



Terms of reference

Research and drafting of the publication:

Local finances in the time of crisis – Lessons learned and how to boost investments towards sustainable recovery in the wake of the Green Deal

CEMR is looking for an external Contractor to collect data, analyse the findings and draft the study

13/09/2021/v6

About CEMR

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) is the oldest and broadest European association of local and regional governments that brings together 60 national associations of local and regional governments from 40 European countries and represents, through them, all levels of territories – local, intermediate and regional.

Since its creation in 1951, CEMR promotes the construction of a united, peaceful and democratic Europe founded on local self-government, respect for the principle of subsidiarity and the participation of citizens. Our work is organised around two main pillars:

1. Influencing European policy and legislation in all areas having an impact on municipalities and regions;
2. Providing a forum for debate between local and regional governments via their national representative associations.

Specific background

In 2012, CEMR published with the support of Dexia Crédit Local, an analysis of the trends and evolutions of [Subnational public finance in the European Union](#). CEMR aims to renew the analysis of the trends and evolutions of subnational governments finance over the last 10 years in light of the recent developments, in particular the current sanitary situation and the EU agenda towards a green recovery. This analysis will draw lessons from past and present experiences to provide recommendations to drive a sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, showing potential risks and opportunities for local and regional finance and investments. The study is expected to be published in autumn 2022, three years after the adoption of the EU Green Deal.

General objectives of the publication

- Provide deep insight into the evolution trends of subnational finances after the economic crisis of 2008-2009 until today, with a specific focus on green and sustainable investments.
- Raise national and European level policy-makers' awareness on the critical situation of subnational finances post COVID-19, and its impact on the ability of the subnational level to contribute to European sustainable recovery through long term and green investments.
- Drawing lessons from the 2009 economic crisis, develop possible scenarios and policy recommendations to counter and to mitigate adverse impacts on local and regional finances and investments, and propose options to (re-)establish a sound situation for subnational finance and investment capacities.
- Take stock of the evolution of sustainable finance at local level and assess the contribution of the local level to the European and global objectives for climate change and sustainability such as the EU Green Deal or the Paris agreement.

Objectives of the assignment

The contractor will lead the research and the drafting of the study to ensure coherence and scientific reliability. He/she will perform desk research, interviews, and draft the main analysis in the format of a study. She/he will also draft templates to collect information from CEMR members and partners. The contract will use the [previous 2012 publication](#) as a model for the methodology purposes. Data to be analysed and used in the study should come from official sources (Eurostat, national data, OECD, EU, etc.).

The study in the format of a publication shall:

- Detail the methodology used ;
- Provide an analysis and an explanatory synthesis of the trends and evolutions of subnational finances and investments since 2010 (post economic crisis) until 2020 for the 41 European countries covered by CEMR membership¹;
- Provide a short analysis of the Resilience and Recovery Facility (RRF) national plans and overview of the green investments directed to local and regional governments based on existing literature and potential interviews with CEMR members;
- An in-depth analysis of 7 to 10 countries including the green aspects, based on case studies, examples of reforms, public policies, etc. (3 pages per country);
- Draw possible lessons learned and recommendations for local, regional, and national governments and the EU to mitigate adverse effect of covid19 impact on subnational finance and to accelerate recovery and sustainable growth at local and regional level.

¹ You can find the list of countries on [CEMR website](#).

Methodology – Tasks and Timeline

The contract will start approximatively **mid-October** with a kick-off meeting to discuss the timeline, methodology and the deliverables. Based on the objectives mentioned above, there are 7 deliverables to be delivered in 2 parts:

Part 1

Deliverable 1: Analysis

Objective – Provide an analysis and an explanatory synthesis of the trends and evolutions of subnational finances and investments since 2010 (post economic crisis) until 2020 for the 40 European countries covered by CEMR membership.

Methodology – Desk research to collect data from official sources like Eurostat or the [Global observatory on local finances](#), and analysis, covering the following topics:

- The macro-economic environment and public finances at local and regional level
- The territorial organisation and relevant reforms over the last 10 years that have had an impact on subnational finance
- Revenue and taxation developments
- Developments in patterns of expenditure and investments
- Budget balance and debt evolutions

Timeline – The first draft is expected for **28 November**. Based on the approval of the first draft, the final version is expected on **19 December**.

Deliverable 2: Template to collect information from the 10 “Focus countries”

Objective – Provide a template to be filled in by the contractor (for some countries: by CEMR members or partners with the help of the Contractor) which will be the basis for an in-depth analysis of 7 to 10 countries including the green aspects, based on case studies, examples of reforms, public policies, etc. (3 pages per country).

Methodology – desk research, possible interviews with CEMR members and relevant partners to agree on a template that will ensure coherence and comparable analysis.

Timeline – The first draft is expected for **28 November**. Based on the approval of the first draft, the final version is expected on **19 December**.

Part 2

Deliverable 3: RRF Analysis

Objective – Provide a short analysis of the Resilience and Recovery Facility (RRF) national plans and overview of the green investments directed to local and regional governments.

Methodology – desk research on existing literature and potential interviews with CEMR members or partners (up to 5 interviews) and relevant partners, keeping in mind the willingness to use this analysis as a baseline to assess the RRF national plans in a few years

Timeline – The first draft is expected for **20 March**. Based on the approval of the first draft, the final version is expected on **24 April**.

Deliverable 4: Chapter on the 10 “Focus Countries”

Objective – Provide an in-depth analysis of 7 to 10 countries including the green aspects, based on case studies, examples of reforms, public policies, etc. (3 pages per country).

