

IMPROVING DATA-DRIVEN ADVOCACY in the Western Balkans



Experiences and Recommendations from Members of the
Western Balkans European Social Survey Regional Network

Policy Document

This policy document is jointly prepared by the [Center Science and Innovation for Development](#) (SCiDEV) and the [Western Balkans European Social Survey Regional Network](#) with the support of the Project [“Protecting Civic Space – Regional Civil Society Development Hub”](#) implemented by the [Balkan Civil Society Development Network](#) (BCSDN) and financed by the [Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency](#) (Sida).

The participating organisations in the Regional Conference [“Data-driven Advocacy in the Western Balkans”](#) based on which this policy document is developed are the [Center Science and Innovation for Development](#), Albania; [CREDI Centre](#), Bosnia and Herzegovina; [Centre for Political Courage](#), Kosovo; [University of Montenegro](#), Montenegro; [Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research](#), Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia; [Institute of Social Sciences](#), Serbia

In alphabetical order, the contributors are Abi Dodbiba, Aneta Cekikj, Biljana Radović, Blerjana Bino, Ilma Kurtovic, Jovan Bliznakovski, Jovana Zafirović, Ksenija Marković, Lirije Palushi, Nataša Krivokapić, Nenad Celarević, Orkidea Xhaferaj.

The content of this document and information views presented do not represent the official position and opinion of Sida and BCSDN. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in this document lies entirely with the authors.

© SCiDEV

Tirana, December 2021

Executive Summary

Data-driven advocacy recognizes that data is essential for effective, evidence-based advocacy. It can be used to sway stakeholder opinion, to identify new policies or ones that require revision, and to develop recommendations for systemic change. The rationale that motivates data-driven advocacy is that evidence-based policymaking is an approach that will lead to better outcomes than arbitrary, intuitive or opportunistic and populist-driven decision making [“because information can reduce uncertainty about the best course of action”](#). This is particularly relevant for countries with socio-economic challenges, such as high unemployment and large inequalities, weak education and healthcare systems, and low trust in institutions, where better policies informed by data can lead to more sustainable development.

Yet, in the Western Balkans, researchers in academia and civil society alike, face a multitude of challenges as frontrunners of data-driven policy advocacy. These include the lack of willingness and interest from policymakers in using data for policymaking, as well as the insufficient skills of researchers in data analytics and visualization, communication, and advocacy. The media is another important actor that can facilitate data-driven advocacy. However, journalists in the region have low data literacy skills, and are subject to considerations set by the editorial policy of the media outlet they work in.

This Policy Document presents a series of recommendations for researchers, academia, civil society, policy makers and media. Primarily, it argues for the need for specialised data analytics trainings; improving researcher’s communication skills; sharing experiences of advocacy between academia and civil society in the region, as well as abroad, particularly in countries with a strong tradition of using data for policy advocacy; increasing funding for research; and encouraging the creation and strengthening of regional collaborations such as the Western Balkans European Social Survey Network.

1. The importance of data for informed policymaking in a changing context

The Western Balkans is a region that embodies diverse institutional traditions on the one hand, and many shared challenges on the other. All Western Balkans economies (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia; hereinafter, WB6) face prolonged socio-economic challenges, including high unemployment, particularly among the youth, and large inequalities between population groups, leaving many at risk of being excluded or left behind. The education and healthcare systems are weak – with their vulnerabilities being further exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moreover, trust in institutions is low, primarily due to perceptions of wide-spread corruption. In fact, according to the [2021 Balkan Barometer](#) (an annual survey of the Regional Cooperation Council), 68% of citizens in the Western Balkans think that laws are not implemented in an efficient manner. The Parliament and courts are the least trusted institutions, with 61% of citizens declaring that they do not trust them. This is followed by a high level of distrust in their government, reported by 57% of the respondents. The [Gallup World Poll 2019](#) survey shows that, on average, trust in national governments in the Western Balkans is higher among older cohorts than younger ones. Citizens aged 50 and above tend to have the highest level of confidence in the national government (37%) compared to those aged 15-29 and 30-49 (31% and 32%, respectively). [OECD](#) reports that there is a strong negative relationship between perceived corruption and confidence in government. Countries and economies in WB6 have significantly lower levels of confidence in national government and correspondingly substantially higher levels of perceived corruption.

