



From Insights to Policy Impact – Monitoring and Driving Change

The European Centre's experience in knowledge translation
and research-based solutions for effective social policy

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15 October 2026

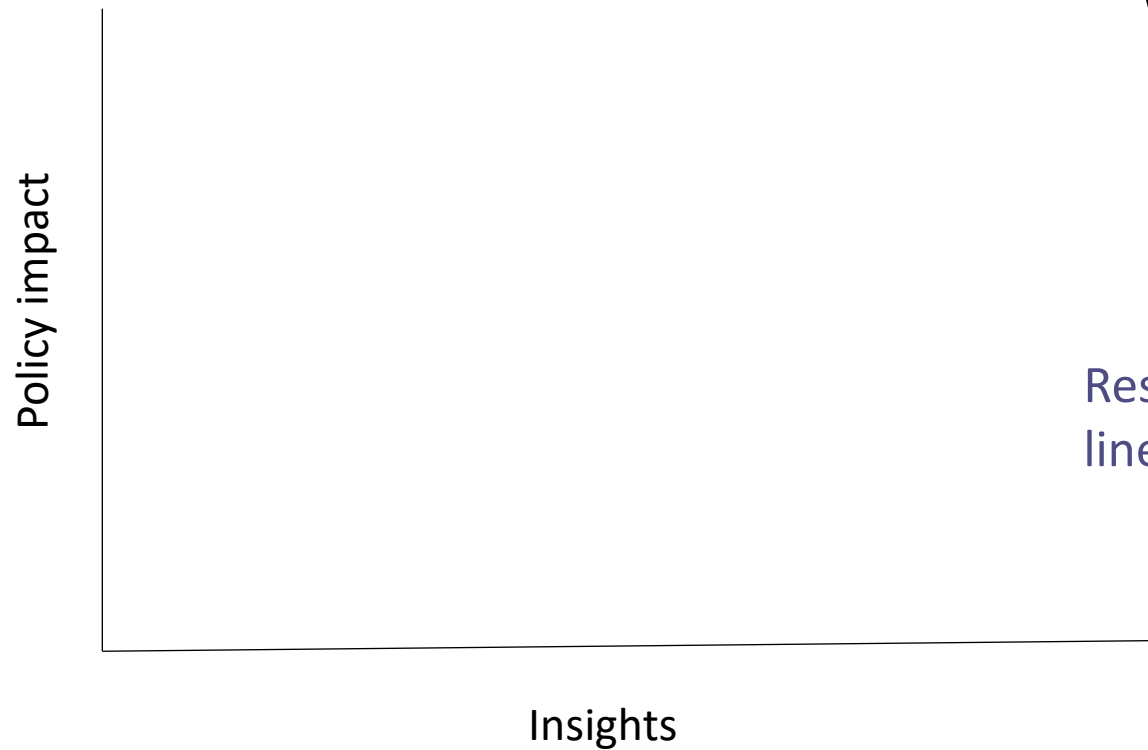
EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY AND RESEARCH

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2026

The “messiness” of impact



“It takes an extraordinary concatenation of circumstances for research to influence policy decisions directly.”

(Carol H. Weiss, 1979)

Research rarely moves into policy in a linear or fully controllable process

Four projects: examples of different ways our research can contribute to better social policies



NEXT-UP

Innovative Approaches to
Enhancing Youth's
Education-Employment
Transitions in Post-COVID-
19 Europe

01/2025 – 06/2028



FELM

Fair Labour Mobility EU:
Counselling Network and
Research for Mobile
Migrant Labour

01/2026 – 12/2026



EDE II

European Disability
Expertise II

03/2024 – 03/2028



Danube Strategy

Support Services for
Bilateral Labour Market
Cooperation in the
Danube Region 2025-
2029

02/2025 – 12/2029

NEXT-UP

Innovative Approaches to Enhancing Youth's Education-Employment Transitions in Post-COVID-19 Europe

Lisa Hanzl

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NEXT-UP – Navigating the Next Normal

Innovative Approaches to Enhancing Youth's Education-Employment Transitions in Post-COVID-19 Europe



Long-term impacts on transition of youth from school/education to work/employment



Co-creating evidence-informed, future-oriented policies and programmes, alongside innovative stakeholder engagement



Include young people's voices through detailed, longitudinal interviews

NEXT-UP – Navigating the Next Normal

What we do in the project?

