

Assessment of Central Baltic programme 2021 – 2027 operational evaluation offers

Offers presented in alphabetical order

4-front

Assessment criteria	Ranking/points	Comments (justifications, considerations)
<p>Experience and qualifications of the staff: (CV's for the staff involved in the work must be provided to verify this point)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proven good knowledge of English required. • proven knowledge of and experience in all Central Baltic programme area countries (demonstrated through academic or professional work in the last 2-3 years at least), • experience with impact evaluations in a relevant field with references listed (at least 3 relevant evaluations should have been finalised in the last 2-3 years) • proven knowledge of the thematics of the Central Baltic programme evaluation • proven knowledge of Interreg programmes, their context and requirements. <p>(15%), maximum score 60 points</p>	<p>1 / 60 points</p>	<p>CV's - provided</p> <p>English – sufficient</p> <p>CB knowledge – 2014-2020 impact evaluation lead researcher and team member(s) included in the team. Relevant and numerous in total references provided. Country experts for each MS. Selected country experts have both the Interreg, and CB knowledge, as well can demonstrate relevant experience in the field of evaluations.</p> <p>Operation and impact evaluations: Several experts have experience with CPR and Interreg operational and impact evaluations.</p> <p>CB thematics – climate, green transitions, startups and business expertise is present. As well as equality, regional development, territorial cooperation, governance, and social inclusion. Team seems to have very good coverage of CB thematics.</p> <p>Interreg - knowledge and understanding has been demonstrated by most of the team.</p>
<p>Evaluation proposal explaining the chosen of the evaluation: Proposal shall consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proposal for how to address the evaluation objectives and each of the evaluation questions - presentation of a sound evaluation methodology - presentation of suitable evaluation tools - presentation of implementation schedule. <p>(35%), maximum score 140 points</p>	<p>2 / 126 points</p>	<p>Addressing evaluation objectives of each of the evaluation questions: all evaluation questions are addressed very well. Offer is well prepared, includes additional details like risk mitigation strategies, potential survey questions, and interview guide.</p> <p>The evaluators have provided a very comprehensive background description</p> <p>Offer mentions that evaluation questions might be revised. That is not foreseen by ToR.</p> <p>Methodology: Theory-based approach is suggested. This is a relevant approach for the evaluation as suggested by ToR. Evaluation question matrix is developed structuring the approach. It lists relevant information.</p> <p>Description of methodology is clear and aligns with the programme's result-oriented approach.</p> <p>Thematic analysis, descriptive statistical analysis and development evaluation methods are suggested. Further techniques like contribution analysis, network analysis, and comparative analysis may be deployed depending on data</p>

		<p>availability. That is fair approach and in line with ToR.</p> <p>The methodology demands engagement from stakeholders – can be resource intensive (also highlighted as high-risk).</p>
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		<p>Evaluation tools: Offer lists detailed methodology and tools to be used. Data needs and proposed key sources of information are listed.</p> <p>Impact assessment is foreseen at the priority level (2021 – 2027). Impact is to be assessed from previous programme periods. Potentially too much of emphasis is on project reports in this regard as those most likely will not contain the information needed to perform the task.</p> <p>How the topics for impact related videos will be selected, is described on a general level.</p> <p>Implementation schedule: Team consists of 9 experts, including national experts for all CB countries. 120 working days are allocated for the task.</p> <p>Implementation schedule respects ToR. The deadline for the final report is suggested to be 17 April 2026. Implementation schedule is sufficient to fulfill the evaluation tasks requested. It is consistent with the approach suggested.</p>
<p>Price (50%), maximum score 200 points</p>	<p>153 points</p>	
<p>Total</p>	<p>339 points</p>	

