



Better social inclusion

Recent findings from research and policy advice project work

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The Social Protection and Inclusion Research Team (SPI)

We design, coordinate and implement projects in the fields of:

- ❑ social inclusion and social protection policies
- ❑ poverty, income inequality and non-monetary aspects of well-being
- ❑ social services and support measures for marginalized groups and;
- ❑ the ageing society.

See more: <https://www.euro.centre.org/social-protection-and-inclusion>

1 NO
POVERTY



5 GENDER
EQUALITY



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



Outline

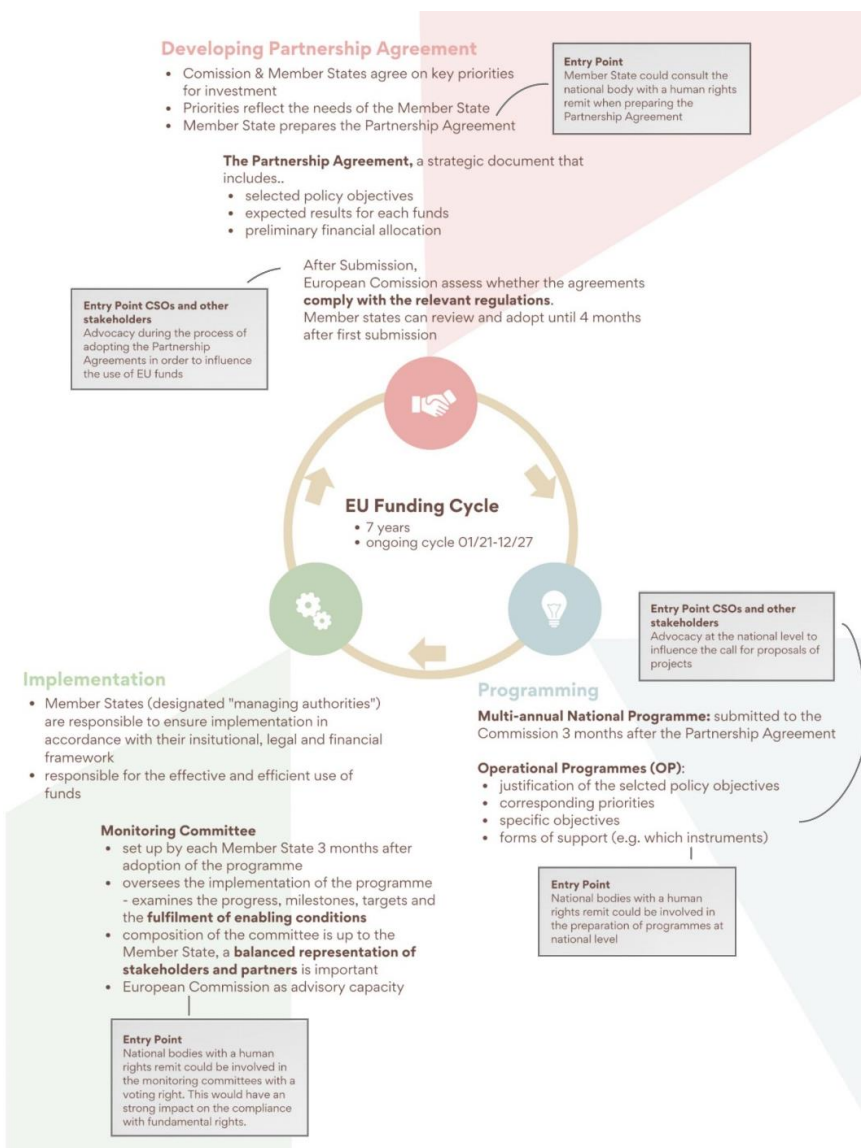
Focus areas of our current projects to contribute to better social inclusion policies in the UNECE region

- Funding, partnerships and evaluation
- Combatting poverty of children and their families
- Linking employment and social policies

Better social inclusion

Through funding, partnerships and evaluation 1/3

What role for National Human Rights Bodies (NHRB) to improve monitoring of EU funds in partnership?



