Ministry of the Interior \_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2020

Order No. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Annex



**Regulations for the Evaluation of the Pre-defined Project Applications for the Programme “International Police Cooperation and Combating Crime” of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism 2014-2021**

**I. General Provisions**

1. These Regulations have been developed on the basis of Section 23, Paragraph one of the Law on the Management of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 and Paragraph 8 of Cabinet Regulation No. 683 of 13 November 2018, Regulations Regarding the Management of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021.
2. These Regulations prescribe the following for the programme “International Police Cooperation and Combating Crime” of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 (hereinafter – the Programme):
	1. the procedures for the submission of the pre-defined project (hereinafter – the project) applications;
	2. the procedures for evaluating project applications;
	3. the procedures for preparing the evaluation committee meeting minutes;
	4. the procedures for preparing the opinion on the project application evaluation.
3. Contact details of the Ministry of the Interior (hereinafter – the Ministry) as the Programme Operator:
	1. Head of the Programme Operator, Deputy State Secretary **Ingūna Aire**, telephone:+371 67219404, e-mail address: Inguna.Aire@iem.gov.lv;
	2. Representative of the Programme Operator, Director of the European Affairs and International Cooperation Department **Tija Rinmane**, telephone: +371 67219507, e-mail address: Tija.Rinmane@iem.gov.lv;
	3. Official e-mail address of the Programme Operator: iem-eeaprojects@iem.gov.lv.
4. Total funding available to projects amounts to EUR 16,342,059 which is comprised of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism funding in the amount of 85%, i.e., EUR 13,890,750 and co-funding from the national budget of Latvia in the amount of 15%, i.e., EUR 2,451,309. Maximum aid intensity – 100%.
5. Funding available distributed per projects:
	1. Promoting cooperation between law enforcement authorities in preventing and combating economic crime in Latvia – EUR 2,197,000;
	2. Preventing and combating economic crime at the Border Crossing Point “Terehova” – EUR 2,585,935;
	3. Support for establishment of whistle-blowing system in Latvia – EUR 650,000;
	4. Support to the State Police for increasing effectiveness and quality of economic crime investigations in Latvia – EUR 8,389,124;
	5. Improvement of employees’ knowledge in combating money laundering in Latvia – EURR 450,000;
	6. Support for Barnahus implementation in Latvia – EUR 2,070,000.

**II. Submission of Project Applications**

1. The Programme Operator sends out an invitation to submit a project application to project promoters defined in Cabinet Regulation No. 91 of 11 February 2020, Regulations for the Implementation of the Programme “International Police Cooperation and Combating Crime” of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism 2014-2021.
2. On the date of dispatch of the invitation, the Programme Operator shall publish the evaluation regulations for a project application and annexes thereto (sample project application form (Annex 1), methodology for filling in a project application (Annex 2), project application evaluation criteria (Annex 3), project contract with annexes (Annex 4)) on the official website of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism in Latvia [www.eeagrants.lv](http://www.eeagrants.lv) and on the website of the Ministry [www.iem.gov.lv](http://www.iem.gov.lv).
3. The following information is specified in the invitation:
	1. Programme title;
	2. title of the respective project;
	3. funding available for financing the respective project, co-funding of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism and co-funding from the national budget of Latvia;
	4. project costs eligibility start and end period;
	5. place and time for submission of the project application, contact details for questions about preparing the project application and the procedures for providing answers to the questions received;
	6. website of the institution of the Programme Operator where the sample project application form and other related documents are published;
	7. other information which the Programme Operator may consider necessary.
4. Time period for the submission of a project application is from 5 May 2020 to 31 December 2020.
5. Additional documents which are submitted as annexes to the project application:
	1. project budget;
	2. plan for key reference points of the project;
	3. project communication plan;
	4. certification signed by the project applicant;
	5. certification of the project partner (if applicable), except for a project with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as a cooperation partner;
	6. Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the project manager;
	7. information on all consultants who were involved in preparing the project application.
6. The project applicant shall prepare the project application in Latvian and in English (one copy each) in accordance with the procedures and the term laid down in the invitation.
7. If any questions arise when drafting the project application, the project applicant shall send them to the Project Operator electronically to the e-mail address: iem-eeaprojects@iem.gov.lv. The Programme Operator reviews the questions in relation to preparing a project application received from the project applicant and provides an answer as soon as possible, but not later than within three working days after receipt of the question. Questions addressed to the Programme Operator may be submitted by the project applicant not later than four working days before the deadline for the submission of a project application specified in the invitation.
8. The project application may be submitted:
	1. in paper format, in person or by post;
	2. in the form of an electronic document to the electronic mail address: iem-eeaprojects@iem.gov.lv.
9. If the project application is sent by post, it shall be bound together, authenticated by a seal, adding the date, numbering of each page, signature and a clear script of signature, and also the number of pages shall be specified in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding preparation and drawing up of documents. The note “original copy” shall be indicated on the project application and sent together with an accompanying letter to the Programme Operator. An electronic version of the application shall be appended to the project application in a data carrier.
10. If the project application is submitted in the form of an electronic document, it shall be signed with a secure electronic signature and contain a time stamp in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding drawing up of electronic documents.
11. The project application may not be updated after submitting the project application until an opinion is provided.
12. After receipt of the project application, the Programme Operator shall register it in the register for project applications (Annex 5) and assign an identification number thereto which is composed of the abbreviation of the name of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism, abbreviation of the name of the institution of the project applicant, respective calendar year and project application registration serial number.

