Framework Service Contract for the Procurement of Studies and other Supporting Services on Commission Impact Assessments and Evaluations

Interim, final and ex-post evaluations of policies, programmes and other activities

Final Evaluation of the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme

Executive Summary

December 2011
Introduction

This evaluation provides an overall assessment of the European Union’s Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme – the CIP.

Evaluations have already been conducted of each of the three component programmes:

- The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP)
- The Information Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme (ICT-PSP)
- The Intelligent Energy Europe Programme (IEE)

The purpose of the current exercise has therefore been primarily to draw together material from the examination of the component parts of the Framework Programme, to make comparisons and arrive at an overall assessment. More specifically, the aims have been to:

- analyse and compare the data collected in the specific programme evaluations, and draw substantiated conclusions;
- measure the impact of the Programme against its objectives;
- evaluate the extent to which the objectives of the Programme are pertinent to the needs, problems and issues it was designed to address;
- evaluate the efficiency of the Programme and identify its most efficient and its most inefficient aspects.

In undertaking this assignment, due note has been taken of specific provisions in the Decision\(^1\) establishing the CIP relating to the evaluation of the Programme, as well as the usual procedures established by the Commission and DG ENTR for conducting evaluations of programmes. Specific aims and evaluation questions are set out in the main text. These were established in order to direct the assessment of the Programme against the standard evaluation criteria of relevance and coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, utility, sustainability and European value added.

At the same time, in taking account of the amount of information already available on the operation of the three component programmes and the wish to avoid repeatedly questioning beneficiaries and stakeholders about the same areas, it was decided that this particular evaluation would be relatively restricted in its investigations and would mainly rely on a desk-based review of existing evaluations and other documentary material and on a restricted number of interviews with Commission officials, primarily in order to obtain further explanations and updates on the information provided in the earlier evaluations. This approach has had implications for the nature of the conclusions drawn from the exercise. A lot of emphasis has been placed on tracing cross-cutting issues and themes, exploring how these relate to the separate component programmes and identifying the elements that are common to all of them.

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Background & Methodology

The Nature of the CIP

The Framework Programme (CIP) has the following objectives:

(a) to foster the competitiveness of enterprises, in particular of SMEs;

(b) to promote all forms of innovation including eco-innovation;

(c) to accelerate the development of a sustainable, competitive, innovative and inclusive information society;

(d) to promote energy efficiency and new and renewable energy sources in all sectors, including transport.

As the first few points in the preamble of the Decision on the Programme make clear, the orientation of the Programme was highly influenced by the revised Lisbon Strategy of February 2005, in which earlier growth and competitive objectives were set alongside social inclusion and environmental protection in an integrated Strategy for Sustainable Development. The revised Lisbon Strategy and more recently the Europe 2020 strategy, provide important reference points both for the overall assessment of the performance of the Programme and for an understanding of the relationship between its various components.

In particular, in addressing the broad range of objectives in the revised Lisbon strategy, it was necessary to pursue actions on several different fronts and this especially explains the decision to have three separate but linked programmes within the Framework Programme. Each component programme had its own objectives and instruments. The analysis of these different instruments and a comparison of their use in the respective programmes defined an obvious perspective for the evaluation as a way of adding value to the analysis already conducted of the separate programmes.

The Management and Budget of the CIP

The management of different parts of the CIP falls under the responsibility of different Commission services, with DG Enterprise and industry providing the overall co-ordination. The Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI) has major responsibilities for implementation, contract management and other day to day inputs in relation to many elements of the Programme.

Co-ordination between the different services of the Commission involved in the Programme is supported by:

- Meetings at Director level of the different services involved
- Meetings at Head of Unit level
- Operational meetings between staff involved in particular aspects of the Programme
The financial envelope for implementing the Framework Programme is € 3,621,300,000 and the CIP Decision also gave an indicative budgetary breakdown for the specific programmes.

The Commission is assisted in the implementation of the CIP by Committees, with participation of representatives from all Member States and other participating countries, for each of the constituent programmes. There is also advice on the operation of the Programme from joint meetings of the Member State Committees of the three constituent programmes and from a body of 20 representatives of industry and business associations, including SME representative organisations, known as ‘STRABO’ (Strategic Advisory Board on Competitiveness and Innovation).

