Terms of reference for the evaluation of measures/actions implemented under the Schengen Facility for Croatia

1. Summary

The evaluation concerns the Schengen Facility for Croatia, established as a temporary funding instrument to support Croatia between the end of 2014 and the date of its accession to the EU, under Article 31 of the Treaty of Accession of Croatia. The evaluation will cover the measures/actions implemented under this financial instrument in the period 1 July 2013 – 21 January 2017. Under the Schengen Facility, the Republic of Croatia benefitted from a total allocation of EUR 120 million of which EUR 116 861 415,77 were spent in the time frame.

According to Article 21(3) of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) Euratom No 1605/2002 and Article 18(3) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, "all programmes or activities, including pilot projects and preparatory actions, where the resources mobilised exceed EUR 5 million shall be the subject of an interim and/or ex post evaluation of the human and financial resources allocated and the results obtained in order to verify that they were consistent with the objectives set". As the expenditure under the Schengen Facility exceeds EUR 5 million, there is a legal obligation to carry out an ex-post evaluation of this instrument.

2. Objectives and purpose

The objective of the evaluation is to examine the outcomes (outputs, results and impacts) of the implementation of measures/actions under the Schengen Facility for Croatia (hereinafter referred to as Schengen Facility) and its functioning in order to:

a) assess its relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and EU added value;

b) provide recommendations in view of implementation of future EU funded interventions with similar features.

The expected user of the evaluation is the European Commission - Directorate General Migration and Home Affairs (hereinafter referred to as the Commission).

3. Scope

The evaluation should assess all measures and actions of the Schengen Facility. In this respect, the evaluation work will consider all relevant documentation, activities etc. including, inter alia, the following:

- The general policy context related to the design and implementation of the Schengen Facility;

- The programming documents and all relevant reports from the Croatian Authorities and the Final Comprehensive Report on the implementation of measures and the execution of the payments under the Schengen Facility for Croatia, submitted by the Croatian authorities to the Commission;

- The relevant national policies/strategies of Croatia in the field of border controls, as well as the afferent action plans, as indicated in the Indicative Programme 2013-2014 (Annex I);

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3 Relevance: the extent to which an intervention's objectives are pertinent to needs, problems and issues to be addressed.
4 Coherence: the extent to which the intervention is non contradictory and/or is complementary to another existing intervention
5 Effectiveness: The extent to which objectives set are achieved.
6 Efficiency: The extent to which the desired effects are achieved at reasonable cost.
7 Sustainability: The extent to which positive effects are likely to last after an intervention has terminated.
- The relevant financial assistance provided to Croatia for the upgrading of border controls and implementation of the Schengen acquis under the national budget and other EU funds/instruments such as the instrument for financial support for external borders and visa, as part of the Internal Security Fund (established through the Regulation (EU) No 515/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council);

- The draft final audit, the conclusions of the assessment of expenses and of the operational and financial checks performed by the Commission in relation to the implementation of the Schengen Facility for Croatia.

The evaluation will not cover the cash-flow, as this was already assessed by the Audit work of DG Home.

The evaluation shall rely amongst others on the consultation of all relevant stakeholders in order to gather data, facts and views on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, sustainability and EU added value of the Programme. A broad range of stakeholders have to be consulted at EU and mainly at national level (programme implementation partners, public authorities, civil society, etc.). The data collection activities are to be undertaken by the contractor. The design of the targeted consultation (questionnaire, interviews, …) will be agreed with the Inter-service Steering Group composed of the Commission services representatives. The inter-service Steering group will steer the evaluation process.

The wider public (citizens) will be addressed through a twelve-week online public consultation which will take the shape of a questionnaire accessible via the Commission's public consultations page, to be run in summer 2018. The questionnaire will be made available at least in English, French, German and Croatian. Replies may be made in any of the 24 official EU languages. The contractor is expected to produce the analysis of the type of stakeholders that contributed to the public consultation and of the replies received and will report on the outcomes and uptake in the evaluation. This will be used to produce the synopsis report of the public consultation, as per the Better Regulation rules on stakeholders' consultation. It is important to know that stakeholders can respond in any of the official EU languages to the public consultation, so the contractor must prove that it is able to process replies in all those languages. Due to time constrains the Open Public Consultation will start before the start of the contract.

The results of this study will support the Commission with the necessary evidence to prepare a Staff Working Document representing the evaluation.

