic.eu/get-funding/programme-2021-2027/>)
- Evaluation Plan of Interreg Baltic Sea Region (https://interreg-baltic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2016.02.29_Complete-Evaluation-plan_v.2.0.pdf)
- Definition of indicators and action plan for setting baselines and targets of Interreg Baltic Sea Region (<https://interreg-baltic.eu/definition-of-indicators-and-action-plan-of-interreg-baltic-sea-region/>)
- Interreg Baltic Sea Region Monitoring of the state of institutional capacity in the region – update 2020 final report Final Report (https://interreg-baltic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2020.11.05_BSR_StateOfInstitutionalCapacity2020.pdf)
- Analysis of projects in 2007-2013 and setting baselines and targets for the indicators 2014-2020 (https://interreg-baltic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2015.07.Final_report_Strategic_Evaluation_by_RMC.pdf)
- 2019 and 2020 Annual Implementation Reports of Interreg Baltic Sea Region (for 2019: <https://interreg-baltic.eu/2019-annual-implementation-report/> ; for 2020: <https://interreg-baltic.eu/2020-annual-implementation-report/>)
- Mid-term evaluation report of Interreg Baltic Sea Region (https://interreg-baltic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2018.12.20_FINAL_BSR_midtermevaluation_finalreport.pdf)

Additional documents, quantitative and qualitative data such as progress reports of projects and contacts to key stakeholders will be provided to the evaluator by the MA/JS wherever possible and necessary for the fulfilment of the tasks described above.

Other Programme documents and relevant information can be found on the Programme website at <https://www.interreg-baltic.eu>.

The Programme’s project library, where information about projects can be found, is available at: <https://www.projects.interreg-baltic.eu>.

Information about the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is available at: <https://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/>



In addition to the existing data and sources, as listed above, **the evaluator is requested to collect additional information and data in order to be able to fulfil the evaluation tasks.**

The evaluator is requested to observe **confidentiality** when dealing with the information and data referred to above.

7. TIMELINE AND DELIVERABLES

Timeline ²	Stage / Deliverable
15 March 2022	Deadline for tenders submission
March-April 2022	Assessment of submitted tenders and Selection of evaluator
April-May 2022	Contracting of evaluator
May 2022	Initial meeting between the evaluator and the MA/JS Inception report including work plan and start of evaluation activities
September 2022	Draft evaluation report including the update of result indicators
November 2022	Presentation of draft evaluation report to MC
December 2022	Final evaluation report

The draft evaluation report, final evaluation report and the update of result indicator values shall include at least the following information:

- An **executive summary** of conclusions and recommendations;
- A short description of the **methodology**, outlining the approach of the evaluators, including a description of the original research undertaken as well as the sources of data and information. The description shall include a statement of the evaluator’s assessment of **strengths and weaknesses** of the evaluation report and any specific difficulties encountered;
- **Results**, followed by **conclusions and recommendations** for improvement, **for each of the evaluation tasks**;
- Bibliography, data sources, list of interviewees; and
- Other relevant attachments (e.g. maps reflecting on results).

According to Article 54(4) of the 2014-2020 Common Provision Regulation (EU) 1303/2013) all evaluations shall be made public in their entirety.

The evaluator shall be prepared for the following exchange with the MA/JS and the Monitoring Committee of the Programme:

- Regular online exchange between the evaluator and the MA/JS;
- An online kick-off meeting with the MA/JS and members of the Monitoring Committee to finetune the evaluation questions and approach;
- up to three ad hoc meetings between the evaluator and the MA/JS, to be defined whether online or at the MA/JS premises (in Rostock, Germany);
- one presentation at a meeting with the MC.

These must be taken into account in the evaluator’s budget and thereby specified.

² The dates will be specified in the contract between the Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein and the evaluator.



The contractor shall provide reports and presentation as agreed. All texts shall be prepared in English language. The evaluator is requested to ensure that the final deliverables, which he/she will submit to the MA/JS, have been copyedited and proofread by a mother-tongue professional proof-reader. This must be taken into account in the evaluator's budget and thereby specified.

8. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The evaluation is expected to be undertaken by a team composed of evaluators with proven experience of evaluating transnational and/or cross-border EU cooperation Programmes and/or nationally based EU regional development Programmes. In addition, there is an expectation of knowledge of regional development policies and strategies in the Baltic Sea region, of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the Europe 2020 Strategy, and of other EU funded Programmes in the region.

The MA/JS will select the offers, based on the criteria defined in section 10.3 of the Terms of Reference and with the endorsement by the Monitoring Committee. The MC will be consulted regularly during the external evaluation, for instance when finetuning the evaluation questions, approving evaluation results and agreeing on follow-up measures. All final decisions regarding the evaluation are taken by the Monitoring Committee.

The MA/JS is the main contact for the evaluator and will channel the flow of information between the Monitoring Committee and the external evaluator. There shall be an interactive cooperation and continuous information flow at all times between the external evaluator, the MA/JS and the MC throughout the whole evaluation period.

9. CONTRACTING, BUDGET, PAYMENT AND COPYRIGHT

9.1 Contracting

Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein (IB.SH), acting as MA/JS, is responsible for arranging the call for tender to carry out the strategic evaluation of the Programme. Therefore, IB.SH will be the contracting party. It is a public entity and located in Kiel, Germany.

Following the selection of the tender by the MA/JS and the endorsement by the MC, a contract will be concluded between IB.SH and the selected evaluator. The evaluation cannot be started until the contract is signed by both parties. The content of the contract is based on the mutual understanding of the parties concerned and according to the approved tender. If sub-contracting is involved, the contract must include the division of tasks and related responsibilities of each evaluator/sub-evaluator.

The contract is planned to be signed in April-May 2022.

9.2 Indicative budget

The maximum budget for the Final Programme evaluation is **EUR 98,000 (excl. VAT)**. **Offers must not exceed this budget threshold.**

This budget shall not include taxes for which the contractor may become liable, and the VAT liability for the service to be provided. The latter will have to be paid by the Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein or the contractor itself depending on the location of the contractor (outside/in Germany).

A detailed calculation of the planned tasks, related costs and calculated working days is expected in order to allow for a thorough assessment of the respective tender (see section 10).



The budget shall cover all costs of the overall evaluation process, including necessary travel costs to meetings with the MA/JS and the MC (as described in section 7) and additional working days for the revision of the final evaluation reports until their approval by the Monitoring Committee.

9.3 Payment

The payment scheme is as follows:

1. Initial payment upon MA/JS approval of inception report (20% of the total budget)
2. Interim payment upon MA/JS approval of the update of result indicators values (the budget planned for task 1)
3. Interim payment upon MA/JS approval of draft evaluation report (max. 60% of the budget planned for tasks 2.1-2.4)
4. Final payment upon MC approval of final evaluation report (final balance of costs for tasks 2.1-2.4 minus initial payment)

9.4 Copyright

After the approval of the final evaluation report by the Monitoring Committee, the ownership rights on the report including all visualisation shall be transferred to the MA/JS and the results and reports will be made public according to the Common Provision Regulation (EU) 1303/2013 (Art. 54(4)) and distributed to key stakeholders of the Programme. In the published evaluation materials, the evaluator organisation and involved experts will be clearly mentioned.

10. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

10.1 Structure of proposals

Tenders shall set out:

- The evaluator's name, address, telephone, e-mail address, website;
- Legal status of the evaluator (individual or company);
- Curriculum vitae of each experts who will effectively conduct the evaluation including their previous relevant experience, their language skills and their specific roles in this evaluation; Description of the tasks to be carried out. Tenders have to cover all tasks defined under the terms of reference. No alternative offers are permissible. Offers on selected lots will not be accepted;
- The methodology and work plan proposed to carry out the evaluation tasks;
- Breakdown of the total price (see compulsory template: Annex 1 Cost calculation sheet).

The tender shall also include statements or information on the following:

- Signed self-declaration MiLoG (see Annex 3)
- Signed declaration of subcontractors (see Annex 4)
- that there is no negative entry into the commercial central register on its company
- that the schedule of tasks and deadlines will be met and that human resources will be made available in sufficient capacity.