The implementation of the constituent programmes is carried out through the Framework’s common implementing measures and procedures, such as the adoption of annual work programmes by each specific programme. The work programmes are required to include ‘appropriate evaluation criteria and qualitative and quantitative indicators’.

The Methodological Approach of the Study

Given the framework established for the evaluation, the actual process of conducting it consisted of the following steps:

- Elaboration of an analytical framework for the evaluation
- A systematic desk research programme
- An interview programme, largely with Commission officials responsible for the main activities of the component programmes
- Examination and writing up of three case studies
- Summary analysis of the results of the research and investigations
- Submission of a First Findings and Recommendations Report
- Response to observations on First Findings

The case studies were intended to throw light on central issues for the CIP and on issues that cut across the different instruments and component programmes. They address the following issues:

- The contribution of small scale measures (in budgetary terms) to CIP policy development
- The effectiveness of support for eco-innovation under the CIP
- Lessons from the Intelligent Energy ‘Chambers promoting intelligent energy for SMEs’ (CHANGE) project.

The central approach of this evaluation was to conduct an examination of the main questions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and European value-added that are the key features of the evaluation, but addressed from the perspective of themes and issues that are recurrent in the findings of the evaluations of the component programmes.

Analysis and Results

The analysis of the results of the evaluations of the component programmes has been conducted by examining the series of common themes and issues:
The Intervention Logic: setting out the relationships is inevitably complex in a Programme with so many distinct elements but helps to establish their shape and to identify the main elements.

The Governance of the CIP: The common governance features are reviewed in the form of the various committee structures, but also the ‘softer’ processes whereby the substance of policy is articulated and developed. While acknowledging that the formalities are carried out efficiently and effectively, steps are proposed, stemming from the discussion, to strengthen governance structures further and enable potential synergies to be identified and acted on. These are restated in the Evaluations’ recommendations.

The main themes of the Programme: the measures in pursuit of the competitiveness objective are judged to be relevant and at appropriate levels. Furthermore, the Programme has been able to demonstrate an important degree of flexibility in responding to emerging issues, such as the growing importance of the management and protection of Intellectual Property Rights.

In the current Programme there has been a greater focus than in earlier programmes on where EU level instruments, such as the Financial Instruments and the Enterprise Europe Network, could add the greatest value to support provided at national or more local level and this focus has benefitted SMEs.

Innovation is one of the central themes in the CIP addressing a significant problem for the EU, in that Europe is not short of good ideas but has a relatively poor record in exploiting them commercially. The respective contributions of the different elements of the CIP are reviewed briefly – Europe INNOVA, PRO INNO Europe, eco-innovation and the contributions under the IEE and ICT-PSP programmes. The various evaluation reports indicate valuable, pioneering work being undertaken on strengthening the dissemination and adoption of innovatory ideas and technologies, but they also suggest that these processes should build on recent experience, project management improvements, such as a greater focus on the identification of results, should be consolidated and synergies exploited to a much greater extent both within the Programme and together with the other main programmes, especially the Structural Funds.

Finally, the issue of the relative concentration on energy in the design of the current Programme in relation to a balanced approach to sustainability is signalled as a matter to keep under review.

Impact: The CIP Decision refers to a number of expected outcomes, particularly in relation to the Financial Instruments and to a lesser extent, the Enterprise Europe Network. Less is said about other aspects of the Programme. The full effects of the Programme are not to be expected until a later period, but some of the results reported are set out (with some limited up-dates) and the main conclusion is that the various measures with specific expectations set out in the initial Impact Assessment are on course to achieve the expected levels.

The conclusions and recommendations of other evaluations: A brief summary is provided of the main conclusions of the Interim Evaluation of the CIP and the Final Evaluations of the component programmes. Issues of governance and communication are raised in the former and have echoes in other evaluations, while a persistent theme is the need to pay more attention to results and longer term impacts rather than just programme outputs.

Co-ordination with related policy areas: The CIP Decision requires the Commission to examine synergies within the Framework Programme and with other complementary Community
programmes. With its broad base, there are a wide range of policy areas that the CIP and its component policies could conceivably interact with, but at this point, the evaluation mainly concentrates on links with the Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) and the Structural Funds. In the latter case, there is a growing overlap as a result of the greater Structural Fund expenditure on business development and innovation support. There are a significant number of instances cited in the evaluation reports where Commission and Agency staff working on CIP programmes have extensive interaction with staff involved in the Structural Funds, but the conclusion is that this needs to be reinforced with more systematic relations between the Framework Programmes to exploit the full range of synergies that are possible.

