

# Evaluating supra-national research funding programmes to facilitate interfaces between science and policy

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Supra-national research programmes can play an important role in developing science-policy interface, as they bring together policy-makers and other stakeholders from different countries. Programme evaluation in supra-national programmes may facilitate the improvement of science-policy interface as a platform for joint learning. However, evaluation of supra-national research programmes faces certain challenges.

Successful evaluations require sufficient resources that should be budgeted already at the planning phase of a programme. Furthermore, the evaluation criteria should be consistent with the objectives of the programme.

Participation of relevant stakeholders is crucial in defining the objectives and research questions of a programme. Common guidelines should be flexible enough to take into account the cultural aspects of different countries.

Specific elements related to the evaluation of supra-national research programmes include the following:

- Considering national variety but guaranteeing fair and consistent evaluation on a supra-national level.
- A balanced representation of different funders, scientific and other experts in the evaluation panel.
- A special focus on the added value of joint funding.

Evaluating policy relevance in supra-national research programmes is challenging as policy relevance varies between countries due to national priorities, socio-economic and political conditions. Also, from the evaluation point of view it is important to acknowledge that research may turn out to be policy relevant later on.



Figure 1: Published reports

Including policy relevance in all phases of a research programme is essential to promote research that can be used for policy-making. Thus, evaluation is a very important tool for improving learning and the effectiveness of the supra-national programmes and for enhancing science-policy interface.