

**LIEPP Strategic Advisory Board members' contributions for LIEPP
renewal 2020-2024 - July 2018**

Written contributions:

- Of members who participated in the July 6th meeting in person: Craig Calhoun, John Martin and R. Kent Weaver.
- Of members who participated in the July 6th meeting in videoconference: Tito Boeri, Susan Rose-Ackerman, Chiara Saraceno, Jody Sindelar
- Of members who could not participate: Thomas D. Cook

Synthesis

The strategic advisory board (StAB) members have congratulated LIEPP on its progress since its creation in 2011. They recognize the achievement of LIEPP objectives, including its interdisciplinary (more than multidisciplinary) approach, the diversity of its research themes and the importance given to the methodological aspects of research. The wealth of its network of academic partners (beyond Sciences Po) and the successful response to numerous calls for proposals leading to many additional funding are also mentioned.

According to the StAB members, LIEPP has managed to become a recognized and influential laboratory in France and abroad with high productivity and a significant contribution to research in the area of public policy evaluation.

In view of LIEPP's response to the call for the renewal of its funding, the members of the StAB made several suggestions, summarized below.

1) Addition of new thematic groups and disciplines

Several comments highlight the importance for LIEPP to justify the reasons why it chose to add new thematic groups and disciplines. Therefore, LIEPP should clarify: 1) What is the value-added it intends to bring to these new thematic groups? 2) Why do the two new disciplines (Legal studies and History) will enhance the capacity for better evaluation research on public policy?

The wording of the new thematic group « Natural risks » seems unclear at least in English. StAB members advice to reformulate it and to specify the type of risks at stake: whether risks outside human control or caused by human behavior. Furthermore, this new thematic group should be framed in policy terms. New research topics could be adressed in the different thematic groups such as the future of the EU post-Brexit, the participation of civil society groups in policymaking (outside of political party involvement and voting in elections) or the measurement of well being beyond the GDP.

2) Highlighting LIEPP's achievements

Interdisciplinarity: StAB members encourage to showcase interdisciplinarity as a value-added in LIEPP projects with some compelling examples. They also encourage highlighting the distinction between interdisciplinarity (engaging people across disciplines on the same topics and provide opportunities to learn from each other and to see possibilities of working with different disciplines) and multidisciplinary (people working on similar topics but remaining with disciplinary siloes in terms of their research).

Increasing LIEPP's national visibility: In order to highlight LIEPP's achievements, several StAB members raise the question of the impact of LIEPP's evaluations in France, that is to say if they had a demonstrable impact in terms of modifying policies in the light of the evaluation outcomes. Several StAB members raise the following questions: To what extent does the LIEPP seek to draw the results of its evaluations to the attention of politicians, their advisors and senior policy makers? Do LIEPP publications reach non-academic audiences? Are there

informations about LIEPP readers' profiles? Is there any evidence that LIEPP publications had any influence in getting LIEPP evaluation results across the worlds of politicians, policy makers and opinion formers in the media? LIEPP should also consider adding training programs on impact evaluations for officials at the national and local level in order to increase its national visibility.

Increasing LIEPP's international visibility: In the future, a greater use could be made of StAB networks and expertise in order to increase LIEPP's international visibility. Another suggestion would be to offer an annual Prize for the best public policy evaluation paper. It would be open to researchers from all over the world so it would have the value of branding LIEPP on the international policy evaluation front. Another question is raised several times: In the future, is the expectation for LIEPP to focus only/mainly on France or to conduct research and evaluation with more of an international focus?

3) Conceptual analysis of evaluation

StAB members encourage taking more into account the policy implementation in order to determine its outcomes. They advice to make more intensive fieldwork in order to understand the technical and practical aspects of policy implementation. This should help LIEPP to better understand the impact and effectiveness of a policy, including sometimes unintended consequences.

StAB members also encourage a conceptual analysis about evaluation, an emerging trans-discipline in the social sciences, with has its own theory and practice guidelines. Therefore, one of the StAB members suggest a sequence of a few courses on policy evaluation that would be taught to LIEPP Economists, Political Scientists and Sociologists together. These courses would enable LIEPP researchers to discover new methods and not to use only the methods they happen to know best if these are not the most adapted to the research project. In the context of this conceptual analysis on evaluation, it is suggested to lead evaluations of policy evaluations in order to identify common factors that make it more or less likely that policy evaluations will have an impact.

4) Relation between LIEPP and Sciences Po

Several StAB comments aim at answering the criticism made that LIEPP is too closely identified with Sciences Po. To answer this cricitcm, the first suggestion is to establish more institutional collaborations between institutions, not only individuals belonging to various institutions, which could lead to joint curricula for instance. The second suggestion consists in enriching the thematic, theoretical and methodological contributions, which LIEPP brings to Sciences Po curricula. LIEPP should also stress its contributions by highlighting that some very specific courses would not be offered otherwise.

5) Data access and methods

StAB members encourage elaborating on how LIEPP plans to overcome the specific French constraints of data access protection laws. The new methods to gather, analyze data and to evaluate policies offer an overload of choices. Therefore, it is suggested that LIEPP focuses on the methods that are the most adapted to its projects, enabling LIEPP to develop a true expertise in them.

Synthèse

Les membres du StAB ont félicité le LIEPP pour sa progression depuis sa création en 2011. Ils reconnaissent l'accomplissement des objectifs du LIEPP, notamment sa démarche interdisciplinaire (plus que multidisciplinaire), la diversité de ses thèmes de recherche ainsi que l'importance accordée aux aspects méthodologiques de la recherche. La richesse de son réseau de partenaires académiques (au-delà de Sciences Po) et la réponse fructueuse à de nombreux appels d'offre donnant lieu à de nombreux financements supplémentaires sont également mentionnés.

Selon eux, le LIEPP est parvenu à devenir un laboratoire reconnu et influent en France et à l'international avec une grande productivité et une contribution significative à la recherche en matière d'évaluation des politiques publiques.

En vue de la réponse du LIEPP à l'appel d'offre pour le renouvellement de son financement, les membres du StAB ont fait plusieurs suggestions dont voici la synthèse.

1) Nouveaux axes de recherche et disciplines

Plusieurs commentaires insistent sur l'importance de justifier le choix d'ajouter des axes de recherche et des disciplines. Il faudrait préciser : 1) Quelle est la plus-value du LIEPP sur ces axes de recherche? 2) En quoi l'ajout du droit et de l'histoire va permettre d'améliorer la recherche sur l'évaluation des politiques publiques ?