i-DEA Consult

Assessment criteria	Ranking/points	Comments (justifications, considerations)
<p>Experience and qualifications of the staff: (CV's for the staff involved in the work must be provided to verify this point)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proven good knowledge of English required. • proven knowledge of and experience in all Central Baltic programme area countries (demonstrated through academic or professional work in the last 2-3 years at least), • experience with impact evaluations in a relevant field with references listed (at least 3 relevant evaluations should have been finalised in the last 2-3 years) • proven knowledge of the thematics of the Central Baltic programme evaluation • proven knowledge of Interreg programmes, their context and requirements. <p>(15%), maximum score 60 points</p>	<p>6 / 30 points</p>	<p>CV's - provided</p> <p>English – sufficient</p> <p>CB knowledge – experience with CB programme 2007-2013. References list lots of experience, much of it relevant for cohesion policy, regional development and the CB area. Experience is mostly from Eastern Europe / Baltics. All experts are from Latvia. Experience with working with CB and BSR. One lives in Sweden. Small team. Neither Finland nor Estonia seems to be covered.</p> <p>Operational and impact evaluations - Except team leader other two experts did provide limited evidence about knowledge and experience in CB area and with operational and impact evaluations within last 2 – 3 years. Communications related expertise seems stronger than evaluation related expertise for the overall team.</p> <p>CB thematics - Not very clear links.</p> <p>Interreg – CB and BSR mentioned. Otherwise, the expertise is limited.</p>
<p>Evaluation proposal explaining the chosen of the evaluation: Proposal shall consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proposal for how to address the evaluation objectives and each of the evaluation questions - presentation of a sound evaluation methodology - presentation of suitable evaluation tools - presentation of implementation schedule. <p>(35%), maximum score 140 points</p>	<p>6 / 70 points</p>	<p>Addressing evaluation objectives of each of the evaluation questions: evaluation objectives of all evaluation questions are addressed. Seems like the logic and methodology of the evaluation would focus specifically on border regions (mentioned separately in data collection table).</p> <p>Methodology: Methodology is provided and is based on theory-based evaluation approach. Methodology used to answer each evaluation question is provided. It is relevant in general, uses common sense and down to earth. Methodology however is presented quite briefly. More detailed proposal for the methodology is missing.</p> <p>Proposal to assess the net impact is based on results of previous programme periods' evaluations. interviews, and statistical data analysis. Not much of detail is provided how the impact video thematic will be chosen or decided.</p>

		<p>Evaluation tools: Traditional and sensible. Different evaluation techniques are listed to answer each evaluation question including desk-based, surveys, secondary data, analysis of approved projects. Tools are listed including surveys, interviews, and desk research of programme documents. Not many details are provided in respect of application of each of the tools.</p> <p>Implementation schedule: An implementation schedule is provided and in general it is sufficient and relevant. Implementation schedule respects ToR. 3 evaluation experts are suggested, no country specific expertise is covered. The number of working days is not mentioned.</p>
Price	152 points	
(50%), maximum score 200 points		
Total	252 points	

