



**Terms of Reference**  
**for an assessment of the status and progress of**  
**the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) EuroFaculty Project in Pskov**

**1. Background**

The CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) decided on 7 December 2007 to launch a new EuroFaculty project in the Russian Region of Pskov (EF-P Project). The project is the third EuroFaculty project undertaken by the CBSS. Sweden was appointed Lead Country, with a representative of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs heading the project's steering body, the International Expert Group (IEG), representing all the Donors to the project.

The overall aim of the project is to upgrade the education in Business Economics/Business Administration at two institutions of higher education: the Pskov State Polytechnic Institute (PPI) and the non-state Pskov Volny Institute (PVI). This will be done through a set of activities, each designed to achieve the project objectives listed under point 2.1 below.

After a selection process based on Letters of Interest, a consortium of five donor universities, headed by Turku School of Economics, University of Turku (TSE/UTU) as Lead University together with the receiving institutions in Pskov, was given the task of implementing the project. A contract between Sweden as Lead Country, representing the Donors, and TSE/UTU as Lead University and Contractor, was signed on 1 October 2008. Due to a three-month delay, the project started on 1 January 2009 and will run until 31 December 2011. Because of the delay, a Supplementary Agreement to the Contract between the Donors and the Contractor was signed on 19 December 2008.

The Consortium was given a start-up period of six months, from 1 January to 30 June 2009, in order to become established and draft a final detailed and commonly agreed project proposal. To this end, the Consortium was asked to submit, by 1 May 2009, an 'Inception Report' for the start-up period (January–June) and a Budget and Activity Plan (BAP) for the remaining six months (July–December) of the first project year.

In accordance with the reporting dates of the said Agreement, by 1 November the Consortium had presented an Annual Report for the first project year (2009), and a Revised Budget and Activity Plan (RBAP) for the second project year (2010). A Statement of Expenditure for the first project year was presented by mid-February 2010.

These reporting documents were assessed by the International Expert Group (IEG). Together with the comments and recommendations of the Expert Group, the Annual Report for the second project year and a Revised Budget and Activity Plan for the third project year, which are due on 1 November 2010, will form the key reference materials for the assessment of the achievements of the project with regard to the stated intentions and contractual obligations. Further aspects of the assessment will be addressed below.

## **2. Aim and focus of the assessment**

The EF-P Project was launched as a 3-year endeavour, which will end on 31 December 2011. As this is a year-and-a-half before the graduation of the first generation BA students under the project period, this naturally leads to the question of a possible prolongation of the project for a second phase of an additional 3-year period in order to ensure long-term results and sustainability. The IEG has therefore decided that an independent assessment should be made two-thirds through the first project period. This assessment is intended to form the basis for a recommendation by the IEG to the CBSS/CSO as to a possible second phase.

The aims of the assessment are:

- To consider achievements to date in relation to the goals and objectives of the project as expressed in the reports and documents mentioned above, as well as the related IEG comments and recommendations.
- To consider to what degree the possibilities for long-term sustainability would be enhanced by initiating a second phase - thus justifying a proposal by the IEG to the CBSS/CSO to prolong the project period for another three years - and whether there is a need for changes in the current direction, organization, and management of the project.

The particular focus of the assessment will be:

*2.1. To assess the extent to which the objectives of the EF-P project have been reached.*

*These are:*

- Curriculum development in order to bring a) relevant degree courses at Bachelors and Master levels, as well as b) programmes of additional vocational studies<sup>1</sup>, in line with recognised international standards.
- Provision of targeted and systematic teacher training in support of curriculum development, and more interactive and demanding teaching methods, with the introduction of problem and project-based learning with increased self-study.
- Improved examination methods to ensure the link between what is taught and how it is taught, and what and how is tested.
- Creation of a quality assurance system which, combined with support to management, will ensure lasting improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Provision of additional language training in English for staff and students.
- Provision of enhanced access to books, journals and other means of communicating research results, including the training of librarians.
- Establishment of a mobility scheme for MA and PhD students to study abroad at donor universities for a limited period of time.

