SOUTH EAST EUROPE
Transnational Cooperation Programme

Fostering Evaluation Competencies
EVAL-INNO
in Research, Technology and
Innovation in the SEE Region

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EVAL-INNO

Public procurement in SEE innovation evaluations: a comparative and needs assessment study

Outline

The objective of this study was to analyse the way RTDI evaluations are tendered and organised by awarding authorities in the participating countries, benchmark skills and challenges and conclude on the specificities and training needs of the countries studied.

Three assumptions were used to help define the benchmarking dimensions:

- There is a need for RTDI evaluations, if SEE countries wish to adopt and implement effective, evidence-based RTDI policies and improve their competitiveness

- As a general rule SEE countries lack an evaluation culture;

- Skill development can play a crucial role for reversing this situation and improve policy performance.

The Study Inputs

A thorough literature search was undertaken, which demonstrated that academic publications only indirectly refer to evaluations; policy papers from international organisations, guidelines and calls for tenders exist on the web and constitute relevant material.

What has been used extensively were the databases created in the EVAL INNO project, formal rules of procurements, RTDI evaluations implemented and interviews in the countries studied.

The Study Methodology (3 steps)

The following parameters were used for the benchmarking exercise:
- Formal institutions
- Informal institutions (routines, behaviours and tendencies)
- Implementation processes
- Maturity and skills of the actors in the RTDI policy and evaluation market.

These areas were decomposed into individual parameters:
- objective to the extent that this was possible to measure then
- complemented by subjective impressions of the research team based on interviews.

The parameters were used to position each country on a scale 1- 5. After studying the individual parameters and explaining how they were quantified an effort was made to create one synthetic indicator giving all categories the same weighting.

Experiences from the EVALL-INNO countries

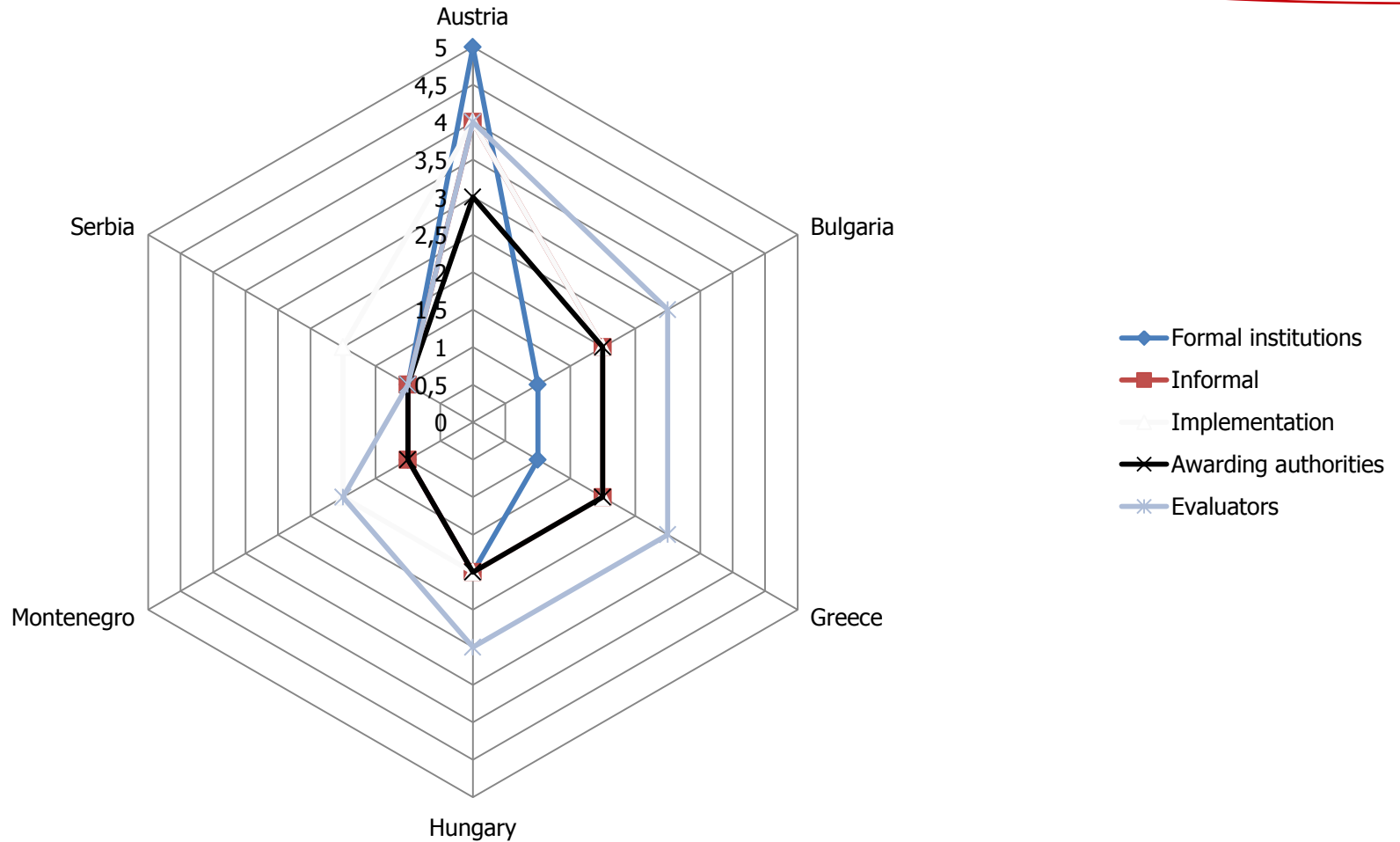|	Special provisions for RTDI evaluations	Explicit legislation	Standards	Comments per country
Austria	No	Yes	Yes	Model country
Bulgaria	No	No	No	Significant problems
Greece	No	No	No	Significant problems
Hungary	No	Yes	No	Basics in place
Montenegro	No	No	No	Significant problems
Serbia	No	No	No	Significant problems
Comments per parameter	general framework;	Only in Austria and Hungary explicit rules all programmes need to be evaluated.	Standards only exist in Austria	

