Reimbursable Advisory Services Agreement on Support in Implementing Activities A2, A3, A5, A6 and A7.2 of the project on „Increasing the efficiency of interventions within the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice and its coordinated structures” (P166070)

OUTPUT 3

Analysis of the regulations affecting the social inclusion indicators’ system in order to propose options to overcome the bottlenecks in order to make sure that the system can be properly implemented

February 18th, 2020
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This report has been delivered under the Reimbursable Advisory Services Agreement on Support in Implementing Activities A2, A3, A5, A6 and A7.2 of the project on „Increasing the efficiency of interventions within the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice and its coordinated structures” (P166070) signed between the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development on 18 September 2018. It corresponds to Output 3 under the above-mentioned agreement.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAPSI</td>
<td>County Agency for Payments and Social Inspection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSI</td>
<td>County Commission for Social Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEA</td>
<td>County Employment Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAS</td>
<td>Directorate for Social Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSPS</td>
<td>Directorate for Social Policies and Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESPROSS</td>
<td>European System of Integrated Social Protection Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU/UE</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-LFS/LFS</td>
<td>Labor Force Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-SILC</td>
<td>EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVS</td>
<td>European Values Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBS</td>
<td>Family Budget Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD</td>
<td>Government Decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDSACP</td>
<td>General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDSAMB</td>
<td>General Directorate for Social Assistance of the Municipality of Bucharest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDBPFM</td>
<td>General Directorate of Budgetary Planning and Financial Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEO</td>
<td>Government Emergency Ordinance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGS</td>
<td>Government General Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>General Objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labor Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARD</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIA</td>
<td>Ministry of Internal Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPF</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPWDA</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCITS</td>
<td>Ministry of Communication and Information Technology Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MER</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoH</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLSP</td>
<td>Ministry of Labor and Social Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTIC</td>
<td>Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAA</td>
<td>National Anti-Drug Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAE</td>
<td>National Agency for Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAEQ</td>
<td>National Agency for Equal Opportunities Between Women and Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAHT</td>
<td>National Agency against Human Trafficking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAP</td>
<td>National Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAPSI</td>
<td>National Agency for Payments and Social Inspection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAR</td>
<td>National Agency for Roma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NARPDCA</td>
<td>National Authority for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Children and Adoption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCSI</td>
<td>National Commission for Social Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHIH</td>
<td>National Health Insurance House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHPP</td>
<td>National House of Public Pensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIS</td>
<td>National Institute for Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRP</td>
<td>National Reform Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSRILSP</td>
<td>National Scientific Research Institute for Labor and Social Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSSSIPR</td>
<td>National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2015-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Priority Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEA</td>
<td>Permanent Electoral Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHD</td>
<td>Public Health Directorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSSA</td>
<td>Public Services of Social Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIQL</td>
<td>Research Institute for Quality of Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQSA</td>
<td>Romanian Quantitative Studies Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIAPFENF</td>
<td>Service for Implementation and Administration of Projects Funded from European Non-Refundable Funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>Strategic Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHA</td>
<td>System of Health Accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>Structure of Earnings Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIIRR</td>
<td>Integrated Information System for Education in Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO</td>
<td>Specific Objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIU</td>
<td>Social Inclusion Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WVS</td>
<td>World Values Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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1. Introduction

This report has been developed under the Reimbursable Advisory Services, aiming to support the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection’s efforts in: (i) developing a monitoring and evaluation system (M&E System) for the National Strategy for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction (NSSIPR), and social inclusion indicators for the programs under the coordination of the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice, and facilitating their integration into M&E System; (ii) the assessment of regulations affecting the M&E system and its implementation, and providing recommendations to improve them; (iii) training of the technical team and policymakers at the ministerial level on M&E, including data analysis and reporting; and (iv) the efficient implementation of M&E systems.

As part of the project, the team has developed reports covering the methodology and the indicator selection for the 3 components of M&E, and this report addresses legislative aspects.

This report briefly describes the M&E system, identifies the main challenges and bottlenecks faced by the M&E practices due to the existing legislation, regulations and operational instructions, and proposes options to overcome them. More specifically, the report summarizes the results of the following evaluations:

- the existing laws and regulations on the calculation and reporting of social inclusion indicators;
- existing regulations on the organizational structures which are or will be connected to the M&E systems in the field of social inclusion and poverty reduction.

The report is structured as follows: Chapter 2 describes the legal framework analyzed and the research methodology used, while the following chapters are dedicated to the analysis of specific laws. Thus, Chapter 3 describes the components of the M&E system piloted under the technical assistance project, Chapter 4 describes the relevant institutional architecture for the M&E system, more specifically the national mechanism to promote social inclusion, Chapter 5 briefly discusses other legal provisions related to those subject to the main analysis, while Chapter 6 proposes various recommendations.

2. Analysis of regulations which impact the systems of social inclusion indicators

2.1. Legal framework

The selection of laws to become subject of this analysis was performed by means of desk research and consultations with MLSP. The main laws considered for the analysis are GD no. 488/2005 and GD no. 1217/2006, the former because it enforces what we call “the main set of key social inclusion indicators”, and the latter because it defines the national mechanism to promote social inclusion and it mentions the structures of the mechanism which should coordinate the M&E systems in the field of social inclusion and poverty reduction.

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1 GD no. 488/2005 approving the national system of social inclusion indicators.
2 GD no. 1217 of 6 September 2006 setting up the national mechanism to promote social inclusion in Romania.
The main set of social inclusion indicators, the first component of the M&E system, was revised under the project, including indicators from the NSSIPR M&E system. The changes occurred meanwhile in the collection and calculation methodologies, and the changes in the socioeconomic situation of Romania were considered when proposing the indicators. The second component of the M&E system related to NSSIPR 2015-2020 was proposed under this project, as it was not developed during the Strategy design process and included in Decision 383/2015 approving the National Strategy and the Strategic Action Plan. The third component of the M&E system includes the MLSP program indicators and is related to the services and benefits currently managed by the Ministry, being monitored according to MLSP Organization and Functioning Regulation (2017), which defines the tasks of the Statistics Department to develop Statistical Bulletins.

Additionally, other laws were also considered. On the one hand, the calculation of indicators in the M&E system depends on the amendment or supplementation of other laws. For example, in order to calculate 4 indicators of the NSSIPR 2015-2020 M&E system, while 3 of them are also included in the main set, it is necessary to add the obligation to report information on local housing by the local public authorities in the Housing Law no. 114/1996\(^3\). On the other hand, MLSP intends to propose that the legislation related to the mechanism to prevent and combat social exclusion, such as Law no. 116/2002\(^4\) and GD no. 1149/2002\(^5\), should be repealed. Having regard to the fact that the laws regulating the M&E system are under a review process, the objective is to check whether it is important to maintain certain provisions on indicators of the law on preventing and combating social exclusion and whether it would be recommended to include them in the legislation on monitoring social inclusion. Other laws proposed for legislation review by MLSP, considered as potentially relevant for the M&E system are: Social Assistance Law no. 292 of 20 December 2011, Ordinance no. 68 of 28 August 2003 on social services and the Ministry Decisions on minimum quality standards for social services.

### 2.2. Analysis objectives and research methodology

The objectives of the legislation analysis are the following: (i) to evaluate legislative bottlenecks and opportunities for the implementation of M&E systems, (ii) to evaluate the functionality of the national social inclusion mechanism and central and local levels, (iii) to analyze the use of this mechanism as a coordinating structure of the M&E systems and (iv) participative development of recommendations to review legislation and institutional arrangements.

To reach this objective, a study with mixed research methods was designed, combining survey methods with qualitative interviews and with desk research.

The quantitative component consisted in two online surveys with the representatives of the Social Inclusion Units (SIU) at central level and of the County Commissions for Social Inclusion (CCSI). The online surveys aimed to determine whether these structures are active and to measure to what extent they fulfil their specific tasks, pursuant to GD no. 1217/2006. The online survey with the representatives of County Commissions for Social Inclusion was submitted by the WB team to all counties, especially to the Prefect’s Offices which coordinate CCSI and, if they did not respond, to the County Agencies for Payment and Social Services.

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3 Housing Law no. 114 of 11 October 1996, as further amended and supplemented.
4 Law no. 116 of 15 March 2002 on preventing and combating social marginalization.
5 GD no. 1149/2002 approving the methodological rules for the enforcement of Law no. 116/2002 on preventing and combating social marginalization, as subsequently amended and supplemented;
Inspection, which provide the secretariat activities. Eventually, we received filled-in questionnaires from 41 counties (Cluj County was the only exception). The online survey with the representatives of the Social Inclusion Units was submitted by MLSP representatives and applied in cooperation with the WB team. The institutions invited to fill in the online questionnaire/form are those mentioned in Annex 3 of GD no. 1217/2006. We received answers to the form from 14 out of the 19 entities of the central public administration from the above-mentioned annex.

The limitations of the online survey on the activity of the Social Inclusion Units are generated by the following circumstances: (i) the distribution of the questionnaire by the inter-ministerial working group, (ii) the questionnaire was self-administered, with support from the research team only inasmuch as it was requested, (iii) the existence of parallel advisory structures in the field of social inclusion. Thus, MLSP managed an inter-ministerial working group which was active as an advisory structure even under the current technical assistance project and it is very likely that the reports of the social inclusion units (regulated by GD no. 1217/2006) are rather related to this working group, without formal links to the national social inclusion mechanisms.

As regards the online survey with the representatives of the County Commissions, we note differences in the activity results reported under the survey and the activity reports available online, most likely due to the fact that certain Prefect’s Offices or CAPSIs do not publish their activity report on the website, do not report publicly/at central level on the activity of the Commission or provided desirable answers to the survey questions.

The qualitative study included (i) three interviews at central level, including two representatives of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MLSP) and one representative of the Social Inclusion Unit of the Ministry of Health (MoH); and (ii) eight interviews in 2 counties (Brăila, Călărași) with representatives of the following institutions which are members of the County Commissions for Social Inclusion: Prefect’s Office, CAPSii (Technical Secretariat of the Commission), SAD, DGSACP, CEA and PHD (carried out in October 2019). The two counties were selected based on both the desk research on activity reports and suggestions by MLSP representatives on active counties within the structure and, generally, in the field of social inclusion policies. The subjects we interviewed are active members of the County Commissions, representatives of the above-mentioned institutions.

The Interview guides are included in Annexes 1 and 2, while Annexes 3 and 4 include the questionnaires. The desk research includes several components:

- Analysis of the legal documents mentioned in the previous section;
- Analysis of activity reports of the Prefect’s Offices and of the County Agencies for Payment and Social Inspection available online on the institution website. This analysis was performed with MLSP support;
- Analysis of the organizational charts of the Prefect’s Offices;
- Brief analysis of the County Plans and of the Regulations on the Organization and Functioning of the County Commissions selected for the qualitative research.
3. The main components of the M&E system managed by MLSP

The main goal of the Technical Assistance provided to the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection is to support the Ministry in developing a comprehensive M&E system. M&E systems are crucial in the strategic planning process, as an instrument to follow-up the progress made in reaching the objectives set in the strategy and in the laws regulating the structure of the programs implemented by MLSP and by the structures under its coordination.

The Ministry collects, calculates and publishes various data on social inclusion, although with limited impact. The current set of social inclusion indicators (GD no. 488/2005) does not include any direct reference to the Strategy on social inclusion and poverty reduction and some indicators are no longer relevant, since they have not been revised in 15 years. The MLSP program indicators are published in several locations on the websites of MLSP and of the institutions under its coordination, following a rather difficult to predict structure, sometimes their reporting format is difficult to use (.pdf/Word), and certain key territorial breakdowns are either missing or not presented in a consistent manner. Therefore, it is necessary to streamline the reporting on these indicators to enable better use by decision-makers and other stakeholders.

The components of the M&E system addressed by the project are:

- The main set of key social inclusion indicators: a limited set of indicators which are highly relevant for Romania, selected from the NSSIPR indicators and designed so as to replace the set of indicators approved by GD no. 488/2005;
- The M&E component of the National Strategy for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2015-2020;
- The monitoring component of the programs implemented by MLSP.

3.1. Brief description of the revised main set of social inclusion indicators

This technical assistance project proposed a revised set of indicators building on the social inclusion indicators from GD no. 488/2005. The revised set was selected to be relevant for the public policy development process, be linked to the NSSIPR M&E system, reflect the specificities of the current socioeconomic situation of Romania, and be harmonized with the methodological changes at European level.

The revised set of key social inclusion indicators includes 47 indicators, which increases to 56 if we take into account the sub-indicators (e.g., relative poverty rate before and relative poverty rates after social transfers) and different units of measurement (e.g. some indicators are measured as number and share, percentage of GDP and percentage of government expenditure).

The main set of key social inclusion indicators is comprehensive and balanced in all NSSIPR/SAP sectors. Most indicators belong to several sectors, except for indicators in the Health and Social participation sectors.
Table 1. Dimensions/Sectors covered by the key social inclusion indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Multidimensional</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard of living</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social benefits</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social participation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional policies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* the same indicators are by definition counted within several domains

Most indicators come from survey data (37), while only 9 indicators come from administrative data. Half of the indicators in the main set come from NIS (24), some from ministries or institutions under their subordination or coordination (14) and less than a quarter of them come from international institutions (9).

