



PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE  
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## Improving the Information Base of Political Decision-making – from Goals to Reality

Working Group Report: Developing the Effectiveness  
Evaluation of Policy Measures



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<b>Name of publication</b> Improving the Information Base of Political Decision-making – From Goals to Reality Working Group Report: Developing the Effectiveness Evaluation of Policy Measures			
<b>Abstract</b>			
<p>At its mid-term policy review session in March 2009, the Government recorded the need to take steps to develop the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures. The Prime Minister's Office launched a project to prepare the issue (the POVI project). An interim report on the project was completed in November; in addition, the experiences of pilot projects have been described in a separate report.</p> <p>The current final project report presents recommendations designed to improve the use of information in preparation and decision-making at Government level. The working group's recommendations are closely linked with the project for developing the effective implementation and monitoring of the Government Programme, prepared under the leadership of the Prime Minister's Office (the KOKKA project).</p> <p>The working group's recommendations are divided into four categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Research and evaluation plan for the Government term</li> <li>2) Responsibilities and organisation</li> <li>3) Changes in modes of operation and the operating culture</li> <li>4) Tools</li> </ol> <p>The work has been supervised by the Prime Minister's State Secretary, and the ministerial working group on better regulation has been kept abreast of the work. Both general evaluation competence and expertise in various impact assessments were represented in the composition of the working group.</p> <p>The working group delivers this report for utilisation when defining procedures in support of political decision-making during the next Government term. The working group encourages broad discussion of the recommendations. Developing the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures is long-range work, which has already been promoted during several Government terms. It is important to link evaluation data with decision-making as closely as possible. Procedures and tools need to be developed, but it also means that the culture for preparing policy measures is developed and dialogue gains a more prominent role in the work process. Realisation of the project's recommendations would involve a shift to more systematic use of information.</p>			
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## Foreword

The procedures followed by ministries – also as concerns the dissemination and utilisation of information – are deeply rooted and marked by tacit knowledge. It is challenging to bring about changes from the outside. However, changes have taken place within a short time when the need has been clear enough and pressures for change have arisen inside the ministry. The crucial factors, therefore, are how the leaders of ministries perceive the needs for change and the importance of those needs, and the extent to which people are ready to work for change. The key feature is that procedural changes must yield genuine value added for everyone and can be implemented as part of daily work.

Changes associated with the culture of disseminating information require that both political actors and public servants want these changes. Work to develop the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures has the goal of supporting political decision-makers. It is the task of public servants and experts to ensure that decision-makers have access to the best possible information as concerns both the impacts of planned political decisions on society and the impacts of steps already taken. But political decision-makers must also be willing to utilise such information. Basing decisions on the best possible information, and disclosing the information sources and the underlying value choices clearly and openly also promote the realisation of democracy.

At its mid-term policy review in March 2009, the Government recorded that work to develop the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures should be started. The Prime Minister's Office launched a project to prepare the issue (the POVI project). An interim project report was completed in November 2009, and the experiences of pilot projects were described in a separate report in January 2011. The current final report presents recommendations that help develop the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures at Government level. The working group's recommendations are closely linked with the project for developing the effective implementation and monitoring of the Government Programme, prepared under the leadership of the Prime Minister's Office (the KOKKA project).

\* \* \* \* \*

Based on the proposals made by the preparatory working group (VNK 6/2009), the tasks of the working group appointed to develop the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures were formulated as follows:

1. To compile and prepare recommendations to the next Government concerning changes that improved linking of evaluation activities with political decision-making may require in the Government's preparatory and decision-making processes, in the roles and responsibilities of various actors (especially the overall responsibility for coordinating and promoting the utilisation of evaluation), and in the tools that can be used for distributing information.
2. To pilot the opportunities offered by new operating models with ministries.
3. To transmit the evaluation perspective to various development projects.

The work has been supervised by the Prime Minister's State Secretary, and the ministerial working group on better regulation has been informed of the work. The working group has maintained close contacts with the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research and has cooperated with various projects and corporations.

Both general evaluation competence and expertise in various impact assessments were represented in the composition of the working group. The working group met eleven times between 15 March 2010 and 31 March 2011 (Appendices 5 and 7). Most meetings were of the workshop type, where the recommendations were handled in detail and as a whole. In addition, the working group members were able to participate in four meetings arranged with the project pilots. The working group has also held discussions with the key stakeholders and experts in order to support the development of its recommendations (Appendix 6).

The working group delivers this report for utilisation when procedures are being defined in support of political decision-making during the next Government term, e.g. when the new Government Programme is being negotiated. The working group encourages open discussion on the recommendations. Developing the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures has been long-range work, which has now been promoted during several Government terms. Development of effectiveness evaluation for policy measures is more than developing various procedures and tools; it also means that the culture for preparing policy measures is developed and conversation gains a more prominent role in the work process. The recommendations also raise issues concerning tools and give detailed recommendations for various processes.

The members of the working group have drawn up the recommendations in this report unanimously, and are ready to discuss them with various bodies, as needed.

**Chairperson:**

Sirpa Kekkonen, Senior Adviser for Government Programme Monitoring, Prime Minister's Office

**Members:**

Klaus Halla, Director of Development, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Sari Heinonen, Leading Specialist, SITRA

Katju Holkeri, Director, Ministry of Finance

Tomi Halonen, Counsellor of Education, Ministry of Education and Culture

Liisa Lundelin-Nuortio, Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Employment and the Economy

Sari Löytökorpi Secretary General, Advisory Board for Sectoral Research

Per Mickwitz, Professor, University of Tampere/ Finnish Environment Institute

Tea Skog, Researcher, Ministry of Justice

Jyrki Tala, Professor, National Research Institute of Legal Policy

Esko Mustonen, Deputy Government, Controller-General, Ministry of Finance

Georg Henrik Wrede, Programme Director, Policy Programme for the Well-being of Children, Youth and Families

**Secretaries:**

Taina Kulmala, Senior Specialist, Prime Minister's Office

Ruusa Hilakari, Senior Specialist, Prime Minister's Office

Jarno Lehtola, Project Worker, Prime Minister's Office

# 1 VISION: FROM SCATTEREDNESS TO A SYSTEMATIC OPERATING MODEL

## Why does evaluation need to be developed?

The quality and effectiveness of decision-making can be improved by consolidating the information base for decision-making. A diverse information base guarantees high-quality preparation for decision-making. According to the Governance Review conducted by the OECD in 2010, Finland has the preparedness for an evidence-based decision-making culture. The proposals for development presented in this report aim at the kind of utilisation of research and evaluation information that could become a stronger element of decision-making and preparation at Government level.

The information society has much evaluation data and other research data. However, those who need information do not necessarily encounter that information in the most efficient way. Evaluation data are utilised in the preparation of policy measures and at various stages of decision-making. However, in our current operating model, it is not always ensured sufficiently that the necessary information is channelled effectively for supporting decision-making in society.

It has been concluded in various contexts that evaluation of the impacts and effectiveness of policy measures is inadequate in Finland. The problem is, in particular, **that evaluation information is not used systematically and its use is not required**. Evaluation activities and the use of evaluations are not organised clearly. Nor does anyone bear the overall responsibility for the development and upkeep of the evaluation system.

Impact assessment and effectiveness evaluation are **sectoral**, having gained different scopes and depths in various sectors. The sectoral nature of evaluation activities makes it more difficult to manage intersectoral policy entities and to recognise how issues are interlinked. There is no tradition for systematic and wide-ranging exploitation of evaluation data. However, correctly aimed decision-making needs information produced at various sources. What is essential is **to be able to combine information, to recognise the essential information and to synthesise and transmit the information in a usable form to decision-makers**.

Apart from the POVI working group, several other bodies have analysed development needs associated with the information base of decision-making. The Research and Innovation Council concluded recently that the utilisation of research information in decision-making is not at a sufficiently high standard. There is also room for development of the ways in which researchers make new information and their own expertise available to people preparing and making decisions. A study conducted by the Academy of Finland listed a number of obstacles to the application of research findings. These include cases where users did not recognise the application potential of the findings, no suitable users existed, or legislation and the political objectives impeded the utilisation of information. Alongside the traditional researcher-oriented perspective, demand-oriented and user-oriented policies accentuate the need for and exploitation of research findings.

On several occasions, bodies engaged in evaluation have expressed the viewpoint that evaluation results are little utilised, the division of labour and responsibilities for the development of evaluation is unclear, and competence is splintered. When evaluations supporting political decision-making are funded through public means, the responsibilities or obligations for their utilisation should be clear. Shortcomings have also been discovered in the development of methods and in the usability of data resources. Moreover, the systematic evaluation of effectiveness is still relatively new, and good practices are yet to be established for its utilisation in decision-making. If closer links are to be forged between evaluation and the development of activities and decision-making, clear and strong vision as well as processes for the use of information are needed.

The POVI pilot projects (Appendix 1) has identified various problems in the utilisation of information: not only lack of commitment and inadequate steering on the part of the management but also an insufficient level of implementing policy measures. Furthermore, the recognition of regional and local perspectives and overly strict timetables for the wide-ranging utilisation of information, e.g. when analysing opinions, have often been seen as problems. The table below illustrates some development challenges and current problems identified in the POVI project, in the related discussions and in the evaluations of the pilot projects.

**Political challenges**

- the convergence of information and its need both contentwise and timewise
- identification of information needs in horizontal phenomena and shortcomings in the large-scale utilisation of information in sectoral administration
- information that is one-sided and narrow in scope
- lack of interest in information or lack of time and processes for the utilisation of information

**Challenges in preparation by public servants**

- no steering system or obligations for the utilisation of evaluation data
- information is not available or it cannot be found
- it is not believed that one can learn from earlier decisions
- information is splintered and sector-specific
- information is too general and does not apply to concrete preparation
- no one has overall responsibility for the development of a systematic evaluation plan
- monitoring of implementation and impact assessment are seen as extra work
- there is no common operating culture for the compilation and utilisation of evaluations
- hurried preparation and lack of resources
- structural obstacles, such as fees, in the availability of information

**Challenges in the generation of information**

- the generation of information is not always linked with phenomena on which information is needed, or information is generated on issues that are irrelevant from the user's point of view
- information is narrow in scope and splintered
- the results are presented poorly
- the timing of the results does not match the needs of preparation
- the difficulty of tasks in information generation
- ex-post evaluation does not stay in step with the world's changes
- correct and equal targeting of research resources

## Goal and focus

The use of effectiveness data in individual policy measures can be improved by developing procedures and by adopting technical aids. What is involved, however, is a **broader system change that enhances the systematic use of information to support political decision-making**. A systematic change does not happen by making individual changes; instead, it requires long-term development and a change in the operating culture. The recommendations given in this project are signposts towards the goal. Systematic change requires constant development and the monitoring of modifications carried out.

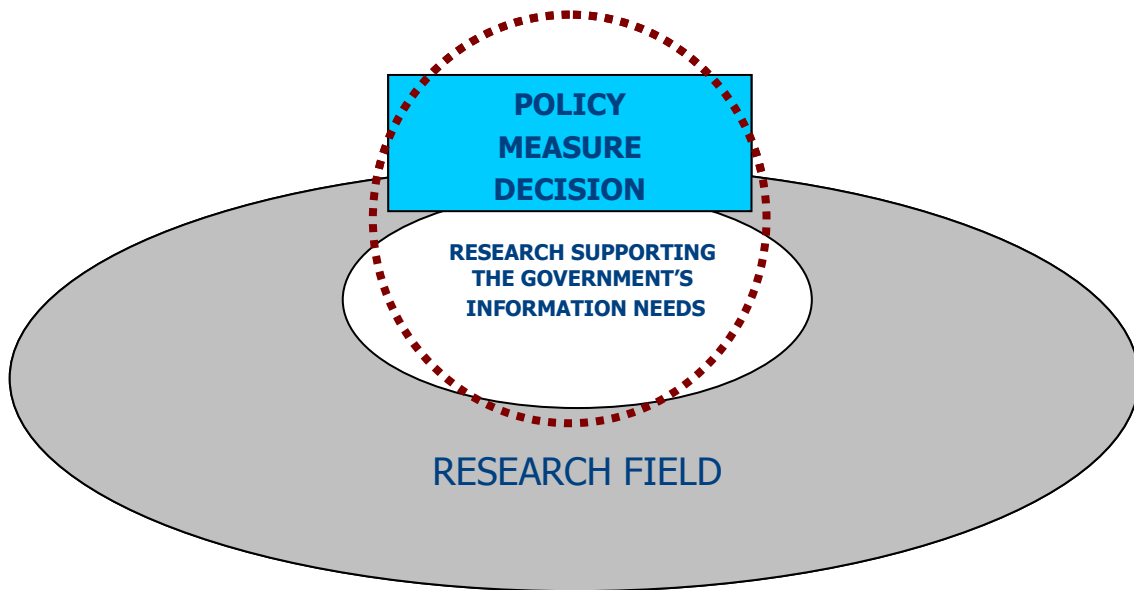
The development of society is a long-term process and policy themes often remain on the agenda for a long time even when Governments change. Political decision-making is cyclical, and often the same questions are taken up from one term to the next, with varying emphasis. Information on impacts, serving decision-making in advance, creates evaluation criteria and an evaluation base for the retargeting of policies in the next phases of decision-making. The improved use of information must provide **long-term support for decision-making in society**.

