



Council of the
European Union

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
No. prev. doc.: 9171/16
Subject: Special Report No 25/2015 from the European Court of Auditors entitled
"EU support for rural infrastructure: potential to achieve significantly greater
value for money"
- Council conclusions (17 June 2016)

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on:

Special Report No 25/2015 from the European Court of Auditors entitled "EU support for rural infrastructure: potential to achieve significantly greater value for money",

adopted by the Council at its 3475th meeting held on 17 June 2016.

Council conclusions
on Special Report No 25/2015 from the European Court of Auditors entitled:
"EU support for rural infrastructure: potential to achieve significantly greater value for
money"

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- (1) WELCOMES Special Report No 25/2015 from the European Court of Auditors entitled: "EU support for rural infrastructure: potential to achieve significantly greater value for money".
- (2) WELCOMES the Court's finding that the audited projects delivered their expected physical outputs and contributed positively to the rural areas;
- (3) AGREES with the Court, however, that further efforts could be taken to achieve more value-for-money by systematically directing aid towards the most cost-effective projects addressing the objectives set in the Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) and by collecting timely, relevant and reliable information on the projects and measures financed in order to determine the success or otherwise of the measures and to inform further decisions on how to best achieve the objectives set for infrastructure investments in rural areas;

- (4) **STRESSES THE IMPORTANCE**, in line with the Court's recommendations, to follow the value-for-money principles (economy, efficiency and effectiveness), for example by setting selection criteria prioritising the most cost-effective projects, applying sound reference prices and ensuring open, fair and competitive public procurement procedures;
 - (5) **NOTES** that the provisions concerning strategic programming of investment priorities and the effective coordination in the use of different funds have been strengthened for the 2014-2020 programming period;
 - (6) **WELCOMES** the additional guidance provided by the Commission on eligibility conditions and selection criteria and procedures for the 2014-2020 programming period and **NOTES** the improvements proposed by the Commission to the monitoring and evaluation systems for the 2014-2020 programming period but **UNDERLINES** the need to find a balance between the benefits of monitoring and evaluation and the costs and administrative burden related to it.
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