**III. Evaluation of Project Applications**

1. The evaluation of project applications shall be performed by a project evaluation committee (hereinafter – the evaluation committee) approved by the order of the Ministry. The evaluation committee shall be headed by the head of the Programme Operator and it shall be comprised of:
	1. representatives with voting rights from the European Affairs and International Cooperation Department of the Ministry and the Sectoral Policy Department of the Ministry;
	2. representatives from the Financial Management Department of the Ministry and from the Council of Europe in the status of an observer.
2. The head of the evaluation committee may invite a representative of the Focal Point in the status of an observer for participation in the evaluation committee.
3. The secretariat functions of the evaluation committee shall be fulfilled by the International Projects Coordination Division of the European Affairs and International Cooperation Department.
4. All participants of the evaluation committee, upon commencing the evaluation of project applications, have the obligation to sign the Declaration on Objectivity and Confidentiality (Annex 6) and to submit it to the head of the evaluation committee.
5. Not later than within 10 (ten) working days after receipt of the project application, the secretary of the evaluation committee shall forward it electronically to the members of the evaluation committee and inform them of the date for a project evaluation meeting or the term for completing the written procedure. The project evaluation meeting or written procedure shall take place not later than 15 (fifteen) working days after receipt of the project application at the Ministry.
6. Not later than within 10 (ten) working days after receipt of the project application, the secretary of the evaluation committee shall forward electronically to a representative of the Council of Europe the project application in English with the following annexes:
	1. project budget;
	2. Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the project manager;
	3. milestone plan;
	4. communication plan.
7. The secretary of the evaluation committee shall evaluate the project application according to administrative criteria and eligibility criteria and shall provide an opinion to the evaluation committee.
8. A representative of the Council of Europe shall evaluate the compliance of the project application with quality criteria and shall provide an opinion electronically to the evaluation committee regarding the compliance of the project with the aforementioned criteria.
9. Representatives of the Financial Management Department shall evaluate the compliance of the project application with financial criteria and shall provide an opinion to the evaluation committee regarding the compliance of the project with the aforementioned criteria.
10. During the project evaluation meeting or written procedure, representatives of the evaluation committee with voting rights shall examine the opinions of the representatives referred to in Clauses 24, 25, and 26 of these Regulations, shall evaluate the project application in accordance with quality criteria and financial criteria, and shall provide:
	1. positive evaluation;
	2. Evaluation with a condition that the project applicant performs specific activities to ensure full compliance of the project with the Regulations and thus to ensure proper implementation of the project.
11. In accordance with Sub-clause 27.1 of these Regulations a project application shall be granted a positive evaluation if none of the evaluation criteria has received the mark “No”.
12. In accordance with Sub-clause 27.2 of these Regulations a project application may receive an evaluation with a condition if corrections or adjustments made by the evaluation committee are related to technical irregularities in the project application, without any impact on the objective and indicators of the project, or it is recommended to make adjustments or supplements in the project application concerning the following matters:
	1. there is a lack of fully understandable information in any of the sections in the description of the project application;
	2. it is necessary to clarify the project budget (arithmetical errors, risk of double funding, inadequate funding is stipulated for the implementation of activities, incorrectly indicated funding share of the financial mechanism or national co-funding share , activities are planned after costs eligibility period of the project, activities included in the project time schedule are not related to the available funding for the project, and other budget-related irregularities).
13. The Programme Operator may invite an independent external expert representing the relevant sector (hereinafter – the external expert) who will perform an additional evaluation of the project application.
14. The external expert shall evaluate the project application in accordance with quality criteria and shall also evaluate the project quality, contribution thereof in the achievement of the objective of the project and compliance with European Union and national legislation.
15. After evaluation of the project application, the external expert shall provide one of the following opinions to the head of the evaluation committee:
	1. the project application is of adequate quality, conforms to the evaluation criteria, European Union and national legislation and also contributes to the achievement of the Programme objectives;
	2. the project application does not conform to the evaluation criteria and European Union and national legislation and it also does not contribute to the achievement of the Programme objectives.

