# Call for tenders

# EXTRACT OF Terms of reference

## ESPON Targeted Analysis

## "The role of digital helpers in reducing digital inequalities (DHAK)"

# Technical and administrative
# Terms and conditions

# Key Information on the Procurement

| | |
|---|---|
| **Title** | DHAK – "The role of digital helpers in reducing digital inequalities" |
| **Procedure** | EU Open |
| **Contracting authority** | ESPON EGTC<br>11, Avenue John F. Kennedy L-1855 Luxembourg<br>Grand Duchy of Luxembourg |
| **Type of contract** | Service contract |
| **Duration** | 15 months (12 months for contract implementation + 3 months for administrative closure) |
| **Maximum available budget** | EUR 250.000,00 (excluding VAT) |
| **Place of delivery** | Luxembourg |
| **Lots** | This tender is not divided into lots |
| **Variants** | Not permitted |
| **Market access** | Participation in this tender is open to all economic operators established in the European Union, the European Economic Area and third countries signatories to international agreements in the field of public procurement by which the EU is bound |
| **Tender submission method** | Electronic submission via the<br>Luxembourg Public Procurement Portal ([www.pmp.lu](http://www.pmp.lu)) |
| **Deadline for sending requests for information**<br>And/or reporting errors, omissions, ambiguities, or discrepancies | 26 September 2024 at 10h59 CET |
| **Deadline for submission of tenders** | **03 October 2024 at 11h00 CET** |

# Table of contents

# 1   What is to be done? (Purpose of the contract)

The ESPON EGTC is launching an open call for tenders to further build up ESPON's stock of research and enhance the European territorial evidence production in the framework of the [ESPON 2030 Programme](). This call for tenders shall result in a targeted analysis project being implemented within the framework of the [Thematic Action Plan (TAP) "Smart Connectivity"](). ESPON's [Targeted Analysis]() is a specific type of project which is exclusively driven by the stakeholders needs which are taken up by the ESPON EGTC via a dedicated evidence production activity.

The geographical focus of the project is on the [Bordeaux metropolitan area]() (France) and the [City of Brussels]() (Belgium). This targeted analysis aims to produce territorial evidence and understanding of the profiles of "digital helpers", their incentives, needs and constraints, aiming to provide an input for elaborating a new public policy that would support digital helpers in Bordeaux metropolitan area and the City of Brussels.

## 1.1   Context

In the Bordeaux metropolitan area and the City of Brussels digital divide has been pinpointed as an alarming consequence of the digital transition processes, affecting, for instance, access to basic public and private services, which are both increasingly being dematerialised. In fact, all political levels share the conviction that the digital divide is a crucial issue due to its resonance in multiple economic, societal and political dimensions (such as citizen participation, access to services, economic opportunities and purchasing power, employability and job search).

At the same time, most public policies have assumed, implicitly or explicitly, that the digital divide was a transitory situation linked to the population born before the digital era, and that the generational renewal could "solve the problem". However, this assumption appears to be false, and a number of studies show that digital divide is multidimensional, multi-factorial, reinforced with age, but affects the entire population, including the young people and the working population.

For several years, both cities have been taking proactive public action, to address the lack of digital skills or obstacles in using digital technologies. However, the methods rely still mainly on a classic model of action: multimedia animators and mediators, based in permanent locations; social and digital workers placed at reception desks in public administration institutions.

Alongside these policies, there is a very strong presumption at the public administration in the above-mentioned cities that there is an unexplored potential for contributing to the reduction of digital inequalities: support from helpers (family, neighbours, friends, colleagues, etc.) via digital solidarity, organized more or less spontaneously by citizens themselves.

In order to elaborate a new public policy on digital technology that contributes in supporting the spontaneous action of digital helpers, there is a need to better understand their profiles, their incentives, their needs and their constraints. It is obvious that this massive, generous, spontaneous workforce will not be available or willing to be enrolled, most of the time, in heavy projects or in structured non-for-profit associations. Digital helpers need to be acknowledged and supported where they are, in a reactive and agile fashion which supposes a specific philosophy of action and lightweight tools.