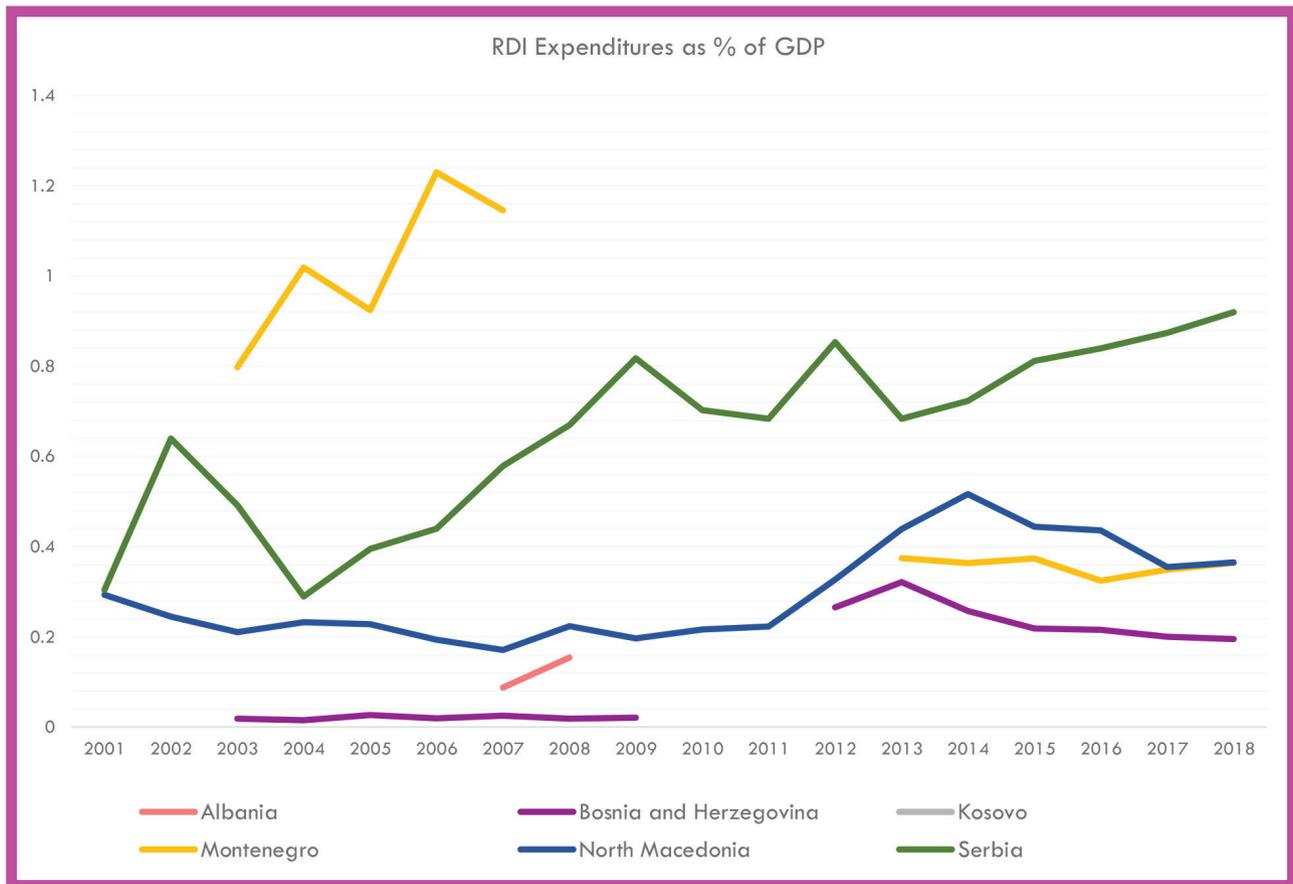
Addressing these multifaceted social issues, that compound on each other, requires an intensive use of data and analyses. To that end, by policymakers should consider academia and the wider civil society, who produce knowledge and collect data, as allies. Yet, across WB6, policymakers tend to place a relatively low value on data and research¹.

