

INTERREG IPA CBC GREECE – ALBANIA PROGRAMME 2021 – 2027

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Call for the selection of 1 (one) Head of First Level Control Office, located in Tirana

Introduction

The Interreg IPA CBC Greece-Albania Programme 2021-2027 is co-funded by the European Union through the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA III). The programme objective is to support cooperation between the two countries by joining forces and leveraging the advantages of the cross-border region in order to achieve mutual benefits for both countries.

The Managing Authority (MA) of the Programme is responsible for managing and implementing the Programme on behalf of the participating partner countries. The Managing Authority is the Ministry of Development & Investments. The Joint Secretariat (JS) provides information to potential beneficiaries, guides project applications, and supports partners in the implementation of their projects. Both the Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat are located in Thessaloniki.

In Albania, the National Authority responsible for the coordination of the Programme is the State Agency for Strategic Programming and Aid Coordination (SASPAC). The National Authority is responsible for ensuring the proper functioning of the management and control system in Albania, in particular for ensuring compliance with applicable EU and national rules for all expenditures incurred by Albanian beneficiaries.

First Level Control Office is in charge of the verifications of expenditures made by Albanian beneficiaries. A centralized first level control system is in place. The staff of the FLC Office consists of four (4) members: one (1) Head and three (3) First Level Controllers.

The Head of the First Level Control (FLC) Office is responsible for ensuring the legality and regularity of the activities implemented and expenditures declared by Albanian beneficiaries within the framework of operations funded under the Interreg IPA CBC Greece–Albania Programme, through the supervision of the work of the First Level Controllers. He/she reports directly to the National Authority on the functioning of the centralised FLC system

This post is based in Tirana and is directly supervised by SASPAC. All interested candidates are requested to submit their application for this position. The successful applicant will be

employed by the State Agency for Strategic Programming and Aid Coordination.

The Head of FLCO shall perform the following main tasks:

- Verifies the legality and regularity of activities and of the expenditure declared by each of the Albanian beneficiaries implementing the operations carried out in the Albanian territory as well as their compliance with EU and National rules, based on the Framework Agreement, the applicable Programme documents, the Subsidy Contract, the Partnership Agreement and the Application Form, through:
- Verification of the certificates prepared and issued by the first level controllers under his/her supervision, in accordance with the documents of all projects for which the beneficiaries have prepared/submitted progress reports, and in accordance with the following principles:
 - Principles of reality and economy according to which it is necessary to verify that the expenditure is actually incurred, it is directly linked to the co-financed operation and the objectives pursued are achieved through the activities undertaken in due time, in appropriate quality and quality and at the best price.
 - Principle of regularity¹ and legality according to which it is necessary to verify that the expenditure complies with the EU and National laws and the contract including the verification of financial reports, the compliance of expenses required to be reimbursed with the budget articles of the application form; verification of financial documents (legality of expenses and payments and their compliance with community and domestic regulations); verification of compliance of the reported activities with national and community rules; verification of compliance of public procurement procedures with applicable rules; verifications of the fulfillment of requirements for the Programme publicity; application of anti-fraud measures;
 - Principle of localisation of the co-financed operation, according to which it is necessary to verify that the expenditure incurred is related to an operation implemented within the Programme eligible area; on-the-spot verifications at the premises of the beneficiary partners in Albania and/or location where the activities are implemented, in accordance with the sampling methodology established by the Programme;
 - Principle of documented evidence requiring that expenditure has been documented with receipts and/or invoices or accounting records of equivalent legal validity.
- Assists the Programme Structures such as: National Authority (NA), Managing Authority (MA), Joint Secretariat (JS), Joint Monitoring Committee/Monitoring Committee (JMC/MC), Certifying Authority (CA), Audit Authority (AA) or other structures with respect to the functioning of Programme implementation within the framework of the competences of the FLC Office.

