Prof. Dr. Vitali Altholz

WEBINAR "HORIZON EUROPE. PROJECTS, COLLABORATION, AND PARTNERSHIPS"

QA INDICATORS & FEEDBACKS:

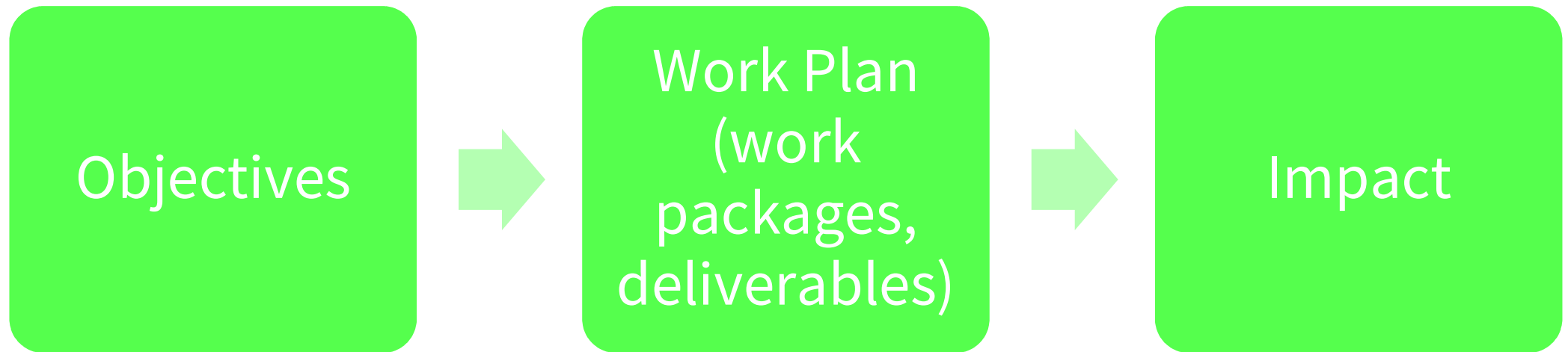# TWO BLACK BOXES OF THE EU PROJECT ACQUISITION

18.05.2021, Kyiv

INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY OF
APPLIED SCIENCES

QA INDICATORS

THE MAIN THEMES IN THE APPLICATION FORM

Objectives → Work Plan (work packages, deliverables) → Impact

Definitions:

"Work package" means a major sub-division of the proposed project.

"Deliverable" means a distinct output of the project, meaningful in terms of the project's overall objectives and constituted by a report, a document, a technical diagram, a software etc.
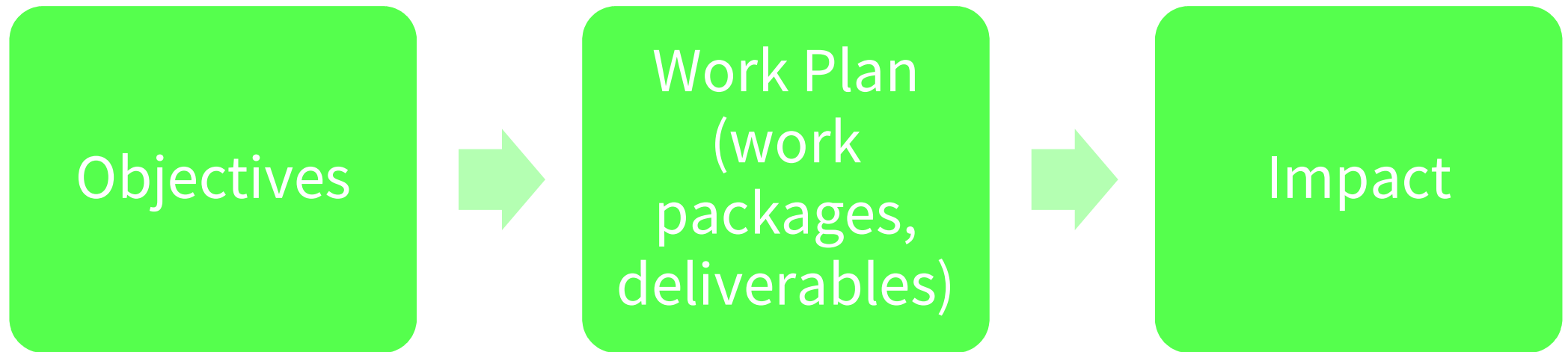
THE MAIN THEMES IN THE APPLICATION FORM

Objectives

1.1 Objectives
Describe the overall and specific objectives for the project, which should be clear, **measurable**, realistic and achievable within the duration of the project. Objectives should be consistent with the expected exploitation and impact of the project.

