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# Evaluation in the Czech Republic: diagnosis and prognosis

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NATIONAL COORDINATION AUTHORITY

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EUROPEAN UNION  
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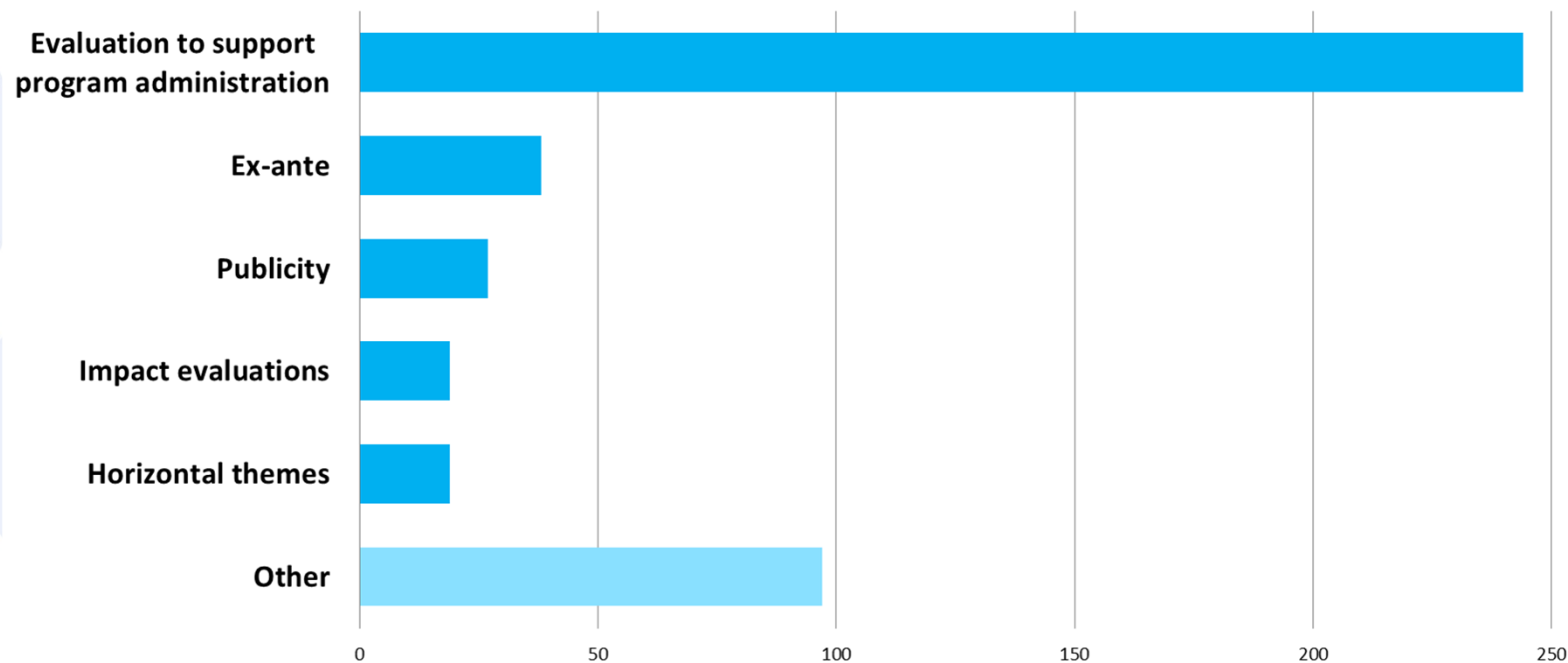




