

**Assessment plan for the intermodal transport aid
scheme under the Infrastructure and Environment
Operational Programme
2014-2020**

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List of abbreviations

CUPT – Centre for EU Transport Projects

CAPI – Computer Aided Personal Interview

CATI – Computer—Assisted Telephone Interview

CAWI – Computer-Assisted Web Interview

DID – Difference in Difference, Double Difference Method

GUS – Central Statistical Office

EC – European Commission

CUPT – Centre for EU Transport Projects

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

PSM – Propensity Score Matching

RDD – Regression Discontinuity Design

REGON – National Economy Register

Aid scheme – Regulation of the Minister for Development and Finance on State aid for the implementation of intermodal transport projects under the Infrastructure and Environment Operational Programme 2014-2020

RP – Republic of Poland

TFEU- Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

TEU- twenty-foot equivalent unit – measure corresponding to the capacity of one 20-alloy container

UTK – Office of Rail Transport

EU – European Union

SHRIMP – Scheme for the scheduling of aid registration and monitoring

OPI & E – Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment 2014-2020

1. Introduction

The purpose of the evaluation plan is to prepare the methodological assumptions for the assessment of the aid scheme – the Regulation of the Minister for Development and Finance on State aid for the implementation of intermodal transport projects under the Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment 2014-2020 (hereinafter “the Aid Programme”), which will provide information on the direct and indirect effects of the State aid granted.

The aid scheme is the instrument for the implementation of the Infrastructure and Environment Operational Programme prepared on the basis of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. The OPI & E was approved by the European Commission by decision of 16 December 2014. The OPI & E sets out national sustainability objectives while maintaining the coherence and balance between investment activities in the necessary infrastructure and support targeted at selected economic areas, including intermodal transport. Under Measure 3.2 ‘Development of maritime transport, inland waterways and multimodal links’, Priority Axis III: “The development of the TEN-T road network and multimodal transport will amount to around PLN 1 billion, the budget of the Aid Programme.

The need to draw up a plan for the assessment of State aid granted under the aid scheme stems from the provisions of Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/2282 of 27 November 2015 amending Regulation (EC) No 794/2004 as regards notification and information forms (OJJournal(OJ L 325 of 10.12.2015). This assessment plan, including its objectives and criteria, is in line with the methodology for evaluating State aid recommended by the

European Commission in its "Common methodology for state aid evaluation" of 28 May 2014 (WD(2014) 179 final).

In order to avoid duplicating evaluations stemming from the state aid rules, as¹well as the regulations and guidelines of the European Commission on the evaluation system of cohesion policy for 2014-2020, i.e. Regulation No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development's Guidelines for the evaluation of cohesion policy 2014-2020, the scope of the evaluation carried out by the selected evaluator will, as far as possible, be adapted to the requirements of those provisions.

The results of the evaluation will be used by the Ministry of Development to prepare a possible follow-up assistance programme for intermodal transport. The results of the evaluation will be disseminated to the authorities and institutions responsible for planning and implementing transport policy, with a view to their use in other interventions of a similar nature in the field of intermodal transport.

2. Description of the aid scheme

1. Diagnosis of the state of the intermodal transport sector in Poland

Despite the gradual development of point infrastructure in Poland, intermodal transport is still much less competitive than in other European countries. The quality of point and line infrastructure in European countries significantly improves the competitiveness of rail transport vis-à-vis other modes of transport. In Poland, the technical condition of the terminals, the lack of adequate transshipment equipment and the insufficient length of tracks and landing tracks still make it difficult for rail to set up regular services. Many terminals are currently in need of extension and modernisation. Carriers have repeatedly drawn attention to capacity constraints for point infrastructure.²

The rail freight segment, i.e. intermodal transport based on modern IT systems, supporting the management of the whole transport chain, is one of the most dynamic freight transport

¹Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006Journal(OJ L 347/320 of 20.12.2013)

