

ANNEX  
Template for the Annual Performance Reports by the Member States to the Commission on the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy, as referred to in Article 29 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

IDENTIFICATION

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| CCI | 2021BE65BVPR001 |
| Title | National Programme Belgium - BMVI |
| Version | 1.2 |
| Accounting year | 01/07/2022 – 30/06/2023 |
| Date of approval of the report by the monitoring committee | 06/02/2023 |

1. Performance

1.1. Progress in implementation – Article 29(2), point (a), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

For each specific objective, report on progress in implementing the programme and in achieving the milestones and targets set out in it, taking into account the most recent data for the accounting year, as required under Article 42 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060. This refers to the cumulative data provided by 31 July of the year before the year that the report is submitted.

Within each specific objective, the information on progress should preferably be structured around the implementation measures, indicative actions and desired outcomes identified in the programme.

Describe also any steps taken and relevant activities related to the implementation of the partnership as per Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060.

|  |
| --- |
| During the reference period (01/07/2022 - 30/06/2023), 15 projects have been selected under SO1, for a total EU subsidy amount of € 20.615.205,95 and a total project value of € 26.805.786,80 (this includes the national co-financing). Under SO2, one single project has been selected, and this for a total EU subsidy amount of € 3.333.333,34 and a total project value of € 4.400.000,00.  Two additional projects - awarded funding in the context of the 'Interoperability' top-up / Specific Action - were selected only after the cut-off date (i.e. on 04/07/2023) and will be reported in the next APR.  All projects under BMVI have been selected via a 'direct award' procedure. Hence, no ‘open calls’ have been launched under BMVI.  In terms of focus, the large majority of the projects - and thus also the EU funding - situate themselves in the domain of 'Smart Borders', and concern primarily the continued development and/or implementation / maintenance of EU Smart Borders systems (including EES, ETIAS, SIS, etc.) and ensuring their interoperability. Given the fact that these systems often concern a variety of stakeholders, and on for reasons of administrative follow-up, some projects cover the same topic but complement each other in terms of scope (as such, for example, there is an ETIAS-project on the level of the BE National Crisis Centre, focusing on implementing the necessary IT-developments at their level, and there is a parallel ETIAS-project on the level of the BE Federal Police, focusing on the implementation of the necessary IT-developments within their systems; both projects complement each other in terms of scope).  The above-mentioned focus on ‘Smart Borders’ projects is entirely in line with BE’s BMVI National Programme 2021-2027, where the “(further) development of different existing (and/or new) IT-applications in terms of border management (Eurosur, BorderTask, BELVIS, EES, ETIAS, SIS II,…) and their maintenance and system updates, as well as their ‘interoperability’” was highlighted as a key focus area. Hence, in this respect, BE is clearly following the strategic lines set out in its National Programme. In addition, by focusing on these actions, BE also contributes in a significant manner to ensuring the implementation on BE level of relevant EU acquis in these fields (ETIAS Regulation, EES Regulation, SIS RECAST, etc.).  Under SO2, the only project selected focuses on ensuring the maintenance and system updates of the BELVIS Message Broker.  In terms of implementation, the majority of the projects are well underway and no significant delays / problems have been signalled. For those projects were (new) staff members were to be recruited as part of the project scope, some delays in the recruitment procedures were caused by the late approval of the national programmes – thereby also delaying the approval / signature of the grant agreements. In one specific case, the lack of progress in project implementation is inherently linked to the objective of the project, namely the purchase of technical border control equipment (e-gates) for the external Schengen border in Brussels Airport Zaventem, Gosselies Airport and the Eurostar terminal in Brussels Midi Station. More specifically, all e-gates are being purchased through a long and cumbersome tendering procedure, which has not yet been finalized. In another specific case, the beneficiary together with the Managing Authority decided to cancel a project focusing on the maintenance for a.o. EES / ETIAS. Given the delays on EU level in operationalizing these systems, it was decided to reorient the funds foreseen for this maintenance project towards another project focusing on the further developments in terms of EES on national BE level. |

1.2. Issues affecting performance – Article 29(2), point (b), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

For each specific objective, describe any issues affecting the performance of the programme during the accounting year and any actions taken to address them.

