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Instrumente Structurale  
2007 - 2013



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# Evaluation a management tool supporting decision-making

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presented at the MC SOP-HRD meeting,  
Bucharest, November 25, 2011

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PROJECT CO-FINANCED FROM ERDF THROUGH OPTA 2007-2013



# The presentation

1. What is evaluation?
2. The working of evaluation
3. Why to evaluate?
4. Partnership



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# I. What is evaluation?

# Importance of evaluation

Evaluation is a **judgement on interventions regarding their results, impacts and needs they aim to satisfy.**

The European Commission regulates that evaluations must be carried out to improve the quality of the design and implementation of programmes, as well as to assess their effectiveness, efficiency and impact. This makes evaluation an important tool:

- to be used in the design and management of programmes financed by EU Structural Instruments;
- to assess the extent to which interventions reach the policy objectives set and how their performance can be improved in the future;
- to provide a rigorous evidence base to inform decision-makers.

## Importance of evaluation

Thus, evaluation can be regarded as:

- a way of **ensuring accountability**, throughout the process of decision-making;
- a way of **measuring performance** by assessing effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the intervention;
- a valuable **input** into the shape of future programmes and policies that can lead **to the improvement** of the quality of the design and implementation of programmes.

**In order to achieve this, evaluation must be planned, designed and performed in partnership with all stakeholders.**

# What can evaluation provide?

*The evaluation's purpose is to formulate useful recommendations for the efficient application of public funds.*

Although evaluation commissioners place high expectations on evaluation's providing solutions to all problems identified, it must be said that **evaluation can provide PERSPECTIVES and RECOMMENDATIONS not solutions.**

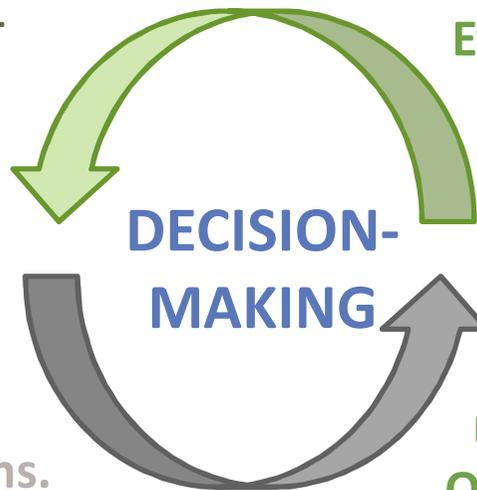
**HOW?**

By providing key data and knowledge to ensure better informed decision-making for planning, designing and implementing the OP as well as for managing the institution.  
By enhancing the legitimacy of decisions and the accountability of decision-makers.

# Evaluation – monitoring – decision-making

The proposed approach emphasizes the need for stronger links between monitoring and evaluation on the one hand, and on the other, between these two interlinked exercises and decision-making.

Monitoring examines process/operational information mainly on outputs and results achieved, financial absorption and on the quality of implementation mechanisms.



Evaluation examines information on socio-economic impact, continuing relevance and consistency of strategies at national/OP level, changes in community, national or regional priorities affecting an OP and proposed adjustments.

In order to ensure high quality of information and analysis to inform management decision, **monitoring and evaluation should be planned in advance** so that relevant evaluation results are available in due time for operational and strategic decision-making and reporting needs.

The timing of evaluations must enable the results to be included into any decision on the design, renewal, modification or suspension of activities or changing legislation.



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## II. The working of evaluation

## Stages of evaluation

Evaluation, throughout its stages, serves as management tool for decision-makers and stakeholders.

- ***At the ex-ante stage***, evaluation can help to improve the relevance and guarantee the rationale of the programme design. Ex-ante evaluations are meant to improve the quality and design of a programme, and verify that objectives and targets can be reached.

The new regulations on cohesion policy for 2014-2020 set out **the contribution to the EU strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth -Europe 2020**, as a priority task for ex-ante evaluations (*Article 48, Common provisions on ERDF, ESF, CF, EAFRD and EMFF*), having regard to **11 thematic objectives**.



