

# General programme "Fundamental Rights and Justice": specific programme "Drugs prevention and information", 2007-2013

2005/0037B(COD) - 06/03/2017 - Follow-up document

The Commission presents an ex post evaluation report on the drug prevention and information (DPIP) programme (2007-2013).

The main aspects evaluated are:

relevance;

coherence and compatibility;

effectiveness;

sustainability and transferability;

efficiency;

the scope for simplification and EU added value.

An independent external evaluator assisted by the Commission's staff carried out the evaluation.

To recall, the programme had the following general objectives:

to prevent and reduce drug use, dependence and drug-related harm;

to contribute to the improvement of information on drug use;

to support the implementation of the EU Drugs Strategy.

The total budget earmarked for the programme from January 2007 to December 2013 was **EUR 22.332 million**.

## **Main conclusions:**

**1) Relevance of the programme: overall, the priorities of the calls for proposals and the selected initiatives were relevant to the objectives of the programme** as defined in the legal base. The annual priorities set by the Commission were not only clearly defined, but were also realistic and attainable and addressed the key policy developments in the policy area. Overall, the programme was relevant to the needs of grant beneficiaries. **The programme is unique in this area and filled a funding gap at national level.** Moreover, the conceptual framework of the programme and its priorities matched the needs of actors working in the area of drug prevention.

**2) Coherence and complementarity:** complementarity of the DPIIP with other EU programmes and interventions was almost fully achieved. Complementarity was reached through mechanisms that the Commission put in place at programme design stage and at the stage of designing calls for proposals.

**3) Effectiveness:** overall, the DPIIP was effective in achieving its general programme objectives, **although the impact was somewhat limited by the relatively low budget** and number of projects funded. The DPIIP contributed to fostering intra-European awareness raising and information on drugs and associated harm, in particular among young people and drug users. At project level, most initiatives achieved their own objectives, in particular thanks to good working relationships with partners and to a clear intervention logic with regard to the target group, objectives, method and activities to implement.

**4) Sustainability and dissemination:** overall, the dissemination of DPIIP results helped increase the impact of the projects on the ground, in particular as a result of the dissemination methods put in place, which helped to reach a wide range of stakeholders (EU and national policy-makers, nongovernmental organisations/civil society organisations, social workers, young people and drug experts). Most initiatives developed a sustainability and/or dissemination plan. However, the extent to which project beneficiaries were effective in securing the sustainability and transferability of project outputs and activities **varied substantially**.

**5) Efficiency:** the funding made available for implementing the DPIIP may not have been entirely sufficient considering the level of ambition of some of the objectives, the high demand for funding, the high absorption rates of grants and the high numbers of outputs and results achieved. Nevertheless, the funding made available under the DPIIP was sufficient for beneficiaries to achieve their own objectives

**As regards scope of simplification,** the level of detail required in the application form has increased from the 2010 call onwards and included the introduction of work streams.

This has benefited both the Commission and the applicants.

**6) EU added value:** the EU added value of the programme lay in the fact that the DPIIP enabled organisations based in various Member States to make a difference in the area of drug demand reduction. The partnerships formed within the projects helped promote transnational learning and improve the visibility of the initiatives carried out, as well as helped to identify information in the area of the prevention and fight against drugs. However, the extent of the improvement and contribution, i.e. the EU added value in terms of impacts could not yet be measured.

**Key recommendations:** amongst the main recommendations made by the Commission following the evaluation of the programme are the following:

**better define the priorities,** in order to ensure that the priorities can be adequately achieved within an earmarked budget;

make realistic assessments of **project risks** and better risk mitigation strategies, by asking for brief progress reports that identify any potential risks as they arise during the implementation of the project;

increase focus on assessment of impacts at all levels and not merely on outputs, as regards monitoring and evaluation; .

explore ways of enhancing the uptake of project outputs, results and best practices by other organisations, including in other Member States, including **more resources for dissemination;**

**sharpen the programme's intervention logic.**