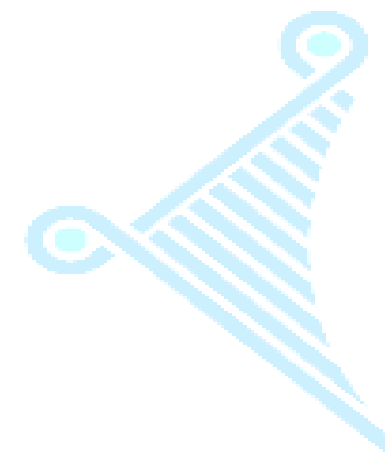
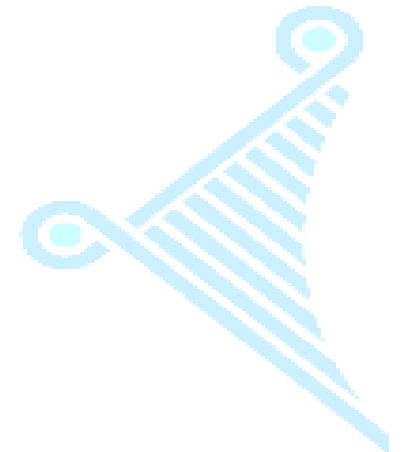

Ireland's Public Policy Evaluation Framework: Experience and Challenges



Contents

1. Overview of evaluation landscape: Why and who?
2. Evolution of Value for Money initiative - 1997 to 2013.
3. Central and Spending Department perspectives
 - i. When does it work well?
 - ii. When is it less successful?
4. Good practice examples
5. International models
6. Future



Why evaluate?

- Answer Value for Money questions
- Inform better resource allocation
- Facilitate reprioritisation
- Promote accountability
- Improve quality of programmes
- Develop new evidence
- Inform better design of new spending
- Key stage in expenditure lifecycle

Gross expenditure for 2014 - €52.9bn
Is this Value for Money?

Public Spending Code Expenditure Lifecycle



Who does evaluation in Ireland?

Central Government

Individual Departments: VFM initiative

DPER: Cross Cutting papers and Mini evaluations

Other agencies

ESRI, NESC, IPA

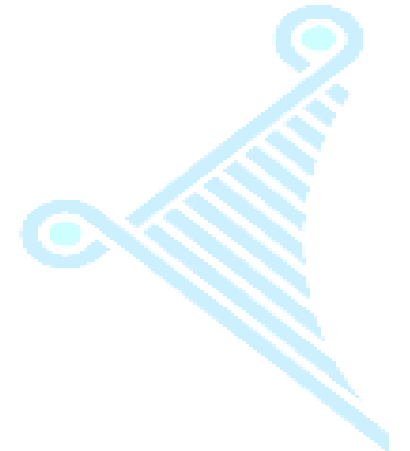
Sectoral = Forfás, Housing Agency, 3rd Sector