The whole range of information generation cannot, and need not, be applied to all decision-making. It is also important to be aware of the different time spans of, in particular, research and policy measures and the timeliness of information use. In the working group's opinion, the first priority is that a sufficient information base, starting from the needs of the users of information (those preparing and making decisions), is ensured to serve as **background for the most important social reforms**. This is done by applying a **systematic operating model for evaluation and research at Government level**. In development work, attention should shift from individual evaluations and the associated shortcomings towards the generation, synthesis and use of broad-based information from various sources that supports the Government's decision-making as a whole. This work has focused on reinforcement of the information base for Government-level decisions – especially for policy measures<sup>1</sup> associated with the Government's priority themes – and on the better utilisation of information in the related preparation and decision-making. The terms used in this work are defined in more detail in Appendix 2.

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<sup>1</sup> At its most concrete, a policy measure is a decision, but it can also be considered to be an aggregate of measures where the various phases of decision-making (anticipation, planning, preparation by public servants, weighing of alternative decisions, final decision, supervision of implementation and monitoring of impacts, and feedback for the next stages) are more or less binding. According to the working group's definition, policy measures include the Government Programme, the Government's Strategy Document, government decisions on spending limits and the budget, Government proposals, reports and resolutions, various strategies, reforms and programmes. The working group's deliberations apply to Government-level policy measures.

**Figure 1** Focus of development work.



Development of the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures has contact points with several other ongoing development projects (Appendix 3). Cooperation has been particularly close with the project appointed by the Prime Minister's Office for evaluating and developing the procedures used for monitoring the Government Programme (the KOKKA project), which has also served as an 'umbrella' for the POVI project. The KOKKA project focuses on the development of methods for the implementation and monitoring of the entire Government Programme, and the recommendations presented in the POVI project are closely linked with the recommendations given in the KOKKA project. Realisation of some of the recommendations presented in this report requires that the recommendations of the KOKKA project are put into practice.

Another issue raised in conjunction with the POVI project is how to assure the quality of effectiveness evaluations applied to legislative drafting; this is discussed in more detail in connection with the project 'Effective legislative drafting'. The 'Effective legislative drafting' project has defined an ideal model for law drafting, which draws attention to the challenges facing the acquisition and utilisation of information during the process of legislative drafting. The ideal model for law drafting has clearly identified the phases of the drafting process where data resources, studies and evaluations carried out or commissioned, as well as political decision-making, have their own places.

The working group has defined **the following vision for the new operating model:**

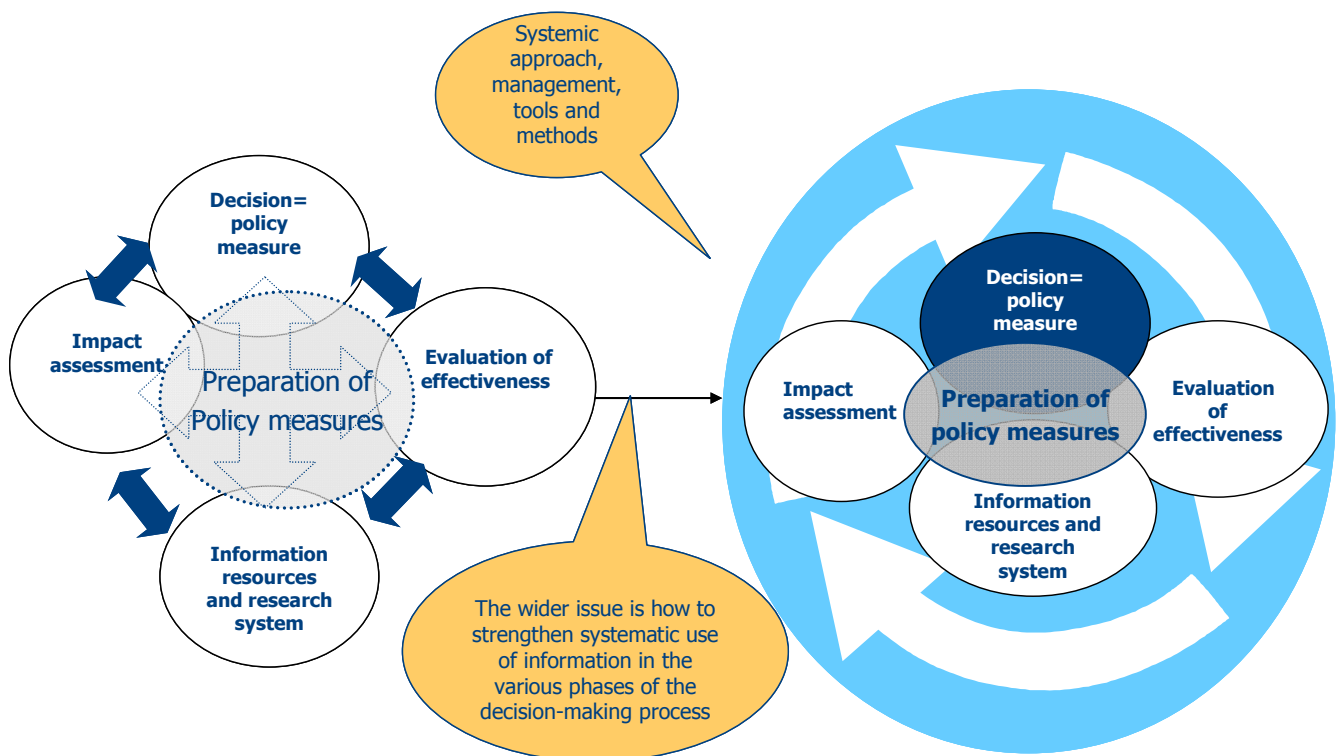
**VISION: Political decision-making and preparation within the Government are based on widespread information. Continued development of society is supported by ensuring that the experiences and effectiveness data gained from earlier policies guide political decision-making over a long term.**

**Implementation of the vision requires an operating model that helps ensure a strong and horizontal information base for the most important sociopolitical decisions.**

**In this operating model:**

- **evaluation and research data are used systematically** in identifying reform needs, in selecting the most effective policy measures, and in the various phases of decision-making and its preparatory process
- **information needs** are defined and identified starting from political priorities
- **information resources** are of a high standard and are used effectively
- **the management system** supports the timely, efficient and systematic use of evaluation and research data
- **interaction** among the producers and users of evaluation and research data is smooth
- **reporting** is as practical and light as possible, is linked with other processes and does not unnecessarily burden public servants and political decision-makers.

**Figure 2** From scatteredness to a new, integrated operating model.



The working group's recommendations have been divided into four categories as follows:

**1) Research and evaluation plan for the Government term**

- The principal objects for evaluation are determined in line with the Government Programme's priorities
- The plan is incorporated into the Government Strategy
- Prepared by the body coordinating sectoral research; compiled by the Prime Minister's Office in cooperation with ministries

**2) Responsibilities and organisation**

- Overall coordination
- The policy analysis functions of ministries are appointed and their responsibilities are assigned at the start of the Government term
- Intermediary functions

**3) Changes in modes of operation and the operating culture**

- The information base of decision-making is consolidated
- Interaction between decision-makers, preparatory bodies and researchers is improved
- Communications are developed

**4) Tools**



## 2 FROM GOALS TO REALITY: RECOMMENDATIONS

### 2.1 A strategic research and evaluation plan is drawn up for the Government term

As problems and events in society are becoming increasingly complex, there is more need for diverse information that can be used as a basis for decision-making. The shift to evidence-based policy-making is ever more accentuated. It is required in society that legislative solutions and the targeting of public resources are based on the best possible information about various alternatives and their different impacts. Decision-makers also want to monitor the impacts of their decisions in retrospect, in order to determine whether the direction taken should perhaps be adjusted in the future. A good information base improves the quality of decisions. Democracy is also promoted when decisions are based on the best possible information and the information sources are made known clearly and openly. Good advance assessment of the impacts of strategically important decisions creates the basis for the ex-post evaluation of the policies pursued.

In the working group's opinion, research and evaluation should be put to the service of political priorities better than at present. The previous Government strove to advance this goal and to strengthen the horizontality of research by organising the steering of sectoral research within a separate horizontal advisory board for sectoral research. The reform of sectoral research has not fulfilled the expectations, which is largely due to the fact that there have been no mechanisms for ensuring sufficient funding for horizontal policy entities.

Parallel with the POVI project, the project undertaken by the Prime Minister's Office for the effective implementation of the Government Programme (the KOKKA project) has drafted recommendations for processes that would be adopted during the new Government term to strengthen the strategic implementation of the Government Programme. The recommendations are based on the idea that the Government Programme, or the Government's Strategy Document supplementing the Government Programme, clearly indicates the intersectoral policy themes that are prioritised during the Government term. Through the process of monitoring the implementation of the Government Programme, the priority themes and, for instance, the associated principal legislation projects gain special attention. According to the KOKKA project, their progress would be assessed in the Government's strategy session held annually.

The POVI working group considers that evaluation and research in the Government's interests should be linked efficiently with the priorities of the Government's political agenda. The steering of sectoral research should be organised so that it can genuinely ensure the realisation of the horizontal information needs prioritised by the Government. Correspondingly, competent ex-ante evaluation of policy measures must be linked with the priorities specified in the Government Programme. Since in many cases the line between evaluation and research is vague, we can talk about a combined strategic evaluation and research plan for the Government term. Implementation of this plan and the real benefits are realised only if it is ensured that sufficient resources are targeted at research and expert activities supporting the Government's need for information.

### **Recommendation 1**

**A strategic research and evaluation plan** supporting the implementation of the Government Programme is drawn up for the Government term. The plan is based on the priority themes designated in the Government Programme.

- The decision on the research and evaluation plan is an element of the Government's strategy and its goal is to support the implementation of the Government Programme.
- Decisions on the themes of the research and evaluation plan and on the amount of funding are made at the outset of the Government term, as part of the Government's strategy.
- The research and evaluation data produced in accordance with the plan serve as the primary **information base** for assessing the attainment and advancement of the Government Programme's goals and for making any adjustments to the Government's strategy.
- The plan can be revised at the Government's annual strategy session.
- The body coordinating sectoral research prepares the plan and the Prime Minister's Office compiles it in cooperation with ministries.

**It should be emphasised that the research and evaluation plan is not a new, separate planning and reporting procedure; instead, it is part of the process for implementing and monitoring the Government Programme.** Drawing up the plan can begin immediately once the Government's priorities have been determined. As the coordinator of the Government's strategy, the Prime Minister's Office is responsible for the compilation and preparation of the plan **in cooperation and in active interaction with the body responsible for the coordination of sectoral research and with ministries and through them producers of information.**

It must also be stressed that the **strategic research and evaluation plan is not used for steering all research and evaluation activities managed at Government level**; it is only used for the part that supports the Government's political priorities at Government level.

**The strategic focal points of research and evaluation, linked with the prioritised policy themes,** may already be defined in the next **Government's programme.** The **focal areas of research and evaluation** must be confirmed in the Government's Strategy Document, at the latest. The timetable for setting the Government's strategy will determine how detailed entries are made in the strategic research and evaluation plan for the Government term. The KOKKA project recommends that the Government's strategy is fixed at the same time as the Government confirms the first resource limits and budget proposal for the electoral term. In this way, the strategic content planning and the preparation of spending limits would constitute a single coordinated process. According to preliminary plans, the confirmation of the Government's strategy, including the spending limits for central government finances, would take place in early September 2011.

The research and evaluation plan could then include the focal points of the activities to be funded and carried out, the definition of responsibilities for preparation, the amount of resources available, the preliminary implementation schedule, and the communications plan. The body responsible for the steering of sectoral research would draw up the detailed implementation plans for the focal areas of the research and evaluation plan. This body would also be responsible for competitive tendering and funding decisions for research and evaluation orders.

Once the Government's information needs have been outlined, the first stage when planning is launched is **to map the field of actors associated with the information needs, to determine the existing information base and to identify the principal gaps in information**. During the past Government term, the subcommittees of the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research conducted valuable basic charting of the existing information base in some policy areas. This charting work can be utilised when the new research and evaluation plan is drawn up. Expertise in research and evaluation must be linked with the preparation of the plan, carried out transparently.

In terms of their scopes, the focal areas of **the research plan** may correspond to the current subcommittee division of the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research. The focal points of **evaluation** are directed at a few (3–5) socially important policy entities, reforms or projects when there is the need to assess impacts in advance or to compile ex-post evaluation material available for a certain selected policy theme.

The KOKKA project recommends that the Government hold an annual strategy session that would concentrate on evaluating the current status of the goals set in the Strategy Document and any needs for retargeting that there might be. In this connection, the Government has the option of basing its strategic evaluation not only on the legislative plan but also on the data material generated alongside the strategic research and evaluation plan. On the other hand, it is possible to review the progress of the plan and, whenever necessary, to speed up the measures specified in the plan. The strategic research and evaluation plan would be discussed at the Government's annual strategy session from two perspectives: on the one hand, it creates an information base for evaluation; on the other, the feasibility of the plan is reviewed and its focus is adjusted.

## 2.2 Responsibilities are defined and transmission of information is strengthened

Interfaces and impact chains among issues are increasingly complex and often have wide-ranging and long-term effects. In preparation work at Government level, the challenge is to ensure that the information base for the Government's decision-making is horizontal and takes into account the way in which issues are interlinked. Information must be collected from many sources, and the essential information must be filtered for use by political decision-makers. It must be possible to synthesise information so that it is useful for decision-makers; it is then the responsibility of decision-makers to draw the necessary conclusions.

