**COMMUNICATION FOR THE COMMISSION
FROM THE PRESIDENT AND Mrs SCHREYER**

EVALUATION STANDARDS AND GOOD PRACTICE

The Commission has been concerned with evaluation for many years now, notably in respect of expenditure programmes. The White Paper on Reforming the Commission[1] acknowledges the Commission's established evaluation practice but recommend strengthening the evaluation tools and structures within its services. In July 2000, the Commission adopted a new Communication[2] extending evaluation requirements to all types of activities, making the Directorates-General and Services responsible not only for regular evaluation of expenditure programmes, but equally for evaluating the whole range of activities. The Communication also recommends measures for improving the quality of evaluation within the Commission, notably the devising of quality standards for evaluation.

The Communication to the Commission "Implementing activity-based management in the Commission"[3] adopted in July 2001 reiterated the need for quality standards in evaluation.

This document stated that only by applying such standards could the quality of evaluation in the Commission be improved so that it could become the basis for informed decision-making in the planning and programming cycle[4].

The purpose of this document is to help improve the quality of evaluation in the Commission by putting forward:

−   **quality standards** for the organisation of evaluation functions and for the preparation and conduct of all types of evaluation commissioned or carried out by Commission departments and for presentation of their results; such standards are by definition binding and the manner in which the departments apply them may be subject to auditing pursuant to **internal** control standard 23 on the organisation of the evaluation function and activities[5];

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[1]   White Paper on Reforming the Commission: COM(2000)200, 1 March 2000.
[2]   Communication to the Commission "Focus on results: strengthening evaluation of Commission activities", SEC(2000)1051.
[3]   SEC(2001)1197/6 & 7.
[4]   *"For this, it is necessary to strengthen policy evaluation through application of standards for evaluation: for the time being, only non-mandatory guidelines (Good practice guidelines for the management of the evaluation function) exist for guiding departments' organisation of evaluation work. To ensure the quality and reliability of the information supplied by evaluations, these guidelines are being reviewed with a view to establishing mandatory standards to be adopted by the Commission"* (SEC(2001)1197/6, p.17).
[5]   *"Each DG shall establish or have access to a properly staffed evaluation function responsible for carrying out or commissioning ex ante and ex post evaluation of all its activities. It shall prepare an evaluation plan which sets out the timing of the planned evaluations and against which progress is regularly reviewed. It shall ensure the systematic follow-up of the conclusions of evaluation reports"*: Standards for internal control, Annex to the Communication "Supporting the reform of financial management - a new framework for authorising officers", SEC(2000)2203/5 of 13 December 2000.

– **good practice** aimed at providing the operational departments with a practical basis to help them organise and manage their evaluation activities and encourage Commission services to pursue their efforts to develop and put to better use their evaluation capacity.

In this document, the term "evaluation function" covers the forms of organisation defined by the DGs and Services which enable them to fulfil responsibilities for coordinating, framing and exploiting their evaluation activities. These forms of organisation may be units, sectors, networks or people. "Evaluation activity" means the preparation and management of evaluation in a centralised or decentralised manner and also utilisation of results.

These (binding) standards and this (recommended) good practice bring to completion the existing sets of rules, the principles laid down in various Communications on evaluation and other documents on evaluation (see Annex 1).

It is proposed that the Commission:

– adopts the "evaluation standards and good practice" which are intended to replace the "Good practice guidelines for the management of the evaluation function" adopted by the Commission in February 1999 (SEC(1999) 62) and updated in January 2000;

– requests the services to take the necessary steps to bring them into effect by 1 July 2003 at the latest.

1. Background

Following up the Communication on evaluation of 26 July 2000 (SEC(2000) 1051), the evaluation network and the strategic planning and programming (SPP) network entrusted a working party with the tasks of drawing up the standards regarded as necessary for development of the evaluation system and having these evaluation standards adopted by the Commission.

For the purpose of carrying out these tasks, the working party first determined the scope of the standards to be defined, the main users of evaluation and their expectations. Subsequently, on the basis of standards widely recognised by the community of evaluators, it sought to decide which were the most relevant standards for ensuring minimum evaluation quality throughout the Commission. In addition, the working party developed good practice for other aspects which go beyond minimum quality.

The standards established and good practice proposed in this document cover the following:

– the profile, role, tasks and resources of the evaluation function;

– the management of evaluation, including planning, feedback and transmission to the outside world of evaluation results;

– the evaluation process which covers the evaluation project, the steering group and the conduct of the evaluations;

– the quality of reports.

