

**EVALUATION PLAN**  
**FOR THE 2021–2027 PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTRUMENT FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR BORDER MANAGEMENT AND VISA  
POLICY, AS PART OF THE INTEGRATED BORDER MANAGEMENT FUND, AND OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY FUND**

1. Objective of the Evaluation Plan	1.1.Planning the evaluation process for the 2021–2027 programmes of the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy, as part of the Integrated Border Management Fund (BMVI), and the Internal Security Fund (ISF) (hereinafter collectively referred to as the ‘Programmes’); 1.2.Informing the European Commission, partners and the public about the planned evaluations of the Programmes.
2. Programmes under evaluation	2.1.BMVI Programme for 2021–2027 (the Programme is published on <a href="https://www.isf.lt/svvp-programa">https://www.isf.lt/svvp-programa</a> ); 2.2.ISF Programme for 2021–2027 (the Programme is published on <a href="https://www.isf.lt/vidaus-saugumo-fondo-programa">https://www.isf.lt/vidaus-saugumo-fondo-programa</a> ).
3. Types and timing of evaluations	3.1.Mid-term evaluation – by 31 March 2024 (or another deadline set by the European Commission); 3.2.Final (impact) evaluation – by 30 June 2029 (or another deadline set by the European Commission).
4. Programme implementation period under evaluation	4.1.For the mid-term evaluation – 01/01/2021 – 30/12/2023; 4.2.For the final evaluation – the Programme’s implementation period (to be updated prior to the final (impact) evaluation).
5. Stakeholders taking part in the evaluation and their functions	5.1. Managing Authority – Draws up the Programmes’ evaluation plan, organises selection of independent evaluators, ensures that the latter receive all requisite information on the Programmes’ management and control, and submits the Programmes’ evaluation report/reports to the European Commission. 5.2. Intermediate Body – Ensures that documents prepared and received within its remit and required for independent expert evaluations are properly stored and accessible to persons having the right to receive/check them. 5.3. Final beneficiaries – Collaborate with the independent evaluators selected for evaluation of the Programmes and furnish them with information and documents requested. 5.4. Independent evaluators – Carry out evaluations of the Programmes’, present interim and final evaluation results to the Managing Authority (also to the Monitoring Committee as necessary) and submit the evaluation report/reports to the Managing Authority within time limits set in the evaluation service agreement. 5.5. Monitoring Committee – Considers and approves the Programmes’ evaluation plan and amendments thereto; monitors and assesses progress in the implementation of the Programmes’ and achievement of their objectives; examines implementation results, factors affecting them and measures taken; and makes recommendations to the Managing Authority regarding improvement of the Programmes’ implementation, communication and visibility actions and other matters referred to in Article 40(1) of the Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 (the ‘Regulation’), including the progress made in carrying out evaluations, summaries of evaluations and any follow-up given to findings.
6. Evaluators and selection thereof	The evaluations will be carried out by functionally independent external experts selected by procedures of public procurement. Procurement of evaluation services will be organised by the Managing Authority. The selection process will ensure that the evaluators are impartial and functionally independent from the authorities participating in the Programmes’ management and

	the final beneficiaries. Criteria for the selection of and requirements for the evaluators will be set in the relevant procurement documents.
7. Preliminary schedule	<p>The evaluation process will be organised as a sequence of the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submitting the draft evaluation plan to the European Commission;</li> <li>• Presenting the evaluation plan to the Monitoring Committee for consideration and approval;</li> <li>• Publishing the evaluation plan online;</li> <li>• Preparing documentation for the procurement of evaluation services and organising the procurement;</li> <li>• Selecting evaluators and concluding a contract for evaluation services;</li> <li>• Carrying out the evaluation and presenting interim evaluation results to the Managing Authority;</li> <li>• Preparing the evaluation report and presenting final evaluation results to the Managing Authority;</li> <li>• Submitting the evaluation report to the European Commission;</li> <li>• Presenting the evaluation report to the Monitoring Committee;</li> <li>• Publishing the evaluation report online.</li> </ul> <p>Preliminary schedule of drawing up the evaluation plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QII-III 2023 – Submitting the draft evaluation plan to the European Commission;</li> <li>• QIII-IV 2023 – Presenting the evaluation plan to the Monitoring Committee for consideration and approval;</li> <li>• QIII-IV 2023 – Publishing the evaluation plan online.</li> </ul> <p>Preliminary schedule of the mid-term evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QIII 2023 – Preparing documentation for the procurement of evaluation services and organising the procurement;</li> <li>• QIV 2023 – Selecting evaluators and concluding a contract for evaluation services;</li> <li>• QIV 2023 – QI 2024 – Carrying out the evaluation and presenting interim and final evaluation results to the Managing Authority, completing the evaluation report;</li> <li>• By 31 March 2024 (or another deadline set by the European Commission) – Submitting the evaluation report to the European Commission;</li> <li>• QI-II 2024 – Presenting the evaluation report to the Monitoring Committee;</li> <li>• QII 2024 – Publishing the evaluation report online.</li> </ul> <p>A preliminary schedule of the final evaluation process will be planned later.</p>
8. Preliminary budget	Procurement of the evaluation services will be financed by the Programmes' technical assistance funds. The preliminary budget of procurement of the evaluation services is included in the Managing Authority's plan on public procurement of goods, services and works.
9. Evaluation criteria	Mandatory evaluation criteria: 9.1. Effectiveness;

