



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS

Directorate E – Migration and Security Funds
Unit E1 – Programming

Brussels,

Subject: Observations on the proposed multiannual national programme under the Internal Security Fund for Italy

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for the second version of the national programme under the Internal Security Fund for Italy, submitted on 8 June 2015, following the observations made by the Commission on 6 February 2015.

Following the re-examination of the national programme by the Commission, we would like to provide you with additional observations on this amended version, and invite you to present us with a modified programme as soon as possible.

The Commission stands ready to assist you in the drafting process in order to facilitate the approval of the national programme.

The period of six months, set for the approval of the multiannual national programme by the Commission, referred to in Article 14(7) of Regulation (EU) No 514/2014, is hereby suspended until an amended version of the programme is provided.

Yours sincerely,

(e-Signed)

[REDACTED]
Head of Unit

Encl.: Annex: Observations on the proposed national programme

ANNEX: Observations on the proposed national programme

General

1. The mostly used acronyms need to be first introduced in the programme (not the glossary) as long as this is allowed by the character limit.
2. In line with Art. 9.4 of the ISF/B Regulation, the Commission consulted Frontex on this version of the draft NP. The Commission took the appropriate and relevant suggestions of the Agency into account.

Identification of the designated authorities

No further comments.

Section 1: Executive summary

3. With regard to the text of the executive summary:
 - a) Could you avoid the use of abbreviations?
 - b) Could you structure the text using the names of the Specific Objectives?
4. The executive summary does not summarise actions in: SO1/NO3, SO2/NO5, SO2/NO2, SO3 and it only summarises a part of the SO5/SO6 actions. The whole section needs to be carefully redrafted (eventually removing also the first two paragraphs) given the high number of actions foreseen in the programme.
5. The summary states that the programme intends to improve “*the prevention and combating of organised crime, including through the extension and reinforcement of the strategy of confiscation of mafia assets in the context of cooperation between Member States against transnational crime;*” and “*strengthening of the prevention activities and supervision of attempted Mafia infiltration in public procurement and intensification, to protect the legal economy, measures to combat the laundering of illicit proceeds acquired by cosche*”. It is to be noted that the 2014-2020 (Italian) National Operational Programme on Legality also includes investments for the rehabilitation of confiscated assets in favour of immigrants and actions to improve public procurement. Possible synergies and overlaps should be clarified (in section 6).
6. Within a sentence in the end of the ISF Borders part of the executive summary, please indicate the allocations for the different Specific Objectives as well as for Technical Assistance (for ISF Borders including the allocation for the Specific Actions). Same for the ISF Police part. In both cases the percentages should add up to 100%.

Section 2: Baseline situation in the Member State

7. The statistics/figures in the Visa/Crime/Risks part needs to be as recent as possible (2014 ones). The Borders part is OK.
8. SO5/SO6: There are no needs mentioned regarding THB, illegal waste trafficking and food chain protection.
9. The information for SO6 is provided together with the one for SO5. This element should be made more explicit.
10. The needs/gaps analysis and description for the Borders part needs to be reinforced (Italy to apply the logic of intervention - e.g. for the Information Exchange NO).
11. National spending in the area of border management needs to be clarified. It is appreciated that Italy provided some figures per type of activity. It is indicated that the amount spent on internal security is 398 M euro, but it would be useful to have a total one for border management in particular.
12. Please, provide information on the state of play of Italy's first reception capacity.
13. SO2 Borders, NO1 Eurosur: Which national authorities cooperate in the NCC? What are the operational needs related to purchase of equipment? How are the existing maritime surveillance systems interconnected?

