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Customs Control Equipment Instrument Annual Progress Report 2022

CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
2. OVERALL CONTEXT	2
2.1 EU Political Context.....	2
2.2 International Context.....	3
2.3 Regulatory Framework.....	3
3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INSTRUMENT'S SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES	3
3.1 Grant implementation for adequate and equivalent customs controls	4
3.1 (a) The successful participation of Member States in the first invitation to submit proposals.....	4
3.1 (b) Co-financing equipment to fulfil the adequacy component of the Instrument.....	4
3.1 (c) The Instrument's agility in responding quickly to changing needs	6
3.2 Data gathering to support current and future policy.....	6
3.3 Customs Control Equipment Instrument coordination expert group	8
3.4 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	9
4. COHERENCE WITH OTHER EU POLICIES AND INSTRUMENTS	9
4.1 Collaboration with the Customs Programme	10
4.2 Coherence with other Programmes	10
5. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED	11
Annex I: Acronyms and definitions	13
Annex II: CCEI performance indicators	14

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Customs Control Equipment Instrument (CCEI) ⁽¹⁾ has the general objective to support the customs union and customs authorities in their mission to protect the financial and economic interests of the Union and its Member States, to ensure security and safety within the Union, and to protect it from illegal trade while facilitating legitimate business activity.

This report, which is issued to monitor the implementation of the CCEI, as mentioned in Recital 26 of the CCEI Regulation, summarises the progress achieved in 2022 in contributing to the specific objective of **adequate and equivalent** ⁽²⁾ customs controls, detailing the main results achieved by the Instrument, synergies with other EU funding programmes, and lessons learned. It was prepared in accordance with the requirements specified under the Monitoring and evaluation framework for the Customs Control Equipment Instrument (2021 – 2027) ⁽³⁾, using indicators as laid down in both the CCEI Regulation and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1528 ⁽⁴⁾.

2022 was a landmark year for the CCEI, being the first full year of implementation of the Instrument's activities, where policy priorities were translated into operational implementation. This was achieved, notably, through the conclusion of the first invitation to submit proposals addressed to Member States, launched under the 2021-2022 Multi-Annual Work Programme ⁽⁵⁾, and the signature of the grant agreements in a timely manner ⁽⁶⁾.

Through these grant agreements, approximately EUR 273.5 million of European Union funding was committed to co-finance the purchase, maintenance, and upgrade of state-of-the-art customs control equipment in border crossing points (BCPs) and customs laboratories across the Union.

In 2022, thanks to its ability to adapt and react very swiftly, the Instrument also demonstrated its intrinsic EU added value, where it contributed to fast changing realities, by allocating funding to BCPs bordering **Belarus, Russia, or Ukraine, most of which were negatively impacted by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.**

2. OVERALL CONTEXT

2.1 EU Political Context

Within the general context, the Instrument started delivering, in 2022, on the Commission priority of **“An economy that works for people”**, by contributing to the objective of ensuring an equivalent level of protection at the EU's external borders. Equally, the CCEI supported the Commission priority of **“Promoting our European Way of Life”** ⁽⁷⁾ by addressing the goal of making customs across the EU act as one. Both contributions were enabled by the signature of the grant agreements with Member States, allowing them to begin the implementation necessary for the purchase, maintenance, and upgrade of modern and reliable customs control equipment.

⁽¹⁾ [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1077 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing, as part of the Integrated Border Management Fund, the instrument for financial support for customs control equipment](#); Hereinafter the CCEI Regulation.

⁽²⁾ The focus of the 2021-2022 Multi-Annual Work Programme was on 'adequacy'. Further information on adequacy can be found in the [Annex on the financing of the Instrument for financial support for customs control equipment for 2021 and 2022](#).

⁽³⁾ Commission Staff Working Document (SWD) Monitoring and evaluation framework for the Customs Control Equipment Instrument (2021 – 2027); Hereinafter SWD(2022) 314 final

⁽⁴⁾ [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2022/1528 of 4 July 2022 supplementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1077 of the European Parliament and of the Council with provisions on the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation framework](#); Hereinafter Delegated Act

⁽⁵⁾ [Annex on the financing of the Instrument for financial support for customs control equipment for 2021 and 2022; Hereinafter the 2021-2022 Multi-Annual Work Programme](#).

⁽⁶⁾ Before their legal deadline of 22 October 2022.

⁽⁷⁾ [Management plan 2022 – Taxation and Customs Union \(europa.eu\)](#)

Within a more focussed customs context, the report of the **Wise Persons Group on Challenges Facing the Customs Union** ⁽⁸⁾ identified, in 2021, a lack of access to customs control equipment as one of the ‘root causes’ of the problems faced by the customs union, as European customs do not yet ‘act as one’. By co-financing the purchase of state-of-the-art customs control equipment, the Instrument started playing its part, in 2022, in addressing such a lack of access. In a similar vein, the funding now enables the purchase of modern and reliable customs control equipment, which will, in turn, contribute to the ambitious forthcoming **reform of Union customs policy**.

2.2 International Context

Within the **larger international context, Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine** had a major impact on the traffic of goods and movements of people across the Union and has re-defined the political priorities of the European Commission in general, and the customs union in particular. The conflict entails significant challenges to perform customs controls in the Union, the ramifications of which have been twofold in nature for customs authorities. For certain BCPs, the sanctions resulted in a significant reduction, or at times complete stop, in traffic flows, whilst other BCPs required an almost immediate increase in their capacity to perform controls, notably, through the purchase of equipment. This, in particular, was due to the simultaneous diversion and major increase in traffic through the creation of the ‘solidarity lanes’ ⁽⁹⁾.

