

Evaluation in Eastern Europe and the Middle East

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The state of evaluation in Europe is ever changing. In 1994, there was only one national evaluation society in Europe. Since then, the evaluation scene in Europe has blossomed to include 10 or 11 national societies—most of which are located in West Europe. Recent efforts, most notably by the European Evaluation Society, have been directed towards integrating all of these organizations under one umbrella. Through training and capacity building, the European Evaluation Society hopes to increase the number of engaged professionals in Europe, develop an academic support base, and strengthen the links to the policy community.

Compared to Western Europe, the state of the evaluation field in the Middle East appears to be less developed. In some way, the state of evaluation in the Middle East resembles that of Eastern Europe. Few of these countries have created national evaluation societies, taught evaluation in schools of higher learning, or published evaluation journals. The present paper intends to examine the current state of evaluation in Europe and the Middle East.

Evaluation Journals and Newsletters

East European Journals

Several representatives of the European Evaluation Society (EES) report that no one knows of any journal or newsletter publications in Eastern Europe.

Middle East Journals

According to Barbara Rosenstein, Ph. D., Chairperson of the Israeli Association for Program Evaluation (IAPE), the IAPE has published, to date, eight newsletters, in both Hebrew and English on evaluation.

Israeli Journal: *Studies in Educational Evaluation*

Studies in Educational Evaluation (SEE) is published in English. The majority of articles were not published by Israelis. Authors were dispersed throughout the world including the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Spain, the Netherlands, and Germany.

A great many of the articles were purely research articles, a few of them described an evaluation case study, and a fair number of them discussed a specific methodology that could be used in evaluation.

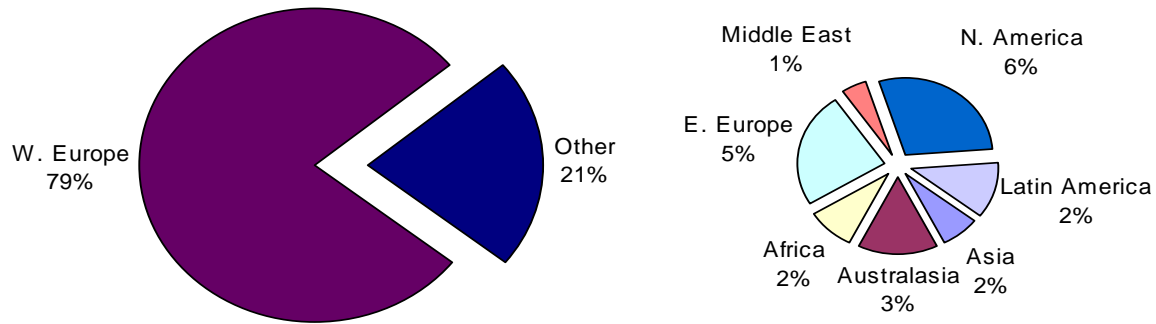
Evaluation Societies

European Evaluation Society (<http://www.europeanevaluation.org/>)

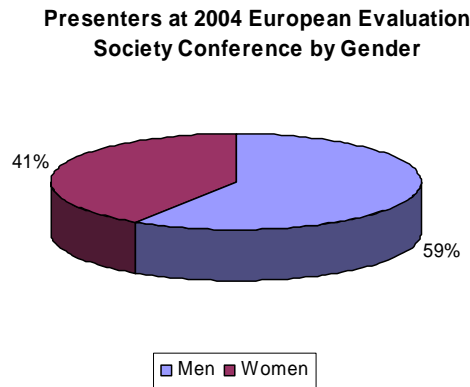
The primary goal of the European Evaluation Society (EES) is to promote theory, practice and utilization of high quality evaluation especially, but not exclusively, within the European countries. This goal is obtained by bringing together academics and practitioners from all over Europe and from any professional sector, thus creating a forum where all participants can benefit from the cooperation and bridge building. The society was founded in Hague in 1994. The first official board was elected in autumn 1995 and started its work in January 1996.

EES held its sixth conference on September 30 to October 2, 2003 in Berlin, Germany. The conference took place at the University of Applied Sciences and featured a total of 334 presenters from 36 countries.

