

Call for tender

Outsourcing of tasks related to receipt of Schengen visa applications

in the Republic of Cyprus

General Information

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary (hereinafter referred to as the Ministry) aims to continuously improve the quality of its services offered to the general public. It also aims to provide favourable conditions for the visa applicants during the visa application process. In order to extend the accessibility of the Hungarian Consular Service and also approach potential visa applicants in different locations, the Ministry outsources specific services to external service providers (ESP) in relation to receipt of **Schengen visa applications**. In accordance with Articles 43 and 44 of the EC Regulation 810/2009 (of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas), as well as with the decision of the Ministry No KKM/10279-2/2023/Adm, the Ministry hereby invites external service providers to take part in a tender (not involving negotiation for a contract) to provide services related to receipt of Schengen visa applications and other related tasks in the **Republic of Cyprus**.

1. Object of the tender

The Ministry is launching a tender for providing services related to receipt of applications for Schengen visa in Nicosia. Average annual number of visa applications processed by the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Nicosia on behalf of Hungary is 500.

2. Description of needs

In the context of the present call for tender it is essential that the ESP be able to assume responsibility for preliminary tasks prior to decision-making on visa applications, such as providing information to applicants about visa regulations and procedures, answering telephone inquiries from applicants, checking/screening applications and making sure that the required documentation has been submitted, handling application fees, managing appointments for interviews, recording of basic application data and capturing of biometrics in the provided client software (CISO), delivering applications to the Hungarian Embassy in Athens, returning passports (and related documents if any) to the applicants after the application has been processed.

The Ministry attributes much importance to the high level of data security in accordance with the related Hungarian and EU legislation. ESP shall make all the necessary arrangements regarding premises, staff and workflow in order that applications can be submitted without undue delay. ESP to be contracted must have an internationally recognized certificate (ISO or similar) on information security management. ESP must also comply with the requirements stated in EC Regulation 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas “Visa Code” (Articles 43 and 44, as well as Annex X).

Services of the external service provider include the following main tasks:

- providing general information on visa requirements (in English and the local language) and application forms;
- informing the applicant of the required supporting documents, on the basis of a checklist;

- collecting data and applications (including collection of biometric identifiers) and transmitting the application to the Hungarian Mission;
- collecting the visa fee;
- managing the appointments for the applicants
- collecting the travel documents, including a refusal notification if applicable, from the Hungarian Mission and returning them to the applicant;
- scanning the submitted supporting documents in CISO upon the request of the Hungarian Mission;
- contributing to visa interviews with the applicants conducted by the Hungarian Mission via safe IT systems.

Receipt of applications

ESP should check if all required fields of the visa application forms are filled in and the application is signed by the applicant. It should also be verified that the required supporting documentation is submitted together with the required passport photos. The website of the external service provider shall contain a link to the application forms available on the website of the Hungarian Mission. Print-out forms and checklists should also be available to the applicants at the Visa Application Centres. In case an application appears incomplete on the basis of the checklist, the applicant should be made aware about the missing documentation and the possible rejection as a consequence. ESP shall further ensure that applications are received in a strictly neutral manner.

Applications of specific applicant categories may be handled directly by the Hungarian Mission (e.g. members of official delegations, V.I.P. clients/companies etc.).

Data recording

ESP shall record application data (both alphanumeric and biometric) directly in the Ministry's software application (CISO). The Ministry provides this software free of charge for the ESP's exclusive use and is ready to share - upon request - its Installation and Administration Guide and the User's Manual in PDF format.

ESP is required to use one of the devices compatible with the Ministry's software application:

1. ARH ComboSmart (<http://www.arhungary.hu/contleft/3031/content.html>, http://www.arhungary.hu/doc/arh_combosmart.pdf)
2. 3M AT9000 (<http://multimedia.3m.com/mws/media/611505O/sell-sheet-at9000.pdf?fn=AT9000%20Sell%20Sheet.pdf>)
3. ARH Osmond Passport Reader (<https://adaptiverecognition.com/products/osmond-passport-reader-id-scanner/>)

Fingerprint scanners:

1. ARH AFS-510 (<http://www.arhungary.hu/contleft/2091/content.html>)
2. Futronic FS64 (http://www.futronic-tech.com/product_fs64.html)

Cameras: any MJPEG streaming IP camera.

