What is this course about?

Does your organisation have qualified experts who are willing and able to design, manage and monitor evaluation activities? Will you be able to ensure high quality evaluation? Will evaluation results really provide evidence for decision-making and improve policies and programmes?

This training course aims to enhance participants’ understanding of how to commission, manage and monitor evaluations. It will increase your ability to design, manage and monitor the evaluations – funded with or without EU funds – conducted by your organisation.

Two top leader experts on the topic will be with us these two days. Stephen Morris is a Professor of Evaluation in the Policy Evaluation and Research Unit (PERU) at Manchester Metropolitan University and he designed studies for over 20 years for a range of different central government departments, local government and not-for-profit clients. In 2013, he co-authored a study for the European Commission, offering a practical guide for managing authorities to design and commission counterfactual impact evaluations. Bradford Rohmer on the other hand, is a Senior Analyst at Oxford Research, leading the European evaluation market. Until then, he was the Principal for EU evaluation at Coffey. Over the last 9 years he has led and contributed to many public policy evaluations and research studies, mostly for the European Commission, but also for the European Parliament and British Department for International Development.

How will it help you?

In recent years, both contracting authorities and practitioners have been learning and growing together. The EU Member States have launched and implemented evaluation capacity-building projects and today we can say that most of them have a well-developed evaluation culture. However, many challenges remain: we must still build capacity at all levels, ensure better dissemination of evaluation results and generate buy-in for the benefits of evaluation and integrate evaluation better into the policy and programming cycle so that it is actually used.

In particular, the seminar should help you understand the two most prominent approaches to evaluation today: Counterfactual (also known as experimental or quasi-experimental) approaches, and theory-based approaches. The interactive seminar will demonstrate in practical terms what counterfactual approaches can and cannot do and the conditions in which they can be used. It will also show how theory-based approaches can provide a good alternative when such conditions are not met and discuss ways in which the two approaches can be combined. After the training, you will get the slides and additional learning material to apply the new knowledge in your working life.

The main aim is not to train participants as expert practitioners, but to put them in a position where they are confident to commission and manage evaluations, understand the basics of certain tools and approaches, and are able to consider the advantages and disadvantages that justify the use of some above others. Consequently, you will be able to design briefs for (internal or external) evaluators, interact with them competently and assess the quality of their work.

Who will benefit most?

This two-day seminar is aimed at public officials from EU Member States, candidate countries, EU institutions and Agencies, Managing Authorities, auditors, consultants, staff of NGOs, and other stakeholders involved in the management of evaluation procedures for policies, programmes and projects. It is especially interesting for those working with European Funds. There is no previous knowledge/experience required, but it surely would benefit you in the course of the seminar.
MONDAY 28 MAY 2018

09.00  Registration of participants

09.15  Introduction to the seminar: presentation of the methodology to be followed

‘Tour de table’ – participants and experts present themselves. Needs assessment of the audience – evaluation on knowledge level

Gracia Vara Arribas, Expert, Project Leader, EIPA Barcelona (ES)

I. What is an evaluation and how to manage it

09.30  Strengthening the impact evaluation culture in the European Union – the lessons from the European Commission

The European Commission has institutionalized the evaluation culture, mainstreaming the different aspects of it – learn from the Commission experience the do's and don'ts for your own organization.

10.30  Coffee Break

II. Introduction to theory-based evaluation approaches and how to use them in practice

Bradford Rohmer, Senior Analyst, Oxford Research

11.00  Different evaluation approaches and their practical use

All evaluations should be systematic, objective and evidence-based. But in other respects they differ depending on the issues and problems at hand. This session gives an overview of different evaluation approaches, their key features and how and why to use them. The discussion revolves around real-life examples to show the strengths and weaknesses of various evaluation approaches and ways to design and apply them in practice.