Information and data received through the tenders will be treated in compliance with the "Datenschutz-Grundverordnung" (DSGVO) (meaning, General Data Protection Regulation under German law). Please refer to Annex 5 for more information on data protection in the framework of the present tender procedure.



The tender shall state whether the evaluator intends to engage sub-contractors to carry out parts of the evaluation. In this case, the main contractor, as well as the division of tasks and responsibilities between the main and the sub-contractors must be clearly identified in the offer. The contract with the Managing Authority will only be signed by the main contractor.

The Programme language is English. Therefore, all tender documents, evaluation reports and presentations must be in English only.

Incomplete offers or offers not in English will be excluded from the selection procedure.

10.2 Deadline

The tender shall be submitted in electronic version no later than **15/03/2022** (date of sending) to Interreg Baltic Sea Region at the following addresses: programme.management@interreg-baltic.eu. **Tenders not in electronic version or submitted after the deadline will be excluded from the selection procedure.**

10.3 Selection criteria and further legal/technical requirements

The proposal shall reflect the following requirements that are used as selection criteria:

1. Completeness of the tender:

- tender proposal including the evaluation methodology, the evaluation tools and the implementation schedule;
- cv of experts involved in the evaluation;
- description of tasks of expert involved;
- Annex 1 Cost calculation sheet;
- Annex 3 Self-declaration MiLoG;
- Annex 4 Declaration of subcontractors;
- statement on no negative entry into commercial central register;
- statement on meeting schedule of tasks and on sufficient human resources);

2. Technical and content quality:

- qualification of the experts (proven experience of evaluating transnational and/or cross-border EU co-operation Programmes and/or evaluation of nationally based EU regional development Programmes; knowledge of regional development policies and strategies in the Baltic Sea region, of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the Europe 2020 Strategy, and of other EU funded Programmes in the region)
- proposal content (tender proposal reflecting the evaluation questions listed in section 4 of this document and how to address them, including a sound evaluation methodology, suitable evaluation tools and implementation schedule);

3. Economic efficiency (value for money of the tender proposal).

Submitted proposals will be assessed against the criteria given above. Criterion 1 (“completeness of the tender”) applies as exclusion criteria: tender proposals which are incomplete will not be assessed and excluded from the tender procedure. Criterion 2 and 3 will be given scores: a maximum score of 60 for Criterion 2 (out of which 20 scores for the “qualification of the experts” and 40 scores for the “proposal content”); a maximum score of 40 for the Criterion 3 (“economic efficiency”). Annex 2 is the Assessment Matrix, which will be filled out at the time of assessing the tenders.

The MA/JS will select the offers, based on the criteria listed above and with the endorsement by the Monitoring Committee. The bidding evaluators will be consulted if minor clarifications of their tenders are needed. However, the written tender submitted by the deadline cannot be modified anymore.





In addition to the selection criteria mentioned above the following legal and technical aspects will be taken into account during the assessment. The evaluator as well as sub-contractors must be independent of those institutions responsible for the management or implementation of the Programme, including Monitoring Committee, Managing Authority and Joint Secretariat, Certifying Authority and Audit Authority. Independency statements need to be provided accordingly. If tendering institutions/companies are in any way involved in project or Programme-related activities, this must be clearly described and stated as well. If detected later on, the tender will be disqualified and/or the contract annulled.

10.4 Opportunity for clarification

Should a need for clarification or interpretation arise, the evaluator is asked to contact Laura Ligazzolo and Eeva Rantama at the MA/JS via email (programme.management@interreg-baltic.eu) no later than **01/03/2022**. In the interests of transparency and non-discrimination, all questions received will be anonymised and publicly answered on the Programme website as soon as possible. Inquiries by phone will not be answered.

Offers submitted shall remain valid until 30.06.2022.

The “general terms and conditions” of the bidding companies do not apply.

The submission of alternative tenders and negotiations of the service description (ToR) and prices is not permitted.

*Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein, Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat of Interreg Baltic Sea Region
Kiel, 15/03/2022*