

IOCE EvalPartners profile survey of Voluntary Organizations of Professional Evaluators (VOPEs)

I. Basic profile information

1. Name and acronym of organization (VOPE)	Czech Evaluation Society (CzES)
2. Geographic scope of organization	1. National (Czech Republic)
3. Contact Details	Mgr. Jiri Remr, PhD., Chairman 2012-2013 PhDr. Dmitrij (Dyma) SVEC, Vice Chairman and Executive Director 2012-2013: E-address: ces@czecheval.cz Postal address: 5.kvetna 65, 140 21 Prague 4, Czech Republic Telephone: +420604232468 VOPE website URL: www.czecheval.cz
4. Current membership – numbers of individuals, by their affiliation (if known; please at least give total)	Government: 5 NGOs/CSOs: 5 Academics: 3 Private sector (consultants): 14 Other: Total membership:27
5. Year VOPE was founded	2007
6. Current status (identify which)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal network • Charter and bylaws adopted • Legally recognized by government
7. Information about growth: evolution of the number of members or financial resources in the last 5 years.	2007 = 4 2008 = 5 2009 = 9 2010 = 3 2011 = 6
8. Purpose and mission of VOPE	Czech Evaluation Society was established: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to offer a non-governmental platform supporting cooperation with European Evaluation Society and International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS) and other international associations of evaluators - to foster effectiveness of developmental policies in the Czech Republic and abroad in line with objectives established by Paris Declaration on improving development effectiveness - to offer qualified feed-back to public and private donors in the Czech Republic and abroad - to collect, expand and utilize experience from Czech Development Cooperation evaluations, EU pre-accession programs and EU Structural funds - to support evaluation capacity building in the Czech Republic taking into account the need to disseminate proven evaluation approaches and methodologies
9. Current strategy and emphasis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stabilizing membership and profiling of expertise 2. Developing and adopting standards for performing evaluations 3. Further integration of adopted Ethical Code of Conduct 4. Developing common products with key partners (Czech Statistical Society and Czech Network of Healthy Cities) 5. Organizing yearly conference “Evaluation for Future” (May 2012) 6. Finalizing official accreditation of CES Evaluation Training program for public administration 7. More active involvement internationally in research/projects/collaborative networks (MENA, EU, AEA)
10. Organizational capacity: Please describe your governance structure, leadership, services provided, finances, human resources, linkages with other	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Structure: Congress made up of all members of the society elects members of the Board (5) and may also elect Internal Audit Committee. The Board elects on its first meeting Chairman and ViceChairman. ViceChairman is also the Executive Director of the Society. Executive Director may establish Secretariat to support activities of the Society.

<p>organizations, etc.</p>	<p>2. Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshops, seminars and yearly evaluation conference for our members (and for broader evaluation constituency) - On-line services for our members (Library, Profiles, Discussion Forum) including eLearning (limited) - Training for internal evaluators and evaluation managers from Ministries - On-line help line related to adopted Code of Ethics (both for evaluators and evaluation managers or any stakeholder interested) - Financial support to meet fee requirements for international conferences/seminars for delegated members to international events (IDEAS, NESE, mini-IPDET, OMLab2012) <p>3. HR and Finance</p> <p>All Board members volunteer including Executive Director. On special occasions Executive Director may contract assistance (Secretariat) to support organization of bigger events as conference/research, Income from yearly member fee (approx. 130 USD per year, decision upon yearly fee is upon Congress) and from special events (members have free admission, non-member have to pay)</p> <p>3. Linkages to other organizations</p> <p>Internationally through Board membership of Dan Svoboda linkage to IDEAS; institutional contacts with NESE, OM network and individual evaluation societies (e.g. Slovak Evaluation Society, Italian Evaluation Society, ROMEval).</p> <p>On national level linkages dependent more upon concrete initiatives/project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Charles University, Faculty of Social Science through current Chairman Jiri Remr (Conference2012) - University of Economics through current board member Ota Potluka (Counterfactual evaluation training) - Ministry of Social Affairs through membership of Vladimir Kvaca and Ministry of Regional Development through board member Vladimir Sodomka (Evaluation training for internal evaluators and evaluation managers) - Czech Healthy Cities Network and Czech Statistical Society through Vice Chairman Dmitrij Svec (Common products)
<p>11.Means of communication with members, e.g. newsletter, listserv, publication, website</p>	<p>Website, newsletter</p>
<p>12.Past events (e.g. during past year)</p>	<p>Evaluation Conference 2011 Congress (members only) Training for evaluation managers and internal evaluators from Ministry of Regional Development Co-organization of training on counterfactual evaluation (together with University of Economics and IREAS) Evaluation Practicum for students of sociology (FSV UK) and students of development studies (Czech Agriculture University).</p>
<p>13.Forthcoming key events/conferences – dates, location</p>	<p>MAY 30, 2012 Conference: “Evaluation for Future”, Prague</p>
<p>14.Name and e-address of person submitting this information</p>	<p>Dmitrij (Dyma) SVEC svec@czecheval.cz</p>
<p>15.Date of this update</p>	<p>25.3.2012</p>

