

Evaluation Helpdesk

Peer reviews of evaluations – the next steps

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Helpdesk activities

- **Primary goal** of Helpdesk: to improve evaluations carried out on Cohesion policy programmes
- In addition to provision of training course each year on important aspects of evaluation:
 - provides **expert support** to individual MA on particular evaluation issues:
 - last year, advice to Latvia on proposed evaluation of effects of 2007-2013 programmes on regional development
 - this year in May, methodological support to Greek MAs on design and management of evaluations
 - undertakes **peer reviews** of selected evaluations by experts
 - as announced at last meeting, intention to broaden scope of peer reviews

Peer reviews

- **Aim:** to subject selected evaluations to critical appraisal by leading evaluation experts so as to highlight strengths and weaknesses and ways of improving
- **Purpose:** to encourage MAs to undertake good quality evaluations and to demonstrate how to do so
- From evaluations reviewed - **shortcomings** evident, originating largely from deficiencies in evaluation process itself:
 - ToRs poorly framed
 - evaluation questions – too many, too imprecise, too ambitious
 - methods specified not linked to evaluation questions
 - inadequate supervision of evaluation process
- **Implication:** to improve evaluations, need to review whole evaluation process to identify reasons for shortcomings and how to correct them

Peer reviews – next steps

- To subject '**evaluation dossiers**' rather than just final evaluation reports to critical review, covering:
 - ToRs
 - Selection of evaluators
 - Budget
 - Inception and interim reports as well as final
 - Other documents relating to process
- Requires **cooperation of MAs** to have access to reports, documents and details of evaluation process
- To open up peer review meetings to **MAs** and to involve **evaluators** so that they can learn directly from experts' comments and advice
- To follow an evaluation from its inception and peer review each element of the process before put into effect so as to advise on how to improve
- To use such evaluations as '**showcases**' for mutual learning

Putting these steps into practice

- First extended peer review in Malta next week
- **Subject of review:**
 - 1) Dossier of **completed evaluation** on: 'Contribution of 2007-2013 Initiatives to competitiveness and improvement of quality of life'
 - 2) **ToR of planned evaluation:** 'Provision of services for data collection and analysis and assessment of methodological approaches and tools to carry out a counterfactual impact evaluation and/or other impact evaluations'
- Both will be subjected to critical appraisal by 3 leading evaluation experts with MA present at meeting
- Peer review = **pilot** – approach will be adopted in future if proves successful and useful for MA
- Ready and willing to support other MAs in similar way

**Thank you
for
your attention**