

OPEN CALL FOR TENDER

for laboratories to participate in interlaboratory studies for the validation of European Standards in support of the Standardisation Request M/564, amended by the Commission Implementing Decision C(2022) 47 final (M/564 Amdt 1), and by the Commission Implementing Decision C(2023) 8288 final (M/564 Amdt 2) to the European Committee for Standardisation as regards the EU fertilising products in support of Regulation (EU) 2019/1009 of the European Parliament and of the Council

Starting date: 2024-03-12

Deadline for tenders: 2024-04-15

I Introduction

I.1 General

This is an open call for laboratories willing to contribute to the activities of CEN/TC 260 "Fertilizers and liming Material" Working Group 8 "Organic and organo-mineral fertilizers" (CEN/TC 260/WG8) by participating to the interlaboratory studies for some methods developed by this Working Group, which need to be validated. These methods will form the basis for the drafting of European Standards (EN).

Laboratories realizing the analyses in the framework of the interlaboratory study(ies) will be contracted to test the method(s) for which they applied. It is planned to select 10 to 13 laboratories per method.

I.2 Context

The European Committee for Standardization (CEN) is requested to draft harmonised standards and European standardisation deliverables that support the implementation of standardization request M/564 to the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) as regards the EU fertilising products in support of Regulation (EU) 2019/1009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, (amended by the Commission Implementing Decision C(2022) 47 final (M/564 Amd1) and by the Commission Implementing Decision C(2023) 8288 final (M/564/Amd 2)).

II Objectives

The objectives of this project are described in Annex I.

III Execution

III.1 General tasks of laboratories realizing the analysis in the framework of the InterLaboratory Study(ies) (ILS)

The laboratories shall realize the analyses by applying the test methods, which involves the following tasks:

- organize necessary facilities, equipment and supplies for the testing;
- participate if necessary in meetings covering topics regarding the interlaboratory study;
- properly conduct the analysis by strictly applying the test method described in the supplied protocol(s) to test the provided samples;

- cooperate with the selected partner in charge of organizing interlaboratory studies, the project leader, the working group convenor and the working group secretary in order to solve potential problems (e.g : during the conduction of the ILS, during statistical treatment of data, etc)
- provide the test results including all data and comments to the project leader and/or Statistician in the manner required by them;

III.2 Timeframe

The timeframe for the ILS is embedded in the general timeframe for the projects, which is in the responsibility of CEN/TC 260/WG 8. The below target dates and timeframe are a realistic estimation but may still change depending on the progress of the methods to be developed :

- STEP 1, Receipt of the samples to be tested and start of the ILS : 31st December 2024 at the latest¹
- STEP 2, Submission of the test results including all data to the project leader and/or Statistician : STEP 1 + maximum 4 months (shorter time frame are defined for microbial parameters and Cr VI : see in Annex I)

The laboratories shall respect the deadlines of the deliverables. If deadlines are not kept, EC is entitled to withhold payment.

The foreseen maximum target dates for the project is as follows:

Step	Target dates for standards falling under projects ² numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11.	Target dates for standards falling under projects numbers 7, 8, 9.
Collaborative study report	1 st October 2025	1 st April 2026
Dispatch prEN enquiry draft to CCMC (30.99)	1 st January 2026	1 st July 2026
Dispatch FprEN Final Draft to CCMC (45.99)	1 st January 2027	1 st July 2027
Definitive EN text is available (stage 60.60)	1 st July 2027	1 st January 2028

IV Financial support

The European Commission and EFTA have decided to provide financial support for the laboratories to validate the methods developed by Working Group CEN/TC 260/WG8. The financial support from the European Commission and EFTA is based on the SMP 'Single Market Programme Regulation' (including its Financing Decision) and the MGA (Multi or mono beneficiary(ies) Grant Agreement). Unless specified otherwise, costs of external subcontractors are generally funded at 100%, with approx. 95% being borne by EC and 5% by EFTA. Costs have to qualify as eligible as defined in *MGA N° 2021-04* and also in compliance with [EC Financial Regulation](#), and be justified. The payment is usually divided into several instalments after completion of defined milestones and approval of the interim/final reports and the justification of costs. The subcontracting laboratories shall fulfil the conditions of the MGA N° 2021-04,

¹ An earlier start of the ILS is possible, which depends on the progress on the method. The start of the ILS is not expected before 31st August 2024.

