



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

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## **COUNTRY REPORT: POLAND**

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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



# 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.



- 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.

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)



# 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
<b>In total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>203</b>

# 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.



- **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



## 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

- 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

## 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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