Evaluation and Impact Assessment in DG Education and Culture (EAC)

Vlaams Evaluatie Platform, Brussel 16 December 2010

Overview

1. **Background**: DG EAC

2. **Evaluation**: What, Why, When, Who, How

3. **Impact Assessment**: What, Why, When, Who, How

4. **Challenges** - keys to success

1. DG EAC

Responsible for	Programmes
Education and training	Lifelong Learning Programme, Erasmus Mundus
Multilingualism	
Part of Research	People (FP7), EIT
Culture	Culture, MEDIA, Media Mundus
Youth	Youth in Action
Sport	---
Central Library, Trainees	Administrative budget

EAC Programmes

Culture, MEDIA,
MEDIA Mundus

EIT

Sport

Lifelong Learning

People

Youth in Action   Erasmus Mundus
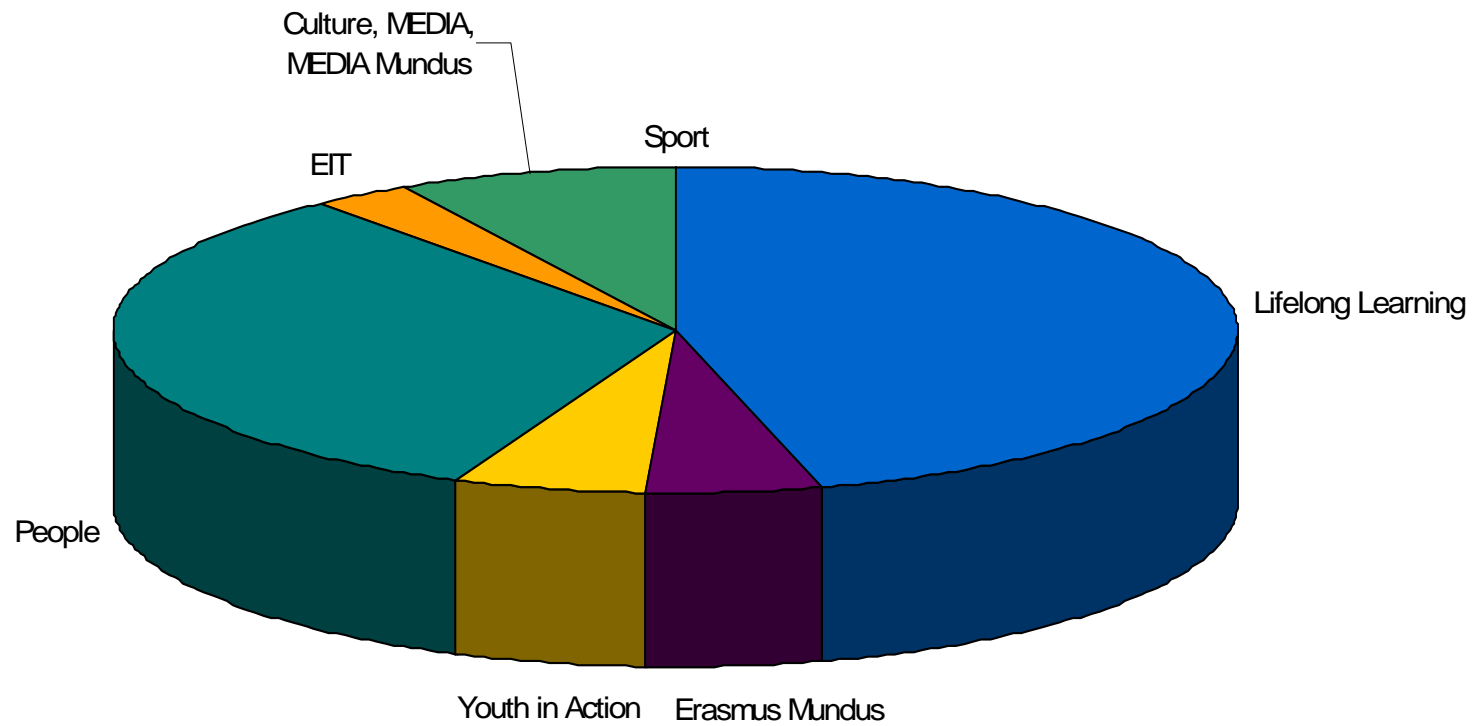
2011 Total: € 2.3 billion

At the heart of "Europe 2020"

Education and Culture DG

Three priorities for Europe 2020

- Smart growth – developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;

- Sustainable growth – promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy;

- Inclusive growth – fostering a high-employment economy delivering economic, social and territorial cohesion.