² See the study by the Office of Rail Transport entitled Analysis of Intermodal Rail Transport in Poland, 2016.

industry in Poland. The development of intermodal transport in Poland faces a number of barriers, including the inadequate number of terminals and logistics centres, outdated or inadequate equipment and the lack of a comprehensive information system in intermodal transport chains. The lack of sufficient specialised equipment for terminals and rolling stock is also a problem, which limits the ability to meet the growing demand for containerised freight. The rolling stock used for intermodal transport in Poland is highly exploited. According to data from the Rail Transport Office, in 2013 the average age of locomotives owned by intermodal operators was 34.6 years, 35.6 years in 2014 and 36.1 at the end of the third quarter of 2015. During the same period, the average age of platform wagons was 30 years. When analysing the data on the rolling stock at the disposal of operators, the number of locomotives and platform wagons decreased between 2013 and 2014 and at the end of the third quarter of 2015. In 2013, carriers had 3 106 locomotives, 3 089 locomotives in 2014 and 3 078 at the end of the third quarter of 2015. The number of platforms used by carriers fell from 11 173 in 2013 to 10,913 in 2014 and reached 10 709 at the end of the third quarter of 2015. The process of replacing railway rolling stock in Poland is slow and, as a result, it does not contribute positively to the expansion of the transport offer.³

The aid scheme responds to the development needs of intermodal transport in Poland.

2. Purpose of the intervention

The primary objective of the Aid Programme is to improve the competitiveness of intermodal transport and to make greater use of this mode of transport in general freight transport.

As part of the intervention for the development of intermodal transport, funding is foreseen for projects to modernise and expand existing terminals and access infrastructure, as well as to increase the number of intermodal terminals, including those located in logistics centres and seaports, and to purchase the equipment necessary to operate these terminals. Telematics and satellite systems will be deployed to provide users with real-time information on the current location of cargo carried and thereby optimising and controlling transport processes. The measures taken will reduce the delivery time and the risk to the condition of cargo carried. Given the significant utilisation of rolling stock used in intermodal transport, projects for the purchase and modernisation of rolling stock, including traction locomotives and wagons adapted for intermodal cargo units, semi-trailers or trucks in their entirety, will also be supported.

³Justification of the Aid Programme.

3. Actions planned to be applied to the aid scheme

Public aid granted under the Aid Programme is intended for the implementation of intermodal transport projects involving:

- 1) the construction or reconstruction of intermodal terminals' infrastructure, including dedicated road infrastructure, sidings or railway lines which link intermodal terminals with the road or rail network;
- 2) purchase or modernisation of equipment necessary for the operation of intermodal terminals;
- 3) the purchase or modernisation and implementation of telematic and satellite systems related to intermodal transport;
- 4) the purchase or modernisation of rolling stock used exclusively for intermodal transport, in the case of entities other than the entity making the rolling stock available;
- 5) purchase of new rolling stock exclusively for intermodal transport – in the case of the provider of rolling stock.

4. Target group

The selection of the group of entities entitled to submit an application for funding (participation in the competitive selection procedure for projects) was carried out on the basis of an analysis of the need for intervention, taking into account the best possible way to achieve the objectives pursued and the rules governing the eligibility of public aid. As a result, public aid may be granted to an undertaking established in the territory of a Member State of the European Union or the European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) for the implementation of an intermodal transport project, with the exception of:

Undertakings subject to an outstanding recovery order following decisions of the European Commission declaring State aid incompatible with the internal market of the European Union;

Undertakings in difficulty as defined in point 20 of the Communication from the Commission – Guidelines on State aid for rescuing and restructuring non-financial undertakings in difficulty (Journal C 249, 31.07.2014, p.1).

The aid scheme covers two target groups, direct and indirect. The indirect target group of support is all enterprises in the Polish economy, while the direct target group of support is

entrepreneurs entitled to submit an application for co-financing which has received public aid under the Aid Programme.

