

## **WE PROVIDE EVALUATION STANDARDS IN POLAND**"Assessment of the Current State of DRG Evaluation in Europe"

## **COUNTRY REPORT: POLAND**

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#### **METHODOLOGY**

Data has been gathered through **desk research** and the **interviews** (FGI/IDI) with representatives of:

- Governmental institutions the Ministry of Investment and Development
- Academic/scientific institutions the Jagiellonian University and the Centre for Evaluation and Analysis of Public Policies (research unit)
- Non-governmental organisations
- Business consulting firms





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#### **OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION SYSTEM**

- Mid-90s first evaluations of educational projects; requirements imposed by Western European countries and the USAID.
- Before 2004 pre-accession EU funds; in 2004-16 the trigger that enabled the expansion of evaluation. Poland is one the main EU funds beneficiary and also a leader of the CEE as regards number of evaluations.
- **2002-2017 1.279** evaluations of Cohesion Policy and more than 3.000 external evaluations in the education sector.
- In 2013 almost 160 people employed in the evaluation system in public administration.



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#### **EVALUATION SYSTEMS IN POLAND**

- 1) EU funds the National Evaluation Unit and evaluation units within the managing/intermediating institutions, which manage/implement/evaluate the operational programmes at the central and regional level (in total 33 in 2016). Evaluation reports are published in Evaluation Data Base.
- **2) Formal education** institutions' activities evaluation according to **government-set standards** (pedagogical supervision). **External** evaluations are conducted by employees of the Boards of Education (inspectors) and **internal** evaluations by schools.



#### **CURRENT DRG EVALUATION PRACTICES**

DGR evaluation refers to **various funds** - EU funds, Norwegian and the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanisms, national funds. Most of these evaluations concern **EU funds**:

- 2004-2006: Transition Facility, Human Resources Development,
   Community Initiative EQUAL
- 2007-2013: 16 Regional Operational Programmes, Human
   Capital (e.g. employment, social integration, good governance)
- 2014-2020: 16 ROPs and Knowledge Education Development
- Food Aid Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund

#### **National funds:**

- Polish Development Assistance (Polish Aid)
- Civic Initiatives Fund (mainly for NGOs)





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### **CURRENT DRG EVALUATION PRACTICES**

Topics	2004-2006	2007-2013	2014-2020	In total
Labour market	35	108	2	145
Social inclusion	6	29	4	39
Good governance	2	12	1	15
Meta-evaluation	-	2	2	4
In total	43	151	9	203

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## **CURRENT DRG EVALUATION CAPACITIES (1)**

- In 1989-2004 relatively small potential including: legal framework, financial resources, evaluation awareness/competences, educational activities.
- In 2007-2015 capacities increased significantly in response to the demand caused by a large number of programmes financed by EU ("learning by doing"), law requirements concerning educational institutions/development cooperation), decentralization.
- In 2016 the scale of evaluation regarding EU funds has been suddenly reduced (evaluation costs at the project level became non-eligible, unless being approved by managing authorities). This change resulted in diminishing the evaluation potential in terms of number of firms, experts, post-diploma studies, but it had quantitative not qualitative character.

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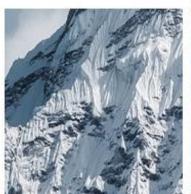
## **CURRENT DRG EVALUATION CAPACITIES (2)**

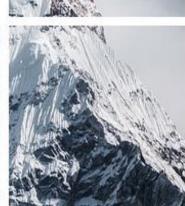
- Legal requirements concerning the EU/Polish funds
- Decentralization operational programmes implemented/evaluated regionally
- More qualified, experienced and aware evaluators/commissioners
- On-line database including evaluation reports concerning EU funds
- Access to various educational opportunities academic courses, post-diploma studies, training, conferences, seminars, workshops, projects
- Increasing number of various materials/publications concerning evaluation
- Evaluation Standards developed by PES in 2008
- More efficient process of commissioning and selecting the best tender substantive criteria, more restrictive requirements for bidders
- Recommendation Implementation System obligatory for all evaluation of EU funds since 2007



