

CLARIFICATION N° 1

CEFTA SEED+ 2026-06

CEFTA TRACES NT Maintenance, Expansion and SPS Digital Systems Support

Request for clarifications received on 18 September 2026:

Question 1: Documents to be enclosed with the request to participate (Additional information, items 16, 18, and 19; application form, points 6, 7, and 8).

Item 18 of the Additional information states that applications must use the standard application form, "the format and instructions of which must be strictly observed," and that "any documentation (brochure, letter, etc.) sent with an application in addition to what has been requested will not be taken into consideration." At the same time, several selection criteria in item 16 refer to documents for which the standard application form contains no field: a valid Tax Clearance Certificate (economic and financial capacity, criterion 2); a bank letter or financial balance sheets (criterion 3); "a description of their policies and procedures for quality assurance, together with supporting documentation and evidence of relevant certifications" (professional capacity, criterion 4); a "statement/letter with supporting documents" describing security measures and "details of current organisational certifications" (criterion 5); the "usual proof of nationality" (item 4); and the "documentary evidence (statement or certificate from the entity which awarded the contract, proof of payment)" supporting the value of the reference projects (form, point 6). The declaration format under point 7 of the form, by contrast, has candidates undertake to provide evidence of financial, economic, technical, and professional capacity "if required", with reference to Section 2.6.11 of the practical guide.

Could the Contracting Authority confirm: (a) which of the documents listed above must be enclosed with the request to participate, and which will instead be requested from candidates at a later stage of the procedure; (b) for documents that must be enclosed, in which form they should be presented so that they are taken into consideration under item 18 - for example as numbered annexes referenced from the relevant point of the application form (point 3 for criteria 2 and 3; points 4 and 5 for criteria 4 and 5; point 6 for the reference evidence); (c) whether official documents issued in a language other than English (for example a national tax certificate, a bank letter or a company-register extract) may be submitted in the original language accompanied by an English translation prepared by the candidate, or whether a certified translation is required (item 14: "All written communications for this tender procedure and contract must be in English").

CEFTA Secretariat response:

Please note that, considering the time-consuming nature of this type of tender and the subsequent contractual process, potential tenderers are strongly encouraged to submit, together with the Standard Application Form and the Declaration on Honour on Exclusion Criteria and

Selection Criteria, the supporting documents referred to in Section 16 of the Additional Information about the Contract Notice. These supporting documents should be submitted at the request-to-participate stage, as they will enable the Contracting Authority to assess in sufficient detail the candidates' compliance with the applicable selection criteria and facilitate the shortlisting process at the first stage of the restricted procedure.

The supporting documents may be submitted as copies and in an appropriate (and free) format corresponding to the nature of the document, such as copies of certificates, letters, statements, financial documents, or other relevant documentary evidence. They should be clearly identified and, where appropriate, referenced to the relevant selection criterion and point of the Standard Application Form.

Supporting documents issued in a language other than English may be submitted in their original language. At this stage of the procedure, a certified or officially authenticated translation is not required. The Contracting Authority reserves the right, where necessary, to request additional or original documentary evidence at a later stage of the procedure.

Question 2: Value of services delivered under a single assignment (Additional information, item 16.3; application form, point 6 and its notes).

Technical capacity criterion 1 requires at least two distinct contracts, "one of which had a value of at least 1,450,000 EUR". The notes to point 6 of the application form provide that "for framework contracts, only specific contracts corresponding to assignments implemented under such framework contracts shall be considered", and that for projects not yet completed "only the portion satisfactorily completed during the reference period will be taken into consideration", supported by "documentary evidence (statement or certificate from the entity which awarded the contract, proof of payment) also detailing its value".

One of our references concerns the continuous development, maintenance, and support of a single information system for a single client, delivered as a single assignment over several years. The client released the work through successive work packages under a single agreement, each work package covering the same continuous assignment on the same system.

We understand the notes to mean that the specific contracts corresponding to that assignment are what fall to be considered, and that the value to be stated in point 6 is accordingly the aggregate value of the services delivered and paid for under that assignment within the reference period, evidenced by proof of payment - rather than the value of any individual work package taken in isolation. Could the Contracting Authority confirm that this is the correct approach, and indicate how such an assignment should be presented in the table at point 6?