Whenever possible and relevant, you are encouraged to distinguish between issues related to:

* underreporting of achievements;[[1]](#footnote-2)
* target setting;[[2]](#footnote-3)
* procedural delays and administrative capacity;[[3]](#footnote-4)
* contextual changes;[[4]](#footnote-5)
* the design and/or implementation of the operations;[[5]](#footnote-6) and
* any other matter.

Describe any changes to strategy or national objectives, or any factors that may lead to changes in the future, as well as the modifications that those changes have produced in the targets estimated as per the methodology to establish the performance framework.

Include information on any reasoned opinions delivered by the Commission in respect of infringement proceedings under Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), and which are linked to the implementation of the Instrument.

|  |
| --- |
| The main obstacle affecting the performance of projects under all SO’s was the late approval of projects. Projects only received grant agreements in December 2022 / January 2023. This caused significant delays with regard to the start of the projects (hiring staff / starting public procurement procedures).  Under SO 1 (Border Management), there remains considerably uncertainty – both on the level of the Managing Authority as on the level of the final beneficiaries – with regard to the concrete implications of the (lack of) funding for the ETIAS National Unit. In line with the European Commission’s feedback during the drafting process of the BMVI NP, BE’s Managing Authority has allocated / reserved part of its BMVI funding for the financing of the ETIAS National Unit.  As mentioned under point 1.1, the beneficiary together with the Managing Authority decided to stop a project focusing on the maintenance for a.o. EES / ETIAS. Given the delays on EU level in operationalizing these systems, it was decided to reorient the funds foreseen for this maintenance project towards another project focusing on the further developments in terms of EES on BE national level.  Under SO2 (Visa), the main beneficiary (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) has decided not to apply for Home Affairs funding anymore, mainly due to administrative reasons (lack of capacity within the organisation, combined to the heavy administrative burden associated with obtaining and justifying expenditure). From the outset, this beneficiary was extensively consulted during the preparation of the BMVI NP. After approval of the National Programme, 2 ‘direct awards’ were opened (one related to continuation of the ‘Document Verification Officers’ (DVO) project; and one focusing on the improvement of the knowledge of visa agents concerning Schengen-related entry legislation (including through trainings). However, during the application process, the beneficiary decided not to submit any concrete project proposals and to opt out from BMVI funding (for the foreseeable future).  As a consequence, certain actions in the NP under SO2 are unlikely to take place in the short and middle term. These concern for example the purchasing of additional VIS equipment for consular posts, the (continued) employment of locally recruited ‘Document Verification Officers’ (DVO’s), etc. This also has a significant impact on the milestones and targets set forward with regard to the SO2 indicators. With the exception of O.2.1 (‘Number of projects supporting the digitalisation of visa processing’) and O.2.5 (‘Number of large-scale IT systems developed/maintained/upgraded’), all other milestones and targets are no longer realistically achievable.  At this point in time, it is unclear whether or not this situation (lack of interest from beneficiary) can / will be remedied in the future. |

1.3. Specific mitigation measures

**If relevant**, describe briefly how the programme activities contributed to mitigating the effects of any relevant and sudden changes in the pressure on the management of the external borders resulting from any unforeseen deterioration of the socio-economic or political situation in third countries, as appropriate. Whenever possible, refer to the volume of resources redeployed for this purpose, and the related outputs and results achieved.

Pay specific attention to activities carried out to mitigate the effects of such sudden changes and whose achievements may not be fully captured by the common output and result indicators.

|  |
| --- |
| Not applicable. |

1.4. Operating support – Article 16(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

If operating support was used during the accounting year, describe how it contributed to achieving the objectives of the Instrument.[[6]](#footnote-7)

Clarify if operating support was used for the operation and maintenance of large-scale IT systems, including the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS).

If the total cumulative eligible cost of operating support for the operations selected for support exceeds 33% of the total programme allocation at the end of the accounting year, explain the reasons. Additionally, if there is a risk that the threshold is exceeded by the end of the programming period, describe the measures envisaged to mitigate it.

