

Mechanisms for institutionalising evaluation: A scoping review

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, there has been growing attention garnered by the institutionalisation of evaluation, with academia as well as international organisations, governments and practitioners engaging more with the topic. Recent publications, in particular the books edited by Stockmann and Meyer (2020, 2022, 2023) that bring together various experiences occurring in different European, American and Asian countries, have contributed significantly to the conceptual and theoretical development of the field. However, the predominant analytical frameworks used to assess institutionalisation are primarily designed to support international comparisons and to quantify the degree of institutionalisation across countries. As such, they tend to emphasise measurable indicators or enabling conditions, often overlooking the specific mechanisms and institutional arrangements that underpin the development and sustainability of evaluative practices. This article addresses that gap by conducting a scoping review of 29 case studies from 12 countries with different evaluation traditions. Rather than focusing on levels of institutionalisation, the analysis identifies and categorises the institutional arrangements and mechanisms most frequently used to embed evaluation within public administration. In doing so, it offers a structured overview intended to support public sector managers—particularly in contexts with limited evaluation traditions—in reflecting on and designing appropriate strategies to strengthen evaluation systems.

1. Introduction

Although it might be argued that evaluation is as old as human activity—because the act of weighing up alternatives when faced with a problem and taking decisions based on that evaluation is surely as old as reason (Shadish & Luellen, 2005)—evaluation as an academic discipline is still relatively young. Although its focus was originally on methodological aspects and the use of its results (Alkin, Daillak & White, 1979; Alkin & Daillak, 1979; M. Patton, 1988b, 1988a; M. Q. Patton et al., 1977; C. Weiss, 1979; C. H. Weiss, 1988), “the characteristics of individual evaluations cannot explain why some institutions, regions and countries tend to systematically produce higher quality evaluations, which are better integrated into the decision-making process” (Martinaitis et al., 2019:1). As a result, in recent decades scholars turned their interest towards the “evaluation capacity” (EC) and the “evaluation capacity development” (ECB) of organisations (Bohni Nielsen et al., 2011; Bourgeois & Cousins, 2013; Compton et al., 2002; Labin et al., 2012; Milstein & Cotton, 2000; Preskill & Boyle, 2008; Segalovičienė, 2012; Stockdill et al., 2002). They have subsequently considered evaluation systems (Goldman et al., 2023; Leeuw & Furubo, 2008; Martinaitis et al., 2019; Raimondo, 2018) and more recently the culture of

evaluation, and above all, **its institutionalisation**.

In recent years, case studies and comparative analysis on the institutionalisation of evaluation have proliferated, largely due to the books edited by Stockmann and Meyer (2020, 2022, 2023). The principal analytical frameworks employed to examine the institutionalisation of evaluation (Furubo et al., 2002; Jacob et al., 2015a; Meyer et al., 2020; OECD, 2020; Varone & Jacob, 2004) are designed not only to facilitate comparisons, but, in particular, to quantify the degree of institutionalisation across countries. Consequently, these frameworks tend to prioritise indicators (e.g., the frequency of evaluations) or conditions (e.g., the extent to which evaluation occurs across multiple policy domains) that enable the operationalisation of institutionalisation, rather than focussing on the underlying mechanisms. **However, to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the strategies that countries can adopt to institutionalise policy evaluation, it is essential to move beyond indicators and instead identify the institutionalisation mechanisms and arrangements most commonly utilised.** While certain nuances between these concepts can be acknowledged, in this article the terms will be used interchangeably to refer to the structures, strategies, processes, and tools that are presumed to influence the regularity of evaluations and their embedding within public institutions.

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To undertake the task of identification and categorisation, a scoping review was conducted focusing on mechanisms within political systems that institutionalise evaluation. The review analysed literature on the institutionalisation of evaluation in 12 countries with different evaluation traditions. Allowing for the systematic identification and classification of the specific institutional arrangements employed in each case. As Jacob (2005b, p. 51) notes, categorisations facilitate the “ordering features into mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive categories”. Given that the institutionalisation of evaluation serves the public interest and falls within the remit of public administrations, the review was designed with a practical orientation. It identifies key factors that public managers should consider when selecting institutional arrangements, aligned with the principal decisions required to establish a national evaluation system: defining the purpose of evaluation, determining what will be evaluated, identifying who will conduct evaluations, specifying under what conditions evaluation will occur, and outlining how results will inform decision-making processes. These factors are framed as guiding questions intended to support public managers in choosing the most appropriate mechanisms. By offering a comprehensive, systematically organised list of institutionalisation mechanisms, and by providing concrete elements for consideration in their selection, the study aims both to advance the literature on the institutionalisation of evaluation and to inform decision-making processes within public administrations.

2. Analytical framework

Evaluation culture and institutionalisation of evaluation are two concepts that have often been **used interchangeably**, even in reference works (Furubo et al., 2002; Jacob et al., 2015b), but they are not synonyms (Jacob, 2023a). In fact, Jacob (2023b) identifies this terminological confusion as one of the limitations of the literature on the institutionalisation of evaluation, and highlights the need to clarify the difference between the two terms in order to systematise future research in this area.

Evaluation culture is a concept that refers to an organisation's commitment to the role of evaluation in decision-making processes (Owen & McDonald, 1999), and therefore emphasises what Leeuw and Furubo (2008) call the epistemological dimension of evaluation systems. As Patton noted at the end of the last century, this concept is linked to the notion of “organisational culture”, where organisation can refer to anything from a specific public agency to the entire state administration. According to Kim (2002:3, quoting Cameron and Quinn, 1999), organisational culture “is reflected by what is valued, the dominant leadership styles, symbols, the procedures, routines, and the definition of success that make an organization unique”. In this sense, Dahler-Larsen and Boodhoo (2019: 280) consider that “evaluation culture describes evaluative mindsets and how people make evaluation fit into local beliefs and traditions”.

These definitions align with what Schein (2010) describes as the second and third “levels” through which an organisation's culture can be observed: the values it adopts (its priorities, philosophy, and strategies) and the premises or assumptions underlying those values, i.e. the unconscious beliefs, perceptions and thoughts at play. The first level, however, refers to what the author calls “artifacts” — defined as visible organisational processes, structures and behaviours— a concept and definition that is very close to that of “institutional devices” for evaluation, used by Jacob (2005:838) to refer to the set of “organizations and rules that contribute to the development and sustainability of the evaluative practice”. In fact, according to Pattyn (2014), **institutionalising evaluation** precisely means developing institutional arrangements with the intention of achieving regular evaluative practices. Therefore, **institutionalisation is the visible level (the first level) of evaluation culture**.

The fact that institutionalisation represents the most visible aspect of evaluation culture makes it also the most concrete and easily observable.

This explains why the bulk of recent literature on the subject, especially in terms of comparative studies —both quantitative and qualitative— focus on this concept. In fact, Dahler-Larsen and Boodhoo (2019:281) attribute a second meaning to the concept of evaluation culture that refers precisely to “the comparative degree of institutionalisation of evaluation.” However, while this might add to the confusion between the two concepts, their explanation links the existence of institutional arrangements related to evaluation to “evaluative maturity”. Thus, although they do not do so explicitly, they imply that an **organisation or administration that has matured in terms of evaluation** is one that has a high degree of institutionalisation of evaluation (which can be operationalised through indices that reflect the availability of institutional arrangements). They do however differentiate this evaluative maturity from a culture of evaluation, since those indices establish a linear and unique conception of success, and do not consider the context (normative, administrative, or organisational), which is essential when we talk about a culture (Dahler-Larsen & Boodhoo, 2019).

