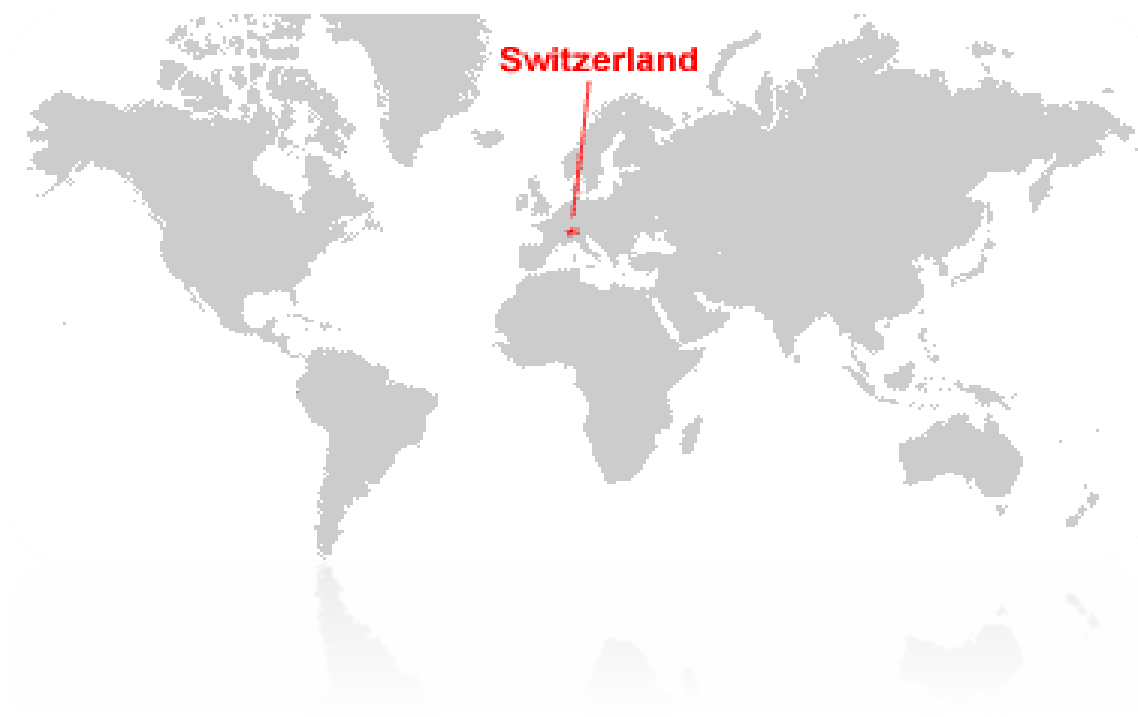


CASE-STUDY #1: NATIONAL EVALUATION POLICY IN SWITZERLAND



Country Profile

Official name:	Swiss Confederation
Location:	Central Europe, east of France, north of Italy
Independence:	12 September 1848
Form of state:	Federal parliamentary republic
Administrative divisions:	26 cantons
Area total:	41,277 sq km
Population	8.01 million (est. 2013)
Language:	4 official languages: German, French, Italian, Romansh
Official currency:	Swiss Franc (CHF)
GNI per capita:	USD 80,970 (2012)
Life expectancy:	80 years (men), 85 years (women) (UN)
Unemployment (% of labour force):	4% (UN, 2011)
National Evaluation Association:	The Swiss Evaluation Society (SEVAL) founded in 1996
NEP legislation:	1984

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For: Parliamentary Forum for Development Evaluation



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Acronyms

AGEVAL Working Group on Legislative Evaluation
ARAMIS Administration Research Actions Management Information System
CAS Certificate of advanced studies
CC-EVAL The Competence Centre “Performance Audit and Evaluation” of the Swiss Federal Audit Office
DAS Diploma of Advanced Studies
GEN Geneva Evaluation Network
MAS Masters of Advanced Studies
PCA Parliamentary Control of the Administration
SEVAL Swiss Evaluation Society
SFAO Swiss Federal Audit Office
SFOPH Swiss Federal Office of Public Health
SFOE Swiss Federal Office of Energy
SFOAG Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture
SFSIO Swiss Federal Social Insurance Office

Executive Summary

This case study presents the policy evaluation practices of Switzerland, underlines its major strengths and weaknesses. The Swiss NEP is focused on evaluating the effectiveness of public policies and legislation. Switzerland is the first country in the world to have an evaluation clause at the constitutional level. There are two main actors in evaluation domain in Switzerland, i.e. the Parliamentary Control of the Administration and the Swiss Federal Audit Office. Swiss Federal Administration spends annually approximately 15 million Swiss francs on evaluation. In spite of that, the evaluation supply is still more developed than evaluation demand due to the peculiarities of the Swiss political system, i.e. federalism and semi-democracy. The quality of evaluation is high and the process for the handling of evaluations are structured in a sensible and appropriate manner; however, yet evaluation findings and recommendations are used only rarely in the decision-making process, and when they are used, it is then often as a means of legitimation.

