



Promoting social inclusion through effective use of EU funding
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METHODOLOGY

FOR MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL ACTION PLANS IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL INCLUSION

What is a public policy?

The overall intervention implemented by a certain institution or a group of institutions with the aim to influence certain societal phenomena or a problem;

The key characteristics of the public policy are:

- It is implemented by a relevant institution with a political, legislative and financial authority;
- It represents a reaction of a concrete appearance or a problem;
- It is directed to fulfill pre-defined goals;
- It is not an isolated action, but a set of synchronized steps and strategies;

SOCIAL INCLUSION

(topics of interest)

- ➔ Gender equality and women's position
- ➔ Non-discrimination
- ➔ Domestic violence
- ➔ Poverty
- ➔ Mental and physical impediment
- ➔ Children on the street/street children
- ➔ Kids without parents and parental care
- ➔ Addictive diseases

Improvement of the effectiveness and efficiency of the public policies is a process demanding a continuous follow up of their implementation according to the defined plans and goals and indicators, by those who should implement them (the state institutions), as well as by everyone who has an interest in their realization. In conditions of rather limited resources, today, more than ever, when governments are under constant pressure from different interest groups (users and rights holders, civil society organizations and individual citizens, as well as different groups of interest and media) regarding the efficiency of spending the public funds and realization of the determined goals. All of these actors want to see not only a good intention in regards of resolving the different social questions, but also concrete steps and visible results in overcoming the existing problems. One

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process like this results in establishing a result-based public management, where the focus is placed on the efficiency and effectiveness of the institutions in implementation of positive societal changes, by creating and implementing productive public policies, promoted through strategies, programs and action plans.

Hence, the interest to monitor the public policies becomes more frequent focus of those who serve as a bridge between the citizens and the states, such as civil society organizations, as well as different academic and

*„It is not always the same, to be
a good man and a good citizen“
Aristotle*

scientific research centers and institutes with focus on public policies. In this manner, all these actors are trying to influence systematically on the improvement of the position and rights of different social groups and on overcoming the detected negative appearances and problems.

The goal of this document is to provide directions for monitoring of the results from the implementation of the public policies, first off all in the field of social inclusion, in order to improve the capacities of the civil society organisations to get proactively involved in the process of follow up and creating of the public policies, and in this way to realise the influence in regards of the questions and groups they represent.

Based on the guidelines presented in this document, your task is:

- to conduct monitoring to a certain part of the local action plans for social inclusion, using primary data sources (which you will get by implementing interviews and focus groups) and other data sources (which you will identify by desk research and analysis of existing documents from previous researches).
- to prepare a document for public policies, or monitoring report as a result of the implemented research and analysis of the extent of implementation of the action plans.

In the following text, there is a short description of the basic characteristics of the mentioned research methods, as well as a suggestion concept frame for your monitoring report.

What is monitoring?

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Monitoring is a systematic process of gathering data with the aim to get a better overview of the implementation of specific policies, in a given time, in regards to previously determined goals and indicators.

Monitoring:

- ➔ Provides check of the pre-determined goals;
- ➔ Connects the activities with the results;
- ➔ Gathers data regarding the indicators to compare the results with the set targets;
- ➔ Reports for the policy implementation and highlights the problems and obstacles;

Monitoring is focusing on two aspects:

1. Are the suggested activities implemented according to the plan?
2. Has the implementation of the planned activities contributed to the realization of the desired results, or fulfilled the desired social changes?

Key aspect of the monitoring process is gathering data. There is a difference between primary and secondary data or the data we find in the frame of other research papers and analysis (secondary), with same or similar goal and primary data, which are result of the research we conduct on our own. Since the public policies are usually complex, most often the data that we are going to analyze will be a combination of both, primary and secondary data.

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Documents of interest:

- Program for social protection development 2011-2021
[Програма за развој на социјалната заштита 2011-2021](#)
- National strategy for elderly people 2010-2020
[Национална стратегија за стари лица 2010-2020 година](#)
- National strategy for decreasing poverty and social exclusion 2010-2020
[Национална стратегија за намалување на сиромаштијата и социјалната исклученост 2010-2020](#)
- Action plan for prevention and work with sexual child abuse and paedophilia
[Акционен план за превенција и справување со сексуална злоупотреба на деца и педофилија](#)
- National strategy for equality of rights of people with invalidity 2010-2018
- National strategy for prevention and protection from domestic violence 2012-2015
[Национална стратегија за спречување и заштита од семејно насилство 2012-2015](#)
- Strategy for gender equality 2013-2020
National strategy for equality and discrimination 2016-2020
- National strategy for equality and non- discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, age, mental and physical impediment and sex

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE AT:

<http://mtsp.gov.mk/dokumenti.nspix>

Other sources of data

As secondary data sources one can find different public available documents, reports, studies and analysis on the same topic, but when it comes to monitoring action plans, the primary source should be reports by the institutions responsible for their implementation. Other documents of interest can be relevant national policies, statistical data and analysis. For example, for the local action plans for social inclusion, as secondary data sources should be taken in consideration also the quarterly and annual sector reports of the municipality, Gazettes, web site and social networks, reports and statistics of the local centers for social work, etc. The preliminary identification of documents of interest is made by desk research and further on, a key method for identification of secondary data is the method of document analysis, where we identify the useful data. We should not forget to mention and appropriately quote them as sources in our own reports.

