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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

Accompanying the document

**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE
COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE
COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**Mid-term evaluation of the 3rd Health programme 2014-2020 under Regulation (EU) No
282/2014 on the establishment of a third programme of Union action in the field of
health (2014-2020)**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This staff working document accompanies the Commission's report on the mid-term evaluation of the third health programme 2014-2020. It presents the main findings based on an independent external study conducted from May 2016 to May 2017. The conclusions of the evaluation will be used to improve the implementation of the Health Programme in 2018-2020 and could also serve to inform the programming period after 2020.

The third Health Programme ('the Programme') is a financial instrument for policy coordination at EU level. The aim is to complement, support and add value to the policies of Member States, in improving the health of Europeans and reducing health inequalities. It has four specific objectives:

- 1) promote health and healthy living and prevent diseases;
- 2) protect Europeans from serious cross-border health threats;
- 3) contribute to innovative, efficient and sustainable health systems; and
- 4) facilitate access to better and safer healthcare for Europeans.

The mid-term evaluation covers the first three years of the programme implementation (2014-2016). The evaluation was carried out too early to quantitatively assess whether the programme objectives were achieved as most of the actions ran over three years. Final results for actions that began in 2015 will not be available before the end of 2018. That said, the evaluation indicates that major achievements have been or are being made such as:

- establishing 24 European Reference Networks;
- supporting Member States to increase their capacity-building to respond to outbreaks (e.g. Ebola and Zika viruses);
- contributing to the EU's migration policy by supporting Member States to respond to the health needs of high influx of migrants and refugees; and
- training health professionals and other front-line staff.

Other achievements of the health programme include exchanges of good practice in areas as diverse as alcohol reduction, cancer screening, HIV/AIDS and TB prevention, additional support for EU health legislation on medicinal products and medical devices, the eHealth Network activities and Health Technology Assessment.

Progress is also being made on important joint work with the OECD and the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies. This collaboration brings together internationally renowned expertise in the State of Health in the EU cycle to strengthen country-specific and EU-wide knowledge on health issues. Major achievements of this collaboration are the publication of the 'Health at a glance: Europe 2016' report in November 2016, as well as EU-28 country profiles and a companion report by November 2017.

The evaluation concluded that all 23 thematic priorities still remain valid, and the funded actions have produced or are producing important outcomes with high EU-added value, serving the programme objectives and contributing to major Commission priorities and international initiatives.

Simplification measures that have been taken by introducing electronic tools to submit proposals and manage grants, by simplifying evaluations and by simplifying financial rules and administrative procedures show efficiency gains.

The new programme design takes a more strategic view of a mid-term perspective and has demonstrated its value as an effective and flexible management tool capable of covering unforeseeable needs (refugees' crisis). Progress indicators have been introduced but there is still a need for continued efforts to improve the monitoring, reporting and dissemination of results.

The exceptional utility criteria for attracting participation from low gross national income (GNI) countries have not been sufficiently effective so far. However, despite the difficult economic context and the significant barrier of assuring the remaining co-financing, the Programme is still attracting a similar level of participation from low GNI countries as in the previous programme.

For the remaining programming period, the Programme should remain focused, strengthen efforts to achieve EU-added value and increase synergies and ensure the upscale significant results through cooperation with other EU financial instruments.