La formulation du nouvel axe de recherche « Natural risks » ne semble pas être très claire en anglais. Ils encouragent à le reformuler en précisant s'il s'agit de risques qui ne relèvent pas du contrôle des humains ou de risques causés par les comportements humains, et en liant davantage le nouvel intitulé avec les politiques publiques. Des sujets à inclure dans les différents axes de recherche sont proposés tels que le futur de l'Union européenne post-Brexit, la participation de la société civile dans l'élaboration des politiques publiques (en dehors de l'implication dans les partis politiques traditionnels et du vote dans le cadre d'élections) ou encore la mesure du bien-être au-delà du PIB.

2) Mise en valeur du LIEPP

L'interdisciplinarité : Ils encouragent à mettre en avant l'interdisciplinarité comme une plus-value pour le LIEPP et à proposer des exemples particulièrement illustratifs des bénéfices de celle-ci. Ils encouragent également à mettre en avant la distinction entre interdisciplinarité (l'implication et l'enrichissement mutuel de personnes de disciplines différentes travaillant sur un même sujet) et multidisciplinarité (personnes travaillant sur des sujets similaires mais conservant les spécificités de leur discipline respective en ce qui concerne leur recherche).

Améliorer la visibilité nationale : Pour mettre en valeur les résultats du LIEPP, plusieurs membres du StAB posent la question de l'impact de ces évaluations sur les politiques publiques en France, c'est-à-dire si certaines politiques ont été modifiées à la lumière des résultats d'une évaluation. Les questions suivantes sont posées à plusieurs reprises : Dans quelle mesure est-ce que le LIEPP cherche à attirer l'attention des décideurs politiques sur les résultats de ses évaluations ? Est-ce que les « séries du LIEPP » atteignent des publics non académiques ? Y-a-t-il des informations sur les profils de ses lecteurs ? Y-a-t-il des preuves

que les « séries du LIEPP » ont contribué à faire connaître les résultats d'évaluations auprès de décideurs politiques et des médias ? L'organisation de programmes de formation sur l'évaluation d'impact pour des fonctionnaires est une suggestion proposée pour améliorer la visibilité nationale du LIEPP.

Améliorer la visibilité internationale : Dans le futur, une meilleure utilisation de l'expertise et des réseaux du StAB est encouragée car elle pourrait être particulièrement bénéfique notamment pour améliorer la visibilité internationale du LIEPP. Une autre proposition consiste en l'organisation d'un concours annuel récompensant la meilleure évaluation de politiques publiques et qui serait ouvert à des chercheurs de toutes nationalités. Une question revient à plusieurs reprises : Est-ce que le LIEPP compte se focaliser seulement/surtout sur la France ou a-t-il l'intention de mener des recherches et évaluations plus internationales dans le futur ?

3) Analyse conceptuelle de l'évaluation

Les commentaires encouragent davantage de prise en compte de la mise en œuvre des politiques publiques pour l'évaluation de celles-ci. Ils conseillent d'effectuer davantage de travail de terrain pour mieux comprendre les questions techniques et pratiques de la mise en œuvre des politiques publiques. L'objectif est de mieux appréhender l'impact et donc l'efficacité d'une politique mais également les conséquences parfois inattendues de celles-ci.

Ils encouragent une réflexion conceptuelle sur ce qu'est l'évaluation, à savoir une transdiscipline qui émerge dans les sciences sociales et qui a des spécificités et méthodologies méritant d'être valorisées. Il est donc proposé que le LIEPP organise des cours sur l'évaluation des politiques publiques à destination des économistes, sociologues et politistes du laboratoire. Cette proposition vise à faire en sorte que les chercheurs découvrent de nouvelles méthodes et n'utilisent pas forcément les méthodes qu'ils maîtrisent le mieux si celles-ci ne sont pas les plus adaptées au projet de recherche. Dans le cadre de cette réflexion conceptuelle sur l'évaluation, il est également proposé de mener des évaluations d'évaluations afin d'identifier les facteurs expliquant qu'une évaluation est plus encline à avoir un impact qu'une autre.

4) Relation LIEPP-Sciences Po

Plusieurs commentaires visent à répondre à la critique de l'association trop systématique du LIEPP avec Sciences Po. Pour répondre à cette critique, la première suggestion est d'établir davantage de collaborations entre institutions, pas uniquement entre individus appartenant à des institutions différentes ce qui pourrait donner lieu à des doubles programmes par exemple. La deuxième suggestion est d'enrichir les contributions thématiques, théoriques et méthodologiques que le LIEPP apporte aux programmes de Sciences Po et de mettre en avant que ces contributions très spécifiques seraient impossibles sans le LIEPP.

5) Question des données

Ils encouragent à préciser comment le LIEPP compte surmonter les contraintes spécifiquement françaises de l'accès aux données. Face à la quantité de nouvelles méthodes de rassemblement, d'analyse de données, ils encouragent le LIEPP à se focaliser sur certaines méthodes particulièrement adaptées à ses projets de recherche ce qui permettrait au LIEPP de développer une véritable expertise.

Contributions

Craig Calhoun (Professor of sociology at New York University and London School of Economics, President of the Berggruen Institute)

Dear Bruno and colleagues,

I want to begin by saying how much I appreciate the work that LIEPP has already done. It is making very significant contributions.

First, I would make a very broad point. LIEPP's distinctive mission is to improve the capacity for effective policy evaluation. This connects LIEPP to several different fields of research and counterpart institutions. It is important to build a network and an identity in each, but not to be contained by any one.

- A. LIEPP's mission connects it to evaluation research centers but also distinguishes it from them. Simply doing evaluation is not its major purpose (though it does conduct evaluations). It does research *about* evaluations and improves and disseminates methods *for* evaluations.
- B. LIEPP is centrally focused on methodology, especially causal analysis, because getting better at causal analysis is a crucial way of improving policy evaluation. This is a concern shared with other evaluation researchers but also with methodologists in other fields. LIEPP learns from and contributes to fields other than evaluation research.
- C. LIEPP is concerned with policy, especially public, state policy. It thus shares something with other policy research centers and with policy research programs in specific substantive areas: health, education, etc. Understanding policy-making and change requires some specific engagements not just generic evaluation techniques.

As LIEPP seeks to build networks and increase its visibility – both of which I think are important for its future agenda – it needs to think about all of these domains and establish an identity in relation to each.

Second, interdisciplinary social science is central to the way LIEPP pursues its distinctive mission of improving the capacity for policy evaluation.

- A. This places a premium on both improving understanding across disciplines in general, including internationally, and on concretely advancing interdisciplinary training and network formation in France. Publications, conferences and other activities may be important to the former. Success will be measured in improved work throughout a range of scientific fields.
 - 1. I think it is probably important to say something about how LIEPP contributes to the task of integrating knowledge across fields (as distinct from just introducing researchers to each other or bringing multiple approaches to a specific project).
 - 2. It strikes me as worth making clear that LIEPP sees working in interdisciplinary teams as a skill in itself that it helps its researchers and trainees learn.