In this sense, it is interesting that, as Jacob (2023b) says, the indices that exist to measure how institutionalised evaluation is in a country —i.e. in the state administration— **all bring together very similar elements**, despite having been developed by a number of different researchers. As Table 1 shows, the proposals list mechanisms related both to the political system —i.e., the institutional structures and decision-making processes of the executive and legislative branches (Meyer et al., 2020) and to the system of professionalisation —i.e., the full range of organisations that offer evaluation services and training. All this reflects what has traditionally been addressed as demand and supply of evaluation (Toulemonde, 1999). However, Meyer et al. (2020) incorporate institutionalisation within what they call the “social system”, referring to the dissemination and acceptance of evaluation among civil society.

In this way, **quantitative comparative studies allow countries to be ranked according to their evaluative maturity**, since “the assumption underlying these studies is that the more institutional mechanisms and arrangements are distributed within the state apparatus, the more embedded evaluations become and the more they can fulfil their purposes in terms of accountability and improved public management” (Jacob, 2023:188). Most qualitative studies, on the other hand, are case studies that conduct longitudinal analyses to delve more deeply into the particular situation of each country or region.

The combination of strategies and mechanisms deployed to institutionalise evaluation in each context constitutes its **evaluation system**. According to Leeuw and Furubo (2008), however, for a set of evaluation mechanisms and activities to be considered an evaluation system, four criteria must be met: (1) there must be a shared epistemology that allows us to identify what can be considered evaluation; (2) the evaluation practice must be driven by organisations, and not by individuals; (3) the mechanisms and activities developed must have a largely permanent nature; (4) there must be some kind of link in place between the information derived from the evaluations carried out and subsequent decision-making processes (i.e. an explicit will to use the results of the evaluations). Goldman et al. (2023:317) sum this up, defining evaluation systems as a “set of rules and processes that are carried out in a systematic way to coordinate, develop and use evaluations”.

In this way, **evaluation systems evolve as evaluation becomes more institutionalised**. According to Jacob (2005a), the institutionalisation of evaluation **is an evolutionary process that works in an adaptive and aggregative way**. First, a mechanism is designed and implemented; second, an assessment is made of how it operates and how well it fits with the other mechanisms in the system; third, it is modified according to the appraisals given by the actors involved. Fourth, if it is seen as viable, when it has eventually been consolidated, the process begins all over again with a new mechanism, which is designed and eventually implemented. In this way, administrations build institutional environments that work to consolidate evaluation practices and help align and systematise evaluation efforts and activities that until that

Table 1
Factors involved in institutionalising evaluation.

Furubo et al. (2002), Jacob et al. (2015)	Varone and Jacob (2004)	Meyer et al. (2020)
Organisations and evaluation structure		
Evaluation takes place in many policy domains.		Sectoral spread, scope and frequency of evaluation (all policy sectors or one field in particular).
Institutional arrangements within governments to conduct evaluations and to disseminate their results to decision makers.	Institutional arrangements within governments to conduct evaluations.	Existence of specific evaluation units in government institutions (such as ministries) and/or existence of independent stand-alone evaluation bodies.
Institutional arrangements are present in parliament to conduct evaluations and disseminate their results to decision makers.	Institutional arrangements present in parliament to conduct evaluations.	Parliament has an evaluation unit at its disposal and commissions evaluations.
Evaluation within the supreme audit institution.	Evaluation within the supreme audit institution.	National audit offices carry out not only performance audits (limited to evaluating achievement and/or efficiency), but also evaluations with a broader focus.
Rules, forum, practices		
Supply of domestic evaluators from various disciplines.		National or sectoral laws, decrees or regulations about evaluation.
Professional Organisation (VOPE*)	Professional Organisation (VOPE*)	Professional Organisation (VOPE*)
National discourse concerning evaluation.		
Plurality of institutions or evaluators performing evaluations within each policy domain.	Scientific journal	Specialised scientific journals.
	Quality standards	Education - academic and non-academic training programmes. Obligatory standards and/or certifications.
Use of evaluation		
Consideration of the effects and implementation of public policies through evaluation.		Parliament regularly takes note of and discusses evaluation results. Institutionalised use of evaluation in the social system (by civil society).

Source: Jacob (2023). *VOPE: voluntary organisation for professional evaluation.

moment have been sporadic or dispersed (Gaarder & Briceno, 2010).

The numerous comparative analyses on the institutionalisation of evaluation (Jacob et al., 2015b; Lázaro, 2015; OECD, 2020; Stockmann & Meyer, 2022a, 2022b) underline that there is no single path to achieving a mature evaluation system. Instead, it is clear that each system—as well as its evolution—is the result of countless factors: the legal and administrative culture (Jacob, 2023a), the motivation to evaluate (Goldman et al., 2023), the political context (Chelimsky, 2009), the role that scientific knowledge has traditionally garnered in public policy (Jacob, 2023a), the influence of international organisations, such as the European Union or the United Nations (Jacob, 2023a), to name but a few. For this reason, in a comparative perspective, it is important to move beyond the quantitative assessment of evaluation maturity and

to advance the understanding of the range of institutionalisation mechanisms and the factors relevant to their selection. The analysis presented below seeks to support this endeavour by contributing to the construction of institutional environments that are favourable to evaluation, particularly in contexts which have very little tradition of evaluation or where evaluation practices are not yet well established.

3. Methodology

A scoping review methodology has been used to systematically examine the existing literature on the institutionalisation of evaluation and to answer the following question: **what are the institutional mechanisms and arrangements currently in place to ensure that evaluation is routinely employed?** The method followed the steps used for scoping reviews identified by both the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) and Arksey, O'Malley (2005): (1) the research question was developed; (2) the relevant studies were identified; (3) a selection was made of the studies; (4) data extraction was performed; (5) a descriptive analysis of the studies was carried out and (6) there was a discussion of the results.

3.1. Identification of relevant studies

After a series of exploratory searches using keywords, the final search for articles was carried out by using two databases (Scopus and Web of Science) and by employing the following terms: “institutionalization of evaluation” OR “institutionalisation of evaluation” OR “culture of evaluation” OR “evaluation culture” OR “institutionalization of policy evaluation” OR “institutionalisation of policy evaluation” OR “institutionalising evaluation” OR “institutionalizing evaluation” OR “institucionalización de la evaluación” OR “cultura de la evaluación” OR “institutionnalisation de l'évaluation” OR “culture de l'évaluation”. The following eligibility criteria were applied: (1) academic articles, doctoral theses or book chapters, (2) published in English, Spanish or French, (3) with no time limitations (since this is a relatively new field of knowledge), (4) specifically addressing the institutionalisation of evaluation in the political and/or professionalising system (thereby covering supply and demand, but leaving out the social system), (5) in the following 12 countries: Sweden, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, Netherlands, Finland, Spain, Chile, Switzerland, Mexico, Romania and Korea.

Following Vedung (2010), three countries were selected to reflect each of the four waves of evaluation diffusion. Germany, Canada and the United Kingdom were placed in the first wave, which ran from the late 1950s to the late 1960s and was marked by the consolidation of welfare states and a radical rationalism that advocated applying scientific principles to public policies (Vedung, 2010). Australia, the Netherlands and Finland were selected for the second wave, characterised by the erosion of the positivist paradigm in favour of constructivist approaches, in an international context of political and economic instability (the 1970s). Spain, Chile and Switzerland were chosen for a third (neoliberal) wave, clearly marked by the rise of New Public Management and the public policy evaluation requirements that the European Union demanded of its members. And finally, Mexico, Romania and Korea were selected as countries belonging to the fourth wave, the wave that we have found ourselves in since the turn of the century, although some scholars defend that a fifth wave also exists (Picciotto, 2015) which is characterised by the return of experimentation, hand in hand with evidence-based policies.