3. Assumptions of the evaluation plan

1. Objective of the Aid Programme and criteria for the evaluation study

The primary objective of the Aid Programme is to improve the competitiveness of intermodal transport and to make greater use of this mode of transport in general freight transport. The study will use the following criteria:

- relevance of aid – appropriateness of aid instruments, how they are implemented in the light of the problems identified during the diagnosis phase;
- aid effectiveness – the extent to which public aid will contribute to the objectives of the intervention logic;
- usefulness of the aid – assessing the overall, planned and unforeseen effects of the aid in the context of the transport sector and the economy as a whole.

2. Research questions with indicators for the evaluation of State aid

The aid scheme is of a sectoral nature – it directly concerns operators active in intermodal freight transport (managers and owners of terminals, operators, rolling stock companies) and indirectly affects other market players (operators, rail infrastructure managers or even customers using intermodal transport services). The questions and indicators were formulated in such a way as to examine the impact of the scheme on the beneficiaries of the scheme, but also in view of the above-mentioned objective of the aid programme, to assess its impact on entities other than the beneficiaries. This approach is reflected in the following list of evaluation questions:

questions on the direct impact of the aid on the beneficiaries

1. How many enterprises have benefited from the aid scheme?
2. What is the value of investments made by enterprises supported under the scheme?
3. To what extent are the results achieved by the beneficiary companies in line with the objectives of the programme?

4. How much has the maximum annual capacity/transshipment capacity of intermodal terminals increased as a result of the investments?
5. Has the scheme increased transshipments at intermodal terminals supported by the scheme?
6. As a result of the implementation of the projects, do the undertakings which have benefited from the aid plan to further develop their offer or have already reached maximum capacity?
7. How many jobs have been created in enterprises supported by the programme?
8. How many rolling stock companies have received State aid under the scheme?
9. How has the average age of rolling stock used for intermodal transport in Poland changed?

questions on indirect effects

1. Has the scheme increased transshipment at intermodal terminals that have not received support under the scheme?
2. Has the programme increased the share of intermodal transport in the rail and road freight markets?
3. How many rolling stock companies have been set up in Poland as a result of the scheme?

questions on the proportionality and appropriateness of the aid

1. Could the achieved results have been achieved with less public aid?
2. To what extent have the individual actions of the scheme increased the maximum annual capacity/transshipment capacity of the intermodal terminals supported by the scheme?
3. Would other aid instruments or types of intervention have been more appropriate in order to achieve the policy objective?

3. Results indicators

The recommended set of indicators in the scoreboard has been developed, inter alia, on the basis of the "Common Methodology for State aid evaluation" and also taking into account the

specificities of the intermodal transport sector. This list is a baseline data set for evaluation that can be adapted by the selected evaluator. Indicators based on counterfactual analysis data will present the net effect of the aid, comparing the hypothetical situation of non-aid with the results of the intervention. The second group is indicators based on statistical and other quantitative data related to the implementation of projects under the Aid Programme. For these indicators, baseline values will be compared with the targets achieved in the implementation of the Aid Programme.

The baseline value of the indicators will be their value as soon as possible before the entry into force of the Aid Programme, including in particular the values of the last day of the calendar year preceding the entry into force of the Regulation. The solution adopted is based on the availability of data on relevant official statistics.

The aid scheme is of a sectoral nature – it directly targets some intermodal transport operators (managers and owners of terminals, operators, rolling stock companies) and indirectly affects other market players (operators, rail infrastructure managers and even customers using intermodal transport services).The questions and indicators were formulated in order to examine the impact of the scheme on beneficiaries, but also in view of the above-mentioned objective of the Aid Programme, to assess the impact of the scheme on entities other than beneficiaries. Due to the sectoral nature, the number of indicators that can be used is limited and the indicators chosen in the evaluation plan best reflect the assessment objective of improving the competitiveness of intermodal transport and the wider use of this mode of transport in general freight transport.

The table below summarises the research questions and indicators for the evaluation of the Aid Programme.