*2.2. To assess whether the management and decision-making procedures established by the Lead University and the Consortium are adequate to meet the objectives above and to secure the involvement of all partners as well as the commitment of the receiving institutions and their staff directly involved in EF-P.*

*2.3. To assess the work and role of the Lead Country, and the International Expert Group in the planning and implementation of the project.*

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<sup>1</sup> a) is the task of the Pskov State Polytechnic Institute (PPI), whereas b) additional vocational education was the main direction of the Pskov Volny Institute (PVI). Achievements in this latter regard shall not be part of the assessment, since only a few activities were organized for the benefit of the PVI due to a long period of uncertainty concerning the future of the PVI. On 29 June 2010 the Pskov Regional Department of the Federal Taxation Service decided to liquidate the Pskov Volny Institute.

However, in view of the need of the economy of the Pskov Region for high-quality additional education in Business Economics/Business Administration, a need repeatedly expressed by the Governor of Pskov, the assessment shall consider whether the EF-P Project should seek to support such programmes at another institution of higher education in Pskov.

*2.4. To assess whether project funds have been distributed adequately in relation to both the fulfilment of the project objectives and viewed in relation to the quality and sustainability of the measures implemented.*

The assessing person/entity shall define the methodology that will be used, and that will be relevant to meet the aims. This should be presented clearly in the proposal/letter of interest as it will constitute an important element of the selection criteria among the bidding teams/bidders.

### **3. Project evaluation personnel and qualification requirements**

The assessing person/entity shall be a legal person or a group of no more than three persons with documented qualifications for evaluating international cooperation projects in the field of higher education. In order to document the qualifications of each person who may participate in the assessment, a dated and signed Curriculum Vitae, and at least two short descriptions of previous assessments, including the name and contact information of the responsible contractor, shall be included in the submitted proposals.

Previous experience in evaluating similar projects involving the Russian Federation and a background in Business Administration/Economics are advantageous. Knowledge of the Russian language is also of benefit.

The assessing person/entity shall have no formal and/or financial connection with the universities that are members of the EF-P Consortium, nor have any current or recent connections to or project cooperation with the staff acting within the Consortium.

### **4. The funding available**

The maximum funding available for the assessment task is EUR 30 000, including all expenses.

<b>Timetable</b>	
6 September	Announcement of the Terms of Reference
20 September	Deadline for submitting letters of interest
4 October	Shortlisted persons/entities will be notified
29 October	Deadline for submitting detailed proposals
Second week of November	Announcement of winning entity and contract to be concluded
15 November	Start of the assessment work
20 January 2011	Deadline for the Interim Report
14 Feb. 2011	Deadline for the Final Assessment Report

## **5. The tender and selection procedure**

The tender will be organised in two steps.

Firstly, these Terms of Reference for the assessment to be carried out will be announced by 6 September 2010 via the Internet and published on selected official websites. Interested persons/entities are invited to send a letter of interest by email and ordinary post to the official address of the Lead Country listed below no later than 20 September 2010.

Secondly, the selection process will be administered by the Lead Country in cooperation with the International Expert Group which on the basis of the letters of interest received, will make a shortlist of 3–5 entities. The short-listed entities will be notified by 4 October 2010 and invited to present a detailed proposal for the execution of the task no later than 29 October 2010. All costs related to steps 1 and 2 are to be covered by the participating entities and will not be considered for reimbursement by the project.

The International Expert Group will then review the proposals received and a decision regarding the winning bid will be taken during the second week of November 2010, with notification going out to the selected entity as soon as possible thereafter. A contract with the winning entity shall be signed as soon as possible thereafter, and the assessing entity shall begin its task no later than 15 November 2010.

A review of the assignment shall be submitted to the Head of the International Expert Group (IEG) within two weeks of the start of the assessment. An Interim Report shall be sent by email to the Head of the IEG by 20 January 2011 at the latest. The Final Report shall be sent by email and, in two original copies, by ordinary post no later than 14 February 2011 to the official address of the Lead Country:

Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Department for Eastern Europe and Central Asia  
SE-103 39 Stockholm, Sweden

Att.: Ambassador Kerstin Asp-Johnsson, Head of the International Expert Group

Email: [kerstin.asp-johnsson@foreign.ministry.se](mailto:kerstin.asp-johnsson@foreign.ministry.se)

Tel: + 46 8 405 56 74, Fax: +46 8 723 11 76

The Interim and Final Reports shall be written in English.

For further information on the EuroFaculty Project in Pskov, please visit the CBSS website at: <http://www.cbss.org/Education-Culture/eurofaculty-pskov>