Session 4:
How can evidence-based policy keep up with the fast-changing world?

Thursday 16 September 2021
14:30 – 15:45 GMT+1
Moderator: Jennifer Baker

Chair: Peter Berkowitz, Policy Director, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Speakers:

- Duarte Rodrigues, Vice-President, Agency for Development and Cohesion, Portugal
- Riccardo Crescenzi, Professor of Economic Geography, London School of Economics
- Julia Bachträgler-Unger, Economist, Austrian Institute of Economic Research
- Katerina Mantouvalou, Director, Europe Policy, ICF
- Jos Vaessen, Adviser, Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank
- Dominika Rogalińska, Director of the Department of Spatial and Environmental Research, Central Statistical Office, Poland
Better planning and policy implementation

Better evidence of policy outcomes

Improved knowledge of what policy works (…why, when and where)

Better planning and policy implementation

Empowered and engaged actors, institutions and networks

Public policies funded by Cohesion Policy more relevant, efficient, effective, and scrutinized

Evaluation culture

All public policies more relevant, efficient, effective, and scrutinized

Implementation system of evaluation for public policies funded within Cohesion Policy

Needs

Input

Activities / Outputs

Outcomes

Impacts

Evaluation Plan

Methodological Guidance

Capacity building

Data available

Evaluation team

Evaluation process monitoring

Evaluation outputs

Follow-up

Results communication

Evidence-based Policies

Evidence-based Policies

• Interest and Recognition

• Relevance and Usefulness

Evaluations

Evaluations

Impacts

Evaluation culture

External factors

Theory of change of the Portugal 2020 evaluation

Public policies funded by Cohesion Policy more relevant, efficient, effective, and scrutinized

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Outcomes
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Main Achievements
- Monitoring and Evaluation Network (M&E Network) meetings
- Guidance for ToR
- Training Actions (M&E Network and other forums)
- Portugal 2020 information systems databases (also available for researchers)
- Investment in the quality of the ToR, prepared with the steering group
- Constitution of broad steering group (AD&C, MA, Public Agencies, Social Partners)
- 17 Concluded evaluations, 10 Ongoing, 6 under contracting process
- A developed follow up methodology
- A Policy Brief for all concluded evaluation

- Evaluation Global Plan with 44 evaluations
- Guidance for Follow-up
- Participation in training actions and in international conferences
- Joining Portugal 2020 data with other administrative and statistical records
- Predominance of public tenders
- Steering group meeting to discuss each of the evaluation report
- Several outputs: Report, abstract, Executive Summary (PT/EN), graphic overview
- An ongoing follow up process for each evaluation
- Launching seminar for each evaluation for a wide audience

Theory of Change of the Portugal 2020 Evaluation

Inputs
- Implementation system of evaluation for public policies funded within Cohesion Policy
- Human Resources
- Organizational structures
- Policy commitment
- Financing

Needs
- Outputs
- Evaluation Plan
- Methodological Guidance
- Capacity building
- Data available
- Evaluation team
- Evaluation process monitoring
- Evaluation outputs
- Follow-up
- Results communication
**Theory of change of the Portugal 2020 Evaluation**

**Main challenges for gear up evaluation for the next programming period**

**Timeliness**

- More robust evaluations teams in Cohesion Policy entities – Role of Roadmap for capacity building on Cohesion Policy Ecosystem
- Improve engagement from the academia in evaluation of public policies – recent call on TA OP for methodological improvements
- Enlarge process of cross data with administrative and statistical records – Cooperation with Statistical system
- More use of open data – webPortal + transparencia
- Improve result orientation of management information system
- Capacity building of evaluators
- Better contract framing on deadlines
- Better balance between evaluations on process (sooner) and on impact (later)
Better planning and policy implementation

Better evidence of policy outcomes

Improved knowledge of what policy works (…why, when and where)