**Examination period**

The evaluation will cover the actions supported by the Schengen Facility within the eligibility period 1 July 2013 – 21 January 2017 (Croatia was given a 6 months extension of the original deadline 21 July 2016). However, for analytical reasons, data from the period 2011-2013 (the baseline) shall also be used.

**Geographical coverage**

The evaluation will cover the territory of the Republic of Croatia where the Schengen Facility was implemented.

**4. Evaluation questions**

In accordance with the Better Regulation rules, the evaluation will look at the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, sustainability, impact and EU added-value of measures and actions implemented under the Schengen Facility in Croatia.

The evaluation work shall provide answers to the evaluation questions and complete analysis on the "how" and the "why". This will constitute the core of the Final Report.

The evaluation study should present and be structured around an evaluation matrix that shall cover as a minimum the following aspects:

- indication of the judgement criteria allowing to answer the question;
- description of the evaluation methods used and an indication of their limitations;

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- detailed description of the reasoning followed in the analysis, indicating in particular the underlying hypotheses and validity limits;
- the conclusions for each question, drawn directly from the analysis with reference to the judgement criteria.

The evaluation matrix should be seen by the contractor as an iterative process to develop taking into account the evolution of the project and the input of the Inter-service Steering Group.

**Theme 1 Relevance**

Q 1.1: To what extent were the objectives of the Schengen Facility relevant for the needs of EU and Croatia, including stakeholders, to prepare the accession to the Schengen area?

**Theme 2 Effectiveness**

Q 2.1: To what extent were the objectives of the Schengen Facility achieved? What outcomes (positive and negative, intended or unintended) can be attributed to the Schengen Facility?

Q 2.2: To what extent and how have external/internal factors influenced the implementation of the Schengen Facility?

Q 2.3: To what extent the Schengen Facility has been aligned to and contributed to the EU’ priorities with regard to the Schengen acquis?

Q 2.4: To what extent the monitoring of the Schengen Facility has been appropriate and supported the achievements of the Schengen Facility? Were the monitoring arrangements adequate?

**Theme 3 Efficiency**

Q 3.1: Which were the costs and benefits of the Schengen Facility? To what extent were the results of the Schengen Facility achieved at a reasonable cost?

Q 3.3: Do the outcomes of the Schengen Facility represent value for money?

Q 3.4: Which were the factors that helped or inhibited the efficiency, simplification and reduced burden? What were the simplification and reduced burden gains?

**Theme 4 Coherence**

Q 4.1: To what extent was the implementation of the Schengen Facility coherent with and complementary to the border control measures in Croatia financed from national resources?

Q 4.2: To what extent was the implementation of the Schengen Facility coherent with and complementary to other EU funded actions in the field of border controls, the Schengen acquis implementation and related policy areas (such as PHARE, the External Borders Fund 2010 Annual Programme, the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the Connecting Europe Facility), in particular concerning synergies and overlaps?

**Theme 5 Sustainability**

Q 5.1: Are the effects achieved under the Schengen Facility likely to be long-lasting?

Q 5.2: Were the actions funded by the Schengen Facility designed to further strengthen and upgrade external border control?

**Theme 6 EU added value**

Q 6.1: What is the likelihood that the positive effects of the Schengen Facility in Croatia would have occurred without the EU support?
The contractor should design more detailed research questions/sub-questions in order to carry out the evaluation. The evaluation report must be drafted in such a way that detailed and justified answers are given to ALL the evaluation (sub-)questions. In addition, the answers to the evaluation questions have to clearly show the reasons behind them. The answers have to clearly indicate the factors that influenced the outcomes in a positive or negative way.

6.2: To what extent has the support provided by the EU helped to improve the ability of Croatian authorities in strengthening and upgrading external border control compared to what they could do at national level without the support?

5. Tasks related to the stakeholders’ consultation

The Contractor shall conduct relevant activities in the context of the targeted stakeholder consultation, in line with the Better Regulation Guidelines, in particular:

- identify the various stakeholder groups that might be concerned by the implementation of the Schengen Facility;
- develop/provide appropriate tools (questionnaires, web portal etc.) aimed at reaching the stakeholders;
- carry out targeted surveys, interviews and other forms of consultation with the stakeholders - these can be combined with the similar activities carried out to collect data, as foreseen under Section 6, Task 1.7.
- analyse the feedback from the respondents in the internet-based consultation of the general public;
- draft the Synopsis Report on stakeholder consultation.

