



The Research Council
of Norway

Quality assurance in evaluations

Special Adviser Gro E M Helgesen
ESF MO Forum on Evaluation, Stockholm 10-11 May 2010



EUROHORCs and ESF Vision

5:

- Transnational funding, **benchmarking of quality** and shared scientific priorities for strategic research and researcher-driven programmes

EUROHORCs and ESF – Road Map

6:

Develop common approaches to ex-post evaluation of funding schemes and research programmes by:

- inter-comparison of national evaluation practices
- improving evaluation studies and conducting studies on the effect of evaluation

Overall goal: Improve evaluation studies

Contribute to:

- Quality in internal operations and external accountability
 - Demonstrate funding organisations' and research organisations' excellence and efficiency
- ➔ Working Group on **Quality Assurance in evaluations**

Workshop III – Vienna, 6-7 Oct 2008

- Experiences in ensuring quality in ex-post evaluation (case studies)
 - Evaluation of thematic programme (EAU) (Luxembourg)
 - Evaluation of Transregional Collaborative Research Centers (Germany)
 - Evaluation of research fields/disciplines (Norway)
 - Evaluation of research programmes (Finland)
 - Evaluation challenges (Poland)

Anke's input:

- Connection between a successful evaluation and follow-up
- Organisation of the "evaluation function" within MO organisations
- Quality control/assurance – guidance/quality thresholds
- Short and long term follow-up
- Evaluation circle

Level of ambitions

- Work in work-shops vs. work between work-shops?
- "Handbook" vs. "Guidelines"
 - Research evaluations must be tailored
 - "Ecology" of research systems varies among MO countries
 - Different types of evaluations have different steps that may need different approaches to quality assurance

Types of evaluations (used in report)

- Funding agency as an organisation
- Funding policies (or particular strategic issue)
- Research fields or scientific disciplines
- Funding schemes
- Research grants (single PI or group of recipients)

The challenge of ensuring quality (I)

- Concentrate on “important” evaluations
 - Concentrate resources
 - Meta-evaluations: increase comparability
- Take control of the organisation and planning process
 - Ensure improvements in the process
 - Develop a systematic approach
 - Develop measurements
- Involve the evaluatees
 - Strive for maximum openness
 - Get advice on “problem areas”

The challenge of ensuring quality (II)

- Allow enough time for planning/process
 - Secure the best peers/experts – legitimacy
 - Put energy into the composition of the evaluation team
 - Allow less time for writing report
- Interact with the committee/tenders
 - Explain goals
 - Present expectations concerning advice from evaluation
 - Be open for advice
 - Be a receptive host - open for complaints

Experiences in ensuring quality (III)

- Contact between committee and evaluatees
 - Allow room to correct misunderstandings (dialogue)
- Report
 - Prepare a list of contents
 - Ensure correct facts
 - Allow/invite comments also on final version (confidence)
- Follow-up
 - Describe "carrots" – show possible consequences

Discussion points - Evaluation guidelines

- Is this a relevant theme for a Working Group?
- Level of ambitions
- Existing models?