	<p>9.2. Efficiency; 9.3. Relevance; 9.4. Coherence; 9.5. Union added value.</p> <p>The mandatory evaluation criteria will be set in the procurement documents for the evaluation services. Additional evaluation criteria/evaluation aspects can be set in the procurement documents, such as communication, visibility, horizontal principles, indicators of the Programme, best practices and/or other priority areas.</p>
10. Scope and questions of evaluations	<p>The evaluations must involve the intervention logic of the Programmes having regard to the evaluation criteria specified in p. 9 above and to the current situation on a level of the Programme's objective, potential gaps in the Programmes and changed needs. The evaluations must cover the Programmes including specific actions, thematic measures or other needs provided for therein. Conclusions and recommendations made as a result of the evaluation must be based on evidence that has been critically assessed.</p> <p>The mid-term evaluation must involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evaluation of progress made in the achievement of the Programmes' objectives using the resources planned therefor, having regard to the moment of approval of the Programmes' and the actual commencement thereof;</li> <li>- compatibility with other financing sources and programmes;</li> <li>- identification of factors that influence achievement of the objectives and measures planned under the Programmes, and, where necessary, proposing new/additional measures and making recommendations and/or adjustments of the Programme. Recommendations must be clear and realistic, indicating a specific target and actions recommended for him;</li> <li>- evaluation of the Programmes' and projects' management procedures in place, in particular, the procedure for monitoring indicators of the Programme. The evaluation of such procedures should take account of the impact of national legal acts on the governing strategic management (e. g. the Strategic Management Methodology) on the management of the Programmes' and projects;</li> <li>- evaluation of other aspects important for the Programme's management and implementation.</li> </ul> <p>The final evaluation should involve the impact of the Programmes' implementation and other aspects that are relevant considering the implementation phase and the results achieved.</p> <p>Preliminary evaluation questions are provided in an annex to this evaluation plan.</p>
11. Evaluation methods and data requirements	<p>Appropriate evaluation methods and reliable data must be used during the evaluations.</p> <p>The evaluations may employ such methods as reconstruction of the Programme's intervention logic, evaluation matrix, needs assessment, formulation of stakeholder map and consultation strategy, analysis of financial and implementation progress of the Programmes, analysis of other data/documents, interviews, modelling, summarisation, etc. Specific methods relevant to the evaluation will be offered by the evaluator during the procurement procedure.</p> <p>Data for the evaluation will be collected from the project implementation documents submitted by the final beneficiaries, reports submitted by the Intermediate Body to the Managing Authority, reports submitted by the Managing Authority to the European Commission, documents on audits conducted by the Audit Authority, documentation of the Monitoring Committee, data from the electronic data exchange system (<i>ISFBMVI IS</i>), European Union's and national legal acts, websites of the Managing Authority and the Intermediate Body, statistical data sources, etc.</p>

12. Publication of evaluation reports	Completed evaluation reports will be published on the website of the Managing Authority <a href="http://www.isf.lt">www.isf.lt</a> and on <a href="https://www.vsfsvvp.lt">https://www.vsfsvvp.lt</a> , as stated in Article 44(7) of the Regulation. The evaluation reports will also be presented to the BMVI and ISF Monitoring Committee in accordance with Article 40(1)(e) of the Regulation.
13. Use of evaluation results	The main ways of using the evaluation results: - using the insights and suggestions provided during the evaluations to support the decisions made; - implementation of the recommendations presented during the evaluations. After the evaluations, the implementation of the recommendations presented during the evaluations is monitored. If necessary, the Managing Authority takes steps to implement the recommendations and informs the Monitoring Committee about the progress of the implementation of the recommendations.