13.00  Lunch Break

14.30  Theory-based evaluation: What is it, how does it work, and how can it be used to evaluate impact?

Theory-based evaluation (TBE) is versatile but is only useful insomuch as it is tailored to the intervention in question. This session runs through the different approaches to TBE (e.g. realist evaluation, contribution analysis, qualitative comparative analysis), the circumstances they are suited to and tools used to employ them. Again, the focus is on practical examples that participants can apply as commissioners or practitioners of evaluations.

15.30  Practical Session 1: a practical example of a theory-based evaluation

17.00  End of the first day

20.00  Welcome dinner

TUESDAY 29 MAY 2018

III. Introduction to counterfactual evaluation approaches and how to use them in practice

Stephen Morris, Professor of Evaluation, PERU, Manchester Metropolitan University

09.30  Counterfactual approaches to causation

Early on in the process of designing an evaluation you will need to consider how a counterfactual will be identified and estimated. This session will show you that once having identified a potential counterfactual you will then need to consider how you will measure counterfactual outcomes and possible collect control data from them. This will set ground for the next session of the programme.

10.30  Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) as a way of identifying counterfactuals

A randomised controlled trial is an evaluation methodology which aims to draw an objective picture of the difference that a project, programme or policy makes by comparing its effect on separate groups. There is a real need to gain a clearer understanding of who requests and uses RCTs, and this session will provide that knowledge.

11.30  Coffee Break

12.00  Practical Session 2: designing an experiment

Participants design an experiment and solve problems from a Commissioner’s perspective.

13.00  Lunch

14.30  Quasi-experimental approaches

Overview of quasi-experimental methods and techniques to quantitatively evaluate the impact of an intervention. Using ample examples, the approaches covered include regression, difference-in-differences and matching. ITS and regression discontinuity will also be discussed.

15.30  Practical Session 3: using quasi-experimental approaches

Participants discuss the practical application of quasi-experimental approaches, also in cases where randomisation is not possible.

16.00  Wrapping up and closing of the seminar
Experts

(In alphabetical order)

Stephen Morris (UK)
He is Professor of Evaluation in the Policy Evaluation and Research Unit (PERU) at Manchester Metropolitan University, Research Associate at NatCen Social Research, Visiting Fellow at the Policy Studies Institute and Honorary Fellow at the Institute for Employment Studies. He specialises in impact evaluation including RCTS and quasi-experimental designs; he also uses theory-based approaches in his work. He is responsible for the design, delivery and execution of evaluation studies in a range of different areas, such as, work, education, employment and skills, welfare, crime and justice, business support, innovation, youth transitions and health. For over 20 years he has designed and delivered studies for a range of different central government departments, local government and not-for-profit clients. In 2013, he co-authored a study for the European Commission, offering a practical guide for managing authorities to design and commission counterfactual impact evaluations.

Bradford Rohmer (SE)
He recently relocated to Stockholm, where he leads the European evaluation market for Oxford Research as a Senior Analyst. Until then, he was the Principal for EU evaluation at Coffey. Over the last 9 years he has led and contributed to many public policy evaluations and research studies, mostly for the European Commission, but also for the European Parliament and British Department for International Development. A political scientist by training, he has worked across a variety of subject areas, from citizenship, education, health, fisheries, sport and customs to gender equality and security sector reform. Much of this work has concerned finding ways to structure and present large, often disorganised masses of information effectively through a rigorous approach to research design, execution and analysis. This has encompassed the use of a range of evaluation methods and a number of data collection tools including focus groups, interviews, case studies and surveys. Before joining Coffey, Bradford worked in various capacities on European policy in the non-profit and public sector and studied political science and economics. He speaks French and Swedish fluently in addition to his native English.

