

Mid-term Evaluation of the Competitiveness and Internationalisation Operational Programme

COMPETE 2020

Framework*



Impact assessment of COMPETE 2020 interventions, focusing on the contribution of the supported actions to the pursuit of the Specific Objectives of the Programme, aiming to achieve the physical and financial realization targets set for 2023.



Commitment Rate: 126%
(Approved Fund/Allocation of the Programme)



Realisation Rate: 55%
(Executed Fund/Approved Fund)



6 Thematic Objectives
(8 Priority Axes)



107 252 Approved Operations
(78 441 Promoters)



7 352 M€ Approved Fund
(ERDF: 6 122 M€ // ESF: 639 M€ // CF: 592 M€)



116 082 Applications Submitted



The June 2021 reprogramming gave rise to two axes: REACT-ERDF (support for SMEs, COVID vaccines, and investments for climate transition) and REACT-EU ESF (support for job creation and internships).

*Data reported at 31/12/2021

Objectives of the Evaluation

Identify the contribution of COMPETE 2020 to the expected results in the Specific Objectives of each Investment Priority (IP) mobilized in each of its Priority Axes.

Methodology

This evaluation had as methodological reference the Theory-Based Evaluation which determined the structuring of the logical framework of the COMPETE 2020 intervention. The methodological approach was anchored in a diverse range of methods and techniques for data collection, treatment and analysis of quantitative and qualitative information:



Data Collection



3 Surveys

(1 to non-corporate beneficiaries and 2 to companies – excluding and including CRII and REACT-EU operations)



Document Collection



5 Focus Groups

(R&TD and Innovation, Business competitiveness, Capacity building and administrative modernization, Transport, REACT-EU)






13 Interviews





4 Case Studies

Main Results






Effectiveness

-  R&TD&I – perspective of the global achievement of the goals, with greater difficulty in the articulation of the Academy and the SCTN with the business fabric.
-  Competitiveness of SMEs – entrepreneurship was the area most affected by the pandemic crisis, with a high loss rate.
-  Business training – the actions associated with IS projects showed lower demand, while the Training-Action stood out for the positive.
-  Transport – despite delays in implementation, projects are expected to be carried out (some after the OP time horizon, notably on the non-TEN-T railway).
-  Capacity building and modernization of PA – great contribution at the level of ICT promotion and administrative capacity-building, but potential for improvement; the training of workers fell short due to the reduced attractiveness of the instrument.
-  REACT-EU ERDF – targets that have been largely exceeded in terms of maintaining the activity of companies and guaranteeing jobs.




Efficiency

-  The resources mobilized and the results generated are adequate in most IPs in view of the objectives to be pursued and the challenges and opportunities.
-  Potential for improvement in the simplification of processes, through the introduction of more effective technological tools, increase in qualification levels, strengthening of teams and focus on Simplified Cost Options.


Impact

-  Economic and financial differences between supported and unsupported businesses, with those supported exhibiting greater resilience in the pandemic context.
-  National productive specialization unchanged. Increased intensity of R&D investment but dynamics below the European target.
-  Significant improvement and contribution of COMPETE 2020 in terms of competitiveness, internationalization, productivity, innovation, and investment.
-  Increase in the number of trainings, contributing to the improvement of the overall qualification of human resources and productivity indexes.
-  Contribution to the training and modernization of Public Administration, but there is still a high potential for improvement.

Relevance

-  High coherence of the approach advocated in the programmatic architecture.
-  Adequacy of the typologies of operations/eligibility in the OP axes.
-  Appropriate response of reprogramming proposals to context changes.

European Added Value

-  Relevance of the OP support to catalyze and leverage investment, in the private sector (business R&D and vocational training) and more evidently in the public sector (in all typologies).

Recommendations

1. Stimulate Business R&D with a focus on reducing market failures at the level of the innovation cycle.
2. Promote initiatives to boost the national R&D and Innovation ecosystem.
3. Enhance the attractiveness of vocational training and lifelong learning.
4. Stimulate qualified demand and strengthen the attractiveness of the support with lower adhesion.
5. Implement mechanisms of greater automatism and efficiency in the processes of preparation and submission of applications and of monitoring and evaluation of projects.
6. Value, in the analysis of applications, the track record of the promoter and of the management team.
7. Give relevance to the evaluations of the projects supported from a perspective of results.
8. Encourage the implementation of integrated administrative modernization operations.
9. Maintain and refine instruments to support digital transformation and capacity building of public administration.
10. Strategically reorient support for the training of PA workers.
11. Intensify the information, guidance and training campaigns for strategic target audiences for the use of the digital public services.
12. Stimulate the sharing of data in the Public Administration as a way to streamline administrative processes and procedures, reduce context costs and monitor the results of public policies.
13. Ensure greater maturity of transport infrastructure operations.