

Brochure

9

th

Evaluation
Conference
in Prague

Cohesion Policy:

Common Path to Results
and Impacts

8-9 November 2023



Co-funded by
the European Union



MINISTRY
OF REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT CZ



EVALUATION
UNIT NCA

**This is a preliminary version of the program
- information may change!**

The organizer of the conference is
Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic – National
Coordination Authority (MMR-NOK)

Conference day programme

8 November 2023

AVI – large hall, Pařížská 4, 110 00 Prague

8:45-9:15

Registration of participants

9:15-9:30

Introductory word (interpretation)

- Minister – **Ivan Bartoš**
- Deputy Minister – **Jan Fluxa**
- Section Director – **Stanislav Schneider**

9:30-11:30

Results and impacts of cohesion policy / Partnership Agreements across Europe

News Presentation followed by discussion (interpretation)

- **Impact evaluation of the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020: Many hounds soon catch the hare** – Linda Maršíková, Ernst & Young
- **Evaluation of the Romania Partnership Agreement 2014-2020** – Crăciun Delia, Ministry of European Investments and Projects, Romania
- **Results and impacts of cohesion policy** – Enrico Pesaresi, DG REGIO

Moderated by: **Jana Drlíková**

11:30-12:00

Coffee break

12:00-13:30

Pro-growth factors of cohesion policy at the regional level, or what helps regions in their development

News Presentation followed by discussion (interpretation)

- **Regional ex-post evaluation CZ** – Ernst & Young
- **The impact of the cohesion policy on the convergence of Poland and its regions** – Jacek Białek, Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, Poland
- **Enhancing evaluation use: Experiences of evaluations of territorial programs** – Zsuzsa Sötét, Prime Minister's Office, Hungary

Moderated by: **Rostislav Kolouch**

13:30-14:30

Lunch break

2 parallel afternoon blocks

AVI – large hall, interpreted

AVI – large meeting room, only in Czech

14:30-15:30

Effects of cohesion policy on climate and environmental protection

News

Presentation followed by discussion (interpretation)

- **Assessment of the cohesion policy impact on the preservation and protection of the environment and the efficient use of resources** – Lukáš Maláč, Naviga Advisory and Evaluation
- **Environmental impact monitoring of the Rural Development Programme in Hungary** – Tamás Csemeczky, Collectivo Expert Community

Moderated by: **Petr Bouchal**

The path to a cohesive society

News

Presentation followed by discussion (only in Czech)

- **School development in form unit costs** – Michaela Mrozková, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports CZ
- **Analysis of the availability of early childcare facilities with a focus on parental strategies** – Tamara Zykanová, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs CZ

Moderated by: **Lenka Průšová**

15:30-16:00

Coffee break

16:00-17:00

Evaluation of experiments and innovations

Inspiration

Presentation followed by discussion (interpretation)

- **Valorising results across EU Funds: Experimental call of Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE** – Jana Vaněček, Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE
- **Searching for causal links: experiences from the call of the Operational Programme Employment** – Štěpán Rezek, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- **Innovation and competitiveness** – Léon Kamenický, Ernst & Young

Moderated by: **Jana Bystrická**

Information based decision-making in public administration

Inspiration

Presentation followed by discussion (only in Czech)

- **OECD: Public Governance Review of the Czech Republic** – Petr Schlesinger, Ministry of the Interior CZ
- **Evidence-informed policymaking** – Office of the Government CZ

Moderated by: **Kateřina Gregorová**

17:00

Closure and invitation to the next day


17:00-19:00

Informal discussions and networking with refreshments

Workshop day programme

9 November 2023

AVI, Pařížská 4, 110 00 Prague



8:30-9:00	Registration of participants		
9:00-10:30	AVI – large meeting room 1st educational WS Creating AI enhanced professional documents and management summaries Education – Tomáš Zykán only in Czech (20 participants)	9:00-10:30	AVI – large hall – part without stage 2nd educational WS Presentation of complex outputs from evaluations and data analyses Education – Ondřej Staněk only in English (20 participants)
			10:00-10:30 Registration of participants
10:30-11:00	Lunch break		10:30-12:30 AVI – large hall – part with stage EvalCafé: Quality final report: client's expectations versus supplier's perspective Discussion Moderated by: Petr Bouchal only in Czech
11:00-12:30	Part 2	11:00-12:30	Part 2
12:30-13:30	Lunch break		
13:30-15:00	Part 3	13:30-15:00	Part 3
			13:30-15:00 PANK's Not Dead Part 1 – Petr Bouchal, České priority Inspiration only in Czech
15:00-15:30	Lunch break		
15:30-17:00	Part 4	15:30-17:00	Part 4
			15:30-17:00 Part 2
17:00	End		

