The Implementation Strategy for Horizon Europe

KoWi Webinar

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An Implementation Strategy for Horizon Europe: Why?

A unique opportunity to design how to implement Horizon Europe, while the rules for participation are fixed by the Common understanding (provisional agreement)

The Implementation Strategy will be an essential component for delivering the objectives of Horizon Europe, in practice:

• It will embrace all the processes involved in running calls, selecting proposals and managing projects, with joined-up systems and common principles

• It will ensure that the new programme is managed according to highest standards, maximizing the impact of every Euro spent

• The strategy will build on successful experience to date, but taking account of lessons learned, and also adapted to the new features of Horizon Europe
An extensive period of analysis, consultation and co-design

• **Key milestones:**
  - Court of Auditors report on Simplification
  - Umbrella stakeholders event, January 2019
  - R&I Days 24-26 September in Brussels
  - National & Regional Stakeholder consultation events (June 2019 to January 2020)
  - Co-design exercise through web survey, open to all stakeholders

• **Report** of the on-line co-design exercise finalised
• Consolidating and co-drafting
• Endorsement by the CIC Steering Board in December 2019 and publication on the **Europa Portal**
The Implementation Strategy Guiding Principles

1. Maximising impacts
2. Ensuring greater transparency and further simplification
3. Fostering synergies with other EU spending programmes
4. Easing access through digital transformation and outreach

For each principles, a series of key measures to be implemented and an indicative timing have been defined, in 13 areas.
The areas of the Implementation Strategy:

**Programme and project life-cycle:**
- Work programme
- Submission and evaluation
- Model Grant Agreement
- Dissemination & exploitation
- Data & reporting
- Feedback to policy and evidence based policy
- Simplified forms of costs
- Control Strategy

**Enabling aspects:**
- Outreach
- Digital transformation

**Specific cross-cutting considerations:**
- European partnerships
- International cooperation
- Synergies
Work programme and calls

Key measures:

• Design a **simpler, less complex work programme**, less prescriptive / Improved readability

• **Specify in the call topics the expected outcomes and their link to the wider targeted impacts**, in line with the Strategic Research and Innovation Plan. Topics will therefore be open to a range of different pathways to achieve them

• Consider a **more frequent use of topics which offer the possibility of submission for more than one year**

• Integrate calls arising from **institutionalized European partnerships and EIT in the Funding and Tenders Portal**.
Proposal submission and evaluation

**Key measures:**

- **Award criteria**: reduce the number of ‘aspects to be taken into account’ under each criterion, and ensure that the same aspect is not assessed twice.

- **Proposal template**: less information requested (in line with criteria); reference to external sources where possible (e.g. Researchers’ ID); substantial reduction in maximum length.

- **Portfolio-based calls** (esp. missions, EIC pathfinder): develop new modalities using provisions of Art.26 (e.g. evaluation of intrinsic quality, then invoke portfolio considerations, to be spelled out in WP);

- **‘Right to react’ (rebuttal) pilot**: greater transparency and more detailed feedback;

- **Anonymised first stage proposals** (‘blind evaluation’): one or more pilots in early calls of HE (as per Art 25.3a);

- **Other areas for attention include**: use of two-stage; resubmission rules; ethical review; *ex aequo* criteria
Key measures:

• **Simplification of the provisions on personnel costs** in the MGA: unique simpler corporate mandatory formula to calculate actual personnel costs → no time sheets

• **Financial reporting will be streamlined**, enabling simpler calculations and reporting on personnel costs and other type of costs

• **Technical reporting template will be further simplified** (e.g.: reducing the number of questions requiring free-text input, use of external identifier)
Control strategy

Key measures:

Design a risk-based overall control strategy (ex-ante and ex-post):

*Ex-ante controls*

- Reinforcing early detection of emerging risks of irregularity: enhancing tools and procedures
- Enhancing beneficiaries’ knowledge on how to avoid errors and sharing best practice in project, in the framework of outreach events

*Ex-post controls*

- Explore the possibility of introducing System and Process Audits (SPAs) with focus on larger participants in the Programme
- Initiate a number of pilots SPAs on H2020 legal basis
- Explore possibility of enhanced cross-reliance on audits and assessments
Lump sum pilot

Key measures:

• **Enhancing knowledge sharing on the first lump sum pilots**: through seminars with Member States, NCPs and beneficiaries

• **Developing an assessment framework for entire lump sum project cycle**: this will enable structured monitoring of the pilots, a deeper degree of analysis and a much easier sharing and communication of findings to all interested parties

• **Reinforcing the harmonised implementation of the lump sum pilots**: production of guidance document on the specificities of lump sum pilot for applicants, beneficiaries and experts

• **Developing guidelines to support the decision of further using lump sums**