The Synopsis Report on stakeholder consultation, as Annex of the Final Report, will inform on all consultation activities carried out, the stakeholders having participated, the results of the process and how and to what extent input has been taken into account. The Synopsis Report will be consistent with the guidelines provided in the Better Regulation Toolbox.

6. Data collection and methodological approach

In carrying out this evaluation, the Contractor shall follow four methodological steps, respectively: Structuring, Observing, Analysing and Judging.

As a principle, these four steps concern the evaluation as a whole as well as the answers to individual questions. The deliverables will reflect these steps and be built progressively, incorporating the results of each task.

**Step 1: Structuring**

With respect to structuring, the Contractor shall perform the following:

**Task 1.1:** Define the intervention logic of the intervention

**Task 1.2:** Refine and complement the evaluation questions in section 4

**Task 1.3:** Present an evaluation matrix of the evaluation questions in section 4 identifying indicators, judgement criteria, analytical methods and information sources. This process will be iterative.

**Task 1.4:** Define the methodological approach to the evaluation.

This should include a description of the methods to be used in the evaluation and their limitations. The reasoning followed in determining the methodological approach, including the underlying hypotheses, should be explained.
This section should explain how the fieldwork and desk research together will enable all the evaluation questions/indicators to be answered.

**Task 1.5:** Define and develop the methods and tools (questionnaires and work documents for interviews and case studies etc.) necessary for the collection of data needed for the evaluation.

The data collection methods shall consist of the following:

- **desk research**
- study of the relevant documents provided by the main stakeholders of the Schengen Facility (Commission, authorities of the management and control system/MCS, beneficiaries and end users), as well as of official documents publicised/issued at national, EU or international level in relation to the Schengen Facility
- interviews with the relevant representatives/staff of the Commission, authorities of the MCS, beneficiaries and operators/end users. The operators/end users to be interviewed shall be selected in consultation with the Commission. If relevant, the interviews shall be combined with the observation on-site of the actual achievements/investments of the Schengen Facility.
- case studies covering a cumulative value of the selected contracts of minimum 75% of the total amount of the Schengen Facility for Croatia, covering in a balanced and representative manner all types of measures/actions. The selected cases shall cover at least the following types of measures: procurement of surveillance equipment, vessels, aircraft and land vehicles, technical development of the national component (N.SIS II) of the new Schengen Information System (SIS II), construction of transit centre for foreigners, construction or reconstruction of facilities of border police stations.

Beside the main stakeholders indicated above, the Contractor may establish, in consultation with the Commission, other relevant entities as sources of data.

**Task 1.6:** Develop the tools (questionnaires, web portal etc.) for the open public consultation and targeted stakeholder consultations

The purpose, timing and content of the consultations, including an overview of the specific guidelines or questionnaires to be used, must be agreed with the Steering group.

The contractor shall keep records and proof of all contacts, in particular in the context of stakeholder consultations, and will produce them in a timely manner upon request. These records shall be appropriately archived to enable verification of the data. Copies of all the documents collected/analysed by the contractor must be made available to the contracting authority when requested.

**Task 1.8:** Draft a detailed schedule for the evaluation work.

**Task 1.9:** Compile all the outputs of Tasks 1.1-1.8 in the Inception Report (see Section 9 Deliverables).

The Inception Report will detail the proposed approach: analysis of the evaluation requirements (questions), proposed evaluation indicators, data collection methods and tools to be applied, envisaged data collection arrangements, data sources, interview guides, focus group and survey guidelines, analytical tools and all other relevant methodological considerations, detailed evaluation schedule with estimated deadlines. A special section will be dedicated to the targeted stakeholder consultation. The Inception Report shall not exceed 40 pages, excluding the annexes.

**Step 2: Observing**

With respect to observing, the Contractor shall perform the following:

**Task 2.1:** Collect information and assess its validity: collect the data necessary to feed the indicators identified under task 1.4, including the data needed to feed the monetary, quantitative and qualitative analysis, carry out the proposed documentation, focus groups/case studies/surveys, on-site observation and interviews, and assess the validity of the information used.
Task 2.2: Draft a descriptive chapter on the status of the implementation of the Schengen Facility: Provide an overview of the implementation of the Schengen Facility, in particular the baseline situation concerning the border controls and implementation of Schengen acquis in 2013 at the accession and important developments in the relevant national policies.