|  |
| --- |
| Under the BMVI, operating support was used to finance 1 project (titled ‘EU Message Broker Staff’) at 100 %. The total project budget amounts to € 2.100.000,00. The aim of the project is to provide support for the setting-up of the different IT-systems required for the implementation of the EU legal instruments in the field of border management & visa. More concretely, the project provides the necessary financial support for the functioning of a team of internal staff members responsible for the implementation, monitoring and maintainance of the systems that are connected to the central European components via the Message Broker. The project also complements another project titled ‘EU Message Broker Subcontracting'), which focuses on acquiring the necessary external IT-consultancy needed to achieve the above-mentioned objectives.  At a ratio of 8,77 % (€ 2.100.000 allocated to operating support projects / € 23.948.539,29 total allocated EU subsidy amount (i.e. € 20.615.205,95 under SO 1 and € 3.333.333,34 under SO 2), the potential total cumulative eligible cost of operating support does not exceed the above-mentioned threshold of 33% of the total programme allocation.  Currently, there is no risk that the 33% threshold is exceeded by the end of the programming period. Hence, no mitigating measures are needed / envisaged. |

1.5. Specific actions[[7]](#footnote-8)

Describe the main achievements of any specific actions carried out during the accounting year, and how they contributed to achieving the objectives of the programme and generating Union added value.[[8]](#footnote-9)

Describe how the individual actions have advanced, both procedurally[[9]](#footnote-10) and operationally[[10]](#footnote-11), and highlight any issues affecting their performance, in particular any risk of underspending.

If relevant, break this information down to the project level. If any deviation from the original planning is expected, explain the reasons for this, describe any mitigating actions taken, and provide the revised timetable.

|  |
| --- |
| No specific actions were carried out in the reference period.  As mentioned under point 1.1, two additional projects – were awarded funding in the context of the 'Interoperability' top-up / Specific Action. However, these were selected only after the cut-off date for the current APR reporting period (i.e. on 04/07/2023) and will hence be reported in the next APR. |

Enter in the Table below the details of all the national specific actions implemented in the programme. The reporting on transnational specific actions should be consistent with the chosen reporting option.[[11]](#footnote-12)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Specific Objective | Name / reference number of the action | Beneficiary | Implementing period | Eligible cost[[12]](#footnote-13) | Eligible expenditure[[13]](#footnote-14) | Progress in the relevant common and / or programme-specific indicators[[14]](#footnote-15) | |
| Output | Result |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1.6. ETIAS – Article 29(2), point (g), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

Provide information on the expenditure in accordance with Article 85(2) and (3) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1240 of the European Parliament and of the Council [[15]](#footnote-16) included in the accounts pursuant to the Article 98 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, as per the headings set out in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Type of cost | Expenditure in the accounting year |
| Large-scale IT systems – European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) – Article 85(2) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1240 | *Not applicable.* |
| Large-scale IT systems – European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) – Article 85(3) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1240 | *Not applicable.* |

1.7. Only in 2024: continuation of projects - Article 33(4), point (e), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

Report on any projects continued after 1 January 2021 that were selected and started under Regulation (EU) No 515/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council[[16]](#footnote-17), in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 514/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council[[17]](#footnote-18).

|  |
| --- |
| Not applicable. |

2. Complementarity

2.1. Complementarity with other Union funds – Article 29(2), point (c), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

Describe the complementarity and, if relevant, synergies achieved during the accounting year between the actions supported by the Instrument and the support provided by other Union funds, in particular the Instrument for Financial Support for Customs Control Equipment, the Internal Security Fund, the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Union external financing instruments[[18]](#footnote-19) or in relation to maritime operations of a multipurpose character.

Describe also the complementarity of the activities carried out from the perspective of strengthening inter-agency cooperation[[19]](#footnote-20), including cooperation with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and the relevant national authorities.

Pay particular attention to:

* complementarity with any Union’s external financing instruments for actions taken in or in relation to third countries, underlining the aspects that are consistent with the principles and general objectives of the Union’s external policy;
* the use of enabling mechanisms, such as existing organisational and procedural arrangements that help achieve synergies and complementarities, and to any actions taken to improve them during the accounting year.