- B. Working through Sciences Po and links to other members of UPSC is crucial to the latter. Success will be measured in enhanced capacity to do the evaluations required by French policy-making. This capacity will be
 1. at LIEPP
 2. at Sciences Po,
 3. in partner institutions in UPSC,
 4. in ministries and other partners in practical policy work, and
 5. distributed widely as graduates of LIEPP and Sciences Po training programs take on positions and advance their careers elsewhere.
- C. Reporting on LIEPP'S accomplishments should mention all of these.
- D. Relatedly, reporting should make clear that the junior staff recruited to work in LIEPP are not only sources of 'inputs' into LIEPP research and training. They are also learners who improve their ability to conduct policy evaluation and work in interdisciplinary teams. They should be tracked as alumni of a sort.
- E. This bears also on why you are expanding the range of disciplines to include history and legal studies. I strongly support both additions, but think you need to be clearer about rational and why they will enhance the capacity for better evaluation research that is core to LIEPP's mission.
 1. History is not just a field that brings specialized capacity in source-checking or working with archives. It is also a field that brings expertise in constructing and analyzing narratives (incl. process-tracing), which is central to advancing causal analysis; in grasping the path-dependency of policy-making and implementation; and in clarifying contexts and their implications for causal analyses and evaluations (and indeed the implications of specific contexts of policy-making and implementation). Moreover, there has been a recent expansion of 'contemporary history' examining public policy.
 2. Legal studies is closely related to policy in several ways. There is also relevance in how courts themselves conduct what amounts to evaluation research and causal reconstruction. Some of the most important contributions of legal studies may come in improving capacity to understand issues in the gathering and use of large-scale data.
- F. It may be worth mentioning that scientific disciplines are not the only silos that need some integration. LIEPP can (and I think does) facilitate links across policy domains, between quantitative and qualitative research, etc.

Third, very important to how LIEPP advances its core mission is actually doing policy evaluations in ways that include learning from the practical projects.

- A. These constitute supplementary funded policy projects and 'results exploitation' but are not limited to either.
- B. They are practical projects that pose new questions and demands for policy evaluation, and thereby lead to improving techniques and capacity for the future.
 1. In a sense this reflects Don Stokes' famous idea of science in Pasteur's Quadrant – ie work that can be of fundamental significance because practical engagements drive new thinking, rather than only theoretical questions.
 2. At the same time, actual evaluation projects are 'tests' of approaches, and thus bases for improving them.

3. In the section you have on the 'research-learning interface' you could mention the interface of actual evaluation and learning.
- C. This also suggests a way to think about the various empirical policy domains in which LIEPP engages. No attempt is made to cover all major lines of policy. Rather, LIEPP does work in several of the most important, both because they are important and because they pose different challenges and insights for the improvement of analytic capacity. The chosen domains need to vary, thus, so they raise different questions.
 - D. This may also be part of the answer to the criticism offered by the jury in the previous review – that the work at LIEPP is high quality, but work that might have taken place anyway. Part of what is important is how LIEPP uses this work to advance future capacity in policy evaluation. LIEPP's projects are sources of innovation and increased capacity, not just high-quality evaluation.
 1. Slightly repeating, let me restate this means two kinds of achievements:
 - a. Innovation measured in improved techniques reported in publications
 - b. Capacity measured in researchers trained and institutions adding attention to evaluation
 - E. In this regard, I support the addition of new thematic groups looking at issues of health, natural risks, and labour.
 1. Health is obviously important. Health policy is also challenged to keep up with major innovations, some of which provide an excellent occasion for considering how new kinds of data and data management transform public policy and evaluation research.
 2. Natural risks is not an entirely obvious category. Environmental risks is a more familiar English term. Clarify whether you really mean to distinguish the completely 'natural' from humanly increased risks. The latter are important, e.g., with regard to climate change. Adding this domain is important because otherwise the project has nothing to say about climate change and the environment, which are among the biggest new issues in public policy and interdisciplinary social science. I would find a way to reframe that makes clear the group will consider environment and climate change as they change the risks that policy makers need to address. There are also some specific policy areas worth attention like: emergency management, prevention, monitoring and preparation/mitigation.
 3. Labour is obviously important. Make clear that you mean not only labor markets, but also transformations in work itself and their implications.
 4. I do not advocate adding lots of other thematic groups, but:
 - a. Migration policy (and with it issues of social integration) is an obvious absence. Since the time LIEPP was created it has become an enormous policy concern.
 - b. Technology policy is important. Think of French investments in AI. This may be something you can indicate you will address as an aspect of other themes (e.g., health).
 - c. I mentioned in the meeting that all the policy domains LIEPP now approaches are matters of 'domestic' policy (even if it is interconnected among different countries). Would it be good to consider foreign or international policy – e.g., with regard to development? It is also significant that much of the most

influential work on evaluating causation through experimental methods (RCTs etc) has been focused on development. (Think of MIT's JPAL.)

Fourth, it strikes me that the summary of achievements so far is heavy on inputs offered (say, publications, new techniques. It is very strong on this. But it will be good to say more about impact. Reporting on training and alumni from training (and from junior staff roles) may help. Reporting on how LIEPP contributions are used in other institutions, or fields, or in ministries would be good.

- A. On training, the new proposal could be clearer about both the contributions LIEPP makes and the ways in which these are multiplied by its Sciences Po base and closest network ties. For example, early documents mention but the existing proposal draft does not come back to:
 - 1. The School of Public Affairs at S-P
 - 2. Summer school with NYUAD

Fifth, I've already mentioned it as an aside, but it deserves more attention. You are right to think data should be a featured emphasis. New or changed data issues have big implications for evaluation of public policy. LIEPP needs to demonstrate that it is improving capacity in this area. Legal studies are central, but LIEPP can make a contribution by improving the connection of legal studies to interdisciplinary social science.

- A. There are several dimensions:
 - 1. Data access and restrictions, including work on the implications of proprietary datasets and national policies seeking to manage data
 - a. Note that these are not only issues for evaluation research itself – they are issues that need to be evaluated. For example, how do biases introduced into the data on which AI algorithms train affect outcomes?
 - b. Should LIEPP research help ministries formulate best practices for ministries in order to facilitate effective evaluation and policy improvement?
 - 2. Privacy and surveillance
 - 3. Hacking and manipulation
 - 4. Data intensive domains of policy and practice (e.g., personalized or precision medicine).
 - 5. Policy on AI and other fields that closely integrated with use of data
- B. You should make clearer how LIEPP will organize learning about data issues across its various thematic domains. Will there be a cross-cutting data group of some sort?

Finally, a few loose ends and miscellaneous comments :

- A. What is meant by criticism that proportion of articles and books/chapters may be out of balance? Just for the record, I have no idea whether this means proportionately too many articles or too few. I think proportions are fine. In any case, norms are somewhat field-specific.
- B. I would urge thinking about how to take policy briefs and other communications online to a greater degree, making updating easier, and making the website more dynamic. Right now the LIEPP website foregrounds information about LIEPP. It should

offer more information of use to various constituencies based on the research LIEPP has done.

