

# **Invitation to tender**

## **Outsourcing of tasks related to receipt of Schengen visa applications**

### **in the Islamic Republic of Iran**

#### **General Information**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary (hereinafter: 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 other locations, the Ministry outsources specific services to external service providers (**ESP**) in relation to collection of Schengen visa applications for Hungary. In accordance with Articles 43 and 44, as well as Annex X. of the EC Regulation 810/2009 (of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas) and with the decision of the Ministry No. KKM/16826/2017/Adm the Ministry hereby invites ESPs to take part in a tender (not involving negotiation for a contract) to provide services related to collecting Schengen visa applications and other related tasks in **the Islamic Republic of Iran** (This tender is not covering visa applications within the framework of visa representation agreements, however after a trial period of 3 to 6 months these could be included with the consent of the represented country.)

#### **1. Object of the tender**

The Ministry is inviting tenders for the provision of services related to the collecting of applications for Schengen visas in Tehran and at a later stage with the possibility of extension to other cities.

In 2016, there were approximately 3.000 Schengen visa applications processed by the Hungarian Mission in Iran (hereinafter: the Mission) with an annually increasing tendency.

By outsourcing the receipt of visa applications, it is expected that a higher number of visa applicants will be able to submit their applications at the offices of the chosen ESP in Iran.

#### **2. Description of needs**

In the context of the present call for tender it is important that the ESP must be able to assume responsibility for preliminary tasks prior to decision-making on Schengen visa applications, such as providing information to applicants about Schengen visa regulations and procedures, answering telephone inquiries from applicants, checking/screening applications and making sure that the required supporting documentation has been submitted, collecting and handling application fees, managing appointments for interviews, recording of basic application data and collecting biometric identifiers in accordance with the related EU regulations and standards with a client software provided by the Ministry, delivering applications to the Mission, returning passports (and related documents if any) to the applicants after the application has been processed. The place of delivery of passports and the place of submission will be specified in the Agreement.

The Ministry attaches importance to the high level of data security, in accordance with the related Hungarian and EU legislation. The ESP shall make all the necessary arrangements in terms of offices, staff and organization, so that applicants may submit their applications without undue delay. The 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 (Articles 43 and 44, as well as Annex X).

The services of the ESP comprise the following main tasks:

- Providing information on Schengen visas and immigration regulations and procedures on a designated website (in Persian and English);
- Operation of a call-center – answering general telephone inquiries concerning rules and regulations as well as application status;
- Collecting and screening of applications (English language application forms only) to ensure that they are duly completed, signed and all the required supporting documentation are attached;
- Collecting and transferring application fees;
- Operating an online appointment scheduling system both for submitting applications and for interviews with the consular officer of the Mission; appointments must be provided in a transparent way agreed with the Mission;
- Recording basic application data with the software provided by the Ministry;
- Digital capture of biometric identifiers (fingerprints and facial image) in accordance with the EU quality standards;
- Regularly (on daily basis) delivery of applications, passports, supporting documentation and digital application data to and from the Mission in a secure manner;
- Handing out passports and supporting documentation to the applicants when they are returned from the Mission. Applicants must be informed within 24 hours (e.g. via phone, SMS or email).

Receipt of applications

The ESP has to check that all required fields of the visa application forms are filled in and that the application has been signed by the applicant. It should also be verified that the required supporting documentation is delivered to the Mission together with the application forms and passport photos meeting specific requirements. The website of the ESP shall contain a link to the application forms available on the Mission's website. Print-out forms and checklists should also be available to the applicants at the Visa Application Centre(s) (VAC). In case of an application appears incomplete as per the checklist, the applicant should be warned about the missing documentation and the possible rejection as a consequence. The ESP shall further ensure that applications are received in a strictly neutral manner.

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

Application data recording

The ESP shall record application data by using the Ministry's software application. However penalty shall be imposed for errors according to a "quota" (see paragraph 6. Penalties for defects of services). The Ministry provides this application free of charge for the ESP's exclusive use and is ready to share, on request, its Installation and Administration Guide (36 pages) and the User's Manual (30 pages) in PDF format.

