Integrated Border Management Fund: instrument for financial support for customs control equipment 2021–2027

2018/0258(COD) - 16/04/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing, as part of the Integrated Border Management Fund, the instrument for financial support for customs control equipment, thus concluding its first reading.

The European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amended the Commission's proposal as follows:

Instrument's objectives

Parliament noted that the Instrument has the general objective to support the customs union and customs authorities to protect the financial and economic interests of the Union and its Member States to promote inter-agency cooperation at Union borders as regards controls of goods and persons. As part of the Integrated Border Management Fund and with a view to the long-term aim that all customs controls in the Union are standardised, the Instrument has the general objective to support the customs union and customs authorities to protect the financial and economic interests of the Union and its Member States.

The Instrument shall make it possible to detect practices such as counterfeiting and other illegal commercial practices. It has the specific objective of contributing to adequate and equivalent customs controls through the fully transparent purchase, maintenance and upgrade of relevant, state-of-the-art, secure, cyber-resilient, safe, environmental-friendly and reliable customs control equipment. An additional objective is to improve the quality of customs controls throughout Member States to avoid the diversion of goods towards weaker points in the Union. It shall contribute to the implementation of the European Integrated Border Management by supporting interagency cooperation, co-sharing and interoperability of new equipment acquired through the Instrument.

Indicators to report on the progress of the Instrument in achieving the general and specific objectives have been defined in Annex 2 of the Regulation.

Budget

Parliament called for the financial envelope for the implementation of the Instrument for the period 2021-2027 to be EUR 1 149 175 000 in 2018 prices (EUR 1 300 000 000 in current prices).

Implementation and forms of EU funding

When the action supported involves the purchase or upgrade of equipment, the Commission shall:

- set up adequate safeguards and contingency measures to ensure that all the equipment purchased with the support of Union programmes and instruments is put to use by the relevant customs authorities in all relevant cases;

- set up a coordination mechanism ensuring efficiency and interoperability between all the equipment purchased with the support of Union programmes and instruments, which shall allow for the consultation and participation of relevant Union agencies, in particular the European Border and Coast Guard Agency.

The coordination mechanism shall include the participation and consultation of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency to maximise the Union added value in the field of border management.

All the costs related to actions referred to in Article 6 shall be eligible for funding under Instrument, with the exception of costs relating to training or the upgrading of skills necessary for the use of the equipment and costs associated with electronic systems, with the exception of software and software updates directly necessary to use the customs control equipment.

Evaluation

Evaluations of actions funded under the Instrument shall assess the Instrument's results, impact and effectiveness, and shall be carried out in a timely manner to ensure their efficient use in the decision-making process.

The interim evaluation of the Instrument shall be performed once there is sufficient information available about the implementation of the Instrument, but no later than three years (as opposed to four years as proposed by the Commission) after the start of the implementation of the Instrument.

The interim evaluation shall present findings necessary to make a decision about a follow-up to the Programme beyond 2027 and its objectives.

Work programme

The preparation of the work programmes shall be supported by an individual assessment of needs, which shall consist, among others, of the following: (a) an assessment of an optimal level of customs control equipment by reference to the category of border crossing points; and (b) a detailed estimate of financial needs depending on the size of customs operations and the relative workload.

Transparency

In order to ensure transparency, the Commission shall regularly provide information to the public relating to the Instrument, its actions and results, referring to, inter alia, the work programmes.

Monitoring and reporting

The reporting requirements shall include at least the annual communication to the Commission of the following information where the cost of a piece of customs control equipment exceeds EUR 10 000 exclusive of taxes:

- the presence and condition five years after commissioning of items of equipment funded from the Union budget;

- information on instances of maintenance of the customs control equipment;

- information on the procurement procedure;

- justification of the expenses.

The Commission shall present to the European Parliament and the Council information on the performance of the Programme. The Commission’s reporting on performance shall include information on both progress and shortfalls.