In this regard, funding was quickly provided for customs control equipment to BCPs that were facing the additional challenge of goods arriving from a war zone, or newly created BCPs because of diversions in trade flows. This way, thanks to its design, the CCEI demonstrated the **Union’s capacity to manage crisis very promptly, and substantially improve the security and safety of supplies, and the integrity of supply chains, already in the first year of implementation**. The systematic promotion of the multi-purpose nature of the equipment ⁽¹⁰⁾, the prioritisation of important policies such as the co-sharing of equipment and investment into mobile equipment, are important success factors in this respect and ensure the EU added value of the Instrument.

2.3 Regulatory Framework

With respect to the regulatory framework, a unique feature of the 2021-2022 Multi-Annual Work Programme was the **retroactivity clause** it included, as foreseen by the CCEI Regulation, allowing Member States to apply for co-financing of actions initiated since 1 January 2021. As a result, although the grant agreements were signed in the second half of the year, some equipment funded by the CCEI could have been put into use earlier ⁽¹¹⁾.

In addition, with a view towards the creation of a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the performance of the Instrument, the Commission adopted a **Delegated Act** which introduced additional indicators to supplement the existing ones provided in Annex II of the CCEI Regulation.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INSTRUMENT’S SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Instrument’s specific objective is to contribute to **adequate** and **equivalent** results of customs controls through the transparent purchase, maintenance, and upgrade of relevant and

⁽⁸⁾ [Wise Persons Group on Challenges Facing the Customs Union \(WPG\)](#)

⁽⁹⁾ Communication from the Commission: An Action Plan for EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes to facilitate Ukraine’s agricultural export and bilateral trade with the EU. In particular, the creation of new trade routes through the solidarity lanes has enabled trade flows from Ukraine to the EU and through the EU to the rest of the world, creating new customs control needs at BCPs.

⁽¹⁰⁾ As set out in the CCEI Regulation and Multi-Annual Work Programme.

⁽¹¹⁾ Some equipment projects could be put into use as early as in April 2022.

reliable state-of-the-art equipment that is secure, safe, and environmentally friendly, thereby helping the national authorities to act as one in protecting the interests of the Union ⁽¹²⁾.

To reach this specific objective, a **two-step implementation process** has been set up. The first step corresponds to a short-term approach, dedicated to filling in the performance gaps in the availability of equipment and to ensuring that the BCPs and customs laboratories do not lack important equipment or have unmet control needs, preventing them from performing adequate and effective controls. This is the ‘**adequacy**’ component of the Instrument’s objectives, which was the focus of the 2021-2022 Multi-Annual Work Programme. The second step, which will be implemented in upcoming work programmes, will provide for a long-term vision aiming to achieve the specific objective of contributing to **equivalent** levels of results of customs controls.

In 2022, implementation of the Instrument’s specific objective was done through the following:

- Grant implementation for adequate and equivalent customs controls
- Data gathering to support current and future policy, mainly focusing on the requirements of the CCEI regulation in terms of assessment of the needs
- Customs Control Equipment Instrument coordination expert group
- Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

3.1 Grant implementation for adequate and equivalent customs controls

3.1 (a) The successful participation of Member States in the first invitation to submit proposals

The projects being implemented through the 2021-2022 Multi-Annual Work Programme are targeted towards achieving the short-term objective of adequate and effective customs controls. To deliver this, **(i) stronger and better equipped customs union (ii) enhanced Union added value with five building blocks ⁽¹³⁾ and (iii) improved Innovation and Sustainability ⁽¹⁴⁾** were identified as the three policy priorities to be addressed in the applications for funding by the Member States.

In this context, the first invitation to submit proposals for the CCEI closed on 20 January 2022 ⁽¹⁵⁾. In total, the Commission received **43** applications from **24** Member States ⁽¹⁶⁾ under two topics: BCPs and customs laboratories. Of these, **24** Member States applied for the BCP topic, while **19** Member States applied for the customs laboratories topic. **20** of these applications, across both topics, corresponding to close to half of the total number of proposals received, were retroactive in nature. Thus, Member States saw real opportunity in using the CCEI to fill in their most urgent needs, as can be demonstrated by the **number of applications**, coming from **most national authorities**, spanning the **length and breadth of the Union**.

3.1 (b) Co-financing equipment to fulfil the adequacy component of the Instrument

All applications were evaluated with the objective of preventing diversions in the flow of goods towards weakest points, focussing on most crucial needs, as identified by the Member States, and duly **considering the specificities** of each BCP and customs laboratory. This was done by ensuring that these needs would contribute to **addressing the most pressing disparities** in the performance of customs controls carried out by Member States in the over **2000** customs offices present in the Union, resulting from differences in geographic features, capacities, and resources available.

⁽¹²⁾ Article 3 of the CCEI Regulation

⁽¹³⁾ These are: Customs union acting as one; Union safety and security; Protection of the Union’s financial interests; Protecting the Union from unfair and illegal trade; Facilitation of the legitimate business activity.

⁽¹⁴⁾ As identified in the 2021-2022 Multi-Annual Work Programme.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Further information on the CCEI invitation to submit proposals can be found [on the funding and tenders portal](#)

⁽¹⁶⁾ Denmark, Greece, and Malta did not participate in the first invitation to submit proposals.

As a result of the evaluation, **42** ⁽¹⁷⁾ grant agreements were signed, resulting in the allocation of funds to co-finance the purchase, maintenance, and upgrade of more than **1300** pieces of customs control equipment in over **210** BCPs, and more than **500** pieces of equipment in over **30** customs laboratories for a total European Union funding of approximately EUR 273.5 million, corresponding to over 95% of the total EU contribution requested for by Member States. The highest contributions in terms of funding were requested by and granted to Bulgaria (EUR 32.2 million), Poland and Italy (EUR 25.8 million each) for BCPs, while for customs laboratories, the highest amounts were requested by and granted to Italy (EUR 4.9 million), followed closely by France (EUR 4.8 million), and Hungary (EUR 4.2 million) ⁽¹⁸⁾.