All-in-one biometric data capturing device:

1. Speed Identity Speed Capture G3 (<http://www.speed-identity.com/produkter/data-capture/speed-capture-g3.aspx>)
2. VisionBox (<https://www.vision-box.com/solutions/smart-government/electronic-identity/registrationEnrollment/vbDesktop>)

Payment of fees

ESP must collect the visa fee to be paid by the applicants for processing their visa applications in accordance with the relevant Schengen rules. ESP may charge a service fee as per application in accordance with Article 17 of the Visa Code (Regulation (EC) No 810/2009). The amount of the service fee shall be set in the master agreement to be concluded with the external service provider. Any changes related to the service fee shall only be made with the prior approval of the Ministry. ESP shall give the applicant a receipt stating the amount collected, clearly showing the administrative (visa fee) and the service fee. The Hungarian Mission shall receive a copy of the receipts and a daily/weekly report of the administrative and service fees collected by the external service provider.

ESP may offer additional services for extra fees (eg. photocopying, courier service for delivery of passports, VIP lounge, etc.) with the prior written approval of the Ministry. Fee for such additional services must be fair and in line with the locally accepted/accustomed prices. ESP shall give clear information to applicants that the additional services are optional and are not required or operated by the Hungarian Mission.

Security level

ESP shall be able to offer a high level of physical security. The premises of the Visa Application Center(s) shall be protected against criminal and terrorist acts by means of metal detectors, code locks on doors and similar measures. It is important, however, that these security measures respect cultural and religious traditions, for example in connection with body search.

The external service provider shall be able to offer a high level of data security. Application data is confidential and must be protected against fraud and data corruption. Personal data should strictly be used for application purposes and cannot be used for e.g. marketing or advertisement. Should the ESP violate the aforementioned security rules the Ministry shall terminate the contract immediately and launch investigation.

Passports and supporting documentation must be kept in safes overnight and the transfer of passports and documentation to and from the Hungarian Mission should be made in the safest way possible. Surveillance cameras in the offices and the service area should be used with regard to the relevant legislation of the Republic of Cyprus.

The aforementioned physical and data security requirements are basic requirements and the proposal will not be considered if a tenderer fails to comply with them.

ESP shall comply with General Data Protection Regulation of the European Union (EU GDPR) and all the rules and provisions on personal data protection set by the legislation of the given location.

ESP is responsible for obtaining all necessary permissions from state and local authorities necessary for rendering its services on the territory of the given locations.

Service level

ESP shall provide information on visa regulations and visa procedures – in accordance with Articles 43 and 47 of the Visa Code, as well as with the instructions of the Hungarian Mission - on a designated website. The website of the external service provider shall contain a link to the website of the Hungarian Mission. Information mentioned above shall also be available in the Visa Application Centre(s) (eg. through freely accessible information stands). In addition, ESP shall operate a call center providing general information on legislation and procedures, as well as on the status of the applications.

Information on the status of individual applications should be tracked on the website of the ESP if this information is available to the external service provider. The following status information might be given out:

- Application received by the visa center;
- Application transferred to the Hungarian Mission;
- Application is in the decision making process at the Hungarian Mission;
- Answer/decision received from the mission;
- Passport (and returned documentation) sent back from the Hungarian Mission.

Applicants may be entitled to have access to the above information using a password issued by the ESP when the application is submitted.

Staff members of the ESP must be service-minded and sensitive to the national, cultural and religious traditions of the country in which they are operating. In relation to the performance of its activities, the external service provider shall ensure that its staff are appropriately trained, receive applicants courteously, respect human dignity and integrity of applicants, do not discriminate against persons on grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation and respect the rules of confidentiality which shall also apply once members of staff have left their job or after suspension or termination of the legal instrument.

