

### How can SAIs ensure they are valued by all branches of government?

The Young EUROS AI Congress 2019 recognises the need to ensure that the work of the Supreme Audit Institution is valued by government.

The members of this committee perceive the following challenges to supreme audit institutions to ensure it is valued by government.

#### Challenge One

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##### Lack of clarity

The lack of clarity around the SAI's position in relation to parliament and government is a challenge because sometimes our mandates are unclear or are no longer relevant; which can lead to uncertainty in our role for the public, parliament and government. Improving the clarity of a SAI's positions is important because it will increase the capacity to act, add value and make it harder for our findings to be ignored. A clearer mandate will help government engage with SAIs more effectively.

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#### Challenge Two

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##### Being recognised

Getting recognition from society is a challenge because SAIs are not using the correct channels of communication or outputs to reach stakeholders. Recognition is important so that society has access to accurate and factual information to strengthen their position in society.

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#### Challenge Three

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##### Timing

Timing is a challenge for SAIs as much of our work is backward looking and takes place after spending, or a specific programme has been completed. When SAIs deal with the results of a programme after the fact, this gives them little power to influence the result and make positive suggestions while delivery is ongoing. Assessment of delivery during the programme is important because it will help SAIs to have impact early, and affect change when change is possible.

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#### Challenge Four

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##### **Right tool for the right job**

A SAI needs to have the right tools in a changing environment because, new tools and resources are required to react to changes in external and internal events and deliver outputs that reflect the changing

needs. Having the right tools is important as it enables us to ask the right questions and provide the right answers to help our intended audiences engage with our findings. The right tools also ensure quality in our outputs.

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**To address these challenges today and in the future Supreme Audit Institutions need to take the following actions**

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### **Action One**

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#### **Exercise our mandates**

A SAI should be bold and assertive and request government to clarify their position and role to make it harder for the work of a SAI to be brushed aside by government. It will also enable government to understand what is required from them in responding to our findings and recommendations.

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### **Action Two**

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#### **Broaden our communication channels**

The use of channels to allow SAIs to directly communicate their message to society, so that they maintain control over the information they produce. SAIs should target a wider, more diverse audience by using fast products on specific, relevant topics to increase awareness of their work. This will make SAIs recognised in the public as a source of relevant information.

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### **Action Three**

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#### **React and flex the work programme**

SAIs need to be reactive and flexible in the timing of their studies. This will enable assessment of programme delivery and spending at different stages and to enable SAIs to have more impact across the delivery cycle and to deliver findings that are relevant to ongoing work, rather than providing assessment of programmes and spending that is in the past.

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### **Action Four**

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#### **Experiment**

SAIs should start pilots to test and trial new tools and research methods. Start pilots to start experimenting with new tools. This will help us work out the tools that work and are appropriate for the new challenges we face and to make sure we are equipped to answer the questions required of us.

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