All the countries analysed have national evaluation systems that encapsulate their institutionalisation initiatives, which means that no analysis is carried out here regarding the existing mechanisms in contexts where institutionalisation initiatives are still spontaneous or isolated. The countries selected for each wave have been chosen considering the existing academic research and seeking to guarantee the maximum territorial heterogeneity. At the same time, including

countries with different evaluation traditions guarantees a greater plurality of institutionalisation strategies.

3.2. Selection and coding of studies

The studies were selected in three phases, a procedure recommended by the Joanna Briggs Institute (Vedung, 2010). First, a search was carried out by applying the eligibility criteria number 1, 2, 3 and 5, resulting in **159 studies** being identified. Microsoft Excel was then used to organise the studies and eliminate duplicates, which resulted in a **total of 144 studies**. Finally, criterion 4 was applied (and criterion 5 was revised) based on reading the abstracts, leaving us with **31 articles** to be analysed. Five articles were also identified that included analyses that were either continental or related to several countries, and nine theoretical articles were found on the institutionalisation of evaluation in the political system, but without reference to a specific territory. These 14 additional articles have been taken into account for the discussion but have not been included in the analysis itself.

After a thorough reading of the 31 articles, two were discarded for not meeting criterion 4. The **remaining 29** were considered for the scoping review and had the information collected in Table 2 extracted from them. Fig. 1 summarises the process of searching for and selecting the studies and Appendix 1 details the items from Table 2 for each of the articles included in the scoping review.

In order to extract and code the various mechanisms, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses – Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScRP) system was used. Both its checklist (Tricco et al., 2018) as well as the qualitative information extraction tool proposed by the JBI (Aromataris et al., 2024) were employed. The information was analysed using qualitative thematic analysis, resulting in a categorisation of the mechanisms employed, as well as a conceptual and practical discussion presented in the section below.

4. Results

4.1. Characteristics of the studies

Of the 29 studies analysed, six refer to countries belonging to the American continent, 18 to European countries (although one of them analyses two countries), four to Australia (Oceania) and only one study analyses an Asian country, Korea. Table 3 shows the frequency of studies found for each of the 12 countries considered in the search.

It can be seen that the majority of studies are concentrated in countries belonging to the second (8 studies) and third (12 studies) waves of evaluation diffusion. It is also important to highlight that most of the studies (23 out of 29) concentrate on the **state level**, as this is typically the administrative level where the institutionalisation of evaluation is most advanced and therefore, the level on which academic research has focused. Finally, six of the articles analysed were published between 2005 and 2009, nine between 2010 and 2019 and 15 between 2020 and 2023, and almost half are book chapters. The volume of publications in recent years is explained by the compilations edited by Stockmann et al., (2020, 2022, 2023), highlighting their important

Table 2

Information extracted from the studies analysed.

General information about the study	
→ Author	
→ Year of publication	
→ Type of document (academic article, doctoral thesis or book chapter)	
Geographical information (in terms of institutionalising evaluation)	
→ Country referred to in the study	
→ Wave (of evaluation becoming diffused)	
→ Administrative level of the administration analysed: state, regional, local	
Strategies for institutionalising evaluation	

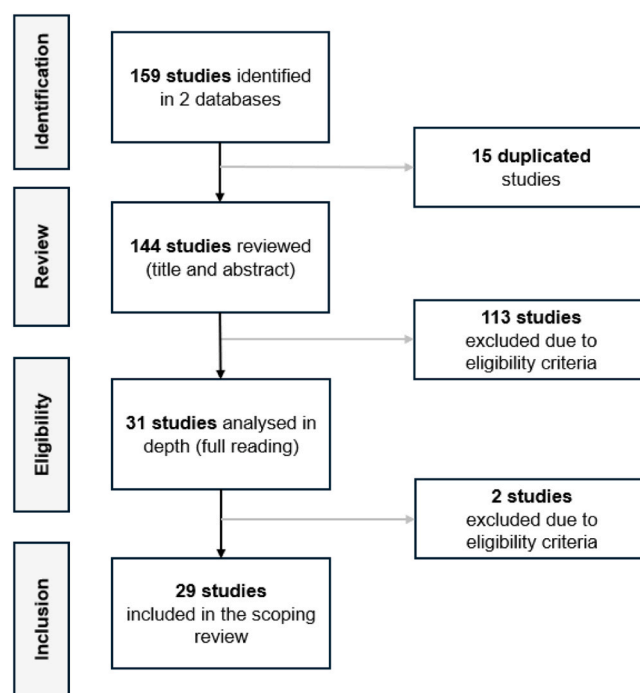


Fig. 1. PRISMA diagram of the search and selection process of the studies.

Table 3

Number of studies considered in the analysis by country, continent and wave of when evaluation began to be diffused.

Continent/Country		Number of studies
America		6
Canada	(1st wave)	2
Chile	(2nd wave)	1
Mexico	(4th wave)	3
Asia		1
Korea	(4th wave)	1
Europe		18
Germany	(1st wave)	1
Spain	(3rd wave)	5
Finland	(2nd wave)	2
Netherlands	(2nd wave)	2
United Kingdom	(1st wave)	1
Romania	(4 wave)	2
Switzerland	(3rd wave)	6
Oceania		4
Australia	(2nd wave)	4
Grand total		30^a

^a The total is 30 studies (instead of 29) because one study analyses two cases: the Netherlands and Switzerland.

contribution to research on the institutionalisation of evaluation.

4.2. Identification and categorisation of institutionalisation strategies in political system

The indices operationalising the institutionalisation of evaluation presented in Table 1 distinguish between: (1) evaluation legislation, (2) evaluation structures, (3) evaluation practices and (4) uses of evaluation. The OECD (2020), however, in the report resulting of its Survey on Institutionalisation, Quality and Use of Policy Evaluation, considers an additional dimension: (5) the evaluation policy framework. These categories are then used to identify and organise the institutionalisation mechanisms inferred from the scoping review.

Table 4

Mechanisms for institutionalising evaluation: legislation and evaluation requirements.

<i>Institutionalisation mechanisms</i> Legislation	<i>Number of studies</i>	<i>Number of countries</i>	<i>Countries^a</i>
<i>Legislation related to evaluation</i>	6	2	MX, SW
→ Specific article in the country's constitution.	2	2	KO, SP
→ Specific law on evaluation.	9	8	AU, CHI, FIN, KO, MX, NE, SP, SW
→ Regulation in sectoral laws (especially in public finance or budgetary laws).	4	3	AU, FIN, UK
→ Regulation in secondary legislation.			
<i>Evaluation requirements</i>	6	6	CHI, FIN, GER, NE, SW, UK
→ Ex-ante reports on the analysis of the impact of new regulations or policies ^b	18	10	FIN, GER, NE, SW
→ Results-based accountability / Decision-making based on effectiveness and efficiency criteria.	7	3	AU, CA, CHI, GER, KO, MX, NE, RU, SP, SW
→ Evaluation of strategic policies.			GER, NE, SW
→ Evaluation clauses in legislative proposals.			