The sectoral generation of information is a major problem. Situations have arisen where information would have been needed, for instance, in legislative drafting, but the availability of information and the resources for the acquisition and utilisation of information have been insufficient. The need for a comprehensive information base is recognised, but sectoral preparation may limit the scope of the information base and may make it more difficult to understand the whole.

The problems arising from the present situation where the generation and transmission of information is fragmented and sectoral could be reduced if **the total responsibility and**

**coordination responsibility for the utilisation of information at Government level were defined unequivocally.** Insofar as the better utilisation of effectiveness evaluation is linked to serve the effective implementation and monitoring of the Government Programme, in particular, the natural coordinating body is the Prime Minister's Office. The office already has a Policy-analysis Unit that compiles and summarises development indicator data, economic research, and evaluation of the implementation of the Government Programme needed by the Prime Minister and the Government. The Policy-analysis Unit works essentially as a network, linking all ministries and, through them, research institutes operating in various sectors, to the generation and processing of information.

#### **Recommendation 2**

**The Prime Minister's Office is responsible** for the overall coordination of information **pertaining to the Government's strategy processes**, and for the processes of information use, as part of the preparation for strategy sessions.

- In cooperation with ministries, the Prime Minister's Office is responsible for compiling the information base for the Government's strategy sessions and ensures that the information specified in the strategic research and evaluation plan is available to the Government at these sessions.
- The Prime Minister's Office serves as an intermediary when information and analysis material are compiled for use by the Government in strategic decision-making. The Prime Minister's Office works as a network and cooperates, for instance, with the Government financial controller's function and the National Audit Office.
- Insofar as the legislative plan included in the Government's strategy and the related evaluation are concerned, the Prime Minister's Office cooperates with the Ministry of Justice and other ministries.

In the preparation of policy measures, the generation and use of information is always strategic and serves a certain goal. It is therefore important that the preparation is grounded in a comprehensive and diverse information base collected from various sources. Both the discussions held in connection with the project to develop the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures, and the views obtained from the pilot projects, indicate that the acquisition and use of information need more support than at present. In the information flood, **the role of the transmitters of information has also become more accentuated and will gain even more importance in the future.**

In the future, effort should be made at Government level to find more modes of operation and to build an operating culture that enable knowledge management where the best possible information and expertise serve decision-making seamlessly. Ministries are constantly engaged in analysis work that is linked with the processes of the ministries' own administrative branches, but only some bodies are equipped with actual policy analysis resources. Certain ministries (the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Employment and the Economy) have assembled and reinforced their policy analysis capacity. Correspondingly, there is the need to develop analysis competence more widely within the entire Government. As part of this project, a simple survey of the ministries' current evaluation, planning and reporting functions was carried out. The survey showed that the organisation of these functions varies greatly from one ministry to the next (Appendix 4).

In order to create a stronger information base to support decision-making, it would be good for ministries to define **the principles of knowledge management** and to ensure their efficient realisation as part of the implementation of projects such as the enterprise

architecture project and the interoperability development programme<sup>2</sup>. For developing knowledge management at the level of individual ministries, it could be useful to describe how the information available can be used to support decision-making and how to ensure the reliability and usability of the information. In addition, it would be important to monitor how the processes of knowledge management are carried out and how the goals set for them are achieved.

All ministries should pay attention to the ability and resources to produce, analyse, compile and transmit policy-relevant information in both the short term and the long term. The efficient use of information as the basis for political decision-making would be strengthened considerably if each ministry had clearly designated the bodies and persons who are responsible for policy analysis in the sector concerned. This could mean that the various evaluation and reporting functions and resources that support the leadership of ministries would be organised systematically so that they would reinforce each other and would not overlap. Ministries should consider putting such functions together.

**Ministry-specific policy analysis function** may include the ministry's resources for coordinating foresight and research efforts, the controller function, the resources associated with the monitoring of the Government Programme, etc. In some ministries, such functions have been assembled under what are known as staff functions. The assembly of functions does not necessarily involve the establishment of units; it can mean, for instance, that the functions already existing in the ministry are reassigned and redefined, that a coordinating network or working group is established within the ministry, or that intersectoral analysis is conducted. The policy analysis functions of ministries constitute a natural network for cooperation at Government level.

**Recommendation 3**

**Intersectoral functions and resources associated with evaluation and reporting should be identified in each ministry. Whenever necessary, these should be put together, or the ministries' policy analysis functions should otherwise be clearly designated and assigned.**

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<sup>2</sup> The goal of the interoperability development programme is to create an enterprise architecture as a tool for managing the development of operations and information systems at all levels of State administration. Another goal is to plan and adopt a model for maintaining the architecture and for utilising architecture descriptions in the steering of development projects and in the design and implementation of systems. State administration uses enterprise architecture as a tool for improving compatibility. Enterprise architecture is an instrument of strategic management that is used to harmonise the development of operations and the utilisation of information and communications technology. By means of enterprise architecture, strategic goals (customer orientation, sustainable development and more efficient service production) can be taken into account better in the development of public services. Operational structures and ICT solutions can be planned in a balanced way, paying attention to technological potential and the whole life cycle of the solutions. Enterprise architecture describes how the organisation's services, processes, organisation units and people, and ICT solutions work together as a whole.

### **Operating principle of the ministry-specific policy analysis function and *examples of tasks***

#### Objective:

- Transmits and combines the existing mass of data and serves as an intermediary for information both in its own sector and for other administrative branches (e.g. policy briefs). In addition, participates in the compilation of the information base for the Government's strategy sessions, in the monitoring of the Government Programme, and in cooperation within the *Findicator*<sup>3</sup> network.

#### Tasks:

- Cooperates with the body coordinating sectoral research and maintains links with the performance management of sectoral research institutions. Orders and transmits strategic studies and evaluations, especially those linked with the Government's priority themes.
- Promotes the utilisation of information services and other similar functions more efficiently than before in both the acquisition and distribution of information within ministries and projects. Participates in the development of knowledge management and in enterprise architecture work.
- Supports and develops impact assessment within the ministry, e.g. in relation to legislative projects and, whenever necessary, supports other ministries in assessments pertaining to the specific sector of the ministry concerned (e.g. enterprise impacts in the case of the Ministry of Employment and the Economy).
- Participates in foresight efforts and in cooperation pertaining to situational awareness and supports the distribution of information generated during these processes.
- Supports the evaluations conducted within the ministry and its administrative branch and ensures that the results of evaluations are utilised. Links the results achieved with future preparation and planning and, within a longer time span, with monitoring.
- Ensures that the planning of policy measures in the ministry is based on a Government-level policy concerning knowledge management and on the outlines approved in the ministry's policy/strategy concerning knowledge management.
- Participates in and coordinates various reporting procedures and coordinates operations associated with risk management within its own sector.

#### Operating principle:

- A networked, multidirectional, active and flexible mode of operation; no new structures; instead, changes to modes of operation and gathering of resources and abilities.
- In addition, public servants need to be versed in policy analysis, in serving as clients and in evaluation; these aspects are considered when training and recruiting personnel.

## 2.3 Operational changes and the operating culture

The discussions held in the POVI working group and the exchanges of ideas with the pilot projects and stakeholders have clearly indicated that the use of information and knowledge management are very topical and important issues in public administration and political decision-making. When striving towards a more systematic, wide-ranging use of information, certain aspects pertaining to the operating culture and modes of operation gain a more prominent role. It is often difficult to direct any concrete ideas for change at such aspects. These changes are often the most challenging of all since they involve re-evaluation of people's routines and established working methods. When changing ways of thinking and working, it is highly important to interact with other people who are interested in the same issue.

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<sup>3</sup> The Findicator service includes data on key social indicators produced by a variety of organisations [www.findikaattori.fi](http://www.findikaattori.fi). Please note that the whole service is only available in Finnish. The main page of the service and a list of the indicators is available in English.

Changes would be needed in the operations of all groups – producers, transmitters and users of information – both within individual ministries and at Government level. **There are problems in the way in which producers and users of information meet and interact with each other.** By nature, scientific research is deeply analytical and very detailed, whereas people preparing and making decisions often **need synthesising and summarising information that is systematic and covers wide thematic entities.** **The communication of information – both political needs and research findings –** is a central target of development.

Finland has organisations and networks that deal with issues relating to the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures. These networks will need to be used efficiently as general discussion forums for evaluation activities, concentrating, e.g. on the current state of effectiveness evaluation and ideas for development.

A good way for ensuring all-round expertise and improving the standard of preparation is to make use of various consultation practices, rounds for comments and panels. It is also worth considering whether a common Government-level instrument, such as an action plan or a resolution, would be needed to boost development of the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures and to increase the wide-ranging use of information.

#### **Recommendation 4**

The varied information base for the preparation and monitoring of decisions is ensured by means of various (alternative) **interaction forms between the producers and users of information**, for instance:

To provide viewpoints and an information base for issues under preparation, expert forums are organised on themes prioritised by the Government.

- Expert forums may consist of one or two meetings to answer a specific need, or they may be groups set up for a longer period of time.
- At their own initiative or upon request, expert forums present various viewpoints, recommendations, and assessments concerning the impacts and effectiveness of decisions to be made on issues under preparation.
- The work done by expert forums supports the information needs of decision-making in a flexible manner and increases cooperation between researchers, preparatory bodies and decision-makers.

A conscious and constructive opponency procedure is developed and favoured. In accordance with the practice of “the Devil’s advocate”<sup>4</sup>, a person is called and appointed to evaluate and intentionally question the scope and quality of the information base for a certain preparatory process of social importance. This practice could be piloted in some separately agreed projects during the next electoral term.

Apart from using traditional formal working groups and statements, it is recommended that ministries consider other, more flexible alternatives for interaction between producers and users of information.

- One option is to adopt information exchange meetings, which are convened by the body responsible for the preparation of the issue at hand. These meetings are a lighter alternative to setting up a working group proper, and they enable a flexible and conversational approach, e.g. with researchers and stakeholders.

<sup>4</sup> In the Catholic church, a Devil’s advocate (in Latin *advocatus diaboli*, officially *Fidei defensor*) is a member of a commission set up to investigate the divine origin of various miracles. The Devil’s advocate’s task is to argue against the alleged miracle. Nowadays the term may refer to persons who defend a view just for the sake of argument without even believing it themselves, or to a situation where people argue against something that they believe themselves – for instance, just to test the validity of their own arguments.

- Another way is to develop and capitalise on researcher pools. It is important to ensure that researcher pools have a broad base and include participants from a wider selection of bodies than the research and expert institutions of the sector concerned. Closer interaction enables better targeting of the existing information and research to support decision-making. Moreover, it is a way of assisting ministries' personnel in their role as intermediaries for information.

The use of a citizens' panel is piloted in some policy preparation tasks pertaining to the Government's priority themes, utilising the opportunities offered by the Platform for Participation (?) project<sup>5</sup>.

- A panel is assembled of citizens affected by the policy measure. The members of the panel are given the same information as the decision-makers (cf. consideration of matters in a parliamentary committee). The alternative policy measures are presented to the panellists, who are then asked to evaluate the impacts from their own perspective (cf. consumer panels). Citizens' panels require organisation, common principles, facilitation, and a genuine wish to utilise the resulting information.
- Procedures are developed for consulting the general public and experts and for interacting with them by means of various types of social media and other web communications tools.

One example of recent deliberations is the panel planned to serve as support for the preparation of climate and energy policy. The underlying idea is that research on climate issues is conducted on a wide scale. The research is international and networked, and scientific summary reviews on the principal thematic areas are drawn up for decision-makers. Finnish scientists conduct solid academic research on climate issues, but the challenge is to generate policy-relevant and multidisciplinary information in rapidly changing situations.

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<sup>5</sup> The Ministry of Justice is responsible (in 2011–2013) for implementation the Finnish e-participation environment project, which is included in the SAdE programme coordinated by the Ministry of Finance. The aim of the project is to support dialogue between the general public, public administration and political decision-makers by developing and implementing new tools for online participation. Another goal is to expand the use of democratic procedures at the various stages of processes and in the monitoring of decisions. The Platform for Participation opens administrative processes and provides analysed information on issues that are under preparation, that have been decided and that are being implemented. The Finnish e-participation environment project makes use of the methods and channels of online participation. These enable citizens to express their opinions on issues under preparation and discuss them. In addition, they can bring up their own viewpoints and themes for social debate, preparation and decision-making. <http://www.om.fi/Etusivu/Valmistella/Osallistumisymparistoprojekti>



**Case: Proposal for a scientific panel to support the preparation of climate and energy policy**

**The Government Foresight Report on Long-term Climate and Energy Policy recommends the establishment of a scientific panel supporting climate and energy policy. The panel's goal is to monitor developments in climate science, technology and policies. It reports to the Government and gives recommendations to support decision-making. The main goal is to strengthen dialogue between research and politics.**

- The group is expected both to produce information that is relevant to policy and to act with agility.
- Assignments are commissioned by the Government and its competent bodies (ministries, working groups). The expert group itself can also select a current theme for discussion and for the topic of a report.
- In the light of research findings and experts' opinions, the group also encourages public debate and makes proposals for the development and weighting of climate research.

In addition to one annual basic review, the scientific panel would draw up 1–3 discussion papers, depending on the need. The group could select, for instance, 1–2 principal authors to lead the preparation of each report. At least two experts outside the scientific panel would review and comment on each report.

