TOOL #52. "BACK-TO-BACK" EVALUATIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Ideally, evaluations and impact assessments should be conducted sequentially so that the results of the evaluation can be fully used in the subsequent impact assessment. This requires appropriate advance planning and may not always be possible. They may be carried out in parallel (in a so-called "back-to-back" manner) as a single process.

Ideally, the intention to conduct a back-to-back evaluation/IA should be clearly specified when the is presented for political validation.553

The text below describes the "back-to-back" process:

(1) Roadmap & inception impact assessment

One combined roadmap/inception impact assessment can be published. This is based primarily on the inception impact assessment but also incorporates elements of the evaluation roadmap554. The template is available from GoPro.

(2) Interservice group

A single interservice group (ISG) should be set up. This may be chaired by the Secretariat-General for important or sensitive initiatives or more usually by the lead DG or service.

(3) Conduct

The evaluation and impact assessment work will follow the usual steps. Any external work conducted to support the evaluation will remain subject to a Quality Assessment, discussed with the ISG.

(4) Stakeholder consultation

A single consultation strategy555 can be prepared. This strategy should be revised and adapted throughout the process to ensure that the necessary work is conducted to gather information from all the identified stakeholder groups to meet the evaluation and impact assessment requirements.

As usual, the consultation strategy should include a range of appropriate consultation activities. One single open public consultation can be used to support the back-to-back evaluation/IA and the scope of the open public consultation will necessarily reflect the stage reached in the (joint) process. There should, however, be a good mix of backward-looking and forward looking questions that address existing performance and the design of the new initiative.

553 See Tool #6 on Planning and political validation.

554 See Tool #7 on Drafting roadmaps, evaluation roadmaps and inception impact assessments

555 See Tool #53 on The consultation strategy
In cases with limited overlap, it should be timed so that stakeholder views can be sought on the (validity of) emerging evaluation findings, together with views on the problems, objectives and possible options.

Only a single Synopsis Report\textsuperscript{556} needs to be drafted as part of the IA report unless the Regulatory Scrutiny Board has selected the evaluation for scrutiny.

\textbf{(5) Evaluation SWD and the IA Report}

For all fitness checks and evaluations selected for scrutiny by the RSB, the results of the evaluation must be presented in a stand-alone SWD, irrespective of the degree of overlap in the back-to-back process.

For other back-to-back evaluations/impact assessments the results of evaluation can be presented as an annex to the IA report. This new annex will follow the structure of an evaluation SWD, reporting as far as possible under each section. It should also explain why a back-to-back approach was taken and identify any limits or issues caused by overlaps in conducting the evaluation and impact assessment.

\textbf{(6) Regulatory Scrutiny Board}

When an evaluation is selected for scrutiny by the RSB, the Board will normally issue a separate opinion on it irrespective of whether it has been prepared "back-to-back" with the impact assessment. A separate evaluation SWD is always required in such cases as well as a separate slot in the Board's rolling activity (meetings) plan. If there are imperative and well-justified timing constraints, the RSB may consider the evaluation SWD and the IA report at the same meeting but in two separate slots. In those cases, the Board will usually still issue a separate opinion on the evaluation SWD.

For back-to-back evaluations not selected for scrutiny by the RSB, the findings of the evaluation may be presented in a self-standing SWD or annexed to the IA report. In either case, the findings will be scrutinised by the RSB as part of its scrutiny of the IA report.

\textsuperscript{556} See Tool #55 on Informing policymaking – the synopsis report.