Table 2. Main institutions in charge with the indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MLSP</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NARPDCA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPWDA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoH/NHIH</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIS</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurostat</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIS/Eurostat (TBD)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other international monitoring systems*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* WVS/EVS, OECD, UNESCO
3.2. Brief description of the NSSIPR 2015-2020 M&E system

The M&E system for poverty and social inclusion related to NSSIPR and SAP\textsuperscript{7} is designed to track the strategy’s progress and results and to inform the next inclusion strategy. The indicators were designed to capture the Overall Objectives (OO), the Specific Objectives (SO) and the Priority Actions (PA) of SAP and to meet the validity and relevance criteria for future public policies. The NSSIPR M&E system presents clear logical links between inputs, outputs and outcomes\textsuperscript{8} for each OO of the strategy.

The NSSIPR M&E system is comprehensive and includes a reasonable number of indicators for all eight sectors of NSSIPR/SAP. There is a total number of 250 indicators, and the sectors with the highest number of indicators are Social Services, Education and Social Transfers.

Table 3. The situation of M&E NSSIPR indicators by sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>28\textsuperscript{9}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social transfers</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social services</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social participation</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional policies</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{7}The Strategic Action Plan (SAP) 2015-2020 (Annex 2 to the Government Decision adopting the Strategy and the Action Plan)

\textsuperscript{8}The monitoring system is simplified and includes three types of indicators for the interventions included in the Plan: input, output and outcome indicators. The input indicators are related to the financial and non-financial resources allocated to an intervention. The output indicators are related to direct short-term results obtained following resource allocation and the implementation of planned activities. The outcome indicators are related to the medium- and long-term changes generated by the interventions. They derive from the actions specified in the OO, SO and PA. Each logical framework presents the influence from one level to another of the intervention cycle, more specifically, from inputs to outcomes. However, the logical connections do not include all prerequisites to obtain the expected outcomes. The selected prerequisites are specific to the SO and PA selected from the Plan, but the outcomes are determined by many other factors which are not included in the Plan.

\textsuperscript{9} Situation presented for single indicators. Two indicators from the Employment sector are also specific for the Education sector, but they are not included in the statistics for that sector so as not to produce overlaps and artificially enhance the total number of indicators.
The NSSIPR M&E system is fed by indicators provided by NIS (68), MLSP/subordinated institutions (96), other public institutions (42) and international organizations (44).

Table 4. The situation of M&E NSSIPR indicators by main responsible institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NIS</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLSP or other institutions under its subordination or coordination(^{10})</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other public institutions(^{11})</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International organisations(^{12})</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost half of the NSSIPR M&E indicators come from survey data, coordinated either by NIS, or by other institutions, due to the fact that these data sources provide highly valid indicators, already accepted at national and international levels, usually with comparable dynamic values.

Table 5. The situation of M&E NSSIPR indicators by data source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data sources</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NIS surveys</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other surveys</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative data</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National/international accounts(^{13})</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3. Brief description of the monitoring component of the programs implemented by MLSP

The goal of the system of monitoring indicators for the programs implemented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection is to measure the performance of the programs implemented by the ministry. The technical assistance project aims at improving the administrative data reporting by structuring the data by fields, by simplifying the tables, by presenting them by time series and by adding new breakdowns, and

\(^{10}\) NAE, NAPSI, NARPDCA, NHPP, GDSACP

\(^{11}\) MoH, MER, MPWDA, MTIC, MPF, GSS, PEA

\(^{12}\) WB, OECD, WHO, Eurofound, Eurostat, European Commission, EVS/WVS.

\(^{13}\) Include data from the European System of Accounts (ESA, 2010) and from the Economic Accounts for Agriculture (EAA, Eurostat).
by unifying the presentation formats and by the automation of the data collection and publication process.

The types of administrative data included in the system are related to: (i) the demand for services (such as the number of persons with disabilities registered with NARPDCA), (ii) monitoring the MLSP/subordinated institutions programs in light of service provision structure and coverage (number of beneficiaries, and their characteristics), (iii) financial monitoring of the programs (expenses for services and benefits covered by the ministry).

The system was designed so as to cover the main fields coordinated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection: employment, pensions, social benefits, social services, social protection of the child and protection of persons with disabilities. So far, due to the availability of primary data sources, the data presentation template only covers 4 fields, more specifically: pensions, social benefits, social services and protection of persons with disabilities.

Table 6. Availability of indicators by sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector (without context indicators)</th>
<th>Available indicators (published)</th>
<th>Unpublished/uncalculated indicators from data already collected;</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social benefits</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social services</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensions</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child protection</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>1025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The program indicators system is fully covered by administrative data provided by MLSP/subordinated institutions (1,019) and by other public institutions (2 from MER), and 4 indicators come from NIS demographic data.

Table 7. Main institutions responsible with data provision, by indicator availability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Available indicators (published)</th>
<th>Unpublished/uncalculated indicators from data already collected;</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MLSP</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAPSI</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHPP</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NARPDCA</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEA</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MER</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>1025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4. Main challenges for the implementation of the M&E systems

The interviews and consultations with institutional representatives indicated the following challenges they will be facing in the implementation of the M&E systems:

- Lack of trained personnel. Here it would be useful that the M&E technical team should benefit from training of the calculation and interpretation of indicators from other sources that the administrative sources (MLSP);
- The lack of an agreement whereby the institutions in charge with generating indicators, other than MLSP, should provide technical support and data;
- Funds for the necessary research to generate the newly proposed indicators and the other indicators from the institutions with which MLSP does not have a cooperation agreement;
- Lack of access to the necessary databases to publish the values of the indicators available on request and to calculate the values of the newly proposed indicators from already available data.

4. The national mechanism for promoting social inclusion in Romania

This chapter analyses the activity of the national mechanism for social inclusion as a whole (section 4.1), by component of the mechanism (sections 4.2. - 4.4.) and in terms of the interaction between components (section 4.5.) and mentions some suggestions for improvement collected from the representatives of the structures that participated in the research (section 4.6.) 14. The purpose of this chapter is to present the conclusions of the field research, which mainly focused on the analysis of the national mechanism for social inclusion, as a structure that should manage, among other tasks, the systems of social inclusion indicators.

4.1. Description of the mechanism for promoting social inclusion

The national mechanism for promoting social inclusion was established by the Government Decision no. 1217/2006, replacing the Anti-Poverty and Promotion of Social Inclusion Commission (CASPIS) and the Steering Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Commitments undertaken through the Joint Memorandum on Social Inclusion. The regulations establishing the above-mentioned structures were repealed by GD 1217/2006. A brief history of the key moments until the establishment of this mechanism is presented below in Annex 5.

14 A separate chapter is dedicated to the recommendations made by the authors of this report, also taking into account some of the ideas expressed by the participants in the research exercise.
The mechanism has specific structures set up at central and county level, as presented in Annex 6. At central level, a National Commission for Social Inclusion and Social Inclusion Units have been set up within the central public authorities relevant in the field of social inclusion (specified in Annex 3 of the GD no. 1217/2006), whereas County Commissions for Social Inclusion were set up at county level.

The National Commission has an advisory role, under the coordination of the MLSP and it brings together representatives from the level of state secretaries or presidents of relevant institutions in the field. It is also responsible for endorsing various documents for planning and reporting on the implementation of policies in the field of social inclusion (priority document in the field of social inclusion, implementation plan, implementation report) and for ensuring the convergence of policies in this area. The social inclusion units have monitoring and reporting responsibilities, including those associated with the international commitments undertaken by Romania. The County Commissions for Social Inclusion must ensure the planning and implementation of inclusion policies at local level. For more details on the responsibilities of the entities set up under the mechanism, please see Annex 7.

Considering the responsibilities of the entities included in the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion and stipulated in the GD no. 1217/2006, the mechanism covers, in particular, 3 issues:

- **Strategic planning:** according to the law, the National Commission for Social Inclusion should contribute to the strategic planning process by identifying the national priorities, developing the action plan and approving the monitoring reports for the implementation of the priorities; County commissions develop, approve and monitor county plans in the field of social inclusion and social protection.

- **Coordination and monitoring the implementation of the social inclusion measures provided in the plans, at central and local level:** Social Inclusion Units must monitor the plans for the implementation of measures to prevent and fight against social exclusion, and at local level, CCSI monitors the achievement of the objectives set out in the county plans and releases regular notifications on the situation and the evolution of the social status of the county;

- **Reporting on the progress made in the field of social inclusion is carried out under the coordination of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, and the entities of the mechanism contribute specifically in this process. In drafting the National Annual Report on Social Inclusion, Social Inclusion Units should monitor the progress made compared to what they have set out themselves to do. Social Inclusion Units should also develop the documents that will be used by MLSP when drafting of the Progress Report in the field of social inclusion.**

15 There are 2 progress reports on the MLSP website, one in which the results are evaluated according to the objectives identified in the Joint Memorandum concerning Social Inclusion, published in June 2006, and the second published by the Romanian Government, which is the first report on social inclusion as part of the National Reform Program, analyzing the period 2006-2007.

16 On the MLSP website there are 2 such reports, published by the Romanian Government: one for the period spanning from 2006 to 2008 and the other for 2008-2010.
4.2. The activity of the National Commission for Social Inclusion (NCSI)

The National Commission for Social Inclusion is not currently active and has not been operational during the recent years\(^\text{17}\). A possible explanation for the cessation or lack of NCSI activity could be the very existence of the National Reform Program (NRP), which, by establishing social inclusion as one of its main objectives, made superfluous the advisory activity of the Commission. Another probable reason for the inactivity of the National Commission, also mentioned by the respondents, is the difficulty of summoning institutional representatives who hold decision-making positions and not just executive positions\(^\text{18}\), in order to discuss current administration issues concerning social inclusion. In the absence of specific funding related with NCSI, the interest of the decision-makers within line ministries, agencies and authorities has reported as low by some interviewees. The findings of this task indicate that the MLSP’s request to update the institutional nominations, as the result of the changes in the political leadership, has been unsuccessful.

During its first meeting, the Commission discussed the advisory role on the social inclusion priorities at national level, but there is no record of any subsequent advisory activities. It is not clear either whether other roles\(^\text{19}\) stipulated according to the statutory provisions of the law were fulfilled.

The National Commission was not involved in the development of the National Strategy for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction or the Strategic Action Plan for the period 2015-2020, although it was responsible for identifying social inclusion priorities and for drafting the action plan. There is no reference in the text of the strategy about the involvement of the National Commission. On the other hand, the annual priorities for social inclusion are set within the NRP. Also, the consultation rounds regarding the central set of key indicators of social inclusion and the M&E system of SNISRS were organized in 2019 within an inter-ministerial group, regardless of the advisory role of NCSI.

Moreover, in the National Strategic Reports on social protection and social inclusion, there is no reference made to their endorsement by NCSI. The annual social inclusion reports were developed by the MLSP Directorate\(^\text{20}\) which should have provided the technical secretariat of the National Commission.

\(^{17}\) It is difficult to determine the moment when it stopped working. The only specific comment on the activity of NCSI made in the reports on social inclusion refers to the first meeting of the National Commission, organized on March 12, 2007. Also, institutional representatives at central level confirmed the Commission’s lack of activity over a long period of time, none of them being able to specify the last year when it was active.

\(^{18}\) As this seems to be indicated by the fact that MLSP representatives would rather refer for consultations on social inclusion to an inter-ministerial working group, which includes persons in executive positions.

\(^{19}\) NCSI’s roles in identifying the inclusion priorities (for the strategic planning stage in 2015), establishing the Action Plan in accordance to the identified priorities and its advisory role in the approval of monitoring reports on the implementation of priorities, endorsing the sectoral indicators and the Report on Social Inclusion and Social Protection. Details on the roles of the National Commission are presented in Annex 7.

\(^{20}\) GD no. 1217/2005 mentions that the technical secretariat is provided by the Directorate for Social Inclusion Policies, Strategies and Programs. Over the years, this directorate has been renamed and reorganized several times, as follows: Directorate for Social Inclusion Programs (2007 - 2009), Directorate for Social Services and Social Inclusion/Department for Social Indicators and Social Inclusion Programs (2010 - 2013), Directorate for Social Services/Unit for Social Economy, Social Innovation and Programs with International Bodies (2014), Directorate for Social Policies and Services/Unit for Social Inclusion, Unit for Social Innovation and Programs with International Bodies 2015 - 2018)
According to the view of MLSP representatives on reviewing the GD no. 1217/2006, the role of NCSI could be still an advisory one, as the Commission is still under the coordination of MLSP and tasked with determining priorities and objectives for the new strategy, as well as with the coordination of monitoring and evaluation of the strategy. However, a substantial change is needed to ensure the relevance and the operation of this entity in the future.