² Projects numbers are given in Annex I, article 3. "Overview of European Standards up for validation by means of interlaboratory studies for which this call is launched"

including those relating to liability, ownership of results, confidentiality, conflict of interests, publicity, evaluation, assignment, checks and audits.

The subcontractor's costs shall be justified with copies of the relevant invoices. All relevant evidence shall be kept in view of future payments (reports, work, drafts and deliverables, contracts & invoices, time sheets, tickets, boarding cards, hotel invoices, attendance lists with signatures, meeting agendas & reports, invoices for any consumables, purchase orders, etc...).

Costs incurred before the Grant Agreement is signed (unless, exceptionally differently agreed with the EC) and before the selection procedure is finalized, will not be considered as eligible for EU financial support.

The laboratories selected will sign an agreement with AFNOR before starting to work on the project. Payments to the laboratories are dependent on AFNOR having received the corresponding payments from CEN. Applicants should be forewarned that the elapsed time between completion of the deliverables and AFNOR being in a position to issue the payment is at least five months. This will be partly overcome by the fact that CEN and the European Commission have agreed on payment steps.

V Selection criteria

The applicants shall comply with the requirements given in Annex II.

VI Award criteria

The weight attributed to each required skill/expertise is also given in Annex II.

From the applications received as a result of the Open Call for Tender, the selection of the laboratories will be done by a selection panel.

The selection and appointment of the laboratories will be conducted by a selection panel that may be composed of :

- the Secretary of CEN/TC 260 "Fertilizers and liming materials";
- the Chairperson of CEN/TC 260 "Fertilizers and liming materials";
- the Convenor of CEN/TC 260/WG 8 "Organic and organo-mineral Fertilizers";
- A representative of the Secretariat of CEN/TC 260/WG 8 "Organic and organo-mineral Fertilizers";
- A representative from CEN.

VII Eligibility criteria

The following candidating laboratories will be excluded:

- evaluation score is lower than 65% in total
- subject of a non-likely judgment of recourse for a professional infringement
- in an irregular tax situation or in an irregular special taxation situation
- providing incomplete or erroneous information.
- submitting their application after the submission deadline.
- presenting any conflict of interest.

VIII Tenders

Tenders shall be sent (only by email) to CEN/TC 260/WG 8 Secretary, Mr Olivier Teitgen (see contact details below), as soon as possible, to be received at the latest by **2024/04/15**. Applications received after this deadline will not be taken into consideration.

The tender shall be in English and contain :

- Application form in Annex IV ;
- Any required accreditation certificates;
- A schedule and a description of the execution of the tasks which will be carried out in the project as such;
- A table with detailed information on the costs (an example of table is given in Annex III);
- Appropriate documentation to prove the economic and financial capacities;
- Any further documents to prove the qualification required in the above Clauses on Selection and Award criteria;
- A signed declaration (an example of declaration is given in Annex V), by which the candidate(s) certifies not to be subject to one of the exclusion criteria as described in Clause "Eligibility criteria" and the veracity of the adjoining documents.

Please note that, to ensure equal treatment of all tenders, it is not possible to modify offers after their submission in relation to the technical and financial proposals. Therefore, incompleteness in this section can only result in negative impact for the evaluation of award criteria. Please note also that proposals deviating from the technical specifications may be rejected for non-conformity.

Tenders should be sent by legal representative, i.e. to be considered, any possible association has to be formalized according to the local legislation before submitting the tender. Working teams, partnerships and other groups of people, particularly under the aegis of an institute qualify as contractors for the service contracts awarded in the course of this Cft (Call for Tender). Partnerships or joint ventures and other legally binding co-operations regardless of their organizational form qualify as well, provided they are recognized entities under the applicable national laws. Potential candidates may come from the public sector as well as from the private industry. It is essential however that the qualifications and experience of the individual fulfilling the tasks are properly described.

