

Annex 3

Annual Programme 2008

MEMBER STATE:	BELGIUM
FUND:	EXTERNAL BORDERS FUND
RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY:	BELGIAN IMMIGRATION OFFICE
YEAR COVERED:	2008

1. GENERAL RULES FOR THE SELECTION OF PROJECTS TO BE FINANCED UNDER THE PROGRAMME

A general invitation for the submission of project proposals is addressed to the Federal Police, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the ICT Department of the Ministry of Interior.

Given the legal monopoly of all the partners and the fact that the budget of the ICT Department of the Ministry of Interior is within the budget of the Immigration Office, direct assignment of the selected projects will take place under the executing body method as outlined in SOLID/2008/2/REV. The Responsible Authority will screen the projects in accordance with the selection criteria defined by the basic act (Decision 574/2007/EC, Article 16/5) and assign the selected ones directly to the beneficiaries by Royal Decree.

All projects will be considered as executed by the Responsible Authority, but they will be managed by the partners (Federal Police, Foreign Affairs and the ICT Department of Interior).

The general rules for the selection of projects financed under the 2008 programme are in conformity with the rules set out in the multi-annual plan (MAP) and in the description of the management and control system.

The Responsible Authority will particularly control the application of the Law on Public Procurement and the conditions laid down in article 11 of the implementing rules. The Responsible Authority will ask the partners to take account of the necessary procedures to be followed according to these regulations in their time schedule. A close monitoring will be carried out by the Responsible Authority.

As all the partners are public institutions, they are bound to the rules of public procurement. The Responsible Authority will control whether the Accountancy Units, the Inspection of Finances, the Court of Auditors who are charged to in particularly control whether the rules on public procurement have been followed, have been informed of the procedures.

The Responsible Authority will also look at the compliance with the internal regulations of each partner on competencies for issuing a tender and signing of contracts.

As also mentioned in the MAP, the relevant partners were extensively involved in the elaboration of the MAP and the APs. The actions and objectives for 2008 are a reflection of the needs and priorities of the four stakeholders: Federal Police, FPS Foreign Affairs, ICT Interior and the Immigration Office. The AP 2008 has been validated by the four partners. Taking into consideration the legal monopolies and security reasons, the partnership could not be extended further.

Some projects are a continuation of projects started under the Annual Plan 2007.

2. CHANGES IN THE MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL SYSTEMS

Not applicable.

3. ACTIONS TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE PROGRAMME UNDER THE PRIORITIES CHOSEN

From the MAP it is apparent that over the past decade, the Belgian government has already in considerable measure invested in border security.

In this plan it is also clear that priority 4 -support in the setting up of IT systems which are required for the enforcement of community legal instruments within the area of external borders and visas- is currently one of the greatest priority areas.

3.1. Priority 1: Support for the further gradual establishment of the common integrated border management system as regards the checks on persons at and the surveillance of the external borders

This could involve investment in infrastructure, systems and equipment within the framework of the eligibility.

Actions under this priority serve the following national objectives:

- Improve the coordination of the information flow between actors/stakeholders at national level and from and between Belgium and other Member States
- A better control of border crossing points (especially traffic and passenger flows at secondary border checkpoints)
- Improved equipment, suitable to be deployed during common actions, coordinated by Frontex, especially in the field of maritime air control during the night.

The national objectives above aim at the gradual realization of an integrated border management system as regards the checks on persons at border points and the effective surveillance of the external borders via the integration of international communication and information systems in the national systems. This will entail the purchase of material which will improve the control on and along weak borders and which will make it possible for Belgium to participate in EU Frontex operations. These objectives will be reached through the implementation of the following actions:

3.1.1 . Improved border management through increased surveillance capacity at secondary border points

Purpose and scope of the action

This project aims to form a better picture of the border-crossing movements, through purchase of visual surveillance and recording equipment, in particular the incoming and outgoing traffic at secondary border checkpoints at the sea border (pleasure boat ports and smaller airports), where vessels originating outside the Schengen may enter the Belgian territory without border control.

This is the second part of a multi annual project (2007-2008). This project follows on the project started under the AP 2007.

3.1.2 . Better observation at the maritime borders

Purpose and scope of the action

This action comprises two projects : one is better observation through a video platform for helicopters and the other through night viewers.

The first project aims to improve and enhance the control of the maritime border-crossing movements and to contribute to projects concerning European surveillance and patrol systems. Using observation techniques by air adds significant value to maritime controlling actions. The purchase of a video platform for helicopters would be a crucial support for a better maritime control and for a better cooperation with neighbouring countries. This project follow on the project started under the AP 2007.