Policy instruments: the main measures to be found in the three component programmes are listed and a comparison made between them. The list is not exhaustive and some actions are seen from more than one perspective, but it is illustrative of the variety of actions undertaken:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Financial Instruments</th>
<th>Exchange of best practice</th>
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<tr>
<td>Business support services</td>
<td>Market replication projects</td>
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<td>Programme support - Grants</td>
<td>Procurement support</td>
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<td>Data collection and analysis</td>
<td>Support for other policy measures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic studies and policy advice through expert and high level groups</td>
<td>Information, communication education and training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness campaigns</td>
<td>Monitoring and evaluation</td>
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Thematic networks and cluster development

The range in the types of activity undertaken across the component programmes is wide and varied, as compared with many other programmes, but a number of the elements considered in the main Report are seen to occur across the different component programmes and this provides a significant part of the potential for one part of the Framework Programme to learn from other parts.

The CIP Budget: Details provided of the CIP budget up to 2011 show that expenditure is generally in line with that anticipated in the CIP Decision, given the flexibility exercised by the budgetary authority.

The Promotion of Best Practice: The identification and dissemination of best practice is a widely used instrument under the CIP. A clarification of terminology is called for, especially in the distinction between ‘good practice’ and ‘best practice’ and there is reference to the close relationship between best practice processes and the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. Particular developments to be considered, through the different stages of best practice identification and the monitoring of dissemination, include:

- developing best practice methodology further
- structuring projects so that they facilitate future take-up
- monitoring progress with best practice implementation
- a precise characterisation of the baseline
• a greater use of benchmarking

Monitoring and Evaluation: The timing of final evaluations makes assessment of longer term impacts difficult. However, even within these constraints, there is scope for building on progress with monitoring systems in recent years. The nature of the specification of objectives for the IEE programme added to the difficulties in accurate assessment and the design of calls for proposals and selection processes is helping to ensure that there are clearer results at a project level, but there is room for strengthened monitoring systems at the action and programme level as well as for projects and for the development of comprehensive monitoring systems, as is happening with the EIP.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Among the diverse range of observations on particular matters in the evaluations of the three component programmes of the CIP, there have been a number of consistent findings.

Relevance and Coherence of the CIP

The logic of addressing a diverse set of aims within this overall conception led to three separate sub-programmes within the framework provided by the CIP. This was an appropriate arrangement, allowing the development of the instruments needed to address particular problems, while still providing scope for a number of cross-references and mutual support mechanisms.

There have been a number of important common factors across all the programmes, notably the theme of contributing to the competitiveness of enterprises and the support for ‘innovation’, where the latter is understood to mean the processes whereby ideas and research are realised in actual products and services in the market.

The CIP as a whole has become a major vehicle for promoting innovation, particularly as conceived as a relatively open process going beyond the simple focus on technological development that characterised earlier conceptions towards the more balanced perspective that encompasses developments in the service sector as much as in manufacturing and relates to processes and business models as much as products. This in turn is a major contribution to the competitiveness of the European economy.

In terms of overall policy design, the definition of the CIP’s objectives is seen to be coherent and to relate directly to the needs, problems and issues they were intended to address. Furthermore, the general perception on the targeting of policy areas is that there has been a concentration on areas where EU action can make a difference and this represents an important improvement on earlier programmes. Finally, the CIP has been able to demonstrate an important degree of flexibility.

The evaluation then goes on to consider more detailed issues about the processes that have operationalised the overall conception and the extent to which synergies have been achieved across the component programmes.

The Effectiveness of the CIP

The early establishing of the results expected from the EIP’s Financial Instruments and the Enterprise Europe Network made it relatively straightforward in principle to assess how these important components of the Programme have progressed and although the time lags involved make it more difficult to judge in practice, the EIP ‘Final’ Evaluation concluded that both these measures are on track to achieve the targets set. Similar conclusions were reached with regard to the innovation measures and eco-innovation in particular, which is significantly over-subscribed in the response to
its calls for proposals. Moreover, some of the particular small budget items are far from negligible in their effects. The Action programme for reducing administrative burdens and its follow-on measures are estimated to be delivering savings for enterprises valued at over € 40 billion.