The issue of digital helpers being regarded as an important force in addressing digital inequalities is by no means a novelty in the policy discourse. Bordeaux Metropole and the City of Brussels have been very active in the Digital Forum of Eurocities, Bordeaux Metropole is co-chairman of the Digital forum since 2023. The [Eurocities Digital Forum 2024]() made a clear statement that digital helpers deserve recognition in the context of digital inclusion, as evidence of their activities can be seen across various European cities like Rotterdam, Ghent, Glasgow, etc.

More concretely, the [2023 Bordeaux metropolitan area survey on digital inequalities]() revealed that nearly 75% of all residents help their relatives with digital technology (regularly or occasionally).

In addition, in 2022 Bordeaux Metropole proposed creation of a Task Force within Eurocities which is actively examining the issue of digital divide and also the role of digital helpers[1]. Whilst there is a proactive action at the public administration level, academic research on the topic is almost non-existent with an exception of a few examples.[2] Thus, this targeted analysis also provides an opportunity to have a breakthrough in terms of acquiring comprehensive scientific understanding on digital helpers, especially from the perspective of spatial planning and territorial development.

## Stakeholders' context

Bordeaux Metropole is a public entity for intercommunal cooperation (EPCI, 28 municipalities) involved in the daily life of its inhabitants. Bordeaux Metropole is driving strategic and cross-cutting orientations for all of the public policies that have been put in place in order to meet its ambitions: to be a Metropolis of proximity, solidarity and ecology.

More specifically, the Metropolis has a Digital Department composed of more than 300 agents divided into 4 deputy departments. Bordeaux Metropole has adopted 7 shared digital orientations:

- A policy of solidarity to fight against the digital divide
- Citizens at the heart of useful, usable and used e-services
- Responsible digital development
- Data governance, a major strategic issue
- Connected cities for attractiveness, efficiency and ecological transition
- Digital transformation of public services
- A secure, resilient and sovereign digital environment.

Every year, Bordeaux Metropole reviews its digital inclusion policy as part of the budget preparation for the following year. Currently, a considerable part of the actions concerns the **financing and coordination:**

- Of **staff** providing interventions and training in proximity to the inhabitants, and the financing of the training of these professionals and social workers (Training "SESAME" of the digital solidarity resource center).
- The **Metropolitan Observatory of Digital Inequalities,** which makes it possible to identify people with digital difficulties and to pinpoint the socio-demographic trends of the digital divide in the metropolitan area.
- **Useful tools** for the knowledge and cooperation of local actors, such as the Metropolitan Guide to Resource Places, which annually lists local social and digital inclusion structures.

The City of Brussels is a public entity that counts more than 190.000 inhabitants over 32.6km². It is the largest of the 19 communes of the Brussels-Capital Region.

Within its "Strategy and digital transformation" department, the Smart City unit is the one that would take part in this project. This unit works on smart and innovative solutions such as the deployment of its first

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[1] See: https://living-in.eu/news/who-are-digital-helpers-your-city

[2] See: *Mata, F., and J. Dumoulin. "The New 'Good Samaritans': Digital Helpers During Pandemic Times in Canada." SOCARXIV, March 28, 2021*

*Hunsaker, A., Nguyen, M. H., Fuchs, J., Karaoglu, G., Djukaric, T., & Hargittai, E. (2020). Unsung helpers: older adults as a source of digital media support for their peers. The Communication Review, 23(4), https://doi.org/10.1080/10714421.2020.1829307*

digital twin but also attaches great importance to digital inclusion, ethical and sustainability questions that are intertwined with technological solutions.

