Area of freedom, security and justice: strategy for the external dimension, action plan implementing the Hague Programme

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This document evaluates in detail the extent to which implementation of the Hague Programmeand the related Action Planhas helped strengthen freedom, security and justice in the European Union. It forms part of the Commission communication, 'Justice, Freedom and Security since 2005: An evaluation of the Hague Programme and Action Plan', which is published together with the Communication on the future priorities for the next multi annual programme ("Stockholm Programme").

The Commission concludes that future action for the further strengthening of justice, freedom and security in the EU should pay particular attention to the lessons learned from the past and should serve the citizen through more efficient and effective policy-making. Looking at the achievements and difficulties encountered during the implementation of the Hague Programme and the related Action Plan analysed in this report, four main lessons applicable across all policy areas have been identified:

- the need for joined-up thinking and action;
- further attention to implementation and enforcement;
- improving the use of evaluation;
- complementing internal policies though external action.