Task 2.3: Draft a descriptive chapter on the implementation of the Schengen Facility including a comparison, for each measure/action, of the target indicator values with the outputs, results and impacts actually produced, as well as a comparison of the programmed financial allocations for each measure/action and the amounts actually paid.

A summary information on the investments supported should be provided, structured by types of investments (infrastructure, equipment, IT systems, means of transport, trainings, operations etc.) and the objectives (improved border checks, improved border surveillance, improved visa management, improved IT systems etc.). The roles fulfilled by the Responsible Authorities, intermediate bodies, Audit Authorities, Certifying Authorities and beneficiaries in the actual implementation of the Schengen Facility should also be described.

The contractor is expected to make use of all data and evidence gathered from any monitoring exercises which are relevant for the period covered by the evaluation and already available, such as quarterly and annual reports submitted by the Croatian authorities and the monitoring reports issued by the Commission following two visits in 2014 and 2015. A non-exhaustive list of such documents is provided in Annex III.

The output of tasks 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 will feed into task 3.

Task 2.4: Draft an overview of the progress of the evaluation, including a description of the difficulties encountered in carrying out the data collection and solutions proposed to solve them.

The outputs of Task 2.4 shall be used in drafting the Interim Report (see Section 9 Deliverables).

Step 3: Analysing

With respect to analysing, the Contractor shall perform the following:

Task 3.1: Based on the output of the Steps 1 and 2, reply to all evaluation questions and provide in-sight on the how the outcomes were achieved and why. Contextualisation, comparison of progress with the baseline and relating the analysis to similar initiatives (e.g. Romania and Bulgaria) is essential.

The analysis must be based on recognised evaluation techniques and triangulating methods. To the extent possible, this analysis must measure and quantify results and impacts. Advantages, limitations and risks involved in using the proposed tools and techniques should be explained. There should be a clear link between the evaluation questions addressed and the corresponding methodology proposed. The drafting must describe precisely the reasoning followed in the analysis, indicating among other things the judgment criteria and the underlying hypotheses of the reasoning and the validity limits of that reasoning. Findings and recommendations should explain the degree to which these are based on opinion, case study analysis and objectively verifiable evidence. Where opinion is the main source, the degree of consensus and the steps taken to test the opinion should be given.

The outputs of Task 3.1 shall be used in drafting the Final Report (see Section 9 Deliverables).

Task 3.2: Analyse the type of stakeholders that contributed to the public consultation and their replies. Further, report on the outcomes and uptake in the evaluation.

Step 4: Judging and reporting

With respect to judging, the Contractor shall perform the following:
Task 4.1: Draft the conclusions and lessons learnt on each evaluation criterion. The conclusions and lessons learnt must be strictly based on collected evidence pointing out clearly the lessons learnt and aspects that worked well and those that did not.

Task 4.2: Prepare an abstract of no more than 200 words.

Task 4.3: Prepare an executive summary of maximum 6 pages. It should include a very brief presentation of the evaluation work and the methods used, together with a summary of the conclusions and recommendations arising from the exercise.

Task 4.4: Compile the Final Report, in accordance with the Better Regulation Guidelines and ToolBox.

The Final Report (without annexes) should not exceed 60 pages. The core text has to concentrate on the answers and analysis to the evaluation questions. The general conclusions shall be based strictly on the results of the analysis, leading to the recommendations.

The annexes should contain the technical details of the evaluation, questionnaire templates, interview guides, any additional tables or graphics, references, sources, statistical and background information.

Task 4.5: Compile the Final Report

Task 4.6: Draft a PowerPoint presentation of the evaluation work, of maximum 20 slides, highlighting the main findings, conclusions and lessons learnt.

The bidders should explain in their offers how they understand the objectives of the evaluation and are expected to propose an appropriate methodology and a detailed description of how they intend to work during the preparatory, fieldwork and analytical phases of the study. A clear methodology for assessing the efficiency of the intervention should be presented. The overall proposed methodology will be further refined in the kick-off meeting and in close collaboration with the Inter-service Group set up for the purpose of steering the evaluation. They should also describe in detail the team organisation as well as the methods and the tools they will use in order to respect both requirements and timelines, as well as the risks and constraints that they see and the mitigation measures they propose for each of them.