In 2023, the City of Brussels launched a [digital rights charter](#) which includes both the commitments that the City wishes to make on this matter and a list of actions to reflect these commitments. This charter is a result of a pilot project within the Cities Coalition for Digital Rights and a separate qualitative study on digital divide ordered by the City that was done by a university for the City of Brussels. Existing initiatives are included to highlight what is already being done at City level. It also sets out new actions to be implemented in order to achieve concrete targets in this area by 2030. With this charter, the City aims to promote a human-centred vision of technology, in which digital tools and innovation can help build a more cohesive, dynamic and inclusive society. The City wishes to protect and promote digital human rights and reduce the digital divide.

## 1.2 **Objective**

The objective of the research is to identify relevant needed actions at the public administration level to support digital helpers (in terms of policy, tools, information, guides etc.) and identify how to create communities of helpers, and better support them in their role, empower them and promote the dissemination of good practices. Digital helpers in the context of this project are persons who act outside of formal and institutionalized frameworks.

More concretely, the project shall deliver new territorial evidence about digital helpers:

- **Identify the phenomena** and the main characteristics of digital helpers.

- **Identify their skills** in line with the [DigComp framework](#) and any other reference grid that could be useful to list social skills, soft skills pertinent with the issue; describe the relation they have with the people they help and the main situations in which they have to provide practical assistance to a third person.

- **Identify the posture** that digital helpers may adopt, the resources they most often lack, and the risks to protect them from, thanks to the collection of typical situations that will be drawn up on the basis of the research results.

Overall, the objective is also to make links to the strategic considerations described in the ESPON **TAP Smart Connectivity**. The research will help to address the described need for identifying digital divides and providing tailored policy recommendations on how to close the digital cohesion gap. In addition, the study will identify obstacles, hindering the uptake of digital solutions and ultimately will provide advice on how to improve access to basic public services via improved digital skills (through digital helpers).

The following questions shall be addressed by this targeted analysis:

- What is the scale and magnitude of the help provided by digital helpers? What are the profiles of digital helpers? How digitally skilled are they?

- To what extent digital helpers are able to reduce digital inequalities and enhance digital cohesion?

- What kind of relevant actions and resources are needed at the public administration level to support digital helpers?

### Stakeholders' envisaged use of the Targeted Analysis

The results of this analysis will be mainly used by stakeholders who declared a partnership under this project in the following way:

Bordeaux Metropolis is committed to taking into account the results of the study on digital helpers by partially modifying the allocation of its resources in order to deploy a new public policy for digital inclusion, specifically focused on supporting, promoting and equipping digital helpers. This policy has not yet been initiated because it requires a good knowledge of the target population (digital helpers) and there is no currently existing study addressing the issue of digital helpers across Europe.

The City of Brussels is committed to take into account as best as possible the conclusions and recommendations of the study on digital helpers in the implementation of its digital rights charter (policy that has a specific chapter dedicated to digital inclusion). A yearly review allows flexibility to this charter and the possibility to add new actions that the City commits to and plans a budget for or looks for subsidies to cover its costs. These new actions need political approval before the City can confirm any commitment to them. The study outcomes will also be taken into account in exchanges with external partners of the City to better support them.

The Eurocities Task Force on digital divide, made up of half a dozen cities, has expressed formal interest in the project's results. The Coalition of Cities for Digital Rights (CC4DR) intends to formally support the project with a representative of the coalition, potentially being involved in the project's steering committee. **Four European cities (Amsterdam, Ghent, Leipzig and Rotterdam)** have already expressed direct interest in knowing the results of the DHAK project for replication purposes.

## 1.3  **Description of tasks**

In pursuing the objectives outlined above, the following tasks shall be carried out within the framework of this targeted analysis. Tenderers are requested to describe how they intend to implement them, to include in their proposal a description of their foreseen organisation and planning, to detail the proposed deliverables and to explain how the necessary resources shall be broken down between the different tasks.  These tasks provide an overall framework foreseen for the delivery of the project objectives and answering policy questions but can be broken down into sub-tasks or reorganised as the tenderer deems appropriate, consistent with the preferred methodological approach. Nonetheless, it is suggested that the tasks listed are not to be viewed in a linear way, but one feeding the other, being implemented in parallel and allowing for an iterative process and improving the final results.