- C. LIEPP might want to consider whether its constituencies for communication are only (a) scholars and (b) public policy makers (ministries and agencies). Is there a broader public interest in the results of evaluation research? Is it important for the public to be aware that policy-makers use evaluation to improve policy and implications? Would this improve trust?
- D. I think it is important that LIEPP takes on the evaluation of big policies and big changes, not just narrow, more technical questions about strategies of implementation. It should help us better understand the impacts and effectiveness of policy, including unintended consequences and the somewhat nebulous implication in broader socio-cultural change. We should know more about how much policy can and does do to shape urbanization or to slow or minimize climate change.

I hope this is helpful. And I hope funding is available so LIEPP can keep up the good work!

John Martin (Former Director for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs at the OECD, UCD Geary Institute for Public Policy)

First and foremost, I want to congratulate the LIEPP team on the great progress that they have made over the past seven years since the Centre was founded at Sciences Po. I attended the first meeting of the StAB back in 2011 and can well recall the enthusiasm and ambition of the team led then by Etienne Wasmer and Cornelia Woll. It is a pleasure to see how the vision of LIEPP that was articulated at the beginning of the project and elaborated at the second StAB meeting in 2015 has become a reality and yielded many important results. This progress was explicitly recognised by the ANR jury when it made its mid-term assessment of LIEPP in 2015, and the updated note on LIEPP achievements 2011-2019 makes it abundantly clear that this progress has been maintained and enlarged.

Bruno's email of the 3rd July in response to my comments and first proposals sets out several issues for our discussion, namely:

- (i) What are the best ways to present LIEPP achievements?
- (ii) What are our views on the proposed future LIEPP projects for the period 2020-2025 as set out in the note circulated to us? In particular, he asked for our views on disciplinary broadening, new topics, new projects and activities and the building of an international network of institutes similar to LIEPP.
- (iii) Finally, any other new ideas and suggestions.

This is an ambitious agenda which Bruno has set for us and I will try to respond to these issues in turn.

1. Ways in which to highlight LIEPP achievements

I liked the way in which the DiD method was used imaginatively in the mid-term report to show that LIEPP has had a real impact on the number of publications produced by Sciences Po since it was set up. It would be useful to update these figures to end 2017 in order to

show whether the positive trend has persisted, and perhaps even accelerated recently. But these data show only the “supply” effect of the formation of LIEPP on the output of Sciences Po publications. It would be good if it were possible to complement this with some data on the “demand” side. Has, for instance, the emergence of LIEPP since 2011 given rise to more commissioning of rigorous public policy evaluations in France? If that were indeed the case, it would be suggestive that LIEPP has contributed to fostering the culture of rigorous public policy evaluations in France which is part of its mission statement.

Going beyond this is the question of the impact of LIEPP evaluations on public policies in France. It would be a real feather in the cap for LIEPP if it were possible to highlight one or more of its evaluations of French policies which had a demonstrable impact in terms of modifying the policy in question in the light of the evaluation outcomes. For instance, did the evaluations of the Competitiveness and Employment Tax Credit (CICE) and the National Programme for Urban Renewal (PNRU) – which are highlighted in the note on LIPP achievements 2011-2019 – lead to any identifiable changes in their designs or implementation which could be attributed to LIEPP? Did LIEPP work on employment contracts and labour laws have any impact on the shape of the Macron reforms to French Labour law? Has LIEPP work had any impact on the ongoing discussions in France about reforms to the unemployment insurance (UI) system and the system of vocational education and training? Any evidence which shows that policy makers paid heed to LIEPP evaluations in these and other areas would be very valuable ammunition in the case for extended funding by the ANR. Unfortunately, I could not find anything in the draft report which would suggest that LIEPP evaluations have had much impact on policy formulation or public opinion.

To what extent does LIEPP seek to draw the results of its evaluations to the attention of politicians, their advisors and senior policy makers? Does it offer to make presentations on its major evaluations to the relevant committees of the National Assembly? In an era where “alternative facts” are common, it perhaps behoves LIEPP to be more pro-active on this front. The political economy dimension of evaluation is one which should be well suited to LIEPP given its interdisciplinary focus.

The report makes several references to the LIEPP Policy Briefs as a vehicle for presenting its research findings and policy recommendations to non-academic audiences. How successful are the Policy Briefs as a communication tool? Who reads them? Is there any evidence that they have had any influence in getting the LIEPP messages across to the worlds of politicians, policy makers and opinion formers in the media?

Does LIEPP have a specialist in Communications and/or an in-house journalist who could help researchers get across their messages better to the non-academic community? Academics are often not natural communicators for non-specialists and it may well pay dividends for LIEPP to invest in this domain in order to expand its influence.

2. Views on the proposed future LIEPP projects

I note that there is a proposal to expand the scope of LIEPP’s activities and broaden its interdisciplinary focus. With respect to the former, three new thematic groups are proposed

as follows: Health; Natural Risks; and Labour. I have a few questions about these proposals. Health policies was first proposed as a thematic research area at the beginning of LIEPP – see the report prepared for the mid-term assessment – but it seems to have been still-born for reasons which are not clear. Now it is proposed to resurrect this topic. Why is now a propitious time to do so and why is this new attempt to foster interdisciplinary work on Health by LIEPP more likely to succeed where the previous attempt failed ?

I also have a question about the proposed thematic work on Labour. LIEPP has already done a lot of work on employment issues and many other institutes in France and elsewhere are working in this area, especially under the heading of the Future of Work, which seems to be at the heart of the LIEPP proposal. So what is the value-added which LIEPP intends to bring to this already-crowded research area ? Will it explore synergies with other institutes outside France who are working on the same topics ?

With regard to the proposal to broaden the interdisciplinary focus of LIEPP's work by integrating legal studies as one of its core competences, I have a similar question to my previous one about health. In its mid-term report, LIEPP proposed to develop a new research group on Justice from 2015 on. But this proposal did not come to fruition. Why is now an opportune moment to resurrect this proposal and what guarantee is there of fruitful collaboration with the Law group at Sciences Po?

I should add, however, that I am strongly supportive of the proposal to associate contemporary historians at Sciences Po with LIEPP's work. My own work on labour market and social policies has consistently shown the importance of understanding the institutional background and history surrounding such policies in order to evaluate them properly. It is also the case that many of these policies are not as novel as their supporters like to pretend but are instead minor variations on older, failed policies. Thus, it is important to bear this historical perspective in mind when evaluating public policies so I applaud LIEPP's initiative here.