MDI

Assessment criteria	Ranking/points	Comments (justifications, considerations)
<p>Experience and qualifications of the staff: (CV's for the staff involved in the work must be provided to verify this point)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proven good knowledge of English required. • proven knowledge of and experience in all Central Baltic programme area countries (demonstrated through academic or professional work in the last 2-3 years at least), • experience with impact evaluations in a relevant field with references listed (at least 3 relevant evaluations should have been finalised in the last 2-3 years) • proven knowledge of the thematics of the Central Baltic programme evaluation • proven knowledge of Interreg programmes, their context and requirements. <p>(15%), maximum score 60 points</p>	<p>2 / 54 points</p>	<p>CV's - provided</p> <p>English – sufficient</p> <p>CB knowledge – Did the 2014-2020 impact evaluation + follow up. In general, the experience is mainly in Finland and Estonia.</p> <p>It has been noted that one of the potential evaluators (SEI Tallinn) has been involved in CB project implementation. That risks of potential conflict of interest or impartiality at least.</p> <p>Operation and impact evaluations – experience with impact evaluations is demonstrated for several of suggested team members. For some team members there is no previous experience with evaluations either at all, or in past 2 – 3 years.</p> <p>CB thematics – Sustainable development mentioned, employment, innovation, otherwise mostly general evaluation background.</p> <p>Interreg – CB and Interreg (Botnia Atlantica, Interreg Nord) knowledge and experience is present for several team members, otherwise wide public sector.</p>
<p>Evaluation proposal explaining the chosen of the evaluation: Proposal shall consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proposal for how to address the evaluation objectives and each of the evaluation questions - presentation of a sound evaluation methodology - presentation of suitable evaluation tools - presentation of implementation schedule. <p>(35%), maximum score 140 points</p>	<p>3 / 112 points</p>	<p>Addressing evaluation objectives of each of the evaluation questions: Clear understanding of evaluation needs. All evaluation objectives are covered by the offer. Methods and tools are suggested for each evaluation question. Data sources are listed.</p> <p>Methodology: Theory-based evaluation approaches are suggested. Contribution analysis is foreseen. This is a relevant approach for the evaluation. Methodology covers are evaluation questions. Multi-perspective evaluation method and developmental evaluation approach in operational evaluation is foreseen. Contribution analysis with a theory of change approach and a predictive impact assessment approach in order to evaluate the programme's intervention logic. For the net impact assessment review of previous studies is foreseen in a form of meta-analysis along with interviews. This might not be sufficient for the specific task as the information from the sources listed might be limited.</p>

		<p>Evaluation tools: Relevant evaluation tools are suggested and in general those interlink with each other and do respect ToR. Surveys, stakeholder interviews, expert interviews, document analysis is suggested. These are relevant for the specific evaluation questions. Surveys suggested only to approved projects. Survey of rejected projects not foreseen. Not much information is provided about how the video content will be suggested. Infographics are included as requested by ToR, yet no specific information is provided about the content of those.</p> <p>Implementation schedule: 130 working days are suggested, and a team of 8 evaluation experts is suggested (CVs provided). Limited experience for Sweden and Latvia.</p> <p>Description of the evaluation process and work tasks is provided. Evaluation steps are suggested and those are interlinked and respective of ToR. Includes workshop on evaluation results.</p>
Price (50%), maximum score 200 points	194 points	
Total	360 points	

Oxford Research

Assessment criteria	Ranking/points	Comments (justifications, considerations)
<p>Experience and qualifications of the staff: (CV's for the staff involved in the work must be provided to verify this point)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proven good knowledge of English required. • proven knowledge of and experience in all Central Baltic programme area countries (demonstrated through academic or professional work in the last 2-3 years at least), • experience with impact evaluations in a relevant field with references listed (at least 3 relevant evaluations should have been finalised in the last 2-3 years) • proven knowledge of the thematics of the Central Baltic programme evaluation • proven knowledge of Interreg programmes, their context and requirements. <p>(15%), maximum score 60 points</p>	<p>4 / 42 points</p>	<p>CV's - provided.</p> <p>English – sufficient</p> <p>CB knowledge – in general the experience is present, though mostly it is related to Sweden and Latvia. Finland and Estonia are covered to a lesser extent. Country experts nominated</p> <p>Operation and impact evaluations – most of team members can demonstrate experience in the field of evaluations, though at different levels – Interreg, national programmes, national and regional interventions, etc.</p> <p>CB thematics – mostly CB thematic areas / priorities are covered, however the knowledge differs among priorities and team members.</p> <p>Interreg - proven knowledge of Interreg programmes is present for most of team members.</p>
<p>Evaluation proposal explaining the chosen of the evaluation: Proposal shall consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proposal for how to address the evaluation objectives and each of the evaluation questions - presentation of a sound evaluation methodology - presentation of suitable evaluation tools - presentation of implementation schedule. <p>(35%), maximum score 140 points</p>	<p>1 / 140 points</p>	<p>Addressing evaluation objectives of each of the evaluation questions: All evaluation objectives are covered. The proposal is structured in a different way compared to others. It is ok and is relevant. All evaluation questions are grouped to correspond the dimensions of EU regulation. From one perspective, this is potentially even a benefit for the team. ToR and evaluation questions though should be respected.</p> <p>Methodology – theory-based evaluation framework is suggested. This is a relevant approach and is in line with ToR. Triangulation of data and conclusions / evaluation results is foreseen. These ads up to the credibility of the results.</p> <p>The use of the methodology and models is well argued, not only on a theory level, but they have analysed the effectiveness based on ToR and CB objectives.</p>