**Step 1: Policy Overview**

Types of policies implemented
around the Covid-19 crisis

Identified **4 different types** of
policies

Done

Step 2: Policy Analysis

Identify **effectiveness** of policies
through systematic review of
academic and grey literature

Analysis of policies around
employability implemented
between 2001 and 2026

Running

Step 3: Policy Design

Create specific, actionable
youth employability designs

Will be tested and refined with
stakeholders in **living lab**

Open

NEXT-UP – Navigating the Next Normal

What we do in the project?

**Step 1: Policy Overview**

Types of policies implemented
around the Covid-19 crisis

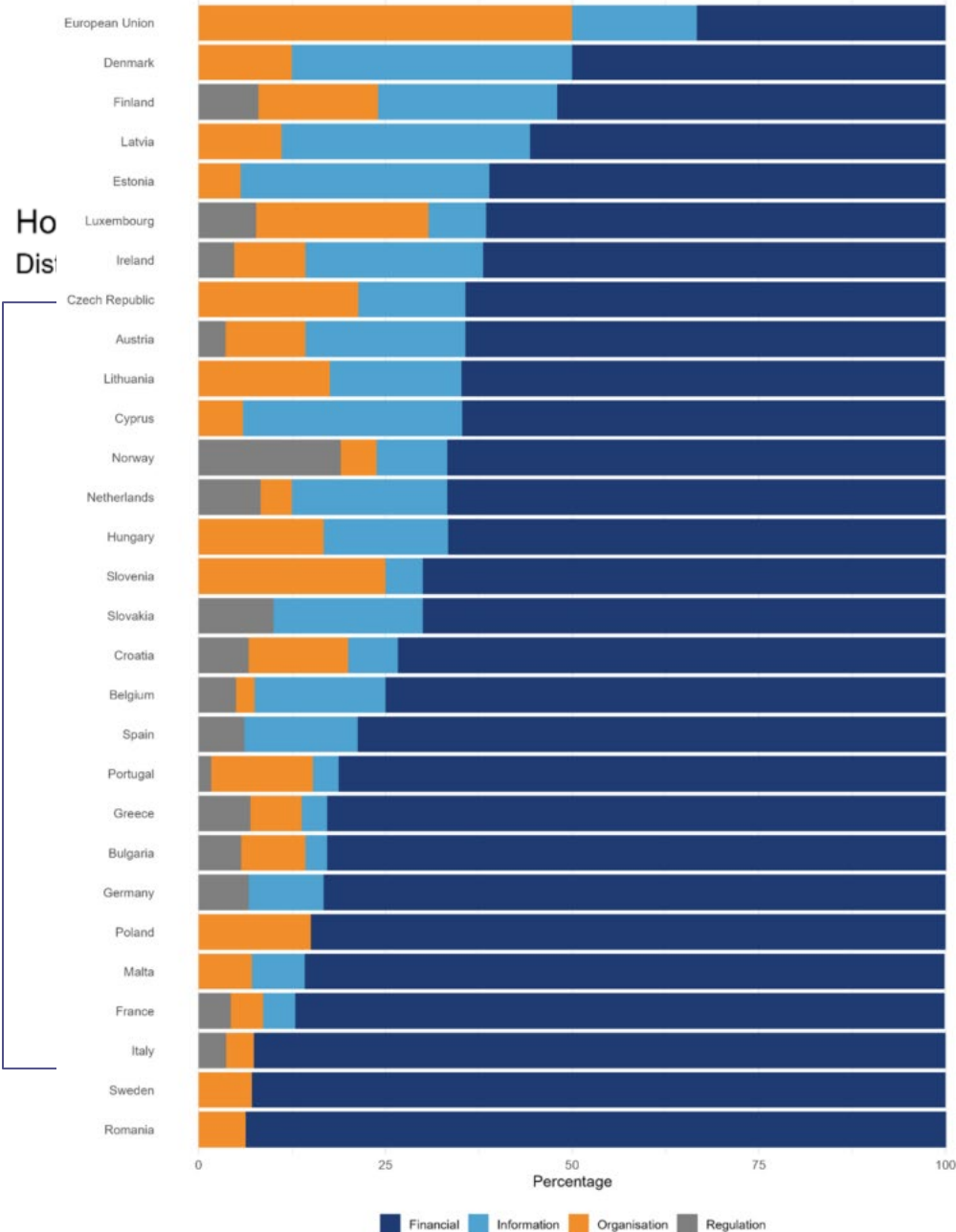
Identified **4 different types** of
policies