The offer should, shall not exceed fifty (50) pages, annexes included.

7. Risks

The evaluation work will have to be conducted in a short period of time (6 months), thus requiring a detailed and careful planning, as well as a strategy to prevent and mitigate any risk of delay. The contractor shall identify other possible risks that could threaten the successful outcome of the evaluation (e.g. inaccessibility of data, security clearance issues, etc.) with the relevant strategy to manage them.

The contractors should be aware that, given the particularities of the Schengen Facility, access to some data and/or information could be limited or requires a security clearance.

For the proper organization of contacts, meetings, interviews etc. and for ensuring access to the relevant documents of the programme, the contractor is expected to be able to communicate in Croatian or use translation/interpretation services.

8. Work plan and organisation

Responsibility and management of the evaluation remain with the European Commission (Directorate General Migration and Home Affairs).

A steering group will be set up at the Commission level to monitor the evaluation and will be the main interlocutor of the contractor. The steering group will follow the evaluation process, assess and decide on acceptance and rejection of the different deliverables that the selected contractor will have to provide. It will also be instrumental in the provision of information to the selected contractor. The contractor should take
into account the comments and recommendations of the steering group and keep it regularly informed on the progress of the work.

The Contractor will be requested, and should be prepared, to attend 3 meetings with the steering group at the Commission’s premises in Brussels:

- a kick-off meeting within one week after the signature of the contract,
- a meeting for the discussion of the interim report, and
- a meeting for the assessment of the final report.

If necessary for the adequate implementation of the contract, the Contractor may be required to attend additional meetings organised by the Commission in Brussels. The contractor must present the Commission with minutes for agreement of each meeting within 48 hours from the meeting date.

The Contractor shall submit a progress report on each month of implementation. These reports will summarise in one page the progress of the evaluation work made with reference to the work plan, particularly the difficulties encountered and mitigation measures taken or suggestions to changes required to the work plan to ensure that the required results of the evaluation are achieved.

For the purpose of data collection and analysis, the Contractor shall ensure the necessary interpretation and translation, in order to adequately communicate with the stakeholders both in English and Croatian and to translate the relevant documents drafted in Croatian into English.

For management purposes, the Contractor shall assign a responsible person for the evaluation and his/her back-up person, who will be in contact with the responsible person assigned by the Commission.

All communications within the framework of the evaluation should be in English. If any communications in relation to the evaluation are conducted in other languages, the Contractor shall provide adequate translations to the extent they are necessary for the evaluation documentation.

The Contractor shall provide activity reports/minutes for all relevant meetings and activities they attend within the framework of the evaluation.

9. Deliverables

The overall duration of the tasks should not exceed 6 months, commencing from the date of signature of the contract by the last of the two parties.

Within 1 week after the signature of the contract, the Commission will organise a kick-off meeting in Brussels with the contractor to discuss the main issues of the contract.

During the evaluation process, the contractor shall deliver:

- an Inception report: an inception report for reviewing will be delivered for the kick-off meeting (within 1 week after the signature of the contract), followed by an inception report for acceptance, based on the comments of the Commission;

- an Interim report: an interim report for reviewing will be delivered within 10 weeks after the signature of the contract, followed by an interim report for acceptance, based on the comments of the Commission.

The exact delivery date and expected content will be agreed between the contractor and the Commission based on the inception report and work plan proposed by the contractor;

- a Final report: a final report for reviewing will be delivered within 20 weeks after the signature of the contract, followed by an final report for acceptance, based on the comments of the Commission.

The Inception report will specify the finalised analytical framework, work programme for the evaluation and describe the methodological approaches to be used for the tasks, including:

- an intervention logic;
- an evaluation matrix, including evaluation sub-questions, success criteria, indicators, data sources, methods, limitations;
- a mapping of the data available and outstanding data needs.

The report will set-out the surveys proposed, interview programme, and case studies (number and scope). The detailed work plan will be submitted to the Commission steering group.

The report must include a clear work programme with estimated timelines. It shall not exceed 40 pages, annexes excluded.

The Inception report has to be validated by the Commission before the start of the data collection.