The second project aims to improve the control of the maritime border-crossing movements, especially fast pleasure boats travelling by night which are otherwise difficult to detect with radars, through the purchase of night viewers.

Expected grant recipient

Since the Federal Police has a legal monopoly on the protection of borders, it will be the final beneficiary of actions 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 and will implement them as executing body in association with the responsible authority (Article 8/3 of the Implementing Rules).

Expected results

- Better image of fluxes in seaport, better image of smuggling or trafficking activities, increase of controlled vessels/persons, increase of port security (3.1.1).
- Purchase of a second gyro stabilised multifunctional camera system after public tender, increase of air controlling activities and purchase of night viewers and installation on board of controlling police vessels (3.1.2).

Indicators

- Analysis report, number of realised controls, number of drafted reports (“procès verbaux”) (3.1.1).
- Public tender, purchase, number of extra hours air observation (3.1.2).

Visibility of EC funding and complementarity with other financial instruments

The recipients are required, to assure an adequate transparency of this financing. In respect of whatever notification and/or publication by the recipient concerning the action, as well as notifications and publications during conferences or seminars, they will be required to mention that subsidy had been received from the European Community.

Guidelines concerning the visibility of funding for material purchased with European funds (such as stickers with a European flag to be put on equipment) and additional publicity of European funding for activities are being discussed with stakeholders.

Proper publicity of European funding for these projects will also be implemented by the “EU Funds Unit” through its website. On its “projects” page, the “EU Funds Unit” website will specifically indicate that the projects are supported by the European Commission. Paper correspondence originating from the “EU Funds Unit” to recipients will bear a European flag logo.

Financial information

A total budget of EUR 154.142,89 is provided for action 3.1.1; EUR 512.500 (3.1.2: video platforms for helicopters) and EUR 21.665,16 (3.1.2: night viewers) are budgeted for actions described in 3.1.2. The share of Community contribution will be 75%. All actions fall within the specific priority 1.3 as identified by the Fund's Strategic Guidelines as the purchased equipment and gathered information will be available for Frontex coordinated actions.

3.2. Priority 3: Support for the issuing of visas and the tackling of illegal immigration, including the detection of false or falsified documents by enhancing the activities organised by the consular and other services of the Member States in third countries

Actions under this priority serve the following national objectives:

- Improvement of the coordination of the information flow between actors/stakeholders at national level and from and between Belgium and other Member States
- Increasing the fight against misuse in connection with visa applications (“visa-shopping”) and pseudo-legal migration
- Acceleration in the issuing of visas to *bona fide* travellers

These objectives are to be achieved through the following actions:

3.2.1. The Field Worker

Purpose and scope of the action

Deployment of specialised immigration officials called ‘field workers’, in support of consular activities in third countries. Their activity will be specifically dedicated to focus on sensitive or unclear/incomplete dossiers (in order to obtain more information in respect of a specific visa dossier).

In the past, immigration officers on visits to third countries regularly committed part of their time collecting specific information on individual files: collecting field information has proved to be a very efficient means to unblock problematic dossiers.

In posts where the fight against pseudo-legal and illegal migration needs to be strengthened (such as Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, Islamabad, Conakry, Yaounde or Ankara for example) demand for field information justifies full-time dedicated ‘field workers’ to support consular activities. Field-workers would be employed on a renewable one year contract. Field-workers will do investigations for different Schengen embassies.

The choice of location is decided in collaboration with Member States who participate in the project, on the basis of shared priorities with respect to fighting visa fraud. The purpose is to improve Member States co-operation in specific visa files and involves the sharing of tasks and responsibilities for the benefit of Belgium, France and Luxembourg. France and Luxembourg have signed a co-operation agreement with Belgium to participate in the project, hence the immigration officials’ salaries are eligible for funding by the project.

This project follows on the project started under the AP 2007.

3.2.2. The document advisor

The document advisor, also referred to as airline liaison officer (ALO), is an important support in the fight against pseudo legal and illegal migration from specific non-EU airports to the Schengen-territory. The document advisor is responsible for training and informing embassies' staff, local immigration services and airline companies in detecting false/forged documents. He also participates in the control of travel documents in non-EU airports. Cooperation with other EU countries to deploy document advisors is a key element in this action.

Expected grant recipient

Given their legal monopoly, both the FPS Foreign Affairs and the Federal Police are the final beneficiaries. They will implement the actions as executing bodies in association with the responsible authority (Article 8/3 of the Implementing Rules).

