

Audit of the Joint Electronic Monitoring System (Jems)

15 January 2023

Terms of reference

On behalf of the Interact programme, Interact Office Vienna (hosted by City of Vienna, Municipal Department 27 – European Affairs) is inviting interested service providers to submit a quotation for a contract to deliver services as set out below.

In order to respond to this call for tenders, interested service providers must demonstrate their experience, capacity and suggested approach to carrying out the assignment in view of the specification presented in this Terms of Reference.

Background

About Interact

We are an experienced international team who are passionate about cooperation. Cooperation can be complex; our job is to make it easier.

Throughout Europe, Interreg programmes are implementing projects which improve the lives of Europeans. Interact helps Interreg programmes, and other actors working in a cooperation context, to be more efficient and more effective, to achieve more with EU funds.

Interact has supported Interreg for more than 20 years, and continues to offer bespoke interventions to address the key challenges facing Interreg programmes and other cooperation actors in working in a complex environment.

We ensure the exchange of experience, information and innovation in order to promote best practice and make cooperation easier. We achieve this through targeted events, publications and tools.

Our services are targeted at cooperation programmes under the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) objective of Cohesion Policy - known as Interreg. Our work covers the Member States of the European Union, as well as Norway and Switzerland. We also support programmes in pre-accession and European Neighbourhood countries.

Interact's Managing Authority and Interact Secretariat (MA/IS) are based in Bratislava. Four Interact offices, in Turku (Finland), Valencia (Spain), Viborg (Denmark) and Vienna (Austria), deliver services to Interreg programmes and other cooperation stakeholders.

The four implementing offices host specialists in Programme Financial Management, Programme Content and Programme Communication. Each office also has lead responsibility for certain operations which are of strategic importance to the Interact programme, and have a significant impact on our target audience, such as keep.eu, EC Day, HIT and Jems.

Full details regarding the aims, objectives, coordination framework and operational strategy for the programme can be found in the [Interact IV Programme document](#), and on www.interact.eu.

The Joint Electronic Monitoring System (Jems)

Every Interreg programme is obliged to set up a computerised monitoring system to collect all project and programme progress according to the point (e) of Article 72(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060.

Additionally, as outlined in Article 69(8) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, programmes should provide their beneficiaries with a system to allow the submission of information in electronic form. All exchanges of information between beneficiaries and managing authorities, certifying authorities, audit authorities and intermediate bodies should be carried out via an electronic data exchange system.

Interact is developing a Joint Electronic Monitoring System (Jems) for Interreg programmes, which supports the submission, approval, management and monitoring of projects. Development is well in progress, and a major part of the system is now available. By the end of March 2024, the whole workflow of programme and project management will have been implemented. The system promotes safe storage of all submitted and approved projects, their implementation and achievements, modifications and closure. Additionally, aggregated data on the progress of the programme and its projects will be recorded in the system. All programme bodies will communicate with beneficiaries via the system and re-use the collected data. Jems is built to support programme authorities in day-to-day programme management and should fulfil all legal requirements.

Jems is designed in close cooperation with seven Interreg programmes and can be used free of charge by any Interreg programme. Currently, 52 programmes have signed the License agreement to test/use Jems. From a recent survey, it can be concluded that more than 45 programmes are using Jems for their programme administration.

Please follow the links for documentation <https://jems.interact-eu.net/manual> and access to the test environment of Jems <https://jems.interact-eu.net/index.html#demo>.

Specification of Services

Objectives

Each Member state shall have a management and control system for their ETC programmes (Art.69(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060). As part of the management and control system, member states shall ensure the quality, accuracy, and reliability of their monitoring system (Art.69(4) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060). All Interreg programmes are subject to management and control system audits (Art.77(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060). As a part of this audit, the programme's management and control system, including the monitoring system, needs to be audited against relevant legal requirements set in ANNEX XIV, ANNEX XVI (4), and specifically ANNEX XVII of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060.

Interact is searching for a service provider to perform the audit of Jems and certify its compliance with legal requirements.

Scope of the audit

The system should be audited against relevant legal requirements of the Regulations (EU) 2021/1060 (CPR), 2021/1058 (ERDF), 2021/1059 (ETC) and possibly others.

The basis for the audit should be ANNEX XVII of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, which establishes the data to be recorded in the monitoring system. However, other regulatory requirements directly concerning the monitoring system and not explicitly mentioned in ANNEX XVII should also be verified.

The audit should include certification of the reliability, security, integrity, and confidentiality of recorded data in the system. The correctness of the calculations in the system also should be part of the certification.

Please refer to **Annex 1** for a list of control objectives from the predecessor system (eMS), which shall be adapted for this audit according to Art. 69(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (Key Requirement 6).

Audit methodology

The audit will be performed on a test system that is not in productive use. Therefore, the audit should focus on the system only. Any requirements which are specific to the particular installations of Jems by the programmes (e.g. security of the server, access rights management, software security updates, IT support availability for final users, etc.) should not be subject of the audit. All such requirements that cannot be audited based on the reference system must be listed in the final audit report.

The audit should be performed in steps:

Step	Service to be provided	Deliverable	Indicative timeline
1	Definition of audit criteria based on eMS audit criteria	List of audit criteria	March 2024
2	Initial audit with intermediate results and recommendations	Draft audit report	April 2024
3	Follow-up audit verifying the implementation of recommendations	Final audit report	July 2024

The audit results will serve to ensure legal certainty of Jems, and will be handed over to third parties, i.e. the license holders of Jems, as a reference for their system audits according to the (Art.77(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060). For the latter purpose, an appropriate methodological standard has to be respected (ISAE 3000).

All communication and deliverables must be in English.

How to apply

In order to be considered for this contract, offers must include:

1. A description of the services offered, including audit methodology and scope, as well as a timeline
2. A CV for each proposed member of the audit team, clearly outlining their knowledge and experience with Interreg and its legal framework, audits of IT/monitoring systems and/or other relevant topics.
3. A price information indicating a fixed lump sum for the services described above (excl. VAT).

Before submitting your offer, please make sure that you are familiar with:

- the relevant legal framework
- the Jems test environment (<https://jems.interact-eu.net/index.html#demo>)
- the list of control objectives from the audit of eMS (**Annex 1**)

Detailed proposals must be submitted by email to genia.ortis@interact.eu by Sunday 28 January 2024 and shall be addressed to:

Interact Office Vienna
MA27 – European Affairs
Kirchberggasse 33-35/9
1070 Vienna
Austria

Offers will be assessed according to quality and price, especially taking into account the service provider's previous experience in similar assignments as demonstrated through the CVs of the proposed experts.

The services shall be directly procured according to Austria Procurement Law (§ 31 Abs 11 BVergG 2018) and will be contracted by the City of Vienna, Municipal Department 27 on the basis of the general contracting conditions of the City of Vienna¹.

Please note, any expenses incurred in the preparation of offers will not be reimbursed.

Further questions

If you have any questions about the above tender, please email genia.ortis@interact.eu.

¹ <https://www.wien.gv.at/wirtschaft/auftraggeber-stadt/vertragsbestimmungen/pdf/wd313-2018.pdf>