**The Interim report** is to be produced after the desk and field research has been completed. It will indicate the progress to date with sufficient information to permit reorientation if appropriate and required. It must as a minimum provide:

- An overview of the status of the evaluation project;
- A description of problems encountered and solutions found;
- A description of preliminary findings and results of the data gathering and the interviews with practitioners including a substantial part of the desk research;
- An assessment of the data collection process and of the quality of data collected, whether it meets expectations and will provide a sound basis for responding to the evaluation questions;
- A conclusion whether any changes are required to the work plan, or any other solutions should be sought in order to ensure that the required results of the evaluation are achieved. If any such issues are to be identified, they must be discussed in the meeting with the Steering Group dedicated to this report;
- A proposal for the final structure of the Final Report.
- Present a first consolidated rationale for preliminary conclusions and recommendations

Clear references on sources of information used or to be used are to be made.

The report shall not exceed 50 pages, annexes excluded.

Within 1 week following the report delivery, an **interim report meeting** will be organised in Brussels between the contractor and the steering group to discuss and clarify possible open questions and issues.

**The Final report** should deliver the results of all tasks covered by these Terms of Reference, and must be clear, concise and demonstrative (all statements must be substantiated by a thorough analysis). It will take account of the comments made by the steering group. It will cover all points of the work plan and shall include sound analysis of findings and factually based conclusions and recommendations in line with the purpose and objectives above.

The Final Report shall include:

- **Main report**, which must be limited to 60 pages and present, in full, the results of the analyses, conclusions and recommendations arising from the evaluation. It must also contain a description of the subject evaluated, the context of the evaluation, and the methodology used (including an analysis of its strengths and weaknesses).

- **Annexes**: These must collate the technical details of the evaluation, and must include questionnaire templates, interview guides, any additional tables or graphics, and references and sources.

Clear references to sources of information used (bibliography; questionnaires and records of interviews conducted; list of interviews detailing dates, services contacted, contributors to the study – without actual natural person names) is required.
Within 2 weeks following the report delivery, a final meeting will be organised in Brussels between the contractor and the steering group, to clarify possible issues concerning the document and provide comments on the report.

The final report must take into account the feedback from the Steering Group, insofar as this does not interfere with the autonomy of the contractor in respect of the conclusions they have reached and the recommendations made.

The final report will be accompanied by an Executive Summary, as a separate document, of no more than 6 pages. The Executive Summary summarises the evaluation’s main conclusions, the main evidence supporting them and the recommendations arising from them. The summary should give the reader an understanding of the conclusions reached. The summary must not be limited to explain the approach. After being agreed with the Commission Services, it should be translated into French and German.

The final report should also include an abstract of no more than 200 words translated into French and German. The purpose of the abstract is to act as a reference tool helping the reader to quickly ascertain the evaluation’s subject.

The contracting authority will publish the final report, the Executive Summary, the abstract, the annexes and the Quality Assessment Grid providing assessment of the evaluation final report on the Commission’s website.

In view of its publication, the final report by the contractors must be of high editorial quality. In cases where the contractor does not manage to produce a final report of high editorial quality within the timeframe defined by the contract, the contracting authority can decide to have the final report professionally edited at the expense of the contractor (e.g. deduction of these costs from the final payment).

Furthermore, the contractor shall submit a progress report at the end of each month of implementation.

10. Approval of the Reports

All documents and deliverables related to the evaluation shall be drafted in English.

The deliverables have to be submitted to the Commission by the delivery date indicated above and conform to the specifications as described in the Specific Contract. The Commission will confirm that the delivery occurred. This can be done by means of a confirmation e-mail sent to the contractor.

Each deliverable will be examined by the Commission Services, which may ask for additional information or propose changes in order to redirect the work if necessary. Reports must be accepted by the Commission.

The Commission will inform the contractor of any comments concerning the Inception report within 2 working days. The contractor shall modify the Inception report according to Commission's requests, or duly explain why they cannot be accepted; a modified version of the report will be submitted within 3 working days.

The Commission will inform the contractor of any comments concerning the Interim report and the Final report within 15 days. The contractor shall modify the Interim report and the Final report according to Commission's requests, or duly explain why they cannot be accepted; a modified version of the report will be submitted within 20 days.

Whenever the Commission considers that a deliverable can be accepted, a formal acceptance form will be sent to the contractor.

The reports need to be accepted by the Commission to allow full payment.

11. Intellectual property rights

9 1 page = 1500 characters
Rights concerning the reports and those relating to its reproduction and publication will remain the property of the European Commission. No document based, in whole or in part, upon the work undertaken in the context of this contract may be published except with the prior formal written approval of the European Commission.