|  |
| --- |
| As mentioned in BE BMVI National Programme, the complementarity and synergies between the BMVI and other forms of support are mainly managed at the level of the final beneficiaries. For example, the Federal Police disposes of a dedicated project unit that works with a.o. the ISF and Horizon Europe. Specifically when it comes to the Customs Control Equipment Instrument (CCEI), the Federal Police and the Customs Control authorities are in close contact with each other and organize meetings in which they (1) discuss which instrument might best fit the incurred needs and (2) whether certain investments might serve both parties. In addition, an overall picture in terms of complementarity between the activities in the different funding streams is centralized within the Belgian Permanent Representation who have a view on all the projects submitted in the various programmes. There is permanent communication between the Managing Authority and the Permanent Representation in order to allow for the detection of possible synergies and complementarities.  Furthermore and as mentioned in BE's Partnership Agreement, in case of emerging doubts around certain aspects of submitted project proposals, the necessary coordination and alignment will take place with Managing Authorities of other respective programmes, and this with the aim of ruling out the risk of double funding. During the reference period, such alignment initiatives have not been necessary / taken place.  In addition, consultations are regularly organised within BE’s Steering Committee and Monitoring Committee, where representatives of the cabinets responsible for Foreign Affairs (covering ‘External relation instruments’), Social Integration, Interior (ex. Horizon 2020) and Asylum/Migration are present.  When they introduce a new project, all beneficiaries are also requested to provide information on other sources of European funding they benefit from and how the risk of double financing will be avoided. This provides additional useful information to the Managing Authority in terms of complementarity. |

2.2. Multipurpose equipment and ICT systems – Article 13(14) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

Describe briefly the relevant operations involving equipment and ICT systems purchased with the support of the programme during the accounting year and used in complementary areas of customs controls, maritime operations of a multipurpose character or achieving the objectives of the Internal Security Fund and of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Indicate the place(s) where multipurpose equipment and ICT systems were deployed.

For equipment, also provide information on the period when it was used in the complementary areas.

|  |
| --- |
| Not applicable. |

For a Union information system funded under the Regulation (EU) 2021/1148 that also serves the objectives of Regulation (EU) 2021/1147 and Regulation (EU) 2021/1149 (multipurpose) or activities required under the Union interoperability legal framework,[[20]](#footnote-21) fill in the table below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Specific objective | Name of the operation | Beneficiary of the operation | Objective of the operation | Implementation period | Co-financing rate | Eligible costs**[[21]](#footnote-22)** | Eligible expenditure**[[22]](#footnote-23)** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

2.3. Multiannual planning for the purchase of equipment – Article 13(14), point (d), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

Set out the multiannual planning for the expected purchase of equipment under the instrument.

|  |
| --- |
| Currently, there is only 1 BMVI-project which foresees in the purchase of equipment, notably the acquisition of 40 new e-gates for Brussels National Airport Zaventum, Gosselies Airport (Brussels Charleroi) and Brussels Midi Train Station. As things currently stand, the public procurement procedure is expected to be awarded during Q2 2024, after which the e-gates will be purchased / installed. |

3. Implementation of the Union *acquis* – Article 29(2), point (d), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

Describe briefly how, during the accounting year, the programme contributed to implementing the relevant Union *acquis* (the body of Union law), especially on Schengen, border management and visa policy, and to any relevant action plans.

|  |
| --- |
| As mentioned under point 1.1, the large majority of the project currently financed under BE’s BMVI NP are focusing on the continued development and implementation of the different EU Smart Borders systems, thereby complying with and ensuring the full implementation of respectively:   * Regulation (EU) 2018/1240 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 September 2018 establishing a European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS). * Regulation (EU) 2017/2226 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2017 establishing an Entry/Exit System (EES). * Regulation (EU) 2018/1861 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 November 2018 on the establishment, operation and use of the Schengen Information System (SIS in the field of border checks (SIS RECAST)). * Regulation (EU) 2021/1133 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 amending the Visa Information System (VIS) Regulations. * Regulation (EU) 2019/817 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2019 on establishing a framework for interoperability between EU information systems in the field of borders and visa.   In addition, with the project ‘EUROSUR BIS FASE II’ the Belgian Federal Police aims to comply with the requirements of the new Frontex Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2019 on the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCGA)) by ensuring the necessary changes to available IT processes, upgrading the network and improving its security level. The 1st phase of this project was already financed under ISF Borders in the previous programming period (2014-2020). |

4. Communication and visibility – Article 29(2), point (e), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

Describe how communication and visibility activities were carried out during the accounting year. In particular, refer to any progress made in relation to the objectives set out in the communication strategy, as measured by the relevant indicators and their targets. If relevant, describe any good practices in reaching out to the target groups and/or disseminating and exploiting the results of the projects.

