



# **Use of Evaluation Results**

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# Past Experience

- Ex post evaluations
  - Weaknesses related to timing, data, broad scope, lack of interest from MS
- Strategic evaluations
  - Greater interest from MS, fed into programming (they had an objective)
- Member State experiences
  - Mid Term & ex ante evaluations



# Objectives for Utilisation (1) – some reflections

- ✓ Evaluation is not audit
- ✓ Evaluation is not propaganda
- ✓ The purpose of evaluation is not to write a report, but to improve the quality of public policies
- ✓ Evaluation is about both accountability and learning
- ✓ Evaluation confronts policy makers with the impacts of their policies on the ground
- ✓ Evaluation tells a story



## Objectives for Utilisation (2) – therefore:

- ✓ To demonstrate how resources were spent and what was achieved - accountability
- ✓ To generate evidence on what works and why – to feed policy debate
- ✓ To support a process where conclusions and recommendations are translated into actions by:
  - ✓ the Commission – on policy design
  - ✓ Member States and Regions – on strategic choices and implementation issues
- ✓ To feed the design of future evaluations
- ✓ To spread evaluation culture: evaluation is about learning and debating openly what doesn't work as well as what does (not propaganda – but also not gospel)



# Implications for Evaluation Design

- Know for what purpose you want to use the evaluation:
  - Accountability?
  - To generate evidence which might lead to a change in the policy?
- Realism – on budgets, data and questions
- Selectivity – focus on particular questions – not all possible



# Dissemination

- Not just publishing a report
- Generating debate – e.g., academic hearings, presentations to MS, within the DG
- Production of policy papers which debate the findings, conclusions and recommendations



# From Evaluation to Policy

- Feed into policy debate on future of policy through inputs to speeches by Commissioner, DG, hearings/debates with academics/policy makers
- Reflection with MS on implications for current programmes
- Follow-up in terms of further evaluations which go deeper into some of the issues, both by DG REGIO and by MS/regions



# Final Thoughts

- Implementation of Evaluation recommendations is only one (and probably the most limited) use
- Evaluation should feed an evidence based policy debate (as opposed to anecdote based policy debate)
- Evaluations contribute to enrich a body of knowledge (no magic bullets)
- Therefore, an ongoing programme of evaluations is important