



Brussels, 12.12.2016  
SWD(2016) 449 final

**COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT**  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION**  
**OF THE**  
**IMPACT OF THE ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK 2008-2014**

**COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION**

**OF THE**

**IMPACT OF THE ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK 2008-2014**

**CONTENTS**

1	EU ACTION UNDER EVALUATION: THE ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK.....	2
2	PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION .....	2
3	SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION .....	2
4	TIMING AND GOVERNANCE OF THE EVALUATION .....	2
5	EXTERNAL STUDY SUPPORTING THE EVALUATION .....	2
6	RESULTS .....	2

## **1 EU action under evaluation: the Enterprise Europe Network**

The Enterprise Europe Network is a support network for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). It was created in 2008 and was financed by the EU's Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP) for the amount of 352 million euros.

## **2 Purpose of the evaluation**

The purpose was to look at the economic impact of the Network in terms of its contribution to the goals of the Lisbon Strategy/EU 2020 strategy, namely the creation of growth and jobs.

## **3 Scope of the evaluation**

The evaluation covers the 2008-2014 time period. The geographic coverage is the 28 Member States of the European Union and the CIP countries participating in the Network at the time (FYROM, Iceland, Israel, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia and Turkey).

## **4 Timing and governance of the evaluation**

This evaluation was conducted between summer 2014 and summer 2016.

A Steering Group within the Commission steered the evaluation process.

## **5 External study supporting the evaluation**

The exercise began with an external evaluation study – carried out by the Technopolis Group between July 2014 and November 2015 – which consisted of two main elements: an analysis of secondary qualitative and quantitative data and a stakeholder consultation consisting of interviews, surveys and case studies for the collection of primary data.

## **6 Results**

The overall question on the economic effectiveness of the Enterprise Europe Network has been answered positively. According to the evaluation survey the services of the Network did help the SME to safeguard or enhance the number of jobs or their turnover. Clients of the Network perform 3.1 percentage points better in terms of growth in turnover and number of staff than the average European SMEs.

SME clients attribute the highest importance to the services of the Network that deal with business cooperation, innovation support and technology transfer. SMEs ranked lowest the possibility to provide to the Commission their feedback on proposed EU legislation.

With regards to efficiency at the level of individual services, the Network Partners seem to allocate resources in an efficient manner. Budgets spent per service are more or less in line with the usefulness that the partners attribute to each service.

The evaluation clearly confirms that the Network succeeds in maintaining and continually improving the access, proximity, quality and professionalism of the integrated services it provides.

The evaluation criterion "relevance" has not been dealt with separately. Although this is now an obligatory criterion under the Commission's Better Regulation Guidelines<sup>1</sup>, the evaluation did not include this question at the time it started and the collected evidence does not allow to draw conclusions on this criterion.

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/toc\\_guide\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/toc_guide_en.htm)

In the context of (external) coherence and complementarity, the evaluation evidence showed that the Network collaborates in a complementary way with other EU interventions that have similar objectives.

The evaluation illustrates that the Network provides EU added value: it complements Member State SME support, can build on the experience of a large network, has a pan-European dimension and focusses on cross-border and international SME cooperation.

The answer to the evaluation question concerning the effects of a possible discontinuation of the Network shows that the role of the Commission in animating and managing the Network is vital for the Network to function well.