The Ministry is the sole copyright owner of this software. However in case of any modification requirement the ESP is allowed to contact the software developer of this software directly, but in order to keep the consistency and integrity of this software application, the source code of the modified application shall be provided to the Ministry for inspection and approval. The service provider and the software developer are required to prove that the modified application to be used at the service provider's own facilities is generated from the above mentioned source code.

The ESP may use any other biometric equipment established in its workflow, but is required to integrate equipment, or the captured biometric data to the Ministry's software application. The integration procedure has to ensure that the applicant's alphanumeric and biometric data are attached unambiguously and in accordance with the EU quality standards.

The ESP shall attach biometric data (including fingerprints and facial image) and scan the submitted supporting documents, as listed and specified in the process verbal, in the Ministry's software application, before handling the application to the Mission.

The cost of any necessary modification, further IT development or the solution of compatibility problem should be borne by the ESP.

Compatible devices with the Ministry's software application are as follows:

Passport readers: Adaptive Recognition Hungary (ARH) CLR233 and newer models

(e.g.; ARH ComboSmart RL);  
3M ePassportReader (model no.: CA000003348);  
3M ePassportReader (AT 9000)

Fingerprint scanners: ARH AFS510 stand-alone;

Speed Identity G3 – integrated biometric enrolment station with  
ARH AFS510 or CrossMatch Guardian fingerprint scanner.

#### Payment of fees

On behalf of the Mission, the ESP must collect the Schengen visa fee to be paid by applicants for processing their Schengen visa applications (according to the Schengen rules – 0-35 or 60 Euros per application). The ESP may charge a service fee as per application, not exceeding 30 Euros per application. The amount of the service fee shall be set in the agreement to be concluded with the ESP. Any change related to the service fee shall only be made with the prior approval of the Ministry. The ESP shall give the applicant a receipt stating the amount collected, clearly showing the administrative (visa fee) and the service fee. Applicants falling into the categories of persons exempt from paying the administration fee of 60 or 35 Euros and submitting their applications at the VAC are only required to pay the service fee. The Mission shall receive a copy of the receipts and a weekly report of the administrative and service fees collected by the ESP.

The ESP may offer additional services for extra fees (e.g. photocopying, courier service for delivery of passports) to be specified in the process verbal. All such services offered and their fees must be fair and in line with the locally accepted/accustomed prices. The ESP shall give clear information to applicants that the additional services are optional and are not required or operated by the Mission. The preliminary consent of the Mission shall be needed for these additional services.

#### Security level

The ESP shall be able to offer a high level of physical security. The premises of the VAC 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 ESP 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 (name, address, phone Nr. etc.) should strictly be used for application purposes and cannot be used for other purposes (e.g. marketing or advertisement). Should the ESP violate the aforementioned security and privacy 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 Mission as appropriate should be made in the safest way possible (e.g. accompanied by security guards and/or minimum two or three persons) Surveillance cameras in the

offices and the service area should be used as far as possible and with regard to the relevant legislation of Iran.

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

#### Service level

The ESP shall provide information on visa regulations and visa procedures on a website. Related information is available on the websites of both the Ministry and the Mission. The website of the ESP shall contain a link to the homepage of the Mission also in order to ensure that applicants have continuous access to updated information. The information to be published will be provided by the Mission in Iran. The information on regulations and procedures shall also be posted on the walls at the VACs or shall be available through freely accessible information stands. In addition, the ESP shall operate a call-center offering the same general information on legislation and procedures and on the status of the applications.

It would be preferable that the website of the ESP would indicate information on the status of individual applications as far as this information is available to the ESP. The following information on status might be provided to applicants:

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

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

#### Payments and financial control

The ESP will receive no payments from the Ministry, 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. at the website, on the wall of the VAC, etc.)

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

#### Transfer of fees

Visa (administrative) fees must be daily transferred to the Mission (in Euros).

#### Performance control and security checks

The Mission will have the right to supervise and check the performance of the ESP's staff, as well the security of the operations. These inspections could be carried out at any time upon the request of the Mission and could include on-site inspections as well. Inspections might take place without notice and could involve fictitious customers appearing as applicants at the VAC. The service provider should open a dedicated IP address for on-line access of a security camera (for consular monitoring reasons) at the VAC during working hours.