Source: Birtha, M et al (2022), Desk research report, Providing technical assistance to national bodies with a human rights remit involved in assessing EU Charter & CRPD compliance of EU funds-EU level research, FRA-FRANET.

- ❑ EU funds contribute significant resources to social inclusion & regional development (esp. in CEE); MS must ensure the EU Charter for Fundamental Rights & UNCRPD are respected
- ❑ ESIF 2014-2020: Several problematic areas of investments, e.g. residential care settings for persons with disabilities, segregation of Roma children in education, reception facilities for refugees → better monitoring needed!
- ❑ **Identified challenges:** Lack of capacity & resources of NHRBs, lack of common understanding of discrimination/segregation, lack of political will to put pressure on MSs, shifting priorities etc.
- ❑ **Proposed recommendations:** Improve NHRB's capacities on technical aspects of the EU funding cycle, strengthen peer learning and knowledge transfer (e.g. lessons learnt from previous funding period), closer cooperation with NGOs, impose adequate implementation etc.

Better social inclusion**Through funding, partnerships and evaluation 2/3****Policies based on needs (Exploration on the use of synergies of European funds at all governance levels)**

- ❑ Partnership Principle as one of the main principles of programming and implementation of **cohesion policy**, recognised in the legislative framework.
- ❑ The **European Community of Practice on Partnership** (ECoPP) was established for the 2021-2027 programming period to facilitate exchange of experience with partnership and review the existing European Code of Conduct. It involves 180 members from all EU-27 (5 DGs, managing authorities of all CPR funds plus AGRI, regional/local public authorities, economic, social and civil society partners).
- ❑ Synergies in partnership approaches among different EU programmes and projects, European regions and governance levels are explored, for instance, in the sub-group **Complementarity of funds**