Seven flagship initiatives, including:

- Innovation Union

- Youth on the move

- An agenda for new skills and jobs

- A digital agenda

Respect for subsidiarity & cooperation

- Soft law (recommendations, resolutions …)
- Communications
- Expert and political dialogue – renewed OMC based on:
  - Common objectives
  - Peer-learning
  - Follow-up of progress
  - European reference tools
- Mainstreaming
- Debates and fora
- Extensive consultation

EAC organisation

- About 600 staff

- Programmes implemented by 2 executive agencies and 71 National Agencies (LLP + YiA)

- 5 operational Directorates
(3 LLP-research, Culture-MEDIA, Youth-Sport)

- 1 resources Directorate
unit R2: budget, strategic planning, evaluation/IA, internal control, risk

2. Evaluation – What?

- *"Judgement of interventions according to their results, impacts and the needs they aim to satisfy"*
  <u>Ref</u>: Responding to Strategic Needs: Reinforcing the use of evaluation, SEC(2007)213

- Evaluation analyses:

  – Relevance

  – Efficiency

  – Effectiveness

  – Utility

  – Sustainability

Intervention Logic and Evaluation Issues
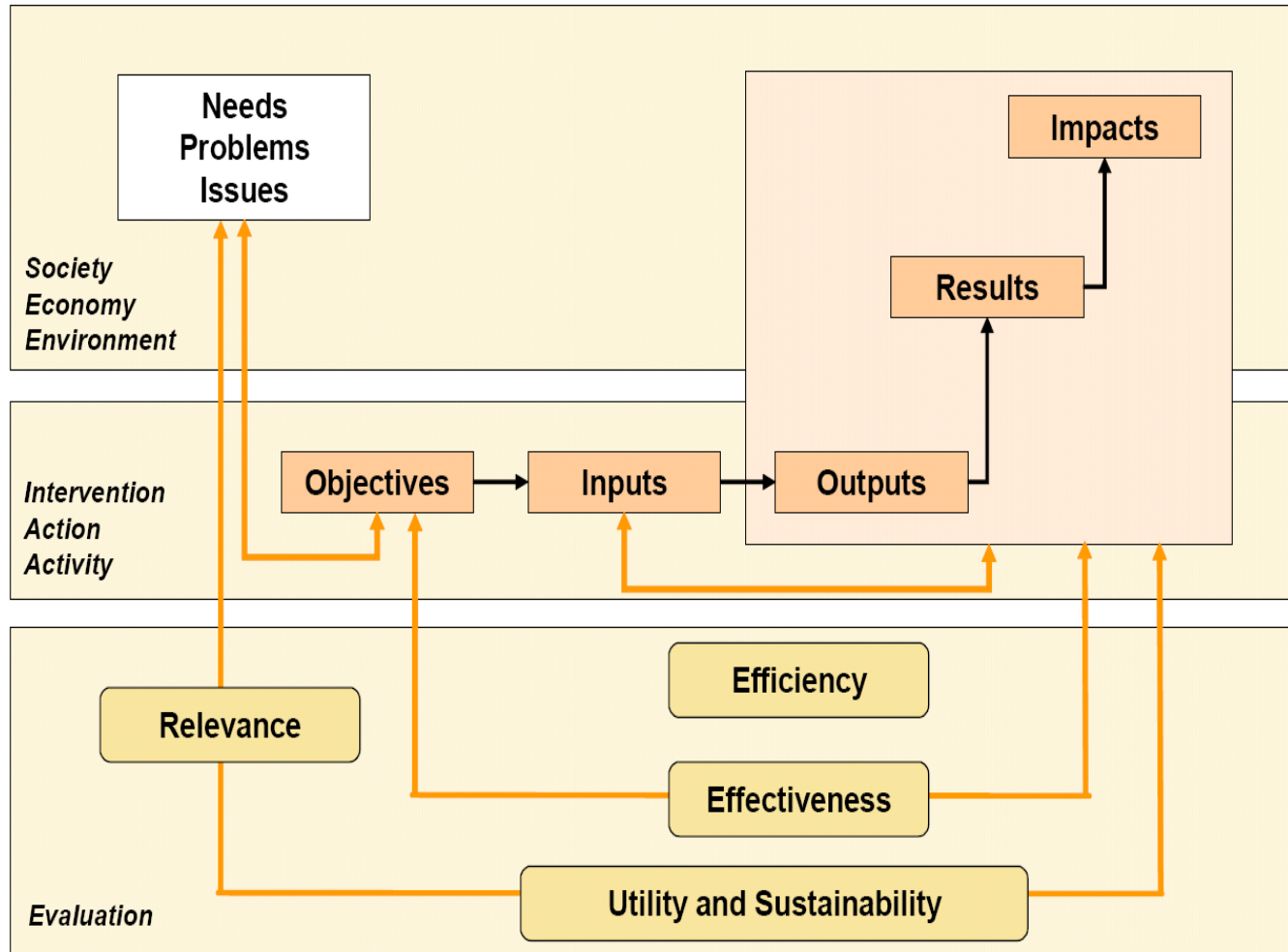
Evaluation – Why?