Section 3: Programme objectives

14. It should be clear reading the National Objectives what are the areas of intervention where Italy intends to put its focus, with particular reference to the most important (also in terms of allocation) national objectives (e.g. Eurosur, Information exchange, National capacity) where, besides the list of all possible actions to finance, those where Italy intends to focus should be highlighted. Moreover, per National Objective, it needs to be made explicit and clear which actions will be financed via ISF and which with national funds. The funding priorities under each National Objective need to be indicated so that the focus of the EU financing is well demonstrated.
15. It seems that some Policy Dialogue identified funding priorities are not pursued with actions in the programme. Please provide an appropriate explanation for the cases where Policy Dialogue funding priorities have been dropped or otherwise please indicate how the programme considers them. We make reference to the following funding priorities:
 - Trafficking in human beings – all funding priorities
 - Anticorruption policy – the first four (out of 5)
 - Financial investigations - the first one (out of 2)
 - Information exchange mechanisms - all funding priorities
 - EU policy cycle - the last one (out of 3)
 - Cybercrime - the last four (out of 5)
 - Radicalisation – the first and the last three (out of 5)
 - EUROSUR – the 4th, 5th and 7th (out of 7)

SO1 – Support a Common Visa Policy

16. The presentation of the national strategy should be improved so as to clarify priorities with further details and distinguish between national actions and funding priorities. It refers still to the Stockholm Programme.
17. The ICT systems related actions have a broader scope than just Schengen Visa processing, therefore at implementation time Italy should pay attention for appropriate cost claims (proportionate to the share of workload related to Schengen visa processing). Moreover, the ICT development should concern Schengen visa processing.

National Objective 1 National Capacity

18. For National Objective 1 (and SO2/National Objective 6) there's no prioritisation regarding the actions foreseen and the fund allocations are considerable. Italy should provide in a separate document (not part of the programme to be adopted) an approximate breakdown of funds assigned to the actions of these National Objectives (either in absolute amounts or in percentages of the total allocation to the National Objective).

National Objective 3 Consular Cooperation

19. Since no actions are planned for ISF funding in the area of consular cooperation, National Objective 3 should either remain empty or only explicitly refer to actions funded via national funds only. The part currently present in National Objective 3 can be moved either to the strategy part of SO1 (eventually some part of it in the Baseline).

Specific Action Consular Cooperation

20. The programme makes reference to two specific actions lead respectively by BE (CCM) and NL (RSCO).
 - a. Concerning CCM: the description does not mention the fact that this action will be implemented at the central level and in the field, and also that there will be deployment of joint document verification officers, both quite important aspects. Also, it isn't mentioned that Italy will participate financially (although it is not entirely clear from Belgium's description whether this has been agreed upon already).
 - b. Concerning RSCO: it should be explained in the text what an RSCO is i.e. a person working on behalf of partner MSs and also the role of Italy as Participant MS and whether Italy will participate with a financial or in kind contribution.

SO2 – Borders

21. On the strategy for border management, the Commission appreciates the information provided in the additional documents. More information on the implementation of IBM model are still necessary: practical mechanism to improve coordination and cooperation between internal stakeholders, practical measures for improving border management based on a thorough needs analysis

and the future plans as well as coordinated communication with the aim of improving risk analysis practices.

22. Please describe in more details the cooperation, communication and coordination mechanisms between the national authorities dealing with border control – checks and surveillance (Polizia di Stato, Guardia di Finanza, Guardia Costiera, Navy, local authorities – chesturas).
23. Although cooperation agreements with third countries are described in the Strategy, there are not related actions described later on in the national objectives (except the one on experts).

National Objective 1 EUROSUR

24. In case there are actions proposed here which are maintenance related, it is suggested to move them under SO3 so as to optimise Italy's financing as to these.

National Objective 2 Information Exchange

25. For certain ICT systems cases (e.g. SATM) it should be noted that the funding allocated will be proportional to the usage of the system related to Border management. Please indicate in the text of the programme that the border management related aspects of these systems will be financed with the ISF/B.
26. For the various ICT systems mentioned, it should be clarified in the programme what measures exactly will be funded with ISF/B.
27. Regarding the equipment used for SAR: the phrasing should be such so as to indicate that the equipment is purchased for border management activities and will also be used for SAR operations (see Article 3.5 of the ISF/B Regulation).

National Objective 3 Common Union Standards

28. Please provide in a separate document the possible locations of the planned ABC gates as well as an indication of their number. Please, note that this information is indicative (not binding).

National Objective 4 Union Acquis

29. Please provide more information regarding the last bullet point (best practices) in order to clarify what exactly is meant and in the case this action is maintained please rephrase.
30. Italy is encouraged to consider setting up a continuous training concept based on the train-the-trainer approach in areas such as first and second line of control, screening and debriefing.

