



Summary

INTOSAI working group on program evaluation (WGEPPP)

Meeting of July 7 and 8, 2021- Videoconference

1. Agenda of the day: approved

2. Objective of the day

The INTOSAI Working Group on program evaluation (WGEPPP) met via videoconference on July 7 and 8, 2021, for its annual session. It was organized, chaired and moderated by the French Cour des comptes (Pierre Moscovici, First President of the French Cour des comptes, Rémi Frenzt, Director of International Relations Department and Nicolas Brunner, senior auditor).

The SAIs of Algeria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, the European Union, Finland, France, Hungary, India, Italy, South Korea, Lithuania, Morocco, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Spain (observer), Switzerland, and the United States were represented. The European Court of Auditors also participated. Beside the SAIs, the OECD and several French institutions and academia (Conseil d'Etat, Assemblée nationale, France Stratégie and Institut de Politiques Publiques) delegated experts to the meeting (see annex 1).

This meeting was the first one to take place in videoconference format since the pandemic started in 2020. In 2020, the WGEPPP held a first dematerialized event by uploading on our website several documents related to the preplanned 2020 agenda. WGEPPP members reacted to those documents by sending their own comments and talking on the subjects on the 2020 agenda :

- the use of evaluation in the audit of SDGs' implementation;
- methodological approach: the follow-up, impact and mediatization of recommendations after evaluation;
- case studies about Environmental issues.

This year meeting had four main items on the agenda:

- The use of evaluation in the audit of the Covid-19 pandemic's management and consequences;
- The relations between SAIs and other national evaluating institutions (legislative and executive powers, national agencies, academia...);
- Methodological approach: citizens' input in EPP;
- Sharing experience on relevant case studies: as every year, we will bring concrete examples of two evaluations recently carried out by SAI France (road safety) and in SAI Algeria (perinatal plan).

3. Main observations

This year meeting welcomed the participation of new SAIs: the Bulgarian National Audit Office as member and the Spanish Tribunal de Cuentas as observer.

It was characterised by the number and diversity of presentations from its members, who presented completed evaluations, organisational issues and methodological tools.

In his **introductory words** **Mr. Pierre Moscovici**, appointed First President of the French Cour des comptes last year in June 2020 and chair of the WGEPPP presented his vision on EPP in France and internationally. He wishes that SAIs could take a greater role in evaluating policies by becoming reference institutions in their national contexts. He then presented the French Cour des comptes 2025 Strategic plan ([JF2025](#)) and its ambition to develop EPP.

Then Mr. Rémi Frentz, Director of International Relations at the French Cour des comptes presented the many activities of the WGEPPP since the last in-person meeting of May 2019 in Vilnius, Lithuania as well as the 2021 WGEPPP webinar agenda (see annex 2).

The **first section** of the webinar was held on Wednesday 7 July and was dedicated to the **use of EPP in evaluating and assessing the Covid-19 response policies**.

- **Ms. Claire Salama**, Policy analyst at the OECD presented the preliminary results from a meta-analysis on OECD countries evaluations of COVID-19 responses. After presenting the objectives and the methodology of this study, she gave an overview of the various institutions that carried out evaluations on the matter. She also described the various type of policies that were evaluated.
- **Mr. Nicolas Brunner**, senior auditor at the French Cour des comptes, explained the reasons why EPPP can be a useful tool to monitor the Covid-19 response policies. The scope of performance audits remains too limited (limited objectives, limited stakeholders' involvement) to have a global overview of a Covid-19 response policy, which shows the need for a better approach such as the EPP. He proposed a list of possible topics, to be completed further by participants.
- **Mr. Emmanuel Sangra**, Head of Evaluation Unit at the Swiss Federal Audit Office, also described the possible evaluation topics and criteria for a SAI in the context of Covid-19 pandemic. He explained how the SFAO identified and chose the topics of evaluation on the Covid-19 response policies. He also made clear that coordination with Parliament and federal agencies was necessary to take into consideration the evaluations conducted by other entities and collect proper data.
- **Mr. Giuseppe Maria Mezzapesa**, Judge at Central Chamber for Ex Ante Compliance Audit of the State Administration at the Italian Court of accounts, presented the Italian experience in evaluating Covid-19 response policies. He highlighted the fundamental role played by the Italian SAI on assessing Covid-19 policies, most especially the management of the health system during the pandemic and the implementation of the recovery plan.

The **second section** of the webinar focused on a methodological aspect of EPP, the citizen involvement in the evaluation process.

Ms. Juliette Meadel, audit manager at the French Cour des comptes, presented how the French Cour des comptes relies on citizens for its EPPs. She showed how the involvement of citizens in the field of decision process is still a very recent phenomenon but it is growing under the demand of the citizens. She then explained the methodology used to consult citizen during an ongoing EPP on the prevention of three chronic diseases by conducting opinion polls and citizens' panels. She explained how the Cour des comptes finally integrated the recommendation and findings of those citizens' consultations in the final report and how it did benefit to the evaluation.

The **third section** took place on Thursday 8 July and looked at the **relations between SAIs and other national evaluating bodies**.