4.3. The activity of the Social Inclusion Units (SIU)

According to the survey on Social Inclusion Units, only 3 out of 14\textsuperscript{21} institutional representatives mentioned that there are social inclusion units included in the organizational structure of the respective institutions. These entities have redefined their roles and their organization and functioning according to the regulations issued by central public authorities which they belong to, as this is actually an option mentioned in the GD no. 1217/2006. The 3 units are included in the organizational chart of NAE\textsuperscript{22}, of the Ministry of Health\textsuperscript{23} and of the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Communications.

On the contrary, the remainder of 11 institutional representatives reported that there is a department/directorate/service/office within their institutions, which has taken over the specific duties in the area of social inclusion. Therefore, most of the institutions are no longer under the name/form defined in the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion (GD no. 1217/2006). Until 2013, a social inclusion unit operated as part of the Directorate for Social Inclusion Programs within the MLSP, which used to be part of the General Directorate for Social Assistance. Since 2014, the Directorate for Policies in Social Services has taken over the duties in the area of social inclusion, until now (January 2020, before the announced general restructuring of MLSP).

Even though only 3 institutions claimed that they have the social inclusion mechanism, the survey showed that 12 institutions (out of 14) carried out activities which are specific to social inclusion units, according to the legislation, but not through the social inclusion mechanism. The activities most often reported, especially in 2019, are the consultation rounds on social inclusion and the updating of indicators and of the software with relevant data (see Table 8). In fact, these were activities carried out as part of the inter-ministerial working group organized within the current project, without any formal connection with the national mechanism of social inclusion. Other activities quite frequently mentioned, carried out also outside the mechanism, were those related to reporting, such as: monitoring the implementation of plans for preventing and fighting against social exclusion and contributions to the Social Inclusion Report.

\textsuperscript{21} Out of the 19 institutions defined in Annex 3 of GD no. 1217/2006, which could have had a social inclusion unit in their chart, only 14 institutions responded to the survey questionnaire.
\textsuperscript{22} The Social Inclusion Unit is included in the Directorate for Labor Market Analysis, Employment and Vocational Training Programs Directorate (APMPOFPFM)/Labor Market Analysis and Employment Programs Division/Social Inclusion Unit.
\textsuperscript{23} The Social Inclusion Unit is included in the General Directorate of Medical Assistance and Public Health.
Table 8. Activities carried out by SIU during 2017-2019 (number of respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>2017 N=8</th>
<th>2018 N=8</th>
<th>2019 N=10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Unit coordinator participated in the meetings of the National Commission</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in the consultation process initiated by the MLSP on social inclusion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring the implementation of plans for preventing and fighting social exclusion</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drafting the reports for monitoring the implementation of plans for preventing and fighting social exclusion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drafting the reports for evaluating the effects of measures to prevent and fight against social exclusion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updating sectoral social inclusion indicators</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to the development of the IT system with data relevant to the field of social inclusion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing the progress monitoring reports in relation to the objectives and indicators established by the Annual Report in the field of social inclusion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to the Progress report in the field of social inclusion</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities ...</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A very small proportion of institutions (2) reported that they do not carry out social inclusion activities, in the sense that they do not have any unit/department that is part of the national mechanism for social inclusion. The reason for no activity in this field is because there are no such structures within their own institution, there is no pressure from the National Commission to stimulate the activity of the inclusion units, and that the activity of the institution is focused on certain groups affected by exclusion, having no responsibilities in the field of social inclusion in general\(^{24}\).

It is likely that the same changes that led to the inactivity of the National Commission -such as the change of political leadership, the restructuring, and the staff turnover- also affected the social inclusion units in the central level institutions, especially in the absence of signals from the coordinating structure (representatives from the central level provided this explanation during the interviews). Box 1 summarizes the case of an active social inclusion unit, namely the Social Inclusion Unit within the General Directorate of Medical Assistance and Public Health, selected from the 3 units which were declared active\(^{25}\).

\(^{24}\) This position disregards the multidimensional character of social issues in general and the need to coordinate the policies in the field.

\(^{25}\) We selected this entity based on the fact that the unit within the Ministry of Health has been active since the launch of the national mechanism for social inclusion, so it has a proper institutional memory.
Box 1. The Social Inclusion Unit within the General Directorate for Medical Assistance and Public Health operates pursuant to GEO no. 18/2017, further amended and supplemented by Law no. 180/2017 and based on the methodological rules approved by the Decision no. 324/2019 (published in the Official Journal no. 458 of June 7, 2019).

The purpose of this unit is to ensure the coordination of the community health care activity at national level, according to the provisions of art. 6, para. (2) of the Decision no. 324/2019, dealing therefore with only one sub-dimension of social inclusion in the health care sector. The unit monitors the measures, updates the medical and social indicators in the AMCMSR.gov.ro online application and regulates the community health care; coordinates, monitors, evaluates and extends the community medical nurses network; sets the strategic directions and objectives of the community health care activity; approves the number of positions and finances the staff expenses for the community medical nurses, midwives and health mediators requested by APL; determines the unitary education and training of the staff included in the community health care network; develops the exam subjects and references.

The tasks of this unit (according to art. 6 of Decision no. 324/2019) partially overlap with those of the national mechanism (see Annex 7). The unit does not contribute to the Annual Social Inclusion Report, however it participates in the consultation process initiated by MLSP in the field of social inclusion through the inter-ministerial group. According to the activity report for 2019, the tasks specific to social inclusion consisted in the involvement in developing integrated community services together with MLSP through a HROP project and the coordination of the community health care activity.

Therefore, this unit represents an example in terms of preserving the SIU name and some of the tasks in the field of social inclusion, and also in terms of redefining overall the tasks, as well as the organization and operation in accordance with MoH regulations, which GD no. 1217/2006 mentions as an option.

4.4. The activity of County Commissions for Social Inclusion (CCSI)

This chapter describes and analyses the way in which CCSI work, using the information gathered in the online survey and the qualitative research, mostly because their activity has not been documented at national level over the recent years, as CCSI have been operating without communicating so much with the decision makers at national level or between counties. First of all, this section discusses issues related to the CCSI structure (section 4.4.1.), then to the reported activities (section 4.4.2.), in order to focus later on the way the county plans are developed and implemented (section 4.4.2.), since these should be the central focus of CCSI activity.

4.4.1. Issues regarding the structure and organization of the County Commission for Social Inclusion

According to GD no. 1217/2006, the management of the County Commission is provided by the Prefect’s Office, and the technical secretariat is provided by the County Agency for Payments and Social Inspection (CAPSI). The extended list of possible member institutions is presented in Annex 8.
The list of Commission members is updated by Prefect’s Order as necessary and whenever there are staff changes within the institutions concerned. In the case of some of the County Commissions, the Prefect’s Order mentioned both the names of the permanent and of the alternate members. Also, according to the Organization and Functioning Regulations\(^{26}\) of each CCSI, representatives of other public institutions\(^{27}\) and authorities\(^{28}\) than those nominated in the permanent structure may be invited to participate in the meetings of the Commission.

The representatives of the County Commissions participating in the survey mentioned some limitations in terms of the Commission structure.

- The configuration of the County Commission and the required profile of the institutional representatives are not specified, so that both competent institutional decision-makers and competent experts with executive powers in the field of social inclusion are often missing.
- The legal provision according to which CCSI must include representatives of the local councils. In some counties, the statutory order based on which the CCSI was established had been drafted in compliance with an inclusive principle in mind, as a high number of local councils, both from urban and rural areas, are mentioned as members of the Commission. This approach led to problems later on, as reaching a quorum in order to adopt decisions was sometimes impossible due to the absence of local councils' representatives. To address this limitation, some County Commissions have also included a representative of the County branch of the Romanian Association of Communes.
- To ensure the operation of the technical secretariat of the Commission. There are counties where the technical secretariat has not been set up within CAPSI, as provided by the law, or counties where, even if it had been set up as such, a continuation of the secretariat activities is received with reluctance, as there is a stronger impetus to move this secretariat to another institution, as respondents indicated. The main reason indicated for the reluctance to fulfilling the role of CCSI in providing the technical secretariat is the failure to comply with the provision regarding the financing from the state budget, from the MLSP budget, of the salary of a full-time employee in charge of the secretariat (art. 15 of GD no. 1217/2006). CAPSI representatives state that the activity is already overloaded, even without taking into account the additional tasks related to the CCSI technical secretariat. Another reason is that CAPSI is not responsible for coordinating the implementation of social policies at county level, as GDSACP's or the Prefect's Office\(^{29}\), which would be necessary in order to provide the technical secretariat in optimal conditions; instead it is mainly tasked with controlling the compliance level with the rules established by law.

> At the moment, we have the capacity to exercise control. We have a reduced capacity, with 4 social inspectors at county level. There are 3 now left. [...] [The National Agency for Payments and Social Inspection] had a unique role, of checking whether the benefits in question were granted


\(^{27}\) Representatives of trade union organizations, employers’ organizations, as well as notable personalities in the field.

\(^{28}\) For example, representatives of the Land Registry Office (OCPI) at county level

\(^{29}\) According to the Organization and Functioning Regulations of the institutions, GDSACPs ensure the implementation of social assistance policies and strategies at county level through the coordination function, while the Prefect is entrusted with the role of ensuring that the laws, Governments Ordinance and Decisions are applied and complied with, managing the decentralized public services, however, without coordinating this activity at county level.
correctly. We are the ones who have to monitor each service in terms of quality standards and cost standards, at least 2 times every 3 years. Well, now we have come up to a situation when we have to evaluate everything.” (County Commission member)

Several participants in the research discussed the option of merging the management and the technical secretariat of the CCSI into a single institution. The representatives of the Prefect's Office consider that the responsibility for the work of the Commission would be dissipated if the coordination role is kept separate from that of providing the secretariat. CAPSI representatives propose that one member of the Prefect’s Office and one member of GDSACP be included in the technical secretariat or relocating the technical secretariat to the Prefect's Office, as this institution exerts more authority over the territorial administrative units. However, concentrating both tasks at Prefect’s Office level may not be optimal, given that the Prefect’s Office has limited jurisdiction in the field of social inclusion and in the development of county plans. The analysis of the organizational charts\(^{30}\) of the Prefect’s Offices shows that the only department partially connected with the field of social inclusion would be the Department for the Management or Monitoring the Decentralized Local Services, with certain variations in the title\(^{31}\). According to the Organization and Functioning and Regulations, the tasks of the department refer in particular to reporting on the activity of these services; organizing meetings; collecting information; approving the budget and financial statements; ensuring cooperation with civil society and reporting on the achievement of the objectives of the Strategy for the inclusion of Romanian citizens of Roma origin.

4.4.2. Activities reported by County Commissions for Social Inclusion

Most of the county commissions for social inclusion, respectively 32 of the 41 commissions that responded to the online survey\(^{32}\), reported that they were active in 2019. According to the desk-based research, the activities of 21 out of 42 commissions were included in the online activity reports of the Prefect's Offices or of the CAPSI in 2018\(^{33}\).

Out of the 9 CCSI which, according to the answers to the survey, claimed they were not active in 2019, 6 Commissions have been inactive before 2017, one since 2017 and 2 other commissions have been active in 2018 but have ceased their activity since. One reason for inactivity recurrently mentioned by the respondents is the fact that the inclusion issues are addressed in some other manner than by coordinating the interventions by the CCSI (6 of 9 inactive commissions, 5 respondents mentioning it as the main reason). Other reasons for the inactivity consist in the overload of the Commission members with tasks within the institutions where they carry out their daily activity (7 of 9 respondents) and the lack of public financial resources for carrying out the activities of the Commission (6 of 9 respondents).

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\(^{30}\) Analysis performed on the organizational charts of the Prefect’s Office from all counties, except CS where the organizational chart is not uploaded on the institution’s website.


\(^{32}\) CCSI Cluj did not participate in the study. According to the same survey, 29 CCSI were active in 2018 and 2017.

\(^{33}\) The analysis was carried out by the MLSP in 2019 and included the latest activity reports of the Prefect's Institutions or CAPSIs available online, that is those of 2018.
In terms of the activities of the County Commissions, almost all CCSI which reported being active organize working meetings (Table 9). In general, these meetings include, according to the survey, activities related to the annual County Plans on social inclusion (e.g., development and approval, implementation, monitoring, reporting on the achievement degree), and to the action plan on the social services managed and financed from the County Council budget or the CCSI activity (structure, organization and operational rules and regulations). According to the interviews, the agenda of the meetings also includes activities regarding the analysis of the needs at community level, communication on the specific cases (notifications, complaints, petitions and requests), training on the legislation in the field\textsuperscript{34} and presentations on the activity of other member institutions. For example, the member institutions presented the way in which certain cases are or could be addressed, such as: evaluation of persons with disabilities, interventions regarding children who commit criminal offences and cannot be held accountable for, escape from placement centers etc.

