



VYTAUTO DIDŽIOJO  
UNIVERSITETAS  
MCMXXII

Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy  
Department of Public Administration

# Evaluation of public policy in Lithuania: introduction, scope and significance

Jaroslav Dvorak



## Object and aim of dissertation research

- **Object of the work** – public policy evaluation in Lithuania.
- **Aim of the dissertation research** – to reveal the introduction, scope and significance level of public policy evaluation in Lithuania, to compare it with other new EU states and describe the influencing factors.



# Tasks of the dissertation research

- To carry out a retrospective analysis of scientific research on public policy evaluation definition, functions and system and to identify the functional variety of evaluation, forming a renewed classification of evaluation functions;
- To analyze and generalize the main public policy evaluation models, which are or could be applied evaluating public policy in Lithuania;
- To research the factors influencing public policy evaluation and to distinguish the specificity of the case in Lithuania in the context of other EU states;
- To determine the tendencies of public policy evaluation subsystems and restrictions in Lithuania and to distinguish their differences according to scope and significance to public management;
- To determine the scope and significance of public policy evaluation, to compare evaluation competencies, management structures, evaluation subsystems, evaluation market and usage of evaluation results in Lithuania, Poland and Bulgaria.



## Statements for defence (1)

- In Lithuania, as in other new EU states, it is possible to state the increasing structural actualization of evaluation of the EU Structural and Cohesion funds, and this preconditions the transfer of evaluation practices to the national decision-making process and the scientific discourse.
- In different evaluation subsystems, evaluation scope and significance are not cohesive: (1) the subsystem of regulatory impact evaluation lacks qualitative grounding of decisions, and because of this, this task is carried out formally; (2) in the subsystem of performance audit, methodological fundamentalism is dominant, by which the Government control attempts to destroy other sources of evidence or opinions; (3) the evaluation of budget programmes is fragmentary, and it has a scarce influence on the decision-making process.



## Statements for defence (2)

- In the subsystem of the EU Structural and Cohesion funds, evaluation scope and significance depends on the coordination of the model of evaluation process (structured or unstructured) and approach of evaluation system organization (centralized or decentralized).
- In Lithuania, Poland and Bulgaria, in the subsystem of the EU Structural and Cohesion funds, *management of evaluations* dominates; however, in order for the evidence-based approach of management to materialize in public management, *management by evaluations* should be used.



## Research methods and empirical base (1)

- Analysis of scientific literature was applied for the definition of the conception of the dissertation research, concept of public policy evaluation, functions, theories, main models and system elements. Interdisciplinary material of various authors, institution points of view, evaluations and interpretations was analyzed.



## Research methods and empirical base (2)

- *The configurative-idiographic* method of case study was applied for the analysis of public policy evaluation in Lithuania.
- *Disciplined-configurative* case study was combined with a *structured comparative* method and applied for the analysis of evaluation of the EU Structural and Cohesion funds in Bulgaria, Poland and Lithuania.
- *In-depth semi structured interview.*



## Research methods and empirical base (3)

- *Quantitative online survey.*
- *Content analysis.*
- *Rating.* order to compare evaluation implementation, scope and significance among Lithuania, Poland and Bulgaria, quantitative rating values were ascribed to the indicator parameters distinguished in the logical structure of the dissertation research.



# The logical structure of dissertational research

<b>CONCEPTS</b>				
Evaluation system		Centralized, Decentralized, Mixed		
<b>Independent variable</b>	<b>Intermediate variable</b>	<b>Dependent variables</b>		
Coordination of evaluation process (structural, non-structural)	Introduction of evaluation	Scope of evaluation	Significance of evaluation	
<b>INDICATORS</b>				
Evaluation capacity of public administration	The management structure of evaluation	The evaluation introduction influencing factors	Evaluation market	Evaluation use in the decision making
<b>MEASURES</b>				
1. Evaluation capacity 2. Evaluation plan 3. Quality of monitoring data 4. Evaluation post graduate studies	1. Evaluation organization approach 2. Evaluation departments 3. Employees involved in evaluation 4. Evaluation coordination group	1. Membership in European Union 2. Internal demand to improve decision – making 3. Demand from the national parliament 4. International organizations	1. Amount of evaluation companies 2. Specific of the market 3. Sources of evaluation demand 4. Evaluation budget	1. Learner/receiver characteristics 2. Characteristics of evaluated policy 3. Evaluation time 4. Evaluation approach 5. Quality of evaluation report