Payments and financial control

ESP will receive no payments from the Ministry, Hungarian Mission or any other Hungarian Official Representation, but will be entitled to collect a service fee from each applicant as per application. The ESP shall set up a list of fees containing all of its services offered to applicants. The list shall be made easily accessible (e.g. on the website, on the wall of the VAC, etc.)

ESP shall indicate that it is subject to regular audits in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Cyprus. Furthermore, the operation of the ESP shall be subject to internal financial control by an auditing company.

Transfer of fees

Visa fees must be transferred daily to the Hungarian Mission (in Euros). Any transaction costs of the money transfer shall be covered by the ESP.

Performance control and security checks

The Hungarian Mission will have the right to supervise and check the performance of the ESP's staff, as well as the security of the operations. These inspections may be carried out at any time upon the request of the Hungarian Mission and might include on-site inspections as well. Inspections might take place without notice and could involve fictitious customers appearing as applicants at the VAC.

3. Deadlines

The Ministry has set up the following timeframes for the tendering process:

Activity	Date
<u>Deadline for receipt of tenders</u>	<u>6th April 2023 12:00 (Budapest time, CET)</u>
Period for evaluation of tenders	6-13th April 2023
Contract signing	by 31 st May 2023
Preferred start of cooperation	1 st June 2023

The Ministry reserves the right to change the schedule.

4. Qualification requirements

Performance capability: ESP shall submit a detailed presentation of its composition/structure and a description of the ESP's relevant experience and competence, as well as a statement of tools, technical equipment, IT-systems and support that are available to the ESP for carrying out the contract.

Financial ability

A credit report from a credit analysis company showing the tenderer's financial economic situation must be submitted with the tender. The credit report should show the ESP's credit score along with an analysis of the score. The credit report should not be older than six months at the time of submission of the tender.

Legally established enterprise

The ESP must submit a (copy of) certificate of registration or a register printout, a declaration of no outstanding public dues, a statement of transparency and the specimen of signature from the authorised representative of the company.

Conflict of interest

No bid by an ESP or by its subcontractor(s) shall be considered during the tender procedure whose owner(s), ranking official(s) or their relative(s) are any kind of members, workers or leaders of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary or, have maintained such relationship(s) in the past 5 years; or maintain close family, cousinship and/or business relationship(s) with high ranking officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary or their close relatives, or has maintained such relationship(s) in the past 5 years.

Subcontractors

Any ESPs submitting a bid to the tender procedure shall be entitled to involve (a) subcontractor(s) in the performance of specific activities. The bidding ESP shall take full responsibility for the activities of the involved subcontractor(s), as the subcontractor(s) and its/their subordinate(s) shall be deemed in the employ of the bidding ESP in terms of participating in the tender procedure and carrying out the specific activities. The subcontractor(s) intended to be involved in the performance of the specific activities shall be fully disclosed in the tender documentation.

5. General requirements

In relation to the performance of its activities, ESP shall ensure that:

- the premises of the VAC(s) are appropriate, secure offices with access and facilities also for disabled people;
- its staff (speaking at least one of the local official languages and English) is chosen according to skill and integrity criteria. The ESP shall also ensure that the staff is appropriately trained so that they deal with applicants in a courteous way, that they do not discriminate people on the grounds of their sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, and that they respect the rules of confidentiality which shall also apply once members of staff have left their job;
- necessary measures are taken to achieve direct monitoring and effective management of its staff, especially by adopting and implementing work regulations, where necessary in a service contract drawn up by the ESP;
- a surveillance system is maintained in the offices where visa applications will be received;
- computer equipment used by the ESP provides optimal security for all collected data;
- the offices of the ESP are equipped with emergency electrical power supply and two separate computer connections or a maintenance contract ensuring the reestablishment of normal working conditions in less than an hour;
- ESP takes appropriate measures of tracking individual application files to and from the Hungarian Mission and deletes the data at the latest seven days after their transmission and ensures that only the name and contact details of the applicant for the purposes of the appointment arrangements, as well as the passport number, are kept until the return of the passport to the applicant and deleted five days thereafter;

- an appropriate timetable is available for opening the VAC in Nicosia.