Conference day programme

8 November 2023

AVI – large hall, Pařížská 4, 110 00 Prague

9:30-11:30

Results and impacts of cohesion policy / Partnership Agreements across Europe

News

Presentation followed by discussion (interpretation)

Impact evaluation of the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020: Many hounds soon catch the hare

With the end of the 2014-2020 programming period, we have the opportunity to evaluate the impact of the interventions implemented within the cohesion policy on the thematic areas as defined in the Partnership Agreement. Due to their financial volume, financial resources from EU funds have only a small chance to influence the socio-economic development of the Czech Republic. Broadly set goals and the fragmentation of funds into many sub-areas meant that the effect of funding from EU funds did not bring any measurable impact in most topics. Although there has been success in selected areas, such as reducing air pollution or improving the availability of pre-school care, many of the expected results have not been achieved by the funds' interventions. In the ending programming period, the Czech Republic was not very ambitious in supporting innovation, it failed to concentrate funds on selected strategic topics that help to increase the state's competitiveness in international comparison. Let's learn from the conclusions of the evaluation and change the targeting of the cohesion policy so that we use the dwindling funds from Europe more efficiently and effectively in the future.



Linda Maršíková

Manager for the Public sector, Ernst & Young

With more than 11 years of professional experience, Linda has extensive knowledge of ESIF implementation and evaluation practice. While working for MOLSA, she conducted many analyses focused on the creation of subsidy policies, prepared the implementation of grants, subsidies and financial instruments, both from the state budget and ESIF. She devoted herself to the methodical management of regions and municipalities in the context of social services financing, and worked as an expert at the Czech Development Agency. At EY, she is the leading guarantor of evaluations, and with her team she participated in the largest evaluation projects that were implemented in the Czech Republic. Among them are the two largest evaluations, the Thematic Impact Evaluation of the Partnership Agreement and the Impact Evaluation of the Benefits of European Funds at the Regional Level. She is currently participating in the evaluation of system projects of the Labor Office. Linda is the vice president of the Czech Evaluation Society.

Evaluation of the Romania Partnership Agreement 2014-2020

A general equilibrium macroeconomic model for Romania has been constructed, which has added significant value to the findings and conclusions, representing a first and very important exercise at national level. Based on the general equilibrium economic model, the economic impact of ESI Funds was estimated by comparing the economy before and after the infusion of funds. The evaluation showed that ESI Funds contributed positively to the progress of the Europe 2020 Strategy indicators and to economic growth. Thus, the contribution to improving the competitiveness of the Romanian economy is reflected in the positive impact on economic growth, labour productivity and the trade balance. The contribution to GDP growth of completed projects was about 8.7% in nominal terms. The future impact of the ESI Funds contribution, the estimated cumulative effects of all contracted funds on economic growth amount to approximately 43.1% nominal GDP and 4.7% real growth for the period 2014-2023.



Delia Crăciun

Head of evaluation office, Ministry of European Investments and Projects, Romania.

Delia is the head of evaluation office from the Central Evaluation Unit, at the Ministry of European Investments and Projects, Romania. She has been active in the Romanian state administration since 2003 in the field of management of European funds. Delia holds a diploma of advanced studies in the electrical field at the Polytechnic University of Bucharest.

12:00-13:30

Pro-growth factors of cohesion policy at the regional level, or what helps regions in their development

News

Presentation followed by discussion (interpretation)

The impact of the cohesion policy on the convergence of Poland and its regions

The impact of the cohesion policy on the socio-economic development of Poland has been unequivocally positive. European funds had a significant impact on economic growth, investment activity and the labour market in Poland, as well as on the internal and external balance of the economy. EU funds also caused a noticeable increase in employment with a resultant decrease in unemployment. The positive effect of European cohesion policy is visible in the creation of new jobs, improvement of employee qualifications and their better adaptation to changing conditions on the labour market. The cohesion policy's intervention contributes to the intensification of the processes of real economic convergence between Poland and the EU in the GDP per capita terms (at PPP) via i.a. the more dynamic economic growth stimulated by the accretion of physical and human capital as well as the technological progress, which in turn affects the increase in labour productivity.



Jacek Białek

Counsellor, Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, Poland

Jacek has been employed in the Polish public administration for almost 30 years, of which last 16 years he has been dealing with issues related to regional and cohesion policy. Within the Unit of Territorial Analyses, he is responsible for i.a. preparing diagnostic inputs to strategic documents elaborated at the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy. He also presents the results of research by the Ministry in the area of cohesion policy's impact on the socio-economic development of Poland and of its regions to, among others, representatives of rating agencies.

