



# Horizon 2020: Initial Lessons Learned

## Meeting of Council Research Working Party

### 13 October 2014

HORIZON 2020

A graphic for Horizon 2020 featuring a globe of the Earth in the center, surrounded by a blue and white light flare. The globe is positioned between the letters 'O' and 'N' of the word 'HORIZON'. The background is a dark blue gradient with light rays emanating from the globe.

Research  
and  
Innovation

## Launch of Horizon 2020: A major achievement

**Successful  
launch of  
first calls (WP)  
immediately after  
adoption of  
Horizon 2020**

Strategic  
Work  
Programme

- 65 calls (12 focus areas) for 2014 embedding key features and novelties;
- Broader and fewer topics;
- Over € 15 billion funding over first two years (€ 9.3 billion in 2014).

Simplified  
operations

- Robust IT systems and Participant Portal as a single gateway for all participants;
- Streamlined business processes reducing red tape.

## Response to H2020 calls in first six months

- More than **2.1 million visits on Participant Portal** in December 2013 and increasing in the following months, **just over 3 million visits**;
- More than **16,000 proposals** submitted (till end of September: 30,000);
- Nearly **5,300 expert evaluators** contracted (60,000 experts registered);
- Attracted **newcomers** and evidence of **increase in industry participation**;
- Positive **response to new innovation actions** and **SME instrument**;
- High oversubscription reflect the **popularity of Horizon 2020**.

## Lessons Learned from first Work Programme

**First assessment focusing on key features and novelties** (notably full research and innovation cycle; SMEs; social sciences and humanities; gender dimension; international cooperation; climate action and sustainable development) **in May 2014 concluded:**

**Work programme has delivered on**

- Embedding key features and novelties of Horizon 2020 reinforcing its integrated approach;
- Opening up topic descriptions in which horizontal priorities are integrated.

## Lessons Learned from first H2020 Calls

**Analysis of the experiences with the first calls** with the objective to take-stock and feed into work programme cycle for 2016-17.

### Based on

- **Statistical analysis of 33 concluded calls** (approx. half of calls launched in 2014, but comprising only ca. 5,250 proposals) covering the first six months of operation;
- Feedback from **Commission services & Executive Agencies;**
- **Observers' reports** from evaluations;
- Feedback from **some stakeholders, some Member States and certain NCPs.**

### Focused on

- **Implementation of First Horizon 2020 Calls**
- **Key Features and Novelties**

# Lessons Learned from first H2020 Calls

## First feed-back and recommendations

### Response to calls

*(Preliminary statistics based on a limited set of evaluation data; will change significantly as new data enters the system.)*

- **Significantly lower success rates** (14%) than FP7, owing to the **over-subscription of 8 times the available budget** (5 times under FP7). However, picture remains largely diverse at this stage.
- **Newcomers attracted** and evidence of **increase in industry/SME participation**.

➔ **Further analysis** necessary; **Maintain challenge-based approach** in delivering topics while improving their clarity and **tightening impact requirements**.

# Lessons Learned from first H2020 Calls

## First feed-back and recommendations

### Evaluations

According to first observers' reports **overall excellent quality of evaluations** with a good mix of experts (disciplines, geographical background, organisational typologies etc.). Some concerns regarding interpretation of criteria and new concepts (e.g. innovation management).

**Selection of expert evaluators:** lack of innovation expertise and women experts.

➔ Continued joint efforts to **attract experts; update the evaluation standard briefing and guidance documents**, including information for applicants.

# Lessons Learned from first H2020 Calls

## Other main conclusions and recommendations

- ✓ Address **key features** and **novelties upstream** in the work programme preparation cycle to **ensure embedding** in the **priority setting** as well as **implementation**;
- ✓ Make **better use** of the **whole toolbox** of funding instruments;
- ✓ Conduct **further analysis of oversubscription** and devise measures to manage large demand, notably in two-stage calls;
- ✓ **Increase international cooperation activities** through support to **flagship initiatives** of sufficient scale and scope, together with **accompanying actions** to strengthen cooperation with key partners;
- ✓ **Continue monitoring the implementation of calls**, particularly when they affect applicants (time-to-grant).



# Lessons Learned from first H2020 Calls

## Next steps

Further in-depth analysis and feedback from a wider audience following planned meetings before the end of 2014 with

Member States in Strategic Configuration of H2020 Programme Committee (October 16)

National Contact Point Coordinators (October 22)

Observers of evaluations

Umbrella stakeholder organisations