

Open invitation to submit proposals for Targeted Analyses

Cut – off 24 February 2023

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Version 23 February 2023

Question 1

We have a practical question regarding the letters of commitment. In the guidance and application form, ESPON mentions: Scanned copy of all letter(s) of commitment signed and dated by all participating stakeholders including the Lead Stakeholder and on the official letter paper of the stakeholders' institution. We and most of our partners use digitally signed documents. Is this alright to submit?

A>Yes, it is. ESPON works with digital signed documents.

Question 2

On the website I found an information that proposals will be evaluated twice per year. Could you please confirm that it is going to take place twice per year and when approximately will be second round this year?

A>See answer to question n. 3

Question 3

When will be the next open periods and deadlines for Targeted Analyses?

A>Stakeholder proposals for ESPON Targeted Analyses can be submitted at any time. The ESPON EGTC evaluates twice per year all stakeholder proposals received by certain cut-off dates. The first cut-off date for the submission of stakeholder proposals is on 24 February 2023. The next cut-off date is envisaged to be before Summer 2023; the exact deadlines will be advertised on the ESPON website.

Question 4

Is there a word/character limitation for the descriptive sections E, F (1-4), G (1-4) of the application form? If yes, could you please specify what are the limitations.

A>No, there is not. However, the table below provides indicative numbers to help applicants filling sections E, F, G

Sections		Words (indicative)
E	Main general characteristics of the territories to be addressed	200 words
F.1.	Policy issues to be addressed	300 words
F.2.	Territorial evidence to be delivered	200 words
F.3.	Presence of a European perspective	300 words
F.4.	Expected use of results in practice by each stakeholder	200 words
G.1.	Direct contribution foreseen	200 words
G.2.	Direct involvement of participating stakeholders	200 words
G.3.	Involvement of other actors	100 words
G.4.	Dissemination and uptake activities	300 words

Question 5

Would it be possible to provide a stakeholder letter of commitment only signed but without an official stamp of the institution? The reason is that one institution of a great relevance for our proposal does not use a stamp.

A>It is recommended to use the official corporate letter of the institution and official stamp. In case this is not in use, it is accepted to have only the signature of the responsible person.

Question 6

Is the number of TAs selected defined by TAP, respectively does the EGTC select up to four TAs per TAP?

A>For the cut-off date of 24 February 2023, the ESPON EGTC intends to select up to 4 expressions of interest in total. The number of selected proposals is not defined by TAP. The selection criteria that are used for the evaluation of the proposals are indicated in "Guidance for Stakeholders" (page 4, paragraph 6. What are the selection criteria?). Link: <https://www.espon.eu/participate/targeted-analysis-cutoff-february-2023>

Question 7

Is there a maximum number of stakeholders that can participate in a TA?

A>See answer to question n. 10

Question 8

By when do stakeholders receive feedback on whether their proposal for a TA has been accepted or not?

A>The ESPON EGTC plans to send feedback to stakeholders about 1 month after the cut-off date.

Question 9

I was inspired by the announcement of the invitation of submission proposals for Targeted Analysis, because the university acts as research and analytics centre in connection with the degree programmes and the innovation projects.

A>Universities, academic experts and private companies are not eligible to submit stakeholder proposals for Targeted Analyses. Nonetheless, they have the opportunity to submit tenders in the framework of the call procedure following the qualification of stakeholder proposals for Targeted Analyses. In addition, they are welcome to submit tenders for open calls. Further information is available here <https://www.espon.eu/participate/calls>

Question 10

Is there a recommended number of stakeholders that should get together to submit a stakeholder proposal?

A>There is no recommended number of stakeholders as such. Depending on the scope of the targeted analysis in question, the themes to be addressed, the tasks to be implemented and the envisaged outcomes, it can be an advantage to involve either more or less stakeholders. Experience from previous targeted analyses has shown that stakeholders often benefited of the inclusion of other stakeholders and the cooperation in the implementation of the activity. Too large partnerships, however, can result in less time and resources dedicated to each stakeholders territory. Nevertheless, it is up to each applicant to judge the appropriate number of stakeholders to be involved. The ESPON EGTC will not assess how many stakeholders are involved but rather how active their involvement will be and how much they intend to make concrete use of the results.

Question 11

Is it possible to include more than one stakeholder from the same member state in a proposal for a targeted analysis?

A>It is possible to include more than one stakeholder from the same member state in a stakeholder proposal for a targeted analysis.

Question 12

Can partner stakeholders join after submission of the stakeholder proposal, or do all partners have to be declared with the submitted application?