This document acknowledges and supports the discretion of Directorates-General and Services to organise and manage their evaluation functions in accordance with the Communication on evaluation. However, it reflects the intention to establish common standards with a view to improving evaluation practice throughout the Commission as a whole.

2. Scope

The standards established and good practice proposed in this document concern the evaluation function in all Commission departments[6] and also the preparation, conduct and presentation of the outcome of evaluations, these are strategic evaluations or evaluations on policies, programmes or activities according to the ABB nomenclature. However, evaluation of individual projects funded under programmes is not covered by these standards and good practice.

Depending on when evaluation is performed, a distinction is usually made in the Commission between three types of evaluation: ex ante evaluations, interim evaluations[7] and ex post evaluations. A further distinction can be made between internal evaluations and external evaluations which can be defined as follows:

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[6] In this document, the term "DGs and Services" also covers cases where an evaluation function is shared between a number of DGs and Services.

[7] Including mid-term and final evaluations as laid down in the rules.

– internal evaluations are carried out by the members of the organisation taking forward the activities evaluated;

– external evaluations are carried out by persons outside the organisation managing the operation.

The standards laid down in this document apply to all these types of evaluation.

3. The users of evaluation and their expectations

In its Communication of 26 July 2000, the Commission highlighted how useful evaluation is as a management tool and supporting the reform. The management model now being developed by the Commission commits it to a learning culture based on the principle that evaluation must be taken into account in decision-making.

With that in mind, evaluations must help managers play their part in devising better policies and programmes and in improving the results of all kinds of activities. They must provide them in good time, with objective analyses of the effectiveness and relevance of these policies, programmes and activities, and also with alternative methods for arriving at the expected results. The success of such a process depends on the managers' involvement in the process, the clarity of the roles of the various players, the application of sound evaluation standards and the establishment of an environment which enables managers to include evaluation in their work alongside other management tools.

As evaluation is one of the components in decision-making, decision makers expect assurances on the advisability of the action taken or to be taken. In particular, they want reliable information on the following (in full or in part):

– whether the planned activity is justified in terms of relevance, coherence, economy, efficiency, effectiveness, added value and sustainability;

– whether the activity carried out or being carried out:

  – attains its aims or produces unexpected results;

  – is carried out efficiently and is cost effective;

  – has the expected impact and whether the impact is lasting;

  – constitutes the best way of obtaining the objectives set, should be pursued or not, if so, in the same way or differently;

– which of the activity's objectives will remain relevant in the future.

In this light, the following "Evaluation standards and good practice" were drawn up.

EVALUATION STANDARDS AND GOOD PRACTICE

A.   Profile, role, tasks and resources of the evaluation function

Profile

Standards

1. The evaluation function shall be clearly visible in the DG's structure, the organisation chart or *Guide des Services* giving details of the unit, sector, coordinator, network members and person(s) responsible.

2. Evaluation shall be clearly identified in the list of each DG's operations so that the human and financial resources set aside for evaluation can be easily identified.

3. Each DG or Service shall define the tasks, responsibilities, organisation and procedures for running, consulting and informing the evaluation function.

Good practice

In each DG or Service, the senior staff should take steps to provide sound support for the fundamental role played by the evaluation function in the planning of policies, programmes and all kinds of activities.

To ensure that the evaluation function contributes to the framing of policies and the setting of their objectives, it should be closely associated with the persons responsible for framing and taking policy decisions.

Where organisation is concerned, it is advisable that DGs or Services have a specific sector or unit for evaluation. If that is impossible, it is expedient to associate it with the strategic planning and programming function.

Role and tasks

Standards

4. The role of the evaluation function shall be clearly defined and distinguished from the roles of other functions such as monitoring, control and audit.

5. Through the evaluations, the evaluation function provides support in the formulation of policies and programmes and also in management processes.

6. To fulfil this role, the evaluation function shall, as a minimum:

   a.   coordinate the evaluation activities of the DG or Service,

   b.   help to anticipate decision-making requirements in the fields covered by the DG or Service,

   c.   establish a multiannual evaluation programme and an annual evaluation plan for

the DG or Service consistent with decision-making requirements and accordingly ensure that information on the efficiency and effectiveness and also on the relevance and the utility of policies, programmes and activities is available in good time,

d. coordinate and monitor implementation of this programme and this plan at central level; where appropriate, it shall assist in decentralised implementation of this programme and this plan,

e. define quality standards for evaluation activities on the basis of these standards and, where appropriate, its own quality requirements, more specific and detailed or better adapted to its policy area,

f. promote the methodological quality and consistency of the evaluation activities of the DG or Service,

g. check on how the evaluation recommendations have been taken into account,

h. ensure that the evaluation results can be useful in defining departmental priorities and in improving the quality of their policies, programmes and activities in such a way that these results can also be used in defining the Commission's political priorities and budgetary decisions.