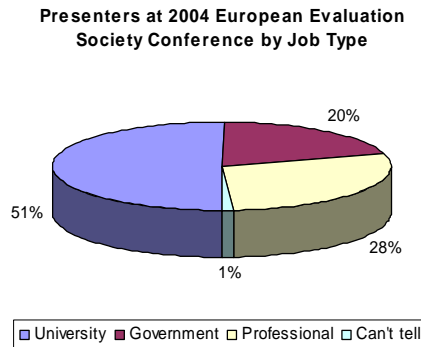
Presenters at 2004 European Evaluation Society Conference by Region



Over three-quarters of the presenters came from West European countries including Belgium (2.4 percent), Denmark (2.7 percent), Finland (4.2 percent), France (4.8 percent), Germany (9.3 percent), Greece (0.3 percent), Iceland (0.3 percent), Ireland (2.1 percent), Italy (15.9 percent), Netherlands (5.4 percent), Norway (1.5 percent), Portugal (2.7 percent), Spain (5.7 percent), Sweden (5.7 percent), Switzerland (4.5 percent), and the United Kingdom (9.0 percent). The remaining presenters included countries from Asia (Japan, 0.6 percent; Korea, 0.9 percent), Australasia (Australia, 2.4 percent; New Zealand, 0.6 percent), Africa (Angola, 0.3 percent; Guinea Bissau, 0.3 percent; Kenya, 0.3 percent; Nigeria, 0.9 percent), East Europe (Austria, 2.4 percent; Bosnia and Herzegovina, 0.3 percent; Czech Republic, 0.3 percent, Poland, 1.2 percent), the Middle East (Egypt, 0.3 percent; Israel, 0.3 percent, Palestine, 0.3 percent), North America (Canada, 0.9 percent; United States, 5.1 percent), and Latin America (Colombia, 0.6 percent; Mexico, 1.8 percent).



There were slightly more male presenters than female presenters.¹ However, this statistic was primarily influenced by the large number of West European presenters. Five of the seven other regions had an equal or greater number of female presenters than male presenters.

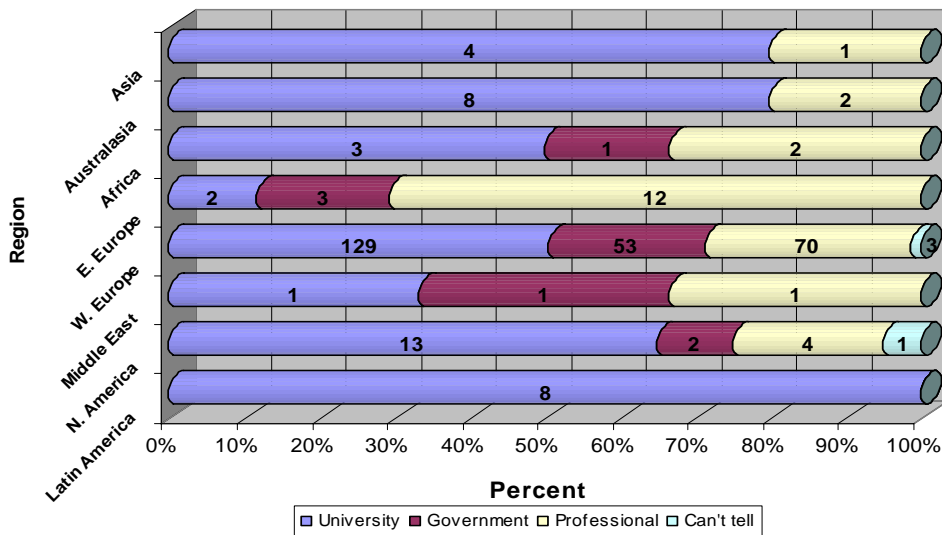


An examination of the type of jobs presenters worked in revealed that the majority of them worked for a university or college in their native country. The two next largest groups included people who worked in private industry or for the

¹ The gender of the presenter was determined by (a) an inspection of their name, (b) an internet search for a website that mentioned the presenter's gender, or (c) an internet search for the gender most common for the presenter's first name. Consequently, there may be a small degree of inaccuracy in the categorization of gender.

government.² It was interesting to note the differences in distribution of job type among the eight regions. For seven of the eight regions, presenters typically worked at a university. However, for Eastern Europe, the majority of presenters came from private industry. Possible explanations for this difference include the lack of university programs specializing in evaluation, the low number of professional evaluation associations, and historical factors such as socialism and recent wars.