Evaluation question	Indicator	Source of data	Frequency of data collection	Level at which the data are collected	Entities covered by the data source
questions on the direct impact of the aid on the beneficiaries					
i. How many enterprises have benefited from the aid scheme?	Number of beneficiaries of the aid scheme	The administrative details of the CUPT; data from the SHRIMP database	Data collected on an ongoing basis	Aid scheme	beneficiaries of aid

2. What is the value of investments made by enterprises supported under the scheme?	Value of eligible project costs incurred by the beneficiary	CUPT administrative data	Data collected on an ongoing basis	Aid scheme	beneficiaries of aid
3. To what extent are the results achieved by the beneficiary companies in line with the objectives of the programme?	Value of delivered result indicators	CUPT administrative data	Annual	Aid scheme	beneficiaries of aid
4. How much has the maximum annual capacity/transshipment capacity of intermodal terminals increased as a result of investments with public aid?	Value of TEU growth ⁴	Statistics from Central Statistical Office and other public statistics, e.g. UTK analyses and reports; data collected from aid beneficiaries	Data collected for mid-term and final evaluation	Aid scheme	beneficiaries of aid
5. Has the scheme increased transshipments at intermodal terminals supported by the scheme?	1. The increase in the weight of the loads, 2. The value of the increase in transport work, 3. Value of TEU growth	Statistics from Central Statistical Office and other public statistics, e.g. UTK analyses and reports; data collected from aid beneficiaries	Data collected for mid-term and final evaluation	Aid scheme	beneficiaries of aid
6. As a result of the implementation of the projects, do the undertakings which have benefited from the aid plan to further develop their offer or have already reached maximum capacity?	The value of the increase in transport work,	Statistics from Central Statistical Office and other public statistics, e.g. UTK analyses and reports; data collected from aid beneficiaries	Surveys addressed to beneficiaries	Aid scheme	beneficiaries of aid
7. What number of jobs were created in enterprises supported by the programme?	Number of FTE jobs	CUPT administrative data	Annual	Aid scheme	beneficiaries of aid
8. How many rolling stock companies have received State aid under the aid scheme?	Number of beneficiaries of the aid scheme which are rolling stock companies	CUPT administrative data	Data collected on an ongoing basis	Aid scheme	beneficiaries of aid
9. How has the average age of rolling stock changed?	Average age of rolling stock	UTK data, data obtained from aid beneficiaries and entrepreneurs who have not received support under the scheme	Annual	Entire country	Rail freight operators
questions on indirect effects					
1. Has the scheme increased transshipment at intermodal terminals that have not received support under the scheme?	1. The increase in weight of freight at non-supported intermodal terminals due to increased intermodal transport work 2. Value of increase in freight work in non-supported intermodal terminals due to increased intermodal transport work	Statistics from Central Statistical Office and other public statistics, e.g. UTK analyses and reports;	Data collected for mid-term and final evaluation	entire country	Rail freight operators

⁴ TEU- twenty-foot equivalent unit – measure corresponding to the capacity of one 20-alloy container