Done

RQ: How do countries aim to enhance youth employability
during and after the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Transitions of young people heavily interrupted due to COVID-19
- Different countries reacted to the arising/deepening issues with different policies
→ we mapped this policy response of EU-27/EFTA countries
- For this we collected **700 (employment/training/education) policies** and grouped them into different categories to give a useful overview

The Policy Instrument Mix by which Countries Aim to Impact Youth Employability (2019–2022)
Countries ordered by financial instrument share



NEXT-UP – Navigating the Next Normal

Results from the policy overview

Hood and Margetts' (2007) four policy instruments:

Financial (Treasure): use money to influence behaviour.

Information (Nodality): inform, persuade, or signal to target groups.

Organisation: use of the state's own resources to deliver services, gather intelligence, or act.

Regulation (Authority): require, forbid, or standardise the behaviour of individuals and organisations through laws and regulations.

Information
12%

Next step in the project



Step 2: Policy Analysis

Identify **effectiveness** of policies through systematic literature of academic and grey literature

Analysis of policies around **employability** implemented between 2001 and 2026

Running

RQ: How **effective** are different kinds of policies targeting youth employability?

- Now that we know what **kinds of policies** were implemented, we are interested in knowing their **effectiveness**:
 - we collect scientific evidence of the impacts of these policies through a systematic literature review of academic and grey literature
- *Currently*: screening 75.000 scientific articles on employability programs and policies

FELM

Fair Labour Mobility EU: Counselling network and research for
mobile migrant labour

Eszter Zólyomi

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FELM – Fair Labour Mobility EU

Strengthening support and protection of mobile migrant workers

- Increased cross-border labour mobility and reliance on mobile and migrant workers in the EU (esp. in low-wage & labour-intensive sectors)
- Workers' protection has not kept pace, leaving many mobile workers insufficiently protected
- Mobile workers can face complex challenges, while access to support varies across countries/sectors → *fragmented rights & support systems*
- Cross-border cases are difficult to address through nationally organised support alone → *need for stronger transnational cooperation*
- Gaps in knowledge/practice → *need for tailored capacity building*



FELM – Fair Labour Mobility EU

Connecting research, practice & policy

Research - Mapping and empirical evidence (desk research, survey of counselling services, expert & practitioner interviews)

Capacity building and exchange - Counselling centres, transnational workshops, peer exchange

Translation - Recommendations for policy and practise

Link to broader strategies - Funded under Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions (PPPA) as part of the European Commission's Fair Labour Mobility Package (2026)

Funding confirmed for a second year



Counselling services and collaboration links mapped through the FELM survey

FELM – Fair Labour Mobility EU

Generating waves of impact

Raising awareness

Maps and identifies risks and gaps in existing protection and support for mobile/migrant workers – enhanced understanding of sector-and group-specific needs (incl. posted TCNs) for counselling and support

Confluence

Counselling centres, researchers, trade unions, worker support organisations pulled in the same direction -bringing knowledge, experience, practices and actors into a transnational network

Impact on processes

Coordinated cross-border case-handling, harmonised counselling standards, expanding/upscaling existing counselling centres/network – changing how support is organised and delivered

Impact on systems

Potential change in institutional arrangements – EU-wide permanent transnational counselling network

Impact on end-users

More accessible low-threshold, multilingual and targeted counselling/support for mobile/migrant workers

EDE II

European Disability Expertise

Eszter Zólyomi

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European Disability Expertise – EDE II

About EDE II

Provides independent, scientific data on disability policies and legislation supporting the European Commission:

- Informing EU disability policies (e.g., European Semester)
- Contributing to future policy development & mainstreaming disability
- Raising awareness & fostering dialogue with DPOs and EU MS
- Facilitate reporting under the UN CRPD

European Disability Expertise – EDE II

Analysis of the public consultation informing the EU Disability Strategy 2021-2030



Danube Strategy

Support Services for Bilateral Labour Market Cooperation in the
Danube Region 2025-2029

Sabina Gjylsheni

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Danube Strategy



The EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) is a macro-regional strategy adopted by the European Commission in December 2010, endorsed by the European Council in 2011 and was jointly developed by the Commission together with the Danube Region.



