

**Subject: Notice of open market survey, aimed at identifying an economic operator for the subsequent and possible direct awarding phase of the service, under public tender, for the management of the travels of the subjects involved in the implementation of the StEP Project, funded by the Interreg IPA Adrion Programme 2021-2027– rif. 0539 - CUP B31F23001930007.**

#### **ART. 1 REFERENCE CONTEXT**

The Economic Development Department of the Marche Region, within the framework of the StEP Project financed by the Interreg IPA Adrion Programme 2021-2027, intends to proceed with the acquisition of the travel management service for the subjects involved in the implementation of the project.

The structure responsible for the implementation of the project in question will have to organise and bear the economic costs for the travel of its internal staff, and of officials from other administrations, experts and other persons who may be involved in various ways in the project implementation activities.

The geographical area concerned by the possible travels is represented by the territories of the following countries participating in the Programme: Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Greece, Belgium, Republic of San Marino (third country), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia (IPA countries), as well as the Brussels metropolitan area and the capital cities of the participating member countries.

Specifically for EU Member States, the territories eligible for expenditure by the Funding Programme are:

- A) Croatia: 2 regions (Jadranska Hrvatska, Kontinentalna Hrvatska);
- B) Greece: 13 regions (Anatoliki Makedonia – Thraki, Kentriki Makedonia, Dytiki Makedonia, Thessalia, Ipeiros, Ionia Nisia, Dytiki Ellada, Sterea Ellada, Peloponnisos, Attiki, Voreio Aigaio, Notio Aigaio, Kriti);
- C) Italy: 12 regions e 2 autonomous provinces (Abruzzo, Molise, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia, Provincia Autonoma di Trento, Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano/Bozen, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Lombardia, Emilia-Romagna, Umbria e Marche);
- D) Slovenia: 2 regions (Vzhodna Slovenija, Zahodna Slovenija).

In order to organise any travels (also referred to as “missions” in the case of the Marche Region staff), of the subjects involved in the implementation of the project (e.g.: project partners, representatives of the participating countries, stakeholders and/or guests invited to the project events), the responsible structure intends to avail itself of an economic operator operating in the market of travel agency services, within the market sector identified with **CPV 6300000-9 - Supporting and auxiliary transport services; travel agencies services.**

The structure responsible intends to proceed with the direct awarding of the service, once it has identified the economic operator whose expression of interest will be considered the most appropriate for the public purposes pursued by the Administration, according to the criteria for identifying the operator to be invited to the subsequent procedure following the market survey, described below, in compliance with the principles of transparency, publicity, equal treatment, proportionality and rotation of awards as expressed by art. 49 D.lgs. 36/2023 and containment of public expenditure.



It should also be noted that in the event that the Administration enters into a framework agreement of a public central purchasing body for the management of the travels of its staff, or if it enters into a framework agreement or an agreement for the containment of public expenditure, the structure responsible for the implementation of the StEP project will evaluate the possible termination of the contract pursuant to Article 123 of Legislative Decree 36/2023, unless the contractual conditions of the future contract in question prove to be more advantageous for the Administration. In this sense, it will be the future contractor's right to request the renegotiation of the rates in order to continue performing the contract.

In order to determine the value of the contract, please indicate in the attached expression of interest form the current market prices and any other additional information useful for the exact determination of the value for the future direct award procedure of the service in question.

**ART. 2 OBJECT**

The required service consists of the following activities:

<b>Requested service</b>	<b>Estimated needs for the entire duration of the StEP project</b>
A) purchasing tickets for domestic flights (Italy)	100 tickets
B) purchase of tickets for international flights (to and from Italy from the countries in the geographical area specified above)	100 tickets
C) purchase of tickets for international maritime travel (to and from Italy from countries in the geographical area specified above, bordering the Adriatic basin)	10 tickets
D) purchasing tickets for local, regional and national rail travel (Italy)	100 travels
E) purchase tickets for international rail travel (within foreign countries or to and from Italy from countries in the geographical area specified above)	100 travels
F) booking and purchase of vouchers for domestic hotel accommodation (Italy) (*)	25 vouchers
G) booking and purchase of vouchers for international hotel accommodation (countries in the geographical area specified above) (*)	75 vouchers
H) booking changes and re-issues of travel tickets	50 operations
I) eventual cancellations of hotel accommodation bookings	100 operations
L) eventual cancellations of travel tickets	20 operations
M) national car rental with driver service (Italy)	10 vouchers
N) international car rental with driver service (countries in the geographical area specified above)	25 vouchers
O) purchase of meal vouchers at affiliated caterers (countries in the geographical area specified above)	50 vouchers
P) insurance for changes in bookings, cancellations of travel and accommodation	100 insurances
Q) medical insurance during travels	100 insurances

(\* ) *the voucher purchase service for accommodation must also include the amount of local taxes (e.g. city tax or subsistence tax), which will be reimbursed in full.*

The future service contract will require the following invoicing method: an invoice for the reimbursement of actual costs, incurred on behalf of the administration, and an invoice for the agency fee, net of the discount offered, plus VAT if due.