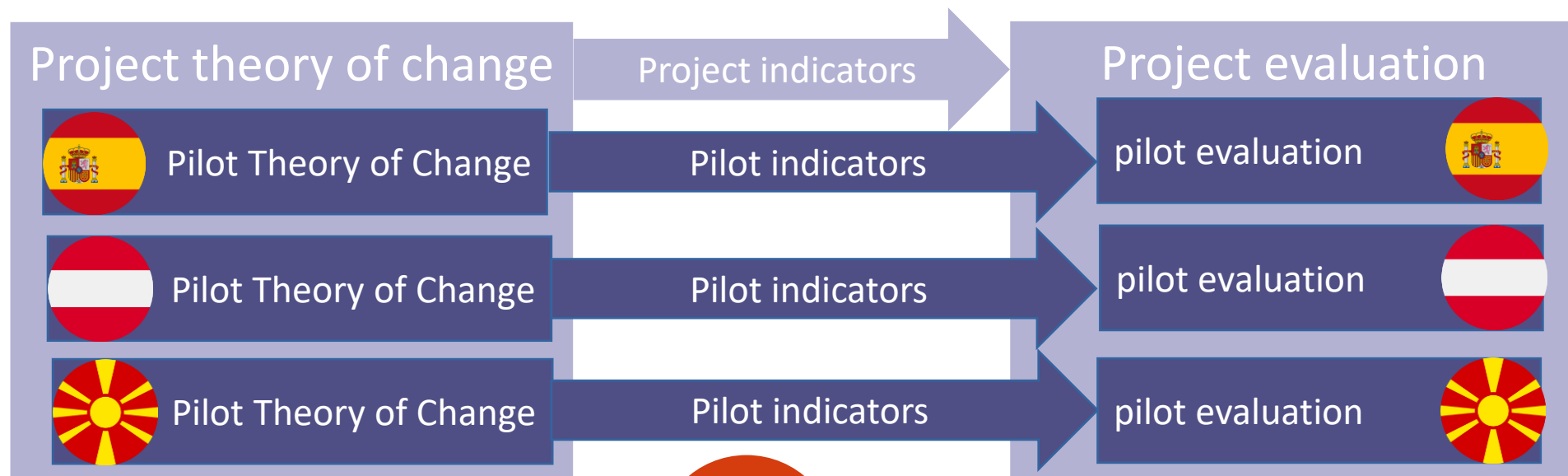


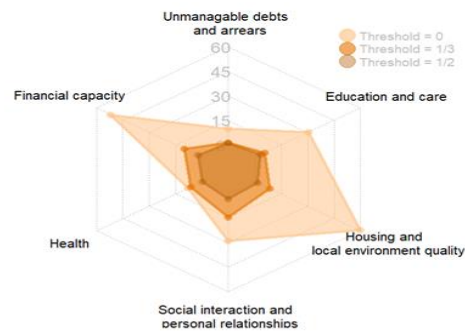
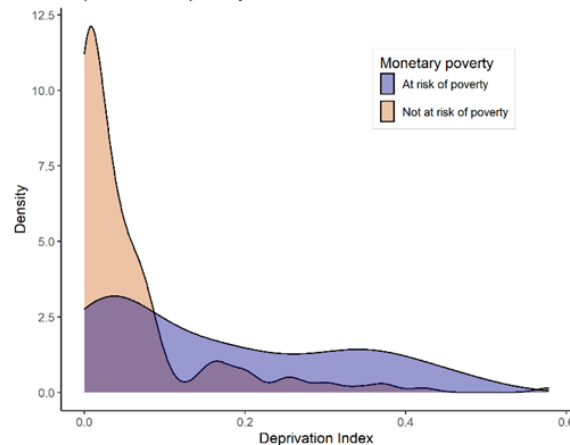
“Policies must be based on needs and not on the availability of the funds”

(Subgroup 1/Complementarity of funds)

Better social inclusion**Through funding, partnerships and evaluation 3/3****Stakeholder-driven evaluation in SPI**

- ❑ Fostering participatory processes to develop stakeholder-driven evaluation plans
- ❑ Developing pilot-specific indicators to assess SPI outcomes
- ❑ Aligning project and pilot theory of change, indicators, and evaluation plans
- ❑ Assisting pilot teams to carry out pilot evaluations and address challenges



Better social inclusion**Through combatting poverty of children and their families****Recent policy analyses (incl. recommendations) based on secondary data analysis (EU-SILC) and tax-benefit microsimulation****Child poverty index Vienna****Deprivation and poverty in Vienna**

- ❑ Simulating the distributive and fiscal impact of monetary family benefits in AT:
 - ❑ Existing family tax credit “family bonus” vs. proposed basic security for children (Volkshilfe Österreich)
- ❑ Analysing the situation of lone parents and their children during and after the COVID-crisis (Ministry of Social Affairs)
- ❑ Developing of an index to measure child poverty in European cities (City of Vienna)
- ❑ Analysing Effect of COVID-19 on poverty and material deprivation of children in AT (ÖNB Jubiläumsfonds)
- ❑ Writing Situation Analysis reports of children and adolescents in Croatia and Moldova with special focus on poverty and standards of living (UNICEF)

Better social inclusion**Through combatting poverty of children and their families**

Effect of COVID-19 on poverty and material deprivation of children in AT – Selected research questions

- How did the prevalence of at-risk-of-poverty (AROP) and material deprivation of children in Austria develop during the COVID-crisis?
- To what extent did the socio-economic background of children concerned change due to the crisis?
- How effective were COVID-induced policies and automatic stabilisers in counteracting an increase in child poverty and to what extent?
- How would alternative policies to counter child poverty have performed during the COVID-crisis?