Enhancing evaluation use: Experiences of evaluations of territorial programs

Insufficient utilization of evaluation results in policy is a well-known problem, and enhancing evaluation use is a very complex issue. Evaluation literature offers various well-founded advice on how to address this shortcoming. However, improving the use and usefulness of evaluations is an ongoing challenge especially for those who are involved in commissioning and managing evaluations. This short presentation shows some key evaluation findings of territorial programs aiming at the reduction of territorial disparities and improvement of local life quality, and the processes and methods we have applied for enhancing their utilization, which proved to be successful.



Zsuzsa Sötét

Prime Minister's Office, Hungary

Zsuzsa is a Senior Advisor at the Monitoring and Evaluation Department of the Hungarian Prime Minister's Office specializing in evaluations of EU programs on territorial development and public administration. She is responsible for managing the preparation of the Evaluation Plan of the 2021-2027 Cohesion Policy in Hungary.

AVI – large hall

Effects of cohesion policy on climate and environmental protection**News**

Presentation followed by discussion (interpretation)

AVI – large meeting room

The path to a cohesive society
News

Presentation followed by discussion (only in Czech)

Effects of cohesion policy on climate and environmental protection

News

Assessment of the cohesion policy impact on the preservation and protection of the environment and the efficient use of resources

What are the benefits and limits of using an innovative quantitative approach (with an emphasis on interregional sequential analysis of differences in differences) for evaluating the impact of support from EU funds in the field of the environment – reducing air pollution by harmful substances, protecting water resources and strengthening the supply of drinking water to the population, increasing efficiency wastewater management and increasing the efficiency of waste management? In which areas does the support cause an observable change in nationwide trends?

**Lukáš Maláč**

Naviga Advisory and Evaluation

Lukáš is an expert at Naviga Advisory and Evaluation in the field of strategic development and evaluation of public policies and programs. In his evaluation practice, he mainly focuses on the evaluation of the results and impacts of support in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship, regional development and the common agricultural policy of the EU. In an international context, he participated in the management and implementation of a number of projects in the field of regional development and evaluation of development and humanitarian projects for donors from the Czech Republic and abroad. Lukáš is a graduate of Masaryk University in the fields of political science and international relations and European studies. He has more than 14 years of experience in the field of evaluations and since 2010 has been working continuously in the private sector, on the side of service providers. In this position, he led several dozen evaluation projects.

Environmental impact monitoring of the Rural Development Programme in Hungary

Nature's services are essential for the survival of humanity. However, agriculture demands a toll on the capacity of Nature to regenerate and provide eco-services. The Common Agriculture Policy is aiming to promote sustainability in Europe's agriculture sector. This is mostly carried out through rules for farming practice. But do we know for sure, that these practices work? Do we know, what the environmental impacts of the changing farming practices are? The Hungarian Environmental Impact Monitoring program is designed to answer such questions, by supplying missing data for evaluation. Data is collected at agricultural sample areas, which represent various geographic conditions, flora and fauna. The data collection program consists of measurements in water quality, soil quality, biodiversity, quality of habitats, and the collection of agricultural farming practice data. The presentation aims at showing the design of the program as well as the challenges and lessons learned.

**Tamás Cserneczky**

Independent evaluator, Collectivo Expert Community

Tamás is the team leader of the experts working on the evaluation of the Hungarian Rural Development Program, and the Environmental Impact Monitoring programme. He has more than 10 years of experience in the evaluation of rural development policies, including the ex-post and ex-ante evaluations. He has been working in the design and execution of the evaluation of ESF/ESIF programmes for more than 20 years.

○ The path to a cohesive society

News

School development in form unit costs

The evaluation contains quantitative and quantitative results of support in form unit costs. It shows regional differences and the most frequently chosen activities. The vast majority of schools and school facilities consider the project to be beneficial, the range of offered activities to be sufficient and the composition of the activities in the project to be optimal. The significant contribution of the unit costs was perceived especially in the area of improving the conditions for the education of children/pupils with SEN and the use of ICT in education. This survey showed that the activities aimed especially at the area of the school staff support were evaluated positively. The staff support positions in schools are very welcome because of the professional assistance and access to children and pupils as well as the facilitation of the teachers' workload through administrative and organizational support.



Michaela Mrózková
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports CZ

Michaela is in charge of the Evaluation Unit at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic. Since 2002, she has professionally focused on the European Union's Cohesion Policy. Currently, she coordinates the evaluation of implementing the ESIF programmes in order to effectively fulfil strategies for the educational and research policies of the Czech Republic. She participates in developing the evaluation culture and effectively using the evaluation results for evidence-based policies. Michaela graduated in economics at the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague.

