



**Minutes**  
**of the Meeting of**  
**National Evaluation Societies**  
**2nd of July 2008, Strasbourg**

***A/ OPENING***

1/ opening of the meeting

- Sandra Speer inaugurated the meeting on behalf of EES.
- Jacques Toulemonde inaugurated the meeting on behalf of SFE and introduced the agenda.

2/ opening speech by Sandra Speer

- Sandra talked about EES that was founded in 1992 when no national societies existed yet.
- The aim of EES was to support exchange of experiences, to organize conferences.
- Now, there are many societies, networks and a new need occurs for bridging and communication between them.
- 1<sup>st</sup> session of national evaluation societies was organized in Berlin, at the EES conference in 2004.

3/ opening speech by Jacques Toulemonde

- Jacques stressed that several societies, including SFE were willing to go ahead.
- Since SFE was giving its Strasbourg event a European dimension, this was a window of opportunity .
- Jacques started to open the window in 2007 through an exchange of emails with many societies and with EES.

4/ introduction of all participants

- Participants introduced themselves and the organization they represent (*see list of participants*).

- Several societies expressed their interest in the cooperation and apologised for not being able to attend (Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, UK).

## ***B/ SURVEY OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES***

Sandra Speer gave an overview on results of a survey that was organized by the EES with the aim to get a clearer picture of the needs for exchange between the national evaluation societies in Europe. (see *powerpoint-presentation*).

## ***C/ DISCUSSION***

### **Areas of cooperation**

- Sandra Speer mentions that comparative studies on *evaluation cultures* have already been undertaken, e.g. International Atlas of Evaluation from 2002, and would deserve to be updated in the mean term.
- Murray Saunders stresses the importance to cooperate on communication and public *awareness raising*. Max Bergman suggests that a large research project be proposed by the national societies on raising (public/ politicians) awareness. Christiane Spiel informs about the new DeGEVAL practice which consists of issuing a statement of the Society to be published after a conference. Such a position paper is targeted at politicians.
- Bart De Peuter, is interested to learn *how to organize events* within evaluation networks.
- Jacques Toulemonde recalls that the survey indicates a frequent willingness to cooperate on *capacity building in the public services*.
- Marie Kaufmann recalls that *evaluation of EU Structural Funds* is one of the most important issues in the new Member States. Dagmar Gombitova says that the cooperation could focus on raising public awareness in connection with Structural Fund evaluation requirements.

### **Cooperation arrangements**

- Murray Saunders confirms the willingness of EES to foster cooperation between national societies. He agrees that the cooperation should be organised by EES and one of the national societies on a rolling basis.
- Jacques Toulemonde suggests that one of the aims of the cooperation should be that *societies* learn from one from another, knowing that the “EES as usual” is the arena where individuals learn from one another. EES as usual is also the arena where the evaluation of EU policies is discussed.
- Georg Spiel recommends that working groups from different national societies establish direct connections (per sector, per theme).
- Roxana Mihalache would like her national society to benefit from a formal visible relationship with the EES (status, support). Rodica Novac stresses the need to have exchanges with other national societies and the EES as soon as possible because new laws concerning the evaluation profession might soon be discussed in the Romanian Parliament.
- Christiane Spiel informs about DeGEVAL having 480 individual members and about 90 institutional members. In such a large organization there is a real need for standard / harmonized approaches, sometimes at the expenses of spontaneity. She stressed that cooperation among societies should be a win/win process for all societies despite their differences (new and old societies, small and big societies)
- Several participants state that there is a need to continue the analysis and dissemination of the survey results.
- Murray Saunders supports the idea of fostering information exchanges through a EU funded research project.

Jacques Toulemonde summarises the discussion as follows:

- Needs for cooperation differ from one national society to the other (big vs small, new vs old, cruise speed vs reform).
- Cooperation between different entities must be a win-win process.
- Cooperation between societies might be established at various levels:
  - Overall information about all societies (surveys, information on the EES web site),
  - Connecting working groups across borders on specific sectors / themes,
  - Establishing interpersonal contacts among people from national societies.
- One of the areas where cooperation would be particularly welcome is that of raising political awareness about evaluation.

## ***D/ NEXT STEPS***

Sandra Speer, Murray Saunders and Jacques Toulemonde draw the conclusions of the meeting as follows:

### **Objectives of the cooperation**

- Exchange of information about the activities of national societies.
- Presentation and discussion of good practices from national societies.
- Monitoring of evaluation activities and context of evaluation in European countries.

### **Means**

- One contact person in charge of the cooperation in each society.
- Page on EES website and two-way links with websites of national societies.
- Continued moderation by EES and one of the national societies. The involvement of a national society shall rotate on a regular basis. SFE is ready to continue until of the annual meeting 2009. Then another national society should take over (which one?) and organise the 2009 annual meeting (where?).
- Further development of cooperation arrangements to be set at the Lisbon meeting.

### **Action plan**

- Identifying good practices in the areas which have been identified as the most interesting ones through the survey. Presentation and discussion a first couple of good practices in Lisbon.
- Extending the survey among societies in order to also cover the national context of evaluation.
- Further cooperation projects at the Lisbon meeting.

### **Next Meeting**

Lisbon, 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2008, 14.00h – 16.00h

**List of Participants:**

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