Presenters at 2004 European Evaluation Society Conference by Region and Job Type



Polish Evaluation Society (<http://www.pte.org.pl/>)

The Polish Evaluation Society (PES) began in 2001 and set out to build an evaluation culture and popularize evaluation as a social and democratic process. To this end, it sought to (a) organize studies, courses and trainings; (b) conduct evaluation research; (c) exchange experiences with other societies, institutions and

² The type of job the presenter worked in was determined by the e-mail domain they provided to EES or by an internet search on their name or the name of the organization listed as their employer with EES. For four presenters, however, it was not possible to determine their job type.

organizations; (d) organize meetings, seminars and conferences, (e) publish in the area of evaluation, and (f) provide consulting and advising services.

The Polish Evaluation Society has very strict rules as to the educational qualifications of its members. Most members are still strongly connected with the academic environment, either via didactic activity or scientific research (Warsaw University, Lublin Catholic University, B. Jański School of Administration and Enterprise). Members of PES continuously enrich their knowledge by taking part in trainings, seminars and conferences both in Poland and abroad (UK, The Netherlands, Denmark) and also by co-operation with other similar organizations in the world. (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, European Evaluation Society, IOCE—International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation, PLS Ramboll Management—Denmark, Eureval-C3E—Centre for European Evaluation Expertise—France).

Members of PES are professional evaluators who also conduct marketing research and other research on social character. They have wide experience in the field of the evaluation which they gained in the process of conducting a variety of research for Polish and international organizations such as Polish Children and Youth Foundation, Public Interest Institute, government organizations such as European Integration Committee, the ministry of Education, service sector companies such as Daewoo, and EU institutions such as European Parliament and European Commission. Members of PES use different paradigms and research perspectives. A Rich variety of the activities and approaches is an advantage of this organization.

Romanian National Assessment and Examination Service

(<http://www.edu.ro/snee.htm>)

The National Assessment and Examination Service (NAES) was established in 1998 by the Romanian Government as the first national, independent body providing professional expertise in educational assessment and examinations in Romania. NAES is responsible for the design and implementation of the new educational evaluation system, namely for: (a) current assessment in pre-university education; (b) school leaving examinations (Capacitate exam and Bacalaureate exam); (c) national assessments at the end of educational cycles (now at the end of 4th grade); and (d) continuous teacher training in the field of assessment and examinations.

NAES is actively involved in national and international projects (e.g. the British Council, QUATRO Fontys—PTH Eindhoven) and maintains professional contacts with universities, research institutes, governmental and nongovernmental institutions and organizations in the field (e.g. CITO—The Netherlands, EDC—USA etc.). Their headquarters in Bucharest provides assessment technologies and facilities for development projects and studies in assessment and examination and their staff offers competence and expertise for cooperation to all those interested, in Romania and abroad.

Israeli Association for Program Evaluation (<http://www.iape.org.il/>)

The Israeli Association for Program Evaluation (IAPE) is a non-profit, professional organization comprised of academics, practitioners and users of program and project evaluation in a variety of fields—psychology, education, social services, health, business, and others. The goals of the organization include (a) increasing the use of program evaluation and its findings, (b) encouraging the development of

the theory of program evaluation, (c) advancing the essential recognition of program evaluation as a means of improving the effectiveness of social and educational interventions, (c) promoting the recognition of program evaluation as a profession, (d) serving the communities and the populations involved in program evaluation, (e) contributing to the influence of program evaluation on decision making, (f) supporting and influencing evaluation practice in Israel, and (g) creating and developing professional ties among evaluators and users of evaluation in Israel. To this end, the IAPE has sought to (a) organize conferences focusing on issues of concern to the evaluation community; (b) create an electronic and regular mail network that provide information about issues concerning evaluation in Israel and abroad; (c) establish connections with evaluation organizations throughout the world; (d) participate in the worldwide forum of evaluation associations, (e) circulate of a list of members to evaluation consumers in Israel; and (f) publish a newsletter containing articles, discussions, and events of interest to the evaluation community in Israel.