The scientific panel would have a term of three years; its approximately ten members would be renowned and versatile climate researchers from universities and scientific institutions. The group would generally meet 4–6 times a year. The group would select a chairperson from among its members; the chair would change annually to ensure a multidisciplinary approach. In general, the members would not be paid fees; this requires that the institutions are committed to the project.

The necessary resources and their continuity should be ensured when the panel is established.

There is a two-way need **to develop communications**. On the one hand, there is the need to communicate the results of research and evaluation projects; on the other hand, better information on policy measures under preparation is needed so that the information needs can be outlined clearly.

Ministries produce good and extensive materials for use in their own administrative branches; the compilation and analysis of these materials would benefit everyone working at Government level. A good example is the AJOTI database of current information, used by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, which contains a wide selection of data concerning business and industry, employment and enterprises. The sharing of this and other similar information with other users could genuinely increase productivity and would also be justified for strengthening horizontality. A system that is also interesting from a general point of view is TrendWiki, which is currently used by the MEE Group. TrendWiki is a data processing technology for compiling and archiving old data and for collecting new data. Experiences of the system have been positive, and its application could be expanded to other bodies within the Government.

Ministries' own websites are seen to play a central role when communicating and transmitting information on research and evaluations conducted under each ministry. However, the importance of online communications and the weight given to it vary considerably from one ministry to the next, even though communication about ongoing projects and studies should be basic prerequisites for open preparation, both within the Government and in relation to the general public. Owing to shortcomings associated with the HARE project register, the

websites of ministries and projects are even more important. In the coming years, community-level communications and use of the social media will gain increased prominence in the acquisition and sharing of information, possibly also in the analysis of information. However, it is recognised that utilisation of the social media involves certain challenges concerning the necessary resources and the identification of opportunities. In practice, holding discussions, their moderation and analysis are often found to take much time, and the benefits gained from them are yet to be seen.

When talking about broad-based utilisation of information in decision-making at Government level, we must recognise the general public's role as information users. People must have enough trust in the producers and transmitters of information, especially when communication concerns political priorities. Information, information sources and their utilisation should therefore be as open as possible. Such openness makes the political value choices grounded in the existing information base more visible.

#### **Recommendation 5**

It is ensured more efficiently that the materials produced and compiled in ministries, such as statistical reviews and analyses, **are distributed widely by utilising the common systems existing within the Government, for instance *Senaattori*<sup>6</sup> at the initial stage.** More attention is also paid to improved dissemination of information when developing the public websites of ministries.

**Communication of information** produced in sectoral research and expert bodies is developed, especially as concerns the findings of research and evaluations. The usability of information can be increased, for instance, by producing a wider range of concise reviews of research findings or themes of pivotal importance to policies (the 'policy brief' practice). These would summarise the results of topical studies and would synthesise their central messages.

- Development of communications and the policy brief practice are taken into account in the performance management of sectoral research and expert bodies.
- Ministries make it a practice to distribute research bulletins, newsletters and research findings at Government level. The policy brief publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture are a good practice that is recommended for other ministries as well.
- The ministry-specific policy analysis functions, described above, can serve as principal actors in this context.

The Government's internal and external communication on research and evaluation findings is improved, e.g. by linking and **collecting information from the websites of various ministries into one location.**

- In order to ensure better usability of results from research and evaluation projects, it is crucial that relevant information is collated through links. Among other things, use should be made of the base provided by the *Findicator* set of indicators for social progress, which defines the key themes in accordance with the Government Programme and the associated indicators as well as other essential research, publication and evaluation material.

## 2.4 Developing common tools and services

**The development of common tools at Government level** has emerged as a topic of discussion within the working group, in meetings with stakeholders and in pilot projects. The availability of data resources, the usability of databases and the application of different systems are challenges for the use of information and for wide-ranging capitalisation on policy analysis in decision-making. The fragmentation of information over various sectors and

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<sup>6</sup> Senaattori is a Government Intranet portal.

systems and the detection of information from various sources have also been identified as challenges.

The problem in Finland has been the existence of both structural and general barriers to making publicly funded data resources available for use. Significant background work was carried out during the past Government term to open these bottlenecks. Some concrete reforms have also been carried out recently, such as the Government Resolution on measures to improve the availability of digital data resources in the public sector and to promote its reuse.

In its most recent policy outline, the Research and Innovation Council called for a national information policy to ensure more efficient utilisation of data resources. This policy should be supported by joint electronic services. According to the Council, information policy should be implemented from the Government level, through all administrative branches, down to the level where material is produced. The Council recommends that, at the beginning of its term, the next Government should make a decision on the basic principles of information policy. According to the Council, the management of information policy in public administration should be strengthened in the Ministry of Finance.

Several development projects are in progress in State administration. They deal with such issues as the enterprise architecture of State administration, the availability of data resources, and project management. The Research and Innovation Council also considers it important that ministries define the roles and objectives of public organisations as producers and distributors of data resources, and that common practices and principles are created for the storage and utilisation of data resources in the public sector and in research organisations. Here a major challenge is funding, or who pays for the costs of services that benefit everyone. At present there are two projects relating to this theme in the administrative sector of the Ministry of Education and Culture: the RAKETTI project (Information Management to Support Structural Development)<sup>7</sup> and the National Digital Library project<sup>8</sup>.

During the coming electoral term, the monitoring of the Government Programme will be implemented on an electronic platform in the *Senaattori* service. This will include links to the studies, surveys and evaluations that have been ordered by ministries and realised through performance management and have a direct interface with the Government's priority themes. This enables better usability of data resources from the political decision-maker's perspective. The *Findicator* service, too, can be utilised better in future for compiling the principal studies and evaluations, especially as concerns the priorities of the Government Programme.

Shortcomings in the flow of information have been identified not only between administrative branches and between politicians and administration, but also between the various levels of

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<sup>7</sup> RAKETTI is a joint project conducted by universities and the Ministry of Education and Culture. Its objective is to enhance the availability of information needed in the supervision of universities, in the monitoring of their effectiveness and in the internal management of universities as well as to improve the quality, compatibility and usability of the existing IT solutions at national level.

<sup>8</sup> The project aim is to improve the availability and usability of the national information resources of libraries, archives and museums in information networks as well as to develop long-term preservation solutions for electronic cultural heritage materials.

administration. For instance, it is difficult to obtain uniform and comparable monitoring data from municipalities.

Pilot projects have revealed challenges in the utilisation of international information. These concern, among other things, the databases in use and how they are utilised; for instance, whether it is possible to exploit the existing databases, i.e. whether the ministry has acquired a database or whether there are enough resources and competence to keep abreast of the latest research in a certain sector. Charging a fee for information produced by public means was also mentioned as a problem in more than one project.

It was concluded in pilot projects that information services had had a minor role in the projects. However, information services can be seen to play a new type of role in the future.

#### **Recommendation 6**

The use of the existing portals and information systems is made more efficient **by collating the information on the principal evaluation and research reports available and by keeping it accessible in one location to the extent possible.**

- **The *Findicator* service** is developed. It is also determined how the cooperation between *Findicator*, the Netra.fi service and the State's performance information service can be developed so that they support evaluation in line with the Government's priority themes and the associated debate.
- **The Government's joint Internet site** (VN.fi) is developed so that the ministries' principal materials, or links to them, can be found in one place.
- **Open Internet pages are established for each of the Government's priority themes**, under the website of the ministry bearing the main responsibility for the theme. The pages will contain up-to-date information on the various preparatory stages, preparation process and the information base associated with the priority theme.
- When information on the monitoring of the Government Programme is published, **reports compiled of the principal studies and surveys associated with the implementation of the Government Programme are also made available.**
- It is determined whether TrendWiki or a similar system could be used to support Government-level **identification of signals in the operating environment.**
- Measures are taken at Government level to promote the joint use of common, high-quality data resources and to advance the opportunities for peer-to-peer development among information producers, information services and the policy analysis function.
- Work is started for compiling **an evaluation manual.** This electronic manual will contain support material for conducting, ordering and utilising evaluations at ministry level. Examples of good practices include the guidelines for legislative drafting in *Senaattori* and the instructions contained in the section on effectiveness evaluation.

## 2.5 Impacts in practice

If the operating models proposed in the evaluation and development project for monitoring the Government Programme (the KOKKA project) are taken into use, Government-level decision-making processes will become more systematic, which both helps to identify information needs and indicates more clearly than at present where information can be utilised. When the information base of decisions is reinforced in the way recommended by

the POVI project, the quality and effectiveness of decisions will improve. Implementation of the proposals makes the utilisation of the existing information base more efficient, thereby eliminating overlapping work. Thanks to this, resources in ministries and in the Prime Minister's Office can be targeted at policy analysis, as required by systematic use of information.

## **What will change in ministries?**

### **Permanent Secretaries**

- participate more closely in preparation of the Government's joint issues
- have a meeting once the Government Programme has been approved and "get organised" under the Prime Minister's Office in order to manage the implementation of the Government Programme:
  - under the Prime Minister's Office, they coordinate the data resources for the Government's annual strategy session, including compilation of the information produced by the strategic research and evaluation plan, identification of any needs for retargeting the plan, and evaluation of the progression made in projects included in the legislative plan.

### **Organisation of the policy analysis function**

- Ministries define the responsibilities for the research, evaluation and reporting that support the implementation of the Government's strategy. They also assemble policy analysis functions more clearly than at present.

### **The Government's strategy and input into research**

- The Government's annual strategy session in January–February: the year's principal political process: guides the planning of operations and the economy, e.g. preparation of spending limits; focus on intersectoral entities and transfers of resources.
- The legislative plan is also discussed at the strategy session; the information base used consists of the information produced by the Government's strategic research and evaluation plan.
- The priorities of research are derived from the Government's strategy.
- The strategic research and evaluation plan is taken into account in the performance target agreements concluded with research institutions.
- Ministries direct their unrestricted research appropriations to the focal areas; joint funds may also be directed to the focal areas.
- Ministries and the research institutions within their administrative branches have the opportunity and the responsibility to participate in research consortia supporting intersectoral policy entities.

### **Operating culture in ministries**

- Ministries adopt an operating culture that strengthens the strategic approach, agility and information base within the Government.
- Issues are prepared in close cooperation among ministries, and information is shared actively with other ministries.
- Ministries adopt practices that intensify interaction between preparatory bodies and the research community.
- Information is utilised broadly in the preparation of decisions (incl. the consultation of experts and the general public).
- The shared portals, such as *Senaattori* and *Findicator*, are utilised.

## Appendix 1 Pilot projects

The project for developing the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures has included seven pilot projects, which have been used to gather experiences and information about the current state of the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures and to assess development needs. The pilot projects are described in the appended separate report. The report gives an overview of the use of evaluation information in the pilot projects. It analyses the successes and shortcomings observed and presents alternative solutions to the problems detected.

The pilot projects were selected so that they would cover as wide a field as possible. The policy measures represent various administrative branches, they are of different sizes and in different phases and use different types of steering processes. The report describes the experiences of the pilots and compares them against the vision defined in the preliminary study for the POVI project. The report also discusses experiences of the possibilities that the information sources available offer and, conversely, the barriers existing to the systematic use of information in decision-making. Moreover, the report describes the use of information as a process from the perspectives of the producers, transmitters and users of information as well as from the perspective of monitoring. Any needs to make changes to the tools and procedures in use are also analysed. A summary of the observations made, in the form of six challenges and proposals for development, is presented in the last chapter. The pilot projects are summarised in the table on the next page.