- Information tool that supports the preparation and implementation of public interventions, and reports on the corresponding results

- Serves double purpose:

  - Learning
  - Accountability

Evaluation – When?

- All EAC activities are evaluated regularly

- Valid, objective and quality assured information is available on a continuous basis, to provide inputs to e.g. the strategic planning cycle

- Evaluations (and impact assessments) are timed and tailored to provide a solid evidence base for all major decisions relating to EAC activities

- Evaluation information is required before new initiatives are accepted in planning (Barroso II working methods)

Evaluation – Who?

- Overall responsibility: operational management of EAC

- A central cell (in Unit R2) provides methodological guidance and quality assurance, and ensures objectivity of evaluations

- Evaluations are carried out by external, independent experts;

- Evaluations are supervised by a Steering Group, consisting of EAC staff + representatives of other DGs

Evaluation – How?

- Because of the nature of EAC interventions, evaluations (and impact assessments) are to a large extent relying on qualitative information, e.g. views of the stakeholders and the citizens

- Therefore, it is crucial that a proper consultation is carried out of all groups concerned

- A combination of different methodological tools is applied to ensure a solid evidence base for all key conclusions

- Responsibility for the methodology lies with the external experts, to ensure objectivity

- Framework contract

DG EAC: Organisation of the Evaluation Process – *allocation of main responsibilities*

Duration (appr.)	2 months		5 - 7 months			8 - 12 months		6 - 12 months	
	Planning		Design			Execution		Follow-up	
	Programming	Preparation	Terms of Reference	Setting up the Assignment	Inception	Data Collection	Analysis & Judgment	Reporting & Dissemination	Action Plan
Evaluation Cell	1. Draft evaluation/IA programme; 4. Submit evaluation/IA programme to SecGen		12. Validate terms of reference				26. Validate final report	28. Complete Q assessm. grids No. 2&3; 29. Update EIMS; 30. Publish on Europa	34. Validate action plan; 36. Monitor implementation
Operational Management	2. Comment on draft Programme; 5. Allocate budget; 6. Appoint evaluation manager	10. Establ. steering group mandate		14. Process contract			27. Approve final report	32. Disseminate evaluation results	33. Draft action plan; 35. Produce progress report
Evaluation Manager		7. Prepare timetable and documentation; 8. Choose procurement procedure; 9. Invite to steering group		14. Process contract			27. Approve final report		
Steering Group			11. Establ. draft Terms of Reference	13. Agree on offer	15. Prepare kick-off; 16. Provide doc. and info. to evaluator; 19. Approve inception report		22. Approve interim report; 25. Comment and agree on Report + Complete Q assessment grid No. 1		
Evaluator				13. Agree on offer	15. Prepare kick-off; 17. Finalise methodolody; 18. Prepare inception report	20. Collect primary and secondary data	21. Provide interim report; 23. Analyse data, provide conclusions and judgments; 24. Provide draft + final evaluation report		
Directors' Board	3. Approve evaluation programme								
Director General							31. Send evaluation report to Cabinet		

3. Impact Assessment – What?

- *"A set of logical steps to be followed when you prepare policy proposals"*
  Ref: Impact Assessment Guidelines, SEC(2009)92

- Evaluation analyses:
  - Relevance
  - Efficiency
  - Effectiveness
  - Utility
  - Sustainability

Impact Assessment – Why?

Education and Culture DG

- A process that prepares evidence for political decision-makers on the advantages and disadvantages of possible policy options by assessing their potential impacts

- Purpose:

  - Early internal coordination
  - Better and comprehensive analysis
    ⇨ better and more coherent proposals
  - Justification and support for proposals
  - Transparency

Impact Assessment – When?

When required?

