

## Management Summary 'Beyond Horizon 2020'

The following management summary provides a comprehensive overview about the key results of this empirical qualitative study of 41 position papers from 39 different Science and Innovation (S&I) stakeholders for the Horizon 2020 Interim Evaluation (IE) and the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP9). Additionally, 17 complementary semi-structured interviews with Swiss and Brussels based S&I stakeholders were conducted and analysed to extend the views and enrich the findings from the position papers. From this research, 34 interlinked 'Critical Success Factors' (CSFs) were identified, which are necessary factors for Horizon 2020 to achieve its mission and ensure a functional design for FP9 from a general and Swiss stakeholders' perspective. These 34 CSFs were split up into five CSF domains: (1) design, (2) management (3) cross-cutting issues (4) European structures and (5) programme level issues. For each CSF within their domain, stakeholders named and framed suggestions for modifications for the remainder of Horizon 2020 and for FP9. The findings from this research can be summarized in four key statements:

### **Solid common ground to design FP9**

First of all, from the findings one can state that the Swiss and European S&I stakeholders' interests for the design of FP9 do not fundamentally differ. There is a high congruence between the CSFs addressed by the Swiss and overall stakeholder perspective. One can observe that the top ten CSFs are the same, where 7 out of the 10 top ranked CSFs are the same and only differ in positioning. For the Swiss S&I stakeholders, the three top CSF are the 'structure', 'collaborative research' and the 'bottom up and top down' elements, instruments and sections within the FP. For the overall S&I stakeholder community, the 'calls, work programmes and impact', 'structure' and the 'evaluation' are the most frequently discussed CSFs, which are also among the top ten from a Swiss S&I perspective. Additionally, one can see that in terms of CSF domains the Swiss and overall stakeholder perspective is similar, even though the Swiss S&I community addresses the 'cross-cutting-issues' more dominantly within their positions. Conclusively, this research shows that Swiss and European stakeholders have a solid common understanding about the CSFs for FP9. This builds a strong foundation to work towards a functional design of FP9, which covers the interests of the European and Swiss S&I community.

### **Same structure – better connections for FP9**

Secondly, the strongest common agreement among the stakeholders is that FP9 should not be a revolution from Horizon 2020 but rather an evolution. This means that FP9 should follow the design logic of Horizon 2020 and particularly make modifications within the sections, instruments and activities itself. Moreover, for the stakeholder it is clear that the principle of 'excellence' has to be maintained as the overarching key competition principle for FP9. However, their needs to be a clearer definition of 'excellence' and how this could also apply for the innovation activities. This leads to the crucial conceptual challenge of Horizon 2020 as well as FP9: to better connect Research and Innovation (R&I) activities within the programme. Naturally, different stakeholders have made their case for research or innovation based on their background. However, for the FP9 consultation it is crucial that stakeholders across all categories find concrete and constructive solutions together to bridge the gap between R&I. Finally, one can point out that the challenge-based approach is highly appreciated by the stakeholders and should be maintained. However, this challenge-based approach needs to find a better balance between bottom up and top down proposals to tackle these societal challenges.

### **Stronger European added value in FP9**

Thirdly, the research shows that European added value (EAV) is an overarching principle for FPs. This means that also FP9 needs to be further designed in a complementary or subsidiary way to the national funding programmes. Concrete examples for clear EAV mentioned by all stakeholder domains are the 'European Research Council' (ERC), the 'Marie Skłodowska-Curie

actions' (MSCA) and especially collaborative research projects. For FP9, other sections, activities and instruments should be evaluated against this principle. This requires additional research to identify what the national levels are providing. Nevertheless, from a stakeholders perspective, also the national R&I systems need to be reviewed in order to achieve complementarity and subsidiarity between the FPs and national funding systems. Otherwise the full potential of FPs cannot be leveraged. Other concrete measures to strengthen the synergies between structural funds and Horizon 2020 e.g. by providing incentives for national member states to use structural funds for R&I or using a small percentage of the structural funds to create synergies with Horizon 2020 activities, such as the MSCA or the research infrastructure actions. Conclusively, EAV is expected to be an even stronger core principle for FP9. From a stakeholder's perspective, this requires a strong European and national political commitment towards a closer alignment of strategies, instruments, resources and actors on the national as well as the European level.

### **An efficient and responsive FP9**

Thirdly, in terms of efficiency, the research shows that the stakeholders welcome the simplification measures implemented and recommend to continue these efforts. Here, stakeholders ask for simplification measures such as the reduction of the administrative burden (e.g through a balanced approach between trust and control), the adaptation of accounting practices (e.g. the model grant agreement, personnel costs etc.), the streamlining of funding instruments (e.g. PPPs, JTIs, JPIs etc.), better guidelines to find the appropriate funding instrument and the alignment of national and EU instruments as mentioned above. These efficiency measures would also contribute to tackle the low success rate. Here, the stakeholders plead that Horizon 2020 and FP9 need to be more responsive to the stakeholders' needs. Based on the high oversubscription rate and the low success rates, one can argue that supply does not respond to the demand. Here, stakeholders also suggest several technical measures to tackle to oversubscription. These measures include more two stage application procedures, more transparent and clearer defined WPs and calls, a better definition of the expected impact within the calls, a higher quality of evaluations or functional synergies between Horizon 2020 and the structural funds.

### **FP9 needs a political paradigm shift towards an investment programme**

Last but not least, the public consultation is only a piece of the entire puzzle for the development of FP9 and is especially important when it comes to modifications on the implementation level. Before these modifications can happen, the financial frame for FP9 needs to be defined. Therefore, discussions on the future of the EU budget – the so called 'Multiannual Financial Framework' (MFF) – are gaining traction and stakeholders in Brussels are preparing their arguments to defend a fair share of education, research and innovation spending before the MFF proposal comes out by the end of 2017. At the same time as the MFF proposal, the first FP9 proposal is expected to be published. In parallel, the EC has set up a High Level Group (HLG) that is mandated to propose measures to maximise the impact of European research and innovation framework programmes. The conclusions of the HLG also play an essential role for the MFF. When the HLG report comes out in June 2017, the FP9 public consultation is expected to be opened, even before the results of the interim evaluation are available. In summary, the timeline towards FP9 is very tight. Therefore, besides a solid preparation from the stakeholders' side a strong political commitment is needed for the design of FP9 besides a solid preparation from the stakeholders' side. This will require a paradigm shift as to how the framework programme is viewed by the institutions, countries and the European citizens. They need to see the bigger picture and shift their views from funding to investment programme for a successful European future. For this paradigm shift, stakeholders have to provide concrete examples for the FP9 consultation that that every FP for R&I is not only a funding programme, but an investment programme to enhance Europe's competitiveness and significantly contributes to the European integration project.