	3. Value of TEU growth in non-supported intermodal terminals due to increased intermodal transport work	data collected from aid beneficiaries and entrepreneurs who have not received support under the scheme?			
2. Has the programme increased the share of intermodal transport in the rail and road freight markets?	1. Value of increase in the share of intermodal transport in the rail market measured in weight of freight 2. The value of the increase in the share of intermodal transport in the rail market measured by transport work.	Statistics from Central Statistical Office and other public statistics, e.g. UTK analyses and reports;	Data collected for mid-term and final evaluation	entire country	Rail freight operators
3. How many rolling stock companies have been set up in Poland as a result of the scheme?	Number of entrepreneurs created	Statistics from Central Statistical Office and other public statistics e.g. UTK analyses and reports	Data collected for mid-term and final evaluation	entire country	All rolling stock companies
questions on the proportionality and appropriateness of the aid					
1. Are the results achieved with less public aid?	1. Value of reimbursement of part of the grant when the projects become excessively profitable (FRR limit/k) 2. Number of cases where the FRR/k limit is reached while the beneficiary reduces project revenues	The administrative details of the CUPT; data collected from aid beneficiaries	Data collected for the final evaluation	Aid scheme	beneficiaries of aid
2. To what extent have the individual actions of the aid scheme contributed to the increase of the maximum annual capacity/transshipment capacity of the intermodal terminals aided under the aid scheme?	Value of OPIE result indicators related to the increase in annual capacity of intermodal terminals by programme activities	CUPT administrative data	Annual	Aid scheme	beneficiaries of aid
3. Is other aid instruments or types of interventions more suitable for achieving a given objective?	The value of the increase in the market share of undertakings active in its segment in which State aid was granted from a source other than the scheme (e.g. comparison of the increase in the share of RES in the electricity generation market, the increase in the share of sales of green means of transport)	Statistics from Central Statistical Office and other public statistics, e.g. UTK analyses and reports; data collected from aid beneficiaries	Data collected for mid-term and final evaluation	entire country	Entrepreneurs

This set of questions is the preliminary scope of the survey. The research questions will be clarified at the stage of the description of the subject of the contract and the preparation of the methodological report, including in order to meet the requirements of the regulations on the evaluation system for cohesion policy 2014-2020, in particular the Guidelines of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development on the evaluation of Cohesion Policy 2014-2020.

4. Selection of test methods

On the basis of the objectives of the evaluation and the objectives of the Aid Programme and the research questions formulated, a set of research approaches, methods and techniques has been identified. The evaluation will use complementary research approaches:

- a counterfactual approach in which the methods and techniques used can measure socio-economic effects.
- theory-based approach (restoration of the intervention theory) to understand why an intervention has had such effects rather than other effects.

In view of the above, the study will be based on:

- analysis of legacy data: review of programming documentation and monitoring, review of statistical data,
- logical methods,
- quantitative methods: to select the CATI/CAWI/CAPI/PAPI method with beneficiaries and other programme stakeholders,
- qualitative methods: individual (IDI) or group interviews (FGI) with CUPT representatives and experts assessing grant applications
- expert methods: an expert panel on the interpretation of results and case studies to better understand the origin of the effects observed,
- counterfactual methods, which will be demonstrated by the use by the evaluator of the most appropriate techniques for reducing the selection load, the so-called Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM) approach, a match based on the probability of receiving support, using the Propensity Score Matching (PSM) technique and, in the area of Difference in Differences-DID (Difference in Differences-DID) effects analysis, a simple regression.

During the evaluation phase, the evaluator will be responsible for making an appropriate triangulation of methods, techniques and data sources (two or more) to compare and summarise the information received, thus reducing measurement errors and improving the quality of the study. The test results will then become less error-prone and thus more reliable.

5. Selection of control group and burden of selection

The evaluation of the Aid Programme envisages a counterfactual approach at the level of the beneficiaries. It is planned to use a tailor-made approach to beneficiaries of the so-called

'control group' consisting of entities that have not received public support. The selection of the control group will primarily be based on a list of selected characteristics. It should be noted, however, that due to the sectoral nature of the intervention and the very limited number of managers of intermodal terminals in Poland (31 terminals were actively used in 2015⁵), the so-called "selection burden" will in itself be minimised in the estimation of the effects of the support. In any case, a list of control variables (including those linked to the size of the firm, terminals, business dynamics, etc.) will be used to minimise the selection burden. At the same time, the different approaches in the way the control group is selected will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Due to the sectoral nature of the Aid Programme, the envisaged research methods did not need to be selected and targeted in order to reduce sectoral bias.