Good practice

It would be advisable for the application procedures for these standards in each DG or Service to be set out in an internal document such as an evaluation agreement.

The evaluation function should encourage the departments to set in place data collection systems to assure the availability of reliable and relevant information to back up evaluation activities.

On the basis of the evaluation results, the evaluation function should provide an independent opinion on the relevance, consistency, economy, efficiency, effectiveness, added value and sustainability of the policy, programme or activity evaluated in the light of its objectives.

In the decision-making process, the evaluation function should be consulted to take account of the results of ex ante, interim and ex post evaluations, other studies providing information useful for analysis of the problems at issue as well as past experience.

The evaluation function should systematically promote the quality of the evaluation project commissioned.

Resources

Standards

7. The human and financial resources available for evaluation work shall be clearly identified and planned. These resources shall be sufficient for implementing the multiannual evaluation programme and annual evaluation plan of the DG or Service.

8. In relation to the evaluation plans approved, the resources earmarked for the evaluation function shall be adequate and appropriate in terms of funds, staff and skills so as to ensure that they can fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

Good practice

The financial resources set aside for evaluation by each DG or Service can vary considerably, both in absolute volume and as a percentage of the total budget, depending on the nature of the activities performed and the budgets administered. However, in the case of expenditure programmes, an indicative 0.5% of the budget could serve as a basis for calculating the amount to be set aside for evaluation.

The evaluation function should have at its disposal financial resources to carry out work on methodological questions.

B. Management of evaluation activities

Planning

Standards

1. The DGs shall plan their evaluation activities in accordance with:

   a. the Financial Regulation and its implementing provisions[8];

   b. the Communication on evaluation of 26 July 2000 (SEC(2001) 1051) extending the principle of evaluation to all activities in the context of activity-based management and budgeting (ABM/ABB);

   c. the rules on evaluation in the Communication on implementation of activity-based management (ABM) of 25 July 2001 (SEC(2001) 1197/6&7)

   d. the Commission's rules on impact assessment[9].

2. This planning shall take the form of a multiannual evaluation programme and an annual evaluation plan.

3. The multiannual evaluation programme shall be drawn up on the basis of the life cycle of the policies and programmes and in accordance with the nature of the activities of the DG or Service. The programme shall be approved by the Director-General -or, if the specific decision is taken, the Commission- and reflects future political priorities and operational needs.

4. The multiannual evaluation programme shall spell out the division of tasks between the evaluation function and the operational departments in the centralised or decentralised implementation of the evaluation activities.

5. The annual evaluation plan shall be drawn up by the evaluation function and used to implement the multiannual evaluation programme. The plan shall comprise an estimate of the human and financial resources needed to bring it into effect. The DG or Service shall adopt and supplement the annual evaluation plan in its annual management plan (AMP).

6. The audit and evaluation plans shall be clearly separated.

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[8] The Financial Regulation of 21 December applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (OJ L 356 of 31.12.1977, p.1) and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1687/2001 of 21 August 2001 amending Regulation (Euratom, ECSC, EC) No 3418/93 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of certain provisions of the Financial Regulation of 21 December 1977, Article 1: OJ L 228 of 24.8.2001, p.8.

[9] COM(2002) 276 final of 5 June 2002.

**Feedback and exploitation of results: transmission of results and taking them into account in the decision-making process**

Standards

7. Appropriate feedback mechanisms shall be provided so that all types of evaluation results are transmitted effectively to all persons responsible for decision-making (senior management and stakeholders, including those responsible for policies).

8. The Directorates-General and Services shall report on the results of the evaluation of their activities in their Annual Activity Reports.

9. Feedback mechanisms shall contribute, on the basis of evaluation results, to the formulation, planning and revision of policies, programmes and activities.

10. The operational departments shall examine the evaluation conclusions and possible recommendations and describe the action they propose to take.

Good practice

The internal procedures should include means to enable senior management to check whether the evaluation results, considered relevant and accepted by the departments concerned, are taken into account in the management of programmes or activities and/or policy proposals and if not, why not.

The DGs or Services should set in place machinery to monitor the action taken on the basis of the evaluation results.