^a For all subsequent tables, the following country abbreviations are used: AU (Australia), CA (Canada), CHI (Chile), FIN (Finland), GER (Germany), KO (Korea), MEX (Mexico), NE (Netherlands), RU (Rumania), SP (Spain), SW (Switzerland), and UK (United Kingdom).

^b Reports that analyse economic and social impacts are considered, so those that focus on the regulatory impact are excluded.

Table 5

Mechanisms for institutionalising evaluation: structures.

<i>Institutionalisation mechanisms</i> Structures	<i>Number of studies</i>	<i>Number of countries</i>	<i>Countries</i>
<i>Function: promoting the institutionalisation and the culture of evaluation</i>			
→ Specific unit(s) dependent on the executive branch.	8	7	AU, CA, CHI, FIN, MX, NE, SP
→ Specific unit dependent on the legislative branch.	4	1	SW
→ Independent unit/agency.	2	1	MX
<i>Function: performing evaluations</i>			
→ Specific unit(s) dependent on the executive branch.	2	2	AU, CHI
→ Specific unit dependent on the legislative branch.	5	2	KO, SW
→ Independent unit/agency.	3	1	MX
→ Court of Audit or National Audit Office.	5	5	CA, FIN, NE, SW, UK
→ Specific people or unit(s) within each department.	17	10	AU, CA, FIN, KO, MX, NE, RU, SP, SW
→ Research institutes.	8	6	AU, FIN, KO, NE, SW, UK
<i>Function: reviewing evaluation quality and/or independence</i>			
→ Specific unit(s) dependent on the executive branch.	2	2	AU, CA,
→ Independent bodies, research centres/groups of researchers.	3	3	FIN, KO, NE
→ Meta-evaluations.	3	2	FIN, NE

4.2.1. Evaluation legislation

"The embedding of evaluation within legislation often represents a turning point in the process of institutionalization" (Jacob, 2023:197). This embedding, however, can occur in different levels of legislation, something that could be considered an indicator of the relevance given

Table 6

Mechanisms for institutionalising evaluation: policy framework.

<i>Institutionalisation mechanisms</i> Policy framework	<i>Number of studies</i>	<i>Number of countries</i>	<i>Countries</i>
<i>Evaluation strategies</i>			
→ National evaluation strategy.	6	5	CA, KO, MX, NE, UK
→ Sectoral evaluation strategy.	3	3	AU, FIN, NE
<i>Evaluation planning (at a systemic level)</i>			
→ Evaluation plans.	10	5	AU, FIN, KO, MX, SP, CA
→ Calculation of the proportion of the national public budget allocated to evaluation.	2	1	CA
→ Calculation of the proportion of the national public budget that has been evaluated.	4	4	CA, CHI, MX, (NE) [*]

* From the text we can infer that it was a punctual exercise.

Table 7

Mechanisms for institutionalising evaluation: practices.

<i>Institutionalisation mechanisms</i> Evaluation practices	<i>Number of studies</i>	<i>Number of countries</i>	<i>Countries</i>
<i>Evaluating more</i>			
→ Specific funds for carrying out evaluations.	3	3	FIN, NE, UK
→ National research programme on public policy.	3	1	SW
→ Access to data.	1	1	KO
<i>Evaluating better</i>			
→ Training administration staff (civil servants and politicians).	10	7	AU, CA, FIN, MX, NE, SP, SW
→ Guides and manuals.	12	8	AU, CA, CHI, FIN, KO, MX, NE, SP
→ Quality standards for evaluations.	7	5	AU, CA, MX, SW, UK
→ Principles of ethical conduct for evaluators.	3	3	AU, SW, UK
→ Peer review.	0	0	
→ Independent oversight committees to monitor quality and/or independence.	3	3	FIN, KO, NE
→ Communities of practice.	4	3	AU, CA, SW
→ "What works" initiatives.	1	1	UK
→ Evaluator pools (available to civil servants commissioning evaluations).	3	2	AU, FIN

Table 8

Mechanisms for institutionalising evaluation: uses.

<i>Institutionalisation mechanisms</i> Use of evaluations	<i>Number of studies</i>	<i>Number of countries</i>	<i>Countries</i>
<i>Mechanisms to promote the use of evaluations</i>			
→ Presentation of evaluation results in decision-making spaces.	8	7	AU, CA, CHI, KO, MX, NE, SW
→ Evaluation response plans.	8	6	CA, CHI, FIN, KO, MX, NE
→ Systematic publication of evaluations (and response plans).	3	3	FIN, NE, SW
→ Evaluation repositories.	3	3	AU, MX, NE
→ Studies on the use of the evaluations performed.	1	1	UK

to evaluation, although of course this is determined by the legal framework and legislative tradition of each country. Only Switzerland and Mexico dedicate an article in their Constitutions (the highest-

ranking legal norm) to the evaluation of public policies. In this sense, it is worth noting that Horber-Papazian and Baud-Lavigne (2019) consider this incorporation of the obligation to evaluate in the national Constitution a determining factor in Switzerland's evaluation maturity (Furubo et al., 2002; Jacob et al., 2015b).

Other countries (among those analysed, only Spain) have opted for passing a specific law on the institutionalisation of evaluation. The most common practise, however, is to address the issue with one or more sectoral laws (this had been the case in Spain until 2022), among which the most notable are laws relating to the national budget or public finances (e.g. Australia, Chile, Finland and the Netherlands). Finally, there are countries that regulate evaluation with secondary legislation, such as decrees and resolutions (e.g. Germany or the UK).

Beyond the range of legislation that governs evaluation, there are also other types of regulatory mechanisms for institutionalising evaluation: **requirements**. In fact, in almost all the countries analysed, current legislation requires ex-post evaluation of at least the most strategic policies. In some countries, ex-ante evaluations of new laws or policies are also required, and in Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland, it is common to include evaluation clauses in legislative proposals.

These types of regulatory mechanisms—evaluation requirements—imply an obligatory nature. According to McDonald et al. (2003), a key aspect when managing the demand for evaluation is to define whether it should be mandatory. According to the authors, "making evaluation mandatory could promote a culture of token compliance, but voluntary adoption is much slower to take effect" (McDonald et al., 2003:11). In line with the first argument, (Cardozo Brum, 2009:191) mentions that in Mexico, their mandatory nature has led to "evaluations being seen as just one more administrative requirement in relation to budget allocation; an activity that must be fulfilled but is not considered a fundamental working tool to improve design and management".

The way in which these different mechanisms (summarised in Table 3) are combined defines the regulatory framework of evaluation in each context, which in turn directly determines the evaluation practices, especially on the demand side.

4.2.2. Evaluation structures

According to Jacob (2023:197), in several countries "the development of evaluation is the result of work undertaken by agents of change who occupy a central position in the functioning of the state". This work, however, can be carried out from very different organisational structures, as evidenced by the results of the scoping review. The first thing to bear in mind is that promoting evaluation does not necessarily mean also carrying it out. A unit may be assigned the task of evaluating but may limit itself to commissioning other agents to carry out the evaluations themselves, while another may choose to conduct them directly. And both these situations stimulate the demand for evaluation. Therefore, when deciding who takes on the task of promoting evaluation, it is important to consider: (1) who can commission evaluations; (2) who carries out evaluations (and what position they have in the institutional organigram, which may determine how independent their results are); (3) who ensures their quality (and if there is a specific unit with this function) and (4) who promotes the institutionalisation of evaluation.