With a view towards smooth grant implementation, over **20** bilateral meetings were organized by the Commission to support national administrations during the grant agreement preparation phase, and more than **170** responses were provided on topics related to grant implementation.

Figure 1: EU award contributions for Border Crossing Points projects in 2022

Country	EU Contributions (EUR)
Bulgaria	32.2 million
Poland	25.8 million
Italy	25.8 million
Netherlands	23.7 million
Belgium	19.9 million
Lithuania	18.8 million
Finland	16.8 million
France	15.0 million
Portugal	14.3 million
Romania	13.7 million
Hungary	12.0 million
Latvia	6.2 million
Slovakia	5.3 million
Sweden	3.8 million
Spain	3.7 million
Estonia	2.4 million
Cyprus	2.4 million
Croatia	2.1 million
Ireland	1.2 million
Germany	0.7 million
Slovenia	0.7 million
Czech Republic	0.5 million
Luxembourg	0.1 million
Austria	0.04 million
Total contributions	247.2 million

Figure 2: EU award contributions for customs laboratories projects in 2022

Country	EU Contributions (EUR)
Italy	4.9 million
France	4.8 million
Hungary	4.2 million
Bulgaria	1.8 million
Finland	1.6 million
Poland	1.4 million
Belgium	1.2 million
Lithuania	1.1 million
Spain	1.0 million
Croatia	0.9 million
Romania	0.8 million
Portugal	0.8 million
Latvia	0.7 million
Sweden	0.4 million
Czech Republic	0.4 million
Austria	0.2 million
Germany	0.1 million
Slovenia	0.1 million
Total contributions	26.3 million

In terms of payments, close to EUR **137** million was transferred to Member States as pre-financing, corresponding to **50%** of the total grant amount of all accepted projects ⁽¹⁹⁾.

Once grant agreements were signed, Member States started the process through their national procurement procedures for the acquisition, delivery, and put into use of the equipment funded by the Instrument. This, in turn, led to the start of their reporting obligations ⁽²⁰⁾.

⁽¹⁷⁾ One grant was terminated at the request of the Member State in question.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Further information can be found on the [funding and tenders portal](#)

⁽¹⁹⁾ The CCEI funds 50% of the grant amount as pre-financing and 50% as final payment.

3.1 (c) The Instrument's agility in responding quickly to changing needs

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has had major repercussions for the customs union. Customs authorities were, on the one hand, required to contribute to the **correct application of sanctions**, whilst on the other, expected to **facilitate the solidarity lanes**. Certain BCPs saw a **complete stop in traffic**, whilst others faced the challenge of **increased trade flows, and new BCPs being established as a result**.

The funding committed in 2022 included the co-financing of customs control equipment for **certain BCPs directly affected** by the military aggression of Russia against Ukraine. This was a major achievement under the CCEI, demonstrating its ability to quickly adapt to changing circumstances building on the possibilities of the multipurpose nature of the equipment, as the decision to start preparations for the signature of grant agreements was taken in May, less than three months after the start of the war.

In total, **approximately EUR 66.5 million** was committed to fund these BCPs impacted by the military aggression, **representing close to a quarter of the total budget** for the 2021-2022 Multi-Annual Work Programme. The CCEI's prompt response to the crisis highlights its ability to reinforce Member States capabilities when most needed.

3.2 Data gathering to support current and future policy

Data gathering within the CCEI has been designed to support the **harmonisation of customs controls** by aligning data points at the level of BCP and customs laboratories within the **Customs Union Performance methodology** wherever possible. The effective kick-off of the data collection through the perspective of the equipment needs and coverage, marks a new level of integration in the customs union. This data gathering, which is also fully aligned with **the overall vision for data-driven customs**, will no doubt significantly support the reform of customs policy when it comes to decisions related to the purchase and use of customs control equipment.

The CCEI operates on a data-driven policy approach, stemming from requirements in the CCEI Regulation. The data-cycle consists of the initial needs assessment, performed in 2019, updated regularly through the information provided by Member States in their applications, and through their reporting obligations. The needs assessment is to be updated at least every three years ⁽²¹⁾.

In their applications for funding under the first invitation to submit proposals, Member States were asked to provide information on BCPs and their associated traffic flows, traffic modalities, threats, and risks ⁽²²⁾. This information is fundamental for the move towards the long-term vision of contributing to **equivalent and harmonised levels** of customs controls resulting in a fully-fledged customs union.

For 2022, the Commission used the data collected to evaluate the applications of the Member States. To support and contribute to the effective implementation of the CCEI, the Commission paid special attention to **mapping out the capabilities of the customs union** based on the commonly agreed equipment model.

⁽²⁰⁾ This is done through eGrants, the Commission's electronic portal for grant management, where Member States update the information originally provided in their application on equipment available, traffic volumes and modalities, and threats and risks. This will help measure the Union added value of the Instrument.

⁽²¹⁾ As per Article 11 of the CCEI Regulation.

⁽²²⁾ For those Member States that did not apply for funding in the first invitation to submit proposals, the collection of information was done separately.