**Transmission**

Standards

11. The DGs and Services shall transmit to the Budget DG and to the SG copies of all the final evaluation reports.

12. Save in duly substantiated cases of confidentiality, evaluation results shall be made publicly available. The means of communication shall be readily identifiable and accessible.

13. The evaluation results shall be transmitted in an appropriate form to meet the needs of decision-makers, beneficiaries and citizens and to fulfil the obligations for reporting in accordance with the legal bases.

Good practice

The evaluation results should be accessible to other Commission Directorates-General and Services. A target group should be designated for evaluation on subjects of special interest to other DGs and Services.

Save in cases of duly substantiated confidentiality, the evaluation results should be targeted at the different groups concerned. Each DG or Service should set up a specific web page for evaluation, thus facilitating access by interested parties to the evaluation results. This page should be accessible from the home page of the DG or Service.

Appropriate resources for planning and administering transmission should be made available to the evaluation function.

The Commission departments should include information on evaluation results in the overall planning of the Directorate-General in the area of information and communications.

C.   Evaluation process

Evaluation project

Standards

1. Each evaluation shall be devised as a project comprising three separate stages: design, implementation and exploitation. The project manager shall establish who is to take part in these three stages in accordance, where appropriate, with the internal rules and procedures applicable.

2. The points of importance to the different departments concerned shall be examined when the questions for the evaluations are established.

3. When designing any (internal or external) evaluation project, the purpose of the evaluation must be clearly and accurately defined. The evaluation project shall comprise the following points:

   a. the background to, reasons for and aims of the evaluation,

   b. for whom it is intended and who will use it,

   c. the scope of the area evaluated,

   d. the key questions,

   e. details of the information available,

   f. the reports,

   g. the deadlines.

4. In the event of external evaluation, the evaluation project must also include the contractual, financial and administrative clauses and quality criteria (see example in Annex 2). Specifications shall formalise the above points.

Good practice

All the parties concerned should be associated in designing the evaluation operation and in the use of its results through working parties or programme committees. However, the launch and practical implementation of the evaluation should be managed solely and directly by Commission departments.

Establishment of steering group and terms of reference

Standards

5. The evaluation function shall decide on the advisability of setting up a steering group for each evaluation.

6. The steering group shall be set up and perform its tasks in compliance with the rules on conflicts of interest and the directives on public contracts.

7. The tasks of the steering group shall be, as a minimum, to:

   a. facilitate the evaluator's access to the information needed to perform his/her work;

   b. support the evaluation work, particularly from the methodological standpoint;

   c. take part in assessing the quality of the evaluation at the appropriate juncture.

Good practice

The steering group should be made up of persons who, by virtue of their knowledge and experience, can make a useful contribution to evaluation.

For external evaluations, it is advisable to set up a steering group including the departments most concerned, notably a representative of the operational unit responsible for managing the area evaluated and a representative of the evaluation function.

It would be advisable for the steering group to assist in defining the questions for the evaluations.

Conduct of evaluations

Standards

8. Evaluation processes shall conform to these standards which are designed to ensure their quality.

9. The evaluation project manager shall be responsible for the conduct of the evaluation.

10. The evaluation project manager shall systematically assess the quality of the evaluation on the basis of the quality criteria laid down in the specifications.

11. The persons carrying out evaluation activities shall be free of all constraints which could jeopardise their objectiveness and shall behave honourably in their relations with all stakeholders.

12. The evaluator's independence in his/her work must be respected and the evaluation results must not be interfered with.

D.   Quality of reports

Standards

1. The substance of the evaluation reports shall be relevant, based on rigorous analysis, meet the quality criteria laid down in the specifications (see example in Annex 2) and comply with the deadlines.

2. The evaluation reports shall describe the purpose of the evaluation and its context and also the objectives, questions, procedures, results and reasoned conclusions of the evaluation, so as to make available the essential information in an easily understandable form (see example in Annex 3).

3. The report shall describe the information sources in such detail that the correctness of the information can be assessed. The data collected or selected shall be adapted to the methodologies used and be sufficiently reliable for the expected use.

4. The prospects and reasoning on which interpretation of the results is based shall be described and explained. The results should follow on logically and be substantiated by data analysis and interpretations based on carefully-presented explanatory hypotheses.

5. The final evaluation report shall present the results and conclusions of the evaluator and the tenor thereof shall not be amended without his/her agreement.

6. The conclusions and any recommendations shall be rigorous and not distorted by personal or partisan considerations. The recommendations shall be comprehensible, useful, applicable and detailed enough to be brought into effect.