I. Introduction

1.1. *Political, Economic and Development Context*

Switzerland is situated in Western and Central Europe. Switzerland is a confederation, a federal republic consisting of 26 cantons, subdivided into 2800 communes. Switzerland has a population of about 8 million, with Bern as its official capital. Administratively, Switzerland is a federal republic.

The country forms a European cultural and linguistic crossroads, with about two-thirds of the population speaking German, around one-fifth French and about 7% Italian. Romansch, the fourth national language, is spoken by less than 1% of the population. Since the beginning of the 20th century Switzerland's population has more than doubled from 3.3 million (1900) to 8 million (late 2012)¹. The resident population is continuing to age. The proportion of people aged 65 and over rose from 15% in 2000 to just under 17.4% in 2012, while the percentage of children and young people under 20 fell from 23% to 20.4% in the same period. Of the around 8 million people living in Switzerland, just under 1.9 million (23.3%) are foreign nationals. Almost two-thirds of foreign nationals are from an EU27 Member State or from EFTA.

Switzerland is an open economy with one of the highest standards of living and one of the highest per capita incomes in the world. Switzerland's GDP was estimated at \$374 billion in 2013². In the 2013-14 World Economic Forum Competitiveness Index³ Switzerland ranked number one for the fifth consecutive year. Switzerland's economy

¹ <http://www.about.ch/>

² <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/switzerland/gdp>

³ <http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-competitiveness-report-2013-2014>

benefits from a highly developed service sector, led by financial services, and a manufacturing industry that specializes in high-technology, knowledge-based production. Its economic and political stability, transparent legal system, exceptional infrastructure, efficient capital markets, and low corporate tax rates also make Switzerland one of the world's most competitive economies. The Swiss have brought their economic practices largely into conformity with the EU's to enhance their international competitiveness, but some trade protectionism remains, particularly for its small agricultural sector. The fate of the Swiss economy is tightly linked to that of its neighbors in the euro zone, which purchases half of all Swiss exports.

Switzerland has a federal structure with three levels of government: the Confederation (federal government equivalent), the cantons (state/territory government) and the communes (local government). The Swiss Confederation consists of a seven member Federal Council (Cabinet equivalent) which is elected by the United Federal Assembly for a four-year term. A new Federal Council was elected in December 2011 following the October 2011 parliamentary election. The position of President of the Swiss Confederation is rotated annually among Councillors. In December 2013 the Federal Council elected Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter as Switzerland's President for 2014. The Federal Assembly is Switzerland's national legislature. It has two chambers: the National Council and the Council of States. The National Council has 200 members elected on a (mostly) proportional representation basis. The Council of States has 46 members: two from each canton (territorial/administrative sub-division) and one from each half-canton. The two chambers serve concurrent four-year terms. The next parliamentary elections will be in 2015.

The people are given a direct say in their own affairs under Switzerland's system of direct democracy, which has no parallel in any other country. In addition to freedom of expression, Swiss citizens can also make their views known through petitions, referenda, and initiatives. These rights allow Swiss citizens to veto proposed parliamentary bills, to force popular consultations by way of referenda, and in case of initiatives to prompt the authorities to address previously ignored problems.

While Switzerland has a long-standing tradition of neutrality and is not a member of NATO, it participates in peacekeeping missions, including NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP), and plays an active role in conflict mediation. It is one of four members (with Sweden, Poland, and the Czech Republic) of the UN Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission monitoring the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea. Switzerland eventually became a member of the United Nations in September 2002. Switzerland is a member of the Council of Europe (CoE), the Europe-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Organization for the Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Switzerland was the 8th largest donor of official humanitarian assistance in 2012. Switzerland provided USD 3 billion in official development assistance (ODA) in 2012, or 0.47%⁴ of its gross national income (GNI): 61.4% of Switzerland's official humanitarian assistance was spent in fragile states, while 47.4% was spent in countries classified as long term recipients of humanitarian assistance in 2012.

1.2. M&E Context

The evaluation culture in Switzerland does not have a long tradition in comparison with other developed countries.

The origins of evaluation activity in Switzerland lie on one hand in the national research program 'The Effectiveness of Public Measures'. It was funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, the national body for the promotion of scientific research in Switzerland. This programme dealt with the overall conditions for government programs, in terms of organization and interests, between 1976 and 1986. In view of the increasing difficulties involved in executing the law, the problem of the implementation of legislation—which had undergone virtually no systematic examination in Switzerland until then—emerged as a focal point.