Though it may still be too premature to give a comprehensive overview of the update in the coverage of customs control equipment needs within the customs union, the data collected through the first invitation to submit proposals has yielded the following results:

- Member States declared over **21,000** pieces of equipment present at BCP level in their applications, and requested funding for the purchase, maintenance, and upgrade of more than **1300** pieces of customs control equipment in over **210 strategic BCPs out of more than 2000 BCPs spread throughout the customs union.**
- They also declared the presence of over **4000** pieces of equipment in customs laboratories and requested funding for the purchase, maintenance, and upgrade of more than **500** pieces of customs control equipment in over **30 customs laboratories.**
- Each Member State identified risks/threats present at each BCP/customs laboratory, based on a list of **16 risk/threat categories** ⁽²³⁾ in order to justify the need for the equipment requested. In addition to these threats and risks, due consideration was given to the specificity of each BCP in terms of traffic modalities, flows, and geographic features.
- This, in turn, allowed Member States to identify equipment required to cover their most urgent needs to perform adequate and effective controls. For BCPs, the equipment type most requested by Member States in their applications was that of **radiation and nuclear detection.** This type of equipment is critical for ensuring the compliance of the customs controls with the safety requirements but also corresponds to emerging new threats and priorities. For customs laboratories **chromatography** was the largest equipment type category requested.
- With regard to the main performance indicator of the instrument – the availability of customs controls equipment and its adherence to the common list of equipment that should be available per type of border crossing point, there is currently an overall adherence level of 9.28% for all BCPs (with further breakdown for BCPs as follows: Air: 11%; Land: 7%; Mobile ⁽²⁴⁾: 23%; Post: 11%; Rail: 8%; Sea: 12%. ⁽²⁵⁾). This data clearly shows that there are still critical equipment needs across all borders, for which the CCEI will continue to play an essential role.

⁽²³⁾ Of these risks, “Fiscal/VAT Fraud (customs gap, goods in evasion of tax and duties)” was the threat/risk declared most often for BCPs, while it was “Misclassification of goods and misdeclaration of origin” for customs laboratories. For BCPs, this was followed by “Drugs and precursors thereof, pharmaceuticals” and “Goods in violation of intellectual property rights”. For customs laboratories, “Drugs and precursors thereof, pharmaceuticals” was also a major threat/risk, and was followed by “Fiscal/VAT Fraud (customs gap, goods in evasion of tax and duties)”.

⁽²⁴⁾ The common list was adopted at the meeting of the CCEI Coordination Expert Group on 1st September 2021. In addition to the categories envisaged by the CCEI regulation, the mobile BCP category was added due to its strategic role in increasing the efficiency of the customs controls by providing greater flexibility and unpredictability in the performance of the controls.

⁽²⁵⁾ The information is based on data provided by Member States, the data comprehensiveness rating for which is assessed at 59,8%.

Figure 3: Distribution of type of equipment requested by Member States for BCP projects in 2022

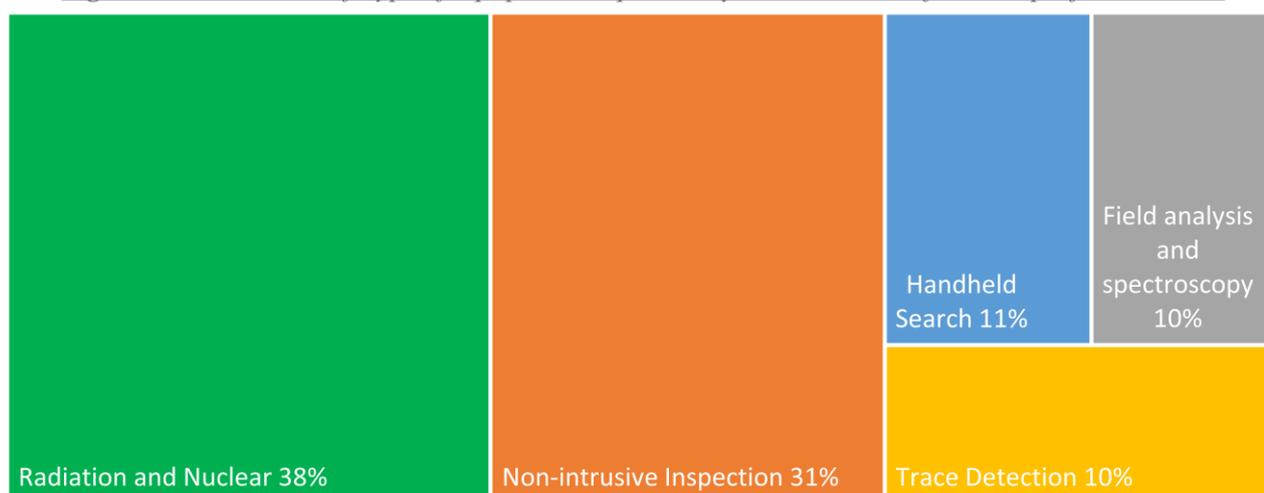
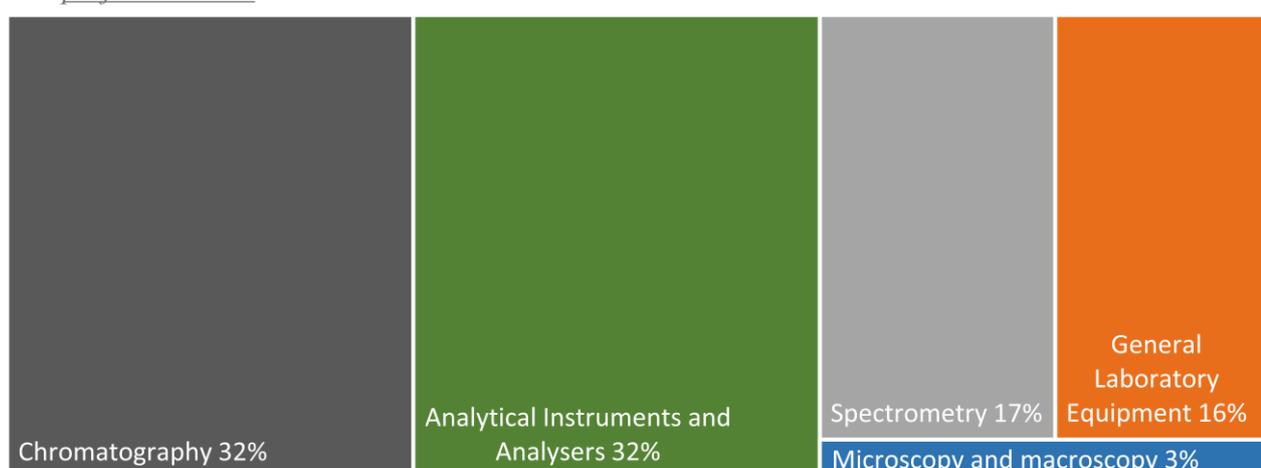


Figure 4: Distribution of type of equipment requested by Member States for customs laboratories projects in 2022



3.3 Customs Control Equipment Instrument coordination expert group

Member State involvement is intrinsic to the success of the CCEI and is secured through (1) contributing to policy development by Member State participation in the CCEI Coordination Group, an expert group funded by the Customs Programme ⁽²⁶⁾, and (2) the implementation of grants.