THE MAIN THEMES IN THE APPLICATION FORM

Objectives	→	Work Plan (work packages, deliverables)	→	Impact

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THE MAIN THEMES IN THE APPLICATION FORM

You should give enough detail in each work package to justify the proposed resources to be allocated and also **quantified information so that progress can be monitored**, including by the Commission.

Work Plan (work packages, deliverables)

**Table 3.1b: Work package description**

For each work package:

Work package number		Lead beneficiary		
Work package title				
Participant number				
Short name of participant				
Person months per participant:				
Start month			End month	

Objectives

Description of work (where appropriate, broken down into tasks), lead partner and role of participants

Deliverables (brief description and month of delivery)
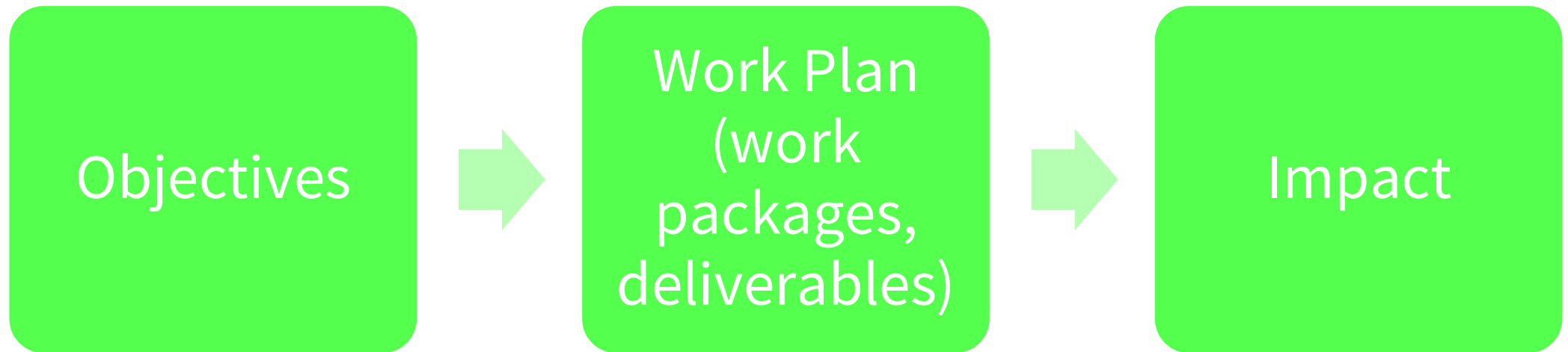
Example, not to complete

THE MAIN THEMES IN THE APPLICATION FORM

| Objectives | → | Work Plan (work packages, deliverables) | → | Impact |

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THE MAIN THEMES IN THE APPLICATION FORM

2.1 Expected impacts
Please be specific, and provide only information that applies to the proposal and its objectives. Wherever possible, use **quantified indicators** and targets.

Impact

MILESTONES

Table 3.2a: List of milestones

| Milestone number	Milestone name	Related work package(s)	Due date (in month)	Means of verification

3.2 Means of verification
Show how you will confirm that the milestone has been attained. Refer to **indicators** if appropriate.
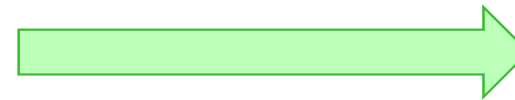
Definition:
"Milestones" means control points in the project that help to chart progress. Milestones may correspond to the completion of a key deliverable, allowing the next phase of the work to begin.

