Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility

Evaluation of Business R&D Grant Schemes: behavioural change, mixed-method approaches and big data

19 / September/ 2018

Reflections on Final report findings and learning experience

The Mutual Learning Exercise (MLE) on **the evaluation of business R&D grants schemes in European countries-** an overview

- This MLE on the evaluation of business R&D grants schemes carried out from April 2017 to June 2018.
- It was a follow-up to the MLE on 'Ex-post evaluation of business R&I grants schemes' ran in 2016.

- The MLE aims:
  - To improve the exchange of information, mutual learning
  - To identify and disseminate good practice in assessing R&D grants among the participating countries
  - To improve systems for the ex-post evaluation of business R&I grant schemes.

MLE Scope - 3 main areas

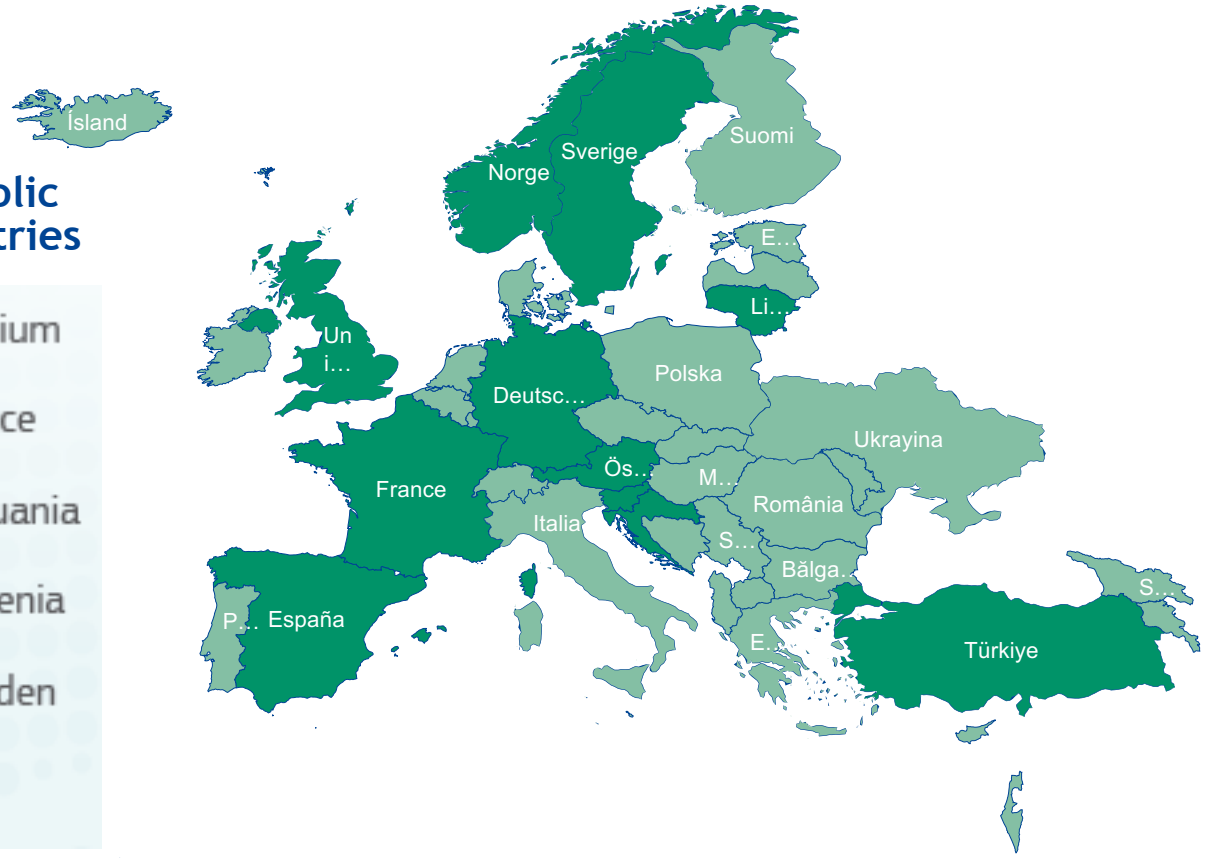
1. The potential of big data – such as data linking and new sources of data
2. Assessing the effect of funding on the behaviour of companies
3. Combining qualitative and quantitative evaluation approaches

Characteristics of MLE participants

MLE participants:

policy-makers and public agencies from 12 countries

- Austria
- Belgium
- Croatia
- France
- Germany
- Lithuania
- Norway
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Turkey
- UK



Challenges faced when designing and conducting evaluation of R&D grants

- R&D grants are used to stimulate investments into research and innovation by private companies;
- Main challenges in assessing their effects quantitatively or qualitatively are related to:

1. skewed effects;
2. lagged effects;
3. paucity of data;
4. low observability (including spill-overs);
5. fluidity of companies;
6. attribution.

Fluidity of companies, skewed & lagged effects

- Heterogeneity of companies over time (at the beginning and at the end of policy scheme)
- Heterogeneity of companies that got support (size, strategy, organizational structure, etc.)
- Diverse impact of innovation support; a small number of highly successful projects
- Impacts, on other actors in the innovation system may occur over many years

Skewed responses to public support & lagged effects

Low observability & paucity of data

- Not all the outcomes and impacts of innovation support are documented;
- Intangible outcomes (e.g. skills) are difficult to capture
- Spillover effects are difficult to measure, may occur with some time lag;

Attribution

- The attribution of impact to any single intervention can be very difficult;
- The direct outcomes of support receives as an R&D grant may be difficult to distinguish from other forms of support;
- Support in a form of R&D grants is an element of a complex STI system (multiple actors and programmes at supra-national, national, regional levels);
- Support may be obtained simultaneously, successively or in an overlapping combination.

MLE on the evaluation of business R&D grants schemes in European countries

- Learning – a way to cope with challenges faced when designing and conducting evaluation of R&D grants

Learning process

Learning process: how it happened?

- 3 interactive workshops (country visits): a platform for sharing knowledge and experience – Oslo (Norway), Stockholm, (Sweden), London (UK)
  - Comparing how ministries and agencies in different countries are evaluating business R&D grant schemes and other schemes for supporting companies' R&D and innovation
  - Elaboration on the methods used in recent and planned evaluations (breakout sessions)
  - Refining key messages would be taken back home

- The 'ex-post survey'- feedback on key messages and lessons learned

Access to main findings

- **Final report**
- **3 thematic reports:**

1. Big data: data linking, new data sources and new data analytics methods
2. Capturing Behavioural Change
3. Combining Mixed Approaches to Evaluation

- https://rio.jrc.ec.europa.eu/policy-support-facility/mle-evaluation-business-rd-grant-schemes