



## An Evolutionary Path to Building the Croatian National Evaluation Society

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# The Croatian Evaluators' Network

- In 2015, Croatian experts interested in the practical and theoretical application of the evaluation of public policies, programs and projects established a network hosted by the Institute of Economics, Zagreb.
- **Network members (2022): consultants 44%, academics 25%, public sector officials 29%, civil society 2%**
- CEN is registered in the international register of voluntary organizations of professionals in evaluation (VOPE) managed by the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE) .
- **CEN/HEM actively participated in the activities of the regional Western Balkan Evaluation Network (WBEN) and small cooperation projects supported by IOCE**



## Regional cooperation of evaluators, evaluation communities and networks in Europe

European Evaluation Association - **EES**

Network of Evaluation Societies in Europe - **NESE**

Western Balkan Evaluation Network - **WBEN**

## 13. EES conference 2018 Thessaloniki , Greece

*7 Voluntary Organizations for Evaluation Professionals (VOPE) from Central, Eastern and Southern Europe agreed to work together to create awareness and understanding of DRG evaluation across Europe; Signatories of the DRG Thessaloniki Declaration*



# VOPE Leadership Boot Camp

- A key input into establishing a formal national evaluation society was the participation of **CEN representatives** in the superb international *VOPE Leadership Boot Camp* (March and April 2022).
- The programme was focussed on the practical application of knowledge: participants learned through 6 modules how to design and prepare management documents for „evaluation” organizations:
  1. Strategic plan
  2. SWOT
  3. Action plan and projects
  4. Pitch
  5. Internal communication plan

# Externally driven processes and national policy responses to evaluation requirements

- EUROPEAN UNION: A key factor for raising general interest in programme and project evaluation was Croatia's accession to the European Union (EU) in 2013 and the Cohesion policy funding system. Programmes and projects have to be evaluated.
- STRATEGIC PLANNING: Within the national strategic planning and management system (2017) evaluation of national policy documents is obligatory.
- LINK TO SDGs: A coherent planning system is established linking national strategic development objectives with EU development policy and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Voluntary national reports are prepared.
- ✓ **OUTCOME: Evaluation obligatory within national strategic planning and EU programming system.**
- ✓ **CHALLENGE: Building evaluation culture.**

# From Evaluation Network to Evaluation Society

- LONG PROCESS: Ten years of voluntary cooperation within the Croatian Evaluators Network (CEN) relevant for building national evaluation capacities.
- ENTHUSIASM: The formation of CEN was a voluntary process driven by evaluation experts active in the public, academic, private and civil society sector interested in knowledge sharing and exchange of experiences.
- INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT: IOCE - International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation supports also informal voluntary organizations in evaluation (VOPE).
- ✓ **OUTCOME: Croatian Evaluation Society (CES) established in March 2024**

# Croatian Evaluation Society (CES) tasks..

- **Raise awareness** on the importance of national evaluation systems through public lectures, seminars and conferences on the importance of evaluation and stimulating public interest.
- **Communicate with policy makers** to highlight the importance of evaluation and contribution to decision-making.
- **Demonstrate evaluation benefits** by conducting pilots that can provide examples of useful evaluation results.
- **Cooperate with researchers and academia** to strengthen the capacity for public policy evaluation through universities; such partnerships can provide the expertise, resources and credibility for evaluation practice.
- **Contribute to strengthening accountability** by promoting transparency in policy processes, including open publication of evaluation results.

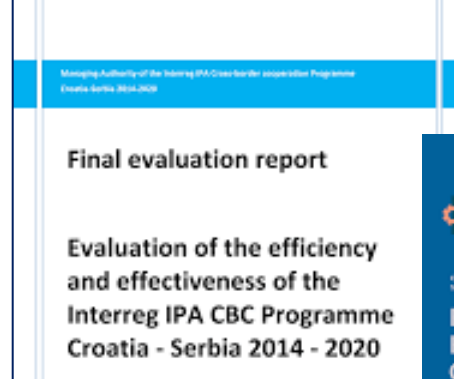
# Conclusion

- **Multi-sector cooperation** of the academic community, researchers, public administration, private sector & consultants, and civil society is essential for the development of the evaluation culture.
- **The formalization of cooperation** through the establishment of the Croatian evaluation society is essential to become a recognized, respected and reliable partner to the state.
- **Sharing knowledge** about evaluation and public communication of evaluation results are key to improving the quality of public policy.
- For the **development of evaluation culture**, it is crucial to build a strong and reputable network of evaluation experts, gathered within a formal society, and who will jointly develop national standards for the evaluation of public policies.



# CROATIA

Voluntary National Review of the UN 2030 Agenda  
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THANK  
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ATTENTION!