# Thematic objectives

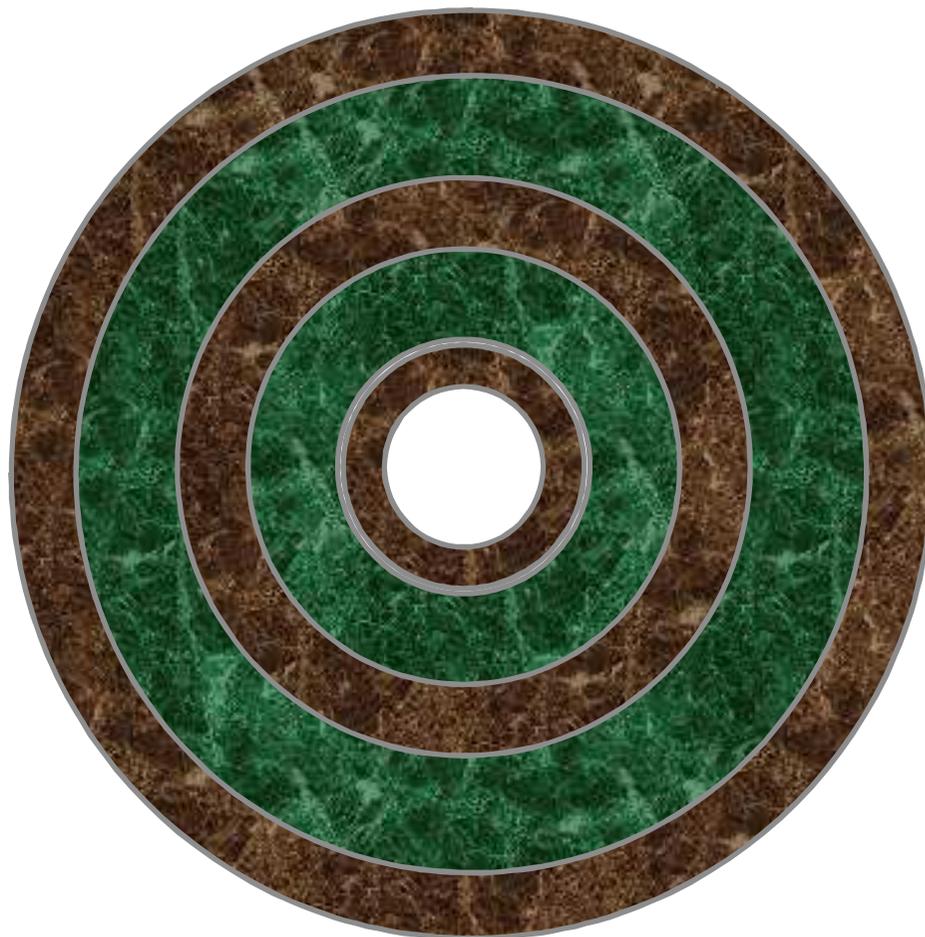
1. research, technological development and innovation;
2. information and communication technologies;
3. competitiveness of SMEs, agriculture and fisheries;
4. shift towards a low-carbon economy;
5. climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management;
6. protecting the environment and resource efficiency;
7. sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures;
- 8. employment and labour mobility;**
- 9. social inclusion and combating poverty;**
- 10. education, skills and lifelong learning;**
11. institutional capacity and public administration.

*(Article 9, Common provisions on ERDF, ESF, CF, EAFRD and EMFF)*

## Stages of evaluation (cont.)

- ***On an ongoing basis***, evaluation can help to assess performance, detect implementation problems and point to corrective measures. On-going evaluations are used to assess effectiveness, efficiency and impact for each programme on the basis of the evaluation plan. (*Article 49, Common provisions*)
- ***At the ex-post stage***, evaluation can tell us what has been achieved and point to lessons for future periods. Ex-post evaluations shall examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the funds and their contribution to Europe 2020. (*Article 50, Common provisions*)

# The project and evaluation cycle



Policy cycle

Programme cycle

Project cycle

Evaluation cycle

## Analysis of the ERDF regional strategy in relation to demographic change and gender equality in Castilla y León, Spain

### Scope

The analysis is part of the Ex-post evaluation of cohesion policy programmes 2000-2006 co-financed by the European Fund for Regional Development (Objectives 1 and 2), Work package 7: “Effectiveness of the Cohesion Policy: Gender Equality and Demographic Change”.

### Aim

- To check the extent to which ERDF contributed to the adaptation to demographic change and gender equality through support to a number of interventions: female entrepreneurship and employment, social, transport and ICT infrastructure and rural development.