Both cities are committed to providing the prospective service provider with **data and knowledge** they have at their disposal and are allowed to share, as well as access to their local, national and European partners**.**  Bordeaux Metropole has created a **center dedicated to digital inclusion** with 4 full-time staff, and department in charge of **data.** The implementation of the project will be supported by these teams. In addition, The Bordeaux Metropole team will provide some resources and data which specifically address the project's theme:

- Report of the Observatory on Digital Inequalities.
- Databases about digital inequalities (national and local databases).
- Access to social actors and local structures working in various neighbourhoods.

The City of Brussels has a Smart City unit composed of 3 full-time staff among which one employee's work is partially dedicated to digital rights (and so digital inclusion). This contact person will support the implementation and the coordination of the project within the City and refer to other useful colleagues

(from other departments such as the data department) and useful external partners if needed. The City can provide some resources and data which specifically address the project's theme:

- Various types of resources and data the City collected to create its digital rights charter and is still collecting to keep up to date regarding this theme.
- Some parts of the qualitative digital divide study that was done on its territory.
- Access to social actors and local structures working in various neighbourhoods

### 1.3.1 Task 1: Develop a conceptual framework for the research

The aim of this task is to develop a conceptual framework for the research. Main concepts and research strategy should be clearly defined as well as an explanation given. Most importantly, the service provider shall conceptualize "digital helpers" from two perspectives. Firstly, the current notion of a "digital helper" is very broad, thus the service provider shall establish a clear definition by defining "who" can be considered as a digital helper. Secondly, the service provider shall concretize what types of situations qualify as "digital help". A clear conceptual clarity will improve statistical comparisons and provide a solid basis for analysis.

### 1.3.2 Task 2: Develop and run a population survey

The service provider shall develop and run a quantitative population survey consisting of a representative sample with an aim to identify the main characteristics of digital helpers (age, gender, occupation, level of education, place of residence). The survey shall also look into the skills of the digital helpers, the relation they have with the people they are helping and, the main situations in which they have to provide practical assistance to a third party. Importantly, the survey shall cover both Bordeaux metropolitan area and the City of Brussels in equal terms.

In designing the survey, the service provider must consult with the City of Brussels and Bordeaux metropole on the survey design and how to carry it out in practical terms (telephone interviews vs on the spot questions, use of Belgian French vs Standard French, etc.). The 2023 Bordeaux metropolitan area survey on digital inequalities was based on a sample of over 5,000 people, representative of more than 800 000 residents of the 28 municipalities of the metropolitan area and revealed substantial new information on digital helpers. In order to clarify the scope of the survey, the Annex G presents a tentative outline of the questionnaire which shall be further refined by the service provider, adjusting it to the existing realities and proposed research framework. The service provider shall submit the adapted questionnaire to the ESPON EGTC for approval, before conducting the survey. While the project stakeholders and the ESPON EGTC will support the service provider, it is the full responsibility of the service provider to implement the survey.

The work on the survey shall lead to a written synthesis report, highlighting the main insights on the identity of the digital helpers, the contexts, and the nature of the assistance provided. The results should be also presented in a simplified, educational version, stylizing them in the form of:

- Comprehensive results of the questionnaire in a tabular form.
- Typical ideal personas that gather the main traits of the major "helper profiles".
- Typical ideal situations that describe provided assistance.
- The main types of assistance provided.

### 1.3.3   Task 3: Develop and run a qualitative field survey

In addition to the quantitative survey, the service provider shall carry out in-depth individual interviews and make contextual observations of real assistance situations "on the ground" between a helper and the person helped, preferably at home. This task shall be carried out both in Bordeaux metropolitan area and the City of Brussels in equal terms.