12. Format of the Reports

Reports will be submitted in an electronic version. All models, tables and reports need to be readable and editable by software that either the Commission uses (Microsoft® Word for Windows format and Adobe® Acrobat pdf format) or has free and unlimited (meaning the access is not restricted to specific officials) access to. The contractor is expected to verify compliance with this requirement before the first delivery.

Each report (except the final version of the Final Report) should have an introductory page providing an overview and orientation of the report. It should describe what parts of the document, on the one hand, have been carried over from previous reports or been recycled from other documents, and on the other hand, represent progress of the evaluation work with reference to the work plan.

All reports must be submitted according to the timetable above to the responsible body.

The contractor must deliver the final Report to the Commission in 10 hard copies and in electronic version. It will implement the Commission publication rules related to its "visual identity" policy by applying the graphic rules set out in the European Commission's Visual Identity Manual, including its logo \(^{10}\).

The presentation of the final report should also be made in the format of a PowerPoint presentation for a large audience in a session of about 30 minutes / about 20 slides.

13. Budget

The estimated maximum budget for the evaluation of the action, covering all the results to be achieved by the contractor as listed above, is EUR 130,000.00.

14. Quality assessment criteria

The overall quality of the evaluation will be assessed by the European Commission on the basis of the Commission's quality assessment framework (Annex VI).

15. Background

According to article 31 of the Treaty of Accession for Croatia a temporary Schengen Facility was created as a temporary funding instrument to support Croatia between the date of its accession to the EU and the end of 2014.

\(^{10}\) The Visual Identity Manual of the European Commission is available upon request. Requests should be made to the following e-mail address: comm-visual-identity@ec.europa.eu

The Commission is committed to making online information as accessible as possible to the largest possible number of users including those with visual, auditory, cognitive or physical disabilities, and those not having the latest technologies. The Commission supports the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 of the W3C.

For full details on Commission policy on accessibility for information providers, see:
http://ec.europa.eu/ipg/standards/accessibility/index_en.htm

Pdf versions of studies destined for online publication should respect W3C guidelines for accessible pdf documents.

See: http://www.w3.org/WAI/GL/WCAG20-TECHS/pdf.html

For graphic requirements please refer to the standard word template in Annex 1. The cover page shall be filled in by the contractor in accordance with the instructions provided in the template. For further details you may also contact comm-visual-identity@ec.europa.eu.

In case you foresee other logos than the Commission logo, the additional logo may only be placed on the cover page of the study if they are one of the following categories:
- a logo duly authorised by the Secretary General and the Director-General for Communication of the European Commission;
- the logo of the author of the study (i.e. the contractor).
To fulfil the obligation of the Republic of Croatia to join the Schengen area and totally abolish controls on its internal borders with other Member States of the EU, several measures/actions were financed from the Schengen Facility for Croatia, in the period 23 July 2013 - 21 January 2017.

Prior to the implementation of the Schengen Facility, in order to adequately accomplish its tasks and to fulfil the requirements for EU accession in the field of the border control, the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Croatia had undertaken significant efforts to enhance its administrative capacities in all the fields of its competences and especially for the Schengen related tasks.

For full compliance with the Schengen acquis and successful integration of the country into the Schengen area, the Republic of Croatia needed additional financial support, in particular to ensure:

- investment in construction, renovation or upgrading of border crossing infrastructure and related buildings;
- investments in any kind of operating equipment (e.g. laboratory equipment, detection tools, Schengen Information System (SIS 2), hardware and software, the creation of the IT systems needed to implement Schengen, means of transport);
- training of border guards;
- support to costs for logistics and operations, including payment of the salaries of the personnel required to fulfil the obligations of Croatia in respect of Schengen acquis.