**PRELIMINARY EVALUATION QUESTIONS ACCORDING TO THE MANDATORY EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Evaluation criterion	Evaluation questions	Preliminary evaluation aspects
Relevance	To what extent the Programme corresponds to changing needs / current situation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The stakeholders have been properly identified according to the objectives set in legal acts;</li> <li>- The needs analysis on the basis of which the Programme was prepared and relevant resources allocated is in line with the current situation and current stakeholder needs;</li> <li>- A Programme strategy was prepared for the meeting of these needs, divided into phases and objectives, and resources allocated on a proportional basis;</li> <li>- The list of the Programme's implementation measures complying with legal requirements is suitable for meeting both current and future needs of target groups/stakeholders;</li> <li>- ...</li> </ul>
	To what extent the Programme can adapt to changing needs / current situation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The need assessment is made and updated on a regular basis or when a need arises / a change takes place;</li> <li>- The partners/Monitoring Committee can timely provide information on changing needs and actual events;</li> <li>- The Programme's actions/projects are planned in a sufficiently flexible way;</li> <li>- Non-essential amendments to the Programme can be made quickly if necessary;</li> <li>- Rules and procedures are in place ensuring that essential changes to the Programme will be timely made if new needs arise;</li> <li>- If needs have changed after approval of the Programme, the Programme's strategy and/or the action/project can be timely adapted or new needs included through a thematic measure;</li> <li>- ...</li> </ul>
Effectiveness	What progress has been achieved in the attainment of the Programme's objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementation of all actions under the Programme has been started according to all relevant objectives and type of intervention measures, except in cases where in the planning process the commencement of actions had been set at a later date;</li> <li>- Early progress in the achievement of interim and final targets having regard to the moment of the Programme's approval is according to expectations;</li> <li>- Challenges that influence implementation of the Programme's objectives and progress have been properly set and linked to efficient plans on overcoming them;</li> <li>- The Programme supports those types of intervention measures and actions that, according to available evidence, are known as efficient (including e. g. academic literature, ex-post evaluation of previous programmes, etc.);</li> <li>- Available best practices are relied on in the implementation of the Programme where applicable;</li> <li>- ...</li> </ul>
	To what extent the monitoring and evaluation system is suitable for informing about progress in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A system of electronic data exchange (between the Managing Authority, the Intermediate Body and the final beneficiaries) for the data registration and storage in order to ensure the functioning of the monitoring and evaluation system;</li> </ul>

	<p>the attainment of the Programme's objectives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants in the data provision process understand the data provision requirements and relevant training or information sessions are organised if necessary;</li> <li>- Reports on the product and outputs give a true view of the level of achievement of relevant indicators (the values reported are neither too low nor too high);</li> <li>- The Programme's actual indicator values reflect main achievements of the Programme that are in line with the Programme's intervention logic;</li> <li>- Indicators of implementation of project activities are used to fill any gaps in the Programme's indicators based on the Programme's intervention logic;</li> <li>- The data set stored constitutes sufficient evidence on the basis of which the need for financing can be assessed (i.e. an impact with a clear causal relationship is assigned to the Programme);</li> <li>-....</li> </ul>
	<p>How is participation of relevant partners in the programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases ensured?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A strategy is in place for identification, informing and reaching most suitable partners and ensuring that they are represented in the Monitoring Committee;</li> <li>- Relevant partners were identified and involved in the programming phase;</li> <li>- Relevant partners take part in the Monitoring Committee as defined in the relevant procedures of the Monitoring Committee;</li> <li>- A procedure permitting the partners to take part in all phases of the Programme's cycle is in place;</li> <li>-...</li> </ul>
	<p>To what extent the Programme's implementation does not contradict or promote implementation of horizontal principles?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appropriate organisational and procedural measures are in place to ensure that implementation of the Programme complies with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (Article 9(1) of the Regulation);</li> <li>- Appropriate organisational and procedural measures are in place to ensure that in all phases of the Programme's preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation proper actions are taken that do not contradict to and/or promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming (Article 9(2) of the Regulation);</li> <li>- Appropriate organisational and procedural measures are in place to enable appropriate actions preventing discrimination on any grounds and in all phases of the programming cycle (Article 9(3) of the Regulation);</li> <li>- Appropriate measures are in place to ensure that implementation of the Programme is in line with the objective of promoting sustainable development as set out in Article 11 TFEU, taking into account the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the "do no significant harm" principle (Article 9(4) of the Regulation);</li> <li>-....</li> </ul>
	<p>To what extent the Programme is efficient in the communication of financing opportunities and results achieved?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication activities reach the target audience and are carried out by properly combining communications channels and platforms including mass media;</li> <li>- Financing opportunities are properly advertised and reach the target group of potential beneficiaries;</li> <li>- ...</li> </ul>