The objective is to better understand the dynamics at play, to analyze in detail the difficulties encountered by helpers and those helped, to identify the strategies and methods implemented, as well as the barriers and obstacles that may hinder the transmission of digital skills. This ethnographic approach, grounded in lived experience, will allow to grasp the complexity and richness of the interactions between the helper and the helped, to apprehend the human, relational, and emotional dimensions underlying these exchanges of assistance.

This qualitative approach will provide a much finer and embodied understanding of assistance situations, relational dynamics, implemented strategies, encountered barriers. Combining observations and interviews would allow for a comparison of discourses with effective practices. A diverse sample of around twenty digital helpers in each stakeholder territory shall be selected (different ages, social profiles, levels of digital expertise, types of helped persons, etc.), based on the personas identified in the quantitative survey.

These results shall take the form of verbatims, exemplary quotes from interviews that paradigmatically illustrate a profile, a situation or a context. They may also take the form of semi-anonymized accounts, video excerpts, full transcripts, content analyses, video recordings of certain assistance situations or audio recordings. Whichever format is chosen, a synthesised form of the outcomes of this qualitative analysis shall also be provided.

Tenderers are invited to make proposals in the offer to enrich this framework, to modify aspects that seem inappropriate, justifying their choices. In case video recordings are being proposed, the stakeholders of this project will provide technical means and the support. In order to clarify the scope of the qualitative work, the Annex G presents a tentative outline on the interviews and field work which shall be further refined by the service provider, adjusting it to the existing realities and proposed research framework. The service provider shall submit the adapted outline on the interviews and field work to the ESPON EGTC for approval, before conducting the qualitative field survey.

### 1.3.4   Task 4 : Analysis and synthesis of the results

The service provider shall synthesize the outcomes of both task 2 and task 3. Specific attention shall be paid to the results applicable to both cities, since they are likely to provide European-grade knowledge on the topic. A comparison of research outcomes between the Bordeaux metropolitan area and the City of Brussels shall be made as well, to examine commonalities and differences, by looking at particular spatial contexts which influence who digital helpers are and how they operate.

### 1.3.5   Task 5 : Develop recommendations on the best way to support digital helpers

The service provider shall develop, based on its first-hand analysis of the conducted surveys, a set of recommendations for local policies applicable to Bordeaux metropolitan area and the City of Brussels. These recommendations must present various doable and pragmatic ways to support digital helpers. These recommendations shall be based on the real-life situations in which digital help occurs. The service provider must pay special attention to the fact that digital helpers are mostly dispersed territorially, punctual, and not members of not-for-profit associations on these matters. The recommendations shall

also reflect the project stakeholder's wish to provide the digital helpers with valuable, lightweight, easy-to-use assets, tools and solutions, allowing them to take full advantage of the web, social networks, in a responsible manner.

## 1.4 Expected outputs and deliverables

The outcome of the various analysis resulting from section 1.3 shall be reported in a textual way as well as in maps, graphs and interactive visualisations like storymaps, dashboards, infographics, etc (as agreed with the ESPON EGTC). The tenderer shall provide details on the nature and format of these deliveries already in its technical offer.

The following outputs and deliverables shall be provided covering the tasks of the requested service as specified above in section 1.3.

### 1.4.1 Expected outputs

The main outputs of the service shall be:

- Population survey on digital helpers, with a full resulting database, accompanied with metadata. Analysis of the outcomes of the survey.

- Interviews with digital helpers, accompanied with technical documentation. Presentation of field work outcomes (in the form agreed with the stakeholders).

- Analysis of the outcomes of the population survey and interviews/field work, accompanied with relevant recommendations on how to effectively support the digital helpers.

- Data and interactive maps and graphs resulting from the research, provided in the format compatible with the environment of the ESPON Portal[3] and open data portals of the stakeholders.

### 1.4.2 Deliverables

The technical offer shall include a description of the format and the content of all deliverables according to the methodological concept the tenderer proposes to implement. The technical offer shall also indicate to which task(s) each deliverable is referring to.