Expected results

- Recruitment and training of an extra of 3 field workers; missions of field workers to yet to be defined posts where the fight against pseudo-legal and illegal migration needs to be improved (3.2.1)
- Recruitment, training of document advisors, risk analysis reports, and at least six missions each year (3.2.2).

Indicators

- A decrease in visa-shopping and a quicker decision in the visa dossier as a result of strengthened consular collaboration (3.2.1).
- Number of detected forged or false documents, number of detected fraudulent visa applications (3.2.1).
- The work of field workers in non-EU countries is expected to lead to an increase in the number of detected false/ forged documents and an increase in the number of detected fraudulent applications which eventuates in a greater number of refusals in issuing of visas (3.2.1).
- The work of the document advisors will lead to a decrease in the number of persons refused (INAD) because they lack valid travel documents, not only at the Brussels airport but also at airports in the entire Schengen territory (3.2.2)

Visibility of EU funding and complementarity with other financial instruments

The recipients are required, to assure an adequate transparency of this financing. In respect of whatever notification and/or publication by the recipient concerning the action, as well as notifications and publications during conferences or seminars, they will be required to mention that subsidy had been received from the European Community.

Proper publicity of European funding for these projects will also be implemented by the "EU Funds Unit" through its website. On its "projects" page, the "EU Funds Unit" website will specifically indicate that the projects are supported by the European Commission. Paper correspondence originating from the "EU Funds Unit" to recipients will bear a European flag logo.

Financial information

For the first action (3.2.1: Field worker) a total budget of EUR 40.092,67 is provided, for the second action (3.2.2: Document advisor) EUR 40.011,56. The share of Community contribution will be 75% for action 3.2.1 as it falls within the specific priority 3.1 as identified by the Fund's Strategic Guidelines.

3.3 Priority 4 : Support for the establishment of IT systems required for implementation of the Community legal instruments in the field of external borders and visas

Actions under this priority serve the following national objectives:

- Installation of the Visa Information System
- Increasing the fight against misuse in connection with visa applications (“visa-shopping”) and pseudo-legal migration
- Acceleration in the issuing of visas to *bona fide* travellers

These objectives will be reached through the implementation of the following actions:

3.3.1. Extending of the central system - BELVIS

Purpose and scope of the action

BELVIS is the Belgian window in respect of the European Visa Information System (VIS).

The intention is to set up a central data exchange system (Message Broker) through the implementation of a central data exchange system between the services involved with visa issuance and control, the implementation of a visa application and issue system for the Consular posts of Foreign Affairs, the implementation of a visa application processing and decision system for the Department of Alien Affairs and the implementation of a visa control system for the border police of the Federal Police.

Each of these implementations consists of a software-window (user-application programme) and a hardware window (purchase of specific equipment for the user applications (servers, PCs but also scanners and cameras).

This action comprises the further financing of the project started under Annual Plan 2007 and which will last till 2013.

3.3.2. Extending the network for the collection of biometric data

Purpose and scope of the action

The network of Belgian diplomatic and consular posts where the collection of biometric data from visa applicants can take place is required to be extended to all visa issuing consular posts (=100).

This action comprises the further financing of the project started under Annual Plan 2007 and which will last till 2013.

In 2008 Foreign Office wishes to equip 25 extra embassies in Africa and the Middle East and to prolong the software licenses for the collection of biometric data in the existing embassies.

Expected grant recipients

FPS Interior Affairs, Federal Police and the FPS Foreign Affairs are the final beneficiaries of these actions.

Because ICT of FPS Interior Affairs is specified for the detailing of the national window of the VIS for Belgium and the budgets for this are managed by the Immigration Office, also the Responsible Authority, this component will be directly assigned to ICT FPS Interior Affairs.

All beneficiaries will implement actions as executing bodies in association with the responsible authority (Article 8/3 of the Implementing Rules)

Expected results

- Implementation of the first phase BELVIS in the VIS, operation of the Message Broker system, meaning that the system is ready to receive and send messages; implementation of the link between BELVIS and the internal operational network of the Federal Police (3.3.1)
- Analysis and preparatory activities for equipping 25 extra consular posts with biometric devices, public tender; start of operation in these posts; training of personnel; better identification and verification of visa applicants; detection of identity fraud; detection of fraudulent asylum applications through which a larger number of asylum applications can be processed more quickly (3.3.2)

Indicators

- End of development, testing of the message broker (3.3.1).
- Number Belgian diplomatic and consular posts where the collection of biometric data from visa applicants can take place, number of personnel trained, number of visa applications processed through the system (3.3.2).