SIMPLE CHANGE IN NUMBERS

```
Objectives → Work Plan (work packages, deliverables) → Impact
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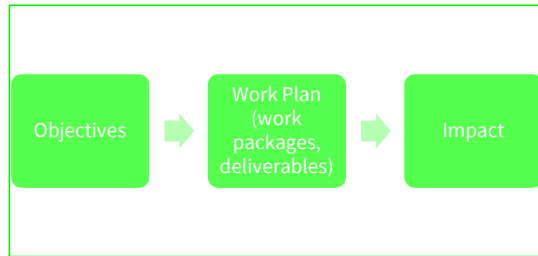
- More modern, dynamic, committed and professional structures
- Improved competences, linked to their professional profiles
- Enhanced academic cooperation
- Better research performance
- More active participation in society
- Greater involvement of target groups
- Minimizing failure rates

INCREASE

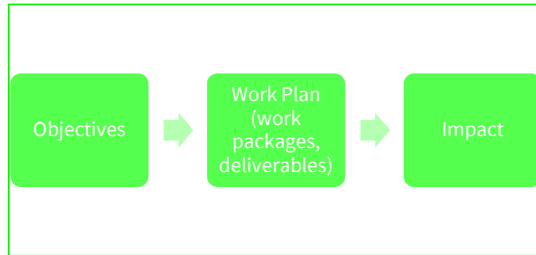**DECREASE**

(Long-term) Counters

RESEARCH WITHIN A PROJECT

- Questionnaires
- Systematic observations
- Assessments
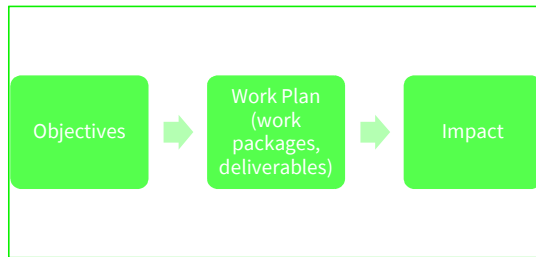- Summary and Comparison of Statistics
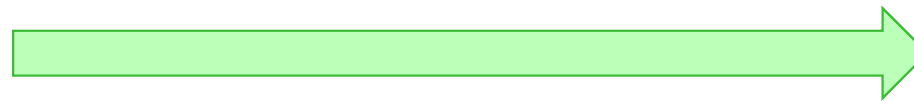- Content Analysis
- …

(Longitudinal) Empirical Indicators

R E S E A R C H

ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Objectives → Work Plan (work packages, deliverables) → Impact

INPUT → OUTPUT
A → B

Ratio Indicators
(e.g. KPI)

PROGRESS

MONITOR

CONCLUSION

Basic Indicators

1. (Long-term) Counters
2. (Longitudinal) Empirical Indicators
3. Ratio Indicators

Collecting the Big Project Data as Project Management Task

02

EVALUATION FEEDBACK

EVALUATION CRITERIA

	Award criteria		