The target group are the nine stakeholders and other interested parties. Consequently, the analysis must be practice and policy oriented. Ultimately, the deliveries aim at improving the knowledge base for deliberations, discussions and decision making. Therefore, it is important that deliveries have a format that serve this purpose, e.g. clear structure, executive summaries, extensive use of maps and illustrations and concrete recommendations.

#### 1.4.2.1 Predefined deliverables

The selected service provider is requested to submit at least 3 predefined deliveries, linked to foreseen payments in the contract (2 interim and 1 final payment):

- One inception deliverable,

- One progress report,

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[3] See: https://portal.espon.eu

- One final deliverable.

The table presented in section 1.5 below indicates the time schedule for the predefined deliverables.

### 1. An inception deliverable containing at least:

- Report (approximately 30 pages, excluding annexes) including:

    - Description of the overall conceptual framework to be applied.

    - Work plan for conducting the population survey and the qualitative work (interviews/field work).

    - Work plan presenting the next steps foreseen in the project's implementation, including meetings with selected target groups.

- Adapted questionnaires (Annex G) for conducting the surveys (task 2 and task 3).

- Description of the format and content of the next intermediary deliverables.


### 2. A final deliverable containing at least:

- Final main report (40 to 60 pages, excluding annexes) including:

    o Results of the quantitative population survey

    o Summary of the qualitative interview results and field work

    o Policy recommendations

- Scientific annexes, detailing the methodology of the population survey and interviews, and the extended research results.

- Presentation of the research results in the format and specific form agreed with the ESPON EGTC[4] and – whenever related to maps and other interactive forms of data visualisation - compatible with the environment of the ESPON Portal.

- Data, maps and figures:

    o Source files for the maps and figures (incl. map project/design and vector formats).

    o Shapefiles, geodatabase(s), for all the static and interactive web-maps, dashboards or apps.

    o Data gathered according to the ESPON metadata template, corresponding to the principles of ESPON data strategy and integration of the collected data in the ESPON database, in cooperation with the ESPON EGTC.

### 3. One progress report

In addition to the above, the service provider will be requested to submit one progress report, corresponding to foreseen interim payment in the contract.

This brief report (max. 10 pages) shall provide:

- an overview on the progress of the implementation of the project, highlighting the status of the different tasks and the challenges and risks associated for the good achievement of the research;

- the list the meetings held;

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[4] *This involves the concise and easy-to-grasp summary of overall research findings in an analogue or digital format by means of (a non-exhaustive list of forms): policy brief, infographics, dashboard, story map, simple video clip, apps, etc.)*

- the list of the intermediary deliverables submitted since the previous pre-defined deliverable.

The service provider will receive written feedback from the ESPON EGTC on each mandatory delivery (inception, final and progress report) including approval or request for revision and/or addressing identified challenges (indicatively within three / four weeks after receiving them).

### 1.4.2.2   Intermediary deliverables

In addition to the predefined deliverables, service providers are expected to provide intermediary deliverables. These can take different forms, depending on the profile and content of the requested tasks. Their exact quantity, format and content shall be proposed in the technical offer, then agreed between the ESPON EGTC and the service provider at the kick off meeting. They shall be submitted on a scheduled basis corresponding to the progress of the implementation of the different tasks described above (see sections 1.3).

While leaving freedom to the tenderers to define the intermediary deliverables in their technical offer, the following shall be considered:

1) intermediary deliverables shall be planned throughout the project's life cycle and are expected in between each of the pre-defined deliverables.
2) compulsory elements of the intermediary deliverables are: the data resource that shall be steadily acquired processed and submitted to the ESPON EGTC, a detailed overview of the data collection process and data structure, and adjustments related to the data strategy when necessary (see dedicated section about data deliverable process below).

The service provider will receive feedback from the ESPON EGTC on each deliverable.

The technical offer shall indicate the <u>time schedule for all intermediary deliverables proposed by the tenderer</u>.