Office of the C&AG

Academics

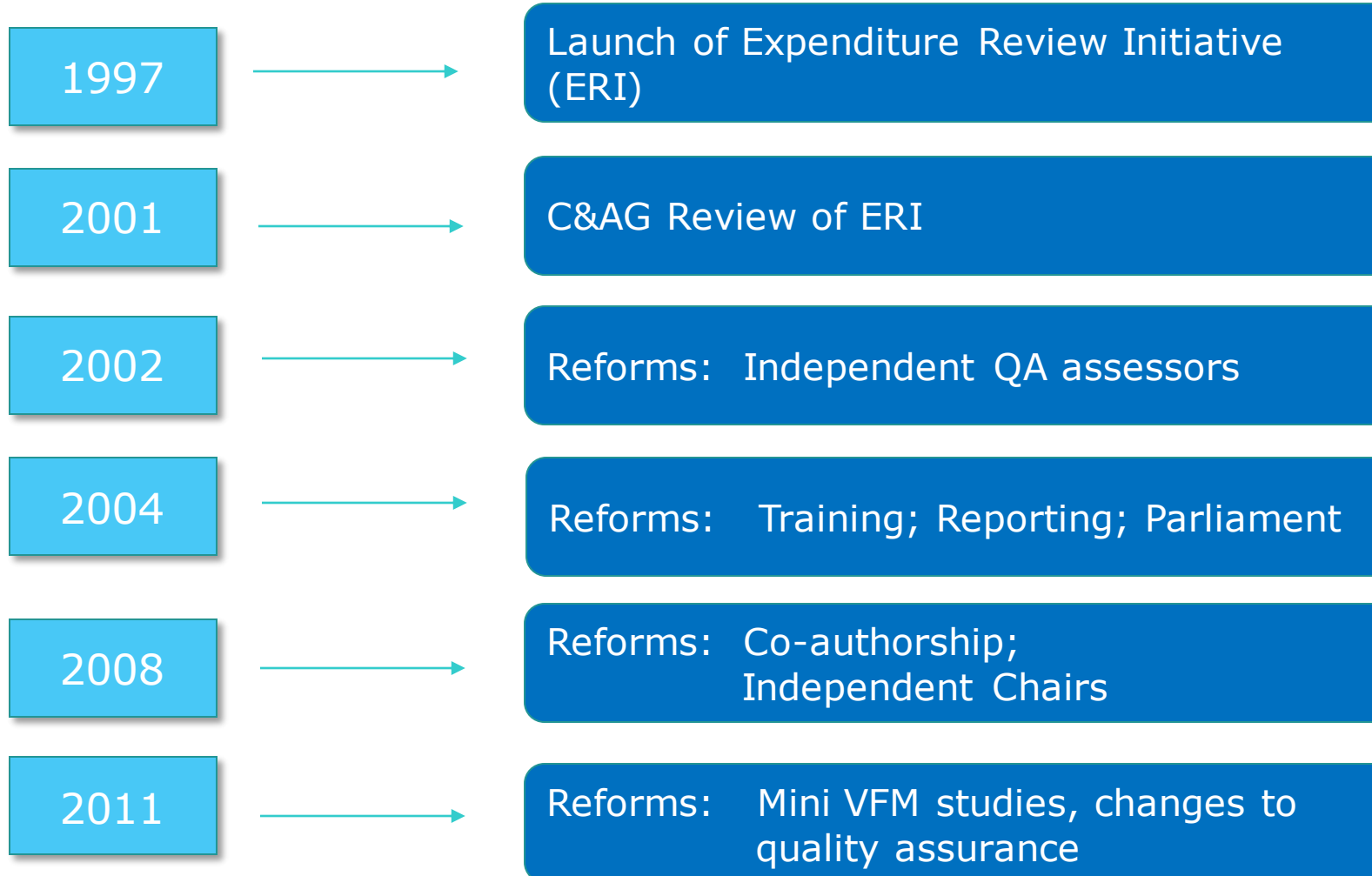
Consultants

Local Government
Audit Service



Evolution of VFM initiative, 1997 to 2013

Ongoing changes...



Selection of current evaluation coverage..

Department	Value for Money Reviews	Stage of completion
Agriculture, Food and Marine	Areas Based Scheme	Completed
	Organic Farming	Finalisation
Foreign Affairs and Trade	EU Missions	Completed
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	Arts Council	Drafting
Communications, Energy & Natural Resources	Public Service Broadcasting Charge	Completed
Tourism, Transport and Sport	Coast Guard	Completed
	Rail Safety	Completed
Children and Youth Affairs	Youth Projects	Finalisation
Justice and Equality	Youth Diversion	Commenced

Focused Policy Assessments/Other Evaluations

Public Expenditure = 10+
Transport = 1
Foreign Affairs = 1
Defence = 1

Public Expenditure & Reform perspective...

When it works well

- Good Independent chairs
- Small steering group
- Lead evaluator with policy analysis skills
- Good methodology
- Proper topic selection
- Still time consuming but worth it



What happens when it doesn't?

- Delayed timelines
- Poor links to resource allocation
- Poor consideration of rationale and effectiveness
- Publishing not timely
- Poor follow up
- Overlap with future policy design

View from other Departments..

- Lengthy process
- Too difficult
- May not affect decision as policy already decided
- Lack of resources can be an impediment
- Difficult and sometimes expensive to get good data
- Managing the message
- Independent unit – difficult to assess programmes for other units



Some good examples

Transport

- Rural Transport e.g. 10% efficiencies identified
- Regional airports e.g. solid findings on rationale

Health

- Disability – covered €1.6bn of spend
- Economic Charges for private beds – new models of charging

Education

- Schools Transport – new charges

Internationally

- ❑ Irish model similar to Dutch approach
- ❑ Some countries have a more decentralised model of commissioning
 - ✓ Dedicated institutes
 - ✓ Academics
- ❑ Codifying requirements for evaluation in legislation e.g. Canada, the Netherlands
- ❑ Same issues in other jurisdictions – inherent in relationship between Treasury and Spending Departments “marking your own homework”
- ❑ Evaluation by specialist evaluation units within Departments seems a good compromise

Ideas for change...



**We have tried variants
of some of these,
feasibility varies...**



Conclusions

- ❑ Clear need for more and better evaluation
- ❑ Ongoing focus on rationale and relevance important for future Comprehensive Reviews of Expenditure
- ❑ Continue and strengthen focus on Focused Policy Assessments
- ❑ More availability of central reporting on VFM initiative progress



Next steps for Value for Money Initiative



Formalise list of VFM/evaluation topics after the budget

New round of Focused Policy Assessments by Irish Government
Economic and Evaluation Service in DPER

Consultation with stakeholders to drive delivery e.g. IGEES boards