¹ Namely, the extent to which transactions have been conducted in accordance with the relevant laws and contracts

- Assists the National Authority or other Programme structures in providing training sessions for potential beneficiaries/leading partners in the Albanian territory, in compliance with the plan approved by the Programme structures.
- Provides the National Authority with reports, statistics and information on the work of the FLC Office and the implementation of the Programme when requested. Also informs the Irregularity Officer and/or the National Authority in relation to any issues or irregularities detected during the implementation of operations by Albanian beneficiaries.
- Cooperates with Audit Authority, Group of Auditors and other Control and Audit entities, be they national or from the European Union, in their control and audit activities and provides them with all required documents.
- Supervises the work of the First Level Controllers working in the FLC Office; plans and updates regularly the work load and the annual plan for on-the-spot verifications in accordance with the sampling methodology established by the Programme, in line with approval of projects in Programme calls.
- Supervises the implementation of quality assurance procedures of the Programme and reports to the Programme authorities on this.
- Ensures that all work processes and procedures are carried out in line with established Programme rules and SASPAC work practices for the public administration.
- Applies confidentiality and impartiality principles, as well as strictly avoiding any conflict of interest, in particular being in no way entitled to accept any other assignments by beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries of the Programme, which are incompatible with the current position.

Required Qualifications:

1. University Degree (at least 4 years of studies in finance, accounting, economics, law or other relevant fields);
2. At least 7 years of working experience in financial management and/or control and audit of projects/programmes, preferably financed by EU Funds;
3. Knowledge of relevant EU regulations, Programme rules and national laws and regulations in place;
4. Good knowledge of public procurement procedures (national and PRAG rules);
5. Familiar with Programme and project level monitoring procedures and systems.
6. Advanced level of English language, both spoken and written (at least C1); able to prepare documents in standard English and communicate effectively with relevant authorities, when needed;
7. A clean criminal record, as well as no disciplinary record, connected to failures in fulfilling accountancy or financial management tasks.
8. Very good computer literacy including excel, word processing, and use of data bases.

Additional elements/qualifications to be considered as an asset:

1. Post graduate studies in any field of relevance to the mentioned tasks, such as a Master's degree or post-graduate qualification in either accounting, finance or auditing;
2. Professional certified accountant or accomplished professional training programme in either audit (Certified Public Accountant or Statutory Auditor) or accounting (Certified Accountant);
3. Experience in management or technical support of Interreg Programmes;
4. Experience in management of public procurement procedures (national and PRAG);
5. Previous experience in leading working teams;
6. Organizational skills and effectiveness;
7. Knowledge of public finance rules and practices;
8. Proven ability to work in a multicultural environment.

Application procedure

Interested applicants should submit in hard copy

- A motivation letter in English;
- A CV in English (suggested europass format);
- Degrees/Diploma for the relevant education, Certificates, trainings, or any other relevant document related to the education;
- A copy of the documentation proving the working experience as described in this ToRs;
- Copy of a valid Identification Document, signed with the original signature of the applicant on it;
- To avoid the rejection of the application, all the supporting documents should be included in the application as requested.

All documentation should be submitted in English; if not in English, accompanied by English translation (**unofficial translation**).

The CV and supporting documents submitted shall be examined in order to assess the compliance with the selection criteria. The Selection Committee will evaluate the education and length of professional experience of candidates, as stated under the required qualifications rubric, based on the documentation submitted. All candidates meeting the required qualifications will be invited to an interview, where their qualitative professional experience and respective qualifications and competencies (and the Written Test) will be assessed.

The Selection Committee will select the appropriate applicant per position, taking into account the sum of the applicant's scores in the CV evaluation and the interview (and the Written Test). The Selection Committee will draw up a ranking list of the interviewed applicants. In each stage of the selection procedure all candidates will be notified by e-mail, sent to the addresses indicated in the CVs.

For successful applicant that will be employed by SASPAC before the signing of his/her employment contract, an official document should be submitted verifying that there is no criminal record.

Administrative Elements

1. Contesters/participants should have:

- a) Good Knowledge of the Interreg IPA CBC Greece-Albania Programme:
<https://greece-albania.eu/>
- b) Good Knowledge of PRAG Rules:
<https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/spaces/ExactExternalWiki/pages/152798604/ePRAG>
- c) Good knowledge of the Albanian Labor Code:
https://qbz.gov.al/share/Ldpfd2e9SoihoV7O9_yQIQ
- d) Knowledge of the Financial Agreement for the Interreg IPA CBC Greece-Albania Programme:
[Marrëveshja Financiare është ratifikuar me Ligjin nr. 75, datë 25.07.2024](#)

2. Evaluation.

- a. Their qualification will be done based upon the above **qualification requirements**.
- b. Contesters/participants qualified to enter the test will be evaluated based on the following norms:
 - b1. Dossier: up to 15 points.
 - b2. Written testing: up to 60 points.
 - b3. Oral testing: up to 25 points.

The final selection will be for the best of those who reach more than 70 points in total.