Challenges: limited economic and social progress, widespread corruption and lower efficiency in public administration.

Aim

- To provide guidance and services towards integrated policies and solutions that are based on the needs of the respective countries: **Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Moldova and Ukraine**

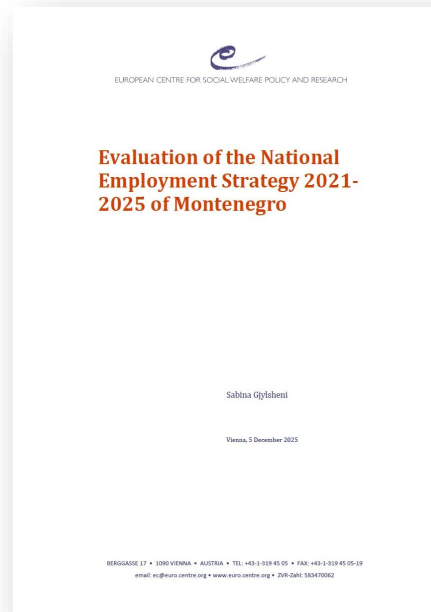
Method

- Policy document reviews, desk research, interviews, workshops, etc.

Milestones

2025

Evaluation of the National Employment Strategy of Montenegro 2020-2025 in the form of a policy document review for the Ministry of Labour and Social Dialogue of Montenegro (assessment of its status quo)