## Analysis of the ERDF regional strategy in relation to demographic change and gender equality in Castilla y León, Spain

### Conclusions

- ERDF impact on gender equality and demographic change in Castilla y León during 2000-2006 is seen as low to moderate.
- There is little awareness of the potential effects of ERDF interventions on adaptation to demographic change and gender equality.
- Civil society participation was missing during the planning phase, however it increased during the implementation and evaluation of interventions.
- Impacts on gender equality are considered neutral for most ERDF interventions, especially infrastructures.
- No specific mechanism, institution or person is designed to monitor gender equality in ERDF measures.
- No official indicators on gender and demographic change are included in the monitoring system. However, close examination of some measures reveals much stronger impacts than reported by those involved in implementation.



## Analysis of the ERDF regional strategy in relation to demographic change and gender equality in Castilla y León, Spain

### Recommendations

- To continue to increase awareness of the potential effects of ERDF interventions on adaptation to demographic change and gender equality.
- To continue support through specific training and communication actions on these issues to MAs and officials in charge with implementation of ERDF measures.
- To mobilize different actors towards such issues identified as important at the EU level.
- To keep continuity in programme management especially when dealing with transversal objectives and indirect effects in order to have a comprehensive view on the impact.



## Who can make use of evaluation and how?

- *The extent to which the use and usefulness of evaluation can be strengthened depends on the demand and interest for evaluation results from decision-makers and senior management but also on the applicability of recommendations. It must be admitted that at times recommendations are too general or simply lack practicality.*
- In order to lessen **evaluation lag**, which hinders the evaluation to materially effect the programmes, policies and structures they are intended to benefit, **evaluation must be approached as a an integral part of programmes and institutional operational procedures.**
- It is crucial that evaluation is seen as a process which begins at the point of programme elaboration and is owned by and shaped by the stakeholders.



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## II. Why to evaluate?

# Who can make use of evaluation and how?

## HOW?

### WHO?

Programme managers;  
Policy- and decision-  
makers;  
Other stakeholders.

- By using experience gained from previous interventions to translate political priorities into meaningful objectives and indicators;
- By using evaluation results to justify existing or new initiatives on efficient allocation of resources;
- By using evaluation results to complement and enrich data from monitoring exercises;
- By using evaluation to identify gaps (or missing links) and emerging needs.



# Evaluation of the impact of interventions co-financed by the European Social Fund on human resources improvement in Poland

## Scope

The evaluation covered financial framework 2004-2006.

## Aim

- To analyze and evaluate the impact of interventions co-financed by the European Social Fund on human resources improvement in Poland.

## Conclusions

- Difference in expenditure structure and allocation between regions are greater than size, GDP and unemployment rate disparities would suggest. Most populated regions are devoted relatively small budget share.
- The majority of funds are devoted to activities aimed at equalizing education and opportunities and strengthening vocational and social integration.
- 60% of beneficiaries are women.



## Evaluation of the impact of interventions co-financed by the European Social Fund on human resources improvement in Poland

- Efficient projects are those concerning support for schools and kindergartens, especially in rural areas. Projects aimed at computerisation in schools and business startup assistance are highly evaluated.
- Substantial funds are spent on training, with positive effects on professional activation of the unemployed.
- There are positive effects on designing and introducing national policies and legislative changes.
- There are positive effects on the institutional system, especially on labour market institutions whose monitoring system improved.
- Beneficiaries are younger than the Polish average and better educated compared to the control group of companies.
- Companies receiving support for entrepreneurship promotion have the highest survival rate, 85% of them survived at least 2 years.



## Evaluation of the impact of interventions co-financed by the European Social Fund on human resources improvement in Poland

- Although the number of start-ups raised, they aren't standing out significantly against companies operating on the market.

The study provides the basis for the policy recommendation in the period from 2007 to 2013.

### Recommendations

- To continue support the chosen interventions and to modify of others (or resignation from others);
- Resource allocation optimisation between regions and types of support;
- Possible changes in the training courses and training institutions aimed at improving the effectiveness of aid;
- Use of experience to improve the local labour market analysis;
- Some possible modification of the support for start-ups aimed at improving the effectiveness.



## Contribution of evaluation to the programme management

Evaluation can:

- improve the Operational Programme management capacity in terms of analysis and decision-making;
- disseminate information within the Operational Programme's management and implementation structures;
- improve the co-operation within the Operational Programme's management and implementation structures;
- generate new ideas, perspectives;
- identify deficiencies in the monitoring system.

## Study on Measuring Employment Effects in Lithuania

### Scope

In order to support the research on measuring employment effects and provide updated insight into practices, seven case studies and other consultations were undertaken in 2006. The study selected is part of this research.