	Excellence *The following aspects will be taken into account, to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the topic description in the work programme:*	**Impact** *The following aspects will be taken into account:*	**Quality and efficiency of the implementation** *The following aspects will be taken into account*:*
All types of action (except Framework Partnership Agreement; see below)	**Clarity and pertinence of the objectives;** **Soundness of the concept, and credibility of the proposed methodology;**	**The extent to which the outputs of the project would contribute to each of the expected impacts mentioned in the work programme under the relevant topic;**	Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, including extent to which the resources assigned to work packages are in line with their objectives and deliverables;

EVALUATION REPORT

Short introduction to show that the expert understands the proposal, but after that… → **Critics!!!**

- **The needs analysis remains at a general level, lacking a specific analysis of …**
- **There is a lack of information on …**
- **The proposal does not show any relevant information about support schemes for …**
- **Target groups could be better described.**
- **Yet it is not clear …**
- **However, to achieve this goal, greater detail is needed about the scope of …**
- **Overall, the link between existing services and the new service is not established, which is a weakness.**
- **The project does not mention any other previous projects, on which the current initiative could draw.**
- **The information provided in the work packages is too scarce, and remains too general.**
- **The proposed budget is not cost-effective.**
- **The work plan is not sufficiently elaborated.**
- **The major weakness is the limited scope of the proposed activities.**
- **The project could be realized in two years and not in three.**

THROUGH THE EYES OF THE EVALUATOR

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE H2020 EVALUATORS

The majority of the evaluators are

- academic staff

- experienced in EU project acquisition and management
- approx. 45-50 y.o.
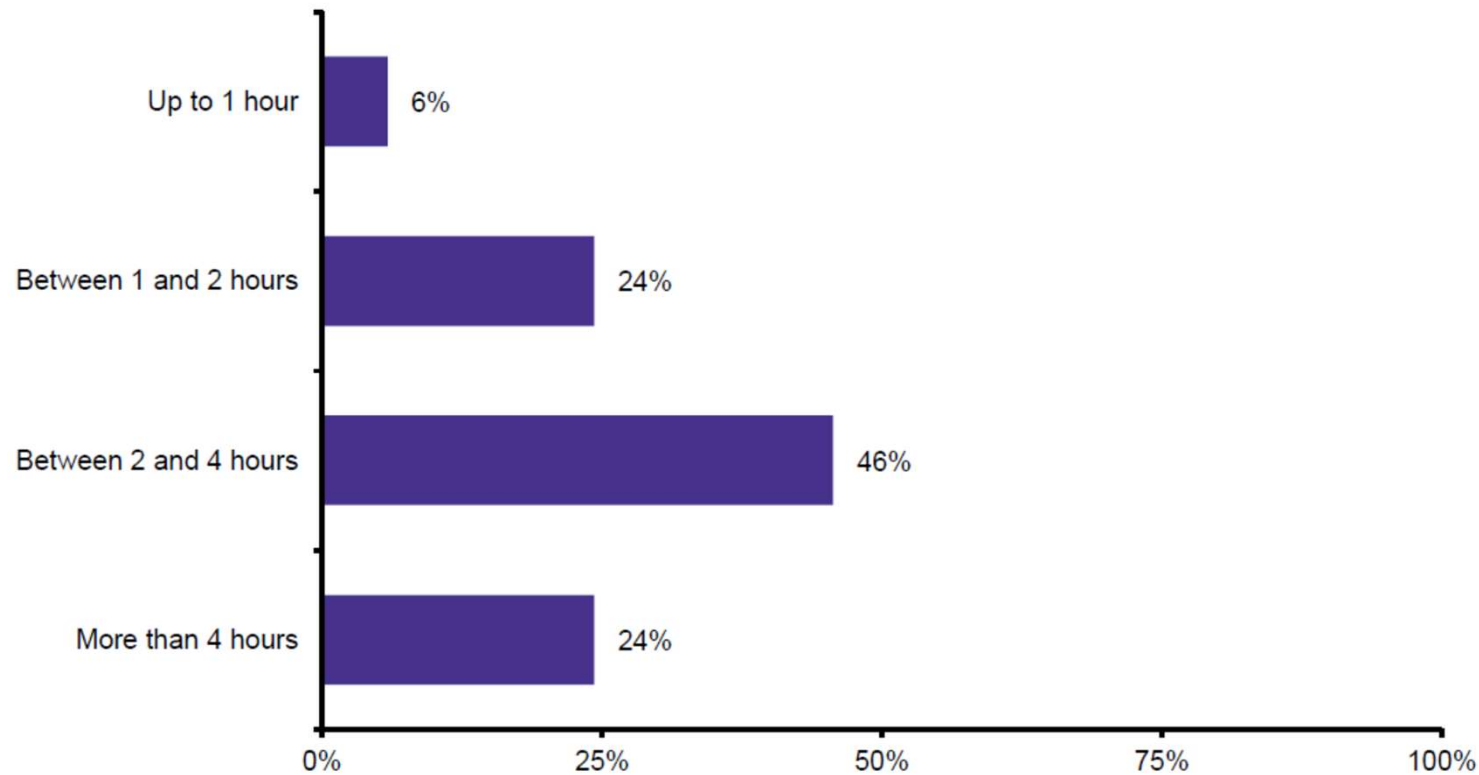- routine EU project evaluators
- not interested in geographic distribution
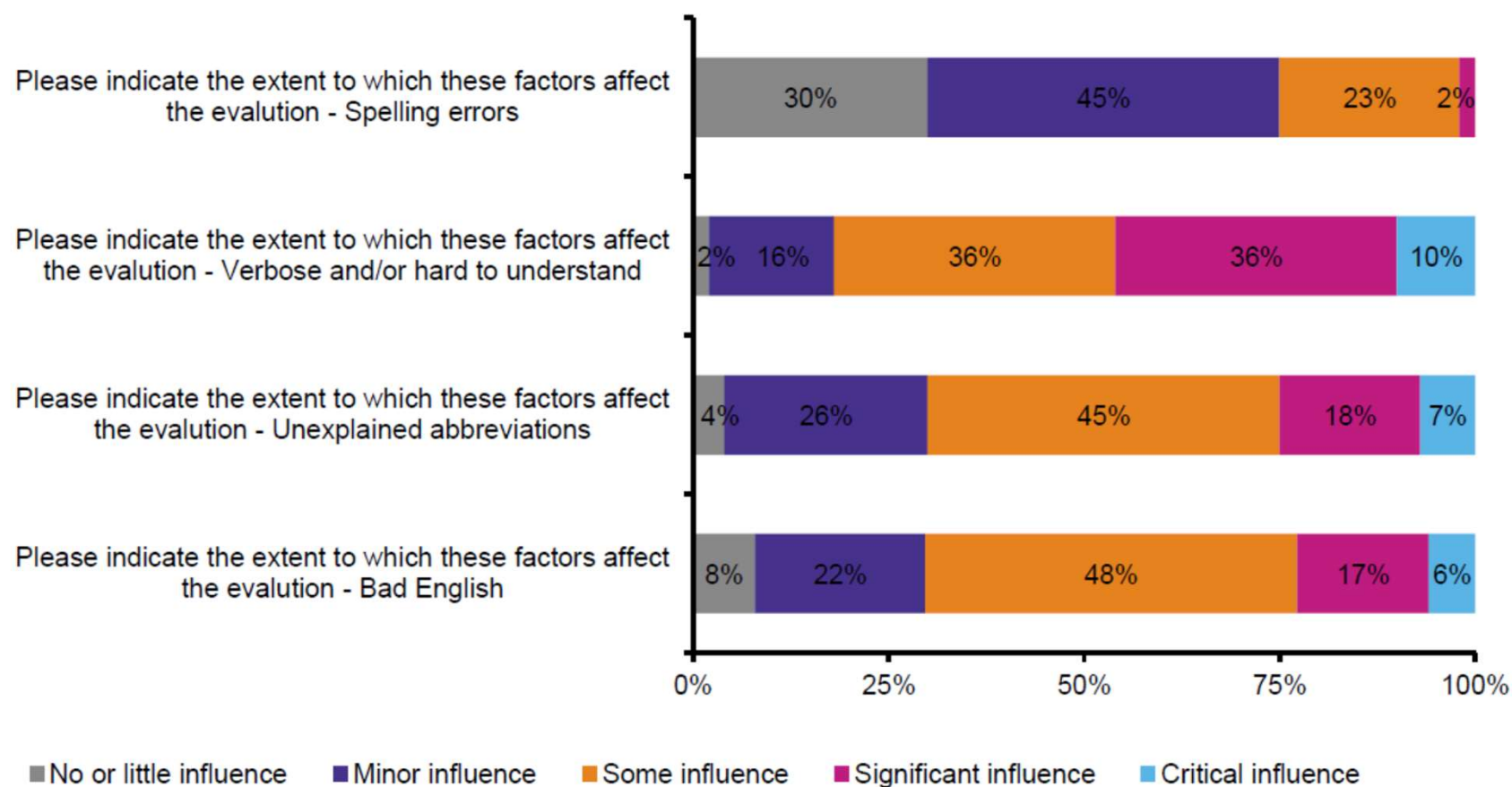- dealing just a couple of hours with the proposal

Evaluations and evaluators in Horizon 2020

Report on an analysis among Danish evaluators

June 2018
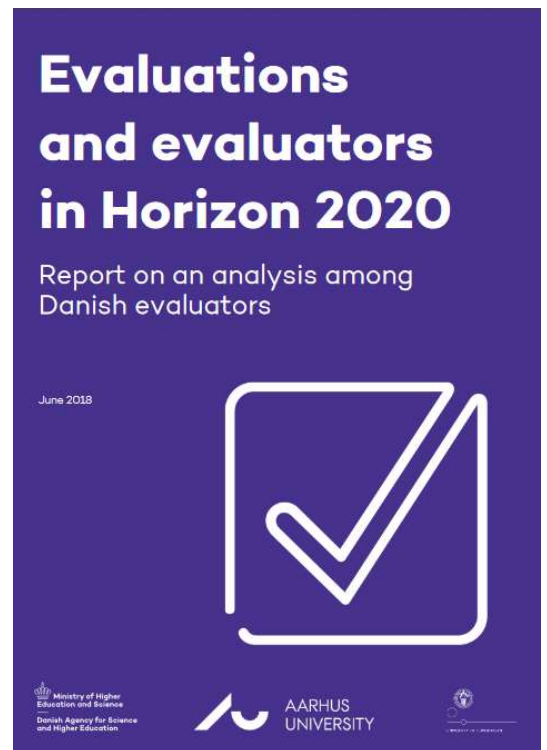
SOME FACTS ABOUT THE H2020 EVALUATORS

How much time do you normally spend reading a proposal?

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE H2020 EVALUATORS