On the other hand, the roots of evaluation in Switzerland can be traced back to the activities of a Working Group on Legislative Evaluation (AGEVAL), which was set up in 1987 by the Federal Department of Justice and Police (Federal Office of Justice) and was active by 1991. AGEVAL was composed of federal and cantonal officials as well as academic scholars, and it promoted evaluation through a series of commissioned evaluation studies. As part of a second national research program, these activities were paralleled by a systematic scientific examination of the subject of policy evaluation.

One important consequence of this national research program was the establishment of the Swiss Evaluation Society and the network Evaluation of Federal Administration.

In the late 1990s, evaluation in Switzerland has become more mature. The Federal Parliaments decided to include a provision for evaluation in the completely revised Federal Constitution of 1999. The constitutional provision concerns not only measures taken to apply the law, but also the legislative process itself. Its addressees are therefore the government and implementing bodies (administration, cantons), as well as parliament. These developments have led to an increasing demand for evaluative services in Switzerland and resulted in the effects-oriented nature of policy and administration in Switzerland.

In a word, evaluation development in Switzerland has been marked by the interaction of various forces and actors: the Parliament (with its parliamentary services), the public

⁴ http://www.sdc.admin.ch/en/Home/About_SDC/Facts_and_figures

administration, the academic community and – with SEVAL – private associations. Also since the late 1990s, important new actors have entered the evaluation field, namely additional federal offices (such as the Federal Office of Health, the Swiss Development Agency).

II. Institutional setting of NEP in Switzerland

2.1. *NEP's Focus and Purposes*

NEP in Switzerland focuses on policy evaluation and aims to *strengthen the results orientation* in the federal administration, *promote transparency* and *serve public accountability*. NEP is intended to measure the effects of measures taken by the state in implementing legislation or a public programme and to assess whether the means put in place produced the expected outcomes.

2.2. *Legal and Policy Framework*

Switzerland is the first country in the world to have an evaluation clause at the constitutional level.

Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation of 18 April 1999

Article 170 states that the Parliament has to ensure that federal measures are evaluated with regard to their effectiveness.

The assignments of article 170 of the Federal Constitution have been specified in parliamentary law.

Parliament Act of 13 December 2002

Article 27 authorizes parliamentary commissions (a) to demand the Federal Council to carry out evaluations, (b) to examine evaluations commissioned by the Federal Council and (c) to commission evaluations themselves.

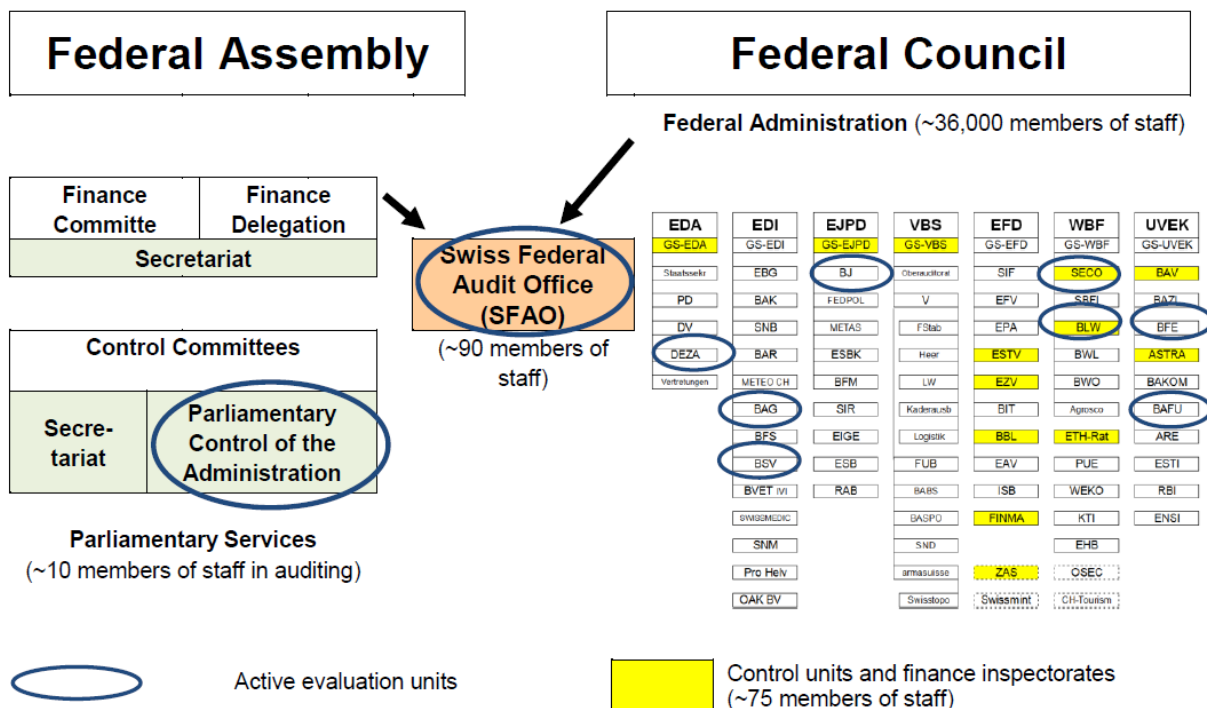
Article 40 underlines that evaluation is a task not only of the audit committees but of all committees of Parliament including those preparing new legislation.