Table 9. Activities carried out by CCSI during 2017-2019 (number of respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizing meetings within the County Commission</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing and approving the annual County Plans on social inclusion</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing annual county plans</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring the achievement of the objectives set out in the county plans</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing monitoring reports on the achievement of the objectives set out in the county plans</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sending the monitoring reports of county plans to the National Commission/MLSP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing information documents on the situation and the evolution of the social status of the county</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities\textsuperscript{35} ... out of which:</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation and approval by the Commission members of the Action Plan on social services administered by the County Council budget</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation and approval of the (annual/multi-annual) County Strategies for the development of social services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revising/Approving the organization and functioning rules and regulation of the Commission</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revising/updating the composition of the County Commission for Social Inclusion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{34} Presentation of the regulations for the area of activity of the member institutions of the Commission, connected to the field of social inclusion.

\textsuperscript{35} The table includes only the activities mentioned by at least 2 institutional representatives. For detailed data please see Annex 9.
On average, a county commission organizes 2 meetings per year, with slight variations from one year to another (Table 10). Over 19% of these active CCSI reported the organization of at least 3 annual meetings in 2019. The percentage of CCSI which reported at least 3 annual meetings is 32% in 2018 and 26% in 2017.

| Table 10. Average number of meetings organized by CCSI during 2017-2019 |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Average number of meetings  | 2017    | 2018    | 2019    |
|                            | 2.1     | 2.5     | 1.9     |

Box 2 summarizes the perceptions of the institutional representatives with whom we discussed the current and potential role of the County Commission for Social Inclusion.

Box 2. Perceptions about the role of the County Commission for Social Inclusion

Some respondents underlined the potential of the County Commission to facilitate collaboration and an integrated approach on social exclusion issues, because they bring together, at least once a year, representatives of the relevant institutions in the field of social inclusion at county and local level, from different areas (education, health, employment, agriculture, public order etc.).

According to the results of the qualitative research, another role of the County Commission could consist in the formulation of proposals to review the legislation and policies at national level, if the legislation in force does not cover the full range of possible situations encountered "at local level" (this role is not currently provided by the law).

Some of the interviewed members consider CCSI's achievements are insufficient to validate the need for such an entity, as they believe that approximately the same results can be achieved without activating this mechanism.

"We do our duty; we observe the law. If it wasn't for the law, the commission wouldn't exist. People think they should do this. But this is not a necessity, because these things were done before, even without the commission". (county commission member)

On the other hand, some respondents provide examples illustrating the usefulness of the Commission meetings, which serve as information and communication tool between members regarding the specific activities of each institution.

In the opinion of the interviewed persons, the Commission meetings can be useful also for the approval of relevant documents at county or local level, which requires the endorsement of several institutions. For example, in one of the meetings organized by the Commission the County Strategies for the Development of Social Services were approved36.

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36 Some county strategies regarding social services were planned for a period of 10 years, while other counties have developed strategies for a period of implementation of 5 years.
4.4.3. Difficulties encountered with the development, implementation and monitoring of county plans on social inclusion

This section presents aspects that hinder or even block the process of developing, implementing and monitoring of County Plans on Social Inclusion (the activity which most of the CCSI focuses on), as evidenced by the discussions with the County Commission members.

A frequently mentioned obstacle in the planning of county plans is the difficulty in identifying social problems at county level or the groups of people at risk of socially exclusion, due to the lack or shortage of specialized staff (social workers with higher education studies in the field, community medical nurses, health mediators) at the level of rural local public administration.

Another obstacle to the process of developing and implementing social inclusion measures is the low involvement of local public authorities (mayors, local council members) and other relevant institutions in this process. Frequently, local authorities are not aware of the importance of social inclusion and the county institutions with responsibilities in the field, such as GDSACP or the Inclusion Commission, do not have the leverage to stimulate the prioritization of this area at local level. According to the respondents, representatives of local authorities are sometimes reluctant towards the non-reimbursable/European funds, which could support the implementation of projects to promote social inclusion. The low interest is usually explained by lack of information about these financing mechanisms, or because they cannot afford to cover their own contribution, manage the bottlenecks and the delays of payments, or ensure the sustainability of the services set up through these programs at the required quality standards.

There is a lack of clear and consistent methodologies (with unified procedures between counties and between the members of the a CCSI in a county) guiding the development of county plans and results reporting; both planning and monitoring processes at the level of NCSI are a selection from the respective activities carried out at the level of each individual component institution. The plans of the county Commissions in the counties where the qualitative research was conducted (Brăila and Călărași), are structured on the key areas of SNISRS, and include proposed objectives or activities according to the responsibilities of the institutions represented in the Commission, mentioning the responsible institution and the deadline for each objective. In general, the analyzed plans showed the practice of including some of the activities that the CCSI component institutions are currently carrying out according to their responsibilities, as provided by the laws governing their activity, the sectoral strategies and the sectoral plans and the functioning rules and regulations.

The above-mentioned practice in developing the plans is deficient also because of the lack of an integrated approach. For only a small number of the actions proposed in the plans the documents mention there are several institutions responsible for implementation, the responsibility for all actions in a field being usually assigned to a single institution37.

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37 County commissions operate as a network of representatives of relevant institutions in the field of social inclusion, where social issues can be identified, debated and raised and where joint intervention plans are developed. In fact, according to the qualitative research, CCSI activity frequently focuses on case studies, namely on discussing the situation of certain persons affected by social exclusion, while the components of the overall diagnosis in terms of social exclusion and of strategic planning are downplayed. Sometimes, in order to better understand such cases and the intervention opportunities, persons that can provide support are invited to the meetings, even if they have not been co-opted to the Commission when it was first set up (for example, a representative of the Land Registry Office that can provide information and guide the efforts to find solutions for people who do not have ownership titles for their properties). According to the interviews, even with regard to solving these concrete cases the capacity of
In addition, as a result of the incremental way of planning, derived from current activity rather than from the proper diagnosis of needs and from designing new interventions, there are difficulties in developing and providing services for vulnerable groups that have not been traditionally covered. For example, there are no adequate or sustainable services for street children or children who get in the street circumstantially, the elderly in rural areas and children who commit criminal offences they cannot be held accountable for.

The indicators for monitoring the plans are those used to report the current activity of each CCSI member institution, which results in a lack of unity in reporting the results. In addition, the reporting method of results is often a simplistic one and with limited relevance, the monitoring referring only to the achievement/failure to meet the objectives in time, without actually tracking quantifiable performance indicators.

4.5. The interaction between the components of the national mechanism of social inclusion

As shown by data collected as part of the research, the county commissions are more active than the Units for Social Inclusion, but with obvious dysfunctions, which were discussed above. CCSI does not interact with NCSI, SIU or between counties. The law does not stipulate a direct interaction between the County Commission and the Social Inclusion Units, but only the interactions between the National Commission and the two types of entities -the county commissions and the units. According to the interviews, the National Commission has not lately requested information on the status of achieving the priorities undertaken through the annual county plans.

The vision on the functioning of the national mechanism for social inclusion is that of a coherent and convergent system, in which the assessment of problems and the planning and the monitoring of the measures are done transversely at national and county level, according to certain common directions. The law does not mention whether the county plans have to selectively take on certain objectives set at national level (to the extent that some of them are locally relevant).

4.6. Suggestions to review the legislation proposed by the participants in the survey

This section presents some suggestions made by the survey participants regarding the revision of GD no. 1217/2006 and other relevant normative acts, while in chapter 5 the report systematically presents a set of recommendations. Some suggestions refer in particular to the correlation of the laws and the institutional structures in the field of social inclusion, to the provision of financial resources for the integrated intervention is low, as the final responsibility is of one single institution or the responsibilities are delegated between institutions that do not have the capacity to solve on their own some situations of multidimensional social exclusion.
functioning of the County Commissions, and to the better definition of the collaboration within the national mechanism for social inclusion, with emphasis on an integrated approach of the way of working.

1. Linking the regulations regarding the strategies, policies and M&E systems:
   - Unified strategic and legislative framework for framework inclusion policies and those for certain vulnerable groups: Roma, people with disabilities, poor people etc. (GD no. 18/2015, 448/2006, Order No. 393/630/4236, Law no. 116/2002, GD no. 1149/2002, National strategy for social inclusion of Romanian citizens of Roma ethnicity etc.);
   - Linking social inclusion indicators with the indicators in the M&E systems of other strategies;
   - Linking programmatic documents, such as the National Strategy on social inclusion and poverty reduction, with the mechanism for social inclusion and the social inclusion indicators;
   - Linking social inclusion actions at national level with those at county and local level.

2. Ensuring a minimum financing of the functioning of the mechanism for social inclusion on the ground (including at local level):
   - Allocating the financial resources for the activity of the County Commission, at least for the payment of a full-time position within the technical secretariat. Material resources can be supplemented to ensure office expenses, protocol expenses, travel expenses for members.

3. Collaboration and integrated interventions:
   - Collaboration between the entities of the mechanism at national and county level;
   - Making sure that the CJIS secretariat is ensured by the same institution that is also responsible for the coordination of the County Commission;
   - Trainings on social inclusion for the members of NCSI, CJIS and technical secretariats;
   - Developing performance and result indicators for the proposed actions;
   - Defining an integrated methodology and instruments
5. **Recommendations for revising the legislation**

This chapter offers several sets of recommendations, organized in a way that they are sensitive to the current strategic context of transition towards a post 2020 programmatic cycle. This transition offers a number of opportunities related to the reconfiguration of public policies, in which policies for promoting social inclusion should acquire a prominent role and be managed in an integrated manner by the different sectors (social protection, education, health etc.) and decision-making levels (central-county-local). The recommendations are particularly focused on the revision of the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion (the technical aspects of M&E systems are the subject of other reports developed as part of the technical assistance project), with some considerations also made regarding the legislative aspects of the implementation of M&E systems.

1. **The role of the national mechanism for social inclusion as a coordinating entity for the processes of problem diagnosis and policy planning, prioritizing the Strategy for Social Inclusion post 2020 and the County Action Plans, should be clearly specified in the legislation.**

1.1. The newly developed legislation should clearly specify the role of the national mechanism for social inclusion in coordinating the design, implementation and monitoring of the policies in the area of social inclusion at national and county level.

1.2. The National Commission for Social Inclusion should remain in MLSP’s coordination.

1.3. The National Commission for Social Inclusion should manage the process of designing, implementing and monitoring the Strategy for Social Inclusion 2021-2027.

1.4. The Strategy for Social Inclusion post-2020, should encompass the planning dimension for the institutional re-building of the national mechanism for social inclusion.

1.5. The activity of the national mechanism for social inclusion should be coordinated with wider strategic processes, such as the European Union cohesion policy, the implementation of Structural Instruments/Operational Programs, and the National Reform Program.

1.6. All sub-sectoral strategic processes relevant for social inclusion should be carried on along the policy guidelines of the strategic documents coordinated by the national mechanism for social inclusion, chiefly the Strategy for Social Inclusion 2021-2027. Strategic documents in areas such as employment, child rights protection, protection of the rights of the disabled, should refer to the Strategy for Social Inclusion 2021-2027, whereas the mechanisms for the management and implementation of these sub-sectoral strategies must cooperate in an organic manner with the national mechanism for social inclusion.

1.7. The elaboration of the County Plans for social inclusion and their implementation should be the focus of the County Commissions for Social Inclusion activity.

1.8. County Action Plans should include relevant objectives of the Strategy for Social Inclusion 2021-2027 and additional objectives specific for the situation at county level.

1.9. County Plans for Social Inclusion should be drafted in such a way as to ensure consistency with other county and local strategies.

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38 “The Social Assistance Law” 292/2011 specifies that „harmonizing the policies related with diagnosing, preventing and tackling the situations that trigger poverty and the risk of social exclusion is realized within the national mechanism for social inclusion.”
Justification

The national mechanism for social inclusion, as regulated through GD no. 1217/2006, does not provide a clear scope from a strategic viewpoint. There is a sense of fragmentation in the planning process. NCSI was not involved in the development of SNISRS 2015-2020. At the same time, the Strategy, while benefiting from a robust evidence base, did not explicitly use the systems for social inclusion indicators managed by MLSP, for instance the core set of key social inclusion indicators\(^{39}\). This report highlights the existence of consultation and decision-making processes that are carried out in parallel, without adequate coordination and a coherent sequence of activities. Most often, these parallel processes appear as a result of dysfunctions of the current mechanism, which determine the launching of other more flexible initiatives/with fewer constraining condition, but undermine the credibility of the national mechanism for social inclusion as the official institutional framework for managing social inclusion policies.

The activity of the County Commissions for Social Inclusion is already partially focused on County Action Plans, but these plans are linked differently and in an uncoordinated manner with NSSIPR 2015-2020.

2. The national mechanism for social inclusion should make better use of research evidence and M&E mechanisms for extracting relevant data able to guide the policy decision making process.\(^{40}\)

2.1. The technical secretariat of NCSI should be tasked with the responsibilities of implementing the M&E system, such as collecting available data, collecting new data when this is considered feasible, archiving indicators in a common database, building the evidence base for the social inclusion strategy and policies, developing regular or occasional diagnosis reports, requesting/managing certain evaluations on issues of special interest.