## Questions relating to the proposal as text

Please indicate the extent to which these factors affect the evalution - Spelling errors: 30% / 45% / 23% / 2%

Please indicate the extent to which these factors affect the evalution - Verbose and/or hard to understand: 2% / 16% / 36% / 36% / 10%

Please indicate the extent to which these factors affect the evalution - Unexplained abbreviations: 4% / 26% / 45% / 18% / 7%

Please indicate the extent to which these factors affect the evalution - Bad English: 8% / 22% / 48% / 17% / 6%

Legend: No or little influence / Minor influence / Some influence / Significant influence / Critical influence

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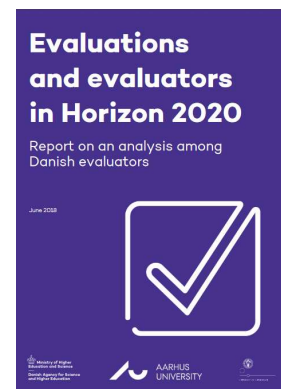
June 2018

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE H2020 EVALUATORS

**How confident are you as an evaluator when scoring the expected impact as stated in the proposals?**
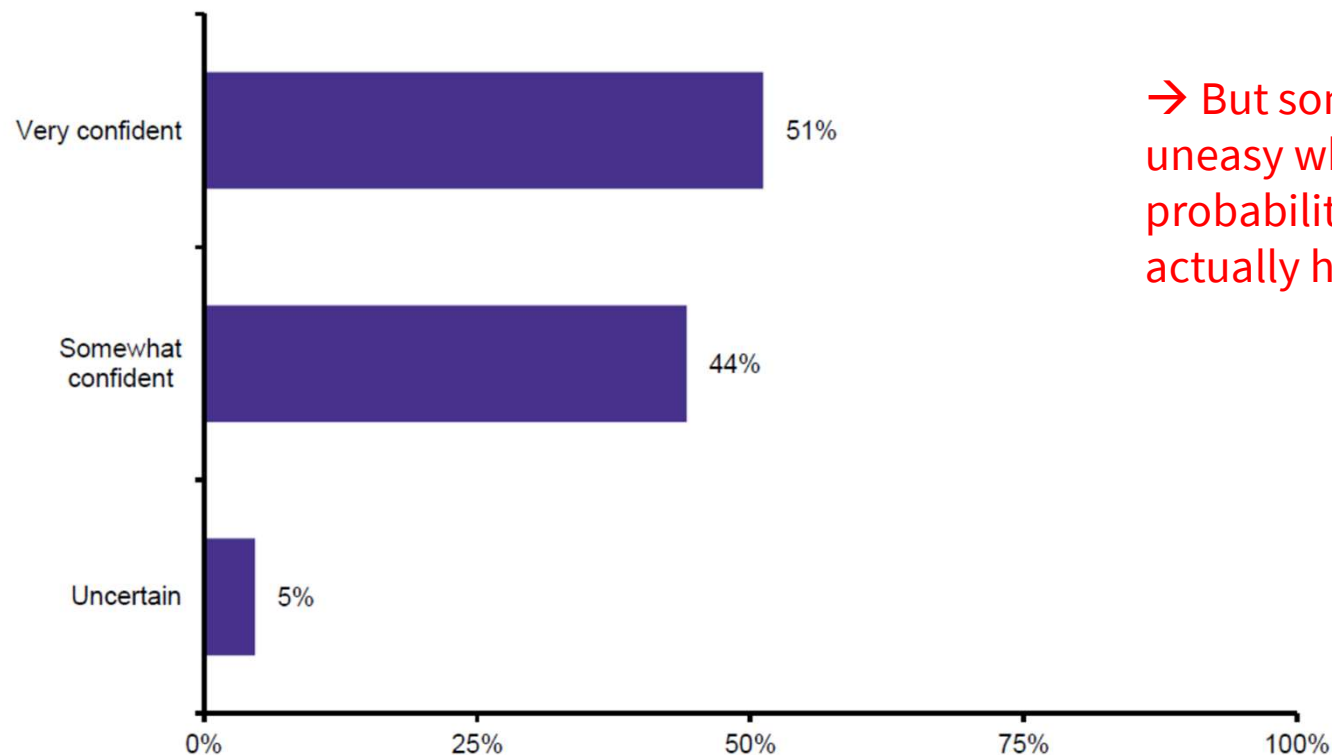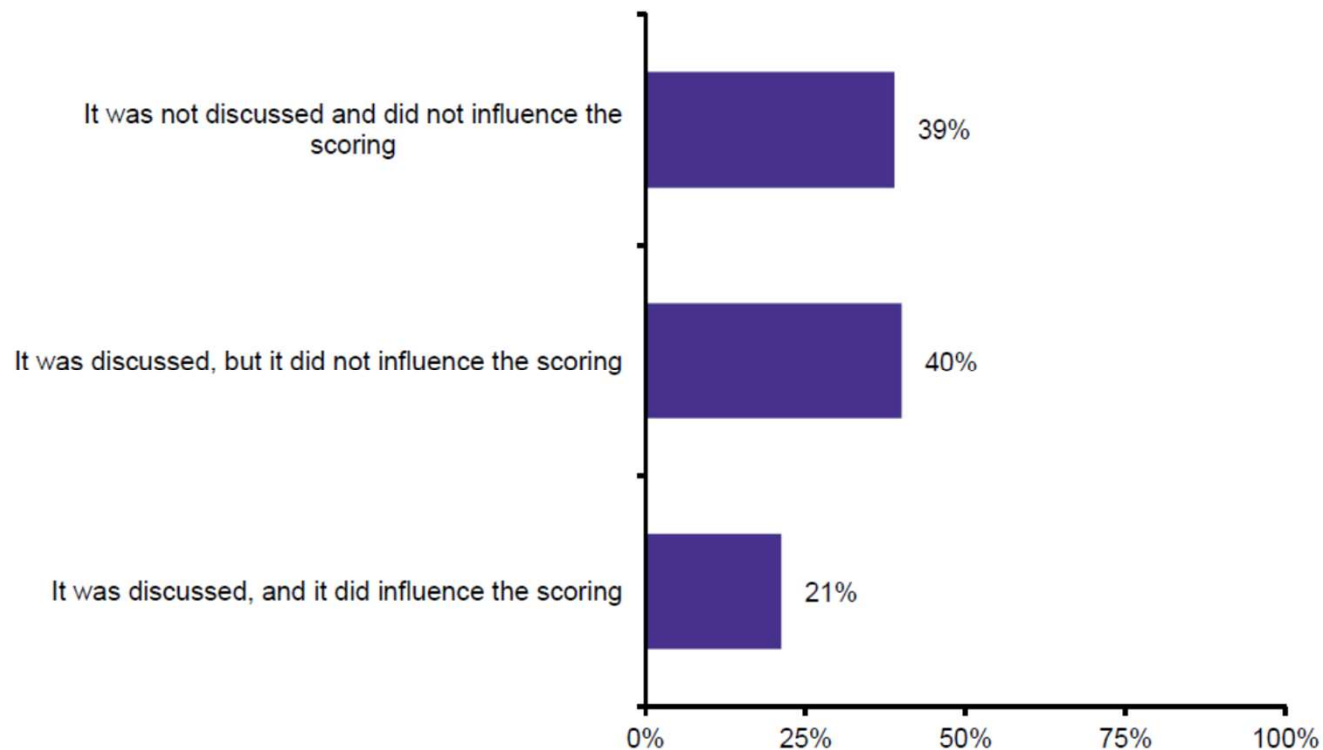

→ But some evaluators feel uneasy when judging the probability of promised impact actually happening!

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SOME FACTS ABOUT THE H2020 EVALUATORS

In your opinion, to what extent did the geographical spread of the consortium influence the scoring of the proposals?
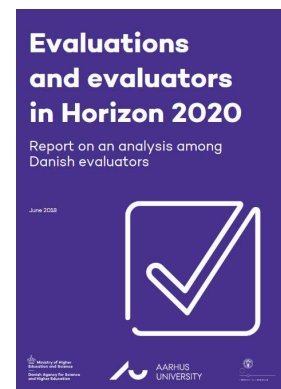
EYE-CATCHER POINTS