In total, around 90 legal acts (laws, ordinances, etc.) carry evaluation clauses (i.e. obligations to carry out an evaluation).

2.3. Institutional Arrangements

The government system of Switzerland gives high priority for evaluation of laws and federal government activities.

Auditing and evaluation bodies and offices within federal government of Switzerland



Source: SFAO 2013

There are two main actors in evaluation domain in Switzerland, i.e. the **Parliamentary Control of the Administration** and the **Swiss Federal Audit Office**.

Parliamentary Control of the Administration (PCA)

The competence center of the Federal Assembly responsible for evaluations is Parliamentary Control of the Administration (PCA). PCA was established in 1991 and is a specialized service that carries out evaluations of behalf of the parliament. Evaluations are presented to the Control Committees, which are mandated by the Federal Assembly to exercise parliamentary oversight of the activities of the Federal Government and the Federal Administration, the Federal Courts and other bodies entrusted with tasks of the Confederation. The PCA consists of 6 specialists and has a budget for commissioning external studies. The legal bases of the PCA are set out in the Parliament Act (article 67 and 153) and the Parliamentary Administration Ordinance (article 10). The last provides the PCA with extensive rights to information. The PCA is entitled to contact directly all services of the Federal Administration and to request all the information it needs; professional secrecy or data protection rules are no grounds for requests to be refused. The PCA guarantees to protect its sources and evaluation

results are treated confidentially until the formal decision is taken to publish by the relevant committee.

The PCA coordinates its activities with those of other federal controlling bodies and is in regular contact with universities, private research institutes as well as Swiss and foreign public evaluation bodies.

The PCA has conducted evaluations on subjects covering all aspects of state activity, such as cultural or social policy, development aid or the Confederation's real estate management. The PCA reports are published and are used in many ways by parliament and government in their decision-making: a) serve as a basis for action recommended by the CC or for parliamentary procedural requests; (b) their conclusions are taken into account when existing laws or ordinances are revised; they instigate learning processes in relation to administrative activities.

Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO)

The Competence Centre "Performance Audit and Evaluation" (CC-EVAL) of the Swiss Federal Audit Office was established in 2002 and functions in accordance with Article 5 of the Federal Audit Office Act. It aims to assess the implementation and effectiveness of federal policies that have significant financial implications, and then to recommend changes for enhancing their efficiency. In this way, the SFAO takes on the duties of an autonomous court of auditors in Switzerland. CC-EVAL has 10 specialists on board. The SFAO holds the chair of the Swiss Evaluation Society (SEVAL), which helps to ensure ongoing quality assurance and the harmonization of working methods. The selection of subjects for evaluation is done by the SFAO and the financing of the studies are handled on an autonomous basis.

The SFAO's institutional position enables it to act autonomously and independently. The SFAO is administratively attached to the Federal Department of Finance (FDF). However, the SFAO is not subject to directions from the FDF. The Finance Delegation is consulted with respect to the SFAO budget, which is passed directly by Parliament. The SFAO has the power to determine its own annual plan and to refuse assignments. Only 20% of its evaluations are undertaken on behalf of the Finance Delegation and Federal Council. The SFAO also has a right to access information, including personal data, under the Federal Audit Office Act. The SFAO is one of the few government evaluation bodies with unfettered authority to deal with cross-cutting issues. Only the PCA is vested with the same powers.

To avoid duplication, the SFAO attaches great importance to coordination with other supervisory bodies. For example, the SFAO liaises with the PCA on a regular basis, in particular when preparing its annual plan and selecting the evaluation areas. The SFAO is also required to coordinate with the PCA under the Federal Audit Office Act. Information on working methods and current evaluation issues is available on the SFAO website. Additionally, the SFAO provides regular input on evaluations into the government database ARAMIS and, as a member of the federal government Evaluators Network, is in regular contact with the various evaluation units. While the

finance inspectorates are the SFAO's traditional auditing partners, they also act as channels of information to facilitate the conduct of evaluations.

CC-EVAL's final reports and summaries are publicly available as they published on SFAO's web-site. In addition, the Federal Audit Office includes the results of its evaluations in its annual report.

The SFAO also conducts performance audits in fields with large financial impacts. The SFAO is attached for administrative purposes to the Federal Department of Finance (Ministry of Finance), but it is answerable both to the government and to parliament, and assists these bodies in their supervisory tasks.