- Four French institutions discussed in a **roundtable** their role in evaluating and their relationship with the French Cour des comptes
 - **Mr. Frédéric Pacoud**, from the Conseil d'Etat, presented a recent report on an overview of the evaluating bodies in France. He explained that the EPP community in France is not well united and lack of coordination and sharing data but remarkable progress have been made however. He gave also some recommendations to improve this coordination.
 - **Mr. Christophe Maisonneuve**, from the Evaluation Committee of the French National Assembly, presented the committee, its composition (MPs) and its objectives. He then described the relation between SAI France and the Committee and its process when programming, following and exploiting the results of EPPS.
 - **Mr. Adam Baïz**, from France Stratégie, presented its institution and the role it plays to evaluated public policies either at the demand of the Government (France Stratégie is attached to the Prime Minister's Office) or on its own initiative.
 - **Mr. Antoine Bozio**, from the Institut des Politiques Publiques, explained the role academia plays in evaluating public policies and its relations with the Administration. The partnership between Administration and academia is still a recent phenomenon, which is facilitated by the open data initiative.
- **Mr. Yassin Naciri**, president of section at the Moroccan Court of Accounts, presented how his institution cooperates with other institutions in order to conduct EPP. After explaining the Moroccan context and the various evaluating bodies, he described the relations the Court of Accounts operates with the government, the Parliament and other evaluating actors.
- **Dr. Gergely Pálmai**, the head of regulation and administration at the Hungarian State Audit Office, gave an insight on the Hungarian system. He explained how a coordination between the organisations is necessary because their mandates are all different and there is a need for complementarity. The coordination is also very much needed to collect reliable data.

The **fourth and final section** proposed a **couple of EPP case studies** to the participants.

- **Mr. Gilles Andréani**, President of the 4th Chamber at the French Cour des comptes, gave an overview of the evaluation on road safety policies, whose report was published on July 1, 2021. He presented the issue at hands and the reasons behind this EPP as well as the calendar and the methodology used. He revealed that the policy was a success but that the results of it have stagnated for a few years. The Cour des comptes therefore gave some recommendations for improvements for a somewhat successful public policy.
- **Ms. Hadjari Boukhari**, magistrate at the Algerian Court of Accounts, gave a presentation on the preliminary findings and recommendations on the National Perinatal Plan. This presentation follows up the presentation of the feasibility note that was given in Vilnius in 2019.

In **conclusion**, **Mr. Emmanuel Sangra** proposed a new and innovative format for the 2022 WGEPPP meeting, which will be held in Bern, Switzerland.

4. Main conclusions

- a. **During the discussions**, some topics were debated :
 - The Covid-19 pandemic has been an excellent opportunity to make the SAI benefit even more for society. Citizens expect the SAIs to take a part in the EPP in the COVID measures and citizens have a role to play in it because they are all impacted in many different ways by the crisis. The various presentations of this webinar gave a great number of public policies or topics that could be evaluated in the future.
 - The Covid-19 pandemic also addressed the issue of when should an EPP start *ex ante*, concurrent or *ex post*. The nature of the pandemic itself demands quick answers to policy responses. Some members highlighted that the political timing and the audit/evaluating timing are not the same but SAIs can go quickly if needed in crisis contexts.
 - Citizens' participation in EPP is very beneficial to SAIs. It allows SAIs to be less shy, think outside of the box, be more innovative and be more intelligible and clear in their reports.
 - The participants also discussed how the different evaluating actors cooperate. A survey could be realised later within the WGEPPP members to identify good practices.
 - The question of the mediatisation of the EPP reports and findings was also debated as some lobbies or interest groups can use the observations and recommendations made by a SAI to promote their agenda.
- b. A work plan for 2022-2025 will have to be adopted at the next INCOSAI. A survey will be disseminated in the coming months to ask for proposals from member SAIs.
- c. The WGEPPP members recalled the vocation of the working group to accompany SAIs in the exercise of evaluation through the exchange of good practices and the sharing of experience.
- d. All presentations will be made available on the working group's website.

5. Next meeting

The WGEPPP will be reunited in-person on 8-9 September 2022 in Bern, Switzerland.

Target audience

The event is aimed at:

- Regular members of the WGEPPP group
- Experienced colleagues from all SAIs willing to present a performance audit or an evaluation that used innovative methods
- Less experienced colleagues who wish to improve their skills

Format of the event

The Forum will last two days.

The first day, renowned speakers will give keynote presentations in plenary. They will present the advantages and disadvantages of the main methods used in public policies evaluation. Then a dozen methodological workshops will feature innovative and successful methods used in specific performance audits or evaluations. Each 20-minute presentation will be followed by 25 minutes of discussion among the participants.

The second day will focus on the choice of the most appropriate methods by means of two or three workshops. They will address specific public policies understandable to all (social,

environmental, public health policies, etc.). On the basis of precise questions, the aim will be to identify possible methods and to determine which to take. The results of the workshops will be presented in plenary.

In the late afternoon of the day before the Forum, September 7, a special session for WGEPPP members only will be held to address the usual agenda items of the working group meetings.

Day 1 **AM**

- Introduction and program
- Keynote 1
- Keynote 2
- Keynote 3

PM

Methodological sessions

13.45	Methodological sessions - goals and how it works					
14.00	Session 1	Session 3	Session 5	Session 7	Session 9	Session 11
14.45	Session 2	Session 4	Session 6	Session 8	Session 10	Session 12
15.30	Break					
16.00	Session 1	Session 3	Session 5	Session 7	Session 9	Session 11
16.45	Session 2	Session 4	Session 6	Session 8	Session 10	Session 12
17.30	End					

Day 2 **AM**

Workshops – three different public policies

9.00	Workshops and goals and how it works		
	Workshop 1	Workshop 2	Workshop 3
9.15	Presentation		
9.45	Group work		
10.30	Break		
11.00	Group work		
11.15	Presentation of results		
12.00	End		

PM

- Results of Workshop 1
- Results of Workshop 2
- Results of Workshop 3
- Final presentation
- End