Efficiency	To what extent the Programme funds measures that are cost-efficient?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Programme supports those types of intervention measures and actions that, according to available evidence, are known as efficient and economical (including e. g. academic literature, ex-post evaluation of previous programmes etc.);</li> <li>- Early evidence of implementation of the actions/projects show that the unit price applied in them corresponds to or is lower than current market prices/averages;</li> <li>- Unit price differences between similar actions/projects within the Programme can be explained or justified (e. g. differences in intensity or quality of proposed financing, innovation etc.);</li> <li>- ....</li> </ul>
	What is the efficiency of the management and control system?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As stated in legal acts, the management and control system aims at ensuring efficient project selection, monitoring, management, Monitoring Committee and accounting functions as well as the function of recording and storing data on each project;</li> <li>- Administrative burden is proportional for all implementing entities (the Managing Authority and the Intermediate Body), e. g. as compared with previous programming period; similar target groups are offered similar services without the Programme's support);</li> <li>- There are no excessive requirements on a national level (e. g. from the Managing Authority, the Intermediate Body and/or the Audit Authority), i. e. requirements are not interpreted more stringently than set in legal acts or relevant methodological guidance for the Member States except in cases where there are valid reasons;</li> <li>- Opportunities for simplified payment for expenses are used;</li> <li>- Technical assistance is used for the strengthening of the management and control system as necessary;</li> <li>- ....</li> </ul>
	What further/additional simplification/facilitation is possible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is evidence that legal requirements, procedures set in the rules or practices create disproportionate administrative burden on an EU level or a Member States' level, and specific alternatives exist;</li> <li>- There is a possibility to additionally use opportunities for simplified cost options and financing not linked to costs;</li> <li>- There is evidence that there is a lack of coordination between entities taking part in the Programme's implementation, which gives rise to e. g. lack of consistency, increased administrative burden, etc.;</li> <li>- There are issues related to electronic data exchange systems that give rise to delays and which can/must be resolved;</li> <li>- ...</li> </ul>
Coherence	To what extent the Programme is compatible with other initiatives that are supported under this policy area, in particular, with the support under a thematic facility in different management mechanisms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are structures, organisational arrangements or coordination mechanisms in place that ensure coordination, complementarity of various management mechanisms and, if necessary, synergy;</li> <li>- The coordination mechanisms and arrangements are successfully used on a regular basis;</li> <li>- Apparent coincidence is justified by objective reasons (e. g. the same target group but different type of measure / different needs / different preparedness for the selected type of financial assistance);</li> <li>- The Programme is in line with the current policy agendas on both EU and national level;</li> <li>- There is evidence of interdepartmental collaboration;</li> </ul>

	<p>To what extent the Programme is compatible with other EU funds (including other home affairs funds), in particular, with the EU's external actions?</p>	<p>- ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are structures, organisational arrangements or coordination mechanisms in place that ensure coordination, complementary and, if necessary, synergy with other EU funds, in particular the Cohesion Policy and the EU's external actions;</li> <li>- The coordination mechanisms and arrangements are successfully used on a regular basis;</li> <li>- Apparent coincidence is justified by objective reasons (e. g. the same target group but different type of measure / different needs / different preparedness for the selected type of financial assistance);</li> <li>- The Programme complements various policy agendas, supplementing other EU's financial assistance;</li> </ul> <p>- ...</p>
<p>Union added value</p>	<p>To what extent is the Programme generating EU added value?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Programme is focused on those areas, interventions and target groups in which better results can be achieved on an EU level compared with the results that can be achieved by the EU Member States acting independently, e. g.:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there is evidence of the impact of scope, i.e. additional target groups or additional types of intervention measures are proposed;</li> <li>- there is evidence of the impact of scale, i.e. larger number of services offered / of final beneficiaries;</li> <li>- there is evidence of the impact of functions, i.e. learning of participating entities and improved capacities to manage public assistance;</li> </ul> </li> <li>- There is no evidence of dependence, i.e. systemic lack of investments based on national resources for relevant services that are provided only with the financing of the EU funds;</li> </ul> <p>- ...</p>