GUIDES

- **Administration DG**

GUIDE FOR THE EVALUATION OF ACTIVITIES OF THE DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION

This guide was prepared in April 2002 and, although focused on evaluation within DG ADMIN, deals with general evaluation issues. It explains in particular:

- the different concepts, types and applications of evaluation,
- the difference between evaluation and audit (including performance audit), monitoring, and Total Quality Management
- evaluation in the context of SPP and ABM
- the stages of evaluation and evaluation tools and techniques
- the organisation and management of evaluations
- the supervision of carrying out an evaluation
- how to get from reporting to using evaluations.

In addition, this guide contains an up-to-date glossary, a bibliography and links to other sources of information on evaluation.

The guide can be consulted on line via DG ADMIN's Intranet (http://www.admin.cec.eu.int/abm/evaluation.htm) and by contacting DG ADMIN's Evaluation Function.

- **Agriculture DG**

GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATIONS CARRIED OUT UNDER THE DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Common Market Organisations in Agriculture, Current Evaluation Practice Guide

This guide, published in 2001, applies mainly to the evaluation of Common Market Organisations (CMOs). The scope is limited to the evaluations of a retrospective nature. Pure ex ante evaluations are not covered.

It builds upon the Agriculture DG's evaluation practice with CMOs over the period 1998–2000 and describes current good practice within the Evaluation Unit. The main purpose of the document is daily guidance for the members of the evaluation unit and other participants in the evaluation process. The structure of the guide reflects the main phases of the process of an external evaluation commissioned by DG Agriculture.

PROGRAMMING PERIOD 2000–2006

Evaluation of rural development programmes 2000-2006 supported from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund

This guide, published in 1999, contains general information about evaluation in the context of rural development. It explains the context and meaning of the articles in Regulation (EC) 1750/99[10] regarding evaluation, explains key evaluation concepts and provides practical information regarding evaluation in the context of rural development. It also provides detailed guidance on ex ante evaluations and on the suggested format for the national level evaluation reports pursuant to Regulation (EC) 1750/99.

Common Evaluation Questions with Criteria and Indicators for the evaluation of rural development programmes 2000-2006 supported from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund

This guide, published in 2000, contains the common evaluation questions with associated criteria and indicators for the rural development programmes 2000–2006 (in particular for mid-term and ex-post evaluation). The common elements were drawn up in accordance with the procedures laid down in Regulation 1750/99. In addition, the document explains the obligation of the Member States and regions regarding the use of these common elements and provides clarifications and examples for the independent evaluators.

Guidelines for the mid term evaluation of rural development programmes 2000-2006 supported from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, Directorate General for Agriculture, 2002

This guide, published in 2002, provides information on how to conduct mid-term rural development evaluations and how to use the Common Evaluation Questions in this specific context.

Guidelines for the Evaluation of LEADER+ Programmes

These guidelines, which will be published by the end of 2001, provide information on general evaluation concepts and methodology, plus practical guidance for carrying out the evaluations under Regulation 1260/1999 at programme level. The document includes common evaluation questions, with success criteria, for all programmes. This approach is intentionally quite similar to the one proposed for rural development programmes under Regulation 1750/1999, but adapted to the specific features of the Community Initiative for rural development Leader+. Recommendations for the ex ante evaluation were provided separately in a previously released document.

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[10] *Commission Regulation (European Commission) No 1750/99 of 23.07.1999 laying down the detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation No 1257/99 on support of rural development from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF): OJ L 214, 13.08.1999, p.31.*

Guidelines for the evaluation of Rural Development Programmes funded by SAPARD

This document, published in 2001, aims to provide the candidate countries with methodological and practical support for the implementation of their evaluations at programme level. As in the case of rural development programmes in the Member States, these guidelines include common evaluation questions, with success criteria and indicators. This common approach follows the requirements for evaluation under Commission Regulation 2759/1999. Account has also been taken of the different objectives and scope of SAPARD as compared to rural development programmes in the Member States, and of the particular situation in the candidate countries, which require a specific approach. Recommendations for the ex ante evaluation were provided separately in a previously released document.

PROGRAMMING PERIOD 1994–1999

Measures under Regulation (EC) No 950/97, Community guidelines for evaluation

This guide, published in its final form in 1999, contains the common evaluation questions with associated criteria and indicators for eight support schemes under Objective 5a (less-favoured areas, setting-up of young farmers, farm investments, training, introduction of accounting practices, setting-up of groups, relief services and off-farm-management services). In addition, it provides information on evaluation concepts and advice about how to organise the evaluation process and reporting at national level.