It is possible to apply for a work package as a consortium. If a consortium is formed, one institute needs to be identified as the leader of the consortium and the division of labour between the consortium members should be clearly described and justified. In this case, only the leader of the consortium would sign the contract with the contractor and ensure that all tasks are fulfilled and is responsible for the justifications and expenses of the consortium members. It is essential however that all members of the consortium are properly identified within the offer.

Regarding question concerning the information provided in this call for tender or in case of need for clarification or additional information please contact CEN/TC 260/WG 8 Secretary, Mr Olivier Teitgen (see contact details below).

If due to queries or other reasons supplementary information to this call for tender is required, this will be published on the website of the AFNOR and CEN-CENELEC.

Please send your application to :

BN FERTI (on behalf of AFNOR) Mr Olivier Teitgen CEN/TC 260/WG 8 Secretary
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oteitgen@bnferti.fr

Le Diamant A - 92909 LA DEFENSE CEDEX

France

Phone : +33 (0)1 46 53 10 47

Annex I: Project plan

1. Background and general objectives

Background of Standardisation request M/564

With Standardization Request (SReq) M/564 of February 2020 and its amendments, the European Commission (EC) charged the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) to elaborate harmonized European Standards and European standardization deliverables in the framework of the [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1009 on fertilising products](#).

The new Regulation creates a level playing field for all fertilizing products. At the same time, new common requirements for quality, safety and labelling will allow European farmers to make informed choices, contributing to making food production more cost and resource effective. The harmonized standards will help economic operators and competent authorities to verify the compliance of CE-marked fertilizing products against the legal requirements.

The aim of the SReq is to develop methods on sampling and analysis of fertilizing products. The establishment of standardized methods of analysis is of utmost importance to guarantee a uniform application and control of the European legislation in all Member States. Standardized methods of analysis are an indispensable element in increasing the quality and safety for fertilizing products for the benefit of farmers. In this perspective, validated modern analytical methods are a prerequisite for reliable analytical results.

In accordance with Article 13(2) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1009, tests for verifying the conformity of EU fertilizing products with the requirements set out in Annexes I, II and III to that Regulation which are in conformity with harmonized standards or parts thereof, the references of which have been published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*, are to be presumed to be reliable and reproducible to the extent that the tests are covered by those standards or parts thereof.

Harmonized standards help ensuring a high level of protection of human, animal and plant health and of the environment throughout the European Union and contribute to the free movement of quality EU fertilizing products in the Union. Given that such standards are technology-neutral and performance-based, they also contribute to ensuring equal conditions of competition among relevant economic operators dealing with EU fertilizing products, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises. Harmonized standards help manufacturers in proving the conformity of their products with the relevant requirements set out in Union harmonization legislation.

The Standardization Request includes a very large number of standardization projects and a broad scope of application with regard to the product range. Three CEN/Technical Committees (TCs) will perform the work mandated under this SReq:

- CEN/TC 260 Fertilizers and liming materials,
- CEN/TC 223 Soil Improvers and growing media, and
- CEN/TC 455 Plant biostimulants.

This proposal concerns some standards relevant to CEN/TC 260 'Fertilizers and liming materials'.

General objectives within CEN/TC 260

The objective of CEN/TC 260 is the elaboration of harmonized standardized methods for sampling and analysis of fertilizers and liming materials. The secretariat is held by the German Institute for Standardization (DIN). The list of standards adopted by CEN/TC 260 is available on [CEN CENELEC](#)

[website](#). Many of these standards have been developed in the frame of three EU Mandates as M/335, M/418 and M/455.