Methodology – data collection through the templates (deliverable 3) complemented by desk research to collect case studies, examples of reforms, public policies, etc., and potential interviews with CEMR members and relevant partners, keeping in mind the willingness to use this analysis as a baseline to assess the RRF national plans in a few years.

Timeline – The first draft is expected for **20 March**. Based on the approval of the first draft, the final version is expected on **24 April**.

Deliverable 5: Recommendations

Objective – Draw possible lessons learned and recommendations for local, regional, and national governments, and the EU

Methodology – Use all data collected and insist on how local, regional and the European government(s) can mitigate adverse effect of covid19 impact on subnational finance and accelerate recovery and sustainable growth at local and regional level; the CEMR Expert Group on Local Finances and the CEMR Expert Group on Energy and Climate, could potentially be used as Focus Groups for this deliverable.

Timeline – The first draft is expected for **20 March**. Based on the approval of the first draft, the final version is expected on **24 April**.

Deliverable 6: The study

Objective – Final study

Methodology – Assemble the different deliverables and add the additional expectations (bibliography, annexes, etc. , see the “Additional Expectations” point below). Please see the provisional outline in the Concept Note, Annex 1. The study should not exceed 70 pages.

Timeline – The final study is expected on **24 April**.

Coordination

One coordination meeting per deliverable is suggested. Most of interviews and coordination meetings are organised virtually (platforms, phone calls, etc.). In case physical meetings are judged necessary by the Secretariat, the costs of travel and accommodation shall be borne by CEMR.

Expected deliverables

List of deliverables

Deliverable 1: Analysis

Deliverable 2: Template to collect information from the 10 “Focus countries”

Deliverable 3: RRF Analysis

Deliverable 4: Chapter on the 10 “Focus Countries”

Deliverable 5: Recommendations

Deliverable 6: The study

Additional expectations

In addition to the objective methodology and timeline mentioned above, the Contractor will send the deliverables **in plain text, Word as well as Excel tables, graphics and raw data under Excel format**, and any other relevant format.

In addition, the Contractor should enrich the deliverables with proposals for **illustrative content**, such as **text frames (boxes), quotes, tables, graphs, infographics, annexes**, etc.

The Contractor will also include an **executive summary, a bibliography**, and as many **annexes** as she/he estimates necessary.

The deliverables will be considered delivered upon final approval by the CEMR Secretariat.

Estimated budget

The budget available for this contract is **10.000 Euros (outside VAT) including travel expenses, per diem, etc split into two payments**. First **5.800 Euros** in December 2021, and the balance of **4.200 Euros** will be paid in May 2022 upon final approval by the CEMR Secretariat of all deliverables.

Contractor profile

The Contractor should ideally:

- have thorough knowledge and understanding of local public finance and sustainable investments;
- additional expertise in local autonomy and decentralisation is an advantage;
- have demonstrated experience in conducting desk research, drafting publications and/or redacting policy analysis;
- be fluent in French and English.

Technical specifications

Language. All deliverables shall be provided in English.

Style. The publication shall be drafted in a modern, fresh and light reading style, avoiding complicated or very technical terms, if possible. All used acronyms shall be explained in footnotes or in a separate section. The text shall adhere to the reference style published in the European Union *Interinstitutional style guide*².

Format. All deliverables shall be delivered electronically, by electronic mail or as downloadable documents (links). All files shall be delivered in the Microsoft Office file format (Office Open XML), OASIS file format (OpenDocument), or any other open format for storage and transmission of digital data. Pictures, infographics or drawings shall be sent in original format and size (not only copy-pasted in a text document).

Intellectual property and data protection. The Contractor shall ensure the compliance of all deliverables, or their constituent parts, with applicable intellectual property legislation and personal data protection legislation. Full copyrights of pictures or illustrations should be provided to the client. All original contribution by the Contractor, as well as the final publication, shall be released under the *Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike 4.0 International License*³.

² *Interinstitutional style guide*. European Union (2011 and subsequent updates)

³ *CC BY-NC-SA 4.0*

Volume. The final publication after layout shall not exceed 70 pages of content (indicative share: 5 pages for summary, introduction and methodology, 10 pages for analysis, 10 pages for green recovery, 30 pages for focus countries and 5 pages recommendations), plus 4 pages of cover, with the paper size according to the ISO 2016 A4 specification. CEMR may shorten, amend, or modify the final study in order to meet the required text volume for layout of the publication, in one or in several languages.

Administrative information

Meetings. In case of coordination meetings taking place with the Contractor, they shall be organised virtually (platforms, phone calls, etc.). Except for the coordination meetings, eventual cost of travel, accommodation or other expenses by the Contractor shall be included in the final and total bid price.

Deadlines. Part 1 deliverables (deliverable 1 and 2) shall be delivered by the Contractor no later than on Sunday **19 December 2021**. Part 2 deliverables (deliverable 3, 4, and 5) shall be delivered by the Contractor no later than on Sunday **24 April 2022**.

Contractor selection process

Bids. Interested bidders are invited to submit the following documentation:

1. a **cover letter** detailing the bidder's experience in desk research, methodology, analysis and the proposed approach to undertake the work;
2. a **curriculum vitae** demonstrating the bidder's background and experience relevant for the assignment;
3. a **list of publications** authored or co-authored by the bidder(s).

The selection process (including possible interviews) will take place from 27 September to 8 October

Deadlines. Interested bidders shall submit their bids no later than **Sunday 26 September 2021** - midnight by electronic mail to the Contact person.

Contact person. The bids, and any other communication related to the tender, shall be sent to studies@ccre-cemr.org

Communication. An automated confirmation shall be sent to bidders upon the receipt of the bid submission. After the selection process, all bidders shall be notified about the outcome of the selection process.