In Switzerland, there are 45 federal agencies and offices. A number of them started to practice evaluation activities and established specialized evaluation units, in particular:

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

The SDC has been dealing with evaluation for more than 30 years. Nowadays, evaluation functions are embedded in Programme Cycle Management. The SDC differentiates between different forms of evaluation: self-evaluation and external evaluations. Project evaluations constitute the great majority of all evaluations within the SDC. In most cases, the responsibility for carrying out an evaluation rests with the sections that are responsible for managing the programmes under examination. Financing is provided from the budget for the programme.

Swiss Federal Office of Public Health (SFOPH)

Evaluation began to play a part at the SFOPH in the late 1980s. Today the directorate level "Evaluation Competence Centre" supports all the SFOPH's evaluation activities, acting as an intermediary between practitioners and scientists in order to define the objectives and focus of a study. Nevertheless, the administrative units are still responsible for clarifying the requirements for evaluations, and for their content. It is also up to them to finance evaluations.

Swiss Federal Office of Energy (SFOE)

Systematic evaluation in the Swiss Federal Office of Energy started in 1991. The senior evaluation authority is the head of the Energy Policy Department, who makes the final decisions on the implementation of studies. The SFOE has a unit responsible for evaluation, which works as an interface between the internal office players and the evaluators. The SFOE has a special budget dedicated to evaluation.

Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture (SFOAG)

Internal and external evaluations are carried out in and by the Federal Office of Agriculture. SFOAG has three divisions ('Production and International Affairs', 'Direct Payments and Structural Improvements' and 'Research and Extension'). Each is responsible for organizing and executing evaluations on their own. One of the most important evaluation programmes within the FOAG is the evaluation of agricultural policy measures. Three FOAG units co-ordinate this evaluation in a collaborative

manner. Evaluation results are taken into consideration in internal annual planning, and when ordinances and laws are being elaborated or revised, evaluation results can eventually be inserted. Evaluation reports are sent to the departmental 'General Secretariat'. FOAG evaluations are also open to the public, and they often serve as basic information in the relationship between the FOAG and policy beneficiaries, e.g. farmers or farm associations.

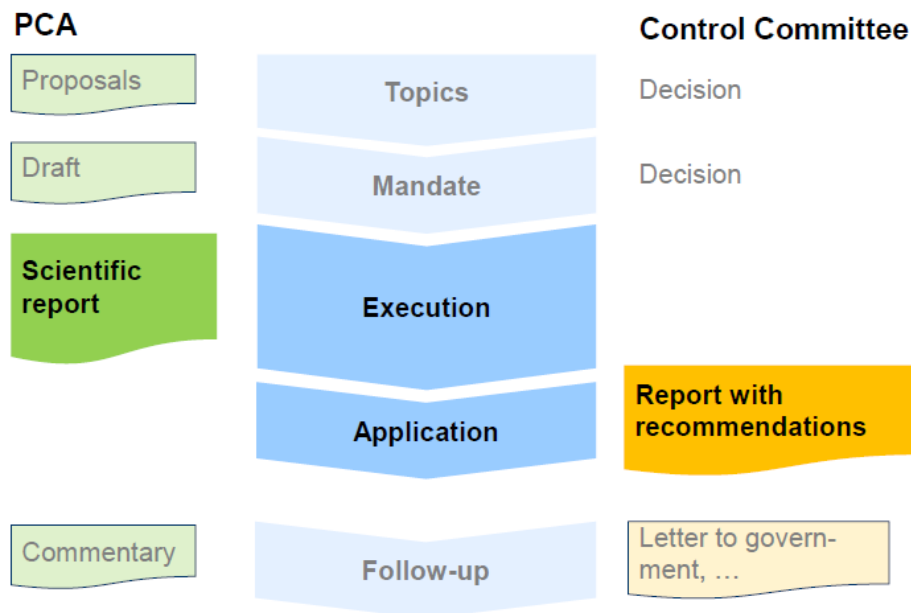
Swiss Federal Social Insurance Office (SFSIO)

The specialized unit 'Economy, Foundations, Research' is responsible for evaluations within the FSIO. The specialized unit does not carry out evaluation studies but contracts out evaluations to external partners. Evaluation reports are sent primarily to cantonal administrators but also to the media, to research institutions, and to (non-)parliamentary commissions that work on the topic; 400–600 copies of the evaluation reports are usually published.

2.4. M&E Tools, Components, Evaluation Methodologies and Quality of Data

The evaluation procedures in the PCA and SFAO compromise of 5 phases and are presented below.

PCA Evaluation Process



Source: PCA 2013

Phase 1: Choice of themes

The committees select the areas to be subjected to evaluation according to an iterative process. The proposals are put forward by the committees, other parliamentary bodies,

the PCA or third parties (cantons, citizens, media, etc.). During this phase, the PCA supports the committees by assessing the proposals according to pre-established criteria (such as topicality, problems arising or the possibility of obtaining more information, etc.). On that basis the committees retain two to five subjects for evaluation and incorporate them into their annual programme.