The elaboration of the elements requested in SReq M/564 and its amendments will be realized within CEN/TC 260 and its 5 Working Groups. These standardization deliverables will cover fertilizing products under the following Product Function Categories:

- PFC 1 Fertilizers
- PFC1/A Organic fertilizers
- PFC 1/B Organo-mineral fertilizers
- PFC 1/C Inorganic fertilizers
- PFC 2 Liming materials
- PFC 5 Inhibitors
- PFC 7 Fertilizing product blends,

and the following Component Material Categories (CMCs):

- CMC 1 Virgin material substances and mixtures
- CMC 8 Nutrient Polymers.

Furthermore, other CMCs will be addressed in the standardization deliverables if relevant for the fertilizing products of CEN/TC 260.

2. Workload within CEN/TC 260/WG8

CEN/TC 260/WG 8 “*Organic and organo-mineral fertilizers*” has initially be charged to develop 19 documents. They have to be elaborated in two steps: as Technical Specification first (CEN/TS) first and then as European Standards (EN or hEN). The CEN/TS have already been published and are used as a basis for the development of the ENs.

This call concerns several above mentioned European Standards for which the performance characteristics of the methods need to be determined by means of interlaboratory studies. **The projects subject to this call fall mainly within the categories in Regulation (EU) 2019/1009 designated by PFC 1A, 1B and PFC 7 containing PFC 1A or 1B. Some CMCs have also to be tested** (CMC 11 By-Products, CMC 13 Thermal oxidation materials and derivates, CMC 15 Recovered high purity materials).

Note regarding the draft documents:

Please bear in mind that the enclosed protocols are drafts. It is possible that changes can be made before the official start of the interlaboratory study. Your laboratory will be provided with the formal protocol for validation in due time before the execution of the experiments in the interlaboratory studies. Furthermore, these drafts will be altered where necessary after execution of the interlaboratory study, the CEN Enquiry and CEN Formal Vote.

3. Overview of European Standards up for validation by means of interlaboratory studies for which this call is launched

Table 1 shows an overview of the European Standards that require validation by means of interlaboratory studies under development in CEN TC260/WG 8 *Organic and organo-mineral fertilizers* (and for which this call is launched).

Table 1 – Overview of the European Standards that require validation by means of interlaboratory studies.

Project Number (in this call)	CEN Reference	Title	Approximative number of samples to be tested	Maximum number of repetition per sample	Remark
1	EN 17778	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers – Determination of chromium VI content	6	3	For spiked samples (4 samples on 6), analysis should be performed with no delay after reception of the samples. STEP 2 (Submission of the test results including all data to the project leader and/or Statistician) is for this project : STEP 1 + 1 month
2	EN 17765	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers – Determination of biuret content	6	3	
3	EN 17771	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers – Determination of nitrogen content	9	3	All samples products will contain >1% total nitrogen by mass. & At least 5 out of 9 samples will contain: >0.5% nitrate nitrogen by mass & At least 5 out of 9 samples will contain: >0.5% Ammoniacal nitrogen by mass & At least 5 out of 9 samples will contain: >0.5% ureic nitrogen by mass & At least 5 out of 9 samples will contain: >0.5% organic nitrogen by mass
4	EN 17775	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Determination of the inorganic arsenic content	6	3	Laboratories will have to specify the analytical instrumentation for speciation analysis (HPLC, ICP-MS or IC)

5	EN 17768	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Digestion by aqua regia for subsequent determination of elements	9	3	Determination of P, K, Ca, Mg, Na, S, B, Co, Cu, Fe, Mn, Mo, Zn, As, Cd, Cr, Ni and Pb has to be done on 8 of the 9 samples Determination of Fe, Zn, Cu, Co and Mn only has to be done on 1 of the 9 samples (CMC11)
	EN 17770	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Determination of total content of specific elements by ICP-AES after digestion by aqua regia			
	EN 17769	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Determination of mercury content	8		
6	EN 17666	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Extraction by water for subsequent determination of elements	6-7	3	Determination of B, Co, Cu, Fe, Mn, Mo and Zn has to be done
	EN 17774	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Determination of the content of specific elements by ICP-AES after extraction by water			
	EN 17767	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Extraction of phosphorus by formic acid for subsequent determination of P by ICP-AES	6		Determination of P has to be done
	EN 17779	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Extraction of phosphorus, which is soluble in neutral ammonium citrate (NAC) for subsequent determination of P by ICP-AES			Determination of P has to be done