Other effects cannot be quantified so directly, but nonetheless may be significant. The body of work on support for innovation (especially Europe INNOVA and PRO-INNO Europe) now represents a substantial corpus of knowledge with major potential for informing other areas of policy.

The evidence from the Final Evaluations and other sources, confirms that the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme as a whole, and its specific programmes individually are all performing well, in line with expectations at the launch of the programme.

Among the further improvements possible at an operational level, there is reference to a general tendency already observable for grant-based programmes to orientate projects towards specific results and to put greater stress on the identifying and reporting of achievements. Continuing to strengthen the monitoring framework more generally is a development that can lead to an improved assessment of performance and a more precise targeting of policy instruments.

The Efficiency of the CIP

The CIP budget allocation so far has been broadly in line with the indications provided in the Initial Council and Parliament Decision, taking into account the flexibility allowed to the budgetary authority.

In terms of the operation of management processes, the Final Evaluations of the component programmes report overall satisfaction with the routine conduct of programme management meetings, with some reservations about the structuring of documents and their timely delivery.

Within the programmes, responsibility for the operational management of substantial parts has been devolved to the EACI. The Evaluation of EACI confirmed that this has led to a more efficient management of these aspects, both in relation to costs to the Commission and to the efficiency of the services provided, as measured in terms of the number of contracts signed, the period to contract and payment delays.

Accessing support under the CIP is easier than in some comparable programmes, but stakeholders echo a general perception that EU programmes are difficult for participants to access and manage.

The Final Evaluations of the component programmes revealed other areas where efficiency improvements could be made. These were identified at different levels. For IEE II, with the exception of the Market Replication projects, the design of the Programme was such that it is difficult to determine where a distinctive contribution from the Programme can be identified. This example had implications for the definition of objectives, the determination of anticipated impacts, the formulation of indicators and the establishment of a baseline. For the ICT-PSP, improvements in project selection and structuring could lead to a better assessment of results. Consideration of the role of best practice analysis underlined its significance within the CIP and suggested that, after many years of experience in various parts of the Programme and its predecessors, the methodology of best practice identification could usefully be reviewed and systematised. A parallel but possibly separate exercise should then look at mechanisms for effectively promoting the take-up of best practice.
However, the evaluation also concludes that there continues to be a problem referred to in the findings of the Interim Evaluation of the CIP. This stated that ‘the current governance structure of CIP is not working effectively in terms of providing a strategic steer to the programme’. This problem arises because the Programme’s focus of action is predominantly on the operational aspects of its component programmes and there are relatively weak mechanisms for aggregating the individual experience of specific activities and for promoting synergies. Lessons learned in one area are not easily transferred to others either within the CIP or in other EU programmes, since such transfers are mainly dependent on the initiative of officials working at an operational level, with little support from the Programme structures. This is a significant weakness in a programme that, in the words of the Interim CIP Evaluation ‘seeks to achieve its ambitious and broadly defined objectives by leveraging its ideas, products and partnerships into other policies and programmes’. Furthermore, mechanisms for systematically identifying and following up potential for synergies are likely to be the greatest source of extra value for the Programme and this is especially the case, at this stage of the Programme’s implementation when the accumulated achievements of earlier years now provide a substantial base for analysis of this kind.

This issue needs to be addressed both within the Programme and in relation to other EU programmes, notably the Structural Funds. From the indications that have been encountered during the course of the evaluation, it is apparent that the opportunities for further synergies are likely to be found at different levels. They include the following:

- **Core synergies:** at the most general level, there is scope to articulate new positions on some of the central themes of the Framework Programme drawing on experience from across the component programmes. In relation to the key theme of the promotion of innovation, for instance, concepts and strategies that have been developed under Europe INNOVA and PRO INNO Europe could be cross-fertilised with those derived from the experience of other elements of the Framework Programme, such as eco-innovation, IEE II and ICT-PSP.

- **Methodological synergies:** methodologies, such as those for best practice identification and dissemination and for monitoring performance, developed across the CIP, could be systematised and applied in other areas of the Framework Programme.

- **Operational synergies:** at the most detailed level, in particular actions and projects, lessons are being learned every day that might have useful applications elsewhere. This might include aspects of project design and management, for instance.

A further increase in the effectiveness of a number of CIP instruments could be achieved if more budget were available, but even with a budget at around current levels, the main source of further increases in efficiency and a greater overall impact is in procedures to identify, articulate, manage and monitor the synergies that are available from across the Programme.

