



## Call for tender

CEMR-EPSU joint project “Localising the European Semester”

### About CEMR

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is the broadest organisation of local and regional authorities in Europe. Its members are over 60 national associations of municipalities and regions from 42 European countries. Together these associations represent some 150 000 local and regional authorities. CEMR’s objectives are twofold: to influence European legislation on behalf of local and regional authorities and to provide a platform for exchange of information and knowledge between its member associations and their elected officials and experts.

### How to apply

For a full description of the tender, please consult the Tender Specifications below. If you wish to express your interest, please submit a tender electronically not later than 12 January 2018 (close of business) to the following email address: [application@ccre-cemr.org](mailto:application@ccre-cemr.org).

For further information, please contact: Leonardo Ebner (Policy officer, Employment and public services, CEMR), [leonardo.ebner@ccre-cemr.org](mailto:leonardo.ebner@ccre-cemr.org), + 32 2 213 86 96.

### **1. Tender Specifications for “Localising the European Semester”**

Tender specification to provide background briefing documents and expertise on issues related to the European Semester and particularly the theme of the involvement of local and regional governments as well as European and national social partners in the European Semester yearly cycle.

## **2. Publication of the tender specifications**

Date of publication on the CEMR website: 22/12/2017. In order to ensure a large visibility to this tender, CEMR and EPSU (European Federation of Public Service Unions) will publish it in their web sites. CEMR will keep this tender on line until 12 January 2018 (close of business).

## **3. Language of the tender**

Tenders must be written in English.

## **4. Deadline**

The deadline for the submission of the tender is on 12 January 2018 (close of business).

## **5. Purpose of the Contract**

The work is part of a project supported by the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, under budget line 04.03.01.08, VP/2017/001 "Support for Social Dialogue", introduced by CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and Regions) and its partner EPSU (European Federation of Public Service Unions) in the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee on Local and Regional Governments.

## **6. Background**

The primary aims of the project are to:

- Increase CEMR and EPSU members' awareness about the functioning of the European Semester mechanism;
- Strengthen capacity-building of social partners at national level, in particular in those countries where social dialogue practices are less common and the role of social partners in the national and local policy making need to be more structured and embedded in the national governance procedures;
- Focus on the quality of local public administration, public investment, local finances, procurement and on the three priorities recently highlighted by the European Commission in the Social Scoreboard: equal opportunities and access to the labour

market; dynamic labour markets and fair working conditions; public support, social protection and inclusion;

- Research and assess the extent to which local and regional authorities have been involved in the European Semester so far;
- Identify the gaps and gather best practice examples and case-studies on the involvement of social partners of local and regional government sector;
- Provide for improving data collection to have better evidence and developing monitoring tools;
- Explore new/innovative solutions that could be delivered through social dialogue actions at EU level and practically used nationally and locally;
- Produce recommendations to European and national governments on how local and regional governments can be better involved in the European Semester cycle;
- Assist with the implementation and guide the future work of the Social Dialogue Committee by implementing its Work Programme and providing evidence and recommendations which can be taken up in more detail in future Committee Working Groups.

#### Implementation of the project:

- The project will start with an opening seminar in Namur on 23 March 2018 that will set the scene and will serve to create a 'level playing field' among all participants, so that they can share a common perspective on the objectives of the project and an adequate knowledge of the subject, if needed.
- Three national seminars will follow: they will be organised in Copenhagen, Madrid and Vilnius. In each of these seminars, the national members' organisations of CEMR and EPSU coming from a cluster of Member States, grouped by geographic proximity, will chair and lead the meeting – i.e. Denmark, Sweden and Finland in Copenhagen; Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in Vilnius; Spain, Italy and France in Madrid. Each seminar will be structured as a peer-to-peer workshop where the group of members' representatives chairing the meeting will exchange on good and bad practices as well as on policy recommendations both with the other CEMR and EPSU members' participating in the meeting, but also with national governments representatives and European Commission officials in charge of the European Semester.

- The project will be concluded by a final conference in Bologna that will facilitate the discussion among the participants and relevant interlocutors (e.g. national governments and the European Commission) on the final products of the project: a handbook for social partners of local and regional government sector on their involvement in the European Semester, and a CEMR-EPSU joint declaration on policy recommendations.

## **7. Tasks to be performed by the Contractor**

### **7.1 Description of tasks**

The contractor will gather data and provide analysis to support the work, in the form of:

- a) **One background report** on the involvement of social partners of the local and regional government sector in the European Semester, to be presented at the opening seminar. Such report should present the state of the art on this subject, taking into account existing literature and reports produced by scholars and European institutions and bodies. The background document will:
  - i. Assess policies and actions that promote the involvement of local and regional governments and social partners in the European Semester;
  - ii. Gather evidence regarding the various challenges being faced by local and regional government;
  - iii. Highlight initiatives which are being already implemented by national governments and by EU institutions to involve LRGs in the European Semester process;
  - iv. Analyse problems and/or gaps which the social partners have not yet addressed, but could provide good actions for follow-up of this project within the Social Dialogue Committee;
- b) **Three working documents** to support the exchange during the three national workshops. The external expert will help to prepare each of the three national workshops by drawing up a working document in the form of a short guiding paper in English to facilitate the meeting. The working documents will bring a clear focus for the workshops with key questions to be identified and existing knowledge and case studies to be shared. Each working document will build up on the relevant Country Specific Recommendations issued by the European Commission and on interviews with the national stakeholders involved in the workshops;