### **3. Deadlines**

The Ministry has set up the following time frames for the tendering process:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
<u>Deadline for submission of tenders</u>	<u>July 31 2017; 12:00 [Budapest time (CEST, UTC/GMT+2 hrs)]</u>

Period for evaluation of tenders	August 1-10, 2017
Signing of the Contract	by August 20, 2017
Preferred start of cooperation	1 September, 2017

**The Ministry reserves the right to make changes in the schedule of the tender procedure.**

#### **4. Qualification requirements**

Performance capability: ESP shall submit a detailed presentation of the service provider's 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.

#### **5. General requirements**

The ESP must confirm that the following criteria will be met:

- The premises of the VAC should be in appropriate, secure offices with access and facilities also for disabled people.
- Choose its staff (they must speak Persian and English) 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.
- Take all necessary measures 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.
- Install and ensure the maintenance of a surveillance system in the offices where visa application will be received. It would be desirable that the Mission be also able to monitor the activities in the office areas.
- Computer equipment used by the ESP must ensure optimal security for all collected data.
- The offices of the ESP must be 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.
- Use of a computerized system for setting up appointments and tracking visa applications would be preferable in order to be able to determine at any time where an application is in the decision process and inform the visa applicant of such. Data used for this tracking shall not include any sensitive information. Any specific application data shall be deleted after the passport has been returned to its holder, the visa having been granted or refused, or, where necessary, the day after the appointment in the event the visa applicant fails to attend an appointment.

#### **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 authority;
- 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 wait time is excessive;
- Delivery of applications to 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:

<b>Award criteria</b>	<b>Weight in %</b> <i>(Total is 100%)</i>
<p><b>Area, location, conditions of the proposed VAC(s)</b> The premises should be modern, secure, and inviting. The premises should have access and facilities for disabled people, or the ESP shall undertake to ensure these criterias in the future (10%). A precise description of the procedures envisaged (5%). A document summarizing the proposed provisions for the protection of personal data. Particular attention should be given on measures taken to ensure the confidentiality of application data (10%). A description how the applicants can obtain information and make appointments (10%). The possibility of extension to other cities at a later stage would be an asset (5%).</p>	10+5+10+10+5
<p><b>Previous experiences, references</b> Detailed description of the previous experiences (including the number of qualified staff), references of the ESP (5%). Recording application data (alphanumeric) including digital capture of biometric identifiers (fingerprints and facial image) and handling SQL databases (20%). Registered company in Hungary as a partner or/and previous existing cooperation with the Mission, Consulates or Agencies in Hungary or/and in the country where the service provided or/and outsourcing agreement with a member state represented by Hungary would be an asset (20%).</p>	5+20+20
<p><b>Price of the service</b> The ESP is to specify the fee it will charge per application at the VACs as a per application service fee. The amount should be quoted in Euros.</p>	5
<p><b>A timetable for opening the VAC</b></p>	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**

- Reference number;
- 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 for whose Ministries of Foreign Affairs and/-or Embassies are currently utilizing the services of the ESP;
- Copy of Certificate of registration;
- Declaration of no outstanding public dues;
- 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.

#### **9. Submission of tenders**

**Deadline: July 31, 2017, 12:00** [Budapest time (CEST, UTC/GMT+2 hrs)]

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

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

#### **10. Treatment of the tenders**

The Ministry will make the decision until 10 August, 2017. Afterward the applicants will be informed about the results and the negotiations will be opened immediately with the chosen applicant/applicants about the signature of the contract and the starting date of the service.

The Ministry reserves the right to declare an application as invalid if the above mentioned requirements are not fulfilled. Furthermore, the Ministry reserves the right to declare the whole tender as invalid.

#### **11. Contact**

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

Ms. Fanni DUDAR (e-mail: [FDudar@mfa.gov.hu](mailto:FDudar@mfa.gov.hu); tel.: +36-1-458-3490)

Budapest, July 17, 2017