A>In principle, all partners that wish to act as stakeholders in a targeted analysis project need to be mentioned in the stakeholder application submitted to the EGTC and need to prove their commitment with a letter of commitment. After the selection of a stakeholder proposal the inclusion of additional stakeholders is not possible anymore. However, if all participating stakeholders agree, potential additional stakeholders could be invited to participate in steering committee meetings as observers.

Question 13

Can associations from third countries (i.e. non-EU member states) participate in a targeted analysis and if so, under which conditions?

A>Associations from third states can participate in a targeted analysis as observers in the project's steering committee, if the actively participating stakeholders wish so.

Question 14

How is the targeted analysis funded? Do stakeholders have to define a dedicated budget?

A>ESPON commissions and fully finances the experts that carry through the analytical work to provide territorial evidence to the stakeholders. Stakeholders don't contribute financially to the commissioning of these experts. However stakeholders need to invest time in supporting the ESPON EGTC in:

- Drafting the terms of reference for the respective targeted analysis;
- Participating in the evaluation of tenders;
- Participating in regular project meetings with the ESPON EGTC and the team of experts carrying through the analysis: at least 3 steering committee meetings for all stakeholders (ca. 4-6 hours each) and monthly project reviews for the lead stakeholder (ca. 1 hour each);
- Supporting the team of experts by providing access to data/information and being available for interviews;
- Commenting on project deliveries;
- Supporting the uptake and transfer of results of the targeted analysis via dissemination and communication activities.

Most of the meetings are held on line except key steering committee meetings (e.g. kick-off meeting, final meeting). For the latter, stakeholders need to cover their own travel expenses for attending meetings related to the targeted analysis.

Question 15

What does it mean exactly that targeted analyses should refer to one specific thematic priority?

A>Proposals for targeted analyses should be thematically related to the scope of one thematic action plan as presented on the [ESPON website](#).

Question 16

Is there a preferable territorial dimension for a targeted analysis, e.g. should it cover a national territory or rather a larger territory like a macro-region?

A>There is no preferable territorial dimension for a targeted analysis as such. Depending on the scope of the targeted analysis in question, the tasks to be implemented and the envisaged outcome, it can be an advantage to either limit or extend the territorial coverage of the analysis. It is ultimately up to each applicant to judge the appropriate territorial coverage of the targeted analysis in question.

Question 17

We and most of our partners use digitally signed documents. Is this alright to submit?

A>Yes, it is. See answer to question n. 1.

Question 18

The instructions under Checklist for submission indicate that one scanned copy of the application form, signed and dated by a duly authorised official representative of the Lead Stakeholder should be provided while of the application form at the beginning does not indicate fields for the authorized official representative but for contact person responsible for coordinating the project within the lead stakeholder organization including, name and position, date and signature are indicated. Should we provide the signature of the authorized official representative under the contact person signature or how should this be understood?

A> Both the application form and the letter of commitment have to be signed by a duly authorized representative of the Stakeholder institution. We do take note of the confusion that may appear by the way the documents are presented and will consider it for the future and during the assessment.

Question 19

Can the lead stakeholder engage the institutions that are members of the network in the process by signing the Letter of Commitment? Can the lead stakeholder ensure that in case a new official representative of the network is elected he/she will have the leeway to decide to continue with the commitment to the analysis?

A>We assume that they would become Lead Stakeholder and engage the whole network. If yes, we consider that indeed, they can engage. They should inform us in due time about the

intention of the next official representative to continue or to drop out of the agreement. Articles in relation with this issue can be found in the Stakeholder Cooperation Agreement:

- § 6 establishes the conditions for termination. Thus, point e) indicates that the ESPON EGTC is entitled to terminate the Agreement if ‘the LS drops out of the Targeted Analysis and does not foresee that any other stakeholder takes over its responsibilities’.
- § 9 point 3 indicates that ‘in cases of legal succession (...) the LS or participating stakeholder is obliged to transfer all duties under this contract to the legal successor. The LS shall notify the ESPON EGTC about any change beforehand’.

Question 20

The Government would link to sign off the letter of engagement via its Delegation in Brussels. Is this feasible?

A>This is feasible if the internal rules of Government allow for this delegation, meaning that the Delegation in Brussels is entitled to legally sign on behalf of the Government.

Question 21

Should the application form be signed by the contact person as stated on the first page of the AF or the official representative as suggested by the checklist on the last page? We found the wording “signed and dated by a duly authorized official representative of the Lead Stakeholder” a little confusing.

A>The application form is to be signed by the official representative. We will take your comment into consideration and adjust the documents accordingly. (See answer to question n. 18).