



An Chomhairle Náisiúnta Eacnamaíoch agus Shóisialta
National Economic & Social Council

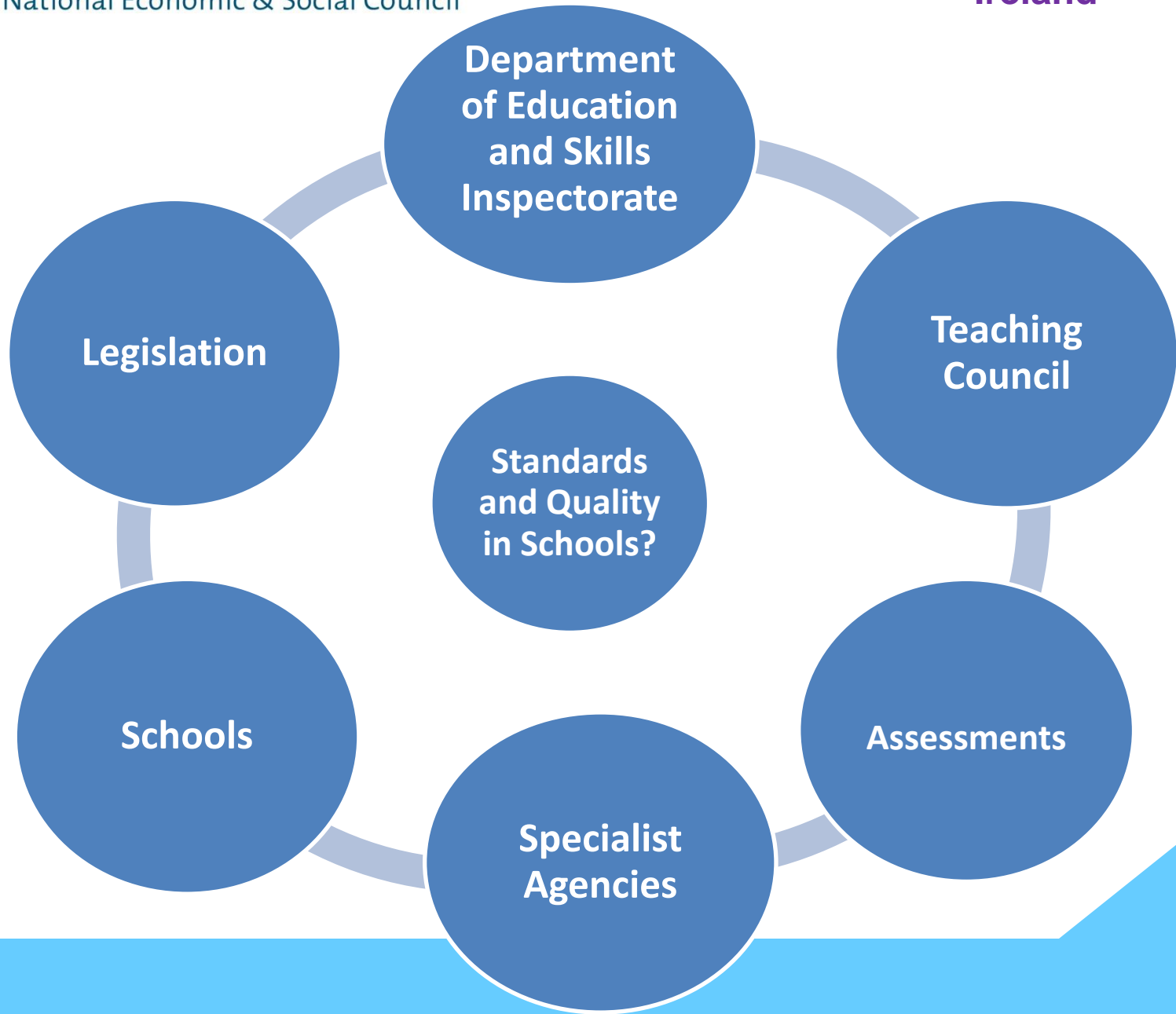
Quality and Standards in Irish Human Services: The School System

NESC Conference
Croke Park
21 November 2012



Presentation

- What the overall project is about
- Description of the school system landscape
- Analysis of standards and quality in the school system
- Conclusions





Consolidation or Transformation?

- Specific programmes
 - Literacy and Numeracy Strategy has been formulated to address concerns
 - Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)
 - Curriculum reform e.g., Project Maths initiative

Two Fundamental Issues

- Absence of a culture and discipline of reflective practice within schools
 - Ensure that assessment of practice is embedded within every teacher's professional business
- Absence of a national data and standards framework
 - National system of data and standards should be viewed as essential so that the potential of all the new practices and arrangements can be realised



The first issue is live in the system

- Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2011
- Evaluation is integral to the DEIS programme
 - Organisational Review Programme Report (ORP)
recommended that this approach be mainstreamed to all schools
 - Curriculum now requires clear statements of learning outcomes

Reflection within schools

- Refashioning the practice of teaching
- Self-evaluation and reflection
- Case examples
 - Finland
 - Victoria, Australia
- Challenges for teachers who believe they have neither the capacity nor resources to become data-generating, self-evaluating professionals



National Standards and Data Framework

- Information gathered by schools have limited value without comparable information on the national context
- DES to support the use of standardised testing and self-evaluation
- Challenges
 - Level of detail
 - Timeliness
 - Linking of ongoing assessment and standardised tests



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A question of ambition and capacity

- The teaching profession
- School Boards of Management
- DES and the Inspectorate Division