I would also support LIEPP's proposal to make data more accessible to researchers online in order to support rigorous evaluations. However, I would welcome more clarity in the document about this proposal. Rigorous evaluations tend to rely upon micro-data, often with a longitudinal focus. Many countries are trying to respond to such demands by linking administrative data sets with those from household surveys. The Nordics have long been leaders on this front but one can cite examples of such data linking from other countries such as the US, Canada, Australia and Germany. Such linked data has proved invaluable for evaluations of labour market, social, education and training policies in these countries.

However, I wonder how easy it will be for LIEPP to make concrete progress on this front in the French context. My caution is based on my experience as a member of an interdisciplinary scientific panel which was established a few years ago to assist the French UI agency (UNEDIC) to evaluate the effects of reforms to the UI system. Evaluations of these reforms required linked micro-data from various administrative data files and household surveys to be made available to researchers. To my surprise, it inevitably proved impossible to generate the necessary linked data files, either because of concerns about privacy, cost or

time. It should be noted that a prominent researcher from the French national statistical institute (INSEE) was also a member of the UNEDIC scientific panel and she was just as frustrated as the other members over the difficulties in linking various data sets and making them accessible to outside researchers.

Now if UNEDIC, a part of the French administrative structure is unable to exert pressure on other parts of the state apparatus to cough up the necessary data, it is unclear to me what leverage LIEPP could bring to bear to do better on this front. It seems as if the French data protection laws are a big hurdle on this front and the situation may well be exacerbated by the new EU GDPR which came into force very recently. Some further elaboration in the document on how LIEPP plans to take this initiative further and overcome the specific French constraints which I have highlighted above would be helpful in giving it more substance.

As for increasing LIEPP's visibility on the international policy evaluation front, I would welcome further clarification on how they plan to achieve this. While LIEPP has undoubtedly made its mark on the policy evaluation front in France, it is not my impression that it has much visibility on the wider European front, let alone the North American one. I might be mistaken in this impression; if so, I am sure that fellow members of the SAB will correct me.

Since one of the stated aims of LIEPP is to raise its international image as a "central hub for social science research on policy making and evaluation", it would be helpful to spell out in more detail how it proposes to achieve this ambitious goal over the next few years. In my email to Bruno of the 3rd July which was copied to all other members of the SAB, I proposed that greater use could be made of the SAB expertise and their networks to further this objective. I would be very interested to hear how my colleagues react to this suggestion.

3. Other Ideas

Would there be a case for organising a joint Master's degree in Public Policy Evaluation with a university in another country which has an interest/history in this domain ?

Another suggestion which would raise the international visibility of LIEPP and Sciences Po would be to offer an annual Prize for the best public policy evaluation paper written in English or French. My preference would be to restrict eligibility to the Prize to young researchers (say under age 35 or 40) but others might disagree. The Prize would be open not only to French researchers but also to researchers from other EU countries, and perhaps North America. The value of the Prize would have to be substantial (at least €40K or more) to make it attractive and it could be sponsored by a private-sector institution to share the cost. It would have the value of branding LIEPP and Sciences Po on the international policy evaluation front.

R. Kent Weaver (Professor of Public Policy and Government at Georgetown University)

LIEPP's research objectives: There is a potential tension in LIEPP's research objectives. Is LIEPP supposed to (1) evaluate specific policies in a systematic and analytically rigorous way, (2) promote academic research of high quality that may have policy implications, or (3) conduct research about when policy evaluations have—or do not have—an impact. I think

LIEPP needs to say that its research is a broad portfolio that incorporates all three objectives, although the specific projects are likely to focus on just one of these objectives.

The importance of interdisciplinarity: I think that a stronger case could be made that interdisciplinarity really provides value-added in LIEPP projects, with some compelling examples provided from your projects. Interdisciplinarity is more than just “multi-disciplinarity”—i.e., people working on similar topics but remaining within disciplinary siloes in terms of their research.

Implementation: A common theme that could be developed across research areas is the importance of policy implementation in determining outcomes. This research may involve intensive field work. LIEPP should outline developing communication strategies to convince policymakers of the importance of incorporating implementation issues in the policy design stage.

Training of Masters students: I think that the grant renewal proposal should emphasize your cooperation with the Sciences Po School of Public Affairs in training MPA students both to understand the importance of considering evaluation results in considering policy alternatives and in training in specific evaluation techniques. The proposal should emphasize specific forms that this training will take in the future that go beyond what is already being done. This could, for example, emphasize assistance from LIEPP in developing data analysis skills in Masters projects, and using Masters students as research assistants in LIEPP projects.

Executive Education: LIEPP should consider adding brief (one or two day) training programs for officials at the national and local levels on how impact evaluations can help them achieve their objectives, and how they can go about evaluating in cost-effective ways. Organizing these trainings in cooperation with current partners like the JPAL would be useful. Again, interdisciplinarity should be stressed.

Research synthesis briefs: LIEPP should consider a new series of research synthesis briefs on what we know about specific policy topics from French and international experience, for example, policies to prevent recidivism among ex-offenders. These policy briefs should (1) be in French, (2) be written in a style that is accessible to policymakers and a general audience, (3) never be more than eight pages long, and (4) always include policy options or recommendations at the end. These policy briefs can draw on literature reviews that are already being written by LIEPP scholars, but go beyond them by listing policy options or recommendations. Since this may go beyond the comfort zones of some scholars, LIEPP should use freelance writers to help scholar tailor the writing. Policy briefs should be timed to be released at public events that feature panel discussions including scholars and policymakers.

Evaluation of evaluations: One specific project that LIEPP might want to consider is an “evaluation of policy evaluations” across policy sectors in France, perhaps with some international comparisons. The purpose would be to identify common factors that make it more or less likely that policy evaluations will have an impact. Could results be communicated more compellingly, for example, and does this make a difference in how

policymakers respond? Should evaluation research be communicated through different channels and networks? Are policymakers in some policy sectors more likely to be receptive to evaluation research? If so, why?

Overall concern: The addition of new research theme areas and new disciplines runs the risk of LIEPP being perceived as just a new general funding stream for Sciences Po. And one of the new research themes, “natural risks,” is unclear, at least in English. Each new addition should be justified as building on particular strengths within Sciences Po or in partner institutions, and these should be outlined specifically. It might be worth mentioning policy sectors that you have considered and rejected because there is not currently a critical mass of interested scholars within Sciences Po and its partners to build a LIEPP research group.

Tito Boeri (Professor of Economics at University of Bocconi and London School of Economics, Scientific Director of Fondazione Rodolfo De Benedetti)

Liepp has established itself as a very influential research center in the area of public policy evaluation, not only in France. In Google Scholar there are 957 citations of Liepp compared with 399 of Irvapp, a similar institution, created in Italy in 2008, thus with a longer history.

Liepp would seem to have had an impact on research well beyond SciencesPo as confirmed by the wide range of research partnerships built around Liepp, mostly across Europe and the US. Since 2015 Liepp has indeed made considerable progress in having an international reach.