A clear manner in the text → The proposers have control over the project.
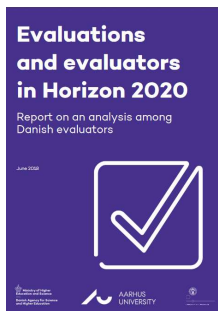
What's new?

Enthusiasm and excitement → The project will be exciting and a pleasure.

Layout, design of tables and figures play a role.

→*"Bad graphics, hard to read, overdone complexity, small print, sloppiness, or just plain repetitions – BAD impression!"*

→*"A 'good' graphic presentation is of high technical and conceptual quality."*

**→*good illustration is always helpful!***

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE H2020 EVALUATORS

"People think its stories, but it's ALL true – unclear language, use of platitudes, muddled meanings etc., it ALL influences the score even though it will never be written down in the evaluation report."
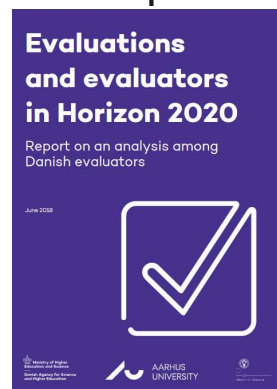
➔ *Hard to understand language (e.g. unclear, too many words, too academic) have significant or critical influence on the evaluation!*

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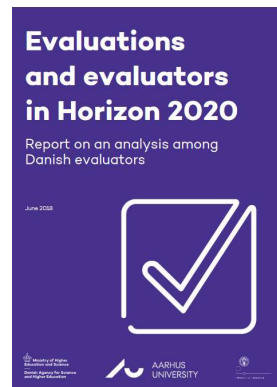
WHAT DO THE EVALUATORS LIKE?

- **The first pages should be exciting**. Do not start with 'Adam and Eve', pitch your ideas immediately and answer the questions 'why is it important' and 'how will your concepts solve the problem?'