7	EN 17780	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Determination of Salmonella spp	4 materials	8 repetition per pathogen level (3 pathogen levels per material)	Analysis should be performed with no delay after reception of the samples. STEP 2 (Submission of the test results including all data to the project leader and/or Statistician) is for this project : STEP 1 + 1 month
8	EN 17781	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Determination of Escherichia coli	4 materials	2 repetition per pathogen level (4 pathogen levels per material)	Analysis should be performed with no delay after reception of the samples. STEP 2 (Submission of the test results including all data to the project leader and/or Statistician) is for this project : STEP 1 + 1 month
9	EN 17804	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Determination of Enterococcaceae	4 materials	2 repetition per pathogen level (4 pathogen levels per material)	Analysis should be performed with no delay after reception of the samples. STEP 2 (Submission of the test results including all data to the project leader and/or Statistician) is for this project : STEP 1 + 1 month
10	EN 17773	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Determination of the dry matter content	13	3	
11	EN 17776	Organic and Organo-mineral fertilizers - Determination of the organic carbon content	8	3	

Annex II: Selection criteria for laboratories willing to participate to interlaboratory study(ies) on methods developed by CEN/TC 260/WG8

The applicants shall comply with the following requirements:

1. Financial and economic capacity to execute the project

- Sufficient economic and financial capacity to guarantee continuous and satisfactory performance throughout the envisaged lifetime of the contract.
- Sufficient financial capacity to cover all pre-financing foreseen under the contract.

2. Technical and professional capacity

Table 2 – Technical and professional capacity criteria with their weight in the selection process.

PROFILE OF THE LABORATORY	35 %
Number of years of experience in performing analyses of the relevant substances in fertilizing products, food, feed (at least 3)	15 %
Accreditation for ISO 17025:2017 and/or GLP certification	5 %
Availability of equipment, materials and consumables required for the execution of the method(s) for which you are applying for	15 %
VALIDATION OF METHODS	55 %
Participation in comparable projects in the validation of test methods (Number of projects/Number of years)	20 %
Participation in at least 1 inter-laboratory study on the analysis of relevant substances with satisfactory results during the last 5 years	10 %
Relevant experience in performing the method of analysis for which the laboratory is applying for (kind of analysis, number of year of practicing, etc)	20 %
Sound educational qualifications, and further qualifications / significant experience in the area of analytical techniques of fertilizing products (of the relevant personnel involved)	5 %
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS	10 %
Communication skills and proficiency in English of the contact person as the test method is provided in English only and in order to effectively participate in (web-)meetings in English	10 %
TOTAL	100 %

Candidates replying to this call shall score at least 65 % of the selection criteria mentioned in the table above. After evaluation, the replies from applicants will be ranked using the equation below to determine which replies offer best value for money, in which quality defines 70 % and the price defines 30 % of the total score for the tender.

$$\text{Score for tender X} = 0,3 \left(\frac{\text{cheapest price}}{\text{price of tender X}} \right) + 0,7 \left(\frac{\text{points awarded to tender X according to Table A2.1}}{100} \right)$$

Annex III: Table with detailed information on the costs

The following table shall be used in the tender to give detailed information on the costs regarding the work of the laboratory.