Data on the number of publications originated at Liepp, notably academic publications mentioning support from Liepp, also suggest that there has been an acceleration in research activities since the midterm review, and in its rebalancing towards more refereed journals and less book chapters.

Finally, success in fundraising within extremely competitive calls for proposals is also an indicator of the achievements of Liepp.

A main strength of Liepp is to be well anchored to social sciences, and specifically in having a research community ranging from economics to sociology to political science. This promotes cross-fertilization of ideas and methods across different disciplines, more than, strictly speaking, multidisciplinary.

A potential weakness is in not having a PhD school directly talking to Liepp. This is only partly compensated by the funding of 14 doctoral scholarships. By the way, it would be important to have more information on the job market of the first cohorts of PhD laureates funded by Liepp.

It is very difficult to evaluate the impact of research on policy-making, and it may be premature to carry out such an assessment at this stage about Liepp research. Typically, the impact of ideas on political decisions can be assessed only over a relatively long time, as the political process is significantly slower than the research agenda.

The public good provided by Liepp has been so far mainly related to the knowledge generated within the network built around Liepp. It would be important to provide public goods for the research community also in terms of datasets made available to researchers outside Liepp.

I think that it is crucial that Liepp develops research groups in labour and health as these two areas are at the core of policy-making in ageing societies, and are fields in which the cross-fertilization across the various disciplines gathered at Liepp can be particularly fruitful. I would suggest to promote work at the intersection between labour and health.

The injection of historians, notably quantitative historians, could be very valuable, notably if they are encouraged to identify and investigate precedents that are particularly useful in addressing relevant current policy issues.

Susan Rose-Ackerman (Henry R. Luce Professor of Jurisprudence, Law and Political Science at Yale Law School)

Basically, LIEPP has done an excellent job at establishing itself as a strong, inter-disciplinary policy institute. Going forward here are some thoughts.

- 1) I disagree with the member of the Advisory Committee who urged you to hire only top disciplinary scholars and then require them to work with others outside their discipline. Instead, I believe that LIEPP will be more successful if it requires both conventional disciplinary achievements and evidence of interdisciplinary interests and knowledge of at least one other discipline. Because the individual disciplines may not reward such breadth, you should consider somewhat unconventional scholars who are willing to take a chance on interdisciplinary work. I liked the suggestion from one member that, in addition to impact assessment, CBA, and risk assessment, LIEPP should explore and evaluate techniques from outside economics that are more qualitative, but could complement other methods.
- 2) I understand that the subfields you select will depend, in part, on the interests of the scholars associated with LIEPP and on your new recruits. Given the small size of LIEPP and the number of important problems, it is inevitable and perfectly fine for LIEPP's agenda to be driven in that way. However, I agree with those urging you to look at immigration and the integration of refugees as one topic. I would also suggest a look the future of the EU post-Brexit.
- 3) If you want to include a legal dimension, I suggest looking at the way administrative/public law might better incorporate the insights of social-science research on substantive policy and on the democratic accountability of executive branch policymaking. I am happy to elaborate on that issue if LIEPP has any interest. Would it be possible to study the effect of changes in the ENA curriculum on the performance of its graduates who go into government service?

- 4) I am still confused about the role of “policy evaluation” in LIEPP. I had understood that that its mission was both to evaluate existing policies and to propose new policies on the basis of studies of particular problem areas. Those two activities, to me, overlap and inevitably go together. I think that I am missing something here, but, at least, LIEPP needs to think through its role. I think that LIEPP wants to be a source of technically sound research that also takes into account the political landscape in a democracy. Is that correct?
- 5) I agree that “natural risks” is not a clear term, at least in English. Does it mean risks that humans cannot mitigate except ex post in providing rescues and medical care? Does it mean risks, such as climate change, caused in part by human activity and capable of being mitigated by policies to reduce the underlying risks? In short, this topic needs to be motivated and explained better. It is the only one that seems related to the broad issue of environmental harms.
- 6) Under the democracy topic there could be some work on participation by citizens and civil society groups in policymaking outside of political party involvement and voting in elections. There have been some interesting experiments in France, and these could be evaluated to see what lessons might be learned.

Chiara Saraceno (Professor of Sociology at Berlin Social Science Center, Honorary Fellow at Collegio Carlo Alberto)

I highly appreciate the work done over the years and overall approve your report. My main reservation concerns the answer offered to the only serious criticism made at the mid-term report: that LIEPP is too closely identified with Sciences Po and the added value is difficult to ascertain, both at the teaching and at the research level.

To this critique, in addition to underlining that funding in one only institution was allowed by the call, the report stresses the wide international network it has created and it intends to further enlarge.

I suspect that this may be enough for receiving a favourable final assessment, but not necessarily for obtaining a renewal.

I suggest :

A) that you offer to establish institutional collaborations between institutions, not only individuals belonging to various institutions. Such institutional collaboration would strengthen the other participating institutions as such, and not only indirectly (and hypothetically) through their individual members who happen to collaborate with LIEPP.

B) that you stress and enrich the added contribution made by LIEPP to Sciences Po curricula. It is not enough to say that So and so will teach one or another course. You must demonstrate that without LIEPP there wouldn't be specific courses. I also suggest that you propose some teaching exchanges, or joint curricula with the institutions with which you will develop an institutional partnership (see point A)

With regard to the final report:

I highly appreciate the work done over the years and overall approve your report. My main reservation concerns the answer offered to the only serious criticism made at the mid-term report: that LIEPP is too closely identified with Sciences Po and the added value is difficult to ascertain, both at the teaching and at the research level.

To this critique, in addition to underlining that funding in one only institution was allowed by the call, the report stresses the wide international network it has created and it intends to further enlarge. I suspect that this may be enough for receiving a favourable final assessment, but not necessarily for obtaining a renewal. I suggest

A) that you stress and enrich the added contribution made by LIEPP to Sciences Po curricula. It is not enough to say that so and so has taught one or another course. You must demonstrate that without LIEPP there wouldn't have been those specific courses.

B) that you highlight what have been the new theoretically or methodologically contributions made by the research developed under LIEPP, which would have been difficult to achieve without it.

With regard to the new proposal, I suggest:

A) that you offer to establish institutional collaborations between institutions, not only with individuals belonging to various institutions. Such institutional collaboration would strengthen the other participating institutions as such, and not only indirectly (and hypothetically) through their individual members who happen to collaborate with LIEPP.

I also suggest that you propose some inter-institutional teaching exchanges, or joint curricula with the institutions with which you will develop an institutional partnership.