6. Collection and coverage of the required data and its sources

It is important to closely link the data for the evaluation process to the monitoring system of implemented projects adopted for the IEOP. Data collected systematically and with care for their quality and completeness form the basis of the evaluator's work. This reduces the costs of the evaluator's work due to the need to obtain or complete them, and reduces the duration of the study. Between 2014 and 2020, progress in the implementation of European Union funds will be monitored using the central electronic system SL 2014, which collects comprehensive monitoring data for all ongoing projects.

An important complement to the data from the IEOP monitoring system, which is particularly useful for counterfactual evaluations, is the official statistics data collected by the Central Statistical Office, including those available in the STRATEG online database, which contains a wide range of data for programming and monitoring development policy. As part of the study, it is planned to use, inter alia, data collected by the Central Statistical Office based on TTI forms – Report on Intermodal Transport Terminals and TDI – Intermodal Road Transport Report.

In addition, other sources of information will be used in the evaluation process:

- Data from other public bodies which hold data on economic operators and scientific bodies, including, in particular, data from the Rail Transport Office;
- Primary (quantitative and qualitative) data obtained during the research process from beneficiaries of aid under the scheme and other operators in the intermodal transport sector.

⁵See the study by the Office of Rail Transport entitled Analysis of Intermodal Rail Transport in Poland, 2016.

The proposed evaluation methodology provides for the use of data that will come from the beneficiaries of public aid and from official statistics. Statistics will, as a general rule, be collected on an annual basis (GUS data are taken from business reports covering the period of the calendar year).

The additional data necessary for the evaluation will be collected by the evaluator as a result of surveys, as well as through the CUPT, at the stage of applying for aid using the information contained in the grant application form, and at the project implementation stage and during the durability period, using periodic, final, implementation and ex-post reports for beneficiaries with signed grant agreements.

7. Confidentiality

The assessment will be carried out taking into account the provisions on legally protected secrets, including trade secrets⁶ and the protection of personal data⁷. Undertakings benefiting from the aid scheme will be required to make the data necessary for the evaluation available, subject to the necessary confidentiality by the CUPT and the evaluators.

Surveys of undertakings active in the intermodal transport sector, which will not be the beneficiaries of the aid, will be carried out in compliance with the principle of confidentiality of respondents' personal data and business confidentiality, of which respondents will always be informed by the evaluator. Obtaining those micro-data will require the approval of the non-beneficiaries of the survey.

8. Timeline of assessment

It is assumed that the Aid Programme will enter into force in 2017. In the same year, it is planned to start collecting data for evaluation studies (both microeconomic data on beneficiaries when submitting applications and macroeconomic data from previous years, including data held by CSO). The selection of the evaluator for the Aid Programme will take place in 2018. A mid-term evaluation is planned in 2020. After the mid-term evaluation, it is planned to start work on the final report. In 2023 and 2024, it is planned to carry out a final evaluation and prepare an evaluation report (the end date of the final evaluation is due to

⁶In accordance with the Act of 16 April 1993 on combating unfair competition (Dz. Journal of Laws 2003, No 153, item 1503, as amended)

⁷ In accordance with the Act of 29 August 1997 on the protection of personal data (i.e.: Of 2015, item (2135) and Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data

the fact that CSO data on intermodal transport are only available in the year following the year to which they relate).The full timetable for the evaluation is set out in the following table:

Assessment	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Entry into force of the aid scheme								
The process of data collection								
Selection of the external evaluator of the aid scheme								
Mid-term evaluation studies by an external evaluator								
Preparation and presentation of the mid-term evaluation report by the external evaluator, together with prior consultation of the draft report								
Final evaluation studies carried out by an external evaluator								
Preparation and presentation of the final final evaluation report by the evaluator, together with prior consultation of the draft report								
Transmission of the final version of the final evaluation report to the European Commission								

9. Resources needed to carry out the study

Human resources

The evaluation of the Aid Programme will be coordinated by the Centre for EU Transport Projects. It is also possible to use a qualified team of independent external evaluation experts, composed of experts whose competences are complementary.

The evaluator carrying out the evaluation of the Aid Programme will be selected on the basis of an open, competitive and non-discriminatory tender procedure and will have a team of experienced and qualified experts.

