

Statement of the Board on the Role of Evaluation in the Context of Current Pandemic-related Challenges

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In recent months, societies, politicians, administrators and institutions have been confronted by **major challenges** with respect to identifying appropriate strategies and measures to deal with the risks and consequences of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

As the leading professional association for evaluation in Germany and Austria, DeGEval (Gesellschaft für Evaluation e.V.) expressly welcomes the role played by **scientifically supported evidence** as a basis for discussion and decision-making in relation to these measures. We would like to **encourage** all parties involved in public discourse to make decisions with reference to the best available knowledge wherever possible.

The same applies, in our view, to the discussion and assessment of the **rationale, practical feasibility, effectiveness and efficiency** of measures taken. These measures, too, should be designed wherever possible on the basis of evidence, which requires systematic science-based investigation and an assessment based on transparent criteria with due consideration of intended and unintended consequences.

We therefore support all efforts already made in this regard for the **evaluation of measures** and encourage all responsible decision-makers to **systematically embed** evaluation and link it with newly approved measures. Particularly in view of the fact that many decisions still have to be made under time pressure and on an uncertain decision-making basis, it is essential for transparent **democratic discourse, the establishment of legitimacy and the ability to learn from experience** to provide information about the implementation and impacts of measures which is as sound as possible.

Evaluation is a science-based process for the systematic and transparent assessment of measures, strategies and other objects. The **Standards for Evaluation** upheld by DeGEval define good evaluations as **fair, feasible, accurate and above all useful** for the purposes of better-informed decision-making at all levels. Used correctly, they are an important tool for supporting transparent and democratic negotiation processes and strengthening an open society.

DeGEval therefore calls for public action to be accompanied systematically and in an appropriate manner by **transparent evaluation processes** aligned with the standards of good evaluation, and will continue to do so even after the current crisis is over.

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