II. Experience with Evaluation Capacity Building

<p>1. Background: Please provide a brief history of the formation of this organization (VOPE).</p> <p>1.1 Who were/are the key players?</p> <p>1.2 How many members do you have on your governing board/ committee?</p> <p>1.3 What are the main existing strengths that your VOPE is trying to capitalize on?</p> <p>1.4 What are the main challenges that your VOPE is trying to address?</p>	<p>1.1. A group of 4 people – with various experience from evaluations under Phare program, Structural Funds program as well as Official Development Assistance program - decided late 2007 to establish a platform to exchange experience and build capacity for quality evaluations in the Czech Republic.</p> <p>1.2 In current period (2012-2013) we have 5 members in the governing committee.</p> <p>1.3 A great mix of evaluation experience from Czech Republic and abroad; informal network of public, private and academic evaluators and commissioners</p> <p>1.4 Decreasing “silo” approach to evaluations; very small capacity building; methodological approaches not always adequate; ethics and standards in evaluations only formal; innovation and know-how/experience transfer limited; very limited evaluation culture in other public programs on regional and local level</p>
<p>2. Organizational motivation: What were/are the driving forces of the VOPE and its historical development?</p>	<p>1. Hard factor: We were lucky to obtain some financial means at the beginning (2008) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which helped us to organize initial courses, establish website and solve basic institutional/organizational issues.</p> <p>2. Soft factor: Our VOPE is NOT a player on evaluation market in terms of competing to consultants on the market with relation to evaluation. Many of the consultants are our members as well as evaluation managers. We consider this very important to build trust among our constituency.</p>
<p>3. Evaluation Capacity Building: What has your VOPE done to promote evaluation (M&E) capacity?</p>	<p>Key issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - we organize workshops, seminars and yearly evaluation conference for our members (and by our members) - we offer on-line services to our members (Library, Profiles, Discussion Forum) - we offer a limited range of own eLearning courses for our members - we train evaluators and evaluation managers from Ministries - we take part in international networks as NESE or IDEAS - we financially support our members to take part in international conferences/events (e.g. IDEAS, mini-IPDET, OMLab2012)
<p>4. Context / target entities: More specifically, who are the persons or institutions your organization seeks to influence (to strengthen evaluation capacity)? For example:</p> <p>4.1 Technical capacities to <i>supply</i> quality evaluations, partnering with experts, local universities or others to provide training for members, etc.;</p> <p>4.2 Strengthening VOPE organizational capacity itself;</p> <p>4.3 Enhancing the enabling environment for evaluation, including strengthening the <i>demand</i> for and use of evaluations by policy makers;</p> <p>4.4 Influencing governmental policies related to evaluation, evaluation designs and implementation of M&E systems, etc.</p>	<p>First of all it is important to underline that CES is a non-governmental organization established according to Law on Association. All our collaboration and exchange with statutory sector is voluntary and statutory sector is not obliged to collaborate with us. We understand that evaluation capacity building is mainly about individuals who are in the system, who may or may not feel strong/willing enough to influence/improve the system adopted to conduct evaluations inside their organization (usually ministry but also private). Secondly it should be noted that CES is a “bottom-up” initiative which offers an alternative to “top-down” approach to evaluations as practiced mainly in EU structural funds arena. We are trying our best so far to avoid giving an impression that evaluation society is a “special club” only for evaluation “experts” or those with extensive experience in the domain. Its mainly about giving space for initiative, learning together and networking.</p> <p>All what is written in the left column is relevant to CES. However it is mainly points 4.1 and 4.2 which are in direct interest of our organization. 4.3. is relevant only out of EU Structural Funds or Czech ODA since within those evaluation is already demanded and legally binding. We do not have currently (but work on it) the capacity to e.g. influence RIA processes on central governmental level. For municipal and regional level we just commenced working with our “boundary partner” Network of Healthy Cities to promote evaluation on local and regional level.</p>
<p>5. Public accountability: Is your VOPE helping to strengthen oversight and transparency of</p>	<p>Not really. We have tried in 2011 to establish some cooperation with the Czech Highest Audit Authority (they mainly concentrate on efficiency and effectiveness of public programs/projects) but CHAA declined our offer. We</p>