Phase 2: Project outline

The PCA drafts an outline of the project for each chosen evaluation theme. This document provides an overview of the issues to be dealt with. Based on the project outline, the committees define the formal evaluation mandate which they give to the PCA.

Phase 3: Realisation of the evaluation by the PCA

The PCA undertakes evaluation using the SEVAL standards and conducts it entirely independently. The reports are drafted solely by the PCA and the parliamentary committees are excluded from this phase of the process. The PCA prepares two reports: (1) a short version which summarises the most important findings and (2) a detailed technical report containing all of the information and data on which the findings are based.

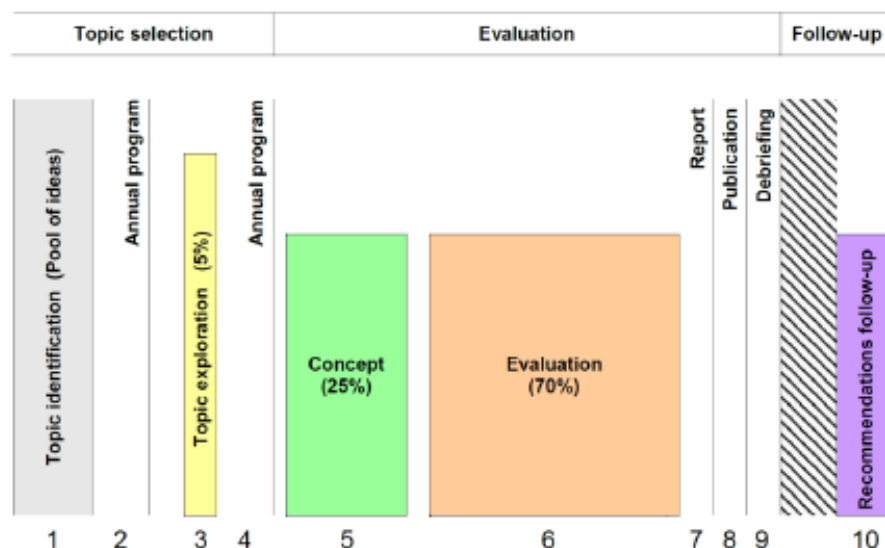
Phase 4: Political conclusions and committee recommendations

The committees then study the PCA's evaluation report and draw political conclusions. In general, the committees draft their own based on the findings of the PCA. In their reports, the committees formulate recommendations; the government is then required to state its position. If they are not satisfied by the government's response, the committees they can as kit to provide further information, which often results in a dialogue between parliament and the government. If they deem that the results of the evaluation show that significant measures need to be taken, the committees can demand that the government submit to parliament plans to revise the law or that they themselves propose such amendments in the form of parliamentary initiatives.

Phase 5: Follow up

Two or three years after the conclusion of an evaluation, the committees carry out a follow-up control. In general, they request the government to submit a report on the implementation of the recommendations. The PCA also supports the committees during this phase, particularly if it is necessary to measure or assess the reality and relevance of progress made.

SFAO Evaluation Process



Source: SFAO 2012

The Swiss Federal Audit Office is responsible for the entire evaluation process, from selecting topics through to following up on recommendations. The SFAO has developed a five-year strategy involving the selection of 25 to 30 evaluation topics. The strategy identifies general risks for the federal government in the next five years, defines key thematic priorities and determines the number of evaluations that should be undertaken in relation to each priority. During selection of topics, the SFAO takes account of the financial implications of federal policies for the economy or private citizens. CC-EVAL produces an average of five to six high-quality reports on topics of interest per year, incorporating a comparative module into each evaluation. In general, one fourth to one third of the total resources required for the evaluation project is spent for preparatory work (exploration, concept).

CC-EVAL undertakes evaluations in accordance with the SEVAL Evaluation Standards. Each evaluation usually has from three to six evaluation questions. As a general rule, four to five method modules are deployed for evaluations: in-depth interviews, group interviews, surveys of both direct and indirect stakeholders, database and documentary analyses, statistics and literature reviews. On average, thirty interviews are conducted for each evaluation project. Statistical analysis is performed for nearly two thirds of projects. Case studies and written surveys are conducted for nearly half of the evaluations undertaken and international comparisons have been carried out in around a dozen cases. SFAO's evaluation reports include five recommendations on average. These recommendations are generally addressed to the offices or entities evaluated and occasionally to the departments. Recommendations are not usually addressed to the Federal Council or Parliament.

The evaluations produced by the SFAO are summative. The SFAO uses various methods to encourage stakeholder involvement and "ownership" of the results. The evaluated offices and relevant stakeholders are involved at key stages in the process (exploration of topics, concept, interim results and final report). Where required, steering committees may be set up to assist the SFAO.