Firstly, this can be seen in the comparatively low investment in expanding and/or strengthening national statistical systems. [Experts](#) have argued for a 'black hole' in the national statistical systems in WB6, emphasising particularly the unreliability of data produced, thus hindering access to credible data for policymakers and other stakeholders. EU and other donors have provided support for the development of the national statistical systems. For instance, within the framework of the Berlin Process, Western Balkan national statistical offices have received support from [Polish Statistical Office](#) on the significance of data in the decision-making process and evidence-based policymaking. Indeed, the lack of reliable statistics makes conscientious policymaking almost impossible. Still, national statistical offices often lack financial resources and capacities to collect and publish data. At the same time, [Western Balkan statisticians](#) have little opportunity to jointly analyse challenges in data collection and interpretation. Western Balkans national statistical offices gather only a fraction of the data their EU counterparts do. In the EU accession process, which all WB6 aspire to, statistics

¹ Albeit with varying degrees from country to country

constitutes a separate [chapter of the *acquis*](#), a clear indicator of the paramount importance of national statistics and data.

Secondly, the low value on data and research is mirrored in the low public funding dedicated to research, development, and innovation (RDI) across WB6. [World Bank data on RDI expenditures](#) (as percentage of GDP) during 2000–2018 shows that WB6 devoted between a minimum of 0.15% to a maximum of 1.23% of GDP to RDI². For comparison, in 2019, [EU members states](#) spent over €306 billion on RDI, equivalent to 2.19% of its GDP.



With limited public funding available, Western Balkans researchers try to resort to international funding for research. According to the [European Commission](#), Horizon 2020 funding for research projects in the Western Balkans tripled between 2014 and 2019. The average success rate for WB6 participation in Horizon 2020 calls is approx. 12%, i.e., about the same as the general success rate (at 11.96%), though there are considerable differences between countries³.

² There are data gaps for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro; data is missing entirely for Kosovo

³ Data obtained from the Horizon 2020 Country Profiles portal: <https://tinyurl.com/H2020CountryProfiles> (last accessed in December 2021). National success rates are as follows: Albania – 8.19%; Bosnia and Herzegovina – 11.86%; Kosovo – 17.93%; Montenegro – 12.5%; North Macedonia – 11.22%; Serbia – 11.37%.

Although participation in [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions \(MSCA\)](#) is low in absolute numbers, this programme is well used when put in relation to the existing scientific human capacities in WB6. Additionally, WB6 are now part of [Horizon Europe](#), the EU's €95.5 billion programme on research and innovation, on equal terms with entities from the EU Members States.

Despite the promising signs, it is worth noting that these types of funding are dedicated to scientific research and/or capacity development in academia. Typically, they do not support policy- or advocacy-oriented research, making it harder for WB6 researchers to contribute to data-driven advocacy and policymaking processes.

As far as data and indicators are concerned, WB6 economies are part of some international surveys, such as the World Values Survey, Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC), Balkan Barometer, etc. However, high quality data that investigates the full range of social phenomena and perceptions across the region is scarce. Furthermore, even when data might be available, it is not always certain whether it is comparable country by country, or even used by decision-makers.