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## Diagnosis: where we are

### Structural funds evaluations 2006 to 2015 by type (444 total)



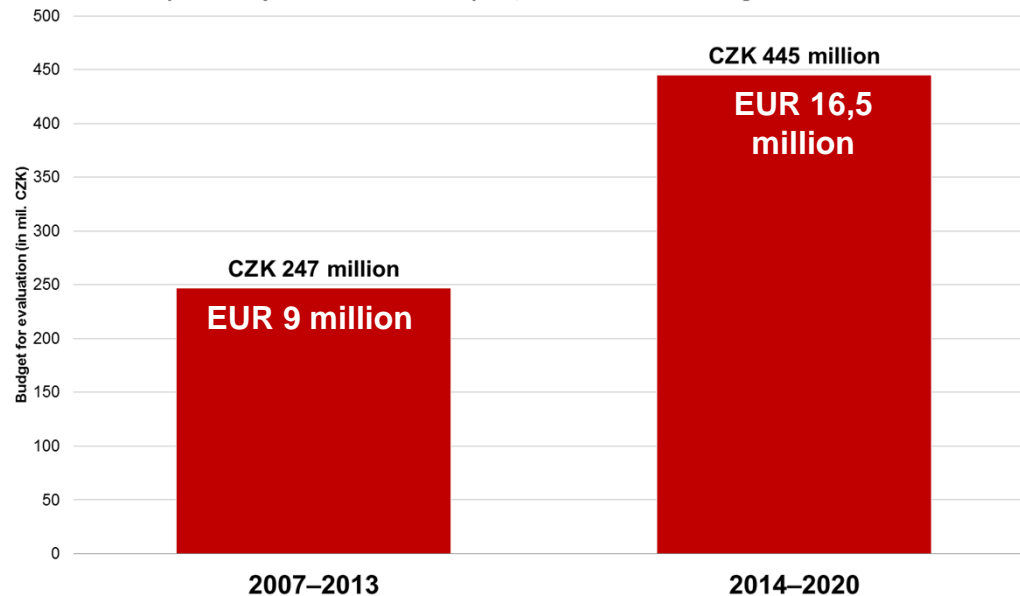


## Prognosis: where we are going

- Evaluation is required by EC regulation for 2014 - 2020
- Greater emphasis on the evaluation of results

### Investment in evaluation of structural funds

Czech Republic only. 2007-13: amounts spent; 2014-20: amounts budgeted





## Prognosis: what does it mean

### Opportunities

- We have „permission“ (new requirements, tone)
- We have the resources (as the budget shift shows)

### Risks

- Massive expansion of the market. How will suppliers respond?
- Increasing demands on evaluation suppliers and users
- Lack of previous experience with using evaluation outputs to actually make policy changes



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## Complication

But our ability to mitigate risks and take advantage of opportunities depends on how evaluations are created and used for learning.

What do we know about it?



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## Classical theory of change of evaluation („ideal situation“)

Identified information  
need in future



Evaluation work



Better information for  
decision making



Better decisions



## Complication

### Assumption

Content and timing  
of decision making is  
known months or  
years in advance

Evaluators have  
technical expertise

Decision makers  
intend to learn from  
evaluation

Identified information  
need in future



Evaluation work



Better information for  
decision making



Better decisions

### Experience

Windows of  
opportunity for  
change come ad-hoc  
at short notice

There is lack of  
expertise on demand  
and/or supply side  
of the evaluation  
market

There is no strong  
incentive to learn in  
the system of public  
policies

# Windows of opportunity for change come ad-hoc at short notice

What to do:

- (Internal) evaluation team has to become a „knowledge broker“:
- Even at short notice one can scan academic journals for relevant knowledge
- There are evaluations of similar policies in similar circumstances => evaluations are public good.
- Need for improvement not only in how to generate new knowledge, but also how to access and use relevant existing knowledge



# There is lack of expertise on demand and/or supply side of the evaluation market

What to do:

First – to learn

Second – to learn

And third – to learn and then check that learning shall not become just empty words or a fashionable phrase

Technical expertise and training is necessary, but not sufficient condition...

# There is no strong incentive to learn in the system of public policies

As this is probably the most serious problem, some considerations first:

- Most people act in conformity with the system. Here, the framework of European Funds is not helping much.
- You are what you measure.
- Where is the focus: Spending, error rate (maybe add ex ante conditionalities and performance framework indicators).
- Not much incentives to learn in the regulations. If, then only in preambles, as a wish, not as a systemic condition.

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# There is no strong incentive to learn in the system of public policies

What to do:

- Act on the policy environment: Support public discussion of evaluation results, invite media. Build expertise in publicity of evaluation.
- Problem could be at the too generic level of recommendations: as a part of evaluation project, **check, plan and do the change** (at least as a pilot). **Show** that the change is possible.
- Act on the system – keep on suggesting to place incentives to learn, accountability for learning.



## Treatment: what we are doing to improve

### Windows of opportunity for change come ad-hoc at short notice

- Building formal and informal connections
- Actively gathering demands for evaluation
- Building up background knowledge and „knowledge brokering“ capability to respond quickly to emerging needs

### Lack of expertise on demand and/or supply side of the evaluation market

- More rigorous evaluation planning to anticipate needs for expertise
- Educating ourselves
- Organizing training for suppliers
- Getting the most out of the procurement framework
- Quality assuring presentation of results

### No strong incentive to learn in the system of public policies

- Improving evaluation capacities and evaluation culture (conference, events, meetings..)
- Normalising the idea of using evidence for making decisions
- Exposing managers to examples of usable evidence
- Pushing at the broader policy system to build in learning incentives



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## Will it work?

This is our proposed „treatment“ given the diagnosis.

What would you do? What are you doing?  
What has (not) worked for you?

We hope to explore these questions with you today.

**Thank you for your attention  
Enjoy the conference**

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