Visibility of EU funding and complementarity with other financial instruments

The recipients are required, to assure an adequate transparency of this financing. In respect of whatever notification and/or publication by the recipient concerning the action, as well as notifications and publications during conferences or seminars, they will be required to mention that subsidy had been received from the European Community.

Guidelines concerning the visibility of funding for material purchased with European funds (such as stickers with a European flag to be put on equipment, or a information board bearing a European flag logo in consulates fitted with new equipment) and additional publicity of European funding for activities are being discussed with stakeholders.

Proper publicity of European funding for these projects will also be implemented by the "EU Funds Unit" through its website. On its "projects" page, the "EU Funds Unit" website will specifically indicate that the above projects are supported by the European Commission. Paper correspondence originating from the "EU Funds Unit" to recipients will bear a European flag logo.

Financial information

For the first action (3.3.1) EUR 720.618,09 is provided, while for the second action (3.3.2) EUR 645.566,25. The share of Community contribution will be 75%, as all actions fall within the specific priority 4.2 as identified by the Fund's Strategic Guidelines.

4. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Scope and objective of the actions

Technical assistance will serve for the purchase of necessary equipment and materials (e.g. accountancy software licences, website licences etc) and the funding of personnel recruited in order to administratively monitor the projects (launch and conclude grant procedures, preparing invitations and contracts, selection, supervision and evaluation of projects, accountancy and audits, development of the internal rules of procedure in collaboration with partners, publicity activity etc.). Technical assistance will also be invested to train personnel recruited by the principal beneficiaries.

Personnel will be recruited also at the certifying body and at the audit agency.

Expected results

- Personnel recruited and trained;
- Supporting equipment purchased;
- Information activity regarding this programme and/or the achieved results;

Indicators

- Number of recruited personnel;
- Number of allocated projects and the setting up of control mechanisms;
- Number of signed contracts with partners.

Visibility of EU funding and complementarity with other financial instruments

Report in annual reports of the Immigration Office and the principal partners, clauses in signed contracts concerning the obligation toward transparency of EU subsidization, inclusion in the general website of the Immigration Office and of the Immigration Office's EU Funds Unit.

Annual Programme - Draft Financial Plan Table 1 - Overview table

Member State: BELGIUM Annual programme concerned: 2008 Fund: EBF

<i>(all figures in EUR)</i>	Co-Financing %	Ref. priority	Ref. specific priority (a)	Community Contribution (1)	Public Allocation (2)	Private Allocation (3)	TOTAL (4) =(1+2+3)	%EC (5) =(1)/(4)	Share of total (4)/ Total(4)
Priority 1: Integration international systems in national systems with intention toward a joint integrated border management system									
3.1.1 : Improved border management in Nieuwpoort	75%	1	3	115.607,17	38.535,72	0,00	154.142,89	75,00%	7,22%
3.1.2 : Better observation at the maritime borders *: night viewers	75%	1	3	16.248,87	5.416,29	0,00	21.665,16	75,00%	1,01%
*: helicopter platform	75%	1	3	384.375,00	128.125,00	0,00	512.500,00	75,00%	24,01%
Sub-total:				516.231,04	172.077,01	0,00	688.308,05	75,00%	32,25%
Priority 3: 3.1. Fight against misuse of visa									
3.2.1: Field workers	75%	3	1	30.069,50	10.023,17	0,00	40.092,67	75,00%	1,88%
3.2.2: Document advisors Alo's/Immigratie ambtenaren	50%	3		20.005,78	20.005,78	0,00	40.011,56	50,00%	1,87%
Sub-total:				50.075,28	30.028,95	0,00	80.104,23	62,51%	3,75%
Priority 4: ICT – VIS									
3.3.1: Extending of BELVIS	75%	4	2	540.463,57	180.154,52	0,00	720.618,09	75,00%	33,76%
3.3.2: Extending of biometrics at consular and diplomatic posts Visabio@bel	75%	4	2	484.174,69	161.391,56		645.566,25	75,00%	30,24%
Sub-total				1.024.638,26	341.546,09	0,00	1.366.184,35	75,00%	64,00%
Sub-total (All Priorities)				1.590.944,58	543.652,05	0,00	2.134.596,63	74,53%	93,00%
Technical Assistance (T.A.)				119.748,52			119.748,52		7%
TOTAL				1.710.693,10			2.254.345,14		100%

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