As regards where the demand for evaluation originates, the main agent is in all cases the country's government. The differential element is the **possibility for parliamentarians to commission evaluations** (this is only the case in Korea, Finland, the Netherlands and Switzerland). In any case, a national government—along with the full range of public bodies under its authority—can choose to conduct evaluations internally or to outsource them to specialised entities, either public or private. In some countries one or more public institutions—either generalist or sector-specific—are formally assigned the function of carrying out evaluations. These institutions can be affiliated with the executive branch (as is the case in Australia and Chile), the legislative branch (as in Korea and Switzerland), or may operate independently—a far less common arrangement that, among the countries analysed, is

found only in Mexico). However, in the majority of countries, the responsibility for evaluation is decentralised and distributed among various ministries or departments. As a result, most ministries or departments maintain dedicated evaluation units of varying size, which in some cases, consist of only a few individuals tasked with carrying out evaluations (this is the case in 10 out of the 12 countries examined).

The extent to which this is feasible depends largely on the degree to which **the role of the evaluator is institutionally embedded and formally recognised** within each public administration. Developing a formal professional recognition is undoubtedly an institutionalisation strategy, which connects with a more general debate on the professionalisation of evaluation. In fact, according to Jacob and Boisvert (2010:363), "when evaluation is well established in the process of public management, that is, when it achieves a certain maturity, questions on the professionalization of evaluation begin to surge". The formal recognition of evaluators means creating a specific professional category within the public administration, leading to advantages and disadvantages. Although it can be a way of strengthening evaluation, it can also restrict the diversity in term of evaluators' profiles. In this way, its final effect on evaluation practices is ambiguous. According to the results of the scoping review, this formal professional recognition of evaluators within the public administration only occurs in Canada and Switzerland, although in Australia a competency framework for evaluators has been defined.

In fact, most of the studies analysed put significantly **more emphasis on outsourcing evaluations** than on its formal professional recognition. In practically all countries, it is common practice to outsource public policy evaluations, either by entrusting them to academia (universities and public research institutes, as usually happens in the Netherlands, Korea, Finland or the United Kingdom) or to specialised consultancy teams (as it is frequent in Chile or Romania). What does vary substantially is the weight, influence and type of relationship these evaluating bodies have with the public administration.

In some countries (Australia, Canada, Finland, the Netherlands and in part, Korea) there is a structure in place that assumes a third function associated with evaluation: a review (generally based on meta-evaluations) of the quality and/or independence of the evaluations carried out. In some cases, this is a task that is taken on by public research institutes or independent committees formed by researchers, and in other cases it is performed by specific public bodies. It is important not to confuse this function of reviewing or guaranteeing the quality of evaluations with the auditing carried out by each country's Court of Audit or national Audit Office, which in some cases (Australia, Canada, Finland, the Netherlands and Switzerland) also conduct evaluations.

Finally, it is important to distinguish the aforementioned functions—commissioning evaluations, conducting evaluations, and monitoring their quality—from a fourth, distinct function: **promoting the institutionalisation of evaluation. This responsibility is often undertaken by units within the executive branch**—typically under the authority of the ministries of finance or presidential affairs—as is the case in Australia, Canada, Chile, Finland, the Netherlands, and Spain. This arrangement is logical, as the task primarily involves fostering the systematic integration of evaluation practices throughout the public administration. However, in other countries, this function is not a clearly assigned one (as is the case in Korea, where there is no structure that formally assumes the task of institutionalising evaluation).

4.2.3. Evaluation policy framework

Evaluation governance has to do with the rules that regulate evaluation and the structures from which it is promoted, but also with what the OECD (2020) calls the "policy framework" for evaluation. While the Survey on Institutionalisation, Quality and Use of Policy Evaluation (OECD, 2020) only considers the existence of national (Canada, Korea, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) or sectoral (Australia, Finland, the Netherlands) evaluation strategies, this scoping review

allows us to identify other increasingly widespread mechanisms, among which evaluation plans stand out (governmental, sectoral and/or regulatory). “Adopting a multi-year evaluation agenda helps to prioritize what to evaluate when resources are scarce and when capabilities are burgeoning” (Jacob, 2023b:197, quoting Goldman et al., 2018).

On another note, some countries calculate figures for public expenditure on evaluation (Canada), i.e. the total amount of resources (in absolute numbers or as a percentage of the national budget) dedicated to the evaluation of public policies; others calculate the proportion of the public budget that has been subject to evaluation (Canada, Chile, Mexico). This implies first identifying which public policies have been evaluated each year, and then calculating what percentage of the national budget is dedicated to those policies.

4.2.4. Evaluation practices

While all the above strategies should result in an increase in the demand for evaluation and therefore also an increase in evaluation practice, it is also possible to develop institutionalisation mechanisms that are specifically aimed at both promoting the implementation of evaluations and at improving their quality.

Mechanisms aimed at promoting the implementation of evaluations mainly consist of **providing incentives**. The most common strategy (even so, it occurs rarely) is to directly allocate public funds to carry out evaluations (Netherlands, Finland, United Kingdom). Other types of incentives may include launching national research programmes regarding public policies (Switzerland), facilitating access to data (as happens in Korea, where ministries have a legal obligation to provide and share data on public policies), organising awareness-raising meetings about evaluation (Australia) or promoting a culture of experimentation and encouraging the implementation of pilot projects (Netherlands and the United Kingdom).

Mechanisms aimed at improving the quality of evaluations are very varied. They include specific training in evaluation for public administration staff (both civil servants and, to a lesser extent, public managers and politicians), drafting guides and manuals, and establishing both evaluation quality standards and principles of ethical conduct that evaluators must follow. They also include the existence of the aforementioned independent committees that oversee quality and/or independence of evaluations. It is striking, however, that no case study mentions the requirement that evaluations should undergo peer review, which is a practice that has been fully established in academia as a guarantee of quality.

On the other hand, the creation of communities of practice linked to evaluation and launching “what works” initiatives (or even networks of “what works” centres as in the case of the United Kingdom) are institutionalisation mechanisms that aim to both promote evaluation practices and improve its quality. Furthermore, these mechanisms also contribute to the creation of epistemic communities, which play an important role in formulating solutions to public problems (Jacob, 2023a).

In this same direction, strengthening links between public administration and external evaluators (whether they come from academia, consultancy firms or they are freelance) helps connect supply and demand, stimulating both. One manner of doing this is to create pools of evaluators that are available to public servants that commission evaluations (this is something that happens in Australia and Finland). In fact, the European Union recommends establishing permanent cooperative relationships between those who require evaluation and those who provide it (European Union European Commission, 2008).

4.2.5. Incorporating evaluation into decision-making processes

It is debatable whether the use of evaluations is a factor that contributes to the institutionalisation of evaluation, as proposed by Horber-Papazian and Baud-Lavigne (2019), a dimension of it, as suggested by the institutionalisation indices presented in Table 1 and the OECD survey (2020), or whether it is actually an effect of institutionalisation itself. If we consider the use of evaluation as a dimension of

institutionalisation (in a similar way to regulation, structures, and practice) it is important to analyse to what extent both the government and, above all, parliament, which is the political body that is assigned control functions, consider the results of evaluations in their decision-making processes. From the articles analysed in the scoping review, it can be inferred that in Australia, Canada, Chile, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, there are mechanisms to ensure that the results of evaluations reach the main decision-making spaces in a regular and systematic manner so that they can be taken into account. However, only in Switzerland are studies on the actual use and influence of evaluation reports regularly published.