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Site internet (art. 49§1 du Règlement (UE) 2021/1060)   *Le site internet de l’autorité de gestion a été adapté pour accueillir les pages relatives à la programmation 2021-2027. Toutes les informations utiles aux bénéficiaires s’y trouvent (Règlements AMIF, ISF, BMVI, CPR, Basic acts of the 2021-2027 Funds), les programmes nationaux (AMIF, ISF, BMVI), des fiches explicatives concernant les indicateurs, le budget du projet, l’éligibilité des dépenses, le rapportage, les paiements, etc., le calendrier des appels à proposition (art. 49§2), la liste des projets sélectionnés (art. 49§3), les transmissions de données à la Commission (art. 42), les données et informations partagées avec le Comité de suivi (art. 38). A l’avenir, les évaluations faites par l’autorité de gestion (mid-term + ex-post) et le rapport de performance final (article 43$4) feront également l’objet d’une publication.*   1. *Portail unique (art. 49§1 du Règlement (UE) 2021/1060)*   *Un portail unique permettant d’accéder à tous les programmes a été mis en place par le SP Wallonie. Le site « Europe in Belgium » a été adapté pour répondre aux exigences de la nouvelle programmation.*   1. *Communication Officer (art. 48 du Règlement (UE) 2021/1060)*   *L’autorité de gestion a désigné en son sein un responsable de communication pour les trois programmes (AMIF, ISF et BMVI). Il participe aux échanges d’informations avec les autres autorités de gestion, le coordinateur national en matière de communication et la Commission européenne en participant notamment aux « country team meetings » (deux fois par an). Il informe chaque fois que nécessaire les bénéficiaires quant à leurs obligations de publicité. De nombreuses réunions teams ont déjà été organisées à cet égard (>20). En outre, une fiche explicative a été publiée sur le site internet de l’autorité de gestion « Obligations de publicité ». Les outils préparés par la Commission pour aider les bénéficiaires à cet égard sont également mis en évidence sur le site internet ( EU Commission Logo Download Center + Générateur d'affiches). Le contrôle des obligations de publicité des bénéficiaires ont déjà eu lieu dans le cadre de leur rapportage intermédiaire (tous les six mois).* |

Provide a link to the website portal referred to in Article 46, point (b), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 and, if different, to the website referred to in Article 49(1) of that Regulation.

|  |
| --- |
| Website of the Managing Authority: <https://amif-isf.be/>  Unique portal: <https://www.europeinbelgium.be/> |

5. Enabling conditions and horizontal principles

5.1. Enabling conditions – Article 29(2), point (f), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

Describe how it was ensured that the applicable enabling conditions in Annex III of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 were fulfilled and applied throughout the accounting year, in particular as regards complying with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. If relevant, describe any change that had an impact on how the enabling conditions were fulfilled, as provided for in Article 15(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060.

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Arrangements to ensure compliance of the programmes supported by the Funds and their implementation with the relevant provisions of the Charter and the UNCRPD:  * Sensibilisation by the MA while launching the calls (coaching sessions). * Commitment of the beneficiaries to respect the Charter / UNCRPD in the project proposal (legal declaration). * Obligation to respect the Charter / UNCRPD registered in the ministerial decree (art.7). * Reporting by the beneficiary in the intermediary and final reports (questions). * Control by the MA during the operational and narrative controls (questions). * Nomination of a Fundamental Rights « expert » within the MA. * Training on the Charter (FRA) followed by the expert. * Reference to the Commission’s guidance (2016/C 269/01). * Support from the partners specialized in Fundamental Rights (UNIA, FPS Justice,…). * Transfer of the complaints by the expert to the relevant instances and follow-up by the MA. * Intermediate bodies AMIF (ESF Vlaanderen et Agence FSE) monitor the respect of the Charter / UNCRPD.  1. Reporting arrangements to the monitoring committee regarding cases of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with the Charter / UNCRPD and complaints submitted in accordance with the arrangements made pursuant to Art 69(7):  * Compliance of the projects with the Charter presented to the MC (protocol art.3). * Cases of non-compliance with the Charter, complaints and their follow-up reported to the MC (template). * A specilized partner (UNIA, FPS Justice) can be invited to the MC to explain a case (protocol art.2 §7).  1. The controls of public procurements are also carried out by the Managing Authority in order to ensure the respect of the Belgian legislation.   No complaints have been received so far. |

5.2. Compliance with horizontal principles – Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060

Describe how you ensured compliance during the accounting year with the horizontal principles laid down in the Common Provision Regulation, in particular equality between men and women and the promotion of gender mainstreaming, as well as avoiding discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

|  |
| --- |
| Actions explained under the point 5.1 apply as well to the horizontal principles. |