CEFTA Secretariat response:

Please note that for an ongoing contract, the tenderer may present the assignment as one reference for the relevant client, indicating the total accumulated value of services delivered and received/paid for to date. For clarity, the tenderer should provide, under the "Detailed

description of project” section of the Standard Application Form, a description of the assignments and the individual work packages delivered, as applicable.

Question 3: Technical baseline of CEFTA TRACES NT (Contract notice, II.1.3; Additional information, items 10 and 16.2)

Section II.1.3 of the contract notice states that CEFTA TRACES NT "is based on the TRACES NT source code provided by the European Commission's DG SANTE to CEFTA and adapted to support SPS processes and information exchange within CEFTA." Under item 10, short-listed candidates may not form alliances or subcontract with each other. They may not change their composition, so any decision to partner to meet the technical competencies required by the contract must be made before the deadline for requests to participate. Candidates therefore need to establish now which technical competences the contract requires.

Could the Contracting Authority indicate, or confirm that the tender dossier at stage 2 will describe: (a) the principal technologies of the current CEFTA TRACES NT platform (programming languages, frameworks, database and integration technologies); (b) the current hosting environment, and whether hosting and infrastructure operation form part of the scope of this contract or remain with the Contracting Authority or a third party; (c) whether the source code and technical documentation of the platform will be made available to short-listed candidates before the tender submission deadline.

CEFTA Secretariat response:

The Contracting Authority informs that the tender dossier to be provided to the short-listed candidates at Stage 2 will contain the technical information necessary for the preparation of their tenders.

In particular:

(a) The tender dossier will provide relevant information on the existing technical architecture and principal technologies of the current CEFTA TRACES NT platform, including the application environment, database and integration technologies, interfaces and other relevant technical components necessary for its maintenance, further development and expansion.

(b) Hosting and the underlying cloud/infrastructure services are not part of the scope of this contract. These services are provided separately under the CEFTA technical infrastructure arrangements. The contractor under this procurement will, however, be required to ensure the proper deployment, operation and interoperability of CEFTA TRACES NT within the infrastructure made available by the Contracting Authority and to cooperate with the relevant infrastructure/service provider where necessary.

(c) Sufficient technical details and relevant documentation concerning the existing platform will be provided to short-listed candidates at Stage 2 to enable the preparation of their tenders, subject to the applicable access, confidentiality and security arrangements.

The Contracting Authority considers that the information provided at the request-to-participate stage is sufficient for candidates to assess the competencies required and to demonstrate compliance with the applicable selection criteria. More detailed technical information necessary for the preparation of the technical offer will be provided at Stage 2.

Question 4: Introduction of subcontractors at tender stage (Additional information, items 8 and 10; application form, note to point 1)

Item 8 allows subcontracting up to 20% of the value of the implementation services. Item 10 provides that short-listed candidates may not form alliances or subcontract with each other. The note to point 1 of the application form states that a subcontractor is not a consortium member and that subcontractor data must not appear in the application.

Could the Contracting Authority confirm that a candidate that submits its request to participate as a single legal entity may, at the tender stage, propose one or more subcontractors within the 20% limit that were not identified in its request to participate, provided that those subcontractors are not themselves short-listed candidates or members of a short-listed consortium?

CEFTA Secretariat response:

Please note that a candidate submitting its request to participate as a single legal entity may, at the tender (2nd) stage, describe into details involvement of one or more subcontractors that were not identified in the request to participate, provided that the applicable 20% subcontracting limit is respected. Such subcontractors must not be members of, or otherwise associated with, another short-listed candidate or consortium participating in the procedure. If subcontracting is/will be foreseen, it is recommended to be informatively mentioned at this (1st) stage.

Question 5: Provisional timetable (Additional information, item 11; Contract notice, IV.2.2 and IV.2.7)

Item 11 gives 19/10/2026 as the provisional date of the invitation to tender. This is the same date as the deadline for requests to participate in section IV.2.2 of the contract notice, and section IV.2.7 sets 14/12/2026 as the estimated date of tender opening. Could the Contracting Authority confirm the intended provisional date of the invitation to tender and indicate the period that short-listed candidates can expect to have for preparing their tenders?

CEFTA Secretariat response:

Please note that the estimated date for the invitation to tender is 19/10/2026. In accordance with the applicable procurement rules and procedures, shortlisted candidates will be granted at least 50 calendar days from the date of dispatch of the invitation to tender for the preparation and submission of their tenders.