If we consider their use as an outcome of institutionalisation, the question is: are there mechanisms in place that are specifically aimed at establishing and improving the use of evaluations? The answer is yes. In fact, it is possible to identify mechanisms that target different points of the evaluation process. First, even before designing an evaluation, it is important to ensure that the evaluation questions accurately reflect an actual need for information. In this sense, the fact that members of parliament can commission evaluations on issues that concern them and on which they have to legislate—as happens in Korea, Finland, the Netherlands and Switzerland—is certainly an incentive to use them. Additionally, evaluators can take specific measures to ensure that their analyses are utilisation-focused (Patton, 1997).

Another strategy that contributes to the instrumental use of evaluations is to systematically bring evaluation results closer to decision-making bodies—both executive and legislative (Cordoncillo, 2023). In this sense, Goldman et al. (2023:332) identify the case of Mexico as a good practice. Here, before discussions take place on the federal budget, the evaluation body, CONEVAL, presents a document that summarises the existing evidence on national priorities and the effectiveness of existing programmes. This is in order to facilitate the use of evidence in the process of preparing and approving the budget. Another increasingly widespread mechanism is the use of response plans to address the results of evaluations. These response plans may or may not be mandatory and are aimed at specifying which recommendations will be implemented, how they will be implemented, the time frame and the person responsible. They are already common practice throughout Canada, Chile, Finland, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands and in a few specific sectors in Spain and the United Kingdom.

Once the evaluation has been completed and delivered to the decision-making bodies, further actions can still be taken to encourage its use, even if only indirectly. Disseminating the results is key to this, and therefore the systematic publication of all the evaluations is crucial. However, this only occurs in Finland, the Netherlands, Switzerland and partially in the United Kingdom. Publishing response plans could also be considered a good practice, but only occurs in the Netherlands. Additionally, to facilitate citizens and interested parties (such as researchers or third sector entities) accessing and using these evaluations for other purposes, some countries set up evaluation repositories (Australia, Mexico and the Netherlands).

5. Discussion

The mechanisms for the institutionalisation of evaluation in the political system in place in a set of 29 case studies in 12 different countries have been identified and categorised in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the strategies that countries can take to institutionalise policy evaluation. However, although evaluative maturity is related to the number of mechanisms deployed and most of them could be used in a complementary manner, it is clear that the process involves selecting the most appropriate ones for each context. Thus, a series of questions are suggested below. **Without being exhaustive, they could help public managers in charge of ensuring a regular use of evaluation to build favourable institutional environments and promote appropriate mechanisms.**

The first thing they should ask themselves and always keep in mind

is: **what is the purpose of evaluation** (in their specific context)? That is, what is the ultimate purpose of evaluation in their political system. Our scoping review allows us to observe that evaluation pursues different objectives in the different countries analysed: while in the Netherlands it is encouraged principally for control purposes (Jacob, 2005a), in Chile the evaluation systems are clearly oriented to inform budgetary decisions "in terms of public spending and investment" (Olavarría Manríquez & Peroni Fiscarelli, 2022:196) and in Korea evaluation is closely linked to performance management. After exhaustively reviewing the literature on the purposes of evaluations, Kupiec et al. (2023) condense the answers into two types of objectives: accountability (outward-oriented) and learning (inward-oriented). They also consider these purposes as opposed to one another and mutually exclusive, since reinforcing accountability requires strengthening the norms and procedures that hinder learning (Raimondo, 2018). In this regard, it is noteworthy that countries belonging to the third and fourth waves of evaluation—likely influenced by the principles of New Public Management—tend to establish a more direct connection between evaluation and control, indicators, performance, and results.

The second issue that public managers should consider concerns the **ecosystem of agents of evaluation**. **Who requests and who offers evaluation** (in their specific context)? Our scoping review allows us to intuit that, while the agents that offer evaluation do not change excessively between contexts (with some nuances that we will point out later), **the way in which the demand is organised does determine the structure of the evaluation system**. This is why, in order to understand the structure of a national evaluation system, several authors recommend considering its level of pluralism (Jacob, 2005b) or centralisation (Kupiec et al., 2023) that is, the **number of agents involved in the demand for evaluation**.

Jacob (2005b) identifies three typical scenarios: monopolies, centralised pluralism and fragmented competition. He considers monopolies to be very rare, except in environments where institutionalisation is still very weak; because "as the evaluation practice develops, a multiplication of organisations and norms aimed at the dissemination of this practice is expected" (Jacob, 2005b:56). More common is centralised pluralism: "when an organization or a norm occupies a preponderant place that determines the behaviour of the other agents" in the national evaluation system. This is the case in Romania or the Netherlands, where a unit responsible for evaluation clearly occupies a central position and the other actors have very little capacity to influence the institutionalisation of the evaluation (Jacob, 2005a; Kupiec et al., 2023). The cases of Switzerland and the United Kingdom, on the other hand, are excellent examples of the model of fragmented competence, where different types of organisations request and offer evaluations, and play a key role in promoting the quality and frequency of evaluation practice, without any one agent directing or coordinating the others.

In these decentralised models, in many cases, it is also true that **parliaments play an important role in the demand for evaluation**, a factor that some authors associate not only with evaluative maturity and greater use of evidence (Speer et al., 2015), but also with better accountability (Bundi, 2016) and efficiency in government action (Filgueiras & Queiroz, 2021). However, there are also cases with less plural and more centralised evaluation ecosystems, such as Korea, where parliamentarians also have the possibility of demanding evaluations; in this way it can be seen that they are two aspects that, although they are related, can be considered separately.

The key is not only the number and type of agents that are part of the evaluation system but also the existence of **coordination mechanisms**, which can take the shape of national or sectoral regulations, structures or strategies: what in the previous section we call the evaluation policy framework. In this way, Mexico or Canada (both federal states) represent good examples of systems with a wide plurality of well-coordinated actors. Lahey (2023) describes them more specifically as a combination of centralised regulation and supervision and decentralised delegated implementation.

How evaluation is carried out is largely determined by who is in charge of doing the evaluating. This would be the third important aspect for public managers to consider. When defining who has the competence to evaluate public policy it is important to take into account: (1) their level of independence and (2) their capacity to evaluate. Numerous authors have defended the **importance of the independence of evaluation structures**. Back in the 1990s, Weiss (1993) already pointed out that evaluations carried out by governmental actors run the risk of being less critical than those generated by non-governmental actors. This is independent of whether these external evaluations are carried out by independent bodies or units/agencies that are dependent on the legislative branch. And Vedung (1997) also affirmed that in order to function correctly, evaluation systems need political and institutional autonomy. However, the results of our scoping review show that **in most countries the main evaluation structures depend on the executive branch**. The reasons for this generally have to do, first, with the reluctance of governments to delegate power and decision-making capacity to units that are not under their control (Filgueiras & Queiroz, 2021, citing McCubbins et al., 1987). And second, it has to do with the risk that the results of the evaluations conducted by critical and independent bodies are not taken into account. Thus, **a tension arises between the importance of protecting evaluation bodies from political pressures and a need for them to be an integral part of larger organisational structures**, so that their contributions are taken into consideration (Chelimsky, 2009).

The other structural aspect that significantly influences how evaluations are conducted—and which therefore warrants careful consideration by public managers—is the **internal capacity of the administration in question to carry out evaluations**. For governments to undertake evaluations internally, they must have access to trained and specialised personnel. As evidenced by the scoping review, such professionals may be concentrated within a specific evaluation unit or agency or distributed transversally throughout the public administration, or a combination of both. The findings also suggest that, although evaluation training for public servants is a fairly widespread strategy, few countries provide such training in a systematic and cross-cutting manner throughout the entire civil service. In this regard, Lahey (2023) distinguishes between what he calls the American model—characterized by evaluation training led primarily by academics in the social sciences—, and the Canadian model, which is led from within the public administration, and involves professionals from a wide range of disciplines. Interestingly, countries with a longer tradition of evaluation—those belonging to the first and second waves—seem to have a more widespread presence of evaluation professionals across public institutions.

