

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE

ASSESSMENT OF FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Context

Purpose of this document: This document must be established for all interim and ex-post evaluations in the Directorate-General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) to provide an objective overall assessment of the evaluation and the validity of its results, as well as a general description of how the evaluation results will be used by DG EAC.

The document shall be published together with the Evaluation Report on Europa:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/evalreports/index_en.htm

Definitions: Evaluation in the Commission is defined as a “judgement of interventions according to their results, impacts and the needs they aim to satisfy”. It is an information tool that supports the preparation and implementation of public interventions, and reports on the corresponding results to the public and stakeholders. Information about the evaluation framework of the European Commission can be obtained at:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/evaluation/index_en.htm

Organisation of the evaluation process: In DG EAC evaluations must be independent and shall be led and carried out by external resources. The operational management of the EAC policy areas is responsible for the identification of evaluation subjects, the organisation of evaluations, and the follow-up of evaluation results. A central Evaluation Cell, detached from the operational activities evaluated, has as a major role in ensuring quality, objectivity and an element of independence to the process, by having a close involvement in all steps of the evaluation. An evaluation Steering Group is appointed to prepare the evaluation, supervise the execution, and support the evaluator on the basis of the members' specific knowledge and expertise of the evaluation subject.

Basic data about the specific evaluation

Evaluation: Interim evaluation of Erasmus Mundus II (2009 – 2013)

Purpose of the evaluation: The interim evaluation is being launched according to Article 13.3.(a) of the Erasmus Mundus Decision 1298/2008/EC of the European Parliament and Council of 16 December 2008 (OJ L340) – based on Article 165 of the Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Evaluator: Public Policy and Management Institute (PPMI), Vilnius, Lithuania

Budget of the evaluation: 162.030€

Time period of execution: 24.06.2011 – 09.03.2012

Assessment

Carried out by: The Evaluation Cell of DG EAC (Unit R2)

Date: 02.05.2012

1. Evaluation subject

The Programme is based on Decision N° 1298/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 establishing the Erasmus Mundus 2009 – 2013 action programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries.

The Programme includes three concrete actions:

1: Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters (Action 1A) and Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctoral (Action 1B) Programmes, including scholarships and fellowships schemes

2: Erasmus Mundus Partnerships supports the creation of large Partnerships between European universities and universities from targeted non-European countries or regions as a basis for structured cooperation and the implementation of sustainable mobility flows from and, if applicable, to the target non-European countries/regions at all higher education levels.

3: Promotion of European higher education by increasing the attractiveness of Europe as an educational destination and a centre of excellence worldwide.

The programme is open to:

- the 27 EU member states; the candidate countries; the countries of the Western Balkans; the EFTA countries; the Swiss Confederation.

The Erasmus Mundus programme may involve higher education institutions from third countries on the same footing as European institutions.

The Erasmus Mundus Decision allocates the following budget for the duration of the programme:

- 494 Mio € for Actions 1 & 3;

- 460 Mio € for Action 2.

The predecessor programme (2004 – 2008) was evaluated as follows:

– Interim evaluation in 2007;

– Ex-post evaluation in 2009

2. Scope of evaluation

The interim evaluation covered all actions and geographic areas of the programme during the period 2009 – 2011

3. Methodology applied for the evaluation

Desk research (literature review and analysis of the monitoring data), interviews, case studies, surveys and other methods of evaluation were used to collect and analyse evaluation information. The methodology applied is deemed appropriate for the requirements of the evaluation.

4. Results of the evaluation

Main conclusions:

The objectives of Erasmus Mundus II remain highly relevant.

The main barriers to the programme implementation resulted from lack of legislation, differences in higher education systems (particularly tuition fees), visa problems and extensive administrative workload (including annual reapplication);

Action 1 joint courses produced ambitious graduates, satisfied with their experience and strongly identifying with the Erasmus Mundus brand. Action 2 participants internationalised their teaching, and improved their institutional capacities.

Main recommendations:

Mobility, partnerships and policy dialogue should be further promoted by the next generation of the programme.

Action 2 should be further integrated into the programme as a vital element for promoting excellence, developmental capacity and joint research activity with higher education institutions outside the EU;

Retain and strengthen the balance between excellence, development of capacity and geographical representation. Incentives should be provided to include a wider range of institutions from candidate and potential candidate countries and strengthen their capacities.

5. Follow-up of the evaluation results

An action plan will be established to address the results of the evaluation.

6. Conclusions of the assessment of the Evaluation Report

The evaluation results are deemed to be reliable and give a true and complete picture of the implementation of the programme.

Due to the fact that the programme started up only in 2009 this interim evaluation could not be organised at an earlier point in time. Thus, the evaluation results arrived only after the Commission's proposal for the successor programme was launched, which meant that the evaluation could not feed into the design of that proposal.