

**Question for written answer E-002334/2024**

**to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Horizon Europe: frontloading bureaucracy

Horizon Europe has ambitious secondary objectives, e.g. with regard to gender equality and spending to address climate change. The implementation of these objectives can undermine efforts to simplify the programme.

1. Does the Commission have evidence that the inclusion of the gender balance requirement as a ranking criterion for proposals with the same evaluation scores is effective, given that the research teams actually implementing the action often differ significantly from the teams presented in the proposal?
2. Beneficiaries report that the introduction of lump sum funding has added complexity to the proposal development phase. This drives up the cost of applying for Horizon funding. Given the low success rates, it means that more resources are lost within the European research and innovation system. How does the Commission factor in these lost resources when it decides to launch a call with lump sum funding?
3. The Horizon programme guide explicitly states that evaluators will not score applications in relation to their compliance with the principle of doing no significant harm (DNSH). However, the DNSH principle is included in the proposal template. Can the Commission consider alternative means of raising awareness of the environmental impact of projects which would avoid this unnecessary administrative burden?

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