Guidelines for ex-post evaluation of measures under Regulation (EC) No 951/97

This guide, published in 1999, contains the common evaluation questions and the support measures regarding processing and marketing under Objective 5a. It also provides information on evaluation concepts and advice on how to organise the evaluation process and reporting at national level.

Guidelines for the ex-post evaluation of Objective 5b programmes 1994-99 programming period

This guide, published in 1999, contains the common evaluation questions and the support measures regarding Objective 5b. It also provides information on evaluation concepts and advice on how to organise the evaluation process and reporting at national level.

Guidelines for ex-post evaluation of the LEADER II Community initiative

Released in 1999, this guide provides indications on the aspects that should be tackled in the ex-post evaluation of programmes under the Leader II initiative. It clarifies concepts and practical details on evaluation, provides indications on the implementation of the evaluations and offers guidelines on how to evaluate the specific features of the Community Initiative Leader II.

Contact: Unit G4: Evaluation of Measures applicable to Agriculture, Directorate G: Economic Analysis and Evaluation
http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/eval/index_en.htm

- **Budget DG**

  Evaluating EU expenditure programmes: A guide: ex post and intermediate evaluation

  This manual covers the basic concepts, preparation, management of and main approaches to evaluation of expenditure programmes. It is aimed at programme managers within the Commission and all other persons who require a general introduction to the theory and practice of evaluation.

  "Ex-ante evaluation: a practical guide for preparing proposals for expenditure programmes

  This guide provides specific advice on ex ante evaluation of expenditure programmes. However, some of the approaches or ideas presented in it may also be applicable to policies, projects or other types of activities.

  Contact: Evaluation Unit, DG BUDGET/B05,
  Tel.: 296.07.74, Fax: 295.31.45.
  http://europa.eu.int/comm/budget/evaluation/index_en.htm

- **Education and Culture DG**

  La Gestation par Activités. Concepts de base pour la programmation, le suivi, l'audit et l'evaluation des activités

  The first version of this document came out in September 2000; its main purpose is to provide methodological support to the DG's departments, setting forth a concise explanation of the Commission's guidelines on programming and evaluation work.

  The aims of this document are to:

  – promote the "new management culture" the Commission wishes to introduce and use it in training;

  – explain the concepts to be used by staff when programming, implementing, monitoring and evaluating activities;

  – gradually incorporate into a single document all the Commission documents on these functions;

  – encourage sound cooperation between departments so as to take advantage of experience gained, facilitate joint analyses and contribute to the strategic planning and management of activities in the Directorate-General.

  A second, updated version was published in August 2001.

  Contact: Unit for Interinstitutional Relations: Coordination, Evaluation
  Tel.: 295.20.06, Fax: 299.88.30

- **Employment and Social Affairs DG**

  Community Structural Funds: common guide for monitoring and interim assessments (1995)

  This guide explains how to interpret and implement the rules on monitoring and evaluation in the Structural Funds regulations. It throws light on application of the logical framework to the Member States' programmes and describes the related system of indicators. It also outlines how to draw up terms of reference for an external evaluator.

  Guidelines for systems of monitoring and evaluation of ESF assistance in the period 2000-2006 (1999)

  This guide comprises advice on how to implement the rules on monitoring and evaluating ESF assistance during the period 2000-2006, monitoring and evaluation indicators by ESF policy field, information collection methods and standard terms of reference for evaluators.

  ESF Ex-ante Evaluation Guidelines (1999)

  The aim of this document is to give practical advice and to clarify the specific requirements resulting from the ESF Regulation for the programming period 2000-2006 as issues to be addressed under Objective 1 and 3 plans and the policy frame of reference, broken down by policy field. It also describes the links between the ESF measures and the European Employment Strategy and the National Action Plans for Employment.

  Guidelines for systems of monitoring and evaluation for the Human Resources Initiative EQUAL in the period 2000-2006 (July 2000)

  Short guide to the evaluation of Community programmes in the area of employment and social affairs policy (2001)

  Contact: Evaluation Unit of the Employment DG, Tel.: 296.68.00.

- **Regional Policy DG**

  MEANS: Evaluating socio-economic programmes: principal evaluation techniques and tools

  The Commission wishes to improve the skills of promoters and evaluation teams in regard to selection of the most appropriate techniques for dealing with the questions raised. In addition to training, one of the possible means for attaining this aim is to make available to desk officers and monitoring committees a document describing the major evaluation methods and techniques. This manual provides a list of the main techniques which can be used, explaining their advantages and drawbacks and defining the criteria for making a choice between them.

  Contact: Evaluation Unit of the Regio DG, Tel.: 295.16.85 / 295.72.79.