In order to operate the Schengen Facility, the Commission subsequently adopted technical provisions:

- Commission Decision C(2013) 2159 final of 22.4.2013 on the management and control of the Schengen facility
- Under the Schengen Facility, the Republic of Croatia benefitted from a total allocation of EUR 120 million of which EUR 116,861,415,77 were spent in the time frame

The Indicative Program 2013-2014 (Annex I), under section 4.2, established 9 operative objectives to be achieved under the Schengen Facility, as follows:

- Objective 1: Acquisition of new technical equipment for border control of the external borders
- Objective 2: Modernization and development of radio communication system necessary for surveillance and control of external borders
- Objective 3: Development and upgrading of information systems and computer networks related to the implementation of the Schengen acquis
- Objective 4: Construction of new and renovation and modernization of the existing border infrastructure
- Objective 5: Increase of the qualification of the border police
- Objective 6: Development of the Croatian Visa Information System and connection to the EU Visa Information System (VIS)
- Objective 7: Improvement of Schengen related knowledge and skills of the consular staff
- Objective 8: Investment in security equipment at diplomatic missions/consular posts according to the Schengen standards
- Objective 9: Support costs for logistic and operations for managing the Instrument

Furthermore, the Indicative Programme, under section 4.3, describes the expected results and impacts, needed to ensure the preparedness of the Republic of Croatia for the full application of the Schengen acquis.
A management and control system was established in Croatia to ensure the proper implementation of the Schengen Facility, consisting of the following functions and actors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsible Authority and the single contact point</td>
<td>Ministry of Interior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certifying Authority</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance, State Treasury, National Fund Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit Authority</td>
<td>Agency for the Audit of European Union Programmes Implementation System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>1. Ministry of Interior:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- General Police Directorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Development, Equipment and Support Directorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sector for Real Estate Management of Directorate for Material and Financial Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs: Consular Affairs Sector and Sector for Informatics, Distribution of Data and Protection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to enhance the preparation for participation in Schengen, several types of actions were eligible for financing under the Schengen Facility:

(a) investment in construction, renovation or upgrading of border crossing infrastructure and related buildings;
(b) investments in any kind of operating equipment (e.g. laboratory equipment, detection tools, Schengen Information System (SIS 2), hardware and software, the creation of the IT systems needed to implement Schengen, means of transport);
(c) training of border guards;
(d) support of costs for logistics and operations, including payment of the salaries of the personnel required to fulfil the obligations of Croatia in respect of Schengen acquis.

Moreover, to be eligible, the actions had to fall entirely or principally within the Schengen acquis, be designed to further strengthen and upgrade external border control and:

(a) be physically located at the external borders,
or
(b) be related to the protection of the future external borders in cases where they are not physically located at the external borders

Covering the entire eligibility period, the Commission adopted on 15 April 2015 the Indicative Programme outlining all provisions and conditions necessary for the implementation of the actions.

The indicative schedule contained, among others, the following information:

- name of the designated responsible authority responsible for the overall implementation of funds provided by the Schengen Facility;
- the name of a single contact point within the designated responsible authority
- the nature of the actions and a description thereof, their estimated costs and location;
- the timetable for implementation of the actions providing an indicative breakdown of the costs foreseen to be incurred within the eligibility period;
- Information on complementary financing foreseen from other sources including other Union sources.
These elements allowed the Commission to ensure on paper, that the actions to be financed fall wholly and primarily within the framework of the Schengen acquis; that they are physically located at the external border, or that they had a link to the protection of the future external border.

According to Article 11(4) of Commission Decision C(2013)2159 final on the management and control of the Schengen Facility in Croatia, the Commission provided Croatia on 15 January 2016 with a model for the comprehensive report on the implementation of actions and the statement justifying the expenditure.

Upon the submission of the final comprehensive report, the Commission checked whether the report complied with the template provided by the commission and included all requested information. The Commission accepted the report on 25 August 2017.

Further on, the Commission checked, on paper, the eligibility of actions and the respect of the eligibility periods, the coherence and complementarily with other instruments, and the measures taken to ensure adequate publicity to actions carried out under the Schengen Facility.

With regard to the eligibility of actions, the Commission checked the compliance with the Indicative Programme and the compliance with the Schengen Facility legal basis. The results of these checks were used for establishing the sample for the financial and operational on the spot checks carried out by the Commission in Croatia as part of the clearance of accounts procedure.

Based on the above analysis that was performed, it could be concluded the measures were adapted and changed but that the objectives indicated in the comprehensive report were coherent to the information reported in the Indicative Programmes 2013-2014.

Annexes:
II. Comprehensive Report on the implementation of measures and the execution of the payments under the Schengen Facility for Croatia with a statement justifying the expenditure.
III. List of relevant documents with monitoring data on the implementation of the Schengen Facility for Croatia (non-exhaustive)
IV. Quality assessment framework

[Image of Checklist quality assessment rev.doc]

11 The updated list of documents will be further discussed by the Contractor with the Steering group.