In that sense, it is important to keep in mind that the ability to evaluate is not only related to the practitioners' degree of knowledge about evaluation, but also to the level of formal recognition of this specialisation within the public administration. That is, to **the extent to which evaluation is professionalised** and therefore carried out by people who have the specific skills and are exclusively dedicated to evaluation tasks. The most obvious or "extreme" professionalisation strategy is the formal recognition of the evaluator figure within the public administration's list of professional figures. However, it has already been mentioned that among the countries analysed, this has only been implemented in Canada, Switzerland and partially in Australia (three countries with a long and consolidated tradition of evaluation). Instead, in general, the results appear to point to a low level of professionalisation, despite the fact that the specialised literature indicates that "a strong profession can influence the institutional structure in which evaluators operate" (Jacob, 2023:199, referring to Cronbach et al., 1980).

In this regard, it is worth mentioning that Stockmann and Meyer (2020:188), referring to evaluation, link the issue of professionalisation to the existence of a "regular dialogue among people interested in the subject, which enables them to develop a common understanding". This

refers to the existence of **communities of practice** linked to evaluation, which according to the results of the scoping review, is a type of institutionalisation mechanism that is rare. On the other hand, [Hanwright and Makinson \(2008:22\)](#) point out that the “acquisition and building of internal evaluation skills and ways of thinking will have a longer term positive impact [...] as opposed to using external evaluation sources”. This is because internal evaluation capacity translates into processes of reflection and learning that usually lead to improvements in the service or policy.

The relationship between internal evaluation capacity and evaluation **outsourcing** is not clear. On the one hand, it could be assumed that public administrations lacking the internal capacity to conduct evaluations themselves will tend to commission them to external agents—usually specialised consultancies and/or research teams. This appears to be the case in Romania and Chile. On the other hand, public administrations may choose to outsource evaluations despite having internal capacity, in order to ensure greater independence. This is the case in Germany, where external evaluations are seen as more legitimate due to their independent nature ([Stockmann & Meyer, 2020](#)). Additionally, internal evaluations generally aim to inform decisions related to the operational management of programmes, while external evaluations tend to have a more strategic focus ([Stockmann & Meyer, 2020](#)).

At the end of the day, the mechanisms that are deployed to define what an evaluation is for (to hold a body accountable or to learn and improve), what is being evaluated (what type of policies and how they are prioritised), who performs the evaluation (what type of structures) and how it is done (with what capacity and degree of independence) become relevant when the results of these evaluations are taken into account in decision-making processes, i.e. when these results are used. However, after comparing the strategies and mechanisms for institutionalising evaluation in European and American countries, [Stockmann and Meyer \(2022\)](#) conclude that, **although regulation, frameworks and structures are essential for embedding evaluation in the political system, they are not sufficient to guarantee it being used** ([Stockmann & Meyer, 2022a](#)). For this reason, it is important to deploy mechanisms that are specifically aimed at promoting the use of evaluations, as suggested by the categorisation proposed here.

Following the same logic, we are forced to ask ourselves whether regulation, frameworks and evaluation structures are sufficient to consolidate a culture of evaluation? Is there a point when evaluation is institutionalised enough to “guarantee” an evaluation culture? Can institutionalisation and an evaluation culture actually evolve in opposite directions? This analysis does not allow us to answer these questions, which would be interesting to investigate in future research. However, it is striking that the scoping review did not allow us to identify **any mechanism that is specifically oriented to the promotion of the values that are usually associated with an evaluation culture**. None of the identified mechanisms specifically aimed at fostering almost any of the values that, according to [Mihalache \(2010\)](#) (taking inspiration from [Trochim, 2006](#)), portray an “ideal-typical evaluation culture”: action-oriented, learning oriented, inclusive and participatory, responsive and fundamentally non-hierarchical, oriented towards diversity and innovation, scientifically rigorous, interdisciplinary, self-critical, honest and impartial, ethic and democratic, forward-looking and transparent. Values that, following the author, should be shared by evaluation demanders and suppliers in order to be able to talk about a national evaluation culture.

This fact is particularly concerning when various authors warn of a **risk of bureaucratisation of evaluation**. Speaking about Switzerland—a country with one of the highest levels of institutionalisation of evaluation—[Jacob et al. \(2015b\)](#) state that “evaluation is increasingly influenced by legalistic ways of thinking and business-influenced traditions, and the connections to a more critical social science are increasingly lost”. As a consequence, they argue that evaluation is becoming increasingly entrenched as a routine feature of bureaucracy, thereby moving away from creativity and innovation (two of the values

listed above). This is a trend that [Stockmann and Meyer \(2022\)](#) also warn is happening globally.

The institutionalisation of evaluation cannot therefore be understood in a linear way, as a universal process (with a common scale and goals) for developing and accumulate regulations, structures and good practices. It is necessary to think strategically about how to identify and select these mechanisms to ensure that a coherent and efficient evaluation system can be constructed. But it is also necessary for this strategic reflection—as well as for the design and deployment of each of these institutionalisation mechanisms—to **take into account the values that make up the evaluation culture in each place**. These values shape the behaviour of the agents that request and offer evaluations ([Mihalache, 2010](#)) and that build the “shared epistemology” that, according to [Leeuw and Furubo \(2008\)](#), characterises each evaluation system. However, if these values are not promoted through specific institutional mechanisms and consequently become lost, then even though processes, structures and initiatives are implemented, evaluation runs the risk of becoming a “technology of bureaucracy” ([Widmer, 2020](#)).

6. Conclusion

The embedment of evaluation in a political system is related to how effective it is in terms of public policies and accountability ([Filgueiras & Queiroz, 2021](#)). In a context of the rise of both populist governments and rampant disinformation, protecting evaluation with a solid legal framework and embedding it in public institutions might be essential to ensure that public policies are informed by evidence and that evaluation practices are not subject to political influences. The institutionalisation of evaluation is thus more important than ever.

This article employs a scoping review to identify and categorise the mechanisms used in 12 countries—with different evaluation traditions—to institutionalise evaluation. The analysis covers 29 studies and aims to support decision-making processes related to the institutionalisation of evaluation by offering a comprehensive, systematically organised list of institutionalisation mechanisms, as well as concrete criteria for their selection. Since the mechanisms have been inferred from the 29 studies reviewed, the list is exhaustive as a general whole, but not for each one of the countries. The categorisation includes the whole range of mechanisms that can be promoted in terms of evaluation regulation, structures, frameworks and practices, as well as a series of mechanisms aimed at promoting the use of the results of these evaluations.

Additionally, drawing on the theoretical and comparative articles identified in the review but not actually included in the scoping review—since they are not case studies—a series of factors has been identified that public sector managers should consider when developing national evaluation systems. To build institutional environments that favour the practice of evaluation they need to reflect on why evaluation is important and what it is for (for accountability or for learning purposes), what is being evaluated (what types of policies and how they are prioritised), who is doing the evaluating (what type of structures request and offer evaluation), how it is done (with what capacity and degree of independence) and what mechanisms are available to guarantee that these results are taken into account in decision-making processes. However, the institutionalisation of evaluation is certainly necessary, but it is not sufficient to guarantee the use of evaluation ([Stockmann & Meyer, 2022a](#)), nor to consolidate an evaluation culture. In this sense, it is especially worrying that none of the mechanisms identified in the scoping review are aimed at promoting the values that are usually associated with the culture of evaluation. Without solid values, institutionalisation runs the risk of becoming mere bureaucracy. Therefore, it is urgent and necessary to identify mechanisms that are specifically aimed at promoting and consolidating the core values related to evaluation, and to analyse how they can become an integral part of institutionalisation mechanisms. This is to ensure that consolidating evaluation practices is neither an end in itself nor a purely procedural

achievement, but a means to reinforce the role of evidence in political decision-making, to innovate in the design and implementation of public policies and to improve governmental effectiveness and accountability of public policies.