In 2022, this group continued to assist the Commission by working on seventeen policy topics ⁽²⁷⁾, producing three ⁽²⁸⁾ guidance notes, and making progress on nine additional guidance notes

⁽²⁶⁾ The CCEI Coordination Group (E03786) assists and supports the Commission in the implementation of the CCEI and the development of the policy aspects required by the CCEI regulation. Further information available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expert-groups/consult?lang=en&groupId=3786&fromMeetings=true&meetingId=29394>

⁽²⁷⁾ Further information on the topics, based on pre-defined policy subjects, can be found in the [CCEI Annual Progress Report 2021](#)

⁽²⁸⁾ Deliverable 4: List of relevant expert level supporting documents; Deliverable 7: Common principles and mechanisms for possible synergies, in particular co-sharing of equipment; Deliverable 9: List of the training needs.

(²⁹). Prior to the award of the grants, particular emphasis was put by the Commission on ensuring the security of the equipment to be purchased under the Instrument, including appropriate considerations for its procurement (further information in point 4). In total, six meetings took place, either online or in a hybrid setting.

In addition to the approval of policy guidance (deliverables), these meetings served as a valuable platform to discuss issues relevant to the CCEI, such as data sharing as well as on-going issues related to grant implementation, and informing on policy.

3.4 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

With a view to assessing the Instrument's progress towards its objectives, in 2022, the Commission **adopted a Delegated Act** supplementing the existing monitoring and evaluation framework with the provision of 9 additional indicators (³⁰) that the Commission will report on (³¹). In doing so, the CCEI contributes today to the **Customs Risk Management Framework (CRMF)** as the data generated from monitoring the implementation of the Instrument, and information on specific challenges and threats to a particular BCP, will reinforce the knowledge base for the effective implementation of the CRMF.

The monitoring and evaluation framework will function as follows:

- through the reporting obligations to be performed regularly by Member States benefitting from this Instrument and;
- through surveys sent annually to national customs authorities.

The results of the survey, together with the information collected through the reporting obligations are included in the annex of this Report.

4. COHERENCE WITH OTHER EU POLICIES AND INSTRUMENTS

Customs law and policy, and consequently the CCEI, have an extensive external dimension linking multiple policy areas. Policy coordination between the CCEI and other EU programmes has therefore been designed around two strategic goals:

- **Efficient spending of EU funds:** make sure that the EU programmes are complementary and offer synergies in the way the funds are spent, with a particular focus on avoiding double funding (programme funds financing the same costs);
- **Policy coordination:** ultimately, even though different policies are pursued, the EU programmes should be complementary to each other (³²).

Furthermore, by its nature, the CCEI entails an important internal and external **security dimension**. In this respect, as part of the call documentation, the Commission had strongly emphasised that projects need to comply with EU policy interests and priorities in the fields of security and provided additional guidance to Member States with a series of recommendations in

(²⁹) Deliverable 5: Guidance for procurement; Deliverable 6: Framework for testing of new and innovative equipment; Deliverable 8: Guidance on efficient maintenance of equipment (including warranties); Deliverable 10: Guidance on the safety, security, and cybersecurity; Deliverable 11: Common equipment (technical) standards for the different customs control equipment; Deliverable 12: Equipment performance metric and indicators; Deliverables 13 and 15: Contribution to CCEI needs assessments of equipment (gap analysis) and needs assessment methodology; Deliverable 14: Centres of expertise; Deliverable 16: Knowledge sharing and identification of best practices; Deliverable 17: Advise on innovation, research and development of State of the Art detection and control equipment, including biodiversity and greening.

(³⁰) Annex II of the CCEI Regulation lists core indicators to report on the progress of the Instrument towards the achievement of the general and specific objectives.

(³¹) SWD(2022) 314 final

(³²) SWD(2022) 314 final

this regard such as: 1) the information collected and processed by the equipment would remain in EU territory, 2) the equipment would be subject to regular security audits and cybersecurity tests and 3) the installation, handling and maintenance of the equipment would always be performed in the presence of national customs and/or security officers.

In 2022, the CCEI continued building synergies with the Customs programme as well as with other programmes and initiatives.

4.1 Collaboration with the Customs Programme

The CCEI has a specific focus: to co-finance the purchase, maintenance, and upgrade of customs control equipment. Other related actions, such as cooperation initiatives or training relating to the equipment concerned, are supported by the Customs programme ⁽³³⁾.