MEANS: Evaluating socio-economic programmes: selection and use of indicators for monitoring and evaluation

Setting out material for consideration, this document is a practical guide to the use of indicators. It is intended for evaluators of the European Structural Funds: designers and managers of socio-economic programmes and evaluation teams. The document aims to show that useful indicators can be defined, selected and quantified while maintaining a pragmatic approach.

Contact: Evaluation Unit of the Regio DG, Tel.: 295.16.85 / 295.72.79.

MEANS collection: Organising intermediate evaluation in the context of partnership

This document aims to help meet the above challenge by promoting intermediate evaluation as a genuine tool in programme implementation, not merely in response to regulatory requirements. It is intended for those responsible for organising evaluation, programme managers who deal with operational programmes in their routine work, including (at present) the various secretaries of the monitoring committees and the Commission desk officers who are responsible for programmes.

Contact: Evaluation Unit of the Regio DG, Tel.: 295.16.85 / 295.72.79.

Evaluation and documents series: Understanding and monitoring the cost-determining factors of infrastructure projects

This guide is intended to help desk officers understand the bases of the project cost estimation process so that they are better equipped to examine, with project promoters, the reasons for real or foreseeable cost and time over-runs. Although this is not a manual on project management, it does deal with certain matters involved in the implementation of major infrastructure projects with clear cost and time constraints.

Contact: Evaluation Unit of the Regio DG, Tel.: 295.16.85 / 295.72.79.

Evaluation and document series: Guide to cost-benefit analysis of major projects

This guide offers Commission officials, external consultants and any other interested parties, an agenda for checking the appraisal of major projects funded by the Structural Funds, including the FIFG (Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance) and the Cohesion Fund. The document is specifically designed for Commission officials who are not specialists in cost-benefit analysis. At the same time, the text gives some indications to external experts who may need to understand the Commission's specific needs for information on the costs and benefits of proposed projects.

Contact: Evaluation Unit of the Regio DG, Tel.: 295.16.85 / 295.72.79.

MEANS collection framework: Quality assessment of evaluation reports

This framework of reference for assessing quality, which focuses on the evaluation report, should be seen in the context of a broader quality assurance effort. The evaluation report is one element in an evaluation system comprising

both the evaluation process and its institutional context. The framework is to be used primarily in assessing intermediate evaluation reports. However, it is sufficiently general in scope to provide guidance for assessing ex post evaluation and ex ante evaluation as well.

Contact: Coordination of Evaluation Unit, Regio DG/G2, Tel.: 296.06.22.

Working Papers

Working papers have been produced by the Evaluation Unit in the Regio DG to provide guidance on drawing up and evaluating programmes. They can be found on the Inforegio website under "Commission Working Documents" in the "Documents" section of the site.[11]

The Ex Ante Evaluation of Structural Funds Interventions

This working document provides guidance on the contents and organisation of the ex ante evaluation in the context of assistance under the Structural Funds in 2000–2006. It defines the key components of ex ante evaluation and also describes the interactive process involving the evaluator and those responsible for drawing up programmes.

Indicators for Monitoring and Evaluation: An Indicative Methodology

An appropriate set of indicators is crucial to effective monitoring and evaluation systems. This document clarifies the terminology used, provides a flexible frame of reference and proposes a list of indicators for the main areas of assistance under the Structural Funds.

Ex Ante Evaluation and Indicators for INTERREG (Strand A and B)

Community Initiative programmes are required to fulfil the obligations for evaluation as set out in the Structural Funds regulations. This document provides supplementary guidance on the programming and evaluation requirements for INTERREG Strand A and B programmes.

The Mid Term Evaluation of Structural Interventions

This working paper provides guidance on the content and organisation of the mid term evaluation of structural operations to be completed by the end of 2003. It outlines the timetable for the evaluation, gives guidance on how it should be planned and managed, and presents the key components to be covered in the mid-term evaluation.

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[11] In the "Documents" section, the "General Publications" section includes "Evaluation" where "Commission Working Documents" can be found.

- **Research DG**

    – *Guidelines for the five-year assessment of the RTD framework and specific programmes*

    – *Guidelines for the 2001 monitoring exercise*

    These broad guidelines aim to assure the minimum harmonisation needed while providing for some flexibility to take account of the special features of each programme.