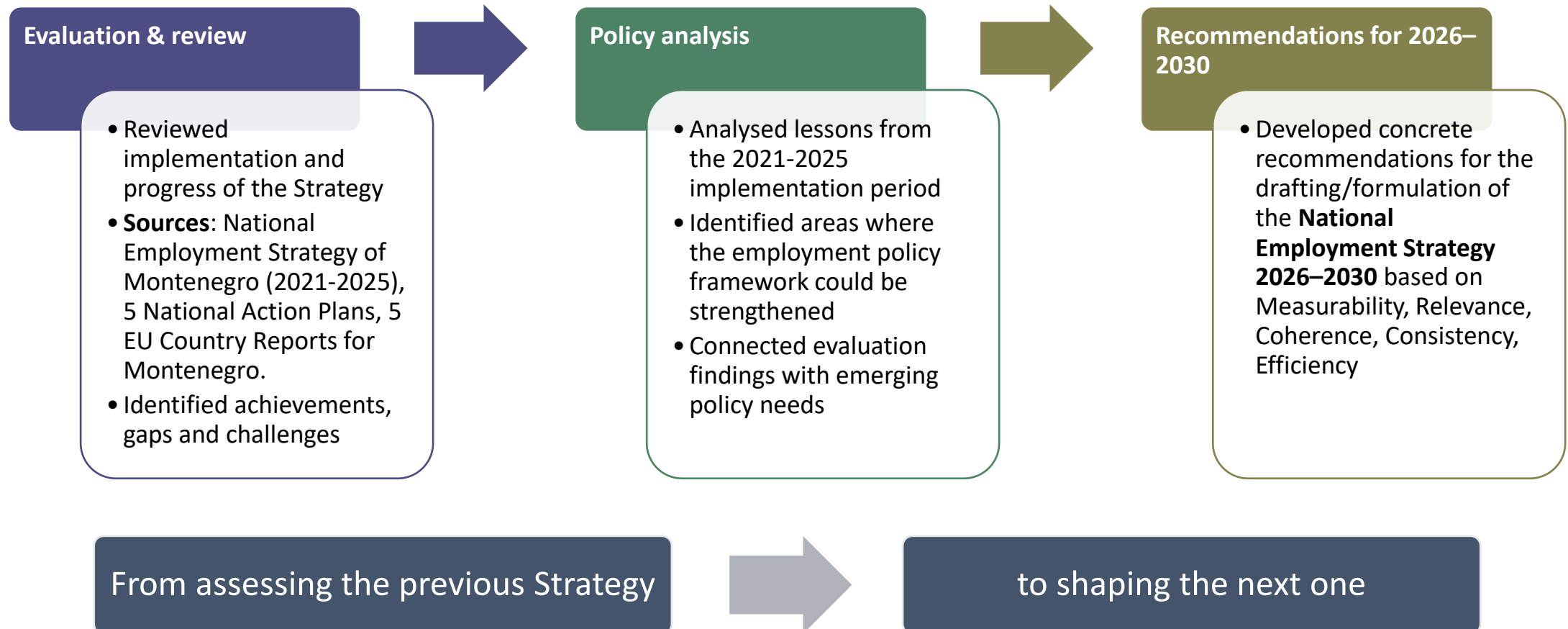


2026

Provision of analytical and advisory support to the Ministry of Labour and Social Dialogue of Montenegro regarding the development of the National Employment Strategy of Montenegro 2026–2030

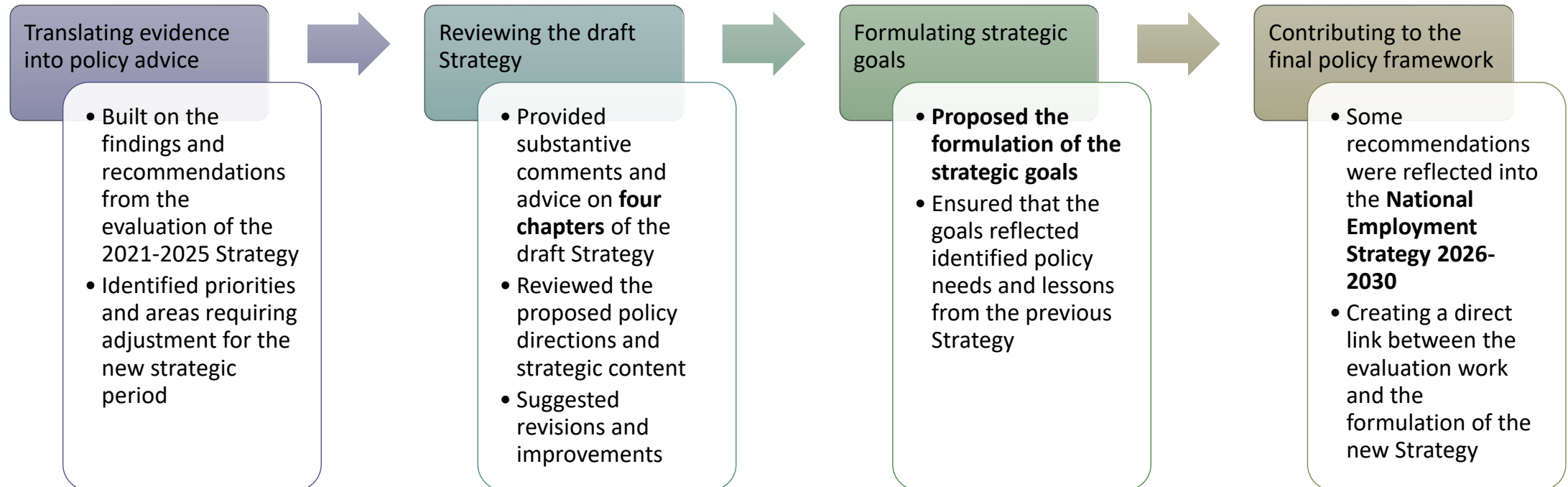
From evaluation to evidence-based policy recommendations