### Aim

- To help prepare updated guidance on measuring Structural Fund employment effects using a ‘bottom-up’ methodology. The existing EC guidance explain in theory how to measure Structural Fund employment effect but lack specific indications on how “bottom-up” approaches should be applied.

**A ‘bottom-up’ approach involves using monitoring data to estimate direct employment effects starting from project level to measure and priority levels leading to an estimate at the programme level.**



## Study on Measuring Employment Effects in Lithuania

### Conclusions

- Consistency and reliability of data on direct gross job creation was compromised at the outset of the 2004-2006 programming period due to various interpretations amongst beneficiaries on how to measure employment outcomes.

The monitoring system makes no difference between part-time / full-time jobs and permanent/ temporary jobs created.

MA issued methodological guidance on how to calculate direct employment effects and measure different types of employment effects.

Information on indirect effects is not entered into formal monitoring systems but is kept for evaluation purposes. For future ex-post evaluation of 2004-2006 programme it is envisaged that evaluators will produce estimates retrospectively for indirect job creation taking into account possible multiplier effects.

Ex-post evaluation of employment effects for 2004-2006 performed in 2008 assessed, among others, the system for data collection and monitoring of employment indicators and proposed improvements. Analysis of methods for evaluating SF employment effects conducted in 2009 included the direct/indirect jobs created/saved estimates for 2004-2008 SF interventions.



## Study on Measuring Employment Effects in Lithuania

Difficulties encountered by implementing agencies in quantifying employment outcomes.

The MA commissioned two separate guides on evaluation and monitoring in 2005, with the aim to strengthen capacity amongst the public administration in respect of evaluation and monitoring and provide single point of reference. A series of training were organized for public officials.

Some confusion with regards to whether anticipated employment outcomes beyond the lifetime of a project (jobs created and safeguarded) should be counted.

The recent issuing of guidance clarified this issue. All jobs created during the project or within two years of its implementation should be counted.



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## IV. Partnership



## Partnership

Partnership is essential for planning, designing and carrying out evaluation for it provides a basis for learning, openness and transparency during the whole process. Evaluation of cohesion policy is undertaken on a partnership basis, with Member States responsible for ex-ante and ongoing evaluation and Commission responsible for ex-post and other thematic evaluations.

Member State shall organize a partnership with partners:

- a) competent regional, local, urban and other public authorities;
- b) economic and social partners; and
- c) bodies representing civil society, including environmental partners, nongovernmental organisations, and bodies responsible for promoting equality and non-discrimination.

## Evaluation – Partnership

### PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING EVALUATION

- When planning and carrying out evaluation, in order to ensure **relevant** and **useful** evaluation **results**, close co-operation between **all stakeholders** involved in national/local level monitoring and evaluation is important.
- Evaluators must cooperate with the concerned individuals /entities, which makes it necessary to define the evaluation objectives and **make** the concerned **individuals/entities aware** of these.
- Open approach is important during evaluation process and when formulating recommendations, in order to avoid that the concerned individuals/entities become opposed to the evaluation, or feel that they have no influence on procedures.

### DECISION- MAKING

- When making informed decisions, **opinion** from **all stakeholders** should be sought and taken into consideration.

## Evaluation – Transparency and publicity

Evaluations are important tools to inform national and regional authorities, the general public and other stakeholders about the outcomes of the Cohesion Policy.

- Effective and timely communication of evaluation results can increase their impact on decision-making, be more useful and better exploited.
- To facilitate the use of evaluation results, they must be communicated to decision-makers and other relevant stakeholders in a clear and transparent manner. This requires a careful assessment of *what* type of information is useful to *whom*.
- Evaluation results should be communicated in such a way that they **meet the needs of decision-makers**. The information needs to be politically relevant, concise and easily comprehensible.
- Policy implications and lessons learnt from evaluations must be synthesized and appropriately disseminated.
- Results must be followed-up.

## Evaluation – Transparency and publicity

- According to the European Commission policy, each Member State must be committed to strengthening its citizens' confidence in Europe with a focus upon results, transparency, informed debate, and good co-ordination and partnership across Member States and European Institutions. Evaluation can facilitate these processes. Evaluation supports the Member States and their Managing Authorities in better communicating the added value of using the Structural Instruments to the European citizen.
- **All evaluations must be made public in their entirety** (Article 47, Common provisions), so they can enhance transparency of state operations and democratic accountability and stimulate dialogue and public debate on evaluation findings.



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**Thank you very much  
for your attention**

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