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Quality research methods

Part of the data we are going to gather directly, through implementing our own research. For the needs of the small research projects, the focus of the monitoring reports will be the quality research methods, focus group and half-structured interview.

The two methods will be based on discussion in order to gather more data for the phenomena we are interested in, where we direct the discussion along the lines of previously prepared questions. During the research phase, we can additionally research those topics of our interest that are resulting from the conducted discussion.

Interview

The interview represents a comprehensive research discussion on individual opinion and experiences regarding the topic we are researching. The interviews are an organized form of discussion, in which the key aspect is actually the choice of people we are going to interview. They should be chosen in a way that will provide a specific insight in the topic of interest. Interviews can be:

Structured

Following a group of previously defined questions where the researcher does not have the freedom to modify the interviewing process. It has a similar function as the one of the survey, with the difference that it gives more accuracy in getting responses from the person being interviewed.

Semi-structured

Most commonly used form of conducting qualitative research. It is based on previously determined frame of topics that should be covered, but the researcher has the possibility and freedom to focus more on certain topics and questions based on the discussion with the interviewee.

Unstructured

This type of interview does not follow predetermined framework, but the researcher defines it during the process and he decides on spot the questions and topics that he/she is going to

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focus on. In this type of interview, the most important aspects are the skills of the researcher.

The interview is used for getting initial data and information regarding the researched problem or to get to know the individual experiences, to determine facts or generating new ideas. In the process of monitoring, the researcher can use the interview at the beginning, in order to get a comprehensive picture of the subject matter and then also to define concrete questions on which he/she wants to focus at a latter stage in the research or in order to confirm/check or find out more about specific topics deriving from previously conducted research.

Focus group

Focus groups are basically a form of a group interview. Most often they are executed in a group of 6-8 people, although they can be successfully conducted with 3 to 12 participants. In order to extract more data, the focus groups have an initial structure of topics, however, according to the discussion, the researcher (moderator) forms the final concept of the questions. In the same time, the group atmosphere creates more relaxed situation and most often leads to a rich with arguments debate in comparison with individual interviews, and it is also a time wise, better options if there is a strict deadline.

The main determinant of the focus group is the moderator who should have the experience and skills to effectively control the discussion in a way that will provide enough freedom for the participants to share their opinions, but also to keep the focus on the key areas of interest.

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RESEARCH ETHICS

- ➔ Confidentiality of the data we receive and the protection and privacy of the participants;
- ➔ Informed consent, which means that people included in the research have exact and clear image about the goals for which the data is collected, and they are properly informed about the possible risks and benefits that could result from their participation and they give a voluntary consent to participate in the research;
- ➔ Right to refuse/withdraw from participating: every participant should know that he/she has the right to backdown from the research without any negative consequences for him/her;
- ➔ Feedback – the participants should have the possibility to see the results from the research and the method of presentation of the results from their statements.

Draft framework for monitoring report

1. Title
2. Content
3. List of abbreviations
4. Abstract
(200-300 words that would intrigue the potential reader)
5. Introduction
(The goal of the introduction is to prepare the reader to better understand the document in front of him/her. It consists of a declaration of intention or sense of the document, description of the subject of analysis – problem, strategy, action plan, key topics of interest, specific challenges and difficulties we have encountered and a short description of the methodology and limitations)
6. Data analysis and key findings
(Sum of the received data, as well as the key findings of the analysis)
7. Conclusions and recommendations
8. Sources of information
9. Supplements (questionnaire etc.)

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*In the process of gathering information, it is very useful to fill out the monitoring matrix, which provides a better overview and possibility for comprehensive analysis of the gathered data.

Monitoring matrix

	INDICATORS	TARGETED/ USED FINANCIAL RESOURCES	DATA SOURCE	ACTIVITY STATUS	INDICATOR IMPLEMENTATION	REASON OF DEVIATION	RECOMMENDATION
PRIORITIES							
MEASURES							
ACTIVITIES							

REPORT PROMOTION

The goal of every policy paper is not only to be read, but also to be understood, discussed and promoted. Therefore, even at the beginning of the planning process, the researcher should know exactly to whom we are going to address the document, i.e. what is our audience. The promotion of the report is essential in achieving the goals of our analysis; therefore, each promotional step needs to be accurately planned and executed.

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