Empowered and engaged actors, institutions and networks

**OUTCOMES**

- Activities / Outputs
  - Evaluation Plan
  - Methodological Guidance
  - Capacity building
  - Data available
  - Evaluation team
  - Evaluation process monitoring
  - Evaluation outputs
  - Follow-up
  - Results communication

**EVIDENCE-BASED POLICIES**

- Interest and Recognition
- Relevance and Usefulness

**MAIN CHALLENGES FOR GEAR UP EVALUATION FOR THE NEXT PROGRAMMING PERIOD**

**BROADER USE**

- Capacity building of all stakeholders — *Role of Roadmap for capacity building on Cohesion Policy Ecosystem*
- Improve complementarities among monitoring/evaluation/research
- Broad use of evaluations at the level of each major projects or each policy programme, including territorial instruments
- Improve follow up responsiveness from agencies
- Continuous improvement of language and communication of evaluation process and results
- Strengthening evaluation process *outside Cohesion Policy instruments* — *Role of PlanAPP (new PT competence center for planning)*
- ...also at EU level

**THEORY OF CHANGE OF THE PORTUGAL 2020 EVALUATION**

- Inputs
  - Needs
  - Human Resources
  - Organizational structures
  - Policy commitment
  - Financing

- Activities / Outputs
  - Evaluation Plan
  - Methodological Guidance
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- Outputs / Impacts
  - Evaluation culture

- Broader Use
  - Public policies funded by Cohesion Policy more relevant, effective, efficient and scrutinized

**Impacts**

- Evaluation team
- Research
- Monitoring
- Media
- Firms, NGO, …
- Civil society/Citizens
- Policymakers/legislators

**External factors**

- Financing
- Human Resources
- Organizational structures
- Policy commitment
- Needs
How can evidence-based policy keep up with the fast-changing world?

Riccardo Crescenzi
London School of Economics
The ‘new’ world

Marked heterogeneity of Covid-19 impacts across sectors, GVC segments and regions within countries

New geo-political fragmentation, stagnating FDI flows, re-organisation of GVCs

New forms of innovation driving response to Covid-19 and recovery (e.g. Work-from-Home and digital transition; net zero targets etc. )

Unprecedented shift in public policy paradigm and resources mobilised for recovery

New patterns of social and territorial inequalities
How to keep up?

Learn from Cohesion Policy for **inclusive** territorial impacts
   – Look at what works (and where) in Cohesion Policy to make impacts more inclusive

Learn from Cohesion Policy for **timely** Recovery by informing and shaping **other EU policies**
   – Learn from Cohesion Policy as a laboratory for other policies (e.g. Recovery Fund)

Learn from **other policies** for Cohesion Policy to **deal successfully with ‘new’ challenges**
   – Take inspiration from ‘outside’ Cohesion Policy in order to keep up with a fast changing world (e.g. Global Value Chains and internationalisation)
Cohesion Policy for inclusive impacts

New Challenge - Cohesion Policy will operate (together with Next Generation EU) in regions affected by a major pandemic shock. How to build ‘resilience’ in all regions?

Evaluation Methods & Data - Spatial Regression Discontinuity Design (RDD) estimates distinct but fully comparable regional impacts for each individual Member State before the Crisis and during Recovery

Evidence - Positive EU-wide impact on regional employment that survived the Great Recession and supported less developed regions in the recovery period

Regions in Germany and the UK ‘kept’ their bonus after the Crisis vs. regions in Italy and Spain that ‘lost’ their advantage with the Great Recession

Lessons – Addressing institutional and governance conditions should be a priority in order to ‘build’ resilience

Treated NUTS-3 regions (Objective 1 regions in 2000-2006) in red. Counterfactual NUTS-3 regions in green

Cohesion Policy for timely Recovery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>‘Traditional’ Projects</th>
<th>Digital &amp; Green Projects</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On time</td>
<td># 249,736</td>
<td>9,945</td>
<td>259,681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 88.24</td>
<td>69.83</td>
<td>87.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light delay</td>
<td># 15,780</td>
<td>1,253</td>
<td>17,033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 5.58</td>
<td>8.80</td>
<td>5.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe delay</td>
<td># 17,494</td>
<td>3,044</td>
<td>20,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 6.18</td>
<td>21.37</td>
<td>6.91</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td># 283,010</td>
<td>14,242</td>
<td>297,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Digital and Green’ projects by completion status – 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy - Italy

**New Challenge** - Cohesion Policy will impact the same territories as the Recovery Fund. How to support the digital and green transitions in all regions for timely impacts?