2.2. The technical secretariat of should lead on the evaluation of NSSIPR outcomes, using the M&E system made available through this project. The process should include the overall evaluation of the outcomes of the Strategy, as well as a series of evaluations of priority MLSP programs for which the methodological framework has already been defined as part of the Outcome Report 1 within this project.

2.3. Regular presentations of update reports on the dynamic of the indicators should become part of the annual agenda of NCSI.

2.4. The technical secretariats of CCSIs should be supported to develop M&E systems for measuring social exclusion at county level, track the implementation of county actions plans and monitor the programs developed by GDSACP and CAPSI.\(^{41}\)

2.5. The M&E system designed at county level might take over the indicators set at national level relevant for territorial comparative analyses, while additional support would be called for in order to determine additional and specific data sources and indicators available at county and locality level.

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\(^{39}\) See Recommendation 2

\(^{40}\) According with the Social Assistance Law 292/2011 a Social Observatory should function. The Observatory is a part of the national mechanism for the implementation of the social inclusion process and it cooperates with central and local public authorities, with all forms of the civil society participating to this mechanism and with the research institutes and universities. However, this Observatory is not functional currently. We propose here an integrated approach where the policy advising and M&E functions are brought together.

\(^{41}\) Several ME components of the M&E system, such as those described in the main text, could be developed, following a methodological approach analogue to the one used at national level.
Justification

The technical assistance project launched the process of reconfiguring the monitoring and evaluation framework at national level. At national level, there is scope for follow up with all the components of the M&E system: (i) the National Strategy for Inclusion 2021-2027 needs to be designed soon, along with an M&E component that could follow up on the NSSIPR system; (ii) an expansion in the number of programs managed by MLSP monitored with program social inclusion indicators would be required; and (iii) the launching of a series of special evaluations proposed as part of the technical assistance project would be highly beneficial. The process of improving the M&E systems used by the national mechanism for social inclusion should continue at county level, using the very tools implemented within this technical assistance project at national level, such as the methodologies for selecting indicators and a selection of the indicators set at the national level, with additional work needed for including specific county and locality level indicators.

3. The legislative provisions regarding the national mechanism for social inclusion and the implementation of the M&E system managed by MLSP should be integrated in a single law.

3.1. The legislation regarding the national mechanism for social inclusion should include a section on the M&E system.

3.2. This section dedicated to the M&E system should state that the technical secretariat of the National Commission is tasked with implementing the components of the M&E system with social inclusion indicators: the core set of key indicators of social inclusion, the M&E systems of social inclusion strategies and the system of indicators on the programs implemented by MLSP.

3.3. The list of the indicators included in the core set of key social inclusion indicators should be provided as an annex to the revised legislation regarding the national mechanism for social inclusion.

3.4. The tasks related to the monitoring components of the social inclusion strategy and MLSP’s programs should only be stated as part of the work plan of the technical secretariat

Justification

Aligning the legislation on the institutional setup managing social inclusion policies and M&E systems with the legislation specifying the technical content of the M&E systems should prevent the disentanglement of these processes in the future. This should support streamlining social inclusion policies, including their M&E processes component. This aligning could be ensured efficiently by issuing a single legislative act.

4. The structure of the National Commission for Social Inclusion should be derived from the structure of responsibilities entrusted through the operational action plan of the Strategy for Social Inclusion 2021-2027 and flexible in terms of the representatives of line ministries, agencies and authorities.

4.1. The structure of NCSI should ideally be derived from the institutional responsibilities assigned through the operational plan of the Strategy for social inclusion 2021-2027 and should be updated with the adjustments made to the implementation plan.

42 The lists of indicators will improve at a very dynamic pace, given that a new strategy for social inclusion will be prepared, while there is still scope for extending the number of programs monitored by the MLSP’s monitoring program. Therefore, it is difficult to specify the indicators in the legislation.
4.2. The composition of NCSI could be twofold, at the decision-making level (secretaries of state/general managers/presidents of authorities/agencies) and at the technical level, with the presence of the decision-makers being requested only in certain key points of the decision-making process, for example approval of the national strategy.

4.3. The regular meetings of NCSI should be organized and managed by the Technical Secretariat of NCSI.

**Justification**

Law no. 1217/2006 specifies that NCSI has a double structure: decision-making (it is chaired by MLSP’s minister and composed of state secretaries or presidents from member institutions of NCSI) and executive (secretariat in MLSP and social inclusion units in member institutions). Although it is specified that “the coordinator of the social inclusion unit participates in the work of the National Commission on social inclusion”, the role of this person with technical expertise is not clear, while the work of the Commission seems conditioned by the participation of the decision makers. In practice: (i) the participation of the decision-makers could not be secured regularly after the initial stage of the functioning of the national mechanism for social inclusion; (ii) the coordinator of the social inclusion unit, i.e. an expert of the institutions in question, was not mandated to represent the institutions at meetings. The structure might be configured in a much more flexible way and it should allow experts within line ministries, agencies and authorities to represent their institutions to the meetings where major policy decisions are not required.

5. The Technical Secretariat of NCSI should be provided with M&E management and strategic planning advisory functions.

5.1. The technical secretariat of NCSI should be ensured by a unit within MLSP with strategic planning advisory and M&E management functions.

5.2. The unit should be placed above the departments and compartments with the role of coordinating MLSP’s programs (services, benefits, programs of national interest).

5.3. The unit should be coordinated at policy level by a high-ranking official, such as the Minister or a State Secretary.

5.4. The unit should be managed at technical level by a policy adviser.

5.5. The unit should include experts in strategy (sociologists, experts in political science, experts in economy), experts in monitoring and evaluation and experts in statistics.

5.6. The unit should compile and process research and M&E evidence across all social inclusion sectors and from all data sources managed by MLSP and coordinated structures and prepare reports aiming to guide policy processes.

5.7. The unit would be required to provide technical support for substantiating the strategies and laws in the field of social inclusion.

5.8. The unit should manage the research commissioned to third parties in support of the MLSP’s activities.

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43 The objective to have Social Inclusion Units as part of the organigram of all the institutions represented within NCSI seems over-ambitious and difficult to impose by MLSP upon line ministries, national agencies and authorities. In order to really secure the functioning of such Social Inclusion Units, the coordination of the mechanism should be ensured by higher-level authorities, such as the prime-minister, and financing should be available for expert human resources within all NCSI members. Unless such support is granted, we recommend that the legislation need not require Social Inclusion Units but only the appointment of decision-makers and experts within each NCSI member.
5.9. The unit should support the development of sub-sectoral strategies managed by the authorities under MLSP’s coordination, in order to ensure the coherence of policies in the field of social inclusion.

**Justification**

Currently, the activities of the Technical Secretariat are undertaken by experts who are tasked as well with a breadth of activities related with the management of social services. The technical secretariat should be the catalyst for the activities of the National Commission for Inclusion. In order to fulfill this role effectively, the technical secretariat could be effectively provided by a unit that focuses on strategic planning and management of the M&E social inclusion system, as described above.

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6. **The strategic role of County Commissions for Social Inclusion should be increased.**

6.1. The elaboration of the County Plans for Social Inclusion, their implementation and monitoring should be the focus of the CCSIs’ activity.

6.2. The drafting of the plans and the presentation of implementation updates should be ensured primarily in face-to-face meetings (not through the circulation of fiches that collect objectives derived from the activity of the component institutions of the County Commissions).

6.3. Improving the strategic planning capacity of the Technical Secretariats of CCSIs should be achieved through training sessions, as well as regular support from the Technical Secretariat of NCSI (e.g. the occasional participation of a member of the Technical Secretariat/M&E unit in the meetings dedicated to the elaboration of county plans and other major tasks).

6.4. Shaping integrated interventions at county level for solving the individual cases of persons in social exclusion should complement, not replace, the activities related to the exercise of the strategic role.

6.5. The prefectures should continue to manage CCIS, and one expert at the operational should be designated to maintain permanent contact with the Technical Secretariat.

**Justification**

Currently, some County Plans for Social Inclusion lack in their innovative dimension, leading to increased social inclusion, and set as objectives routine outcomes of the activities of the institutions represented in CCSIs. The activity of some county commissions seems to be partly focused on solving individual cases of multidimensional exclusion, the meetings being used as an opportunity to communicate about the options available for each institution to intervene in solving these cases. This individual case solving activity should be complementary to the main tasks related with the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of the County Plans for Social Inclusion.

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7. **The activity of the Technical secretariats of the CCSI should be permanent, and this objective could be achieved by pursuing one of the two options presented below.**

7.1 *(the optimal option)*: at least a post for an expert working exclusively for the Technical Secretariat should be financed from the central budget, as stipulated in GD no. 1217/2006. The post could be maintained within CAPSI**44**.

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44 In the event that the optimal scenario out of the ones offered as part of Recommendation 7 is implemented, and a specially created and funded position within CAPSI ensures the secretariat of the County Commission, the job description of this position should include field activity at the level of the localities of each county, to promote the...
7.1 bis (alternative option): the functions of Technical Secretariat can be provided through rotation by the institutions with the most important role in social inclusion policies (Prefect’s Office, GDSACP, CAPSI. This arrangement would stimulate the collaboration among the main stakeholders but could be less effective in boosting the level of activity within technical secretariats.

7.2. The technical secretariat of the County Commissions must be ongoing, such as managing the data systems in general and monitoring the implementation of the County Plans for Social Inclusion.

Justification

The current configuration proves ineffective. The funding of an expert working permanently for the technical secretariat has not been provided. In these circumstances, the activity of the technical secretariat is maintained in suboptimal conditions through sporadic additional efforts made by CAPSI’s personnel. The overloading of CAPSI personnel determines the activation of this expert only for certain occasions such as CCSI meetings or for drafting reports, hence the activity does not have a permanent and sustainable character. In this sense, the optimal solution would be to maintain the provision regarding the financing one position for each county in the revised version of the legislation from the MLSP budget and ensuring the funding necessary for its implementation. If there is no decisional support for this approach, other solutions could include assigning the responsibility of the technical secretariat by rotation, e.g. with an annual frequency.

8. The coordination and exchange of expertise between the Technical Secretariat of NCSI and CCSIs, as well as among CCSIs, should be ensured.

8.1. Framework models and toolkits should be developed with support of the Technical Secretariat of NCSI for the work at county level, such as framework models for social inclusion plans, and toolkits on how to design M&E systems adapted to the needs at county level (e.g. a methodology on drafting plans based on evidence, with clear and feasible to attain objectives, a methodology on how to develop a system of social inclusion indicators at county level etc.)

8.2. Systematic information on county social inclusion plans, county implementation plans and any other programmatic documents at county level should be collected by the Technical Secretariat of NCSI (synthetic reports on the situation across counties could be published).

8.3. Bottom-up policy elaboration processes should be initiated in the future, with the taking over of the objectives at the county level in the national policies, based on programmatic documents and also regular consultation meetings.

8.4. NCSI technical secretariat should be required to organize regular (e.g. annual) meetings with the participation of the CCSI Technical Secretariats, with the presentation of the CCSIs’ activity, exchange of experience, training sessions.

8.5. All these processes are possible only if there is a financing line ensuring minimal funding for the activities of the Technical Secretariat, which includes expenses related to activities (training, regular meetings) and current operation (office supplies, travel expenses).

Commission’s activity and that of the technical secretariat, with the purpose of increasing the involvement of local authorities.
Justification
One of the findings of the evaluation exercise is that CCSIs receive no methodological coordination in respect with the main activities that they are expected to perform, such as strategic planning, or monitoring, relying on the minimal specifications provided by the legislation. As a result, these activities are carried out in a very heterogeneous way among counties and even among the members of the same CCSI. Moreover, the various components of the CCSI activity, such as diagnosis or planning are implemented without any clear methodology guiding these activities and they are often relying on a limited level of technical knowledge. Capacity development support should be targeted mainly towards the Technical Secretariats, which should then support the implementation of the activities of the CCSI in a structured manner, with a clear sequence of activities and following standard procedures.
The representatives of CCSIs have reported that they feel they are not aware of the activity at national level or in other counties.

9. LPAs should be supported for a more efficient collaboration with CCSIs through field work of the technical secretariat experts of CCSI, training of LPAs and the dissemination of good practices of local authorities

9.1. The planning of training for all levels of the national mechanism for social inclusion should include training modules for local authorities, targeting the localities with higher levels of social exclusion and the ones identified by CCSI as needing the most this support in order to facilitate collaboration.
9.2. The training courses could cover, dependent on the profile of the needs, basic/general themes on which CCSI representatives report that local authorities have no expertise, such as social protection and social inclusion policies and their role, or more specialized modules.
9.3. Mayors, social assistants or other representatives of local authorities reported as most active in the social inclusion area should be invited to CCSI meetings to showcase their activity, along with representatives of less active local authorities.
9.4. The law should explicitly stipulate that reaching quorum for certain decisions within CCSI meetings should not require the presence of representatives of all the local authorities included in CCSI.