6. Penalties for defects of services

ESP shall be subject to penalties for failing to provide adequate service as follows:

- Application form having omitted or erroneous fields;
- Application form is not signed by the applicant or in case of a minor his/her parents exercising permanent or temporary parental approval;
- Supporting documents are not adequately arranged;
- Passport contains observation related to bio data page;
- Biometric data incomplete or erroneous;
- Data inputting of mandatory field is incomplete or erroneous;
- Fee, refund or remittance report is erroneous;
- Remittance is delayed;
- Incorrect information provided via telephone or e-mail;
- Applicants' waiting time is excessive;
- Delivery of applications to the Hungarian Mission is delayed.

7. Award criteria

The tenders will be ranked on the basis of an overall assessment of compliance with the award criteria in order to determine which tender is the most advantageous. A scoring scale of 1-100 will be used.

Tender materials should be structured in accordance with the following award criteria:

Award criteria	Weight in % <i>(Total is 100%)</i>
Area, location, conditions of the proposed Visa Application Center(s) The premises should be easily accessible, well-equipped and secure with access and facilities also for disabled people.	20
Previous experiences and references Detailed description of experiences (including the number of qualified staff), references of the external service provider.	20
Data protection, procedure A description how the applicants can obtain information and make appointments, including measures against false appointment bookings. A precise description of the procedures envisaged. A document summarizing the proposed provisions for the protection of personal data. Recording application data (alphanumeric) including digital capture of biometric identifiers (fingerprints and facial image) and handling SQL databases; particular attention should be given on measures taken to ensure the accuracy and high quality of application data.	40
Price of the service The ESP is to specify the service fee it will charge per application at the Visa Application Center(s).The amount should be quoted in Euros.	10
A timetable for opening the Visa Application Center	10

8. Tender materials

Tenders must be written in English and be structured as shown below, divided into the chapters shown and in the sequence stated:

Tender letter must contain

- Firm's legal name;
- Address, enterprise registration number;
- Contact person with postal address, e-mail address and telephone number;
- Confirmation of tender validity period (exact date);
- Confirmation of compliance with the general requirements in point 5.

Documentation of fulfilled qualification requirements

- Detailed presentation of the ESP's composition/structure, relevant experience and competence;
- A list of countries whose Ministries of Foreign Affairs and/-or Embassies/Consulates are currently utilizing the services of the ESP;
- Copy of Certificate of registration including the name(s) and data of authorised representative(s);
- Declaration of no outstanding public dues;
- Specimen of signature from the authorised representative of the company.
- Draft ESP contract;
- Statement according to which the applicant accept the result of the tender and renounce the right of contest in administrative or judicial way;
- Statement of transparent organization according to Act CXCVI of 2011 on National Assets.

The tender is considered invalid if any of the above listed requirements is missing. Furthermore, the Ministry reserves the right to consider the whole tender invalid.

9. Submission of tenders

Deadline: 6th April 2023, 12:00 (Budapest time, CET)

Tender offers must be delivered by mail in a closed envelope to the following address:

*Magyarország Külgazdasági és Külügyminisztériuma
Konzuli és Állampolgársági Főosztály
Dr. Farkas Balázs főosztályvezető
Nagy Imre tér 4.
1027 Budapest
HUNGARY*

10. Treatment of the tenders

The Ministry will make the decision until 13 April 2023. Applicants will be informed about the results and the negotiations will be opened immediately with the chosen applicant about the contract and the starting date of the service.

11. Contact

Any queries relating to this call for tender may be addressed to the Ministry's contact person:

Ms Edina CSERJÉS (e-mail: ecserjes@mfa.gov.hu; tel.: +36-1-458-3490)

Budapest, 23 March 2023