6. Projects in or in relation to third countries - Article 29(2), point (h), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

Describe any actions taking place in or in relation to third countries during the accounting year and how these bring Union added value in achieving the objectives set by the Instrument. Indicate the names of the third countries concerned. Provide a description that clarifies that the actions supported by the Instrument are not development-oriented, serve the interest of internal Union policies and are consistent with activities undertaken within the European Union. If relevant, refer to the consultations with the Commission before the project was approved (Article 13(12) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148).

|  |
| --- |
| No projects in or in relation to third countries have been selected during the reference period. Hence, no Commission consultations have taken place. |

7. Summary – Article 29(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148

Provide a summary of the Sections 1 to 6, which will be translated and made available to the public.

As a minimum, the summary must cover all the points listed in Article 29(2), and should preferably be structured around them.

The use of bullet points, bold text or informative headings is encouraged, so that interested stakeholders can easily identify the programme’s main achievements and the main issues affecting its performance.

|  |
| --- |
| * In terms of progress in implementation:   + During the reference period (01/07/2022 - 30/06/2023), 15 projects have been selected under SO1, for a total EU subsidy amount of € 20.615.205,95 and a total project value of € 26.805.786,80 (this includes the national co-financing). Under SO2, one single project has been selected, and this for a total EU subsidy amount of € 3.333.333,34 and a total project value of € 4.400.000,00.   + In terms of focus, the large majority of the projects - and thus also the EU funding - situate themselves in the domain of 'Smart Borders', and concern primarily the continued development and/or implementation / maintenance of EU Smart Borders systems (including EES, ETIAS, SIS, etc.) and ensuring their interoperability.   + By focusing on these actions, BE also contributes in a significant manner to ensuring the implementation on BE level of relevant EU acquis in these fields (ETIAS Regulation, EES Regulation, SIS RECAST, etc.).   + Under SO2, the only project selected focuses on ensuring the maintenance and system updates of the BELVIS Message Broker.   + Operating support was used to finance 1 project (titled ‘EU Message Broker Staff’) at 100 %. The total project budget amounts to € 2.100.000,00. The aim of the project is to provide support for the setting-up of the different IT-systems required for the implementation of the EU legal instruments in the field of border management & visa.   + No specific actions were carried out in the reference period.   + In terms of implementation, the majority of the projects are well underway and no significant delays / problems have been signalled. * In terms of issues affecting performance:   + The main obstacle affecting the performance of projects under all SO’s was the late approval of projects. Projects only received grant agreements in December 2022 / January 2023. This caused significant delays with regard to the start of the projects (hiring staff / starting public procurement procedures).   + Under SO 1 (Border Management), there remains considerably uncertainty – both on the level of the Managing Authority as on the level of the final beneficiaries – with regard to the concrete implications of the (lack of) funding for the ETIAS National Unit.   + Under SO2 (Visa), the main beneficiary (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) has decided not to apply for Home Affairs funding anymore, mainly due to administrative reasons (lack of capacity within the organisation, combined to the heavy administrative burden associated with obtaining and justifying expenditure).   + As a consequence, certain actions in the NP under SO2 are unlikely to take place in the short and middle term. These concern for example the purchasing of additional VIS equipment for consular posts, the (continued) employment of locally recruited ‘Document Verification Officers’ (DVO’s), etc. This also has a significant impact on the milestones and targets set forward with regard to the SO2 indicators. * In terms of communication and visibility, the website of the Managing Authority has been updated in order to accommodate the 2021-2027 programming period. Also, a unique portal has been put in place under the name ‘Europe in Belgium’. Lastly, a Communication Officer has been designated within the Managing Authority. * With regard to the enabling conditions and horizontal principles, there are no specific points of attention. No complaints have been received so far. * No projects in or in relation to third countries have been selected during the reference period. Hence, no Commission consultations have taken place. |