Management and coordination of the evaluation process

The CUPT is responsible for organising the evaluation of the Aid Programme and disseminating the results of the research. The role of the CUPT will be to prepare and coordinate a procurement study and to cooperate with the evaluator. The CUPT will not actively participate in the implementation of the study and the evaluation of the aid programme in the form of a report.

Criteria for the selection of the external evaluator

The evaluation will be carried out by an independent evaluator, a body with a team of independent experts. The entity to which the evaluation will be commissioned will be selected through an open public tender, carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Public Procurement Law. The tendering procedure will ensure that the evaluator and the individual experts are fully independent from the aid provider.

The criteria for selecting the entity carrying out the assessment will include requirements relating to:

- the experience of the evaluator in carrying out evaluation studies on aid programmes and instruments, using the testing methods planned for the evaluation;
- the experts in the evaluation team are qualified to carry out evaluation studies in the field of aid instruments.

The tendering procedure will ensure that the evaluator and individual experts are fully independent from the aid provider and the aid beneficiaries under the aid scheme – lack of capital or personal links.

In order to ensure the quality of the assessment and to meet the deadlines set out in the timetable, the evaluation team should be composed of at least four persons:

- Project leader – a person with at least 5 years' experience in carrying out evaluation studies, who is responsible for coordinating the work, supervising the team and contacting the institution commissioning the study;
- Expert with experience in evaluation studies of schemes related to aid instruments, including those constituting public aid. The role of this specialist will be to share his/her knowledge of public aid issues and to explain any doubts raised in the team

in this regard;

- Specialist – experienced in counterfactual methods. The role of the expert – econometrics will be to create counterfactual models for the different parts of the test that must be performed according to counterfactual methods;
- Expert with experience in quantitative surveys using databases of statistical offices. The main role of this specialist will be to carry out analyses on statistical data using non-counterfactual methods.

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Justification for not being able to select an evaluator at the stage of preparation of the Evaluation Plan

Since the evaluation plan concerns an aid programme, the final form of which has not yet been approved by the European Commission, it is not possible to give a final estimate of the number of projects to be examined during the study at the time of drawing up this plan. As a result, it is currently impossible to determine precisely the extent and time-consuming of the work carried out during the study and, as a consequence, to estimate the value of the contract for the evaluation study. The selection of the evaluator must be carried out, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Procurement Act, which require the contracting authority to have an estimate of such a contract at the time of publication of the notice. Therefore, in the light of the above, it was not possible to select the evaluator at the time of drawing up the evaluation plan for the aid programme.

10. Publicity

Consultation process for evaluation reports

The process of consultation of conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation will be carried out under the responsibility of an external evaluator and a team of CUPT evaluators. Consultations with stakeholders – all interested parties – should take place during the preparation of the mid-term and final evaluation reports. The consultation process should consist of at least one round of written comments/positions on the draft assessment. This should follow the preliminary conclusions and recommendations of the study and include a public consultation and possibly a discussion on their findings and relevance among

stakeholders. Stakeholders should have the right to provide feedback on the results and conclusions of the evaluation.

An optional second round of consultation of the evaluator with stakeholders may take place after the presentation of the preliminary version of the assessment report, but before its final reception. The consultations carried out at this point in time should make it possible to clarify the final recommendations and to remove recommendations that are incorrect and impossible to implement.

Publication of plan and mid-term and final evaluation report

In order to keep the evaluation study transparent, this evaluation plan and all evaluation reports, including the final evaluation report, will be uploaded electronically on the website of the Centre for Union Transport Projects (www.cupt.gov.pl) and the Information Portal on European Funds in Poland (EuropeanFunds.gov.pl), thus ensuring public access to information.

The results of the evaluation will be disseminated to the authorities and institutions responsible for planning and implementing transport policy, with a view to their use in other interventions of a similar nature in the field of intermodal transport.