# MAIN OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTEGRATING DRG INTO EVALUATING GOVERNMENT POLICIES

- Providing the financial basis for evaluation
- More favorable attitudes towards evaluation
- Modifications of the public procurement law
- Increase of evaluation quality through growing requirements of commissioners and the application of new methodologies
- New potential areas security, business (CSR), local initiatives
- Closer cooperation of public institutions that aggregate/share data
- The demand for long-term evaluation
- Promotion of senior experts (former pioneers)
- Digital technologies/globalization faster data collecting, cost reduction, sharing good practices
- Rebuilding of the evaluation market





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#### MAIN CONSTRAINTS ON DRG EVALUATIONS

- Social low level of social trust/participatory approach (negative attitudes evaluation as a form of control), lack of interest in evaluation results (poor quality, useless recommendations, not sufficient dissemination)
- Legal/financial restricting regulation concerning EU project evaluation
- Administrative/Organizational not enough integration with planning and implementation of public policies, inappropriate planning (insufficient resources), lack of evidence-based management at the local level
- Personnel "Passion for evaluation" features specific people, staff turnover/ shortages in public administration, less people involved in evaluation presently
- **Business** constraints less **competition** on the evaluation market
- Informational constrains weak PR activities of evaluation contractors, no media presence of evaluation



#### CHALLENGES RELATED TO DRG EVALUATION

- Lacking/insufficient competences (knowledge of the specific areas including DRG)
- Insufficient awareness at the local level (self-government)
- Weak interest evaluations are carried out as a result of an external, imposed requirement rather than an internal need for information
- Overloaded project teams/public institutions staff with many formal requirements and duties (they often perceive evaluation as an additional/unnecessary task)
- Lacking resources in NGOs (competences/staff, time, finance)
- Formulating useful recommendations (possible to implement)
- Very limited number of evaluations conducted by universities/research institutes
- Very slight spill over effect of the EU funds evaluation into other sectors
- Lack of a formally approving profession of evaluator
- Lack of legitimate certification system of proving evaluation competences that could enhance evaluation quality

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS (1)**

- Raising awareness of DRG evaluation this issue should be a subject of a broader public debate involving various stakeholders
- Building a grass-roots evaluation culture and stimulate the demand (encouraging and rewarding such practices instead of forcing it, promoting benefits)
- Increasing the level of social trust and enhancing civil society
- Promoting evaluation as a useful tool for managing DRG activities it should not be a casual action referring to selected projects but systematic procedure
- Educating commissioners in using right criteria in the public procurements, in assessing of evaluation reports in order to increase their quality
- Providing adequate resources for the DRG evaluation quality/need for evaluation can rapidly decrease in case of insufficient competences, staff, financing, time
- Promoting stronger integration of DRG evaluation with the project/programme
   cycle management



## **RECOMMENDATIONS (2)**

- Regarding the macro level evaluating activities taken by parliaments and governments regarding 5 cross-cutting dimensions of DGR
- Increasing emphasis on evaluators' specialization/expertise in DRG area can contribute to improving the evaluation quality and use of recommendations
- Reflecting on the specific of DRG evaluation (purposes, questions, criteria)
- Promoting closer/real cooperation between commissioners and evaluators in order to agree mutual expectations and possibilities
- Promoting multiannual DRG evaluation contracts that enable both commissioners and contractors learning in action and better cooperation
- Eliminating incorrect criteria from tender procedures (price as the dominant criterion, high scores for shortening evaluation deadline)
- Increasing the role of universities/research institutes in DRG evaluation



## **RECOMMENDATIONS (2)**

- Promoting dissemination of DRG evaluation reports, online summaries and information on implemented recommendations and their effects
- Sending short summaries concerning DRG evaluation results to politicians, members of the government, parliamentarians, think tanks, media
- Increasing of the PES' role in the process of building DRG evaluation capacity in Poland e.g. through:
  - encouraging the use of non-standard evaluation criteria concerning DRG
  - modernization of Evaluation Standards
  - popularization of the blended-learning course on evaluation
  - extension of the training offer
  - developing effective methods for the selection of evaluators in public procurement



## Thank you for your attention

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