**Information and Awareness**

Communication within the Programme is mainly taking place at the level of particular actions. There is little communication at the level of the Framework Programme. Yet communication of the policy messages and the results of the activities of the CIP are an essential element of the overall effectiveness of the Programme, particularly in view of the nature of the CIP as a programme that for a major impact frequently relies on actions being taken up more widely. It is also the case that many of the potential synergies to be gained rely on a clear articulation of what has been achieved and what is necessary in order to build on this achievement. Communication is thus closely linked to generating greater synergies.
The Utility, Sustainability and European Value-added of the CIP

The current economic and financial crisis has only underlined the significance of many of the issues that the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme was designed to address, while the urgency of measures to meet the 2020 climate targets continues to increase. The utility of the CIP, then, is higher than ever, especially since, notwithstanding the scope for further improvements, the effectiveness of the instruments used has increased over time.

Part of this increased effectiveness has resulted from a greater concentration on areas where action at an EU level is more effective than action by the Member States. However, this is not a fixed boundary and the demonstration of the feasibility, for instance of new funding instruments, at a European level may lead to new possibilities opening up at a national or regional level. It is necessary therefore to keep the European value-added of actions under review. In particular, it is necessary to ensure that the Financial Instruments remain at the cutting edge of dealing with market failure in this area.

In terms of the sustainability of actions under the CIP, a major consideration is the nature of the follow-on programmes to the CIP. The features of these programmes have still to be determined in detail and are subject to a political decision-making process. However, the CIP now has a considerable amount of social capital in areas ranging from expertise in the promotion of innovation and on funding for SMEs to the efficient networking arrangements of the Enterprise Europe Network. Care should be taken to preserve this capital in successor programmes, as far as possible, and to avoid the sort of disruption that was evident at the start of the current Programme.

Recommendations

The recommendations of this evaluation are intended to build on those provided in greater detail in the Final Evaluations of the component programmes of the CIP. They relate primarily to developments that can still take place over the remaining period of the current Programme, but also contribute to the effective implementation of successor programmes.

The recommendations start from the point that, although there can continue to be operational improvements, in general, the current CIP is performing well across the range of its activities. This general conclusion from the Final Evaluations of the component programmes is also that of the CIP stakeholders brought together in the "Ready to Grow?" conference on 25 January 2011.

The main challenge for the Programme is to build on this achievement in terms of articulating more clearly the messages to be derived from its varied experience and of generating more extensive synergies between its varied activities. In particular, there is an opportunity to seek additional value from the considerable assets that have been developed within the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme in terms of the understanding and know-how relating to the Programme’s core policy areas and, especially in relation to the promotion of innovation.

The initial CIP Decision anticipated significant synergies from interactions, both within the Programme and externally, and the current evaluation has concluded that with the accumulated experience at this stage of the Programme’s cycle, there are major opportunities for further improvements in the overall performance of the Programme.

To achieve substantial additional value from current operational practice, a series of interrelated developments should be considered. The following summarises these developments, which are set out in greater detail in the main report:
1. **The governance of the CIP** should be improved so that substantive issues of policy and practice from across the Programme can be better considered and managed. This could include:

- greater attention in implementation reports to the results of actions (as opposed to outputs delivered);

- specific allocation of responsibility for analysing the results that are being achieved across the Programme;

- strengthening management instruments, such as communication tools, best practice analysis and monitoring systems, (as explained in subsequent recommendations);

- consideration of reports on this analysis of results at the Commission’s co-ordination meetings at director and head of unit level and at the joint Member State committee meetings.

2. There is scope for **improvement in the co-ordination** between the Directorates-General involved in implementation of the CIP and the Directorate-General for Regional Policy, in particular. This co-ordination needs to be on a more systematic basis than currently, providing a framework for the on-going contacts between officials at an operational levels, drawing lessons from experience in areas of common interest, such as supporting businesses and innovation, and specifically identifying synergies and complementarities relating, for instance, to the implementation of the Structural Fund guidelines for the next programming period.

3. The development of evidence-based policy processes can be taken further, including **continuing improvements in monitoring systems**.

4. The methodology of best practice analysis should be reviewed and systematised. Mechanisms for promoting the take-up of best practice should be developed further and monitored.

