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Summary of doctoral dissertation: THE USE OF THE RESULTS OF INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S COHESION POLICY IN THE POLITICAL DEBATE. CASE STUDY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE SILESIAN VOIVODESHIP IN 2010-2018

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The dissertation deals with the issue of using the results of institutional evaluation of the European Union's cohesion policy in the political debate on the example of the Silesian Voivodeship. The aim of this work is to check whether regional political actors used the results of evaluation studies in their statements.

The working time periods are set for the years 2010-2018, which refer to the beginning of the 4th term of the Council of the Silesian Voivodeship and the end of the 5th term of the Council of the Silesian Voivodeship. All the work was divided into four chapters.

The first chapter presents the genesis of evaluation, its definitions, research approaches, typologies and functions, which are described both in general terms and in the context of the role of institutional evaluation in EU cohesion policy. In this part of the work, the following research questions are asked:

- What does evaluation in the social sciences mean?
- What is the institutional evaluation process?
- What are the functions of institutional evaluation?
- Can the results of institutional evaluation be used in building rational political argumentation?

As a result of the analysis, the research hypotheses that were previously derived from the above research questions were confirmed. First of all, it was stated that the concept of evaluation in the social sciences means “a socio-economic study aimed at assessing, against clearly defined quality criteria and the effects of the implementation of public interventions”¹. Secondly, the most important features of the institutional evaluation process are: regularity, concreteness, objectivity, reliability, transparency, participation and usefulness. Thirdly, due to its functions, institutional evaluation can be an effective tool to assess the results obtained through concrete and pre-planned actions in public space, as well as an effective tool to improve the quality of planning of subsequent actions in many important areas of social life. Fourthly, it has been proved that the results of the conducted evaluation studies can constitute a source of knowledge and can be a reliable basis for the political demands made.

The aim of chapter two was to analyse the tradition of evaluation culture in the world and to identify examples of countries with greater evaluation potential that can apply the results of institutional evaluation in the political debate. The comparative analysis of the three evaluation cultures of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Swiss Confederation and the Kingdom of Spain confirmed that the evaluation culture first developed in countries with a long and uninterrupted democratic tradition, and then in those countries where these traditions are much shorter. However, its development usually took place in three stages: first as a requirement of the law, then as an effective management tool and finally as a sustainable element of democracy. Moreover, the hypothesis that the results of institutional

¹ Guidelines for the evaluation of cohesion policy 2014-2020, Minister for Investment and Development, Warsaw 2018, s.4.

evaluation in democratic countries are used in the political debate on strengthening the power of political argumentation by politicians and other public actors is also confirmed.

The third chapter looked into the following questions: What are the traditions of evaluation culture in Poland? How is the system of institutional evaluation constructed? How are its results used? The results obtained allowed to confirm the following detailed hypotheses. First of all, it was confirmed that institutional evaluation appeared in Poland in the course of negotiations on the country's accession to the European Union. Secondly, it was stated that institutional evaluation in Poland is treated only as a mechanism for effective management of public funds (but not in all areas). At the same time, it was confirmed that it is not yet possible in Poland (on the example of the Silesian Voivodeship) to treat evaluation as an element supporting the development of democracy. This means that it cannot be seen as a political game mechanism in a democratic system.

The fourth chapter poses the question of how to use the results of institutional evaluation in the political debate in the Silesian Voivodeship, for which the following hypothesis was constructed - the results obtained in the process of institutional evaluation in the Silesian Voivodeship are not used in the political debate to propose the direction of necessary reforms or to propose solutions to newly emerging social challenges and problems. On the basis of the analysis carried out, evaluation reports were selected, which could potentially be used by politicians in constructing political demands. After the analysis of the published materials covering the debate of politicians conducted during the term of the Council of the Silesian Voivodeship and materials relating to the local government election campaign, it was concluded that the results of the research were not used in the political debate.

To sum up, the main hypothesis of the work was confirmed, which is that due to the relatively short history of evaluation culture in Poland and the lack of political tradition in this area, the results of the institutional evaluation of the European Union's cohesion policy were not used in the political debate held in the Council of the Silesian Voivodeship in 2010-2018.