An exception to this is the [European Social Survey \(ESS\)](#), an academically driven, cross-national, bi-annual survey that measures the attitudes, beliefs, and behavioural patterns of diverse populations in more than thirty nations. Due to its rigorous methodology, ESS makes it possible to compare the results between participating countries. To date, nine ESS rounds have been completed, while the tenth is underway at the time of writing this policy document. All WB6 economies but Bosnia and Herzegovina have participated or are participating in at least one [ESS round](#).

This policy document is a joint effort of a group of scientists and civil society representatives that became members of the [Western Balkans European Social Survey Regional Network \(WBESS\)](#) – a network dedicated to promoting the continuous participation of WB6 countries in the ESS. The group met in Durres, Albania on December 9-12, 2021, for collaborative sessions on sharing experiences on usage of data for advocacy and policy development and identifying recommendations for promoting data-driven advocacy in their countries.

Based on their experience with ESS and recognizing that data enables the measurement and understanding of the long-term structural changes, as well as changes of values and cultural patterns and practices of citizens in participating countries, this group seeks to boost the regular use of ESS and other high-quality data for monitoring social phenomena and formulation of practical policies across WB6 – at the country, as well as regional level.

2. Experiences from the Western Balkans on the use of data for advocacy

Much like 'traditional' advocacy efforts, data-driven advocacy concerns itself with wanting to influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions. The difference lies in the more effective use of data. Data-driven advocacy recognizes that data is essential for effective, evidence-based advocacy. It can be used to sway stakeholder opinion, to identify policies that require revision, and to develop recommendations for systemic change. The rationale that motivates data-driven advocacy is that evidence-based policymaking is an approach that will lead to better outcomes than arbitrary, intuitive or ideology-driven decision making, [“because information can reduce uncertainty about the best course of action”](#).

Particularly in the context of WB6, data is crucial for the developing demand for progressively transparent, accountable, and responsive institutions. It is also an integral part of the [Open Government Partnership](#) platform. For instance, publication of data collected and analysed by public institutions is a mean for opening up the policymaking process. It can empower a broad array of actors, such as civil society, academia, media, political opponents of the governing party, the private sector, and concerned citizens, to uncover problems, develop innovative solutions, and demand results and thus influence policy.

This section introduces the experiences of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia regarding their participation in ESS⁴ and the use of data for advocacy.

Albania

Albania has participated in two ESS rounds: round 6 (2012–2013) and round 9 (2018–2019). Participation in the latter round was possible through the coordinated efforts of policy actors and an academic institution, and the support of PERFORM, a Swiss-funded project focused on social science research.

Experience from the implementation of 9th round showed that Albanian researchers and policymakers were not aware of ESS. As such, awareness raising efforts began already in 2018, while field work for the 9th round was being set up. They were further intensified during 2020–2021, with the organization of several information sessions with academics and students, meetings with policymakers, and one hands-on training organized in mid-2021.

The goal of these activities was to create a critical mass of 'Friends of ESS' that would advocate independently for the continuous participation of Albania in ESS, and potentially other surveys in the future.

Albania did not apply to participate in the 10th ESS round. Advocacy efforts under WBESS tried to promote participation in the upcoming 11th round. No national network on ESS exists yet.

4 It is worth noting that, since 2014, participation in ESS is possible only if a country's government submits a formal request to the ESS administration and pays the respective participation fee (following the request's approval). As such, coordination with the governmental actors is crucial for the successful participation in ESS.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina is the only WB6 country that has not participated in any ESS round yet. CREDI Centre, a leading social science research institute and member of the WBESS network, has been advocating to encourage participation of the BiH in ESS and has submitted an official request to the Ministry of Civil Affairs, responsible for science at the state level.

In the meantime, CREDI is conducting the preparatory work that will ensure successful implementation of ESS, should the application be granted for the upcoming round (in 2023). This includes the creation of a dedicated Survey Unit, with trained coordinators and enumerators. To promote ESS, CREDI has established and is coordinating a national ESS network, including 14 leading universities in BiH ([ESS-BiH network](#)).

