



Brussels, 19.1.2016
SWD(2016) 1 final

Ex-Post Evaluation of the Seventh Framework Programme

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Accompanying the document

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

**On the Response to the Report of the High Level Expert Group on the Ex-Post
Evaluation of the Seventh Framework Programme**

{COM(2016) 5 final}
{SWD(2016) 2 final}

Executive Summary Sheet (Max 2 pages)

Introduction

The Staff Working Document (SWD) assesses the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) on the basis of the five evaluation criteria of the Better Regulation Guidelines. It covers the seven years of FP7 implementation. It cannot present a complete picture of FP7 results and impacts, since more than 50% of the FP7 projects are still on-going.

1. How effective has FP7 been?

FP7 contributed to increasing the competitiveness of Europe's industry and had a positive impact on growth and jobs. FP7 only accounts for a small proportion of total public RTD expenditure in Europe. It is estimated that FP7 will increase GDP by approximately 20 billion EUR per year over the next 25 years through its indirect economic effects and create over 130,000 research jobs per year and 160,000 additional jobs per year. The Joint Technology Initiatives and other Public-Private Partnerships boosted industry participation by more than 50%, made it possible to realise strong leverage effects, and contributed to the competitiveness of Europe's industries in areas such as pharmaceuticals, aeronautics and fuel cells and hydrogen. The Risk-Sharing Finance Facility improved access to loan finance with EUR 11.3 billion loan agreements signed. FP7 participants reported innovative product developments, increased turnover, improved productivity and competitiveness. It is, however, too early to make a final assessment of FP7's micro-economic impacts.

FP7 was particularly effective in strengthening scientific excellence. FP7 projects have so far generated over 170,000 publications, with an open access rate of over 54% for all scientific peer reviewed publications created during the life time of FP7. In some programmes of FP7 30% of publications rank among the top 5% of highly-cited publications in their disciplines - above the European and US averages. Finished FP7 projects led to more than 1,700 patents and 7,400 commercial exploitations. FP7 promoted ground-breaking research through the European Research Council (ERC).

FP7 trained and involved leading international scientific and technological talent. FP7 fostered inter-disciplinary research whilst increasing Europe-wide research and innovation collaboration and networking. FP7 was an open system that funded more than 21,000 new organisations. FP7 helped increase the participation of women researchers and of international researchers. FP7 involved the EU-13 Member States to a significant extent taking into account national R&D capacities.

FP7 contributed to increasing the level of research investment. Through short-term leverage effect and long-term multiplier effects each EUR spent by FP7 generated EUR 11 of estimated direct and indirect economic effects. FP7 enhanced the alignment of research activities between Member States.

2. How efficient has FP7 been?

FP7 simplification measures led to cost savings for participants of 551 million EUR compared to FP6. However, FP7 did not succeed in delivering large scale simplification. The different components of FP7 risked at creating silos. The variations in rules and procedures between different parts of FP7 hindered its efficiency, which is demonstrated in part by FP7's high error rate.

3. How relevant was FP7?

Under FP7, actions were taken to respond to the economic crisis. FP7 addressed relevant societal challenges such as food safety, climate change, health and socio economic issues such

as migration and radicalisation, investing more than 28.7 billion EUR in 7,873 projects.

4. How coherent was FP7 internally and with other (EU) actions?

FP7 worked coherently with other EU policy initiatives such as the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme and the Structural Funds. However there could have been greater synergies. FP7 provided the knowledge-base to support EU policies in more than 374 cases and contributed to international commitments such as the Millennium Development Goals. FP7 was open to the world, involving participants from 170 countries. The different components of FP7 operated as isolated silos.

6. What is the EU added value of FP7?

FP7 addressed transnational European societal challenges which could not have been resolved by Member States alone. FP7 ensured additionality, meaning that only a small minority of projects would have gone ahead in its absence. Many FP7 activities were of such a scale and complexity in terms of knowledge and skills from different sectors and disciplines that they could only be carried out at EU level to achieve the required critical mass. FP7 helped creating durable cross-border, cross-sectoral, inter-disciplinary networks.

7. Lessons learnt

Notwithstanding the measures that were introduced in the course of the Programme, FP7 did not lead to large-scale simplification and rules remained too complex. While FP7 as a whole proved adaptable to changing economic circumstances, FP7 could have had a greater scope to adapt to unexpected and emerging issues. FP7 sought to ensure complementarity with other related programmes, but could have been more effective in building synergies.