**Evaluation Methods & Data** - Textual analysis at the project level combined with regression methods shed light on what correlates with timely implementation.

**Evidence** - Digital and Green projects are inherently more prone to implementation delays in particular in ‘weaker’ regions.

**Lessons** - The direct involvement of citizens through participatory procedures led by central governments can significantly cut delays.

**Cohesion Policy for Global Value Chains**

**New Challenge** - In the ‘new world order’ attracting and embedding GVCs through FDI is central to regional development and Cohesion Policy

**Evaluation Methods & Data** - Combination of innovative survey on FDI promotion covering virtually all EU regions and diff-in-diff and synthetic control methods.

**Evidence** - Regional Investment Promotion Agencies are highly effective in attracting knowledge intensive investments to less developed regions (+71% vs. non treated sector/regions)

**Lessons** – Investment eco-systems are built at the local level. Cohesion Policy can effectively support regions in attracting and embedding FDI

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**Impact of Investment Promotion Agencies in Europe**

Treated/synthetic region-sectors and estimated gap, 2003-2017 (less developed regions)

Riccardo Crescenzi
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@crescenzi_r
Key References


 – Read also our LSE GILD Blog column: https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/gild/2019/02/21/what-policies-work-for-fdi/

 – Read also our EUROPP column: https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2021/02/15/next-generation-eu-how-the-eus-covid-19-recovery-fund-should-be-implemented/
Evaluating EU Cohesion Policy Using Satellite data

Project on behalf of Bertelsmann Stiftung, joint work with ifo Institute and the German Aerospace Center

Julia Bachträgler-Unger, Mathias Dolls, Paul Schüle, Hannes Taubenböck, Matthias Weigand
Nightlight Emissions in Europe 2000
Nightlight Emissions in Europe 2019
Motivation
EU Cohesion Policy and the Development of Nightlight Emissions

- Pilot region: municipalities in border region of CZ, DE and PL
- Does EU cohesion policy affect the local development of economic activity, proxied by nightlight emissions?
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https://www.wifo.ac.at/julia_bachtroegler
Twitter: @JBachtroegler
Dealing with complexity in evaluation through the use of data science applications

Shaping Transitions with Evidence
The 9th Conference on the Evaluation of EU Cohesion Policy

Jos Vaessen, PhD
September 16, 2021
1. Evaluators as synthesizers: example private sector development projects evaluative synthesis

Source: IEG, Bravo
2. Identifying the evaluand: example global evaluation WBG support to combat undernutrition

Source: IEG, Gold and Vellez
3. Using big data for evaluative analysis: example geospatial data Tirana (urban development)

- **Description**: high resolution street-level imagery.
- **Source**: GoogleEarth, Mapillary, others.
- **Data type**: images.
- **Spatial coverage**: worldwide
- **Temporal coverage**: mostly available for recent years. Timerseries analysis with this data might prove difficult.

- Particularly useful for in-depth analysis of smaller geographic areas (e.g., cities) in the context of urban development projects. Different techniques allow to process a large amount of images in a short amount of time and extract its relevant features (such as roads, cars, buildings, sky, etc.). These features can be geocoded and mapped.

Example: Semantic segmentation of a street-level image from Tirana (Albania). The information extracted from 800+ images was used to derive a map showing the level of greenness across different parts of the city.