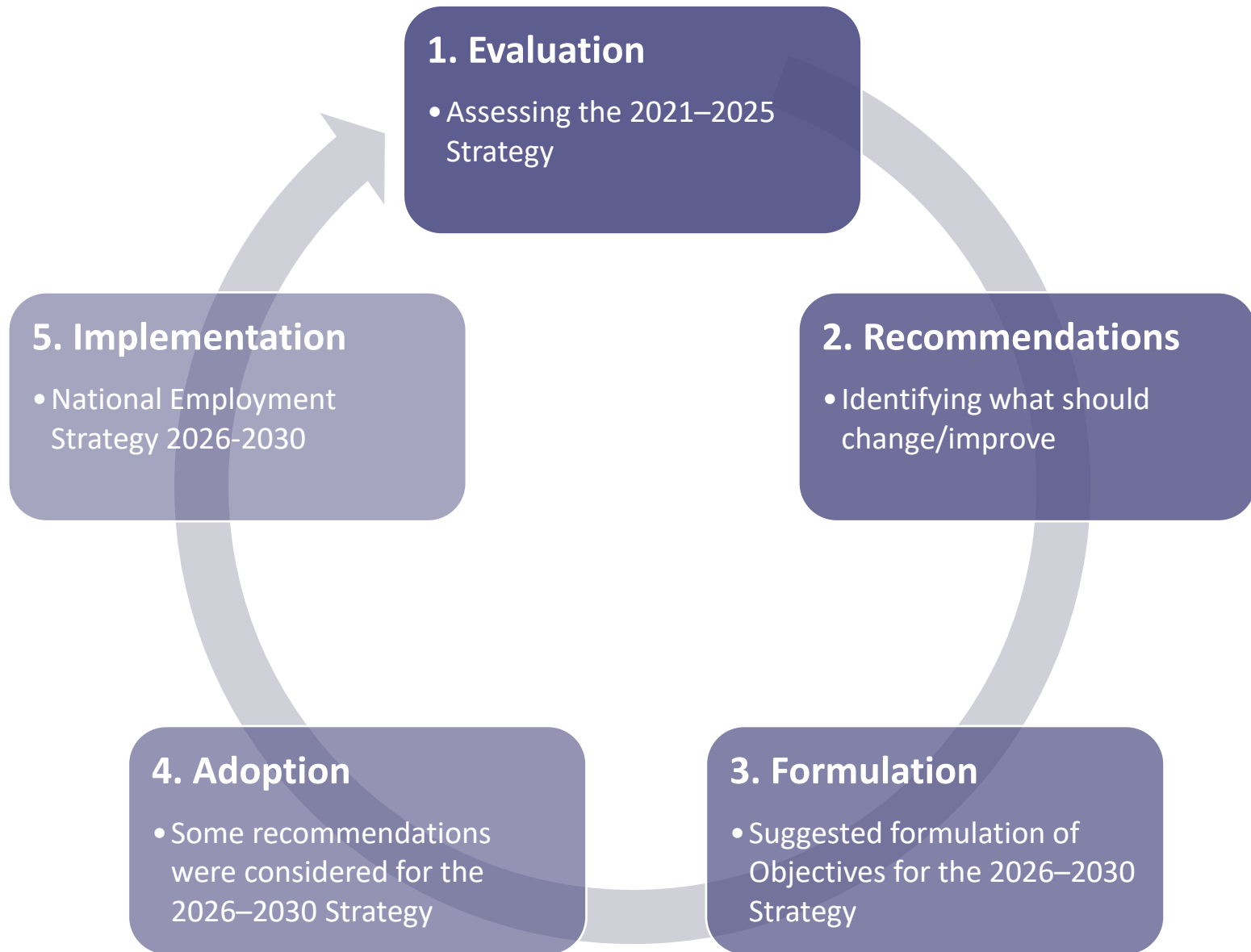
Evaluating Montenegro's 2021-2025 National Employment Strategy for the 2026-2030 Cycle



From policy recommendations to formulation to impact

Advising on Montenegro's Draft 2026-2030 National Employment Strategy





From anticipating change to shaping policy

We look ahead

Anticipating future challenges and generating forward-looking evidence

NEXT-UP

We bring knowledge, practice and stakeholder input together

Connecting research and practice to build evidence and recommendations

FELM

Bringing expertise and stakeholder perspectives into policy

EDE II

We engage with policy directly

Assessing policy in practice - learning from implementation to inform future policy

Danube Strategy

Different projects, different points in the knowledge-policy cycle, different routes to impact

One shared ambition:

Turning knowledge into better policy



Thank you!



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