Justification
According to the research findings, some CCSIs faces challenges in mobilizing local authorities and working consistently with the authorities that are open to collaboration; the challenges vary from the difficulty of ensuring participation in CCSI meetings to the lack of competence on the topic of social inclusion, especially in the case of representatives of authorities from rural areas.

10. The national mechanism for social inclusion should be linked to the financing flows available in the field of social inclusion and social protection

10.1. The national mechanism of social inclusion should be active in the future in the preparation, launching and implementation of programs offering financial support for social inclusion projects and services, such as National Interest Programmes.

45 The legislation might specify that representatives of associations representing groups of localities/mayors can be invited, as some CCSIs covered by the research already did.
10.2. Potential revisions of some programs already carried on by MLSP, as follow up to some already proposed evaluations of these programs, might take into consideration the option to include National and/or County Commission for Social Inclusion as institutional actors in managing and implementing these programs.

10.3. CCSIs should be activated as inter-institutional mechanisms for attracting funding for social inclusion projects implementing the objectives set in County Action Plans. The new policy objectives (and not derived from current activity) should be consistently followed through mapping of potential funding sources in the field of social inclusion and preparing applications from attracting such funds.

10.4. County-level training of the Technical Secretariats of CCSIs should include information on available funding, ‘how to apply’ info and guidance for the efficient implementation of projects within the framework of certain types of financing (European funds, National Development Program, other types of funding).

Justification

The research revealed that some of the people involved in the activity of the national mechanism perceive the activity as lacking in importance and purpose. Awarding responsibilities related with financing social inclusion programs to NCSI/CCIS should tackle this problem.

Setting innovative objectives in the County Plans which, once met, would enhance the level of social inclusion at county level, is important. Setting such ‘new’ objectives usually requires identifying funding sources as well. The lack of funding for implementation of innovative objectives determines CCSIs, according with interviews, to select the objectives included in the County Plans out of the activities that are implemented on regular basis as part of the tasks that the institutions represented within CCSI are assigned by the legislation.

The alternatives of revising the national inclusion mechanism may be different:

- depending on the level of political commitment, and the extent of the adjustments:
  1. Residual adjustments scenario, with only the positive elements of the current institutional set-up being maintained and contextual adjustments (most of the content of recommendations 1, 3, 6, 8 and 8).
  2. The maximum scenario, with the restructuring of the inclusion mechanism to become functional and connecting to financing mechanisms (all recommendations with their integral content).

- depending on the time of implementation:
  1. The optimal moment, along with the process of drafting or with the finalization of the Strategy for social inclusion 2021-2027.
  2. In anticipation of the Strategy for social inclusion 2021-2027.
6. List of references

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs Country-specific recommendations Available at: http://www.mae.ro/node/48037
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs European Semester. Available at: http://www.mae.ro/node/47936
7. Annexes

Annex 1. Interview guide for the County Commissions for Social Inclusion

Hello! My name is ________________ and I’m ________________. I am currently working on the "Increasing the efficiency of interventions both at the level of the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice, and of the structures under its coordination" project, signed between the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

I contacted you as a representative of ________________. I would like to have a free discussion on the law no. 1217/2006 regarding the establishment of the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion in Romania.

I ask for your permission to record the discussion, ensuring that the recording will be used solely for research purposes to substantiate the revision of the legislative framework.

What do you particularly do in the county commission? What did the activities, in which you were involved, consisted of? Please provide details.

Organization of meetings
- When was the last committee meeting? Since 2016 and so far, how many annual meetings have you had?
- How about before 2016 (incl. In 2007-2010)?
- How do you determine the need for meetings? Is there a procedure? What difficulties did you encounter in organizing the meetings?
- Who sets the meeting agenda? What were the most important topics on the agenda for promoting social inclusion at county level? Why were these the most important?
- What happened after the sessions? What was the result of the sessions?
- How were these characteristics in the beginning/in the first 3 years after the commission was formed?

Structure of the commission
- Has the committee’s structure changed over time (reorganizations)? When exactly did these reorganizations occur (frequency)? What were the reasons why the committee’s structure has changed over time?
- What is the structure of the commission at present?

Development, approval and implementation of annual county plans with actions on social inclusion
- What is the most recent county plan, developed and approved by the commission, with actions aimed at social inclusion? What were your goals within it (objectives, activities)? What happened after the plan was implemented? What were the results of the actions?
How did the need to develop the plan come to fruition? What were the steps involved in approving this plan (practices)?

Did the Commission developed and approved other county plans over time? When?

We repeat the above questions for each plan separately.

Only if applicable:

How did you manage to keep the commission active in the development, approval and implementation of annual county plans? What are the factors that facilitated this?

What were the challenges encountered in the development, approval and implementation of annual county plans? What legislative, institutional and other barriers have you encountered? What were the reasons why you encountered these challenges and barriers/obstacles?

Monitoring the achievement of the objectives set out in the county plans

For which of the annual county plans mentioned earlier, did you monitor the achievement of the objectives?

What were you particularly doing in the monitoring activity? How often did you do this monitoring?

What was its purpose? How relevant was the monitoring to you (the county commission)?

Did you have a monitoring methodology? If so, what was it?

What were the difficulties you encountered in carrying out the monitoring activity? Why do you think you encountered such obstacles?

Periodic briefing on the situation and the evolution of the social condition of the county

Did the county commission periodically inform about the situation and the evolution of the social state of the county? Who should have been informed? Who was in charge of this information, from the committee’s side? What were the topics addressed, the data source?

What was the purpose of briefing about the situation and the evolution of the social state of the county? How do these situations help you? How was this situation used at the county level?

How often did you elaborate this information at the commission level?

What were the difficulties encountered in developing the briefing? Why do you think you encountered such obstacles?

Notifying the national commission on the stage of achieving the priorities assumed by the annual county plan

Have you ever updated the national commission about the stage of achieving the priorities assumed through the annual county plan? When exactly and for which of the implemented annual plans?

What did this information entail? Did you receive a response from the National Commission following the briefing? If so, what was it? What have you done as a result of this response?

What were the difficulties encountered in notifying? Why do you think you encountered such obstacles?
The national mechanism for social inclusion

How does the county commission's activity influence the situation at the county or local level regarding social inclusion or social protection?

What do you think was or is the role of the county commission in promoting social inclusion? What makes you believe this? What role do you think they should play? What aspects would you need for the county commission's activity to be relevant to promoting social inclusion?

Please describe the situations of interaction with other actors within the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion (the national commission, the secretariat of the national commission, the social inclusion units)? How often have you interacted with them?

What difficulties did you encounter in interacting with the National Commission or its secretariat?

What do you think about the way the institutions within the national mechanism of social inclusion work?

What do you consider important to keep in the revised mechanism for social inclusion (strengths - legislative, institutional, other)? What aspects would need adjustments (institutional, legislative etc.)? Why do you think this? Reasoning.

What are the present needs to ensure the functionality of such a revised mechanism?
Annex 2. Interview guide for the National Commissions for Social Inclusion and Social Inclusion Units

Hello! My name is ________________ and I’m ________________. I am currently working on the "Increasing the efficiency of interventions both at the level of the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice, and of the structures under its coordination" project, signed between the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

I contacted you as a representative of ________________. I would like to have a free discussion on the law no. 1217/2006 regarding the establishment of the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion in Romania.

I ask for your permission to record the discussion, ensuring that the recording will be used solely for research purposes to substantiate the revision of the legislative framework.

What are you really doing (have you worked in the past) in the social inclusion unit? What the activities, in which you involved, consisted of? Please provide details.

Structure of the unit
Has the unit’s structure changed over time (reorganizations)? When exactly did these reorganizations occur? What were the reasons why the unit’s structure has changed over time?

Monitoring the implementation of plans to prevent and combat social exclusion
What is the latest plan for preventing and combating social exclusion, which you have monitored?
Who had prepared and approved this plan? What had they set out in this plan (purpose, goals, actions)?
Have other plans been developed and approved over time? When?
I repeat the above questions for each plan separately.
Has the unit been in charge of monitoring these plans? If not, why was another unit taken over to monitor these plans? For what reason?
What were you doing specifically in the monitoring activity? How often did you do this monitoring? What was its purpose? How relevant was the monitoring for the initiators of the plans for preventing and combating social exclusion?
Did you have a monitoring methodology? If so, what was it?
What were the difficulties you encountered in carrying out the monitoring? Why do you think you encountered such obstacles?

Evaluation of the effects of measures to prevent and combat social exclusion
What is the latest plan for preventing and combating social exclusion, for which you evaluated the implemented measures?
Did the unit deal with the evaluation of the measures of some older plans? If not, why was another unit taking over the evaluation of these plans? For what reason?
Did you have an evaluation methodology? If so, what was it? What was the purpose of this assessment? How relevant was the assessment for the next planning? Was it used in any way for the next planning? What were the difficulties you encountered in carrying out the evaluation? Why do you think you encountered such obstacles? What do you think were the effects of the measures stipulated in the plans?

**Update of sectorial indicators of social inclusion**
What does the updating of the sectorial indicators of social inclusion entail? How did you get involved in updating the sectorial indicators of social inclusion (responsibilities)? What about the other units? How often did the indicators get updated (by you or someone else)? What challenges did you encounter in updating sectorial indicators of social inclusion? Why do you think you encountered such obstacles? How were these difficulties resolved? What do you think about the current national system of social inclusion indicators (GD no. 488/2005)? What are the current shortcomings of this system of indicators?

**Information system on data relevant to the field of social inclusion**
What does the information system with data relevant to the field of social inclusion mean? In what way was this developed by the social inclusion units? Did you in any way contribute to its development? What is the stage of developing the information system? From what do you know, what challenges did the social inclusion units face in developing the information system with data relevant to the field of social inclusion? Why do you think they encountered such obstacles? How were these difficulties resolved?

**The consultation process initiated by the MLSP on social inclusion**
What does the process of consultation initiated by the MLSP on social inclusion imply, or used to imply? When was this consultation process last initiated? What was the purpose of this consultation process? What happened as a result of the consultation? What was or is the role of the unit in the consultation process? How was the consultation process during the beginning period (in the first 3 years) of the social inclusion unit?

**Periodic monitoring of the progress made in relation to the objectives and indicators established by the Annual Report in the field of social inclusion**
What does the activity of monitoring the progress achieved in relation to the objectives and indicators set by the Annual Report in the field of social inclusion, mean? What did the social inclusion unit specifically do in the monitoring activity? What about the other units? How were the responsibilities distributed? How often did you do this monitoring? How relevant was this monitoring and to whom? Did you have a monitoring methodology? If so, what was it?
What were the difficulties you encountered in carrying out the monitoring? Why do you think you encountered such obstacles? How did you overcome these difficulties?

**Progress report in the field of social inclusion**

What documents were prepared by the social inclusion units for the drafting of the Progress Report in the field of social inclusion, finalized by the MLSP?

When was the last time you prepared such documents for the progress report? What happened in the meantime (including reasons)?

**Perspective of the Unit coordinator as a member of the National Commission**

What does the activity of identifying the social inclusion priorities by the National Commission entail? How is this activity carried out? How often are social inclusion priorities identified?

What happens to these priorities once they have been identified?

What does the National Commission do once it approves the monitoring reports on the implementation of the priorities in the field of social inclusion? How useful are these reports and to whom?

When was the last time a monitoring report on the implementation of the priorities in the field of social inclusion was completed? What happened in the meantime (including reasons)?

What does the National Commission do when it approves the national report on the field of social inclusion and social protection. Who is responsible for drafting this report?

What do you think is the role of the National Commission in promoting social inclusion? What role do you think they should play?

What were the difficulties that the commission encountered in fulfilling its responsibilities? Why do you think it encountered such obstacles? What aspects would be needed to make the National Commission's activity more important in promoting social inclusion?

**The national mechanism for social inclusion**

What do you think was or is the role of the Unit in promoting social inclusion? What makes you believe this? What role do you think they should play? What aspects would you need for the Unit's activity to be relevant for promoting social inclusion?

Please describe the situations of interaction with the other actors within the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion (the national commission, the secretariat of the national commission, the county commissions)? How often have you interacted with them?

What difficulties did you encounter in interacting with the National Commission or its secretariat?

What do you think about the way the institutions within the national mechanism of social inclusion work?

What do you consider important to keep in the revised mechanism for social inclusion (strengths - legislative, institutional, other)? What aspects would need adjustments (institutional, legislative etc.)? Why do you think this? Reasoning.

How can the link between data (indicators) and planning be improved within the mechanism?

What needs are there to ensure the functionality of such a revised mechanism?
Hello! The Ministry of Labor and Social Justice implements the "Increasing the efficiency of interventions both at the MLSP level and the structures under its coordination" project, with technical assistance from the World Bank.

On the basis of the agreement for the provision of reimbursable advisory services (RAS), the World Bank conducts the analysis on the existing legislation and regulations regarding both the national system of social inclusion indicators and the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion. The purpose of this approach is to identify the challenges encountered in implementing the mechanism and suggest/recommend measures to improve the mechanism of social inclusion.