<p>government programs? If so, in what ways? Can you share any success stories of evaluators or others promoting public accountability?</p>	<p>have also approached EU structural funds Managing Authorities but any project cooperation (with exception to relatively small scale training) with statutory sector means to enter a bidding process and compete against our members, which we have decided not to.</p> <p>We have been officially nominated as members of evaluation steering group established by Ministry of Regional Development in 2011 (voluntary position). That helps the ministry to advocate its program evaluation (and its accountability at the end).</p> <p>As mentioned above as an entity we DO NOT directly implement any evaluation (although we have been asked already several times). We have agreed internally that CES may receive a grant in open grant schemes for research/education, may react on direct offer to train/couch/consult, but is not entitled to enter any commercial competition for evaluation projects in Czech Republic. It could be interpreted as conflict of interest (in case of public admin members) and would not be fair to our private sector members (competing to ourselves?)</p>
<p>6. More specifically, what are some of the key themes for which you advocate? For example, are you promoting issues related to cultural sensitivity, equity, social justice, empowerment, transformation, gender, environment, poverty? If so, please describe or attach relevant documents.</p>	<p>So far we see our main role in learning and helping being more accountable. From advocacy point of view we advocate transformation as an on-going process of learning.</p>
<p>7. Methods: Experiences in strengthening skills of individual members, by (for example):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organizing workshops led by local experts; • organizing webinars with international speakers; • designing and delivering e-learning programmes; • administering mentoring programmes; etc. 	<p>Our constituency is two folded: On one side we promote evaluation capacity within our member constituency by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering virtual library with evaluation articles, books and journals • Offering space for members to present themselves and their expertise • Offering on-line discussion forums on various topics of interest • Offering eLearning courses in our own LMS • Organizing yearly evaluation conference • Involving our members in capacity building events and trainings for other parties (e.g. universities) <p>We organize and co-organize various courses, seminars and other events to promote evaluation and/or certain methodological framework of evaluations of interest.</p>
<p>8. Standards: Has your VOPE developed professional standards/ ethical codes/ competencies (or adheres to those developed by others)? If so, please provide documentation.</p>	<p>Yes, we have adopted Code of Ethics last year and a document depicting implementation support measures.</p> <p>We believe that our future work on evaluation performance standards must be based on Code of Ethics since a number of standards are directly relevant to ethics adopted for evaluations - which are in our understanding - culture bounded.</p>
<p>9. Job opportunities: Do you share employment/ consultancy opportunities with evaluators on your database?</p>	<p>Yes, we inform our members and those interested in evaluations about a number of opportunities, both evaluation jobs and projects. Newsletter is published approx. bi-weekly (depending what is happening).</p>
<p>10. Progress and results: What progress has been achieved so far in any of the above or other domains? What are expected and unexpected results achieved?</p>	<p>We have been recognized by statutory sector, by those ministries and agencies which have to evaluate their programs (EU structural funds; Development Cooperation).</p> <p>We have stabilized our members constituency. We believe we have a good mix of private, public and NGO based members.</p>

<p>11. Lessons learned: Recommendations/ tips to others for good practices on how to organize and sustain VOPEs like yours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VOPE needs critical mass of members to get “the core” to work with (as volunteers) – Think from the very beginning if you want to be “a think tank” or a “platform”. Think tank may lead to “silo approach”. -Do not create another consultancy on the market called “evaluation society” (although you might have some real problems to survive without any proper financial means available to finance your projects). - Its better to be a smaller independent NGO than “fund” driven NGO (you know how it works – we have so many other projects that there is no time for our project) - Keep on and don't expect that you will be recognized immediately. People need time to accept that its their organization and what they will not do, will not be. - Be ready that some “champions” may leave since you offer work but not money.
<p>12. Next steps: What does your organization plan to do next?</p>	<p>Develop a network project to link and support know-how transfer and experience sharing in Europe Create a specific program on Outcome Mapping and Outcome Harvesting for CZ Expand partner cooperation in CZ (create common products with key partners) Improve existing services, especially the eLearning and generally “e” services available Finalize Standards for Performing Evaluations and adopt them by Society members Integrate our Code of Ethics into evaluation tender documents published by statutory sector Organize a bowling tournament with official platform of young statisticians (University of Economy)</p>
<p>13. Willing to share with other VOPEs? For example, would you be interested in forming peer-to-peer partnerships with one or more other VOPEs to share lessons learned, advise each other? If so, describe what you would be willing to share / advice you would seek.</p>	<p>Yes, we would be interested to twin with some other society. We are willing to share anything our partners may find interesting.</p>
<p>14. Suggestions: What ideas do you have for what should be included in activities of the EvalPartners Initiative?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - common training programs (FtT or eLearning) - offering dedicated focus to young people in evaluations - intermediating tertiary education or continuing professional education (by recognised university for example)
<p>15. Want to be actively involved? Does your VOPE want to be actively involved in EvalPartners? If so, in what ways?</p>	<p>We would appreciate some involvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assisting with development of concrete programs for EvalPartners - Deploying our eLearning Management System to provide common courses for EvalPartners network - “Leading a working group on agreed theme