National Objective 5 Future Challenges

31. In the 1st bullet point reference to PNR should be removed.

32. The 2nd bullet point needs to be rephrased to become more specific as to what it is intended to fund. If still early to provide more details at this stage, please indicate that these will be instruments and national systems for border control.
33. In the last paragraph it should be specified that the indicated measures relate to crime linked to the movements of persons, and not cross-border crime in general (see Art 3.3(b) of the ISF Borders Regulation).

National Objective 6 National Capacity

34. For National Objective 6 (and SO1/National Objective 1) there is no prioritisation regarding the actions foreseen while the fund allocations are considerable. Italy should provide in a separate document (not part of the programme to be adopted) an approximate breakdown of funds assigned to the actions of these National Objectives (either in absolute amounts or in percentages of the total allocation to the NO).
35. Given the purposes of EUODAC, please clarify its usage, noting that ISF/B could only finance measures relevant to Border management and used at the border.
36. Financing SAR measures need to be in line with Article 3.5 of the ISF Borders Regulation.
37. Regarding the cooperation with 3rd countries, the Commission appreciates the extensive information provided in the annex. However, it is still needed to define in the programme the priorities, objectives and concrete actions for the initiatives to be undertaken vis-à-vis 3rd as well as the limits (scope) of financing such activities within the cooperation agreements (e.g. these are actions only on Italian territory, mostly related to the exchange of best practices and information as opposed to purchasing equipment to be used by 3rd countries' authorities).
38. In the last paragraph, please add an explanation so as to be clear whether the experts mentioned are ILOs or not.
39. Italy is encouraged to strengthen its capacities as regards screening and debriefing activities at the border in order to improve and systematise the interviewing, fingerprinting and registration of migrants with the aim of better managing migration flows and gathering additional information which could further feed into risk analysis activities.

SO3 – Operating Support

40. National Objective 2: for the same reasons expressed in our letter Ares(2015)1967740 sent to your services on 8 May, we suggest removing the action related to the fibre-optic infrastructure as there is a high risk that problems concerning the eligibility of the expenses related to such action might arise.

SO5 – Preventing and combating crime

National Objective 1 Prevention and Combating

41. There is no mention regarding the desired outcome(s)/result(s).

42. Regarding whistle-blower protection it should be stated whether the programme will fund any actions or not.
43. Please provide more details regarding the action on hardware and software for anti-corruption units at the police: "acquisizione di HW/SW per il potenziamento delle Sezioni/Unità Anticorruzione delle Squadre Mobili di PS".

National Objective 4 Victim Support

44. Italy declares that no funding from ISF is necessary for this National Objective. However, some actions undertaken with national funds should be mentioned within these two national objectives. In addition the possibility for future introduction of actions (so as to avoid the need for revision) should be indicated. Same comment for National Objective 5 Threat and Risk assessment.

SO6 – Risks and crisis

National Objective 4 Victim Support

45. Italy declares that no funding from ISF is necessary for this National Objective. However, some actions undertaken with national funds should be mentioned within these two national objectives. In addition the possibility for future introduction of actions (so as to avoid the need for revision) should be indicated.

Indicative timetable

46. We take note that (as confirmed by you in the 15/6 meeting) no actions start in 2014.
47. SO2/National Objective 6: only two actions are mentioned under this important National Objective: please list at least the three most important ones.

Section 5: Common Indicators and Programme Specific Indicators

48. Specific Objective 1 / C1: value is still 4 but should be 0.
49. Specific Objective 1 / C3: please clarify what the figure of 40 refers to.
50. Specific Objective 1 / C4.2 indicates that 99% (172) of Italy's consulates will benefit from the fund. However, the focus of the fund should be on Schengen issuing consulates. Please clarify.
51. Specific Objective 2 / C2 & C3.1 & C3.2: values to be updated in the next programme version. For C2, a breakdown should be provided by category.
52. Specific Objective 2 / C5: please give an estimate based on past years information.

Section 6: Framework for preparation and implementation of the programme by the Member State

53. Observations 27 and 28 on version 1.0 need to be addressed in the next programme version.

Section 7: The financing plan of the programme

54. The amount for SA1 should be removed.