In this regard, the World Bank, as a contractor, coordinates the application of questionnaires to the institutional representatives on the Government Decision no. 1217/2006 regarding the establishment of the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion in Romania.

The information you provide is confidential, will be aggregated, not related to your identity and will be used for statistical purposes only. We mention that there are no right or wrong answers. Therefore, we ask you to support us in completing this questionnaire by ...... Completing the questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes.

We also inform you that the contact details sent through this questionnaire are subject to the MLSP policy for the processing of personal data.

For details on the project and this request for data collection, please contact Larisa Cazan (senior advisor within the Department of Social Services Policy, email: Larisa.Cazan@mmuncii.gov.ro, 021.230.23.61), and for issues regarding technical aspects related to the completion of the questionnaire, please contact Andra Panait (World Bank expert, email: apanait@worldbank.org, 0729.547.207).

Q1. What is the county in which the Commission for Social Inclusion you represent is carrying out its activity?

*Only one possible answer.*

1. Alba
2. Arad
3. Argeș
4. Bacău
5. Bihor
6. Bistrița-Năsăud
7. Botoșani
8. Brăila
9. Brașov
10. București
Q2. What is the institution in which you have been or are active in the Social Inclusion Commission?

*Only one possible answer.*

1. Prefect’s Office
2. County Agency for Payments and Social Inspection
3. The General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection
4. Social Assistance Directorate
5. Public Social Assistance Service
6. Another institution. Please specify which other institution you refer to:
................................................................................................................................

Q3. Please specify the following useful details in solving technical problems related to completing the questionnaire.

*These details allow us to identify the respondent and to remedy the technical problems that appeared in completing the questionnaire. The information you provide in the questionnaire is confidential and will not be related to your identity (details below)*

Name: ..................................
Surname: ..................................
Position: ..................................
Telephone number: ..................................

Q4. The county commission for social inclusion, which is part of the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion (GD no. 1217/2006), has been active during 2019?

*Only one possible answer.*

1. Yes -> go to question Q7
2. No -> go to question Q5

Q5. What do you consider to be the *three main reasons* for the malfunction of the County Commission for Social Inclusion at present?

*Record the reasons in the order of importance: first, second and third reasons.*

*If you find any reasons other than those listed below, please check the Other reasons and list the reasons in the box below.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First reason</th>
<th>Second reason</th>
<th>Third reason</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social exclusion is not a priority issue at county level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social exclusion is not a priority issue at national level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the Commission are already overloaded with the current tasks carried out in the institutions in which they operate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interest of the Commission members on social inclusion issues</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The problems of inclusion are solved otherwise than by coordinating the interventions by the County Commission

There are difficulties of interaction at the level of the institutions included in the county commission

Lack of pressure from the National Commission on the approval and reporting of social inclusion actions

Lack of public financial resources to carry out the activities of the Commission

Other reasons

Please specify below the reasons you refer to and which have not been mentioned previously:

Q6. What is the last year the County Commission for Social Inclusion was active?

Please specify the last year in which the commission has worked, that is to say, it has carried out or coordinated various activities. Only one possible answer.

1. Before 2017 -> go to question Q13
2. 2017 -> go to question Q11
3. 2018 -> go to question Q9

Q7. What were the activities carried out within the County Commission for social inclusion or coordinated by it in 2019?

Please tick all the activities of the commission in that year.

1. Organization of meetings within the County Commission -> go to question Q8
2. Development and approval of the annual County Plans on social inclusion
3. Implementation of annual county plans
4. Monitoring the achievement of the objectives set out in the county plans
5. Preparation of monitoring reports to achieve the objectives set out in the county plans
6. Transmission of the monitoring reports of the county plans to the National Commission/MLSP
7. Development of informing documents regarding the situation and the evolution of the social state of the county
8. Other activities. Please specify below other activities:

.................................................................
Q8. What was the number of meetings organized by the County Commission for social inclusion in 2019? Only one possible answer (numerical value).

........................................

Q9. What were the activities carried out within the County Commission for social inclusion or coordinated by it in 2018?

Please tick all the activities of the commission in that year.

1. Organization of meetings within the County Commission -> go to question Q8
2. Development and approval of the annual County Plans on social inclusion
3. Implementation of annual county plans
4. Monitoring the achievement of the objectives set out in the county plans
5. Preparation of monitoring reports to achieve the objectives set out in the county plans
6. Transmission of the monitoring reports of the county plans to the National Commission/MLSP
7. Development of informing documents regarding the situation and the evolution of the social state of the county
8. Other activities. Please specify below other activities:

.................................................................

Q10. What was the number of meetings organized by the County Commission for social inclusion in 2018? Only one possible answer (numerical value).

........................................

Q11. What were the activities carried out within the County Commission for social inclusion or coordinated by it in 2017?

Please tick all the activities of the commission in that year.

1. Organization of meetings within the County Commission -> go to question Q8
2. Development and approval of the annual County Plans on social inclusion
3. Implementation of annual county plans
4. Monitoring the achievement of the objectives set out in the county plans
5. Preparation of monitoring reports to achieve the objectives set out in the county plans
6. Transmission of the monitoring reports of the county plans to the National Commission/MLSP
7. Development of informing documents regarding the situation and the evolution of the social state of the county
8. Other activities. Please specify below other activities:

.................................................................

Q12. What was the number of meetings organized by the County Commission for social inclusion in 2017?
Q13. The Ministry of Labor and Social Justice conducts a series of consultations and workshops with the aim of revising the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion (GD no. 1217/2006) and the core set of indicators for social inclusion (GD no. 488/2005). Please specify and explain in detail what aspects (including legislative, institutional and other) would need adjustments to improve the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion.

Aspect 1: ................................................................................................................................................
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Aspect 2: ................................................................................................................................................
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Aspect 3: ................................................................................................................................................
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Thank you for your time and support!

Responses are automatically recorded.

For details on the project and this request for data collection, please contact Larisa Cazan (senior advisor within the Department of Social Services Policy, email: Larisa.Cazan@mmuncii.gov.ro, 021.230.23.61), and for technical issues related to completing the questionnaire, please contact Andra Panait (World Bank expert, email: apanait@worldbank.org, 0729.547.207).

Protection of personal data: In accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data and repealing Directive 95/46/ General Data Protection Regulation), the personal data contained in this document are confidential. The collection of personal information is intended solely for the express purpose of organizing and managing the event. We are committed to respecting and protecting the confidentiality of personal data collected. We treat your personal data as confidential information and will never share it with third parties. Thank you!
Annex 4. Form for the Social Inclusion Units

Hello! The Ministry of Labor and Social Justice implements the "Increasing the efficiency of interventions both at the MLSP level and the structures under its coordination" project, with technical assistance from the World Bank.

On the basis of the agreement for the provision of reimbursable advisory services (RAS), the World Bank conducts the analysis on the existing legislation and regulations regarding both the national system of social inclusion indicators and the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion. The purpose of this approach is to identify the challenges encountered in implementing the mechanism and in proposing/recommending measures to improve the mechanism of social inclusion.

In this regard, the World Bank, as a contractor, coordinates the application of questionnaires to the institutional representatives on the Government Decision no. 1217/2006 regarding the establishment of the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion in Romania.

According to the Government Decision no. 1217/2006 regarding the establishment of the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion in Romania, the social inclusion units are constituted within the central public authorities provided in the annex no. 3 and have the purpose of monitoring the implementation of the commitments assumed by Romania in the international documents in the field of social inclusion. By the social inclusion units, we refer to the directorates/services/departments/offices within the institutions provided in the annex no. 3, which took over the powers established by law.

The information you provide is confidential, will be aggregated, not related to your identity and will be used for statistical purposes only. We mention that there are no right or wrong answers. Therefore, we ask you to support us in completing this questionnaire by ...... Completing the questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes.

We also inform you that the contact details sent through this questionnaire are subject to the MLSP policy for the processing of personal data.

For details on the project and this request for data collection, please contact Larisa Cazan (senior advisor within the Department of Social Services Policy, email: Larisa.Cazan@mmuncii.gov.ro, 021.230.23.61), and for issues regarding technical aspects related to the completion of the questionnaire, please contact Andra Panait (World Bank expert, email: apanait@worldbank.org, 0729.547.207).

Q1. What is the institution in which you are working or have worked in the field of social inclusion?

1. Ministry of Health
2. Ministry of Justice
3. Ministry of Internal Affairs
4. Ministry of Economy
5. Ministry of Public Finance
6. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
7. Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration
8. Ministry of National Education
Q2. Which is the department within your institution where you are working or have worked in the field of social inclusion, according to GD no. 1217/2006?

1. The Unit for Social Inclusion
2. Other departments/directorates/services/offices, which have taken over the specific duties of a social inclusion unit

Please mention what other departments/directions/services/offices you refer to:

.................................................................

Q3. Please specify the following useful details in solving technical problems related to completing the questionnaire.

These details allow us to identify the respondent and to remedy the technical problems that appeared in completing the questionnaire. The information you provide in the questionnaire is confidential and will not be related to your identity (details below)

Name: ........................................
Surname: ...................................
Position: .................................
Telephone number: ........................

Q4. The social inclusion unit/department with specific tasks, which is part of the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion (GD no. 1217/2006), has been active during 2019?

Only one possible answer.

1. Yes -> go to question Q7
2. No -> go to question Q5

Q5. What do you consider to be the **three main reasons** for the malfunction of the Social Inclusion Unit/department with responsibilities related to social inclusion?

*Record the reasons in the order of importance: first, second and third reasons.*

*If you find any reasons other than those listed below, please check the Other reasons and list the reasons in the box below.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First reason</th>
<th>Second reason</th>
<th>Third reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social exclusion is not a priority issue at national level</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Social exclusion is not a priority issue at the level of the institution to which the social inclusion unit belongs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The personnel of the unit is already overloaded with other current tasks, which are not related to the activity of the social inclusion unit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient staff within the unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of specialized staff within the unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLSP has no longer organized consultations on social inclusion</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of requests from the National Commission regarding the delivery of documents under the responsibility of the unit, according to the tasks stipulated in GD no. 1217/2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of financial resources to support the activity of the unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of data access to update sectorial indicators of social inclusion and contribute to other specific deliverables</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

*Please specify below the reasons you refer to and which have not been mentioned previously:*

Q6. What is the last year in which the Social Inclusion Unit/Department with responsibilities regarding social inclusion was active?

*Please specify the last year in which the unit/department has functioned, having responsibilities specific to social inclusion. Only one possible answer.*
1. Before 2017 -> go to question Q10
2. 2017 -> go to question Q9
3. 2018 -> go to question Q8

Q7. What were the activities carried out within the Social Inclusion Unit/Department with responsibilities related to social inclusion in 2019?

*Please tick all the activities carried out by the social inclusion unit/department in that year.*

1. Unit’s coordinator attended to the meetings of the National Commission
2. Participation in the consultation process initiated by the MLSP on social inclusion
3. Monitoring the implementation of plans for preventing and combating social exclusion
4. Preparation of reports for monitoring the implementation of preventing and combating social exclusion plans
5. Preparation of reports to evaluate the measures’ effects to prevent and combat social exclusion
6. Update the sectorial indicators of social inclusion
7. Contributions to the development of the informational system with data relevant to the field of social inclusion
8. Preparation of progress monitoring reports in relation to the objectives and indicators established by the Annual Report in the field of social inclusion
9. Contributions to the Progress Report in the field of social inclusion
10. Other activities .... *Please specify below other activities:*

Q8. What were the activities carried out within the Social Inclusion Unit/Department with responsibilities related to social inclusion in 2018?

*Please tick all the activities carried out by the social inclusion unit/department in that year.*

1. Unit’s coordinator attended to the meetings of the National Commission
2. Participation in the consultation process initiated by the MLSP on social inclusion
3. Monitoring the implementation of plans for preventing and combating social exclusion
4. Preparation of reports for monitoring the implementation of preventing and combating social exclusion plans
5. Preparation of reports to evaluate the measures’ effects to prevent and combat social exclusion
6. Update the sectorial indicators of social inclusion
7. Contributions to the development of the informational system with data relevant to the field of social inclusion
8. Preparation of progress monitoring reports in relation to the objectives and indicators established by the Annual Report in the field of social inclusion
9. Contributions to the Progress Report in the field of social inclusion
10. Other activities .... *Please specify below other activities:*

....................................................................................................................
Q9. What were the activities carried out within the Social Inclusion Unit/Department with responsibilities related to social inclusion in 2017?

Please tick all the activities carried out by the social inclusion unit/department in that year.

1. Unit’s coordinator attended to the meetings of the National Commission
2. Participation in the consultation process initiated by the MLSP on social inclusion
3. Monitoring the implementation of plans for preventing and combating social exclusion
4. Preparation of reports for monitoring the implementation of preventing and combating social exclusion plans
5. Preparation of reports to evaluate the measures’ effects to prevent and combat social exclusion
6. Update the sectorial indicators of social inclusion
7. Contributions to the development of the informational system with data relevant to the field of social inclusion
8. Preparation of progress monitoring reports in relation to the objectives and indicators established by the Annual Report in the field of social inclusion
9. Contributions to the Progress Report in the field of social inclusion
10. Other activities .... Please specify below other activities:
..............................................................................................................................................................