		<p>Evaluation tools – relevant tools are provided. Offer lists desk research, semi-structure, in-depth interviews, surveys, focus groups, indicator analysis from Jems. The usage of all of these is mentioned and is relevant to the evaluation. Data sources are listed as well. Those are relevant and in line with ToR.</p> <p>As for the net impact evaluation question, stakeholder surveys are suggested, and result packages are to be analyzed.</p> <p>Not much information is provided about how the thematic / topics for impact videos will be decided.</p> <p>Implementation schedule – implementation plan, deliverables, timeline, as well as budget respects ToR. The implementation schedule is in line with the methodology suggested.</p> <p>Evaluation team consists of 6 persons. The number of working days allocated is not mentioned.</p>
<p>Price (50%), maximum score 200 points</p>	<p>187 points</p>	
<p>Total</p>	<p>369 points</p>	

TK Eval

Assessment criteria	Ranking/points	Comments (justifications, considerations)
<p>Experience and qualifications of the staff: (CV's for the staff involved in the work must be provided to verify this point)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proven good knowledge of English required. • proven knowledge of and experience in all Central Baltic programme area countries (demonstrated through academic or professional work in the last 2-3 years at least), • experience with impact evaluations in a relevant field with references listed (at least 3 relevant evaluations should have been finalised in the last 2-3 years) • proven knowledge of the thematics of the Central Baltic programme evaluation • proven knowledge of Interreg programmes, their context and requirements. <p>(15%), maximum score 60 points</p>	<p>5 / 36 points</p>	<p>CV's - provided</p> <p>English – sufficient</p> <p>CB knowledge – Jukka Teräs worked on CB evaluation, and SFE evaluation was done by TK-eval. Nicely listed. Relevant evaluations are listed at the level of the company. The expertise seems to be mostly Finnish. One team member is from Latvia. Estonia and Sweden are not covered with specific expertise.</p> <p>Operation and impact evaluations: Both Tommi and Keimo has broad expertise in operational and impact evaluations, however Maija and Jukka does not seem to have proven knowledge of evaluations in the last 2 – 3 years.</p> <p>CB thematics - The expertise across CB priority / thematic areas varies.</p> <p>Interreg - several team members have the Interreg expertise. Central Baltic ex-ante evaluation for the period 2014–2020, Interreg III A – Southern Finland – Estonia 2000–2006, ESPON, 4 Interreg Programmes listed.</p>
<p>Evaluation proposal explaining the chosen of the evaluation: Proposal shall consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proposal for how to address the evaluation objectives and each of the evaluation questions - presentation of a sound evaluation methodology - presentation of suitable evaluation tools - presentation of implementation schedule. <p>(35%), maximum score 140 points</p>	<p>5 / 84 points</p>	<p>Addressing evaluation objectives of each of the evaluation questions: All evaluation objectives (questions) are covered sufficiently. Required information is listed. Information sources are provided. Data collection methods are provided. Those are relevant to answer the evaluation questions.</p> <p>Methodology: Theory based evaluation approach is suggested. Triangulation of evaluation data and methods is foreseen. This is relevant to approach to address the evaluation questions stated. Strong focus on learning process. Mentions annual reports as a critical starting point – but we don't have them anymore. Not much details provided how the content for impact themed videos will be selected. General comment: the arguments for using the specific method are not entirely clear. The text lacks a clear thread. In addition, graphical presentation of method is quite sloppy, not always following accessibility rules.</p>