Another special feature of the SFAO is that it makes recommendations and ensures that these are followed through. By comparison, the PCA, for example, does not formulate recommendations. This task falls to the Control Committees. The recommendations drafted by the SFAO on the basis of its findings are primarily addressed to the bodies evaluated, but may also be submitted to policymakers, especially if the recommendations involve legislative amendments. The evaluated office states its position on the recommendations and announce, what action will be taken and the timeframe for implementation. These statements are subsequently included in the published evaluation report. Where the Finance Delegation is dealing with the report and position statements, it may request additional information. However, the SFAO will follow up on its recommendations a few years after the report is published to ensure that the bodies concerned have taken effective action in response to its recommendations. This enables the SFAO to review progress and assess the efficacy of its recommendations. Where an office has failed to implement the proposed changes, the Finance Delegation will determine what action, if any, should be taken.

About 80 evaluations per year are carried out by federal agencies and offices in Switzerland. The biggest number of evaluations is taken place in Swiss development, health, environment and energy sectors.

2.5. Professional Capacity for M&E

Switzerland has an active and dense network of evaluators and circles interested in evaluation in the civil service and in academia. It is achieved by well-functioning evaluation association and network.

The Swiss Evaluation Society (SEVAL)

- Founded in 1996 as result of the National Science Foundation sponsored Research Program 27.
- Has about 450 members.
- Goal is to foster the exchange of information and experience in the field of evaluation between politics, administration, academia, NGOs and the private sector.
- Has 4 thematic working groups on: (1) evaluation standards, (2) evaluation and development aid, (3) research on evaluation and (4) competencies in evaluation.
- Developed its own evaluation standards (the SEVAL Standards) in 2000 to contribute to the professionalization of evaluation in Switzerland. Various institutions, among them seven federal offices, have declared that they adhere to those standards. The SEVAL standards have been used to assess the quality of evaluations. They have also been incorporated into the

curricula of evaluation courses and into manuals by the federal administration for planning and preparing evaluations.

- It organizes courses in professional development for experienced evaluators and evaluation commissioners, holds annual meetings twice a year on evaluation practice topics, conducts conferences, and issues a newsletter.
- Has a website and database of evaluators.
- Annual membership for regular members costs 100 CHF and 50 CHF for students.

Geneva Evaluation Network (GEN)

- Established in 2006 as an informal network by Mr. Craig Russon.
- Consists of 95 members.
- Aims to (1) strengthen the individual evaluation capability of its members through informal presentations/seminars and (2) enhance networking among the local evaluation community in the Geneva area.
- Has a website, blog and listserv.
- Memberships is free of charge.

SEVAL has encouraged universities to teach courses in evaluation methodology and include evaluation in their curricula. Two universities now offer such courses in evaluation as:

Diploma and Master of Advanced Studies in Evaluation

- Offered by **Centre for Continuing Education, University of Bern**.
- Started in 2002.
- Runs for 21 months - Diploma of Advanced Studies (DAS); and for 33 months - Master of Advanced Studies (MAS).
- DAS and MAS focuses on how to design, conduct or commission evaluations.
- Both programmes are taught in German.
- DAS costs - 13'300 EURO and MAS costs - 25'000 EURO.

Certificate of advanced studies (CAS) in Educational Evaluation

- Offered by the **University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Northwestern Switzerland, College of education, Institute of further education and consulting**, in cooperation with the University of Bern.
- Started in 2012.
- Focuses on data collection methods and instruments in educational settings.
- Runs for 14 months.
- Taught in German.
- Costs 7,050 EURO.

2.6. Utilization of M&E

According to SEVAL evaluation “Ten Years after the International Atlas of Evaluation: Developments in Evaluation” (2012), the intensity of evaluation activities are different in different federal administration. At the federal level, evaluation activities take place in most of the public sectors, while at the regional (cantonal) level; evaluation activities take place only in a limited part of the public sphere. This is so because of the federal structure of Switzerland. In numerous areas the implementation of federal law is delegated to the cantons which are sovereign. In such cases, the parliament exercises a great deal of restraint with regard to the measures taken by the cantons in applying federal public policy. Federalism therefore acts as a very solid barrier against the ability of federal evaluators and parliamentarians undertake evaluations and ensure the usage of evaluation findings.

As a result, evaluation findings and recommendations are used only rarely in the decision-making process, and when they are used, it is then often as a means of legitimation. Federal evaluation activities are strongly related to ‘power games’: evaluation often is seen as a way to gain power and influence within the administration. Because of this, evaluation co-ordination has to be considered as weak. Prospective planning of evaluation activities synchronized with other administrative units does not usually occur.