This section of the report has been published in the series Prime Minister's Office Reports (VNK 2/2011). It is available in Finnish at:

<http://www.vnk.fi/julkaisut/listaus/julkaisu/fi.jsp?oid=323929>

PROJECT	MINISTRY AND THE PERSON IN CHARGE
<p><b>Assessment of agri-environmental support</b>            Agri-environmental support has been in use in Finland since 1995 as part of EU-funded rural development. Now it is part of the Rural Development Programme 2007–2013 co-funded by the EU.</p>	<p><b>Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry</b>  <i>Eero Pehkonen, Senior Adviser</i></p>
<p><b>Comprehensive reform of waste legislation</b>            The working group drawing up the waste plan set up a separate legal division, which discussed the need to reform waste legislation and the systematic structure of the reform. In addition, the role of municipalities in waste management was studied separately in conjunction with the national waste plan.</p>	<p><b>Ministry of the Environment</b>  <i>Jussi Kauppila, Researcher, Finnish Environment Institute</i></p>
<p><b>Decree on Maternity and Child Health Clinics, School and Student Health Care and Preventive Oral Health Care for Children and Adolescents</b>            In particular, the Decree regulates the contents and scopes of physical examinations and health counselling in the above services. By intensifying preventive efforts, the Decree strives to ensure that health counselling and physical examinations for children, adolescents and families are systematic and uniform, and meet the needs of individuals and the population at large.</p>	<p><b>Ministry of Social Affairs and Health</b>  <i>Maire Kolimaa, Ministerial Adviser, and Marjaana Pelkonen, Senior Officer</i></p>
<p><b>Provision for ageing</b>            In November 2007, the Prime Minister commissioned the Secretariat of the Economic Council to conduct a review concerning ageing trends and policies. The report examines ageing trends among the population, the impacts of ageing, and ageing policy in Finland. On this basis, it is assessed whether sufficient provision has been made for ageing and whether there is a need for new policy measures.</p>	<p><b>Prime Minister's Office/ Economic Council</b>  <i>Pekka Sinko, Economist</i></p>
<p><b>Monitoring of integration and ethnic relations</b>            For the period 2009–2010, the Ministry of the Interior set up two projects co-funded by the European Union Fund for the Integration of Third-country Nationals. The aim of these projects was to create a comprehensive system for evaluating and monitoring integration and ethnic relations. The projects have developed indicators describing living conditions, questionnaires for municipalities and Employment and Economic Development Offices concerning the supply of services, and an immigrant barometer study.</p>	<p><b>Ministry of the Interior</b>  <i>Meri-Sisko Eskola, Ministerial Adviser, Paula Karjalainen, Senior Planning Officer, Riitta Koponen, Senior Government Adviser, and Tuomo Kurri, Director</i></p>
<p><b>Equality Programme of the Finnish Government 2008–2011</b>            The Government's Equality Programme compiles and coordinates the Government's actions for promoting equality between the genders. A working group has been set up to support implementation of the programme. The final programme report was completed at the end of 2010.</p>	<p><b>Ministry of Social Affairs and Health</b>  <i>Annamari Asikainen, Senior Officer, and Outi Viitamaa-Tervonen, Project Coordinator</i></p>
<p><b>Government Foresight Report on Long-term Climate and Energy Policy</b>            Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet drew up a foresight report on climate and energy policy, which assesses the challenges faced by climate and energy policy over the long term and paves the way towards a well-being and low-carbon Finland.</p>	<p><b>Prime Minister's Office</b>  <i>Pirkko Heikinheimo, Project Manager</i></p>

## Appendix 2 Definitions of the terms used

Development of the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures is a multidimensional issue. It is often challenging to discuss research and evaluation so that the issues are seen from the same point of view; this observation was also made by the working group in the course of its work. It is therefore necessary to define the contents of the principal terms used from the perspective highlighted in this work.

**Analysis capacity** refers to various actors' capacity to process and analyse research and evaluation data as well as other information collected from different sources, and to reorganise it for use by political decision-makers and other actors in a concise and functional form. The capacity of both organisations and individuals to process information is limited and requires careful and incessant critical selection of information sources, as well as actors for transmitting information. The interpreters of information explain what certain information means for an organisation in relation to a decision to be made.

**Policy analysis** is the identification and definition of alternative policies, solutions and actions. It is anticipatory and proactive work where new approaches are outlined and developed. Policy analysis is based on the formulation of questions, and strives to place individual issues and events in a broader context.

Policy analysis is part of strategic management. It provides decision-makers with recommendations on alternative contents of decisions and alternative ways to proceed. Above all, policy analysis is intended for politicians. At the same time, it serves the general public and public debate by making it possible to weigh alternatives against each other.

A **policy measure** is a decision made by a political decision-maker. At its most concrete, the decision can be a Government proposal, but it can also refer to the launching, planning or review of larger aggregates of measures. According to the working group's definition, policy measures include the Government Programme, the Government's Strategy Document, government decisions on spending limits and the budget, Government proposals, reports and resolutions, various strategies, reforms and programmes. In addition, the working group has considered that the structures and procedures of the politico-administrative system, or "longer-term, continuous policy measures" (e.g. programme management and intersectoral policy programmes as a Government-level process) are policy measures. This work has focused on Government-level policy measures.

The working group has clearly recognised that policy measures differ from each other in terms of how binding they are and how they are steered. The effectiveness of policy measures also varies as to its time span. Moreover, in the time dimension of effectiveness, it must be recognised how much change arises and can be derived from the policy measure itself and how much is caused by other events in the environment. With respect to the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures, it is also important to recognise the scope of various measures and the consequent differences in the need for information.

Information needs associated with policy measures are concretised roughly in three phases. The first phase is when it is decided to carry out a policy measure, and the associated information needs are identified. The second phase is when information has been obtained concerning the alternatives or impacts of the policy measure, and the actual decision is made on the basis of this information. The third phase starts when there is a wish to learn about the impacts of the policy measure carried out. This information may then lead to the restarting of the first phase.

A **systemic** perspective generally means that phenomena form systems where "everything affects everything else". Thus, in this context, a systemic perspective and reinforcement of



the systematic use of information refer to a holistic approach where jointly agreed procedures and tools work in parallel and support each other, forming a systematic but flexible whole that underpins decision-making. It has been found that a systemic approach is best realised when new ways of interaction are created between administrative steering (legislation etc.) and the principal actors.

When **information** is used to underpin political decision-making, the basic prerequisite is wide-ranging and diverse information acquired from among various sources that are relevant at any given time. In the POVI project, information refers to information obtained from research, reviews and evaluations and also to other information, which in this work is defined in more detail – whenever needed – depending on the initial situation and the context. In most cases, the value of information is not determined until it reaches the end user, and often the value is measured through effectiveness. The main perspective in this project is to stress the utilisation of data, information and knowledge, and the importance of the resulting understanding.

In the POVI project, **data resources** are materials gathered from various information sources, such as statistics, studies, articles and various types of reviews. It has been recognised in this project that data resources ordered to support policy measures is often more likely to be reviews than research.

By promoting **knowledge management**<sup>9</sup>, information can be utilised comprehensively in various Government processes. Knowledge management can also be seen as organised, systematic and holistic utilisation of information so that the organisation's objectives are met. According to Tuomas Pöysti of the National Audit Office, the preconditions for knowledge management include the development of information technology and management together with basic processes and functions. A challenge recognised by the POVI working group is that development of various information technologies is slower than development of the operating environment; this means that, when completed, systems are already outdated.

According to the OECD, **evidence-based decision-making** supports the legitimacy and implementation of operating policies and reforms, thereby promoting implementation of the Government Programme. Evidence-based decision-making feeds a strategic view when it makes use of research and broad consultation to assesses probable benefits, costs and impacts. It helps to ensure that all possible future scenarios have been taken into account, it increases openness in the Government's decision-making and gives a realistic picture of the costs incurred in the Government's objectives, and it provides the Government with a tool for prioritisation among competing objectives.

As used in this work, **research** refers to research that either applies directly to the policy measure in question or is associated with its theme, the purpose being to support and provide an information base for decision-making and to ensure the adequacy of the information underlying decision-making so as to meet the needs of political assessment. In this work, research is seen from a broad perspective, encompassing both basic research and applied research. In practice, research here refers mostly to research and review material

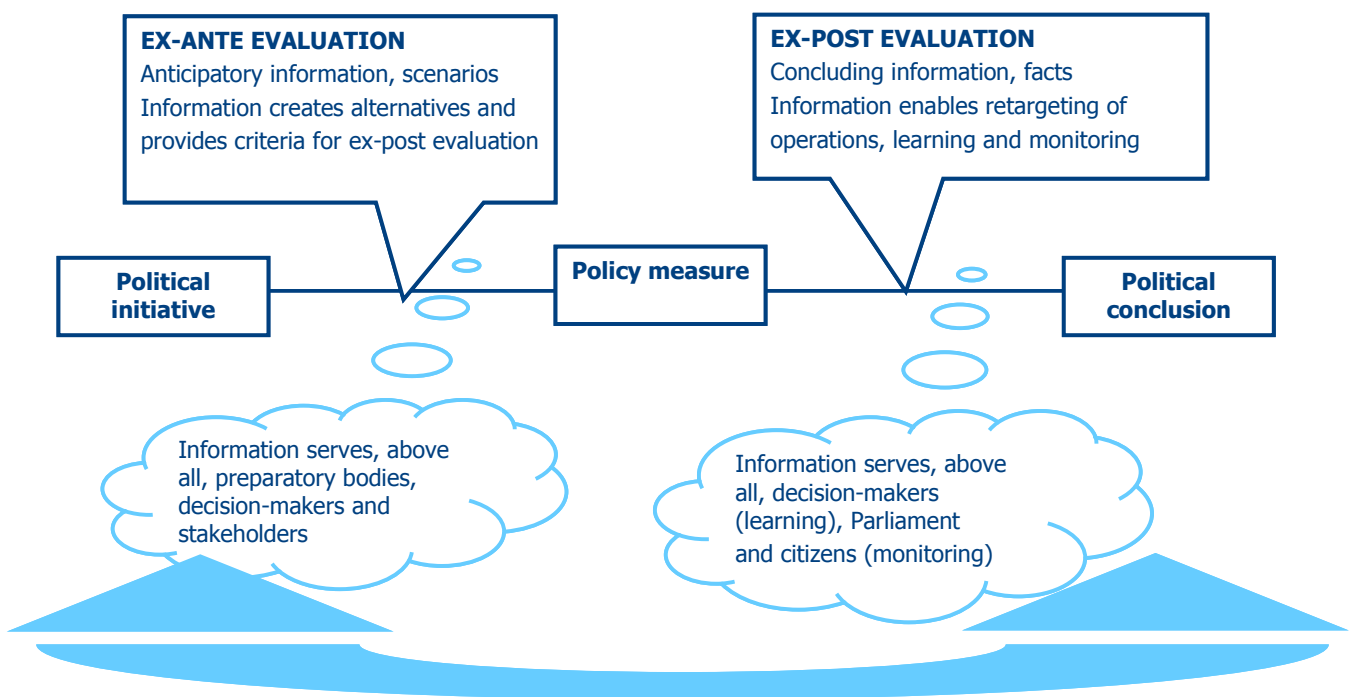
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<sup>9</sup> Knowledge management can be approached through different definitions. A technical and system-oriented approach emphasises the support and expert systems of decision-making. In turn, an approach focusing on information processes and documentation emphasises the management and efficient utilisation of explicit, documented information in an organisation. The pilot projects uncovered some shortcomings in terms of documentation and forwarding of information. Both approaches have a clear connection to the objective of this work and require changes in the existing tools and systems. In their review "Information Management or Knowledge Management? Looking for an Identity of the Research Domain". *Informaatiotutkimus* 1, 15–24 (2003), Maija-Leena Huotari and Reijo Savolainen write that knowledge management refers to the management and supervision of activities associated with the acquisition, creation, recording, transmission, use and deletion of knowledge and information inside and outside an organisation.

produced by sectoral research institutions and universities or commissioned by ministries, but research and information should also be exploited more widely.

In this project, **impact assessment** is understood to mean varied ex-ante evaluation of the impacts of policy measures (legislation and other policy measures defined above). Information concerning the current state and trends is also an essential element of impact assessment. **Effectiveness evaluation** is understood to mean ex-post evaluation of how well the objectives of policy measures have been attained. Apart from the attainment of objectives, it is important to consider the overall impacts of the measures (including cost-effectiveness, side effects). A well-functioning evaluation system enables the re-evaluation of the objectives set previously. Ex-ante and ex-post evaluation of the implementation of policy measures differ from each other in terms of factors such as the nature of evaluation, tools and producers of information.

**Figure 3** Viewpoints of ex-ante and ex-post effectiveness evaluation.



The goal of **ex-ante impact assessment** is to provide decision-makers with information on the various alternatives for implementing an issue under preparation and on the impacts of these alternatives. An impact assessment carried out before decision-making is anticipatory by nature; therefore, it also involves uncertainty factors, risks and speculative information. For instance, the impacts of a certain decision on behaviour or long-term impacts may be difficult to assess and predict. Ex-ante assessment should utilise the assessment of alternatives more than at present so that, on the one hand, the assessment focuses on various means of reaching a goal and, on the other hand, it analyses the impacts of the various means in the changing operating environment. It is often beneficial for impact assessment to make use of the ex-post evaluation of earlier policy measures and, for instance, international references. Ex-ante assessment also facilitates implementation of the decision's goals and provides criteria for decision-making. In addition, it helps the people affected by the decisions to be prepared for the coming changes. The central roles in the ex-ante assessment of impacts are played by preparatory bodies, decision-makers and the principal stakeholders, such as experts, enterprises and civil society organisations.

**Ex-post evaluation or effectiveness evaluation** gives answers to questions of whether the impacts anticipated before decision-making were materialised and whether there have been impacts that could not be anticipated before decision-making. Effectiveness evaluation provides decision-makers with information showing whether the desired goals have been reached. The main role of ex-post evaluation information is to enable the development of measures so that the goals set are reached better. Ex-post evaluation also enables learning from the viewpoints of decision-makers and preparatory bodies, and it improves accountability.

According to the policy outline drawn up by the Research and Innovation Council for 2011–2015, performance and quality targets should be set for policy measures, and mechanisms should be defined for following the attainment of these targets. The challenge in effectiveness evaluation is the problem of how to measure effectiveness; aside from direct effects, effects arise indirectly and in interaction with other factors in the environment and over a long time span.

In its policy outline, the Research and Innovation Council considers it generally difficult – but important – to develop effectiveness evaluation. In the Council's opinion, evaluation strengthens policy development and strategic decision-making, and is a tool for shared learning, understanding and utilisation. Successful effectiveness evaluation also requires that more attention is paid to the creation of monitoring and data collection systems. The Council stresses that competence cannot be reinforced and shortcomings in the information base cannot be eliminated without investments and long-term development.

