



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE GENERAL
ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

DG ECFIN's economic research activities - evaluation report

In the course of 2006, an external evaluation of the economic research activities of DG ECFIN was carried out.

The aim of the evaluation was to help strengthen the DG's economic research activities and the links with policy-making. Through this evaluation, we wanted to find out how relevant DG ECFIN's economic research is to its current or potential users and what use they make of it. The evaluators also made an assessment of the academic quality of a sample of our research outputs and compared the organisation of our economic research with other organisations with comparable activities, such as the ECB, OECD and IMF.

DG ECFIN selected the Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services (CSES) to carry out this assignment. Their evaluation report, including an executive summary of their conclusions and recommendations, is published on this webpage.

Overall, the results of the evaluation are positive. CSES concludes that within a relatively short period of time and with modest resources, DG ECFIN has developed a wide range of economic research tools and products. The various economic research outputs are widely used inside DG ECFIN, elsewhere in the Commission and by external users. They are generally seen as being of a high quality and make a valuable input to the Commission's operations and policy-making. The evaluation also suggests that, while steps could be taken to strengthen each aspect, DG ECFIN is largely achieving a balance between supply-driven research, reflecting the interests of the researchers, and demand-driven research, which is undertaken to support the day-to-day operations and policy making.

The report of the evaluation also includes fourteen specific recommendations. Several recommendations focus on the need for more consultation on economic research priorities, both within the DG as with other DGs. CSES also recommends further developing our links with external economic researchers by involving them more in our research and by increased participation of ECFIN staff in external events. Another area for improvement is the communication of our research results within and outside the Commission. Finally, a number of practical suggestions are made on the organisation of the work of the Advisors, on the Visiting Fellows programme and on the continuation of the Topics in Economic Research (TIER) notes.

We invite all interested parties to send us comments by e-mail to ECFIN-EVALUATIONS@ec.europa.eu, which will serve as input to our follow-up.