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Declaration of Competing Interest

The Author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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Appendix 1. Articles included in the scoping review

Authors	Title	Publication Year	Country	Evaluation wave	Type of document
Ahonen, Pertti	Aspects of the institutionalization of evaluation in Finland: Basic, agency, process and change	2015	Finland	2a	Article
Astbury, Brad; Bayley, Scott	Evaluation in Australia	2023	Australia	2a	Book chapter
Bussmann W.	The emergence of evaluation in Switzerland	2008	Switzerland	3a	Article
Bustelo, María	The Potential Role of Standards and Guidelines in the Development of an Evaluation Culture in Spain	2006	Spain	3a	Article
Bustelo, María	Spain	2020	Spain	3a	Book chapter
Cardozo, Myriam	La institucionalización de una cultura de la evaluación en la administración pública mexicana: Avances y desafíos pendientes	2009	Mexico	4a	Article
Conde Bonfil, Carola	Avances y retrocesos de la evaluación en México. La perspectiva de los evaluadores	2017	Mexico	4a	Article
Cordoncillo, Carla	The use of evaluation in a weakly institutionalized context: a Qualitative Comparative Analysis approach	2023	Spain	3a	Article
de la Fuente Moreno A.; Cinca A.N.	El marco institucional para la evaluación de políticas públicas en España	2023	Spain	3a	Article
Gauthier, Benoît; Lahey, Robert E.; Jacob, Steve	Evaluation in Canada	2023	Canada	1a	Book chapter
Goswami S.; Lane V.	Building Evaluation Capital in Government: A Queensland Departmental Approach	2017	Australia	1a	Article
Hanwright J.; Makinson S.	Promoting evaluation culture: The development and implementation of an evaluation strategy in the Queensland Department of Education, Training and the Arts	2008	Australia	1a	Article
Horber-Papazian K.; Baud-Lavigne M.	Factors Contributing to the Strong Institutionalization of Policy Evaluation in Switzerland	2019	Switzerland	3a	Article
Horber-Papazian K.; Rosser C.	From law to reality: A critical view on the institutionalization of evaluation in the swiss canton of geneva's parliament	2018	Switzerland	3a	Book chapter
Horber-Papazian, Katia; Jacot-Descombes, Caroline	Is Evaluation Culture Shaped by the Swiss Political System and Multiculturalism?	2012	Switzerland	3a	Book chapter
Huckel Schneider C.; Milat A.J.; Moore G.	Barriers and facilitators to evaluation of health policies and programs: Policymaker and researcher perspectives	2016	Australia	2a	Article
Jacob S.	La volonté des acteurs et le poids des structures dans l'institutionnalisation de l'évaluation des politiques publiques (France, Belgique, Suisse et Pays-Bas)	2005	Netherlands	2a	Article
Jacob S.	La volonté des acteurs et le poids des structures dans l'institutionnalisation de l'évaluation des politiques publiques (France, Belgique, Suisse et Pays-Bas)	2005	Switzerland	3a	Article
Klein, Carolien	The Netherlands	2020	Netherlands	2a	Book chapter
Lahey, Robert	John Mayne and the Origins of Evaluation in the Public Sector in Canada: A Shaping of Both Evaluation and the Evaluator	2023	Canada	1a	Article
Mihalache R.	A developing evaluation culture in Romania: Myths, gaps and triggers	2010	Rumania	4a	Article
Mora C.; Antonie R.	Lever supporting program evaluation culture and capacity in Romanian public administration: The role of leadership	2012	Rumania	4a	Article
Olavarria, Claudia; Peroni, Andrea	Evaluation in Chile	2022	Chile	3a	Book chapter

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Authors	Title	Publication Year	Country	Evaluation wave	Type of document
Park, Nowook	Evaluation in Korea	2023	Korea	4a	Book chapter
Salvador, Janett; Meza, Jaqueline	Evaluation in México	2022	Mexico	4a	Book chapter
Stockmann R.; Meyer W.	Germany	2020	Germany	1a	Book chapter
Uusikylä, Petri; Ahonen, Pertti; Hietakangas, Nina K.; Nurmi, Johanna	Finland	2020	Finland	2a	Book chapter
Valiño, Aurelia	Evaluation in public policy analysis: the state of the art in Spain [La evaluación económica en el análisis de las políticas públicas: el estado del arte en España]	2023	Spain	3a	Article
Widmer, Thomas	Switzerland	2020	Switzerland	3a	Book chapter
Wond, Tracey	United Kingdom	2020	United Kingdom	1a	Book chapter
Jacob, Steve; Speer, Sandra; Furubo, Jan-Eric	The institutionalization of evaluation matters: Updating the International Atlas of Evaluation 10 years later	2015	Several	NA	Article
Pattyn V.; van Voorst S.; Mastenbroek E.; Dunlop C.A.	Policy evaluation in Europe	2017	Several	NA	Book Chapter
Stockmann R.; Meyer W.	The Institutionalisation of Evaluation in the Americas: A Synthesis	2022	Several	NA	Book Chapter
Stockmann R.; Meyer W.	The Institutionalisation of Evaluation in Europe and the Americas: A Comparison	2022	Several	NA	Book Chapter
Trujillo C.M.	CLEAR LAC-Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results-Latin America and the Caribbean	2022	Several	NA	Book Chapter
Varone F.; Jacob S.	Institutionnalisation de l'évaluation et nouvelle gestion publique: Un état des lieux comparatif	2004	Several	NA	Article
Chaytor, Kaireen	Building Evaluation Culture-The Missing Link	2023	None	NA	Article
Goldman, Ian; de la Garza, Thania; Kalugampitiya, Asela; de Erice, Alonso Miguel; Djimitri Agbodjan, Edoé; Chirau, Takunda; Dlakavu, Ayabulela	Chapter 20: The emergence of evaluation systems in low- and middle-income countries	2023	None	NA	Book Chapter
Jacob S.	Réflexions autour d'une typologie des dispositifs institutionnels d'évaluation	2005	None	NA	Article
Jacob, Steve	Chapter 12: The institutionalization of evaluation around the globe: understanding the main drivers and effects over the past decades	2023	None	NA	Book Chapter
Leeuw F.L.; Furubo J.-E.	Evaluation systems: What are they and why study them?	2008	None	NA	Article
Meyer W.; Stockmann R.; Szentmarjay L.	The Institutionalisation of Evaluation: Theoretical Background, Analytical Concept and Methods	2022	None	NA	Book Chapter
Meyer W.; Stockmann R.; Taube, L.	The Institutionalisation of Evaluation: Theoretical Background, Analytical Framework and Methodology	2023	None	NA	Book Chapter
Meyer, Wolfgang; Stockmann, Reinhard; Taube, Lena	The Institutionalisation of Evaluation: Theoretical Background, Analytical Concept and Methods	2020	None	NA	Book Chapter

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