In particular, cooperation between the CCEI and the Customs programme was ensured in 2022 in the following ways:

- **Collaborative activities**: the Customs programme continued to support several collaborative activities that directly contributed to the management and implementation of the CCEI, such as the **CCEI coordination group**. **Other activities** ⁽³⁴⁾ were also undertaken with a view to **sharing best practices and expertise** of benefit to the CCEI. Furthermore, the **Expert Team dedicated to the Eastern and South-Eastern Land Border (CELBET3)** ⁽³⁵⁾ contributed to the harmonisation of customs controls by sharing technical knowledge and experience about customs control equipment. Some of the most notable examples in this regard are: development of common technical specifications for the procurement of equipment, the development of a common platform to exchange X-ray images (now transferred to TAXUD CRMS ⁽³⁶⁾ equipment corner), the CELBET BCP diagnostic studies which support the equipment needs assessment, training materials etc. CELBET3 was also integral to the efforts of the solidarity lanes, which in turn was invaluable for customs controls in countries bordering Ukraine. Finally, the Customs programme funded bilateral study visits to facilitate knowledge-sharing on the optimal use of customs control equipment.
- **Training**: based on the training needs analysis performed by the CCEI coordination group, 7 training modules started to be developed. In addition, the **Common Learning Event Programme (CLEP) and CELBET** organised several other training courses and activities over the year, of direct or indirect relevance to the CCEI.

4.2 Coherence with other Programmes

The CCEI is part of the **Integrated Border Management Fund**, which also comprises the **BMVI** ⁽³⁷⁾. The two Instruments are conceived as complementary, but with distinct scopes: the CCEI for customs control (mainly goods), and the BMVI for border control (mainly people). Linking customs and border controls enables customs and border authorities to work together and maximise the impact of the Union budget through co-sharing and interoperability of control equipment ⁽³⁸⁾. In addition, the CCEI maintains close links, including through the establishment of a structured coordination mechanism, with **the Union Anti-Fraud Programme** ⁽³⁹⁾, the

⁽³³⁾ Recital 16 of the CCEI Regulation

⁽³⁴⁾ Tobacco Detection Dog Handler's Regional Workshop; Seminar of the Baltic Customs Laboratories; and Rummage Project Group, to name a few.

⁽³⁵⁾ [CELBET](#)

⁽³⁶⁾ Customs Risk Management System.

⁽³⁷⁾ [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1148 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy](#)

⁽³⁸⁾ Recital 18 of the CCEI Regulation

⁽³⁹⁾ [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/785 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021](#)

Horizon Europe programme ⁽⁴⁰⁾, **the Recovery & Resilience Facility (RRF)** ⁽⁴¹⁾ **and the Technical Support Instrument (TSI)** ⁽⁴²⁾.

Complementarities and synergies amongst programmes are reinforced at two stages:

- Policy coordination i.e., while drafting work programmes;
- Through the evaluation process, to allow for possible ‘multiplier effects’.

Member States are also **encouraged to actively seek and achieve complementarities** and synergies through different EU funding programmes.

During the reporting period, such synergies and complementarities were observed, in particular:

- Through the **Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-2022**, where the Commission worked in a coordinated manner across policy domains, resulting in the funding of topics related to customs controls ⁽⁴³⁾.
- Under the **EU Cohesion Fund**, Romanian customs administrations are implementing a large infrastructure project ⁽⁴⁴⁾ (with the EU financing EUR 6.4 million) for the rehabilitation and modernisation of the customs offices in/across the Romanian / Moldavian border ⁽⁴⁵⁾. The customs control equipment and infrastructure project, funded under the framework of the 2014-2020 programme, served as a valuable complement to the equipment co-financed under the CCEI. It also demonstrated proactivity by a Member State in maximising the added value of EU funds. The project continued to be implemented in 2022, and results are expected by mid-2023.

Identifying such complementarities with other funding instruments and support programmes should be increasingly the focus area of the CCEI in order to foster the added-value of the instrument and to look for synergies considering the important equipment needs that remain to be covered.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

2022 was a significant year for the CCEI, where the Instrument entered successfully into its implementation phase. Whilst it is too early to tell whether the Instrument reached its objective of contributing to adequate and equivalent customs controls, it demonstrated its **full flexibility in adjusting and delivering swiftly and providing EU added value to address the needs of Member States in times of crisis in the context of the war in Ukraine. At the same time**, considering the Instrument’s potential for **synergies to be achieved from the own initiative of Member States** in utilising the complementarity between the EU funding programmes or other sources, more transparency should be given in this context.

On the financial side, the signature of the grant agreements enabled greater clarity on the real budgetary requirements of Member States through the amount requested for in each project. It confirmed that the funding, as originally foreseen in the 2021-2022 Multi-Annual Work Programme, could adequately cover their most urgent needs, financing over 95% of the total EU contribution requested for. However, the data collected and the information provided by the

⁽⁴⁰⁾ [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021](#)

⁽⁴¹⁾ [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021](#)

⁽⁴²⁾ [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/240 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 February 2021](#)

⁽⁴³⁾ Advanced detection of threats and illicit goods in postal and express carrier flows; Improved detection of concealed objects on and within the body of persons; Better, more portable and quicker analysis and detection for customs. More information available under the [Horizon Europe -Work Programme 2021-2022](#)

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Romania-Moldova cross-border cooperation programme.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ This is being done under the framework of the 2014-2020 programme.

Member States further displays the continued need for the funding of equipment at BCPs and customs laboratories given the presence of persisting critical equipment needs, for which the CCEI is expected to play an essential role.

With continued implementation and monitoring of the Instrument, 2023 will be a crucial year to measure its effectiveness as equipment co-financed by the CCEI grants will continue to be purchased progressively and put into use. More data will become available on whether Member States meet their targets, as set out in their grant agreements, in achieving their deliverables and milestones, communicated through the reporting obligations. The data gathered through the CCEI reporting obligations will also have a significant contribution in assessing customs union performance.

Finally, the end of 2022 provided a better understanding of upcoming challenges for the CCEI: ensuring EU security is of utmost priority, rapid changes in trade flows will continue to require quick and agile adjustments, while economic factors, such as inflation, will also need to be addressed. With the aim of reaching a level playing field, Member States will continue to be strongly encouraged to follow the guidance provided by the Commission on security requirements. Advances in technology will provide greater opportunities to look for synergies with other EU programmes and further increasing the interoperability of the EU customs control equipment and the exchange of data and information. The emphasis should remain on meeting the challenges as they come, whilst delivering on the objectives and improving customs union performance.