Source: ÖNB Jubiläumsfonds project 18785

Better social inclusion**Through linking employment and social policies**

Integrated policy approaches

- ❑ Need to apply **targeted** and **integrated** policy responses: supporting the most vulnerable throughout the entire pathway of social integration (outreach, low-threshold services, activation measures, combined measures/integration chains, etc.)



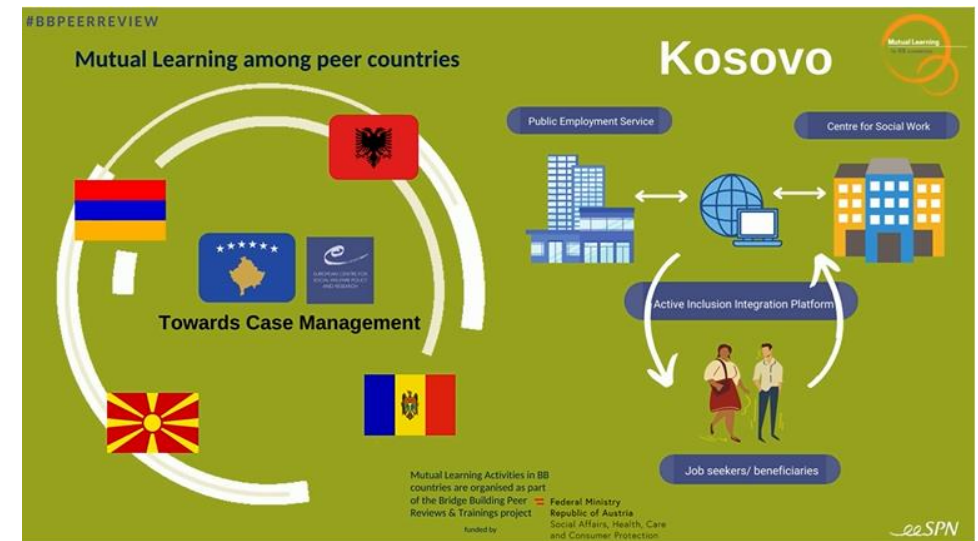
Armenia: Integrated Service Centres exist, but there is no system of unemployment benefits and activation measures for active adults and a social protection system that provides poverty relief (Scoppetta & Sandu, 2022)

Better social inclusion**Through linking employment and social policies****Integrated policy approaches**

- ❑ **Partnership** between **Employment** and **Social service agents** is key for assisting vulnerable groups more holistically in their integration pathway



The Active Inclusion Integration Platform (AIIP) has been developed collaboratively in Kosovo but a coherent regulatory framework is still needed (Scoppetta, BIRTHA & Sandu, 2022)



Lessons learnt from our projects

- ❑ There is no one-size-fits-all approach (to be) adopted in developing/strengthening the integrated policy approaches
- ❑ Many BB countries still need to develop/improve activation measures
- ❑ Once investment in segregating social infrastructure is done, it will continue to be used for different target groups proactive approach needed to foster social inclusion
- ❑ Partnerships are key for integrated policy approaches as well as monitoring and evaluation policies/EU funds - need to be fostered top down
- ❑ Economic crisis: children and youth among most disadvantaged groups
- ❑ For combating child poverty both monetary and non-monetary policies matter
- ❑ Monetary support for families/children: trade-off between tax credits and benefits; trade-off between universal and means-tested benefits
- ❑ War in Ukraine: Potential impact on social inclusion priorities in EU MS (e.g. institutionalisation of children with disabilities)

Areas for future work for the SPI team

- ❑ Evaluation of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine on monetary poverty and material deprivation, as well as on social welfare policies and services in the UNECE region
- ❑ State of play and impact of recent deinstitutionalisation reforms in UNECE region
- ❑ Inclusive labour market policies for persons with disabilities, role of social economy
- ❑ The effect of family policy instruments (cash, services) on the gender equality of parents and children's material well-being
- ❑ European Framework for Social Services of Excellence
- ❑ Implementation of principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights in the EU and WB



Thank you!



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