**URBAN FABRIC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Area (m²)</th>
<th>Urban Fabric (m²)</th>
<th>Residential and Commercial (m²)</th>
<th>Parks and Forests (m²)</th>
<th>Cemetery</th>
<th>Military</th>
<th>Parks and Forests</th>
<th>Other (m²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39,998,805</td>
<td>31,763,600</td>
<td>28,379,611</td>
<td>2,729,500</td>
<td>3,761</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>104,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirana</td>
<td>39,998,805</td>
<td>31,763,600</td>
<td>28,379,611</td>
<td>2,729,500</td>
<td>3,761</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>104,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathehe</td>
<td>456,457</td>
<td>12,334</td>
<td>5,076</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>2,903</td>
<td>2,948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone 1</td>
<td>336,776</td>
<td>3,386</td>
<td>3,004</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone 2</td>
<td>298,747</td>
<td>9,145</td>
<td>5,670</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone 3</td>
<td>298,747</td>
<td>9,145</td>
<td>5,670</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>867</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ROADS**

**BUILDINGS**

**GREENNESS AND SKYVIEW**

- Greenness: areas in central parts of the city have a large concentration of green areas due to the existence of parks and a larger number of trees along main streets. Areas in the periphery of the city have a high concentration of green areas mostly correspond to forests.
- Skyview: areas in the periphery of the city have the most sky view (around 50%) due to low development density.
- Maps were produced applying IDW interpolation algorithm.

Source: IEG, Ziulu
Thank you!
9th Conference on the Evaluation of EU Cohesion Policy

Katerina Mantouvalou
Director - Public Policy

16-17 September 2021
Evaluation cornerstones that should be maintained
Online Theory of change (ToC) development and validation workshop

Managed to:
- Review, amend and sign off the model
- Demonstrate and discuss the draft model and make changes in real-time

Missed:
- Anything!
Assessment of the impact ‘stay at home orders’ had on women during the Covid-19 pandemic

Data analytics (Google trends and website traffic data) showed a sharp increase in searches of the term ‘domestic violence’ and visits to the websites of organisations assisting victims during the pandemic.

Managed to:
✓ Solid evidence about the immediate negative impact of a policy on a specific group

Missed:
✗ Qualitative insights about the needs of victims and how to assist them
Evaluation cornerstones revisited
About ICF

ICF (NASDAQ:ICFI) is a global consulting and digital services company with over 7,000 full- and part-time employees, but we are not your typical consultants. At ICF, business analysts and policy specialists work together with digital strategists, data scientists and creatives. We combine unmatched industry expertise with cutting-edge engagement capabilities to help organizations solve their most complex challenges. Since 1969, public and private sector clients have worked with ICF to navigate change and shape the future.

Thank you!

icf.com
People reached . . .

were **interested and inspired** by the campaign messages

were **better informed** about the contributions of the EU to their daily lives

take action to **search for more** information about the campaign topics

have experienced a positive influence on their **trust in the EU**

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**#EUANDME M&E**

- **Online panel survey**
- **Focus group**
- **On the spot data collection**
- **Campaign hub traffic metrics**
Analysing the website traffic we collected a wealth of information about the journey of the those reached by campaign material.

We learned whether...

the campaign was **successfully launched**

individual interest in the campaign was **continuously high**

individuals **searched other sources** after visiting the campaign hub

they interacted with the campaign **content**, and, if so, when and how

However, website traffic can only say part of the story for the evaluation...

The full scale and quality of interaction could not be assessed through the campaign hub. Surveys with 36,000 respondents, individual interviews and focus groups shed light into it.
Success factors
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icf.com
Assessment of the impact ‘stay at home orders’ had on women during the Covid-19 pandemic

Google trends

Google searches for *domestic violence* and related terms 2016 - 2021 within the EU 27
Percentage change from the pre-pandemic mean search rate since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic (01 March 2020)
Assessment of the impact ‘stay at home orders’ had on women during the Covid-19 pandemic

Website traffic data