ANNEX I: ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

Acronym	Definition
BCP	Border Crossing Point
BMVI	Border Management and Visa Instrument
CCEI	Customs Control Equipment Instrument
CUP	Customs Union Performance
EU	European Union
EUAF	European Union Anti-fraud programme
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
IBMF	Integrated Border Management Fund
MAWP	Multi-Annual Work Programme
RRF	Recovery & Resilience Facility
TA	Technical Assistance

ANNEX II: CCEI PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

OP 1.1 ⁽⁴⁶⁾: Number of pieces of equipment per Member States Border Crossing Points (BCP) and Customs Laboratories that were purchased, maintained or upgraded through CCEI funds

Equipment purchased, maintained and upgraded through the CCEI for border crossing points (BCPs) in 2022

Data not available for 2022 as most of projects are in the initial stage of implementation at national level following the signature of grant agreements between Member States and the Commission (by October 2022).

In future reporting, this indicator will provide the number of pieces of equipment (per category of Border Crossing Points) that were purchased, maintained or upgraded through Customs Control Equipment Instrument funds.

Equipment purchased, maintained and upgraded through the CCEI for customs laboratories in 2022

Data not available for 2022 as most of projects are in the initial stage of implementation at national level following the signature of grant agreements between Member States and the Commission (by October 2022).

In future reporting, this indicator will provide the number of Customs Laboratories equipment that were purchased, maintained or upgraded through Customs Control Equipment Instrument funds.

OP 1.2: Use of equipment concerned per Member States' Border Crossing Points and customs laboratories that were purchased, maintained or upgraded through Customs Control Equipment Instrument funds

This indicator incorporates data on the frequency of using the equipment over a specific time period.

Occupancy rate for equipment purchased, maintained, or upgraded through the CCEI for border crossing points in 2022

Data not available for 2022 as most of projects are in the initial stage of implementation at national level following the signature of grant agreements between Member States and the Commission (by October 2022).

In future reporting, this indicator will inform on the frequency of use of Border Crossing Points equipment that were purchased, maintained or upgraded through the Customs Control Equipment Instrument funds, categorised by type of Border Crossing Point type of equipment.

Occupancy rate for equipment purchased, maintained, or upgraded through the CCEI for customs laboratories in 2022

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Indicators OP 1.1, OP 1.2, RES 1.1 and RES 1.3 (quantitative indicators) are calculated using the information provided by beneficiaries of CCEI funds during their proposals, as well as during their continuous monitoring and reporting obligations.

Data not available for 2022 as most of projects are in the initial stage of implementation at national level following the signature of grant agreements between Member States and the Commission (by October 2022).

In future reporting, this indicator will inform on the frequency of use of Customs Laboratories equipment that were purchased, maintained or upgraded through the Customs Control Equipment Instrument funds, categorised by type of Customs Laboratories type of equipment.

OP 1.3⁽⁴⁷⁾: Proportion of national administrations who report positively on the overall Customs Control Equipment Instrument’s support and the efficiency of the implementation process

This indicator measures on one side, Member States’ satisfaction with the guidance and programme management support provided and, on the other, whether the procedural and management tasks are carried out in a timely manner by the CCEI project team and the national customs administrations.

Percentage of positive replies on CCEI support, in 2022⁽⁴⁸⁾

	2022 value	2023 target	2027 target
Satisfaction with the programme management support and guidance provided	96%	70%	70%

Member States level of satisfaction, in 2022, with:

	Not at all satisfied	Not satisfied	Satisfied	Fully satisfied
The quality of the guidance provided at the application stage	0%	5.5%	63%	31.5%
The quality of the information contained in the call documentation	0%	0%	63%	37%
The quality of the ongoing guidance provided during the implementation stage	0%	5.5%	63%	42%

Efficiency of the implementation process, in 2022:

	2022 value	2023 target	2027 target
Adherence to deadlines/timelines set out in the relevant grant agreements ⁽⁴⁹⁾	100%	80%	100%

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Indicators OP 1.3, RES 1.3 and RES 2 (qualitative indicators) are calculated using the information provided by beneficiaries of CCEI funds during the survey activity performed annually by the Commission

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Replies received from 23 Member States for indicator OP 1.3 (Austria, Greece, Luxembourg, and Poland did not provide data for 2022).

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Adherence to the timelines calculated in basis of the legal deadlines established in the grant agreement, and agreed by the beneficiaries of the Instrument.

All grant agreements have been signed by the Commission and the national customs administrations by October 2022. No delays were signalled during the first implementation months of 2022 (November & December).

EU level project implementation timeline for 2022:

<i>Step:</i>	<i>Effective date:</i>
Launch of call for applications	14 October 2021
Deadline for submission	20 January 2022 ⁽⁵⁰⁾
End of evaluation of applications, with the transmission of evaluation result letters to Member States (time to inform)	25 May 2022
Signature of all grant agreements (time to grant)	20 October 2022
Payment of pre-financing (time to pay)	No later than 30 days after the signature of each grant

Conclusion about the timeliness in the implementation of the project at Commission level:

In 2022, all CCEI activities (as described in the timeline above) were completed on timely manner, and all the required payments were processed within the legal deadline.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Extended from original deadline of 18 January 2022

Results indicators

RES 1.1: Specific results achieved by Member States through use of CCEI funded equipment

Percentage of achieved commitments from the use of the CCEI funded equipment per policy building block of the CCEI ⁽⁵¹⁾ in 2022

Data not available for 2022 as most of projects are in the initial stage of implementation at national level following the signature of grant agreements between Member States and the Commission (by October 2022).

