



Evaluation Summary

Diplomacy, Trade, and International Assistance Coherence in the Europe, Arctic, Middle East and Maghreb Branch, 2017-18 to 2022-23



ABOUT THE EVALUATION

Global Affairs Canada's Evaluation Division conducted a thematic evaluation of the Europe, Arctic, Middle East and Maghreb Branch (EGM) that examined coherence across business lines, including diplomacy, trade, and international assistance, covering the period 2017-18 to 2022-23. It is the last in a series of 4 geographical coherence evaluations. Its main objectives were to provide an assessment of the extent to which the EGM Branch operated in a coherent manner across business lines and to examine the factors that either fostered or impeded this coherence.



KEY FINDINGS

- Leadership was vital to coherence and most impactful on the ground where the connections between business lines were most visible and needed.
- HQ executive staff with previous cross-stream experience were better equipped to provide tangible and operational guidelines to their teams, and Heads of Missions were a key point of convergence for business lines in the branch.
- Mandated joint initiatives provided clear messaging on priorities and goals; without which coherence took a less efficient *ad hoc* approach.
- Planning and strategy were conflated to mean the same thing across EGM branch.
- Coherence was not well understood nor interpreted in the same way; creating missed opportunities for strategic integration points across streams.
- Regional and countries strategies were relatively uncommon across the branch. When they were present, they made priority and planning exercises more effective.
- A reliance on annual planning exercises and Strategia were primarily stream-specific with short-term goals and made coherence less purposeful.
- Corporate systems were limited in their contributions to integrated planning, reporting or sharing of information across streams (except for SharePoint).
- Staff capacity to undertake coherent work was challenged by limits to time and a high degree of urgency in core responsibilities.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. EGM should identify opportunities to create structured processes and operational approaches that build coherence through improved communication and engagement between business lines, at the country or regional level, where appropriate.

