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Impact Assessment Board

Brussels,
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# Opinion

**Title** **DG RTD - Impact Assessment on a proposal for a European Metrology Programme for Innovation and Research (EMPIR)**

(draft version of 31 January 2013)*

## (A) Context

This impact assessment report accompanies the Commission proposal for a decision on the participation by the European Union in the European Metrology Programme for Innovation and Research (EMPIR). The current EMRP initiative (European Metrology Research Programme), based on Art.185 of the TFEU, is a joint European programme, enabling European national metrology institutes (NMIs), industrial organisations and academia (Dis – Designated Units) to collaborate on joint research projects within specified fields. The EMRP is implemented by EURAMET, organised by 22 NMIs, supported by the EU, and has a total public budget of € 400 million, for duration of five years. According to the mid-term evaluation, an estimated 50% of the dedicated national investments in metrology research are now influenced and coordinated by the EMRP.

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*The initiative is based on the Commission's proposal for the "Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation in the European Union (2014-2020)" that provides a basis for future EU Public Partnerships in Research and Innovation. The focus of IAB analysis has been adapted accordingly.*

## (B) Overall opinion

**The report needs to be strengthened in several respects. First, it should clarify the parameters already set in the Horizon 2020 proposals relating to metrology research. It should then clearly identify the specific problems with the current metrology programme that need to be addressed, drawing in particular on the interim evaluation and/or the views of stakeholders. Second, it should explain why it is considered necessary to broaden the current programme to encompass standardisation and greater industrial co-operation. Third, the report should explain how objectives such as boosting industrial uptake relate to the specific problems and how targets, such as increased turnover arising from metrology research, were arrived at. Fourth, the report should explain the differences between the new programme (EMPIR) and the current programme and clarify how in concrete terms the new programme will address the weaknesses identified either in the interim evaluation or otherwise such as the need for European global leadership. The report should better explain how the expected achievements will be measured and should include robust and realistic monitoring indicators clearly linked to the objectives.**

* Note that this opinion concerns a draft impact assessment report which may differ from the one adopted

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**(C) Main recommendations for improvements**

**(1) Better explain the specific problems.** The report should be more concise in its description of the general importance of metrology as a science and should focus on what the current programme has achieved in concrete terms. To aid understanding a description of how the programme works in practice, including the actors involved and their roles should be included. Drawing on the results of the interim evaluation and stakeholders input it should then clarify the precise problems to be addressed by this initiative. In particular, it should explain the drivers of insufficient industrial co-operation and of the need for better standards as well as for a more inter-disciplinary approach to metrology research. The report should better explain why there is a need for critical mass, reduction of fragmentation and to avoid duplication of efforts. In doing so, it should demonstrate how these challenges can be better overcome in a new metrology programme. The added-value of increasing the overall budget for the next cycle of the programme should also be demonstrated.

**(2) Clarify the objectives and better explain the options.** Having clarified and better explained the specific problems to be addressed, the report should establish clear linkages between these problems and the specific and operational objectives. It should explain the basis for the targets mentioned under these objectives. For example, the report should clarify: why at least 10% of resources should be dedicated to 'normative' research; why the participation on non-National Metrology Institute scientists should be 'doubled'; what is the basis for the objective to increase the leverage of EU structural funds from 0% to 10%; why at least € 400 million turnover from improved products and services (how can this be attributed to metrology research funding?). The content of the policy options and the difference between them should be better described i.e. what in concrete practical terms is the difference between the proposed new programme and the current one? In that context, the report should also explain the linkages between this programme, other innovation/standardisation related programmes/plans and EU structural funds.

**(3) Better assess impacts.** The report should better explain what the added value of the changed scope and increased budget is expected to be in terms of effectiveness and efficiency of the programme. It should provide more substantial information on how proposed options address the problems identified such as lack of cooperation between national institutes and industries and lack of cooperation between national metrology institutes and the wider science community. The report should also explain how the new programme will leverage greater private sector investment and address the underexploited potential for better standards. It should also clarify how the new programme will support agenda setting and research projects with 'improved efficiency'. More detail should be provided regarding the assumptions underlying the levels of co-financing from public and private sources. In particular the report should better explain the significance of the risks (considered to be of both high importance and high probability) of the inability to access structural funds. Given the different profiles of the Member States in terms of research intensity (research investment), the report should also consider whether there will be any country-specific impacts. It should substantiate the argument on increasing competitiveness and the EU's strong position/influence in the metrology research worldwide.

**(4) Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation arrangements.** The report should better explain how the expected achievements will be measured. It should include specific and realistic monitoring indicators and should ensure better alignment between the range of indicators and the detailed targets mentioned in the objectives section of the report.

*Some more technical comments have been transmitted directly to the author DG and are expected to be incorporated in the final version of the impact assessment report.*

| **(D) Procedure and presentation** |
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| The views of different categories of stakeholders should be better integrated into the text. |

| **(E) IAB scrutiny process** | |
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| Reference number | 2013/RTD/004 |
| External expertise used | No |
| Date of IAB meeting | 27 February 2013 |