### **ART. 3 ESTIMATE OF THE TOTAL VALUE OF THE SERVICE**

For travel and transfers, the financial plan of the StEP project for the Marche Region currently provides for a maximum, all-inclusive sum of euro 42.000,00.

This sum includes the actual cost of travel tickets and vouchers for food and accommodation, the fee for the agency service, VAT where due and any options to renew the contract and increase or decrease the value by up to one fifth of the amount awarded. In addition, the amount specified in the StEP project's business plan for travel may be increased or decreased during the implementation of the project according to the actual needs of the Administration, subject to authorisation and acceptance by the competent authorities of the Funding Programme.

However, the exact value that will qualify the subsequent and possible direct awarding procedure of the service contract in question will be determined on the basis of the estimated discounted fee for the agency service, excluding VAT, as a result of this market survey.

### **ART. 4 LENGTH OF SERVICE**

The Department of Economic Development of the Marche Region, the structure of the Region in charge of implementing the StEP project, intends to acquire the service described above for an estimated period of 2 years, renewable for a maximum of a further 24 months, starting from the date of signature of the contract and in any case until the expiry date of the StEP project, currently set for December 31<sup>st</sup> 2027, unless the final project deadline is prolonged and authorised by the competent authorities of the Funding Programme.

### **ART. 5 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF THE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

Economic operators wishing to submit their expression of interest for travel management services must meet the following general and technical-professional requirements:

- a) enrolment in the Register of Companies of the Chamber of Commerce where the economic operator has its registered office and, in the case of entities based in a foreign country, enrolment in the Register or in the Official List of the State to which it belongs (at the time of submitting the expression of interest, the economic operator from another Member State, not resident in Italy, will be required to declare - pursuant to the Consolidated Text of legislative and regulatory provisions on administrative documentation, as per Presidential Decree no. 445 of 28 December 2000 - that it is enrolled in one of the professional or commercial registers, relevant to the activities covered by this notice, as per Annex II.11 of Legislative Decree 36/2023 and to have a local unit registered in the R.E.A. (*Repertorio delle notizie economiche ed Amministrative*) with a Chamber of Commerce based in Italy. The latter condition will also be applicable to operators from non-EU countries, provided that they participate in the IPA Adrion Programme 2021-2027).
- b) non-existence of automatic and non-automatic grounds for exclusion, including professional misconduct, pursuant to Articles 94 to 98 of Legislative Decree No. 36 of 31 March 2023;

- c) operate with a main ATECO code related to the services covered by this notice (ATECO code 79.1 - Activities of travel agencies and tour operators);
- d) be in possession of at least one quality system certification in accordance with European and national standards, issued by an accredited body;
- e) have attained a total turnover of at least twice the estimated maximum value of the contract (EUR 4.500,00, excluding VAT if due) in the three years preceding the call for tenders. It should be noted that the above amount has been estimated on the basis of the value of the agency service increased by the value of the options provided above;
- f) possession of a valid IATA airline ticketing licence;
- g) possession of a valid Trenitalia licence or equivalent document proving that he/she is the holder of the aforementioned licence for issuing railway tickets.
- h) it will be considered a preferential requirement to have at least one local unit in the Marche region, given the overall maximum amount envisaged for the future contract and the function of the Marche region as an actor for the competitive growth of the local ecosystem through the public procurement market.

Furthermore, it is specified that the possible future direct awarding of the public procurement contract for travel agency services will be negotiated via the telematic negotiation platform GT SUAM ("Gare e Appalti") - <https://appaltisuam.regione.marche.it/PortaleAppalti/it/homepage.wp> -, whose service is free of charge.

Failure of the economic operator to register with the platform in the above-mentioned category will absolutely not allow the direct award procedure of the service contract to be initiated against it.

#### **ART. 6 HOW TO SUBMIT AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

The expression of interest, to be drawn up in accordance with the attached form and digitally signed by the legal representative of the interested economic operator, must be transmitted via the GT-SUAM portal by 1:00 pm (13:00) Of the day June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2024.

Any other method of submission will result in the non-evaluation of the submitted event.

Expressions of interest will be assessed on the basis of the following elements:

- 1) ability to provide all the services requested and listed above;
- 2) ability to provide these services at the best possible discount compared to the list tariffs charged by transport, accommodation and catering companies;
- 3) the ability to provide any increased services, improvements and discounts to meet the administration's needs outlined above;
- 4) ability to be able to ensure as many services as possible, at competitive rates with respect to the reference market, even shortly before the start of the transfert. To this end, the economic operator concerned must specify within how many days before the start of the transfer it is able to ensure the best possible rate compared to the price list applied by the reference operator.