### **Case: Evaluation of the sufficiency of basic benefits**

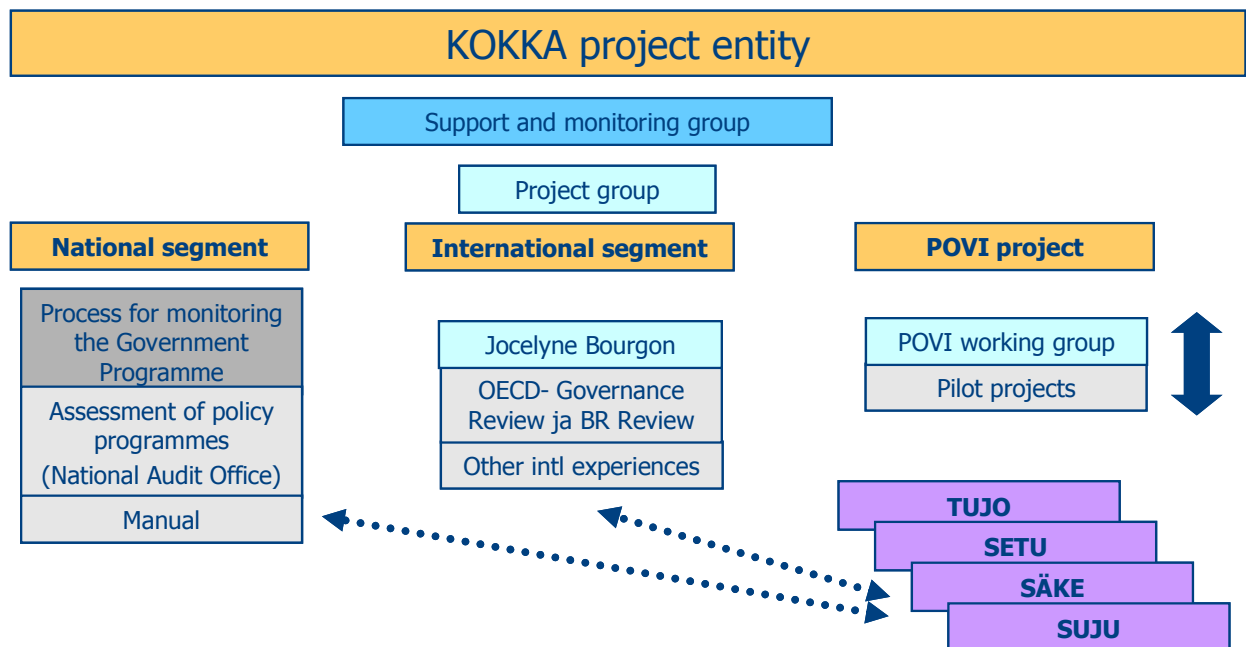
Evaluation of the sufficiency of basic benefits is one example of ex-post evaluation and its links with the future preparation of decision-making.

- A legislative amendment based on the work of the SATA Committee (Comprehensive Reform of Social Protection) entered into force on 20 December 2010. According to the amendment, once every four years the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health commissions an overall evaluation on the sufficiency of basic benefits.
- In addition to individual benefits, the evaluation was to focus on other factors of central importance to the disposable income of persons or households receiving the benefits, such as the taxation of benefits. The goal of the evaluation was to obtain an overall picture of the income formation of households on basic benefits.
- The evaluation must always be carried out before parliamentary elections so that it is available, e.g. when agreeing on the Government Programme.
- Responsibility for carrying out the evaluation was assigned to the National Institute for Health and Welfare, which convened a group of experts from research institutions in the sector, the Social Insurance Institution, Statistics Finland and the University of Turku.
- The working group based its evaluation on section 19 of the Constitution of Finland, which lists the life situations where the public authorities must safeguard basic subsistence. Students and people on a home care allowance were included in the evaluation. The trends in basic benefits were examined for the period 1990–2011, as this was the first report evaluating the sufficiency of basic benefits.
- The first evaluation report was published on 1 March 2011. It contained themes closely linked with basic benefits, such as the sufficiency of basic benefits in relation to living costs, the trend of basic benefits in relation to the income trends of other population groups, the level in relation to the public's view of sufficient minimum subsistence, and the position that households on basic benefits have in the income distribution.
- The goal of the regularly conducted evaluation of the sufficiency of basic benefits is to improve the information base of the debate on basic benefits, in addition to serving political decision-making.
- In its report (29/2010 vp), the Social Affairs and Health Committee of the Finnish Parliament concluded that not only does such wide-ranging evaluation serve decision-making; it can also serve Finnish research on economic and social policy.

## Appendix 3 Developing the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures through other ongoing projects

One of the POVI project's operating principles has been light organisation and cooperation with other ongoing development projects. The closest cooperation has been conducted with the project set up by the Prime Minister's Office to assess and develop the process of monitoring the Government Programme (the KOKKA project), which has served as an umbrella for this POVI project as well. The KOKKA project has focused on the development of efficient processes for carrying out and monitoring the Government Programme in its entirety. The recommendations of the POVI project are closely linked with the recommendations of the KOKKA project, and implementation of some of the recommendations presented in this report depends on whether the recommendations of the KOKKA project are realised or not.

**Figure 4** Project to assess and develop the process of monitoring the Government Programme.



The main development projects with which the POVI project has had cooperation and/or whose mission is related to the POVI project are described below.

A report on **the development of the availability and preservation of research data** was published on 8 February 2011<sup>10</sup>. The difficulties described in the report concerning the availability of data and the scattered storage and organisation of data have also surfaced in the POVI project.

The POVI project concurs with the working group's proposal to develop legislation so that it would support the gratuitous availability and utilisation of data resources in research and decision-making. From the perspective of the POVI project, the working group has presented important proposals for increasing coordination so that the rules for using data resources can be made more uniform and the systems can be made more compatible with each other. In

<sup>10</sup> Putting data into use, A for the utilization of electronic data in research. Reports of the Ministry of Education and Culture 2011:4.

addition, the proposals for actions concerning, in particular, the reinforcement of political will and the creation of a national data policy, the development of operating models and common practices within organisations, and the construction of the information infrastructure for research, are in line with the goals required for realisation of the POVI project's vision and are therefore to be supported.

**Development of a steering system for sectoral research (SETU)** has been discussed both in the evaluation concerning the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research and in the policy outlined by **the Research and Innovation Council** for 2011–2015. The most important challenges facing sectoral research are utilisation of the research conducted and its increased use as support for political decision-making, as well as structural development of the research field and the entire science system to meet the changing needs of society better than at present. The Research and Innovation Council's policy for 2011–2015 recommends that the strategic steering of research institutions be enhanced at Government level. Research institutions must be developed to strengthen research that is multidisciplinary, of a high standard, and relevant for society. The division of labour between research institutions and universities must be clarified, and both must be equipped with common infrastructures and support services. At the outset of its term, the Government should determine the focal points of research serving the Government's functions, should draw up a policy concerning the structural development of the field of research institutions, and should arrange the necessary resources. The Council also recommends the preparation of an action plan on structural development and the targeting of resources, extending up to 2020. The action plan will determine the percentage of research institutions' resources allocated to horizontal projects serving decision-making, and how much is allocated to studies commissioned by ministries and to the development of the research institutions' own competence. The necessary reallocations among ministries are also done. Resources are retargeted according to the changing needs of society, to know-how-intensive sectors and to research meeting international standards.

Universities and research institutions build strategic long-term partnerships. It is also practical to promote cooperation between universities and sectoral research institutions in order to reinforce the field of research and its effectiveness.

From the POVI project's viewpoint, realisation of the above proposals is important. Coordinated development calls for the creation of a specific, shared funding mechanism and robust political steering of the measures selected.

**The project "Effective legislative drafting" (SUJU) launched by the Ministry of Justice** has defined an ideal model for legislative drafting. When developing the ideal model, attention has been paid to POVI project discussions concerning challenges in the acquisition and utilisation of information during the legislative drafting process. The ideal model for legislative drafting has clearly identified the phases where data resources, the conducting and commissioning of research and evaluations, and political decision-making have their roles to play.

Issues relating to the quality assurance of effectiveness evaluation in legislative drafting have been brought to the agenda in conjunction with the POVI project. These issues are discussed together with the project "Effective legislative drafting" and as part of the KOKKA project.

At present, **the Government's** knowledge concerning **the future** is based on evaluations, forecasts and studies done by various bodies in Finland, in international organisations and abroad, on the results of ministries' anticipatory work and on the Government's foresight reports. Foresight improves the readiness to prepare for and

influence future developments and new events. The instability of the international operating environment highlights the importance of foresight. This instability requires that Finland act with even greater agility in order to make use of opportunities and prevent threats. The need for foresight is also emphasised in EU policy, since the development of various policy sectors in other EU Member States and within EU institutions needs to be monitored so that decision-making in Finland can be timely and efficient. In fact, to improve our foresight capacity, we need to increase the effectiveness and scope of both the anticipation of short-term changes (situational awareness and analysis) and the identification and assessment of long-term change factors (trends, weak signals), both in Finland and with respect to the international operating environment.

**The Government Foresight Network** has served as an interministerial forum for cooperation. Among other things, the Network has drawn up a joint description of the operating environment for the foresight reviews drafted by ministries. When the Network's operations have been evaluated, the work has been deemed to be useful to ministries and it has been recommended that the Network's operations be continued. Anticipation is important as a function serving strategic planning, decision-making and management and as a factor contributing to research and evaluation. According to the foresight review of the Prime Minister's Office, the Network's role in the coordination of ministries' foresight activities could be strengthened. In particular, the resources for preparing the description of the operating environment could be reinforced so that the Network would also have access to more outside experts. More directly than now, the description of the operating environment could provide a common platform and point of departure for the foresight reviews of ministries.

The situational awareness influencing the Government's decision-making also includes an up-to-date common picture of the security situation, which combines both analysed official information and analysed public information. The same information must be available simultaneously to all members of the Government. The Prime Minister's Office is responsible for merging and sharing the situational awareness information as it assists the Prime Minister in the overall management of the Government and ensures that the Government has the necessary prerequisites for operations in all situations.

From the perspective of the POVI project work, the ability to anticipate changes in society and in the operating environment is needed constantly. There is need for such joint activities within the Government, and the results of this work should be utilised actively. Some administrative branches already have access to sector-specific situational awareness material, and active monitoring of the situational material also enables better anticipation and identification of weak signals. On a wider scale, the issue concerns risk management at State level in relation to the global situation.

**Sitra's Public Leadership and Management Programme** has studied and analysed the possibilities of shifting to strategic and systematic corporate steering. Sitra's report *Kaikki yhden ja yksi kaikkien puolesta* [All for one and one for all] presents proposals for the content and implementation of State corporate steering. The proposals identify the key issues falling under the scope of corporate steering and describe how these issues can be managed efficiently across ministerial boundaries with the current resources without losing sight of the division of responsibilities.

The report states that the most important decision-making situations concern the knowledge-based and vision-based evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of alternative

actions: which selection of means – either one or a mix – would enable the attainment of the most optimal effects. According to ministers, at its best sectoral research could meet this challenge but, for instance, the Secretariat of the Economic Council, the Policy-analysis Unit of the Prime Minister’s Office, the Ministry of Finance and the National Audit Office could also play a major role here.

Incorporating effectiveness evaluations and research data into political decision-making is a multidimensional and complex issue, as is concluded in the report *Tutkimustiedon ja vaikuttavuusarviointien käyttö poliittisessa päätöksenteossa* [Use of research data and effectiveness evaluations in political decision-making] commissioned by Sitra. The report compares experiences from the Netherlands, Denmark and the United Kingdom. The observations made in these countries concerned, in particular, the transmission of research and evaluation data to political decision-makers and anticipatory evaluation of effectiveness. There is constant progress in the utilisation of research and effectiveness data, but so far none of the countries reviewed have adopted a systemic operating model where effectiveness data would be utilised comprehensively, uniformly and with a corporate steering approach. The report states that all of the countries reviewed have practices from which Finland could learn.

Sitra’s Public Leadership and Management Programme has supported the information needs of the POVI project by analysing international practices and by keeping the principles of information utilisation and knowledge management in mind during its development projects.

**The Governance Review completed by the OECD in spring 2010** states that Finland has the preparedness for an evidence-based decision-making culture. Examples of this type of culture are research institutions, the occasionally arranged public hearings, evaluation of the impacts of legislation, and the requirement to support ICT investment decisions by means of business cases. However, these practices do not constitute a uniform whole where evidence-based decision-making would be a deeply rooted working method within the system of public administration. This may be partly because the processes for preparing decisions at central government level are largely based on informal discussions and there are no standard requirements for business cases, cost-benefit analyses, comparisons or extensive hearings on impacts.

According to the OECD, informal decision-making processes play a central role in the functioning of the Finnish public sector. They enable rapid exchange of information and intersectoral discussion. However, the process itself is not transparent and the desired results may be defined in political agreements that leave little room for manoeuvring. A wider use of analyses to support political discussions on policy measures would increase transparency and openness in decision-making processes. The OECD also stresses that strategic insight is not necessarily generated automatically by collecting more information or even by making analyses more frequently or improving the quality of analyses. However, explicit and transparent transmission of information from administration to political decision-makers and to the leading public servants may introduce more information to the discussion and may clarify the various alternatives. This is particularly important for public administration since Finland has no tradition of using “think tanks” near political parties when public operating policies are created and evaluated. Moreover, increasing evidence-based preparation and enhancing the related expectations require consultation with outside experts and stakeholders in order to harness innovative thinking and strategic insight. Such a working method calls for a change in the relationship between administration and the general public; it requires hearings and cooperation.