**IV. Preparation of the Evaluation Committee Meeting Minutes**

1. The secretary of the evaluation committee shall draw up the minutes of the meeting of the evaluation committee or the written procedure and, within a period of five working days after the meeting or written procedure, prepare a draft meeting minutes specifying the following:
	1. date and place of the meeting or written procedure;
	2. start and end time of the meeting or written procedure;
	3. persons participating in the meeting or written procedure;
	4. agenda of the meeting or written procedure;
	5. decision of the evaluation committee on a positive evaluation or evaluation of the project application with a condition;
	6. other information, if necessary.
2. The secretary of the evaluation committee shall send the draft meeting minutes to the representatives of the meeting or written procedure with voting rights for coordination thereof. A representative of the meeting or written procedure may, within 2 (two) working days after receipt of the draft minutes, send his or her objections or proposals to the secretary of the evaluation committee. If objections or proposals are not received within the prescribed period, the draft minutes shall be regarded as coordinated.
3. The minutes shall be signed by the head of the evaluation committee, representatives of the evaluation committee with voting rights and the secretary of the evaluation committee.

**V. Opinion on the Evaluation of the Project Application**

1. After provision of the evaluation referred to in Sub-clause 27.1 of these Regulations, the secretary of the evaluation commission shall prepare a draft opinion which is coordinated with the Director of the European Affairs and International Cooperation Department of the Ministry and the Director of the Legal Affairs Department of the Ministry, and it shall be signed by the Head of the Programme Operator. The Document Management Division of the Administrative Department of the Ministry shall send the opinion to the project applicant and the Ministry of Finance being the Focal Point of the Programme.
2. After provision of the evaluation referred to in Sub-clause 27.2 of these Regulations, the secretary of the evaluation committee shall prepare a draft opinion which is coordinated with the Director of the European Affairs and International Cooperation Department of the Ministry and it shall be signed by the Head of the Programme Operator. The Document Management Division of the Administrative Department of the Ministry shall send the opinion to the project applicant.
3. The project applicant shall ensure the fulfilment of the conditions specified in the opinion within the deadline specified in the opinion which shall not exceed a period of 10 (ten) working days, and shall submit to the Programme Operator information on the fulfilment of the conditions specified in the opinion and the updated project application.
4. After receipt of the updated project application, the evaluation committee shall conduct repeated evaluation thereof in accordance with the procedures laid down in Chapter III of these Regulations and shall act in accordance with the procedures laid down in Clause 36 of these Regulations.
5. An opinion regarding the fulfilment of the conditions specified in the evaluation shall be provided by the Programme Operator not later than within a month from the date of submission of the updated project.
6. If the project applicant fails to take the actions referred to in Clause 38 of these Regulations in order to update the project application, the project application shall be regarded as rejected.
7. The opinion of the Project Operator regarding a positive project evaluation or the opinion regarding a project evaluation with a condition may be contested within one month after the announcement of the opinion by submitting an application to the State Secretary of the Ministry. The decision taken by the State Secretary of the Ministry regarding the contested opinion shall not be subject to appeal.
8. The opinion regarding the fulfilment of the conditions specified in the decision may be contested and appealed according to the same procedures and terms as the decision regarding the fulfilment of the conditions of which an opinion has been prepared. The opinion regarding the fulfilment of the conditions specified in the decision may be contested and appealed also separately from the decision specifying the conditions.
9. Prior to entering into the project contract, the project applicant or the Programme Operator may update the information specified in the project application without changing the project application on the merits.

**VI. Other Provisions**

1. The opinion of the Programme Operator regarding a positive project evaluation or the opinion regarding a project evaluation with a condition shall be provided within four months after the deadline for the submission of the project.
2. The project contract shall be signed within 30 (thirty) working days from the date on which the opinion regarding a positive project evaluation or the opinion regarding the fulfilment of the conditions specified in the evaluation has come into force.
3. Upon reasoned request by the project applicant or for other objective reasons, the Programme Operator may extend the term referred to in Clause 46 of these Regulations which in total, counting from the day of the entry into force of the opinion regarding a positive project evaluation or the opinion regarding the fulfilment of the conditions specified in the evaluation, does not exceed 60 (sixty) working days.
4. If the project applicant fails to enter into the project contract within the prescribed term, entering into the contract after expiry of the mentioned term is forbidden.
5. These Regulations and any other matters related to the evaluation of a project application shall be examined together with the following documents:

49.1. Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 between Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Latvia;

49.2. Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 and annexes thereto of 23 September 2016 adopted by the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism Committee;

49.4. Law on the Management of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021;

49.5. Cabinet Regulation No. 683 of 16 November 2018, Regulations Regarding the Management of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021;

49.6. Cabinet Regulation No. 91 of 11 February 2020, Regulations for the Implementation of the Programme “International Police Cooperation and Combating Crime” of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism 2014-2021;

49.7. Programme Agreement of 4 December 2019 entered into between the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism Committee and the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Latvia regarding the introduction of the programme “International Police Cooperation and Combating Crime”;

49.8. other laws and regulations or guidelines adopted by Latvia in relation to the implementation and management of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism 2014-2021.