B) that in defining your research agenda you engage explicitly with some of the ongoing policy issues and debates at the international level. Migration and multicultural integration might be a good candidate, as well as the development and role of civic movements. As I suggested during the meeting, I also would suggest to engage with the effort at developing indicators for measuring well being beyond the GDP, in the light of the Sustainable Development Goals, but also beyond those. This debate is heavily driven by the search of quantitative indicators and "metrics", which is unavoidable and necessary. But LIEPP might also use its intellectual strength and multidisciplinary body to explore the possibility of developing comparative qualitative indicators.

C) I agree with those who pointed out that "natural risks" does not sound right. But also if you use the term environmental risks you should specify which ones, and whether outside human control (earthquakes) or caused also by human behavior (pollution, climate change, and so forth). Furthermore, since LIEPP's focus is on policy (making, implementing, outcomes), you should frame this field in policy terms, i.e actors and dynamics in environmental policy making; contrasting interests in environmental policy making

I hope this is useful

Jody Sindelar (Professor of Public Health at Yale School of Public Health)

The evidence is that LIEPP has been very successful over the years with strong productivity and impact. I am providing my comments with the goal of helping LIEPP obtain more years of funding and continued productivity with the proposal for years 2020 to 2025.

I was connected to the board meeting on Skype but could hear very little of the conversation so my comments here are largely without the benefit of the group discussion. I am sorry that my comments do not reflect the broader deliberations.

Comments:

1. Focus

There are several points regarding the broad focus of the next LIEPP proposals that seem to merit greater attention and specificity. The choices would be determined by a mix of the interests of faculty and their expertise, how to develop other areas of expertise and connections, policy impact and what the funders are seeking. Indicating why certain areas are worthy of greater intensity of focus might make the choices more compelling. I thought that these could benefit from further development.

2. Policy Evaluation and/or Policy Development

It seems like the focus is on policy evaluation but there could be more emphasis on the implications from the evaluation of:

- a. Use of rigorous methods versus development of new methods?*
- b. France primarily and/or global (or EU only)?*
- c. Making connections with policy-makers, other universities, etc. How important is this to LIEPP and funders? Are these key, and if so do they need more attention?*
- d. How much effort should be devoted to mounting conferences, dialogues and other ways to promoting interdisciplinary evaluations and projects?*
- e. See below re big data, new methods.*

3. Interdisciplinary Research

There are multiple ways to encourage interdisciplinary (or cross -disciplinary) research:

- a. select and fund those most interested in conducting interdisciplinary research (risk of not getting 'top' people and more difficult to find a departmental home, etc.;*
- b. attract top people in their fields to tackle a policy topic from their own perspective;*
- c. as in b above but have people from different disciplines tackle the same policy issue;*

- d. a hybrid in which there is a bit more coercion to have people work together, learn from each other and hope to change over time.

The latter could occur from joint funding, conferences, dialogues etc. Which ones does LIEEP want to pursue? It would be good to have more comment regarding the options and the approaches that LIEPP most supports. I favor using a mix.

Use approaches to engage people across disciplines on the same topics and provide opportunities to learn from each other and to see possibilities of working with different disciplines.

Develop a cadre of those more interested in interdisciplinary approaches

4. *New Topics*

Health is a good topic to add. Because this is my area of work, I can see many subtopics with the broad area of health, e.g. health insurance policies: reimbursement of medical providers; most substantial coverage of the cost effective preventive services; the optimal degree of cross-subsidization; causes of rising prices, etc. Also, there are the more human capital health issues such as socio-economic determinants of health and inequalities, and even the use of more modern app-based approaches to improve health habits. I think that it would be good to be specific with respect to which areas LIEPP will focus. You could also indicate how you will make that determination, e.g. will it be decided organically by researchers or will you allocate resources to some specific areas?

“Natural risks.” As I mentioned while on skype, I am not sure how to interpret the term natural risks. To the extent that it is as I think, i.e. floods, earthquakes, and I do not even know what else; it is unclear to me how these would be key policy topics. Yes, there should be good government policies to alert the population re impending earthquakes (but I think that the evidence shows little benefit) but these natural risks do not link closely to many policy issues, other than cleaning up the mess post the “natural risk.” I would consider dropping this topic or making the topic much clearer and making a compelling case to the link to policy (and rigorous and new methods for analyzing). Or, the alternative would be to focus on environmental health policy or climate change more specifically. These are clearly policy related. They could be interpreted as French issues or global issues. Best to consider in what context LIEPP could have the biggest impact.

Immigration seems like an obvious choice. It can relate to the topic of labour and would be pertinent not only to France, but also to the EU and more broadly. This latter point leads me to a question: is the expectation for LIEPP to focus mainly/only on France or to conduct research and evaluation with more of an international focus? It would be important to match the proposed work to the funders’ expectations and LIEPP’s current and proposed expertise.

5. *New Disciplinary Fields to Add*

The case for legal studies is compelling. The study of regulations would be quite compelling too—would this be a part of Science Po’s legal studies?

Perhaps a good case could be made for including history, especially contemporary history, but a compelling case has not been made in the current write-up. It sounds more backward looking rather than forward moving.

LIEPP could also hire people with expertise in new methods for using big data.

6. *Data, Big Data and New Analytical Tools*

There are so many new opportunities in data including; 1) greater access to data ,e.g. big data, 2) methods of analyzing data, e.g. AI and machine learning, collecting data online through online questionnaires, scraping data off the Internet, etc., 3) methods of analyzing data, e.g. AI and machine learning, and 3) new ways to conduct RCTs and field studies , e.g. online discrete choice experiments to analyze alternative policies in advance of implementation. These new ways to gather, analyze data and to evaluate policies offer almost an overload of choices. I suggest that LIEPP should focus on a few that would be most feasible and productive and plan to develop expertise in them. A decision is to wait until researchers have problems when they choose to use new methods or to present new opportunities to students and faculty by mounting seminars etc. that is, similar to the seminar that you plan on experiments in discrimination Development of infrastructure, if the budget allows, might be a way to draw more faculty into conducting policy evaluations and interdisciplinary research.

7. *Budget*

In the future, there might be benefits to providing some budgetary data at the broadest level with the Board. How to allocate resources is key to growth and productivity at LIEPP. For example, the document stated that the plan is to continue support of current junior faculty, but it might be better to reduce their funding and hire a new person, or maybe not. New and useful opportunities might be developed by the Board engaging in discussions of resource allocation. Other issues might be how much to allocate to new data infrastructure and/or teaching new techniques.

Small notes:

- i.* I am not sure how to interpret the mid-term criticism that LIEPP is too closely identified with Sciences Po. I do not know if this is important to address even though the earlier proposals were clear about the pivotal role of Sciences Po. But, it is part of the earlier, broader question of making sure about whom is expecting what, and how you can take advantage of your resources and expertise to develop a strong match.
- ii.* I am also not sure how to interpret the second criterion for evaluation that will be used re ‘structuration promoted by the project’. This seems important but nebulous. Would

be good to have both a good understanding of this and pinpointed steps to meet this criterion.

