

EX-POST EVALUATION OF THE CONSUMER PROGRAMME 2007-13 AND MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE CONSUMER PROGRAMME 2014-20

Presentation of the methodology

For the European Commission – Directorate-General Justice and Consumers
(DG JUST)

By Civic Consulting

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Objectives of the study /1

The study covers two separate evaluations that are to be carried out simultaneously, whilst respecting their different scopes and nature:

- Objectives of the ex-post evaluation of the Consumer Programme 2007-13:
 - Assess main outcomes and results achieved
 - Identify main problems and solutions with regard to its implementation, including against recommendations from the mid-term evaluation
 - Actions will also be assessed for sustainability

Objectives of the study /2

- Objectives of the mid-term evaluation of the Consumer Programme 2014-20
 - Review achievement of the objectives of the measures, state of play regarding the implementation of the actions, allocation of funds to the beneficiaries, efficiency of the use of resources and programme's European added value
 - Address the scope for simplification, the programme's internal and external coherence, the continued relevance of all objectives, and contribution to the Union priorities of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth
 - With a view to feeding into a decision on a possible renewal, modification or suspension of a subsequent programme in terms of scope, nature and cost

Presentation of the study team

- The Civic study team members have in-depth expertise in the analysis of EU consumer policy and law, as well as consumer markets and consumer behaviour in general
- We have explored in various studies specific issues related to product safety, consumer redress including ADR, consumer detriment, and the implementation of the EU consumer law
- With our recent Study to support the Fitness Check of EU Consumer and Marketing Law we supported the EC's Fitness Check and assessed the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance and EU added value of the UCTD; UCPD; PID; MCAD; and ID

Thematic scope

- The scope of the study is defined by the two financial programmes
 - Consumer Programme 2007-13: All activities financed for the whole programming and implementation period
 - Consumer Programme 2014-20: State of play regarding the implementation of the measures (at the level of results and impacts) and of the eligible actions set out in Article 4 and the specific actions referred to in Annex I

Evaluation criteria and questions

- The study will assess separately the two programmes and all implemented actions on their:
 - *Effectiveness*
 - *Efficiency*
 - *Relevance*
 - *Coherence*
 - *EU added value*
 - As well as other evaluation criteria where applicable, e.g. *sustainability, scope for simplification*
- The TOR set out a common set of 21 evaluation questions, including 3 subquestions

Key evaluation questions /1

- To what extent have the objectives of the programmes been achieved by the choice and implementation of their actions?
- To what extent do the activities and outputs of the actions match the objectives of the programmes?
- Which were the costs and the benefits of the actions?
- To what extent are the objectives and priorities of the programmes still relevant to the needs of the stakeholder community and to other consumer-relevant EU policies (such as energy, financial and digital sectors and environment)?

Key evaluation questions /2

- To what extent have the objectives, priorities & actions of the CPs been coherent with those of the Consumer policy and/or with other consumer-relevant EU policies?
- What is the additional value resulting from the EU interventions compared to what could have been/be achieved by MS at national and/or regional levels?
- To what extent do the actions of the CP/policy support, complement and usefully supplement and monitor policies pursued by the MS?
- How likely are the effects to last after the interventions' end?

Overview of methodology

- Structuring of the evaluation (Task 1)
- Fieldwork (Task 2)
 - Reviewing existing evidence on the implementation of actions, results and impacts;
 - Consulting stakeholders and SMEs;
 - Conducting case studies;
- Analysis (Task 3)
 - Assessing results and impacts of actions;
 - Answers to evaluation questions, conclusions and recommendations.

Exploratory interviews

- Interviews with Commission officials and selected key stakeholders at EU and MS levels, including consumer organisations and business associations with the aim to:
 - Rapidly develop a clear vision of the main issues at stake regarding the implementation, results and impacts of the actions financed under the Consumer Programmes 2007-13 and 2014-20,
 - Identify areas of consensus and controversy,
 - Collect relevant contacts for future interviews/case studies,
 - Contribute to fine-tuning of the methodological tools

Review of existing evidence

Aim to conduct a **focused review** establishing key supporting evidence for answering the EQs, especially document the implementation of the actions and related inputs and outputs and identify results and impacts, using:

- *Publicly available documents* and data concerning the programmes/actions, e.g. legal acts, annual work programmes, deliverables of actions, impact assessments or evaluation reports, etc.
- *Not publicly available documents* and data to be obtained from the Commission/Chafea
- *Complementary documents*, reports and data series

Consultation strategy

- Several complementary consultation activities are planned, most notably the **open public consultation** and **in-depths interviews** at EU and MS level, complemented by an **outreach to SMEs**
- We will carefully **focus our consultation activities** to avoid duplication of questions and unnecessary interactions with stakeholders

Online public consultation and supporting outreach to SMEs

- The results of the online public consultation launched by the Commission will be an important source of information for the study. We will analyse and summarise the responses submitted to closed and open questions
- We will also assist the Commission in its efforts to reach out to SMEs. We will build on the questionnaire prepared by the Commission for businesses in the open public consultation

Interviewing authorities and stakeholder organisations

In-depth interviews will cover expert stakeholders from:

- National authorities responsible for policy and enforcement of consumer legislation and other prioritised relevant legislation;
 - Consumer associations;
 - Business associations;
 - ECCs/ODR Contact points.
- Covering 28 EU MS as well as NO and IS, and EU level
- Based on targeted interview questionnaire for each stakeholder group

Meetings with relevant networks

- Contribution to 2-3 meetings with relevant networks
- E.g. the Consumer Safety Network/Rapex contact points, the CPC network, the ECCG and/or the CPN
- With the aim to:
 - Inform network participants about the objectives and methodology of the evaluation
 - Promote an interactive dialogue on their views regarding the relevant actions financed under the two CPs, and their implementation and related results and impacts
 - Discuss interim results, where available, and gather views, comments and assessments on these results
 - Obtain inputs for the next stage of the study

Focus of the case studies

We proposed a total of **eight case studies**, focused on specific key actions funded or cross-cutting/ thematic, to:

- Collect *quantitative and qualitative data on results and impacts of the implementation of key actions*, as well as data on *additional costs of beneficiaries* for programme implementation
- Assess the *achievement of the objectives* of the two Consumer Programmes for key actions
- Consider the extent to which *cross-cutting aims of the programmes* have been achieved

Selection of case studies on specific key actions

The following **specific criteria** were applied for the initial selection of potential case studies on specific key actions:

- Selected actions involve substantial financial resources;
- Selected actions are relevant for both CPs;
- Selected actions cover all programmes' objectives;
- Selected actions are essential for identification of main results and impacts, and so for assessing effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, as well as EU added value;
- For the selected actions, separate evaluations have not been recently conducted

Candidate case studies on specific key actions

Candidate case studies:

1. Consumer Protection Cooperation Network (CPC)
2. Support of and capacity building for consumer organisations
3. Consumer education and information
4. Facilitating access to ADR/ODR
5. Coordination of market surveillance and enforcement action on product safety

Selection of cross-cutting/thematic case studies

The following **specific criteria** were applied for the potential cross-cutting/thematic case studies:

- Constitute a policy priority area or theme;
- Provide synergies/complementarities with other EU Programmes;
- Are essential elements of EU consumer policy/the Consumer Programme(s) under evaluation;
- Provide key insights for addressing EQs of relevance and coherence, as well as EU added value.

Candidate cross-cutting/thematic case studies

Candidate case studies:

6. Digital single market
7. Empowering energy consumers
8. Sustainable consumption
9. Vulnerable consumers
10. Convergence to a high level of consumer protection and empowerment between different MS

Assessing results and impacts of the programmes

- Quantification of the effects of the two CPs for those types of results and impacts for which quantification is feasible
- Focusing on key actions subject to case studies or for which previous evaluations have collected suitable data
- Costs and benefits to be determined according to a uniform methodology as much as possible

Creating fact sheets per action financed

- We will first process and triangulate the evidence collected under previous tasks separately for each Consumer Programme
- We will then prepare separate fact sheets on each of the actions financed under the two programmes, based on the document review, consultation, case studies and quantification of results and impacts

Answering the evaluation questions

Answering of the EQs according to the following **four topical clusters**, with one core team member as lead expert for each cluster:

1. Product safety;
2. Consumer information and education;
3. Rights and redress;
4. Enforcement;

On this basis development of conclusions and recommendations

Timing of key deliverables

- Inception report – 12.2017
- Interim report – 2.2018
- Draft final report – 4.2018

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