1. This refers to the situation when there is a gap between the nominal target achievement rate measured by the indicators and the actual progress in implementation. For instance, under-reporting of output and results could be due to issues with the development of the IT system, ongoing operations for which output and results are not yet reported, issues with the data collection leading to slow or incomplete reporting, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. This refers to a situation where the low target achievement rate is not due to slow progress but rather to incorrect or unrealistic target setting. It may include lessons learned in connection with the establishment of a the methodology for target setting – such as wrong or incomplete assumptions or issues with the benchmark values selected – and any planned changes to it. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. For instance, issues related to tendering procedures, issues with audit procedures, issues linked to lack of resources at the managing authority level, an unforeseen delay in the adoption of the programme, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. This can include, for instance, socio-economic or political factors, changes in the regulatory context, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. For instance, issues to do with the scope of the action (e.g. eligibility criteria), low interest from beneficiaries or participants, any deviation in the implementation of the action etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. If relevant for this purpose, refer to the information which is in scope of Regulation (EU) 2021/1148 and available as a result of Schengen evaluations, carried out in accordance with Council Regulation (EU) No 1053/2013 of 7 October 2013 establishing an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen acquis and repealing the Decision of the Executive Committee of 16 September 1998 setting up a Standing Committee on the evaluation and implementation of Schengen (OJ L 295, 6.11.2013, p. 27) and Council Regulation (EU) 2022/922 of 9 June 2022 on the establishment and operation of an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen acquis, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1053/2013 (OJ L 160, 15.6.2022, p. 1). Likewise, if relevant, refer to vulnerability assessments carried out in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2019 on the European Border and Coast Guard including recommendations following Schengen evaluations and vulnerability assessments (OJ L 295, 14.11.2019, p.1) and related recommendations. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. In the case of specific actions with a transnational nature, the scope of this section varies according to the distribution of roles and responsibilities between the lead Member States and the other participating Member States, as well as the choice of the reporting method used. This is described in the Commission’s note of 14 February 2022 - Transnational specific actions under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy (BMVI),and the Internal Security Fund (ISF) – Arrangements between partners (Ares (2022)1060102). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Union added value is defined as the generation of results beyond what would have been achieved by Member States acting alone. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. For instance, in connection to procurement activities or any other preparatory steps taken. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. For instance, in terms of deliverables, outputs, results etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. As set out in the Commission’s note of 14 February 2022 (Ares (2022)1060102). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Total eligible cost of selected operations, as reported to the Commission by 31 July of the last accounting year. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Total amount of eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries to the managing authority, as reported to the Commission by 31 July of the last accounting year. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. If specific actions represent a top-up of previous operations and there are no dedicated monitoring arrangements, report the output and results pro-rata. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Regulation (EU) 2018/1240 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 September 2018 establishing a European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) and amending Regulations (EU) No 1077/2011, (EU) No 515/2014, (EU) 2016/399, (EU) 2016/1624 and (EU) 2017/2226 (OJ L 236, 19.9.2018, p.1). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Regulation (EU) No 515/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 establishing, as part of the Internal Security Fund, the instrument for financial support for external borders and visa and repealing Decision No 574/2007/EC (OJ L 150, 20.5.2014, p.143). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Regulation (EU) No 514/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 laying down general provisions on the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and on the instrument for financial support for police cooperation, preventing and combating crime, and crisis management (OJ L 150, 20.5.2014, p.112). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. In particular, e.g. the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe and the Instrument for Pre-accession assistance (IPA). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Such as cooperation at Union level between the Member States, and between Member States and relevant Union bodies, offices and agencies, as well as cooperation at national level among the competent authorities within each Member State. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. Regulation (EU) 2019/817 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2019 on establishing a framework for interoperability between EU information systems in the field of borders and visa and amending Regulations (EC) No 767/2008, (EU) 2016/399, (EU) 2017/2226, (EU) 2018/1240, (EU) 2018/1726 and (EU) 2018/1861 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Decisions 2004/512/EC and 2008/633/JHA ([OJ L 135, 22.5.2019, p. 27](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/AUTO/?uri=OJ:L:2019:135:TOC)).

    Regulation (EU) 2019/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2019 on establishing a framework for interoperability between EU information systems in the field of police and judicial cooperation, asylum and migration and amending Regulations (EU) 2018/1726, (EU) 2018/1862 and (EU) 2019/816 ([OJ L 135, 22.5.2019, p. 85](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/AUTO/?uri=OJ:L:2019:135:TOC)). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Total eligible cost of selected operations, as reported to the Commission by 31 July of the last accounting year. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Total amount of eligible expenditure declared by the beneficiaries to the managing authority, as reported to the Commission by 31 July of the last accounting year. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)