Although, the positive signs could be observed in the amount of spending on evaluations by the Swiss Federal Administration. The evaluation expenditures increased from 8 million Swiss francs per year in 1999 to 15 million Swiss francs per year in 2013.

III. Achievements and Challenges

Main Achievements

- o Establishment of a specialised internal service within parliament – the PCA, which has enabled parliament to fulfil its legal mandate in a consistent and credible manner.
- o Creation of the special center to conduct evaluations and performance audits within the SFAO, which in turn helps to develop evaluation culture within the Federal Administration.
- o Clear division of responsibilities: political actors assume responsibility for the mandate and for assessing the results and the experts conduct the study independently and in accordance with recognised scientific criteria.
- o Increased degree of professionalization of Swiss evaluation community (not only with regard to the execution of evaluations but also with respect to evaluation know-how within the federal administration).

Key Challenges

- o Special nature of the evaluation as a tool, its use presents certain inconveniences in a parliamentary context.

- o An evaluation of high quality requires a good deal of time and long-term planning, whereas the pace of political affairs which dictates parliamentary activity is fast moving.
- o Conducting evaluations and making use of the resulting findings requires large amounts of resources, which are sometimes lacking in a semi-professional parliament such as Switzerland's.
- o Insufficient level of interest in evaluating the effectiveness of political measures on the side of parliament.
- o Evaluation culture is not still developed equally among different federal agencies and offices.

IV. Good Practice(s)

ARAMIS (Administration Research Actions Management Information System)⁵

ARAMIS is the information system of the Swiss Federal Administration, which contains information regarding research, development and evaluation projects. It has been operational since 1997. It contains information regarding research projects and assessments that are either run or funded by the Federal Administration.

The objectives and tasks are clearly described in the ARAMIS Ordinance (regulation #420.171) and are as follows:

Provide interested parties with information about federally run or funded research activities and assessments (transparency),

Ensure that similar projects are not already being carried out within the Federal Administration (avoid redundancy),

Provide federal agencies with a simple tool that they can use to manage their research projects more efficiently (management tool).

The ARAMIS information system is very convenient and users-friendly as it allows the Federal Statistical Office (FSO) and the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) use this database for statistical and other assessment purposes. It also serves as a pillar of quality assurance in the area of federal policy sector research.

The 'External Studies' Database⁶

Swiss federal administration established a database of external studies, reports and evaluations commissioned by external organizations. It became operational since 1 January 2010. The database allows making a search by cost, budget invoiced, commissioning or commissioned body.

⁵ www.aramis.admin.ch

⁶ <http://www.admin.ch/dokumentation/studien/>

V. Conclusion

In Switzerland evaluation has developed steadily since 1980th. Swiss NEP is focused on evaluation of public policy effectiveness. Evaluation function is laid down in the Constitution. Evaluation has been integrated into the planning and management instruments at the federal level. Parliament plays an important role in evaluation, which corresponds to its lawmaking function. The mandate of carrying out evaluation relating to the results and performance of public policies and services is given to the Parliamentary Control of the Administration. Meanwhile, the Competence Centre "Performance Audit and Evaluation" of the Swiss Federal Audit Office undertakes assessments of the implementation and effectiveness of federal policies that have significant financial implications, and then to recommend changes for enhancing their efficiency. Federalism and direct democracy are two main factors of the Swiss political system that influence the policy evaluation in the country. Evaluation activities in the federal administration are very varied. Switzerland has an active and dense network of evaluators and circles interested in evaluation in the civil service and in academia. Swiss Federal Administration invests into evaluation around 15 million Swiss francs per year. Yet evaluation findings and recommendations are used only rarely in the decision-making process, and when they are used, it is then often as a means of legitimation. Federal evaluation activities are strongly related to 'power games': evaluation often is seen as a way to gain power and influence within the administration. Because of this, evaluation co-ordination has to be considered as very weak. Prospective planning of evaluation activities synchronized with other administrative units does not usually occur.

VI. Documents consulted

Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO)

<http://www.efk.admin.ch/>

Federal Audit Office Act

http://www.efk.admin.ch/images/stories/efk_dokumente/gesetz/FKG%20English%202011.pdf

Parliamentary Control of the Administration (PCA)

<http://www.parlament.ch/E/ORGANE-MITGLIEDER/KOMMISSIONEN/PARLAMENTARISCHE-VERWALTUNGSKONTROLLE/Pages/default.aspx>

Research department at the Federal Administration

http://www.ressortforschung.admin.ch/html/index_de.html

ARAMIS

<http://www.aramis.admin.ch/>

External Studies Database

<http://www.admin.ch/dokumentation/studien/>

Geneva Evaluation Society (SEVAL)

<http://www.seval.ch>

Geneva Evaluation Network (GEN)

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VII. Interviews held

Emmanuel Sangra, President of the Swiss Evaluation Society, Head of the Competence Centre "Performance Audit and Evaluation" at SFAO