

Invitation to a Belgian Presidency event

Simplification Seminar

Wednesday, 14 July 2010
Hôtel de Lalaing (BIP), rue Royale, 2-4 – 1000 Brussels, Belgium

**The Belgian Presidency is pleased to invite you to the Seminar on
“Simplification and strengthening the efficiency of research programmes”**

The EU’s Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development is a major tool to support and stimulate research as well as consolidating the European Research Area (ERA). The 7th Framework Programme, for the period 2007 to 2013, has already been greatly simplified so as to be more effective and more accessible to researchers. This process of simplification needs to be continued in the prospect of the publication of the 8th Framework programme.

Therefore, the Belgian Presidency decided to continue the discussion about simplification, as it is a fundamental topic for the future of the research programmes. The Competitiveness Council, in the framework of the Belgian Presidency, is planning to adopt conclusions on simplification. This document will be a response to the three initiatives of the European Commission published recently¹. Moreover, the results of this seminar will be presented at the Informal meeting of Research ministers on 16 July and will serve as a technical input to discussions on simplification to the Council.

The morning session of the seminar will be dedicated to key note speeches and discussion on the proposals made by the Commission and will be followed by a debate in the afternoon, based on the four following questions:

- The administrative burden related to detailed cost reporting and financial control and the related error rates could be drastically reduced by introducing result/output-based

¹ “Simplifying the implementation of the research framework programmes” (Research DG, 29/04/2010, COM (2010) 187); “More or less control? Striking the right balance between the administrative costs of control and the risk of error” (Budget DG, 26/05/2010, COM (2010) 261); “Regulation on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Union” (Budget DG, 28/05/2010, COM (2010) 260).

funding. However, such an approach would require the exact definition of the results/outputs to be achieved and a robust methodology for approving (or rejecting) results/outputs as a basis for payments. Under which circumstances would such an approach be beneficial?

- Is the introduction of lump sums within FP programmes and instruments a desirable approach?

- Under the current FP there is a variety of specific programmes and instruments (i.e. JTI, ERC, PPPs, KICs, etc.) as well as several different activity types (research, demonstration, training etc) implemented according to different rules. How could the complexity of the EU research funding landscape and the multiplicity of rules best be reduced?

- What should be the timing for simplification measures requiring changes to the legal basis? Bearing in mind that changes to the legal acts require the ordinary legislative procedure (former co-decision) with associated lead time, is it worthwhile to envisage some changes yet to the FP7 rules. If yes, which ones?

Draft Programme:

8:45 - 9:00	Arrival and accreditation
9:00 – 9:10	Welcoming address and introduction by Minister B. Cerexhe, Minister of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region, responsible for the Economy, Employment, Scientific Research and Foreign Trade
9:10 – 11:00	<p><u>Keynote addresses:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Robert-Jan Smits (Director General, DG RTD, European Commission) • Ms. Maria Da Graça Carvalho (Member of ITRE Committee, European Parliament) • Mr. Eric Paradis (DG Budget, European Commission) • Mr. Ladislav Balko (Member of the European Court of Auditors) <p>Presentation by Monique Septon, FNRS</p>
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee break
11:30 – 12:45	<p><u>Keynote addresses:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Hans Melle van Dijk (EU Liaison Officer and Senior Advisor Research, Utrecht University, Member of LERU) • Mr. Alessandro Coda (Research coordinator, EUCAR)
12:45 – 13:45	Lunch buffet – possibility of visit to free exhibition “Experience Brussels” (1 st floor-BIP)
13:45 – 15:45	Debate based on the questions and moderated by Monique Septon, FNRS
15:45 – 16:00	Conclusions

The Seminar will be in English only.

The attendance is free of charge; however registration is compulsory due to a limited number of seats available.