Analysis of the availability of early childcare facilities with a focus on parental strategies

The Operational Programme Employment provides a great deal of support in a process of developing and financing early childcare facilities. In terms of useful targeting of this type of facilities, a number of surveys are being carried out by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The Analysis of the availability of early childcare facilities offers an insightful interpretation of administrative data in conjunction with information of parents. Linking administrative data with the survey of parental attitudes provides a number of answers to how parental strategies differ at regional level, whether low attendance rates of young children in childcare facilities are a matter of choice or low capacity, or what the regional differences are.



Tamara Zykanová
Evaluation Unit, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs CZ

Tamara is a part of evaluation unit at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs which is responsible for evaluating of Operational Programme Employment (OPE). Her work focuses mainly on projects and processes in the field of early childcare facilities and employment. She is involved in setting up a system of administrative data collection for purpose of evaluating OPE projects. She studied demography and social geography at the Faculty of Science of Charles University in Prague.

AVI – large hall

Evaluation of experiments and innovations

Inspiration

Presentation followed by discussion (interpretation)

AVI – large meeting room

Information based decision-making in public administration

Inspiration

Presentation followed by discussion (only in Czech)

Evaluation of experiments and innovations

Inspiration

Valorising results across EU Funds: Experimental call of Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE

In 2019, the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme (Interreg CE) launched an experimental call for “capitalisation through coordination” encouraging beneficiaries to valorise in their capitalisation projects the existing outputs and results produced by projects funded by Interreg CE, other Interreg programmes and EU programmes directly managed by the European Commission. The aim of the call was to bring frontline research and other valuable results to central European regions and to increase the impact of transnational cooperation results. The objective is to present not only the design of the experimental call but mainly the evaluation of its outcomes and results achieved by the funded projects. We aim to provide insight into specific intervention logics of the projects as well as their quantitative and qualitative results.



Jana Vaněček

Evaluation Coordinator and Programme Officer, Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE

Jana works as an Evaluation Coordinator and Programme Officer at transnational cooperation programme Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE and is responsible for operational and impact evaluation of the programme and its interventions. She has 15 years of experience in evaluation research, holds a Ph.D. in Social Policy Analysis and acts as an external expert in development projects implemented by the Czech Development Agency or the United Nations Development Programme.

Searching for causal links: experiences from the call of the Operational Programme Employment

At the end of 2017, the Department of Social Innovation of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs announced a call for projects that wanted to verify the causal mechanisms of their solutions. Simultaneously the projects should have established cooperation with public institutions, which should ideally start using proven solutions and thus start a systemic change. The inspiration for the call was the “Rapid Re-Housing” project in Brno, which was also supported by an innovation call in the past. The projects verified causal mechanisms mainly using counterfactual evaluation methods. How did a total of 11 projects cope with the demands of the call? And is the environment of EU funds ready for this type of call? Does it make sense to announce such calls? The aim of the contribution is to share the experience from this call and to answer these questions as well.



Štěpán Rezek

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs CZ

Štěpán is a graduate of sociology and public and social policy at Charles University. He currently works in the department dedicated to the implementation of projects supported by the ESF in the field of social innovation at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic. He participated in the creation of all announced innovation calls in the past and current programming period within Operational Programme Employment and Operational Programme Employment+. The scope of his work is mainly consultation of project applications in relation to their evaluation design and consultation of evaluation materials of supported projects.

Innovation and competitiveness

In the 2014-2020 program period, many needs of existing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) were reflected through programs financed from the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). This included, for example, the implementation of programs aimed at the revitalization of brownfields, the support of activities related to the participation of companies in trade fairs or the introduction of low-carbon technologies. In general, however, it can be stated that when it comes to the financing of projects in the field of innovation in the business sphere, it was mostly low-level innovation. In combination with the fact that funds from the ESIF were mainly used by companies operating in less knowledge-intensive sectors, the implemented programs had only a minimal possibility of supporting the creation and development of new micro-enterprises operating in knowledge-intensive areas. Without innovative domestic enterprises, the Czech economy is at risk, and there is also a threat of an increase in the outflow of talented young people abroad due to limited opportunities on the domestic labour market.



Léon Kamenický

Senior consultant, Ernst & Young

Léon is a consultant at the international company Ernst & Young, where he focuses mainly on evaluations and monitoring of subsidy programs. He was part of the research team of the thematic evaluation PA 2014-2020, where he acted as a gestor for topics related to business support. Léon studied International Economics at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam.

