## Expert group evaluates 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn

The Interim Evaluation of the European Union's 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research has now been completed. The work was carried out by a Group of Experts chaired by Rolf Annerberg, Director General of the Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Research and Spatial Planning (FORMAS), which presented its report to the EU Commissioner for Research Máire Geoghegan-Quinn. The Commission is analysing the report in detail and will respond in the weeks to come.

Commissioner for Research Máire Geoghegan-Quinn said: "The 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme is making a major contribution to European science and the European Research Area. We welcome the report from the Expert Group which concludes that the Framework Programme is backing excellent projects and has a vast and impressive reach. We will take the Expert Group's recommendations fully into account in bringing forward early next year our proposals for the implementation of the remainder of our current Seventh Research Framework Programme and subsequently for the successor Eighth Framework Programme. I am determined to make continuous improvements in our support for research and innovation."

Ten independent experts evaluated the ongoing 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (2007-2013) during a six month period. They were supported by an extensive evidence base, a self-assessment by Commission Services and an open online stakeholder consultation. They also took into account specific FP7 Interim Evaluations such as the one on the Risk Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF).

The report provides a detailed assessment of the implementation of FP7 so far and presents 10 recommendations for improvements:

Advance the European Research Area and Innovation Union objectives; it is vital to integrate the research base by overcoming fragmentation in research, while simultaneously achieving a sharper division of labour between what is done at EU level and what is undertaken in national programmes.

- Develop and implement high quality research infrastructures.
- Maintain, at least, the level of funding.
- Encourage participation from a broad spectrum of small and large enterprises, universities and research and technology organisations through a well-articulated **innovation strategy**.
- Achieve a quantum leap with **simplification**; the Commission is asked to move to a more trust-based and risk-tolerant approach.
- Give greater emphasis to **open calls** in the remaining years of FP7; linkages between research and innovation should be adequately complemented by research training.
- Consider a *moratorium* on new instruments until the existing ones have been sufficiently developed and adequately evaluated.

- Take further steps to increase **female participation** in FP7.
- Build connections between the FP and Structural Funds in order to pave the way for increased participation from **Member States that are under-represented**.
- Carry out a review based upon a thorough analysis of the current strategy towards **international cooperation**.

The full document is available at <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations">http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations</a>