In future reporting, this indicator will inform on the percentage of achieved commitments from the use of equipment that was purchased, maintained or upgraded through the Customs Control Equipment Instrument funds, categorised by policy building block.

RES 1.2: Proportion of national administrations who agree that the Customs Control Equipment Instrument has contributed to adequate customs controls with equivalent results

Proportion of National Administrations who agreed ⁽⁵²⁾ that the Customs Control Equipment Instrument has contributed to adequate customs controls with equivalent results in 2022, disaggregated by types of threats ⁽⁵³⁾

	2022 value	2023 target	2027 target
Radiological and nuclear materials	100%	60% ⁽⁵⁴⁾	80% ⁽⁵⁵⁾
Weapons, firearms, ammunition, explosive material, precursors thereof and dual use	100%		
Drugs and precursors thereof, pharmaceuticals	100%		
Waste, and hazardous and toxic materials	100%		
Goods in violation of intellectual property rights	100%		
Non-compliant and unsafe products	100%		
Cash declared incorrectly (Cash Control)	100%		
CITES (endangered species)	100%		
Cultural goods and treasures	100%		
Non-compliance with other trade regulations, prohibitions, and restrictions	100%		
Non-compliance with environmental standards	100%		
Under-valuation	100%		
Fiscal/VAT Fraud (customs gap, goods in evasion of tax and duties)	100%		
Misclassification of goods and misdeclaration of origin	100%		
Need for equipment processing capacity	100%		
Equipment preparedness/capacity for e-commerce	100%		

⁽⁵¹⁾ The five building blocks of the CCEI are: Customs Union acting as one; Union safety and security; Protection of the Union's financial interests; Protection of the Union from unfair and illegal trade; Facilitation of the legitimate business activity.

⁽⁵²⁾ For each risk/threats, the Commission looks at the proportion of Member States that have agreed or fully agreed with the statements proposed to them during the Annual Survey activity.

⁽⁵³⁾ Replies received for 9 projects from 7 Member States.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ 60% target for each type of threat.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Indicative targets which will be adjusted based on indicator values after the implementation of the first Work Programme.

Commission's services perspective on external factors which may influence the results:

External factors identified by the Commission in 2022 that may have negatively affected the output initially envisioned by Member States in their projects:

- The Russian aggression against Ukraine and consequent sanctions against Russia have negatively disrupted the activity at specific BCPs / customs laboratories.
- The rise of the cost of materials due to inflation.
- Disruption(s) in the supply chain due to the lack of components / raw materials -could delay the project's implementation.

No additional external factors have been identified by Member States.

RES 1.3: Degree of adherence of BCPs and customs laboratories equipment to the common list of equipment ⁽⁵⁶⁾ that should be available per laboratory/type of border crossing point ⁽⁵⁷⁾, contributing to a harmonised application of customs controls

Degree of adherence of Border Crossing Points, in 2022⁽⁵⁸⁾:

Type of BCP	Degree of adherence (%)	Target 2024	Target 2027
Air	11%	60%	80%
Land	7%		
Mobile	23%		
Postal	11%		
Rail	8%		
Sea	12%		
Overall adherence level	9.3%		

⁽⁵⁶⁾ The common list was adopted at the meeting of the CCEI Coordination Expert Group on 1st September 2021.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ In addition to the categories envisaged by the CCEI regulation, the mobile BCP category was added due to its strategic role in increasing the efficiency of the customs controls by providing greater flexibility and unpredictability in the performance of the controls.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ The information is based on data provided by Member States, the data comprehensiveness rating for which is assessed at 59,8%.

RES 1.4: Coverage of risks and threats present at Border Crossing Points/laboratories contributing to a harmonised application of customs controls

This indicator is designed to gather data to suggest that the CCEI has contributed to harmonised application of customs controls across the different categories by ensuring the conditions to address the threats and risks present at the BCPs and laboratories with the funded and available equipment. It comprises quantitative data gathered at the application and reporting stages where Members States specify the risks and threats present at each BCP/laboratories, linking it with the equipment to be funded.

Coverage of non-financial and financial risks and threats of BCPs and customs laboratories in 2022:

Type of BCP	Non-financial risks/threats	Financial risks/threats	2024 Target	2027 target
	Coverage (%)	Coverage (%)		
Air	58%	66%	70%	90% ⁽⁵⁹⁾
Land	40%	31%		
Mobile	73%	89%		
Post	66%	70%		
Rail	44%	39%		
Sea	55%	53%		
Customs laboratories ⁽⁶⁰⁾	N/A	N/A		

RES 2: Proportion of National Administrations who report positively on the contribution of the Customs Control Equipment Instrument to the better implementation of the Customs Risk Measurement Framework (CRMF)

This indicator is designed to collect data on the ways in which the CCEI contributes to the better implementation of the CRMF ⁽⁶¹⁾.

Percentage of positive replies for BCPs and customs laboratories in 2022 ⁽⁶²⁾:

	2022 value	2024 target	2027 target
Proportion of National Administrations who report positively on the contribution of the Customs Control Equipment Instrument to the better implementation of the Customs Risk Measurement Framework (CRMF)	95%	60%	80% ⁽⁶³⁾

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Targets are indicative to a large extent. They will be adjusted based on indicator values after the implementation of the first Work Programme.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ No data available for customs laboratories in 2022 as the correlation of risks and threats with the equipment could not be established yet, due to the complexity of the situations of the customs laboratories.

⁽⁶¹⁾ Feasibility to report on the indicator on a yearly basis is dependent on consistent cooperation of Customs Risk Management and Customs Controls departments of specific Member States, which may take time to establish. In the meantime, reporting may be less regular.

⁽⁶²⁾ Replies received for 19 projects from 12 Member States.

⁽⁶³⁾ At this stage, targets are indicative to a large extent. They will be adjusted based on indicator values after the implementation of the first Work Programme.