

Question for written answer E-002332/2024

to the Commission

Rule 144

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Subject: Horizon Europe: effectively closing projects

Beneficiaries of Horizon Europe projects have indicated that the completion of these projects is time-consuming and imposes excessive administrative burdens on small and medium-sized enterprises. In particular, the official closure procedure, which includes the submission of the technical and scientific outcomes of the projects and the financial reports, is supposed to be completed six weeks after the project's end date. However, the submission of financial reports represents the most time-consuming and resource-intensive part of a Horizon Europe project's closure, and stakeholders have indicated that the six-week deadline is not realistic.

1. Will the Commission consider a more phased approach for closing Horizon Europe projects, e.g. by maintaining the six-week timeframe for the technical/scientific reporting, while allowing additional time for the submission of financial reports?
2. Does the Commission plan to offer specialised auditing support for beneficiaries through a network of experts with in-depth knowledge of EU regulations and with timelines compatible with the Commission's deadlines?
3. Is the Commission ensuring that requests for additional financial information during the analysis of the closed file, or the Commission's audit, are streamlined appropriately to avoid unnecessary delays?

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