    Contact: Planning, Programming and Evaluation Unit of the Research DG, Tel.: 299.47.15/296.27.04.
    http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/monitoring/home.html

- **External Relations, Development and Trade DGs and the EuropeAid Co-operation Office (AIDCO)**

    Evaluation of the results of country/regional and sectoral policies, programmes and programming performance are conducted by the Evaluation Unit (AIDCO.H.6) under the direct authority of the AIDCO Board. These evaluations are published and available to the general public on the internet site of the evaluation department.

    This internet site is located at:
    http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/evaluation/index.htm

    At project level, the EuropeAid Office is responsible (in partnership with delegations, as appropriate) for evaluation and for sending a copy of each completed evaluation report to the department which maintains the database of all evaluations.

    Sound practice in evaluation at project level is encouraged through the dissemination of literature and training in Project Cycle Management (PCM), which includes advice on the preparation and implementation of evaluations at different phases of the project cycle. The PCM Manual (version March 2001) and the PCM Training Handbook are available online.

    Regarding evaluation itself, the relevant document is: *Evaluation in the European Commission – A Guide to the Evaluation Procedures and Structures currently operational in the Commission's External Co-operation Programmes*. This guide is available on line in English and French at the following address:
    http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/evaluation/methods/index.htm

    Financial and Economic Analysis of Development Projects

    The ultimate purpose of financial and economic analysis is to determine, as accurately as possible, the costs, efficiency of resource use (especially the financial and economic return on investments), and the relevance of projects to current economic policies and structural reforms. The EcoFin Manual was designed as a reference tool for EC officials and consultants, both economists and non-economists. In addition, it provides, through a case study, an illustration of the kind of analysis and the level of detail that is expected for the analysis of

development projects to be financed by the Commission. It is available from the Evaluation Unit of the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, tel. 92964.

- **European Community Humanitarian Office(ECHO)**

  Manual for the evaluation of humanitarian aid

  This manual was published for the first time in 1996 and amended in 1999. It is intended for all those working in the field of humanitarian aid: ECHO staff, its partners, the Member States and anyone interested in the evaluation of humanitarian aid. It thus contributes to the development of an evaluation culture in the humanitarian world. Its main purpose is to serve as a methodological basis for the evaluations carried out by ECHO.

  This manual is out of print, but interested parties will find it on ECHO's Internet site (http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/).

  A third, updated version of the manual is planned for 2002.

  Contact: ECHO Evaluation Unit, Tel.: 299.22.55; Fax: 299.11.73

ANNEX 2

Summary table for assessing the quality of work (Adapted MEANS table)

As regards this criterion, the evaluation report is:	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Good	Excellent
1. Meeting needs: Does the evaluation deal adequately with requests for information from the Commission and is it in line with the specifications?				
2. Relevant scope: Have the rationale of the programme, its outputs, results, impacts, interactions with other policies and unexpected effects been studied in full?				
3. Appropriate methodology: Is the design of the evaluation adequate and suitable for providing the results required (within time limits) to answer the main evaluation questions?				
4. Reliable data: Are the primary and secondary data collected or selected suitable? Are they sufficiently reliable in the light of the expected use?				
5. Sound analysis: Does the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data comply with established rules, and is it complete and appropriate for answering the evaluation questions correctly?				
6. Credible results: Are the results logical and justified by the analysis of the data and by interpretations based on carefully presented explanatory hypotheses?				
7. Valuable conclusions: Are the conclusions just, and are they unbiased by personal or partisan considerations?				
8. Useful recommendations: Are the recommendations comprehensible, useful, applicable and detailed enough to be put into practical effect?				
9. Clarity: Does the report describe the context and goal of the programme evaluated and also the organisation and results in such a way that the information provided is easily understood?				
Bearing in mind the specific constraints imposed on this evaluation by the background, the evaluation report is considered to be				

ANNEX 3

> ## Box 5.1. of the Guide on Evaluating EU Expenditure Programmes,
>
> ## page 62: An example of an evaluation report structure

Title page:
- title and nature of evaluation (e.g. ex post)
- title of programme, generation, duration
- identification of author, date of submission, commissioning department

Table of contents:
- main headings and sub-headings
- index of tables of figures and graphs

Executive summary:
- an overview of the entire report in no more than five pages
- a discussion of the strengths and weakness of the chosen evaluation design

Introduction:
- description of the programme in terms of needs, objectives, delivery systems etc.
- the context in which the programme operates
- purpose of the evaluation in terms of scope and main evaluation questions.
- description of other similar studies which have been done

Research methodology:
- design of research
- implementation of research and collection of data
- analysis of data

Evaluation results:
- findings
- conclusions
- recommendations

Annexes:
- terms of reference
- additional tables
- references and source
- glossary of terms