### 1.4.2.3   Data deliverable process and digital deliverables

Data and data visualisations are an integral part of all the above-mentioned deliverables. When it comes to data deliverables, it is important to document and provide associating metadata and all the data possible that would allow to reproduce the results. It is important to keep the potential reuse of data in mind when collecting and structuring them, therefore, detailed spatiotemporal granularity is important. Visualisations need to be adapted both for static representation in reports as well as interactive web-based content. The project is expected to deliver both static and interactive web-based maps and figures, when relevant also dashboards, applications or similar, suitable for ESPON website and Portal[5].

The delivery of data and (web)maps and/or any other relevant interactive content mentioned above shall be delivered and integrated throughout the implementation of the project as they are completed, finalised and agreed with the ESPON EGTC.

ESPON Portal is built upon a software system for web-based GIS, powering mapping and visualization, analytics, and data management. It is the backbone for creating and running the interactive web-maps, data stories, dashboards and any custom GIS applications the project may propose or what ESPON may request. Hence, all proposed/requested interactive visualisations or solutions must be compatible with the system. Access to the environment can be provided by ESPON.

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See: https://gis-portal.espon.eu/arcgis/apps/sites/#/espon-hub

### 1.4.3   Common requirements for all deliverables

All deliverables should be delivered in electronic (editable) format and the text – whatever the format of the deliverable, as relevant, should have gone through a thorough language check, preferably by an English native speaker. ESPON EGTC will provide the generic templates for the maps, however, the service provider shall adjust the templates if necessary, depending on the geographic extent or the relevant peculiarities.

## 1.5   Project management

### 1.5.1   Mandatory meetings foreseen during the contract implementation

The service provider shall ensure participation (of at least with one team representative) in all mandatory meetings mentioned below. Costs related to these meetings must be included in the Annex B financial offer of this call for tenders. No other expenses will be paid by the contracting authority to the service provider.

Most of these meetings are held online. In case of a physical meeting (up to 2 physical meetings shall be organised during the life-time of the project), it will normally take place at the ESPON EGTC's premises in Luxembourg. However, physical meetings may also take place at other suitable locations, upon agreement between the service provider, the stakeholders and the ESPON EGTC.

**Kick-off meeting**

It will consist of a general presentation and dialogue regarding the objectives and tasks of the service contract. The kick off meeting will also address more precisely the organisation of the project and the plans for the intermediary deliverables. The service provider will receive guidelines on how to use the ESPON portal interface for data delivery and digital deliverables, 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. Written minutes are prepared by the service provider to document key decision points and shared with the ESPON EGTC after the meeting.

**Coordination meetings**

Project coordination meetings are organised to discuss the service contract implementation, the deliverables submitted and to provide related feedback. They take place on a regular basis (e.g. monthly basis or more frequently if deemed necessary) by a common agreement between the service provider and the ESPON EGTC. Their agenda and duration are agreed in advance. Written minutes are prepared by the service provider to document key decision points and shared with the ESPON EGTC after each meeting.

**Steering Committee meetings**

Partnership and cooperation are central to the implementation of ESPON Targeted analysis projects and are prerequisites for ensuring useful results and meeting stakeholders' research demands. The successful accomplishment of the objectives of this project will be achieved by proactive collaboration of the group of stakeholders, the ESPON EGTC and the service provider at every stage of the implementation.

Stakeholder involvement commenced with the definition and development of the specific theme for this targeted analysis and will continue throughout the implementation of the research and beyond. Authorities of all stakeholder institutions are determined to continuously support the work on the project, providing all necessary documents and data they possess, as well as contacts that shall be consulted. As some of the documents to be considered for this targeted analysis might be available only in the languages of the stakeholder territories, the service provider should dispose of the relevant language skills.

To allow for a framework that facilitates successful cooperation, a Steering Committee shall be established for the lifetime of this Targeted analysis. The main purpose of the Steering Committee is to ensure the involvement and active participation of stakeholders in the implementation and steering of the project and to safeguard the policy relevance of project outputs for the stakeholders.