- Make **only short background descriptions** that convince the evaluators that you are the right consortium for answering the questions and bring the research beyond state-of-the-art.
- Proposals should **be well structured**, covering the right areas under the different criteria in the proposal template.
- A **strong focus** on relevance for the project. **Nothing even slightly irrelevant** should have a place in the proposal.
- **Clear and convincing** objectives.
- **High quality graphics** that illustrate the concepts in a simple manner.
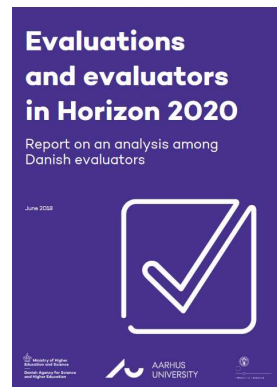- Layout and readability is important.

Evaluations and evaluators in Horizon 2020

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June 2018

Ministry of Higher Education and Science
Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education

AARHUS UNIVERSITY

BACK TO THE BLACK BOX "INDCATORS"

- **Focus on the European "added value" is important!**
- **Good impact is a difficult issue for evaluators!**

→ *"A concrete business plan, a set of KPIs [Key Performance Indicators] or similar are still more convincing than a lot of promises".*

Evaluations and evaluators in Horizon 2020

Report on an analysis among Danish evaluators

June 2018

CONCLUSION

1. Understand the mindset of evaluators
2. Study the evaluation report after you receive it

THANK YOU

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