- IA Guidelines provide no firm rules anymore: decision by the SG, IAB, and DGs concerned

- Based on the nature of an initiative:
  - Proposals for Decisions, Directives and Regulations: always
  - Proposals for Commission and Council Recommendations: highly likely
  - Commission Communications on new/renewed policies: likely
  - Commission Communications on initiative within existing legal framework: unlikely
  - Green Papers: highly unlikely

Impact Assessment – Who?

- Impact assessments are led by operational internal resources, but may have external support

- Central cell plays similar role as for evaluations, but powers to ensure quality assurance are less developed (is changing)

- Impact assessments are supervised by an Inter-service Steering Group

- Impact Assessment Board (IAB): centralised quality assurance
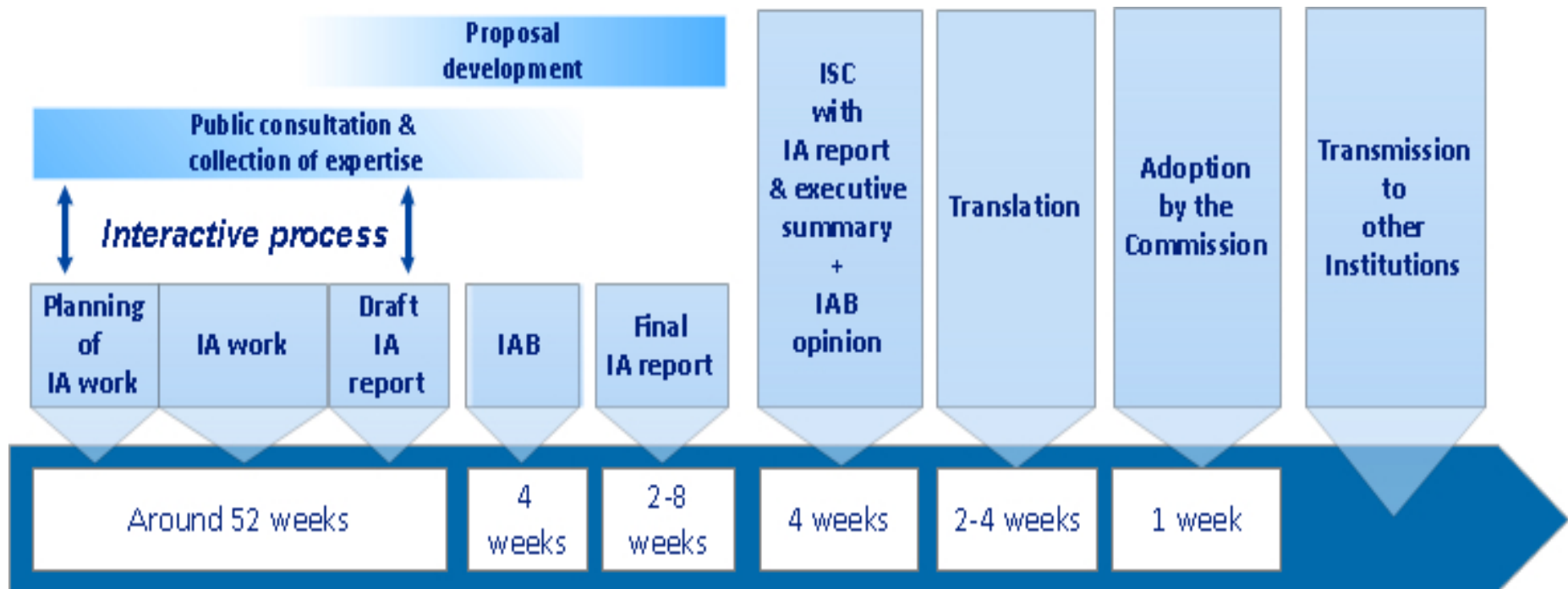
Impact Assessment – How?

- Commission IA guidelines

- Standard content:
  - Problem definition
  - Objectives
  - Options
  - Analysis of economic, social, environmental impacts
  - Compare options
  - Monitoring and evaluation

- Proportionality

- Strong accent on use of available evaluation/studies results

Impact Assessment – How?

4. Challenges

- Long and heavy processes – insufficient resources allocated

- Quality of consultants

- Independence - objectivity

- Application of proportionality (predictability of required quality)

- Insufficient use of results in decision-making process

Keys to success

- Limited political pressure (e.g. on timing IA)

- Strong positive pressure within Institution (IAB)

- Good planning and coordination of work

- Credible and timely internal methodological/technical support

- Clear roles/mandates of actors

- Link between evaluations and IAs

- Trained evaluation/IA managers and enlightened hierarchy