Q10. The Ministry of Labor and Social Justice conducts a series of consultations and workshops with the aim of revising the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion (GD no. 1217/2006) and the core set of indicators for social inclusion (GD no. 488/2005). Please specify and explain in detail what aspects (including legislative, institutional and other) would need adjustments to improve the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion.

Aspect 1: ................................................................................................................................................
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Aspect 2: ................................................................................................................................................
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Aspect 3: ................................................................................................................................................
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........................................................................................................................................................................
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Thank you for your time and support!
Responses are automatically recorded.

For details on the project and this request for data collection, please contact Larisa Cazan (senior advisor within the Department of Social Services Policy, email: Larisa.Cazan@mmuncii.gov.ro, 021.230.23.61), and for technical issues related to completing the questionnaire, please contact Andra Panait (World Bank expert, email: apanait@worldbank.org, 0729.547.207).

Protection of personal data: In accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data and repealing Directive 95/46/General Data Protection Regulation), the personal data contained in this document are confidential. The collection of personal information is intended solely for the express purpose of organizing and managing the event. We are committed to respecting and protecting the confidentiality of personal data collected. We treat your personal data as confidential information and will never share it with third parties. Thank you!
Annex 5: Brief history of the key moments until and after the establishment of the mechanism for promoting social inclusion

1995: NIS launches a poverty measurement program

2001: The European Council approves a comparative methodology at the level of the member countries for the measurement of relative poverty

2001-2005: The Commission on Anti-Poverty and Promotion of Social Inclusion (CASPIS) was coordinated by the MLSP and the Prime Minister's advisor on social issues. The secretariat was within the Chancellery of the Government. The financial resources were provided through grants from DFID and the World Bank, in particular, for advisory services/research, training of the technical secretariat and some aspects related to the development of the institutional structure (equipping with PCs, training sessions). The CJASPIS Secretariat is at the GDSACP.

2002: CASPIS prepared the anti-poverty and social inclusion promotion plan (and an implementation report).

2003-2004: The Laeken indicators for measuring social inclusion were taken over and adapted by CASPIS in the set of indicators legislated by GD no. 488/2005.

2005-2007: MLSP signed on June 20, 2005 the Joint Memorandum on Social Inclusion (JIM), through which the major problems that Romania was facing at that time were identified.

2006: The Steering Committee for the monitoring of the implementation of the commitments undertaken by the Joint Memorandum in the field of social inclusion is legislated and repealed in the same year

2006: A progress report on the objectives set out in the Joint Memorandum on Social Inclusion is published.

March 12, 2007: First meeting of the National Commission for Social Inclusion

2008: The second progress report is published on the MLSP website under the logo of the Government of Romania and is the first report on social inclusion as part of the National Reform Program, analyzing the period 2006-2007.

2008: The National Strategic Report on social protection and social inclusion 2006-2008 is published on the MLSP website, under the logo of the Government of Romania. It is part of the new cycle on the Open Method of Coordination in the field of Social Protection and Social Inclusion, according to the EU program for employment and social solidarity, PROGRESS.


2010: The National Strategic Report on social protection and social inclusion 2008-2010 is published on the MLSP website, under the logo of the Government of Romania.

2010: The National Reform Program (NRP) is coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the open method of coordination and the European Semester to meet the objectives of the "Europe 2020" Strategy transposed into annual national objectives. The European semester 46 consists of a succession of

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46 Which stands for the strategic planning process at European and national level
events, which begin each year with the establishment of priorities through the Annual Growth Analysis report, followed by the assessment of the economic and social situation of each Member State through the Country Report, the bilateral discussions between the European Council and each Member State on the priorities accepted by the Member States and ending with the establishment of Country Specific Recommendations. The NRP is adjusted annually at the level of each objective according to the country specific recommendations. This whole process guides national policies in the field of social inclusion. The objective of Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction is the primary responsibility of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, as well as of many other central public ministries/authorities.
Annex 6: The structure of the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion

1. Nivel central

- Ministerul Muncii Familiei și Protecției Sociale
  - Secretar de stat – Coordonator al domeniului asistenței sociale și politiciilor familiale
    - Direcția Programe Incluziune Socială
      - Strategii, sinteze și indicatori incluziune socială
      - Programe Incluziune Socială
      - Secretariatul Comisiei Naționale privind Incluziunea Socială
    - Unități de Incluziune Socială
  - Consiliul Interministerial pentru Afaceri Sociale, Sănătate și Protecția Copilului
    - Comisia Națională privind Incluziunea Socială
      - Unități de Incluziune Socială
      - Ministere Autorități Agenții
Notes:
The Directorate for Social Inclusion Programs has been renamed over time. The present name is: Directorate of Social Services Policies. And at the time of the legislation, it was: Direction of policies, strategies, programs of social inclusion.

The County Directorates for Labor and Social Protection have been restructured, and the current name is the County Agency for Payments and Social Inspection.

Annex 7: Entities’ main responsibilities in the national mechanism for promoting social inclusion

The Social Inclusion Unit has the following main responsibilities, in relation to the specific field of activity of the central public authorities in which it operates:

a) coordinates the monitoring of the plans for the implementation of measures to prevent and combat social exclusion;
b) evaluate the effects of the measures envisaged by the implementation plans provided in letter a), in relation to the regional and county development objectives;
c) updates the sectorial indicators of social inclusion;
d) elaborates the information system regarding the data relevant to the field of social inclusion;
e) participates in the consultation process initiated in the field of social inclusion by the Ministry of Labor, Social Solidarity and Family, with the purpose of eradicating poverty and preventing social exclusion;
f) periodically monitors the progress made in relation to the objectives and indicators established by the Annual Report in the field of social inclusion;
g) elaborates the necessary documents for the drafting of the Progress Report in the field of social inclusion, finalized by the Ministry of Labor, Social Solidarity and Family. (art. 2, para. 2, GD no. 1217/2006)

(1) The main tasks of the National Commission shall be the following:

a) identification of national priorities in the field of social inclusion;
b) establishing the Action Plan in accordance with the identified national priorities;
c) approving the reports for monitoring the implementation of the priorities in the field of social inclusion;
d) approval of the sectorial indicators regarding social inclusion, used in the reporting systems;
e) approval of the National Report on the field of social inclusion and social protection.

(2) The national report on the field of social inclusion and social protection, as well as the monitoring reports on the implementation of the priorities in the field of social inclusion shall be prepared under the coordination of the Ministry of Labor, Social Solidarity and Family. (Art. 7, para. 1 and 2, GD no. 1217/2006)

County commission regarding the social inclusion, respectively the Commission on the social inclusion of the municipality of Bucharest, having mainly the following responsibilities:

a) elaborates and approves the county plan in the field of social inclusion and social protection;
b) monitors the achievement of the objectives set out in the county plans and carries out periodic information on the situation and the evolution of the social state of the county;
c) periodically presents information to the National Commission on the stage of achieving the priorities assumed through the annual county plan. (art. 11, GD no. 1217/2006)
Annex 8. Structure of the County Commission for Social Inclusion

- Prefect’s Office
- County Agency for Payments and Social Inspection
- County Employment Agency
- School Inspectorate
- County Service for Sport and Youth
- Directorate of Public Health
- National Anti-drug Agency - Center for Drug Prevention, Evaluation and Counseling
- General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection (adults, children)
- County Office for Roma
- Social Assistance Directorate
- Statistics County Service
- Directorate for Strategies, European Integration and International Relations - County Council
- Public Services of Social Assistance, Social Assistance Department
- Other representatives of local public authorities
- Community Advisory Council
- Local Council (local expert for Roma, councilors)
- County House of Public Pensions
- County Health Insurance House
- Probation Service
- Police Inspectorate
- Gendarmerie
- General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations
- Regional Center for Adult Training
- Agriculture Directorate (because they have projects for young people in agriculture, they offer training courses)
- Agency for Environmental Protection
- NGOs, Foundations, Associations.
Annex 9. Activities carried out by CCSI in the period 2017-2019

Table 11. Activities carried out by CCSI in the period 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>No. of respondents (N=29)</th>
<th>% respondents (N=29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization of meetings within the County Commission</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>93.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration and approval of the annual county plans on social inclusion</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>86.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of annual county plans</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>55.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring the achievement of the objectives from the county plans</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>51.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation the reports for monitoring the achievement of objectives set out in the county plans</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>44.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transmission of the monitoring reports for the county plans to the National Commission/MLSP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration of some information documents regarding the social situation and evolution in the county</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities ... of which:</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation and approval by the commission’s members of the Action Plan on the social services administered and financed from the budget of the County Council</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation and approval of the County Strategies for the development of social services (annual/multi-annual)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation and endorsement of the County Strategy for social assistance for the period 2014 - 2018</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modification/Approval of the Commission's organization and functioning regulation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of the main achievements of the County Commission on Social Inclusion, between January and September 2017.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of Order no. 2277/12.12.2016 for the approval of the framework protocol for the implementation of the integrated community services, in order to prevent social exclusion and fight against poverty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The request of the County School Inspectorate, through the address of the prefect institution no. II B 12180 from 15.06.2017, informing all the schools in the county about the opportunity to receive grants from the Ovidiu.Ro Association for each newly established kindergarten group made up of children from disadvantaged families.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Informing the member institutions of the County Commission for social inclusion, potential eligible applicants, about the opportunities to access external grants or government programs for non-reimbursable funding.

Meetings of the Joint Working Group for Roma

Monitoring the implementation of the pilot program "Every child in kindergarten" (2016 - 2017)

Table 12. Activities carried out by CCSI in the period 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>No. of respondents (N=29)</th>
<th>% respondents (N=29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization of meetings within the County Commission</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>96.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration and approval of the annual county plans on social inclusion</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>82.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of annual county plans</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>51.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring the achievement of the objectives from the county plans</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>58.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation the reports for monitoring the achievement of objectives set out in the county plans</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transmission of the monitoring reports for the county plans to the National Commission/MLSP</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration of some information documents regarding the social situation and evolution in the county</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities ... of which:</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informing the member institutions of the County Commission for social inclusion, potential eligible applicants, about the opportunities to access external grants or government programs for non-reimbursable funding.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modification and completion of the regulation of organization and functioning of the commission</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation and approval by the members of the commission of the Action Plan on the social services administered and financed from the budget of the County Council</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation and approval of the County Strategies for the development of social services (annual/multi-annual)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation for consultation of the commission members of the Action Plan of the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection for 2018.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Presentation of the activity carried out in the field of social inclusion, in 2018.

Meetings of the Joint Working Group for Roma

Approach for the correlation and interoperability of the databases of the county institutions with responsibilities of social inclusion (I.S.J., A.J.O.F.M., A.J.P.I.S., Pension House). Finding the solution for correlating the information from the databases used by each institution so that both the number and the age group of persons in our county of which there is no data can be detected. The purpose of this approach was to identify these people and then the solutions for their inclusion in the education system, the labor market/apprenticeship programs, the list of taxpayers etc., as well as for their legalization with civil status documents and identity, as appropriate;

Visit to Bistrița Penitentiary to analyze the institutional steps for implementing the "National strategy for social reintegration of persons deprived of liberty 2015-2019", as well as the problem of social reintegration of persons deprived of liberty from the point of view of recognition when calculating the pension provided during the detention period, as seniority in work

Commission visits and presentation of the activity of non-governmental organizations "Innocent Foundation" and "Christian Center for Social Reintegration Onisim", as examples of good practice in our county.

Table 13. Activities carried out by CCSI in the period 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>No. of respondents (N=32)</th>
<th>% respondents (N=32)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization of meetings within the County Commission</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>96.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration and approval of the annual county plans on social inclusion</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of annual county plans</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring the achievement of the objectives from the county plans</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>53.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation the reports for monitoring the achievement of objectives set out in the county plans</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>43.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transmission of the monitoring reports for the county plans to the National Commission/MLSP</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration of some information documents regarding the social situation and evolution in the county</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities ... of which:</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working meeting regarding the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice project, carried out in partnership with the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Health, SMIS code 2014+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informing the member institutions of the County Commission for social inclusion, potential eligible applicants, about the opportunities to access external grants or government programs for non-reimbursable funding.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval of the regulation of organization and functioning of the commission</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revising/updating the structure of the County Commission for social inclusion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation and approval by the members of the commission of the Action Plan on the social services administered and financed from the budget of the County Council</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation and approval of the County Strategies for the development of social services (annual/multi-annual)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation and endorsement by the members of the committee of the County Strategy on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Child and Adult in difficulty 2014-2020</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposals for the elaboration of the National Strategy for Romanian Citizens of Roma Ethnicity for the period 2021-2025</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County file</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report on social marginalization</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising the team of the county unit of support and supervision for the development of a project (development of integrated community services)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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