For the purpose of identifying the economic operator to be invited to the direct award procedure, the method of drawing lots or other random name-drawing methods will not be used, except in the event that such a large number of expressions of interest are received that the Administration is unable, within a maximum period of 15 days after the expiry date of the public notice, to complete the evaluation of all the expressions received. In this case, the economic operator will be identified from

among the expressions that will be evaluated within this deadline, provided that it is not less than twenty (20). The evaluation of the manifestations received will follow the chronological order of arrival recorded by the telematic system for the receipt of manifestations.

This notice is intended as a prior exploration to collect possible expressions of interest, in open mode, from the reference market, which will not be binding for the Marche Region for the subsequent and possible invitation to the acquisition procedure of the above mentioned travel management service.

No right arises for the applicant by the mere fact of submitting the expression of interest. The Marche Region also reserves the right not to proceed with any awarding procedure, as well as the right to amend/supplement/withdraw this notice at any time, without assuming any financial liability towards the participants in this search. Furthermore, it should be noted that no tender procedure is being launched by means of this notice.

#### **ART. 7 APPLICATION OF THE ROTATION PRINCIPLE**

Even if it is an open market survey, the Administration intends to ensure compliance with the principle of rotation, pursuant to Article 49 of Legislative Decree No. 36/2023, when identifying the economic operator to be invited to the direct service contract awarding procedure, unless, in compliance with the objective criteria for identifying the operator and the quality criteria for performing the service, the previous economic operator is the only one to have expressed its interest during the survey. In that case, the Administration's interest in receiving the service that is suitable to meet the needs that have emerged will prevail, given the effective absence of manifest alternatives on the reference market.

The perimeter for verifying compliance with the principle of rotation is that referring to the contracting station Regione Marche, identified according to the Anagrafe Unica delle Stazioni Appaltanti (AUSA), pursuant to Article 33-ter of Law Decree No. 179 of 18/10/2012, converted with amendments by Law No. 221 of 17/12/2012.

The principle of rotation shall be ensured in respect of any economic operator who, following a previous direct awarding procedure or participation in a negotiated tendering procedure without a call for competition, has been involved by the Administration of the Marche Region in the procedure for the awarding of a service falling within the same sector as the one in question, identified or identifiable with CPV 63000000-9 - Supporting and auxiliary transport services; travel agency services. The period defining the temporal consecutiveness between the previous and the subsequent procedure is that of the three years elapsing between the date of the start of the previous procedure and the date of the start of the subsequent direct award procedure.

In order to allow compliance with the rotation principle, the economic operator concerned is requested to provide a specific declaration, made pursuant to and for the purposes of Articles 46 and 47 of Presidential Decree No. 445/2000, concerning the past award procedures within the same sector of interest herein, to which it has been expressly invited by the Administration of the Marche Region during the last three years.

#### **ART. 8 EXEMPTION FROM PROVIDING THE FINAL GUARANTEE**

Any subsequent direct awarding of the service contract will be carried out without the need for the successful contractor to provide a suitable definitive guarantee, except in the case of the non-

existence of sound economic-financial conditions. In this case, the definitive guarantee will be required in an amount equal to five per cent of the contractual amount, excluding VAT where applicable.

The solidity of the economic-financial conditions of the entrusted economic operator will be ascertained by inspecting the last three annual balance sheets and at least one letter of reference issued by a bank registered in the register of banks under the supervision of the Bank of Italy.

#### **ART. 9 DATA PROCESSING**

The data sent by interested parties will be processed in accordance with the provisions of Legislative Decree No. 196/2003 as amended and supplemented for the purposes solely related to this procedure.

#### **ART. 10 PERSON IN CHARGE OF THE PROCEDURE AND OF REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION**

The person in charge of these proceedings, as well as the sole project manager, having the requisites and skills appropriate to the tasks entrusted to him/her pursuant to and for the purposes of Article 15 paragraph 1 of Legislative Decree no. 36/2023, as well as Article 3 of Regional Law no. 19 of 22 July 2013 and Article 3 of R.R. no. 1/20212 and ss.mm.ii. is Ms. **Laura Novelli**, in her capacity of assignee of an organisational position at the Contracting Authority's Economic Development Department.

Any requests for clarification may be addressed to the person in charge of the procedure, in the communications section of the GT-SUAM tenders and contracts portal at <https://appaltisuam.regione.marche.it/PortaleAppalti/it/homepage.wp>.

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#### **Annex:**

*Request for the submission of expressions of interest for the direct awarding of the travel management service for those involved in the implementation of the StEP project **available only in Italian language** : Istanza per la presentazione della manifestazione di interesse per l'affidamento diretto del servizio di gestione trasferite dei soggetti coinvolti nell'attuazione del progetto StEP.*

**The person in charge of the procedure**  
**Laura Novelli**

*Document digitally signed*