Experiences from the EVALL-INNO countries

	Frequency identified by country visits	Type of evaluations	Willingness to improve/ experiment (max 5*)	RTDI evaluation champions
Austria	High	Restricted tenders very frequent	***	*** (Platform)
Bulgaria	Low	Mainly mandatory through SF	**	* * (Structural Funds)
Greece	Negligible	Mainly Internal	**	* (GSRT)
Hungary	Low	Mainly Internal	*	* (New Unit)
Montenegro	Negligible	PRAG	**	--
Serbia	Negligible	PRAG	*	--

The European Commission defined PRAG – Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EU External Actions

Experiences from the EVALL-INNO countries

	Smooth process	Time to contract	Monitoring	Content	Adoption of recommendations	Comments per country
Austria	Yes	***	Good/variable	Variable	60%	Implementation is smooth but can be further improved
Bulgaria	Yes	***	Limited/variable	Standard	40%	Need to improve monitoring, content of the ToR and relevance of recommendations
Greece	Yes	*	Limited	Standard	20%	"
Hungary	Yes	**	Limited/variable	Standard	40%	"
Montenegro	Yes	**	Limited	Standard	30%	"
Serbia	Yes	**	Limited	Standard	30%	"

A topic for benchmarking

Legend:
- Formal institutions
- Informal
- Implementation
- Awarding authorities
- Evaluators

Categories: Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Montenegro, Serbia

Scale: 0, 0,5, 1, 1,5, 2, 2,5, 3, 3,5, 4, 4,5, 5

The Results

The aggregated results suggest that:

1. Austria differs from the other countries studied and can be used as a benchmark. It is well ahead of the other countries and close to *excellent performance*.
2. In terms of actors the "evaluators" are the best performing group.
3. The RTDI evaluations market has started to be formed; actors are in place but rules and interaction need improvement.
4. In the ERDF countries the Structural Funds play a leverage role; in the IPA countries pioneer work exists but more efforts are needed.

The Results

Rather than any type of name and shame this Synthetic Indicator serves more as intelligent benchmarking, confirming some intuitive knowledge that we already had and suggesting where to put emphasis on the trainings.

The benchmarking exercise attempted, in the context of the EVAL INNO project, was a useful tool for the countries studied, because it gave them the possibility to measure their own performance against their peers and see what type of challenges they face, if they wish to improve their capabilities and adopt RTDI evaluation as an instrument for policy improvement.

In the process of data gathering certain Good Practices were identified that could be used for training purposes.

A suggested training curriculum

Special provisions for RTDI evaluations	All RTDI evaluation rules in the countries studied follow the general framework; no evidence that this should change
Explicit legislation	Only in Austria and Hungary there are explicit rules that all programmes need to be evaluated. This is an important issue for the training.
Standards	Standards only exist in Austria where they have played a positive role; EVAL INNO has produced standards and it is important to include them in the training.
Frequency identified by country visits	Frequency varies considerably; model Austria need to be referred to extensively in the trainings
Type of evaluations	There seems to be a preference for internal and not international tendering i
Willingness to improve/ experiment (max 5*)	Training to improve willingness, which was lower than expected
RTDI evaluation champions	Use / identify champions during the trainings
Time to contract	Ways to minimise time to contract are important and need to be stressed during the training
Monitoring	In three countries the monitoring varies, in the rest it is in generally limited. Good monitoring should be included in the training modules.
Content	The balance between standardised content in the Terms of Reference, request for more ambitious exercises and avoidance of over specification is an important element for the training
Adoption of recommendations	Improving the need to discuss/adopt recommendations and the way how to embed it into the policy cycle is another important element for the training modules

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Thank you for your atttention!

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