Gracia Vara Arribas (ES)
She is a Lawyer, working as expert project-leader and consultant in EU Law at the European Institute of Public Administration-EIPA. She holds an LLM degree in comparative, European and international law from Maastricht University (1995-1996). After practicing law for 10 years in Spain, she became at EIPA the Deputy Director for Europe at the Cefir Programme of the European Commission in Uruguay (1996-1998). Since 2000 she works at the delegation of EIPA in Barcelona. For over 20 years, under her direction, several impact assessment and evaluation studies have been carried out commissioned by the EU Presidencies (UK 2006 and SE 2009) and for different Member States (SE, NO, UK, FR, NL, DE). She has led different commissioned studies for the EU institutions (“The Scoreboard on Multilevel Governance”, “The division of Powers in the EU” “The Role of Regional Parliaments and subsidiarity” etc). In 2014 she led and co-authored the study by the European Parliament analyzing the cost of non-Europe in the Sharing Economy. She has authored several policy reports and published numerous articles on Public Procurement Law, being at present the consultant for the City Council of Barcelona in the promotion of Public Procurement of Innovation.

European Institute of Public Administration
EIPA Barcelona
C/ Girona, 20 / 08010 – Barcelona
www.eipa.eu

Project Leader
Gracia Vara Arribas
Expert & Project Leader
Tel.: +34 93 245 12 03
E-mail: g.vara-arribas@eipa.eu
Programme
The programme will commence on Monday 28 May at 09.00 and will finish on Tuesday 29 May at 16.00.

Seminar venue
Grupotel Gran Via 678
Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes 678
ES - 08010 Barcelona
Tel. +34 93 1924560
www.grupotel.com

Working language
The seminar will be conducted in English.

Fee
EIPA members’ fee*: €900
Regular fee: €1000

The participation fee includes documentation, two coffee breaks, two lunches, a welcome dinner and a certificate of attendance. Accommodation and travel costs are at the expenses of the participants or their administration. For more information, please visit EIPA's website: http://seminars.eipa.eu (Training courses - Discount policy)

* EIPA members can take advantage of a reduced fee; this is available to all civil servants working for one of EIPA’s member countries (i.e. AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, MT, NL, NO, PL, SE, UK), and civil servants working for an EU institution, body or agency.

Hotel reservations
EIPA Barcelona will be pleased to make reservations for you at the same hotel where the seminar will take place, and where special rates apply for EIPA participants:

Grupotel Gran Via 678
Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes 678
ES - 08010 Barcelona
Tel. +34 93 1924560
www.grupotel.com

Rates of room with breakfast buffet included:
• Single room: € 110 + €1.21 tourist tax
• Double room for single use: € 132 + €1.21 tourist tax
• Double room for two pers.: € 154 + €2.42 tourist tax

Should you wish to make use of this possibility, please indicate the dates of arrival and departure on the registration form as well as the type of room required. Payment is to be made directly and personally to the hotel upon checking out. Please note that if you register after the deadline, hotel reservations cannot be guaranteed.

Meals
Should you require a special menu (e.g. vegetarian, diabetic), please inform the Programme Organiser so that this can be arranged.

Registration
Kindly complete the online registration form which can be found on EIPA’s website http://seminars.eipa.eu before 14 May 2018.

Programme Organiser
Mr Raymond Pelzer
Tel: +34 93 245 12 01
E-mail: r.pelzer@eipa.eu

Your name and address will be part of EIPA’s database for our mailing purpose only. If you do not want to be included in our mailing database, please tick the box on the registration form.

Confirmation
Confirmation of registration will be forwarded to participants on receipt of the completed registration form. Moreover, when it is confirmed that the seminar will take place, the participant will receive a confirmation letter by e-mail from the Programme Organiser, with some other details.

Payment
Prior payment is a condition for participation. Please indicate the method of payment on the registration form. For cancellations received within 15 days before the activity begins, we will have to charge an administration fee of €150 unless a replacement participant is found.

Cancellation policy
EIPA reserves the right to cancel the seminar up to two weeks before the starting date. EIPA accepts no responsibility for any costs incurred (travel, hotel, etc.). For more information: http://seminars.eipa.eu (Training courses - Cancellation policy).