WARNING ! If you apply to several interlaboratory studies³, **please fill a table per project:**

Project N° _____

Person day, Analysis rates, etc	Cost
TOTAL COST :	0,00

Project N° _____

Person day, Analysis rates, etc	Cost
TOTAL COST :	0,00

³ ILS projects 1 to 11 are listed and detailed in Annex I, Article 3 "Overview of European Standards up for validation by means of interlaboratory studies for which this call is launched"

Annex IV: Application to a Call for Tender / Consultation process in compliance with SMP Single Market Programme Regulation (and its financing decision) & MGA (Mono or Multi beneficiary(ies) Grant Agreement)

A- Contact details of the Expert

Name: Position: Phone: Email address: Personal website (if any):
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B- Information about the organisation/s the expert is working (name, website, contact person, phone, email)

C- Curriculum Vitae (maximum 4 A4 pages) - can also be enclosed separately

D- Please specify the position you are applying for:

If you apply to several interlaboratory studies, please note that your application will be assessed project per project : your application may be selected for all or some of the projects for which you are applying.

Please indicate for which project(s) you are applying for by filling in the table below.		
<i>Project Number</i>	<i>Standards covered</i>	<i>Interested to participate (Yes or No)?</i>
1	EN 17778 (Cr VI)	
2	EN 17765 (Biuret)	
3	EN 17771 (N)	
4	EN 17775 (inorganic As)	
5	EN 17768 (Digestion by aqua regia), EN 17770 (Determination of total content), EN 17769 (Hg)	

6	EN 17766 (Extraction by water), EN 17774 (Determination after extraction by water), EN 17767 (Extraction of phosphorus by formic acid), EN 17779 (Extraction of phosphorus, which is soluble in neutral ammonium citrate (NAC))	
7	EN 17780 (Salmonella)	
8	EN 17781 (Escherichia coli)	
9	EN 17804 (Enterococcaceae)	
10	EN 17773 (dry matter)	
11	EN 17776 (organic carbon)	

E- Please describe and provide evidence of the required skills and expertise for the role you are applying for (half a page maximum including your proposed approach)

YES	NO	Skills and expertise	Short description of the evidence of the required skills and expertise for the role you are applying for
		FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC CAPACITY TO EXECUTE THE PROJECT	
		Sufficient economic and financial capacity to guarantee continuous and satisfactory performance throughout the envisaged lifetime of the contract. Sufficient financial capacity to cover all pre-financing foreseen under the contract.	
		PROFILE OF THE LABORATORY	
		Number of years of experience in performing analyses of the relevant substances in fertilizing products, food, feed (at least 3)	
		Accreditation for ISO 17025:2017 and/or GLP certification	
		Availability of equipment, materials and consumables required for the execution of the method(s) for which you are applying for	
		VALIDATION OF METHODS	
		Participation in comparable projects in the validation of test methods (Number of projects/Number of years)	
		Participation in at least 1 inter-laboratory study on the analysis of relevant substances with satisfactory results during the last 5 years	
		Relevant experience in performing the method of analysis for which the laboratory is applying for (kind of analysis, number of years of practicing, etc)	
		Sound educational qualifications, and further qualifications / significant experience in the area of analytical techniques of fertilizing products (of the relevant personnel involved)	
		ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS	

	Communication skills and proficiency in English of the contact person as the test method is provided in English only and in order to effectively participate in (web-)meetings in English	
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F- Information on the costs of the experts: table as per Annex III

G- Description of the offer (answer to the call for tender)

I certify that all documents provided are veracious and in conformity with reality and certify not to be in any situation described below:

- a) subject of a non-likely judgment of recourse for a professional infringement
- b) to be in an irregular tax situation or in an irregular special taxation situation
- c) to provide with incomplete or erroneous information

I also certify that I had no conflict of interest by submitting the present offer.

Signed:

On behalf of: (print name here)

Date:

Annex V: Declaration on honour on exclusion criteria

I certify that all documents provided are veracious and in conformity with reality and certify not to be in any situation described below :

[Please tick the appropriate boxes]

- subject of a non-likely judgment of recourse for a professional infringement
- to be in an irregular tax situation or in an irregular special taxation situation
- to provide with incomplete or erroneous information

I also certify that I had no conflict of interest by submitting the present offer and I am not concerned by any exclusion criteria listed below :

[Please tick the appropriate boxes]

- they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the European union's financial interests;
- following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations)

Signed :

On behalf of:

Date :