Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for research and innovation 2014-2020: rules for participation and dissemination

2011/0399(COD) - 11/12/2013 - Final act

PURPOSE: to lay down rules for participation in indirect actions undertaken under Horizon 2020, and for the results of those actions.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) n° 1290/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down the rules for participation and dissemination in "Horizon 2020 - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)" and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006.

CONTENT: the Regulation lays down specific rules for the participation in indirect actions undertaken under the Horizon 2020 Programme, including participation in indirect actions funded by funding bodies. It also lays down the rules governing the dissemination of results.

Simplification: following recommendations made by Parliament in its resolution of 11 November 2010, simplification of financial and administrative is a central aim of Horizon 2020.

The new rules provide a **coherent, comprehensive and transparent framework** to ensure the most efficient implementation possible, taking into account the need for easy access by all participants through simplified procedures in particular with regard to micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Financing rules: the financial assistance from the Union could be provided in various forms, such as prizes, pre-commercial procurement, public procurement of innovative solutions, or financial instruments.

Simpler funding rules will reduce administrative costs for participants and decrease financial errors. **A simplified funding model** will be used for the reimbursement of activities:

- a **single reimbursement rate** for eligible costs that will be applied to all activities within an action;
- the reimbursement would reach a maximum of 100 % of the total eligible costs of an action, with a ceiling of 70 % for those innovation actions closer to the market and for programme co-funded actions;
- non-profit organisations will benefit a reimbursement of maximum 100% also in innovation actions;
- a flat rate of 25% of the total direct eligible costs will be reimbursed to cover indirect costs.

Selection and award criteria: the proposals submitted shall be evaluated on the basis of: (a) excellence; (b) impact; (c) quality and efficiency of the implementation.

The selection and award criteria should be applied in a transparent way and based on objective and measurable parameters.

The following minimum conditions for participation shall apply: (a) at least three legal entities shall participate in an action; (b) three legal entities shall each be established in a different Member State or associated country; and (c) the three legal entities shall be independent of each other.

Proposals: the period between the deadline for the submission of project proposals and the conclusion of a grant agreement will be significantly **shortened**. The following time-limits are provided:

- for informing all applicants of the outcome of the scientific evaluation of their application, a maximum period of **five months** from the final date for submission of complete proposals;

- for signing grant agreements with applicants or notifying grant decisions to them, a maximum period of **three months** from the date of informing applicants they have been successful.

In line with the principle of transparency, the Commission must publish open calls for proposals on the **internet pages of Horizon 2020**, through specific information channels, and should ensure their wide dissemination. It should consider the **timings of calls for proposals** and requests for information taking into account, where possible, standard holiday periods.

The Commission shall also ensure the existence of a procedure for participants to make **enquiries or complaints** about their involvement in Horizon 2020. In the case of unsuccessful proposals, it should give feedback to the applicants concerned. The process of the ethics review must be as transparent as possible.

The Commission may appoint **independent experts** to evaluate proposals.

Procedures: these should be simplified in ways made possible by the improvement of IT systems, such as the further expansion of the **portal for participants** which should function as the single entry point from the moment of publication of the calls for proposals, through submission of proposals, until implementation of the action, with the aim of establishing a **one-stop shop**. The system may also provide feedback to applicants on the progress and the timeline of their applications.

Access to risk finance: this remains a key issue, in particular for innovative SMEs.

In order to allow their most effective use, the new rules allow for debt and equity financial instruments to be combined with each other and with grants funded under the Union budget, including under Horizon 2020.

The Commission should, in particular, ensure continuity of the Risk-Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF) set up under Decision No 1982/2006/EC and the early stage part of the High-Growth and Innovative SME Facility (GIF1) set up under Decision No 1639/2006/EC.

Open access to results: to increase the circulation and exploitation of knowledge, open access to scientific publications will be ensured. Furthermore, open access to research data resulting from publicly funded research under Horizon 2020 will be promoted.

The Regulation makes provision for **rules governing the exploitation and dissemination of results** to ensure that participants protect, exploit and disseminate those results as appropriate, and to provide for the possibility of additional exploitation conditions in the European strategic interest.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 23/12/2013.

DELEGATED ACTS: the Commission is empowered to adopt delegated acts with regard to funding bodies set up under Article 187 TFEU. The power to adopt delegated acts is conferred on the Commission for the duration of Horizon 2020. The European Parliament or the Council may object to a delegated act within two months of notification of that act (which may be extended by two months.) If Parliament or Council raise objections, the delegated act will not enter into force.