Thomas D. Cook (Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Northwestern University, Institute for Policy Research et Joan&Sarepta Harrison Chair in Ethics and Justice)

Dear Bruno: Here are my final brief comments on the materials you sent us. They all boil down to one point: Yours is a research program on evaluation in the economic, social and political spheres, but where is the conceptual analysis of what evaluation is and of the method choices that are worth emphasizing because they best map onto what the functions of evaluation require.

1. I am happy that the great fear with which I left the last meeting many years ago has not been realized. I was then afraid that the work was going to be split up along disciplinary lines – with Economics taking the lead and doing its own discipline-centered projects and with Sociology and Political Science following along behind and doing projects from within their own disciplinary traditions. My fear was that the resulting research would not be multi-disciplinary and multi-method, like so much of evaluation requires. Evaluation is a trans-discipline, much like the decision sciences or neuro-science or behavioral economics or communication studies. To pretend otherwise is to miss the boat. Fortunately, that fear has been reduced, though not entirely eliminated.

2. I was also pleased to see the work being organized around more and more topic themes like education, health, urban issues, higher education, etc. The more the work is based on colleagues from different disciplines talking concretely about specific evaluation projects the better.

3. My own experience after spending a year at SciencesPo about 12 years ago was that evaluation was not even considered then as a domain of research. The institution also did a poor job of teaching causal methods, though this is central to Evaluation. I never heard the Rubin Causal Model mentioned anywhere. No one was teaching about randomized experiments, no-one was doing them, and when I talked about doing them people stared at me blankly as though I was from Mars. I never heard or read about anyone at Sciences Po using sophisticated quasi-experimental methods – e.g., the simplest form of regression-discontinuity design or more complex forms like comparative regression discontinuity. There was some incidental mention of the simplest form of interrupted time-series design, but not of more elaborate versions of it with comparison time series or switching replication. Simple difference of difference designs were routinely used without much appreciation of what to do about hidden variables. I never heard any discussion of how to better meet the strong ignorability assumption either through theoretical and empirical analyses that directly examined selection processes or through efforts that set out to reduce the bias from hidden variables by selecting non-equivalent comparison groups locally and then selecting “rich” sets of covariates, being careful about the ambiguity and diverse meanings of “rich”. I left Sciences Po 12 years

ago thinking it was a backwater of the experimental and quasi-experimental design principles that figure so prominently in discussions of evaluation elsewhere.

4a. I was glad to see, therefore, in what I read that there is more on methodology and on LIEPP's role in propagating better causal methods within the French social science community interested in social and economic policy. I also know that the French social science community is now much more advanced than 12 years ago, and it pleased me to see that Sciences Po has recruited from CREST, where there was the beginnings of serious interest in novel causal design practices even 12 years ago. The new methodological trajectory that I read about is promising, therefore. However, what I would like to see is a sequence of a few courses on Methods in Evaluation that would be taught to Economists, Political Scientists and Sociologists together and that would form the basis for professional development elsewhere in France.

4b. A central function of evaluation is to describe the effects of policies, programs and pilot projects. This is clearly a causal task and so high standards of causal method are required. One part of placing emphasis on causation would require coursework and professional development training in Causal Design and Analysis, albeit with more emphasis on the former than the latter. It would cover the Rubin Causal Model, randomized experiments of various forms, Regression-Discontinuity in its various forms, Interrupted Time Series in its various forms, and Difference in Difference in the few forms that are worth promoting (with theoretical or empirical analysis of the selection process and covariates tailored thereto or, more likely, with local comparison group choices, use of pretest measures of the study outcome, and a "rich" set of other covariates). With decent coverage of design, many analytic issues fall easily into place, and analytic techniques like propensity score analysis and the like are not hard to understand and place in their legitimate context. The point is that the need to describe "what works" is so fundamental to evaluation that anyone calling him- or herself an evaluator has to be fluent in the best traditions of experimental and quasi-experimental design. Without that, there is no quality causal knowledge; there are only numerous assumptions to be swallowed whose validity is opaque.

4c. The second part of method training in Evaluation has to do with what is often loosely called Mixed Methods. Among other things, Evaluation requires understanding implementation processed at several levels, including the ground level where services are delivered. Implementation is worth study in its own right even if it is subject to the dilemma that improving a policy's implementation will not improve a policy whose fundamentals mean that it cannot work. Instead, one merely learns how to better implement what is inadequate either on theoretical grounds or because the resources needed for effectiveness are not realizable. This is why implementation is secondary to describing a policy's effectiveness. Even so, implementation is still very important because it can sometimes be improved in simple ways and because we would like to relate the level of implementation to the level of results. Technically speaking, we aspire to a treatment on treated estimand

as well as an intent to treat one, for each is of interest to different stakeholder groups in any social policy. But what are the methods one might use to examine implementation and to relate it to levels of effectiveness? At issue here are different qualitative methods that are useful under different sets of conditions and different quantitative methods for assessing implementation quality and quantity. Then there is the issue of relating implementation to outcome data either qualitatively or, more likely, quantitatively in, say, instrumental variable analyses where the exclusion restriction is clearly met – viz., when there is random assignment or regression-discontinuity.

5. Evaluation is another emerging trans-discipline in the social sciences, albeit one of the smaller ones. It has its own theory and practice guidelines, none of which I saw in the documentation sent me. How can LIEPP researchers learn about what the field of evaluation entails? Evaluators have to know at least 5 knowledge bases: (1) Practical theories of social programming – the difference between policies, programs, projects and practices; the different sources of leverage each offers for social change; the different stakeholder groups with an interest in each; and what these difference mean for how one approaches an evaluation task? (2) Theories of knowledge; How to create practical knowledge at the highest levels possible about implementation, about causal impacts and also about how implementation levels relate to causal results; what to do with archival data; when to collect new data, etc. – see my notes above; (3) Theories of Value are also required since the description of a program's results is not the same as placing a value on those results – the latter has to do with conceptual analyses of whose interests are promoted by the results a program or policy achieves, by cost-benefit analyses, by organized discussions of the results among potentially affected parties, including ministerial ones, etc.; (4) Theories of the Use of social science information – a major aim of evaluation is to get results used – but by whom, through which processes that researchers have studied in the past, through which direct processes of use, through which indirect and sometimes delayed processes, etc.? And finally (5) Theories of Evaluation Practice – how the elements of (!) through (4) above are put together in individual evaluation projects designed to answer questions about a policy, program within constraints of budgets, time, personnel, data sources, and the like. Thus, practical theories of evaluation are about the trade-offs one has to make in designing studies and how to evaluate these very trade-offs. The materials I was sent were devoid of any consideration of what is special about Evaluation and devoid of consideration of the work of those who have thought hard about evaluation. Anyone interested might want to consult *Foundations of Program Evaluation* by William J Shadish et al.