5. There should be a review of the relationship between the CIP and its main stakeholders, with a view to **considering systematically ways to identify and promote synergies**. This should include a review of structures for co-ordinating practice with closely related policy areas, such as FP7 and the Structural Funds and consideration of how CIP results can best be taken up in Member States and other participating countries.

6. With the experience from a wide range of actions under the CIP continuing to accumulate, the Recommendation of the Interim Evaluation of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme that the Commission should develop a **communication and dissemination strategy for the CIP**, which reflects stakeholders’ demand for simple coherent and tailored messages, has even greater force:

   The main purpose of such a strategy at this stage should be to communicate clearly the main achievements of the CIP, with a view to assisting further take-up of results and promoting synergies at all levels: within the Programme, with related areas of EU policy and with national and regional initiatives that are able to make effective use of the experience at an EU level.

7. **A significant legacy** that the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme can leave for its successor programmes is a clear and comprehensive statement on Innovation and how best to promote and support it.

   This would build on the work of Europe INNOVA and PRO INNO Europe, but also take in the experience of the eco-innovation projects, the IEE II programme and ICT-PSP and wider
developments, such as the Lead Market Initiative. It would also take into account particular approaches needed to support eco-innovation and possibly consider links with FP7 and the Structural Funds. It would add practical detail to the framework provided by the Innovation Union Flagship Initiative and provide a clear orientation for the operation of innovation promotion under successor programmes.

Recommendations have also been made in the three case studies that have formed part of the Evaluation. These recommendations are set out below, along with a brief explanation of the reason for examining each of the three cases:

Case study 1: The contribution of small scale measures to CIP policy development

While the overall evaluation of the CIP inevitably concentrates on the broader themes and the instruments with the greatest financial backing, the purpose of this case study is to conduct a separate review of smaller scale activities, in order to consider their contribution to the Programme as a whole. The intention is to focus some light on activities that might otherwise escape scrutiny and to contribute to a debate on their role. The case study found that small scale measures in budgetary terms are not necessarily small scale in their significance. The recommendations are:

- While there will continue to be a need to justify each specific small scale measure separately, it is also necessary to continue to strengthen the mechanisms for overall co-ordination of these measures, in order to avoid unnecessary proliferation, to achieve greater synergy and to increase their overall impact. Reference to a broader framework, such as the Small Business Act helps this process.

- Clearer communication of the aims and achievements of small scale measures is necessary, including their follow-up. Continuing to develop an improved monitoring system is part of this process.

- The development of tools contributing to better strategic co-ordination of the Programme (such as instruments for the more effective dissemination of best practice) is an important contribution made by small scale measures. The process of developing these tools could be undertaken more systematically.

Case study 2: The Effectiveness of Support for Eco-innovation under the CIP

The purpose of this case study was to consider whether across the CIP as a whole, eco-innovation and the objective of sustainable development is being effectively pursued. It is seen that with the funding available it is not possible to promote extensive synergies across the CIP. The recommendations are as follows:

- While it is not suggested that enterprises supported by CIP measures to promote various forms of eco-innovation should have any privileged status, there should be a further consideration of how such enterprises can effectively fund their subsequent development, including by access to venture capital, in a situation where competition for VC funds is quite fierce.

- In areas where further support for the application of ideas and technology, of the kind developed under various CIP measures, is restricted by a shortage of funds, there should be a
new investigation of the extent to which interaction with other policy instruments, such as the Structural Funds, can be strengthened to the advantage of all the policy instruments concerned.

Case study 3: The Effectiveness of Support for Industrial Excellence in Energy – the Chambers promoting intelligent energy for SMEs (CHANGE) project

This project focuses on the CHANGE (Chambers promoting intelligent energy for SMEs) project, supported under IEE II to consider business support co-ordination issues, especially with the Enterprise Europe Network. The recommendations are as follows:

- Efforts should be made to identify potential synergies before launching projects in areas where there are multiple inputs from different parts of the CIP.

- There is a particular onus on those developing business support services to ensure that they do not confuse enterprises by needlessly proliferating services, but rather seek to integrate new services, as seamlessly as possible, into existing provision.

- Efforts should be made to make sure that welcome capacity-building initiatives such as CHANGE lead to services to enterprises that are as effective as possible by putting in place the appropriate information, co-ordination and referral mechanisms with support agencies working in related areas.