		<p>Evaluation tools: Evaluation tools suggested are relevant and cover all evaluation questions. Rigorous approach is suggested. Questionnaires, surveys and interviews are suggested for most of the evaluation questions. That should be sufficient. Applicants not receiving support does not seem to be covered to a good extent. No in-house communications skills.</p> <p>Implementation schedule: Implementation schedule is realistic and relevant. ToR is respected. 105 working days are allocated for the evaluation. 4 experts suggested, 1 being the country expert for Latvia.</p>
Price	200 points	
(50%), maximum score 200 points		
Total	320 points	

Verian Group

Assessment criteria	Ranking/points	Comments (justifications, considerations)
<p>Experience and qualifications of the staff: (CV's for the staff involved in the work must be provided to verify this point)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proven good knowledge of English required. • proven knowledge of and experience in all Central Baltic programme area countries (demonstrated through academic or professional work in the last 2-3 years at least), • experience with impact evaluations in a relevant field with references listed (at least 3 relevant evaluations should have been finalised in the last 2-3 years) • proven knowledge of the thematics of the Central Baltic programme evaluation • proven knowledge of Interreg programmes, their context and requirements. <p>(15%), maximum score 60 points</p>	<p>3 / 48 points</p>	<p>CV's - provided</p> <p>English – sufficient</p> <p>CB knowledge –References mention BSR and cohesion policy. Country experts assigned. CB knowledge seems to be present.</p> <p>Operation and impact evaluations – several of team members do have proven knowledge with impact evaluations in relevant fields. Piia's and Viktor's experience stands out among other team members.</p> <p>CB thematics – proven knowledge of the CB thematic / priorities varies among team members. Several of team members might have quite limited understanding of some of CB priorities as the experience seems to be mostly in other fields (healthcare, for example).</p> <p>Interreg – Relevant experiences from BSR. Other Interreg experience is lacking.</p>
<p>Evaluation proposal explaining the chosen of the evaluation: Proposal shall consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proposal for how to address the evaluation objectives and each of the evaluation questions - presentation of a sound evaluation methodology - presentation of suitable evaluation tools - presentation of implementation schedule. <p>(35%), maximum score 140 points</p>	<p>4 / 98 points</p>	<p>Addressing evaluation objectives of each of the evaluation questions:</p> <p>In general, all evaluation objectives are addressed, however the level of detail seems to be superficial. It is not convincing that the indicator level analysis would be sufficient to answer all evaluation questions listed in ToR.</p> <p>Methodology:</p> <p>Theory Based Evaluation is suggested. It is planned that Theory of Change concept will be deployed. This is realistic approach and is in line with ToR. Methodology lists data sources and tools to be used in the evaluation. In general, these are reliable and relevant.</p>

		<p>Evaluation tools: Tools include quantitative and qualitative analytics. Document studies, interviews, statistics analysis are among the tools listed. Those are in line with ToR.</p> <p>Suggested: use AI/machine learning-based text analysis tools (e.g. Verian's own analysis tool Smart Matrix Analyser4) to identify recurring themes and keywords in our qualitative analysis</p> <p>For the net impact assessment two example indicators are suggested (number of projects with measurable economic impact and percentage of projects with sustainable outcomes). Programme documents and reports are to be analysed combined with follow-up surveys with project beneficiaries and stakeholders. This seems to be a minimalist approach and might not be sufficient to produce meaningful results for the evaluation question concerned.</p> <p>Offer does not list analysing 2007 – 2013 and 2014 – 2020 periods, thus it is not clear whether that is included in the foreseen analysis as requested.</p> <p>Regarding impact videos not much information is provided on how and based on what topics / content of those will be decided.</p> <p>Implementation schedule: Implementation plan is suggested and is in line with ToR. No clear schedule provided; timeframe explained. Implementation schedule lists additional tools and approaches not mentioned in the methodology part of the offer.</p> <p>Evaluation team consists of 5 members. 93,3 days are allocated for the evaluation. This might not be sufficient for the level of details required by ToR.</p>
<p>Price (50%), maximum score 200 points</p>	<p>159 points</p>	
<p>Total</p>	<p>305 points</p>	