Information based decision-making in public administration

Inspirace

OECD: Public Governance Review of the Czech Republic

This year, the first-ever OECD review focused on public administration in the Czech Republic, the so-called OECD Public Governance Review, was published. The overview is a balanced document that points out the strengths and weaknesses of the Czech public administration in the context of the 37 current OECD member states. It contains six interconnected chapters - Participation, Coordination role of the Centre of governance, Evidence-informed decision-making, Public administration at the local level, Human resources and Digitization. The OECD also offers a number of specific recommendations for each chapter. The Czech Republic is trying to fulfil some of them. The implementation phase is currently underway and will be completed in April 2023.



Petr Schlesinger

Deputy Director of the Department of Strategic Development and Coordination of Public Administration, Ministry of the Interior CZ

Petr has been involved in the development of public administration in the Czech Republic for a long time at the Ministry of the Interior. He focuses primarily on public administration at the local level. He has been working in this field since 2009, first at the Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic, where he worked as a lawyer, and then at the ČSSD Mayors' Club, where he held the position of secretary. From 2014 to 2015, he worked briefly at the Government office of the Czech Republic as a director of one of the departments, from 2015 to 2017, he was an advisor to the Minister of the Interior.

Workshop day programme

9 November 2023

AVI, Pařížská 4, 110 00 Prague

9:00-17:00

1st educational WS, (only in Czech)

Creating AI enhanced professional documents and management summaries

Struggling to distil complex information into concise summaries? Our seminar will help you unlock the potential of AI in writing summaries needed for critical decision making. Often you will be basing your recommendation on complex background information which can cover hundreds of pages. This seminar will help you summarize key ideas, highlight priority issues, structure arguments, simulate critical discussion and select relevant detail. But learn how to use your AI assistants wisely to avoid pitfalls and unnecessary time wasters. The seminar is highly interactive using relevant use cases and examples. You don't need any technical knowledge, but experience with chatGPT is an advantage.



Tomáš Zykán

Tomáš Zykán & Associates
Workshop lecturer

Tomáš is an experienced consultant and trainer who works with top managers in the field of communication and development of leadership teams. He focuses on senior management presentations, strategy communication and team leadership in times of rapid change. He gained his experience at the consulting firm McKinsey & Co. He later worked in Prague, London and New York. Since 2009, he has been working as an independent consultant and trainer cooperating with leading companies in the fields of technology, finance and telecommunications. You can find more about Tomáš and his approach at www.tomaszykan.cz

9:00-17:00

2nd educational WS, (only in English)

Presentation of complex outputs from evaluations and data analyses

The training will introduce you to key methods and techniques of data visualization for presentation purposes. You will learn the most essential design principles for creating presentation slides. We will demonstrate how to present tables and graphs in a way that captures attention to the most important information. Additionally, we will explore visualizing data using maps and simple infographics. This course aims to enhance your proficiency with presentation software, providing concrete ideas for future content creation. You will acquire skills to present data effectively, ensuring your presentations are impactful, illustrative, and capable of effectively supporting your spoken content.

Participants are asked to bring their laptops with PowerPoint for the training.



Ondřej Staněk

Staněk Consulting s.r.o.
Workshop lecturer

Ondřej is consultant and lecturer of presentation skills, presentation design and communication. He specializes in creating design presentations, conducts trainings on public speaking, and provides consulting services to conference speakers. He works as an expert consultant for startup incubators and lectures on rhetoric and modern presentation skills at the University of Chemistry and Technology Prague and Charles University.



14:00-17:00

EvalCafé (only in Czech)

Quality final report: client's expectations versus supplier's perspective

Discussion

At last year's EvalCafé, we discussed effective cooperation between contracting authorities and suppliers in the field of evaluation contracts. One of the outcomes we took away from the debate is that the imaginary stumbling block is what individual actors consider a "quality evaluation report". That's why we decided to focus this year's debate on this very topic. This already started during the internal cooperation on the Czech Priorities project "PANK" with EU NCA. It also continued at the NCA Evaluation working group, where contracting authorities from the governing bodies discussed this topic. The theme also resonated at the European Commission's summer school in Madrid held in July this year. Now we would like to involve suppliers and the expert public in the debate. Let's discuss together how we perceive a quality evaluation report. And is it even possible to define it somehow, or will any "standardization" end in failure and only general statements? Join us and let's try together to move the quality of creating evaluations in the Czech Republic a little further!



EVALUATION
UNIT NCA

To find out more about evaluations of EU funds, see:

www.DotaceEU.cz/evaluace



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