In its work, the POVI project has considered the viewpoints raised by the OECD report. The project has worked to determine what types of changes should be adopted in operations so that preparedness for an evidence-based decision-making culture would be as strong as possible.

**The working group “Development of the Government’s legislative drafting”** (the SÄKE III working group) has had under it **an expert network for impact assessment**, which has been responsible for the development of impact assessment. The network has had the following duties: arranging and coordinating general and sector-specific training events in impact assessment; producing assessment material for websites and the *Senaattori*; seeking means for ensuring the completion and quality of impact assessments in ministries before a Government proposal is discussed at the Government plenary session; supporting and monitoring the impact assessment of legislative projects included in the Government’s legislative plan; collecting feedback concerning the guidelines for impact assessment and the support measures for assessment; monitoring the international development of impact assessment; and making proposals for development, whenever needed.

In addition, development work has been underway in many impact sectors. Examples of these include work to develop the assessment of impacts on businesses, the assessment of gender-related impacts, and the assessment of impacts on language.

The POVI project has interacted closely with the expert network for impact assessment. The project has been discussed within the network, and viewpoints have been exchanged in both directions.

## Appendix 4 Survey of the planning, assessment and reporting carried out by ministries

As part of the project to develop evaluation of the effectiveness of policy measures, a simple survey was conducted among the ministries to determine how they have currently organised their planning, assessment and reporting. The purpose of this survey was to identify and highlight ministry-specific functions linked with policy analysis.

As a general observation it can be said that policy analysis functions, when understood widely, are an essential element of the ministries' work, but these have not usually been identified as a separate function, for which reason it is difficult to estimate the total volume of work used for such activities. More focused policy analysis functions were discovered at least in the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Often these functions overlap and are closely linked with each other, and are in part designated to the same units and persons within the ministries. To a large extent, the work is decentralised among various departments and units in order to ensure solid understanding of the substance.

The viewpoint of anticipation was taken up as a specific issue for examination in connection with the development project for monitoring and assessing the Government Programme (the KOKKA project) (Eerola 2010). The conclusions of this small survey were that anticipation should have a close connection with the planning of operations and political decision-making, and that anticipation has direct impact of on policy.

The importance of various cooperation networks, including informal foresight networks with business, is highlighted in anticipatory efforts. Such networks are considered necessary because large global enterprises have the clearest vision of changes taking place in the global division of labour and in power relations. It is not enough for ministries to engage in foresight work alone or with each other; a wider perspective is needed (business and industry, civil society organisations, etc.). Foresight work is organised differently in different ministries, and the resources available in the ministries for this work are scant. Most often, anticipation is part of other preparation.

Intersectoral foresight work has taken place, for instance, when predicting education and labour needs or climate and environmental issues. The Government Institute for Economic Research, which has lately invested much in foresight work at strategic level, is generally considered a good player in the foresight sector. At least the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, and the Ministry of Finance make use of the Institute's forecasts.

**Table. Rough summary of the organisation of functions**

Ministry	Anticipation	Steering of research	Evaluation	Policy analysis	Indicator work	Monitoring of the Government Programme and report on measures taken	Development of legislative drafting	Drafting of the Operating and Financial Plan (OFP) and reporting
<b>Ministry for Foreign Affairs</b>	Unit for Policy Planning and Research	By department	By department	Unit for Policy Planning and Research, by department	By department	Leadership of the ministry and the departments	Legal Service	Financial Management Unit
<b>Ministry of the Environment</b>	Included in other duties	Research Director, team members from departments	Included in implementation of the strategy and the legislative plan	Not a separately organised function	Not a separately organised function	Administrative Unit and contact persons at departments/units	Director of Legislative Affairs, steering group for legislative drafting	Administrative Unit and contact persons
<b>Ministry of the Interior</b>	On an ad hoc basis	Finance Unit + steering group (4 times/year)	On an ad hoc basis and research as needed	On an ad hoc basis	Finance Unit and its divisions	Finance Unit and its divisions and Administration Unit	Legal Affairs Unit	Finance Unit and its OFP group and divisions
<b>Ministry of Social Affairs and Health</b>	Administration and Planning Department and Advisory Staff Unit	Administration and Planning Department; steering by the substance departments	Administration and Planning Department	Permanent Secretary, management groups. Advisory Staff Unit coordinates strategy work. Administration and Planning Dept. draws up budgets for expenditure and funding	Indicator work has established processes	Advisory Staff Unit	Under the Permanent Secretary, the Ministry's own development group for legislative drafting, Advisory Staff Unit	Administration and Planning Department
<b>Ministry of Transport and Communications</b>		Administration and Specialist Services bears responsibility, coordinators in departments, contact persons in units. R&D coordination group prepares R&D policy to support performance management.	R&D Secretariat in the Administration and Specialist Services of the Administration Dept.  Included, e.g. in legislative drafting, R&D and performance management	Included in strategic planning	Organisation of indicator work partly unfinished		R&D Secretariat in the Administration and Specialist Services of the Administration Department	Financial Administration of the Department is responsible for coordinating and developing performance management, Controller of Transport and Communications Administration
<b>Ministry of Finance</b>	Each department for its own substance area	By department; especially the Economics Department for research on economic policy,	Operations are divided among departments depending on the division of responsibilities among institutes and policy sectors under their supervision	Each department for its substance area. Fiscal policy: Budget Dept., Admin. policy: Public Management Dept., Tax policy: Tax Dept., Municipal policy: Dept. for Municipal Affairs. Financial Markets Dept. for financial markets policy and Personnel Dept. for government employer policy.	Not organised separately.	Administrative Governance and Development (AGD) coordinates preparation and the process for the ministry and the main title.	By department	AGD/financial administration coordinates the preparation and process of both the OFP and reporting for the ministry and the main title. Government Financial Controller coordinates the preparation of the final accounts.

Ministry	Anticipation	Steering of research	Evaluation	Policy analysis	Indicator work	Monitoring of the Government Programme and report on measures taken	Development of legislative drafting	Drafting of the Operating Plan and Financial Plan and reporting
<b>Ministry of Defence</b>	Corporate Planning Unit	Research Unit	Auditing Unit, Research Unit	Corporate Planning Unit	Corporate Planning Unit	Corporate Planning Unit	Legal Unit	Finance Unit, Auditing Unit and Corporate Planning Unit
<b>Ministry of Employment and the Economy</b>	Strategy and Foresight Unit, departments for their substance and the TrendWiki signal system	Strategy and Foresight Unit is responsible for coordination; Cooperation group for research	Evaluation is steered by the Ministry's evaluation principles, included in the research strategy. Operations are divided among departments and units depending on the division of responsibilities among institutes and policy sectors under their supervision.	The Research and Foresight Group has developed and maintained analysis materials based on the Ministry's own statistics. The group analyses topical issues pertaining to policy drafting and the control of the operating environment.	Indicator work associated with performance targets is decentralized. A group within the Development Unit maintains an up-to-date PowerPoint folder (AJOTI).	Strategy and Foresight Unit and internal network	The group for better regulation and corporate social responsibility led by the Director of Legislation	Finance Unit
<b>Ministry of Justice</b>	Management Support and Department of Criminal Policy	R&D steering group led by the Permanent Secretary; departments also have their own activities	Included in the functions of the R&D steering group. Departments and units manage their own sectors. Resources divided among departments and units.	Departments/units manage their own sectors; Management Support is responsible for coordination and collation.	Each department/unit and the Information Service of the Administrative Unit	Management Support; departments/units responsible for preparation in their own sector	Director of the Law Drafting Department and a network comprising representatives of departments	Economy Unit; economic planning network concerning departments and units
<b>Ministry of Education and Culture</b>	Anticipation and planning are carried out as part of strategic preparation.	All units have job descriptions that also include related tasks.	The ministry's sectors have different practices and procedures, cf. items on policy analysis and indicator work.	Analysis group working in the ministry's entire administrative branch to develop management by information, analysis functions and information production. The analysis group draws up policy analyses of socially important issues concerning education, science, cultural, sports and youth policies.	Analysis group working in the ministry's entire administrative branch to develop management by information, analysis functions and information production. The analysis group draws up policy analyses of socially important issues concerning education, science, cultural, sports and youth policies.	Network of contact persons inside the ministry; Administration Department for the report on measures taken,	Legislative coordination group, the Permanent Secretary and a legislative counsellor working under him	The unit for economic planning of the Administration Department coordinates; preparation in the departments
<b>Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry</b>	Departments	Departments	Departments	Departments	Departments	State Secretary	Departments	Departments

## **Development of the planning, assessment and reporting carried out by ministries**

Many ministries are conducting, or have already completed, development activities linked with the recommendations presented in this report.

Some examples of development projects are described briefly below:

Early in 2011, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs completed a reform of the system for planning and steering operations and finances. One goal of the reform was to incorporate issues pertaining to clearer implementation of the Government Programme as part of the Operating and Financial Plan (OFP). Information on the implementation of the Government Programme and on the attainment of goals will now be collected in connection with the OFP process.

The Ministry of Employment and the Economy is preparing a reorganisation where three horizontal units will be replaced by one horizontal unit ("corporate management and policy steering"), which would include, e.g. preparation of the corporate strategy, performance management, and evaluation of policy impacts.

In 2009, the Ministry of the Environment completed an action plan for developing the quality of legislative drafting. Implementation of this plan is one of the ministry's strategic projects. Evaluation is included in implementation of the strategy and the legislative plan and constitutes a part of the annual planning and monitoring system, where agreement is reached on any broader evaluations that will be made.

To support performance management and to strengthen corporate thinking within its administrative sector, the Ministry of Transport and Communications has set up various groups, and performance managers from substance departments have been designated for agencies and institutes. The organisation of indicator work is still partly unfinished. The goal is that experts in the Transport Policy Department and the Communications Policy Department will be responsible for indicator work.

The Ministry of Defence is in the process of setting up the post of a controller, which will bring added value to several actors within the ministry. The job description is new and has contact points with the sector of internal finances at least in the Corporate Planning Unit, the Auditing Unit, the Finance Unit and the Administration Unit. The post will be located in the Corporate Planning Unit. The goal is to promote the efficient use of human resources. The controller's task is, for instance, to ensure that implementation of the defence sector's administration reform is based on reliable cost calculations, to analyse the realisation of the cost calculations after the fact, and to participate in the development of goals set for social effectiveness, in the definition of the associated indicators, and in the determination of their cost trends.

In the Ministry of Education and Culture, the development of legislative drafting and certain legislative drafting tasks will possibly be transferred to the Administration Department during 2011. If this transfer takes place, the tasks will be located in the same unit with budget preparation and economic planning. This is expected to improve the opportunities for the assessment of economic impacts during legislative drafting. Management by information and analysis functions at the ministry have been strengthened and developed within the past few years as part of the ministry's development programme 2007–2011. The ministry has established an analysis group for developing management by information, analysis functions and information production. The analysis group will draw up policy analyses of socially important issues.

## Appendix 5 Working group meetings

Meetings	Topics
<b>1st meeting</b> <b>15 March 2010</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Background and goals for the project</li> <li>2. Feedback from the preparatory working group's report and discussion of the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>analysis of the task</i></li> <li>• <i>viewpoints to consider in the coming work</i></li> <li>• <i>principal outlines during the preparation</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Preliminary presentation of pilot projects</li> <li>4. The working group's routines</li> </ol>
<b>2nd meeting</b> <b>17 May 2010</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Principal challenges in developing the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures – a summary of the previous meeting's discussions</li> <li>2. Developing the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures and SITRA's report</li> <li>3. Cooperation between the POVI group and the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research</li> <li>4. Current situation of the pilot projects</li> </ol> <p><b>Brainstorming:</b> Foresight reviews, Government Programme, Government Strategy Document and sectoral research – the challenge of horizontality</p>
<b>3rd meeting</b> <b>9 June 2010</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A summary of the previous meeting's discussions</li> <li>2. Cooperation between the POVI group and the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research</li> <li>3. Feedback from the first meeting with the pilot projects and presentation of the pilots' workbook</li> </ol> <p><b>Brainstorming:</b> Tasks and responsibilities of actors, coordination of overall responsibility, and interaction between actors</p>
<b>4th meeting</b> <b>19 August 2010</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presentation by the Honorable Jocelyne Bourgon "Finland: From Success to Sustained Success"</li> <li>2. A summary of the previous meeting's discussions</li> <li>3. The OECD report and its contact points with the POVI work</li> <li>4. Joint meeting of the POVI working group and the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research on 30 September 2010</li> <li>5. Feedback from the meeting with the pilot projects and observations of the projects</li> </ol> <p><b>Brainstorming:</b> Tools and working principles</p>
<b>5th meeting</b> <b>29 September 2010</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A summary of the previous meeting's discussions</li> <li>2. Study by the National Research Institute of Legal Policy – Impact assessment in Government proposals in 2009</li> <li>3. The 'Effective legislative drafting' project and use of information in the drafting process</li> <li>4. Joint meeting of the POVI working group and the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research on 30 September 2010</li> <li>5. The POVI working group's recommendations, report outline and further work</li> </ol>
<b>6th meeting</b> <b>21 October 2010</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A summary of the previous meeting's discussions</li> <li>2. News from meetings with stakeholders and preparations for the event on 27 October</li> <li>3. Recommendations of the POVI working group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• drafting of recommendations continued on the basis of the Secretariat's groundwork</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>7th meeting</b> <b>23 November 2010</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Current status of the KOKKA and POVI projects</li> <li>2. News from meetings with stakeholders and from the ministerial working group on better regulation</li> <li>3. Recommendations of the POVI working group</li> </ol>
<b>8th meeting</b> <b>21 December 2010</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evaluation of the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research and its subcommittees</li> <li>2. News from meetings with stakeholders</li> <li>3. Processing of the POVI working group's recommendations</li> <li>4. Other issues <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The foresight review of the Prime Minister's Office</li> <li>2) Updating the work plan</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>9th meeting</b> <b>21 January 2011</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Current situation of the KOKKA project</li> <li>2. Presenting the project undertaken by the National Research Institute of Legal Policy for evaluating the policy for better regulation</li> <li>3. Current situation of the 'Effective legislative drafting' project</li> <li>4. Processing of the POVI working group's recommendations</li> </ol>
<b>10th meeting</b> <b>2 March 2011</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Processing of the POVI working group's recommendations on the basis of the members' comments</li> </ol>
<b>11th meeting</b> <b>23 March 2011</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Processing of the POVI working group's recommendations on the basis of the members' comments</li> <li>2. Finalisation of the report, its publication, and communications</li> <li>3. Conclusion of the working group's assignment</li> </ol>

## Appendix 6 Meetings with stakeholders

At the initiative of the project secretariat, the project for developing the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures held several meetings with stakeholders in October–November 2010.

