

Evaluation of project  
**Promoting innovation policy capacities in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus**  
 (E317, September 2023)

Progress report as of 30 June 2024

#	Recommendation	Management response	Responsibility	Target date	Progress
1	Given its high relevance, it is recommended to <b>i) seek continuation funding to support further Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus countries</b> (especially for ensuring sustainability and continuity); <b>ii) seek new funding to replicate this project for other subregions</b> , such as the Western Balkans or Central Asia. At the same time, this can raise donor visibility and complement investments into the European Union's (EU's) Eastern Partnership (in the case of Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus). UNECE's governance-focused approach using evaluation, accountability, and transparency also aims to reduce corruption and informality in the EESC region, where this issue is of great relevance	UNECE accepts the recommendation.  Follow-up actions:  a) Liaise with Sida and write proposal on follow-up funding for EESC  b) Ibid for Western Balkan and SPECA countries	Jakob Fexer, OiC, Innovative Policies Development Section, Economic Cooperation and Trade Division	31 December 2024	<b>In progress</b>  Sida proposal underway after several meetings and visit to Stockholm on 13 June  Concept developed for WB and SPECA countries; outreach to Sida, DG Near, DG INTPA, further meetings with potential donors at SPECA WG meeting end of June.
2	<b>Increase awareness among national stakeholders in Member States about the importance of the Leave No One Behind approach across policy-making</b> , for example, by adding relevant indicators in the project results framework, and supporting ongoing national processes	UNECE partially accepts the recommendation.  Follow-up actions:  a) Include and strengthen the LNOB approach into the updated	Jakob Fexer, OiC, IPDS, ECTD	31 December 2024	<b>In progress</b>  LNOB discussed in detail with Sida and integrated into the revision process for the IPO methodology

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	such as the upgrading of online procurement platforms for reading impaired persons, with a focus on gender, disabilities, and human rights (keeping in mind that the latter two were not included in the project document).	<p>methodology for the Innovation Policy Outlook</p> <p>b) Ibid for the I4SD review methodology</p> <p>c) Include the approach into project proposals (bilateral and regional)</p>			
3	<p>In a context where donors increasingly focus on short-term results after 12 or 24 months, <b>UNECE should encourage Sweden and other donors to continue investing in projects with a system-change approach, leading to the implementation of research recommendations as a means to ensure the sustainability of results.</b> A project duration of 5 years is recommended for projects with such an approach.</p>	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>Follow-up actions:</p> <p>a) Upgrade the IPO and review methodology to reflect the new policy principles aiming to create institutions that learn from, adapt to, and try out ways to influence systems change and creating a growing “innovation commons”.</p> <p>b) In the podcast series Innovation Matters, explore topics clearly related to systems change, such as flexible regulation.</p> <p>c) For EESC continuation (with Sida funding), link activities clearly to support efforts to put review and IPO recommendations into practice.</p> <p>d) For all work, especially Western Balkans (where EU funding dominates), ensure that recommendations guide also other</p>	Jakob Fexer, OiC, IPDS, ECTD	31 December 2024	<p><b>In progress</b></p> <p>IPO revision process underway, reflecting policy principles</p> <p>Biweekly Innovation podcast series exploring regulation, open innovation, systems change, and privatisation of rule making</p> <p>EESC continuation aims to link outputs to practice more clearly, as also requested by Sida</p> <p>New projects will ensure synergies and guidance</p>

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		donor-funded activities on-going or in planning systematically.			
4	Building on the good practices of this project, <b>using local experts to gather intelligence on the ground is recommended for similar future projects at the country level.</b> At the same time, national focal points should continue to be appointed for centralized project coordination in project countries.	UNECE accepts the recommendation.  Follow-up actions:  a) Stress this aspect in Sida and other potential project proposals.  b) Increase engagement of both local experts and focal points.	Jakob Fexer, OIC, IPDS, ECTD	31 December 2024	<b>In progress</b>  UNECE envisages to strengthen local presence through permanent consultants or, if budget permits, staff in addition to focal points in the new EESC and other regional projects
5	As a follow-up to this project, UNECE should use its limited regular budget resources to <b>monitor the implementation of recommendations and keep engaging with the network of focal points to share good practices for developing and implementing national innovation-related strategies and policies.</b>	UNECE accepts the recommendation.  Follow-up actions:  a) Conduct regular IPO policy dialogue sessions with EESC countries to review progress and explore issues related to recommendations with leading experts and practitioners.  b) Dedicate part of the annual meetings of ToS-ICP and CICPPP to EESC and other member states reporting on progress on implementation (next ToS session in November)	Jakob Fexer, OIC, IPDS, ECTD	31 December 2024	<b>In progress</b>  Regular IPO dialogue sessions held monthly, the latest in combination with those of ETIN Innovation Circle CICPPP will include elements of report back from EESC countries on implementation

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6	Senior management should <b>use this evaluation report as a robust evidence base to lobby for replicating the project approach in other sub-regions</b> , for example, the Western Balkans, with high relevance for donors like the EU and Sweden.	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>Follow-up actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Follow-up to the September meeting on IPO and related engagement with Western Balkan countries</li> <li>b) Further engage with potential donors</li> <li>c) Promote similar engagement around the IPO through SPECA</li> <li>d) Systematically explore opportunities to participate in related regional events, such as those of RCC in the Western Balkans, and the OECD Eurasia week (December)</li> <li>e) Engage the director of ECTD and contribute to or suggest opportunities and input for missions and speaking roles for the ES and the DES</li> </ul>	Jakob Fexer, OIC, IPDS, ECTD	31 December 2024	<p><b>In progress</b></p> <p>Second WB meeting held on service innovation</p> <p>Donors contacted for EESC (Sida, DG Near), WB (DG Near, Norad), and SPECA (DG Intpa, FCO, potentially ABD through UNIDO and PRC or Korea through ESCAP)</p> <p>Contributions to outside events envisaged, especially OECD Eurasia week (end of year tbc)</p>