The goals of the Steering Committee meetings are, as follows:

- To closely follow and advise the implementation of the research, making sure that it meets both research objectives and policy demands,

- To discuss and give feedback to deliverables from the service provider and provide guidance for the subsequent steps of the research and service contract implementation;

- To facilitate the information and data flow between the service provider's team, the stakeholders and the ESPON EGTC;

- To discuss and agree upon how to deliver - at each stage of the implementation – the results of the research to selected target groups.

Indicatively, three steering committee meetings shall be foreseen.

- The first one shall take place ca. 1 month after the kick-off meeting, preferably as a physical meeting.

- The timing and location of the other Steering Committee meetings will be discussed and agreed during the kick-off meeting and may be amended during the project implementation.

The Steering Committee shall consist of representatives of all stakeholder institutions, the service provider and the ESPON EGTC. Other stakeholders and/or relevant organisations may also take part in the Steering Committee as observers, should the Steering Committee decide so.

Bordeaux metropole (France) is the lead stakeholder in this targeted analysis and the City of Brussels is a participating stakeholder.

## 1.5.2 Indicative time schedule

The table below presents the indicative time schedule for the predefined deliverables and kick-off and steering committee meetings.

The exact deadlines for the predefined deliverables as well as indicative time schedule for all other intermediary deliverables and for coordination and steering committee meetings will be agreed during the kick-off meeting.

The minutes of the kick-off meeting, containing a record of the agreed dates, will be signed by the representatives of both, the service provider and the ESPON EGTC, and will be subject to article 4 - "Performance of the contract and subcontracting" of the service contract.

| Meetings | Predefined deliverables | Indicative deadline[6] |
|---|---|---|
| **Kick-off** | | As soon as possible (and normally within 2 weeks) after the award of the contract |
| | **D1- Inception Deliverable** | T + 1 month |

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[6] The letter "T" in this table stands for the date of the kick-off meeting. Timeframes are indicative.

| Meetings | Predefined deliverables | Indicative deadline[6] |
|---|---|---|
| **1st Steering Committee** | | T + 2 months |
| | **D2- Progress report** | T + 4 months |
| **2nd Steering Committee** | | T + 6 months |
| | **D3- Final Deliverable** | T + 11 months |
| **Final Steering Committee** | | T + 12 months |

## 1.6  Competences and skills required

The service provider must have proven, European/transnational scale research expertise and multidisciplinary experience relevant to the contract subject matter in order to ensure the successful implementation of the service. The competences and experience of the service provider within the fields outlined below shall be clearly demonstrated and documented, as requested in Sections 3 and 4.

- Proven experience in studies addressing territorial development issues, including experience from policy-relevant and comparative analyses related to digital transition, preferably with a European or transnational coverage and including multi-disciplinary approaches.

- At least three of the proposed team members of the service provider shall have at least five years of experience and academic background in analysing digital inclusion issues.

- At least 2 of the proposed team of experts shall have at least five years of experience and academic background in the fields of computer science, data collection and management, data quality check and survey design and implementation.

- Data visualisation skills to carry out the necessary analytical work on the data resource, configure ESPON mapping templates when necessary, and present the research results in the digital format both in static and interactive manner by means of the forms agreed with the ESPON EGTC (e.g. maps, figures, webmaps, dashboards, story maps, infographics, simple video clips, apps, etc. )

- At least one member with a communication/journalistic experience in visualising and presenting research findings in an easy-to-grasp way.

- Team members shall demonstrate a very good linguistic ability to draft and communicate research findings in high-quality English.

- Linguistic competences in French and Dutch to be able to carry out tasks 2 and task 3 and engage with local/regional stakeholders, analyse policy/planning documents in national languages. These competences can be demonstrated either with a team member or through resource to a language service provider.

**(...)**
**End of extract**
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