<b>Project / Body and implementing organisations</b>	<b>Persons met</b>	<b>Topics covered</b>
<b>Working group 'Availability of Public Information'</b> (Ministry of Transport and Communications)	Ministerial Adviser Taru Rastas	In its proposals, the working group concurs with and, whenever applicable, derives support from the recommendations issued by working groups set up to promote more efficient utilisation of publicly funded research data and statistical data. The project encompasses the whole of society, whereas POVI aims at the Government level. There are contact points but no overlapping. A new cooperation body – the Knowledge Management Network – was recognised.
<b>Union of University Researchers and Teachers</b> (University of Helsinki)	Professor Markku Temmes	The current state and challenges of State administration from the perspective of the capacity for evaluation and analysis; interaction between universities and administration; improving the capacity for evaluation and analysis.
<b>Systems analysis and modelling</b> (Aalto University, Systems Analysis Laboratory)	Professor Raimo P. Hämäläinen, Professor Ahti Salo (Aalto University), Ministerial Adviser Riitta Kirjavainen (Prime Minister's Office)	The Systems Analysis Laboratory develops analysis practices and creates models and the associated software. Modelling provides structures for the analysis of issues before decision-making, but does not eliminate the importance of values in the processing of facts – especially in political decision-making. The principal development needs include intermediary functions, development of analytical expertise, development of different interaction modes, and giving up the consensus-centred approach. Researchers should be a source of encouragement when decisions are being prepared. Through systems analysis, future training for public servants could be considered; to test ideas, students could also be given cases about State administration.
<b>Data for Research project</b> (Ministry of Education and Culture and CSC – IT Center for Science)	Chief Planning Officer Tuomas Parkkari (Research and Innovation Council), Director Pirjo-Leena Forsström, Project Secretary Terhi Pennanen (CSC)	Challenges in the processes of research and decision-making: time span, relevance, focus; the importance of political values in the use of information; data resources can be shared and expounded at many levels; linking research with policy-relevant entities: performance management as a way of encouraging interaction; challenges to encounters between information producers and users; uses, changed roles and intermediary functions of information professionals: (information specialists, information services etc.); emphasising the third task of universities: contribution to debate and to information production.
<b>Normitalkoot project</b> (Ministry of Finance and Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities)	Senior Legal Counsel Kari Prättälä, Cabinet Counsellor Arto Luhtala, Senior Officer Anu Hernesmaa	Municipal policy in the Government Programme; horizontal preparation in government steering targeted at municipalities; assessment of impacts on municipalities in steering by legislation and in other management.
<b>Information management projects</b> (Ministry of Finance)	Ministerial Adviser Jukka Uusitalo, Project Manager Anne Kauhanen-Simanainen (VALTASA project)	The objective of the 'State-level architectures' project was to give a rough definition of enterprise architecture in State administration. The goal was to define State-level architecture policies (principles) and architecture solutions (joint operations, information, ICT services) and describe the visions specified for them. When formulating the State-level architecture, the project took into account the viewpoint of public administration in its entirety. Mere large data resources are not enough; attention must be paid to utilisation. It is important to link processes to the overall structure and to begin development with operations and needs (technology comes third). Good search functions and common metadata are essential for finding the right information.

<p><b>The Government's information service network</b> (Government's Information Services)</p>	<p>Tarja Kaira-Hiekkavuo (Min. of Educ. and Culture) Anne Niemi (Min. of Transport and Comm.) Anna-Maija Marttila (Min. of Finance) Pentti Vesänen (PMO) Pekka Kuittinen (PMO) Henry Ryhänen (PMO) Anne Kauhanen-Simanainen (Government IT Shared Service Centre)</p>	<p>The pilot projects showed that information services are not utilised much for information searches: operations emphasise the management of systems and documents, people no longer specialise in different themes (multiple skills), cf. information services at universities. Topics of discussion were more efficient use of resources among the ministries' information services and the harmonisation of information services.</p>
<p><b>In addition, the working group members met various other bodies and participated in the following events:</b></p>		
<p>Presentation of the TrendWiki system of the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, 23 August 2010</p>		
<p>Joint meeting of the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research and the POVI working group, 30 September 2010</p>		
<p>Meeting of the division for impact assessment, 7 October 2010</p>		
<p>Meeting of the Finnish Evaluation Society, 27 October 2010</p>		
<p>Presentation of a monitoring system for the AJOTI database of current information managed by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, 7 December 2010</p>		
<p>The 'Effective legislative drafting' project (Ministry of Justice / Sitra)</p>		



## Appendix 7 Letter of appointment

**Subject** **APPOINTMENT OF A PROJECT TO DEVELOP THE EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION OF POLICY MEASURES**

**Period** 1 March 2010–15 February 2011, extension until 31 March 2011

**Background** At its policy review session on 24 February 2009, the Government required that a project be started to develop the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures. The Permanent Secretaries of the ministries agreed in spring 2009 that the Prime Minister's Office would assume responsibility for launching the necessary measures to implement the Government's stand. The Prime Minister's Office appointed a working group to prepare the project between 15 June and 31 October 2009.

According to the preparatory group, the core question is **how to improve the use of information in political decision-making**. Here it is essential not only to examine the evaluations of individual policy measures, such as legislative projects, and the associated shortcomings, but also to investigate how to proceed **from scattered production and use of information to a systematic operating model**.

In the preparatory group's view, it must be ensured that an adequate information base starting from the needs of information users (those preparing and making decisions) is created to underpin at least the most important social reforms. Information generated at various sources and in various phases must be collated for mutual benefit, and the essential information must be channelled efficiently to support the principal political decisions. There is a need for developing the systematic use of evaluation both before (ex ante) and after decision-making (ex post). The continuity of social development can be supported by ensuring that the experiences and effectiveness information derived from earlier policies steer political decision-making in a sustained manner.

### **In the operating model sought:**

- evaluation and research data are used systematically in identifying reform needs, in selecting the most effective policy measures, and in the various phases of the preparatory process and decision-making;
- information needs are defined and identified deriving from political priorities;
- information resources meet high standards and are used effectively;
- the management system supports the timely, efficient and systematic use of evaluation and research data;
- interaction between the producers and users of evaluation and research data functions well;
- reporting is as light as possible and does not unnecessarily burden public servants and political decision-makers.

The preparatory working group submitted its report (Prime Minister's Office Reports 6/2009) to the State Secretary of the Prime Minister on 12 November 2009. Thereafter, the issue was discussed in the ministerial working group on better regulation chaired by Minister of Justice Mrs Brax, and in the ministerial working group on public administration and regional development led by Minister of the Public Administration and Local Government Mrs Kiviniemi. Both supported the working group's proposal for organisation of the work ahead. The report on the POVI project drawn up by

the preparatory group under the Prime Minister's Office is appended to this letter of appointment.

Shortcomings in the present operating model are manifested in various ways: overlapping preparation; multiple reporting; declining standard of legislative drafting; inefficient use of resources; and endangering the transparency of decision-making. Even though assessment of the impacts of legislation has been developed resolutely for quite some time, the present situation has still been criticised quite recently by bodies such as the Finnish Parliament and its Audit Committee and the National Audit Office. Most recently, the problems were brought up in the report on the external evaluation of the Economic Council, published on 21 January 2010. The report proposes that responsibility for coordinating the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures should be vested in the Policy-analysis Unit of the Prime Minister's Office, which incorporates the Secretariat of the Economic Council.

### **Organisation and procedures**

The idea underlying future work is that the project to develop the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures should be organised lightly, drawing on the numerous other on-going development projects pertaining to or touching on effectiveness evaluation. Above all, these projects include the project undertaken by the Ministry of Finance to develop performance management, the project of the Ministry of Justice for better regulation, and the reform of sectoral research. A working group consisting of evaluation experts is appointed for compiling a coordinated set of recommendations on how effectiveness evaluations can be utilised during the next Government term. The working group will prepare material for the use of the ministerial working group on better regulation, which supervises the work.

Evaluation of the impacts of legal regulations is developed as part of the legislative plan included in the Government Strategy Document. In this respect, the ongoing close cooperation with the Ministry of Justice is an essential element of the work to develop the effectiveness evaluation of policy measures, as referred to herein. In order to strengthen effectiveness evaluation, the Ministry of Justice is in the process of setting up a network of experts. The working group now appointed will cooperate with this network. Similarly, cooperation with the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research will be ensured in coming preparatory work.

### **Tasks**

Based on the proposals made by the preparatory group, the working group's tasks are:

1. To compile and prepare recommendations to the next Government concerning changes that improved linking of evaluation activities with political decision-making may require
  - in the Government's preparatory and decision-making processes,
  - in the roles and responsibilities of various actors (especially the overall responsibility for coordinating and promoting the utilisation of evaluation), and
  - in the tools that can be used for distributing information.
2. To pilot the opportunities offered by new operating models with ministries

3. To transmit the evaluation perspective to various development projects

The work will be supervised by the Prime Minister's State Secretary, and its progress will be discussed at the meetings of the Permanent Secretaries. The ministerial working group on better regulation and, whenever necessary, the ministerial working group on public administration and regional development will be kept abreast of the work and its results. The working group will maintain close contacts with the Advisory Board for Sectoral Research, Parliament and the National Audit Office.

The project now launched is closely linked with the project appointed by the Prime Minister's Office to assess and develop the implementation and monitoring of the Government Programme. It also produces material for the recommendations to be prepared in that project.

**Composition** The working group's members represent both general competence in evaluation and expertise in various types of impact assessment.

**Chairperson** Sirpa Kekkonen, Senior Adviser for Government Programme Monitoring, Prime Minister's Office

**Members** Klaus Halla, Director of Development, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health  
Sari Heinonen-Lindqvist, Leading Specialist, SITRA  
Katju Holkeri, Director, Ministry of Finance  
Tomi Halonen, Counsellor of Education, Ministry of Education and Culture  
Liisa Lundelin-Nuortio, Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Employment and the Economy  
Sari Löytökorpi, Secretary General, Ministry of Education and Culture/Advisory Board for Sectoral Research  
Per Mickwitz, Professor, Finnish Environment Institute  
Tea Skog, Researcher, Ministry of Justice  
Jyrki Tala, Professor, National Research Institute of Legal Policy  
Soili Vasikainen, Government Controller-General, Ministry of Finance  
Terho Vuorela, Leading Performance Auditor, National Audit Office  
Georg Henrik Wrede, Programme Director, Policy Programme for the Well-being of Children, Youth and Families

The working group's **secretary members** are Senior Specialists Taina Kulmala and Ruusa Hilakari from the Policy-analysis Unit of the Prime Minister's Office. If necessary, the working group and the secretariat may be supplemented later. The working group operates as a network and will consult a wide spectrum of experts from various administrative branches.

**Costs** The working group members will discharge their tasks as part of their official duties. The Prime Minister's Office will pay the travel costs of the working group members and the experts consulted in accordance with the relevant State guidelines.

In matters concerning salaries and fees and the recruitment of part-time secretaries, the Prime Minister's Office must make the appropriate decisions separately.

The working group cannot place orders or make agreements – such as hiring consultants, renting premises or acquiring supplies – that would be binding on the Prime Minister's Office unless specifically approved by the Prime Minister's Office.

The working group's meeting trips or excursions outside the regular meeting locality require permission by the Prime Minister's Office.

The printing and distribution of any reports and other publications must be agreed on in advance with the Prime Minister's Office.

Risto Volanen  
State Secretary

Heikki Aaltonen  
Permanent State Under-Secretary

Distribution: Ministers, State Secretaries and Permanent Secretaries  
Director General Lea Kauppi, Finnish Environment Institute

For information:  
Prime Minister's Office Registry  
Director General Vilavaara, Prime Minister's Office

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PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE  
FINLAND

SNELLMANNINKATU 1, HELSINKI  
PO BOX 23, 00023 GOVERNMENT,  
FINLAND  
Tel. +358 9 16001, +358 9 57811  
Fax +358 9 1602 2165  
[julkaisut@vnk.fi](mailto:julkaisut@vnk.fi)  
[www.vnk.fi/english](http://www.vnk.fi/english)

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