- c) **Five short reports** (maximum two pages each) of the discussions taking place during the opening seminar, the three national workshops and the final conference;
- d) **One summary report of the above activities**, to be based on the five short reports, including an introduction on the background report, the main conclusions drawn from the project's events, analysis of the main challenges, and policy recommendations;
- e) **One handbook** on social partners' involvement in the European Semester. The research gathered by the contractor in the previous activities will be used to formulate, in collaboration with the project steering committee, practical guidance to support social partners of the LRGs sector and increase their involvement in the European Semester. The actions and recommendations contained in the handbook will be easily implementable by national social partners and by the European Social Dialogue Committee.

The contractor will be present and active in each of the five proposed events throughout the duration of the project and in the steering group meetings.

The contractor will maintain discussions with the steering group of the project after each workshop, and further develop the papers in line with the steering group members' expectations.

## **7.2 Guidance and indications on tasks execution and methodology**

The work will include mostly desk-based research and interviews. Flexibility is required, as the contractor will be expected to be present during all workshops throughout this project. The contractor will carry out a comprehensive review of the relevant literature and the most recent developments concerning the European Semester and the involvement of social partners in its yearly cycle. Moreover, the contractor will also conduct interviews with stakeholders (representatives of national social partners' organisations, European institutions and national governments) that will be involved in the project's events. The number of interviews will be determined together with the Steering group members.

A steering group made up of the CEMR and EPSU secretariats and elected chairs of this Social Dialogue Committee of the local and regional government administration will oversee the implementation of the project.

## **8. Expertise required**

The contractor would be expected to demonstrate:

- a) Experience of working with social partners, European institutions and bodies, and national governments;
- b) Capacity to work in a multilingual setting and to collect information for the case studies in particular in different languages;
- c) Demonstrate a high-level of research skills, preferably with a focus on the local and regional government sector.

## **9. Time schedule and reporting**

<b>Start date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Type of event</b>
January 2018	Brussels	1st Steering group meeting
End of February 2018	Brussels	Delivery background report
23 March 2018	Namur	Opening seminar
June 2018	Brussels	2nd Steering group
October 2018	Copenhagen	1st national workshop
February 2019	Madrid	2nd national workshop
October 2019	Vilnius	3rd national workshop
January 2020	Brussels	3rd Steering group meeting
January 2020	Bologna	Final conference

## **10. Payments and standard contract**

The contract will be drawn up between CEMR and the contractor upon the selection of the candidate. The payment will be in several phases: initial payment of 20% upon signing of the contract; 20% on presentation of the background paper in February 2018 and acceptance by CEMR; 10% for each of the three working documents and acceptance by CEMR for each document, and 30% upon completion and presentation of the final report (including the five short reports) and the handbook and final acceptance by CEMR.

The travel and accommodation expenses for the contractor to attend the project conferences will be covered by the overall travel and accommodation budget of the project. The project only covers real costs that are justified by original receipts and proofs of payments. However, the contractor shall foresee in its own budget travel and accommodation costs for the participation to the three Steering group meetings to be held in Brussels.

### **11. Price**

The estimated price for the above described activities, including travel and accommodation costs for participation to Steering group meetings, is € 24.000, all taxes included.

### **12. Selection criteria**

The contractor will be expected to demonstrate the expertise as listed in section 8 of the present document.

### **13. Award criteria**

The contract will be awarded to the tenderer whose offer represents the best value for money, taking into account the above criteria. It should be noted that the contract will only be awarded to a tenderer who clearly proves that their experience and knowledge match at least two out of the three criteria listed in section 8 above.

### **14. Content of the bids**

The tenderer will ensure that their bid clearly identifies how they meet the selection criteria, ideally by indicating their knowledge and expertise under each of the relevant headings.

The tenderer will provide information about the capacity to carry out the work under this contract. Tenderers will provide with their offer:

- a) A cover letter containing the following information: organisation name/name of the tenderer if self-employed, contact person and contact details, the VAT number (if applicable), and the registration number;
- b) Detailed curriculum vitae (CV), including educational background, degrees, diplomas and professional experience;
- c) A list of relevant services provided in the past two years with the dates and recipients provided as well;

- d) A technical section that encompass all aspects required in section 7 “Tasks to be performed by the Contractor” and present in a concise manner, in no more than three pages, the methodology to deliver each of the above described tasks, meet the expected results and the foreseen deadlines;
- e) A financial proposal: the price must be quoted in euros including VAT and covering all expenses, such as travel expenses and daily allowances. Prices will be fixed and not subject to revision during the performance of the contract.

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