**Comparing of the three new EU member states: Bulgaria, Lithuania, Poland**



# Novelty and significance of dissertation research (1)

- The theoretical analysis of the research on public policy evaluation revealed the changing understanding of evaluation from the evaluation of merits and value to the service based on research, which is provided according to a contract. Exhaustive analysis of evaluation functions showed the functional variety of this phenomenon. The analyzed main evaluation models emphasize evaluation tendencies, which prevail in the old EU member states and are gradually implemented in the new EU member states.
- The generalized conceptions of evaluation system and competencies revealed the dominating *dualism*, which is exhibited from broader and more abstract definitions, using the concept of evaluation possibilities, to narrower and more concrete ones, comprising the areas of public administration organization activities and information management. The determinants of closeness and openness dynamics of evaluation culture are revealed.



## Novelty and significance of dissertation research (2)

- The analyzed public policy evaluation in Lithuania comprised all subsystems (decision impact evaluation, performance audit, evaluation of budget programmes and evaluation of the EU Structural and Cohesion funds support). During the research, the mutual complementation of the evaluation subsystems was established; the prospective conditions for the design of a common public policy evaluation system were foreseen.
- In the research, the implementation, scope and significance of the EU Structural and Cohesion funds in Lithuania, Poland and Bulgaria were analyzed. The model of analytical evaluation use by M. Ferry and K. Olejniczak was adapted, its validity and appropriateness were tested, and this preconditions its usage in the case of the three new EU states in the future.



## Practical novelty of research

- The structure of the dissertation research may be used while analyzing evaluation systems in other countries because of its originality, universality and validity. The research itself contributes to the spread of evaluation theory and practice in the new EU member states. State officials will be able to learn and compare the implementation of evaluation in other member states, what aims were reached, what the scope and significance of evaluation is dependent on evaluation coordination and system centralization-decentralization and what the influence of cultural aspects on evaluation implementation are.
- The evaluation community could learn about the differences of evaluation systems, possibilities and restrictions, the applied evaluation methods and means of evaluation quality management in order to work in a certain market. Taking into consideration the results of the research, academic community could implement Bachelor and Master study programmes in public administration and politic science and include the evaluation discipline because contemporary administration requires developed competencies in evaluation.



## Future scientific research

- Further research on evaluation should be developed in the interdisciplinary context. Scientists in management and public administration can analyze the topics related to the relationship between the client (the Government) and the evaluators. Scientists in politics can analyze the power of evaluators and their influence in the decision making process, independence of evaluators and objectivity while preparing evaluations. It is possible to develop the research on how the public sector institutions initiate evaluations, when and under what circumstances they are performed. This work forms the basis for the extended research on the subsystem of decision impact evaluation, the forms of involvement of the interested parties and demand.



## Conclusions (1)

- After analyzing and generalizing the scientific literature, it is possible to compose a renewed classification of evaluation functions. The following main evaluation functions are distinguished: planning improvement, accountability, knowledge production, policy implementation improvement, institutional and community consolidation and learning.
- Many evaluation models and approaches are propagated in the scientific and specialized literature without any clear evidence of their effectiveness and suitability. There is some basis to maintain that the analyzed evaluation models have become a global norm, as the EU or other donors use them as a *condition* to allot support. However, the research shows that there are researchers who critically prove that the seeking for more trust in the indicators has *dazzling, misleading and substitutional* effects.



## Conclusions (2)

- After the analysis of public intervention values and the functioning of the budget process, a conclusion can be made: Lithuania does not learn from earlier lessons. Imitating the Western experience and forming pre-conditions for the unmeasured interventions, the point of view had to change in the new situation of the crisis; however, while allotting money, nobody mentions or promises that such interventions will be evaluated.
- The research results show that isomorphism and donor-oriented evaluation dominates in the evaluation subsystem of the EU Structural and Cohesion funds.
- The mentioned circumstances denote the dominating management of evaluations, the basis for which is the institutionalization of evaluation activities. However, it should also be understood that management by evaluations should be used and guaranteed that because of the evaluation study, the government fulfills the evaluation functions analyzed in this dissertation research.



# Questions

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