The network wants to promote research based on ESS data among students and wider audience. One of the noteworthy initiatives is the Inquire Research Incubator support program, which offers scholarships for graduate student with a research proposal that makes use of ESS data.

Kosovo

Kosovo has participated only in the 6th ESS round 6 (2012-2014). The efforts for promoting the participation in the 10th round began in January 2020 under the support of the WBESS. This involved in person meetings with several high-level politicians, policymakers, CSOs representatives, university representatives and academics, potential donors etc.

Unfortunately, promotion and awareness raising activities were hindered by pandemic-related restrictions and by the unexpected political rotations that the country has experienced in the last two year. As such, priorities of national institutions shifted drastically, rendering further advocacy on ESS and participation in the 10th round impossible. Even when excluding the unusual political and public health circumstances, there was little to no political will to pursue participation in ESS. No national network on ESS has been established.

Montenegro

Montenegro participated in ESS for the first time during its 9th round (2018-2019). The data collected filled a gap in the larger need for high-quality data in the field of social sciences – a great limitation for the academic community, state institutions and NGOs. Yet, interest in and use of ESS data by these groups varies. In the opinion of Montenegrin researchers, state institutions have not used ESS data. One possible reason for this might be the lack of awareness on the existence of this data.

NGOs expressed high interest for ESS data but could only make limited use of it. The high interest is to be expected given the high level of alignment between topics covered by the ESS survey and the space within which civil society operates, addressing for e.g., trust in institutions, religious beliefs, national and ethnic identity, living standards, discrimination, migration, attitude towards democracy, ideological positions, etc. However, their ability to use ESS data is limited due to their lack of statistical analysis skills. This is rather unfortunate given the NGOs' influence in media and their ability to make analyses on these issues accessible to a wider audience.

Finally, the academic community in Montenegro does make use of ESS data but not to a significant level. Two examples are worth highlighting: (i) the Department of Sociology at Faculty of Philosophy in Nikšić, University of Montenegro is in the final stage of preparing a monography that will address various topics covered by ESS data like democratisation, demographic policy, position of women, media, etc.; (ii) an ongoing bilateral project between Faculty of Philosophy in Nikšić and University of Maribor that compares youth in Montenegro and Slovenia is based on ESS data. Montenegro is currently conducting the 10th round of the ESS.

North Macedonia

North Macedonia is participating in ESS for the first time during the 10th round (2020-2021). Fieldwork commenced in October 2021 and is expected to be completed by February 2022. The first snapshot of findings will be available to the public by fall 2022. North Macedonia has a functional national ESS network of representatives from public and private universities, which also engages with representatives of state institutions and the NGO sector.

Broadly speaking, the political context for data-driven advocacy in North Macedonia is favourable, but the country is still due to establish a systematic practice, which would connect the data-driven initiatives to the outcome of policymaking. A normative framework which stipulates mandatory consultations during government policy formulation is in place, but it is followed sporadically and inconsistently. The country introduced the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) process in 2009, and from the early 2010s the national electronic portal for electronic consultations on draft legislation (ENER). These two processes provide avenues through which data-driven advocacy can be promoted but the initiatives from the civil sector are not always followed-up, as successful consultations are often dependent on the level of political will in a specific policy sector.

The specialized think-tank organizations from the civil sector are best equipped for data-driven advocacy in the country, and occasionally manage to influence policy and public opinion on specific issues with the aid of data. Organizations working with specific target groups – marginalized groups, most noticeably – are also successful in providing research-based expertise and help in the implementation of specific policies directed towards these groups. However, these are few exceptional cases; much remains to be done for data-driven advocacy to be recognized as an effective practice for influencing policy making.

Serbia

Serbia participated in ESS for the first time during its 9th round (2018-2019). The national coordination team included five institutes and faculties from different Serbian universities⁵, which were supported by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development, as well as PERFORM, a Swiss-funded project focused on social science research.

Despite participating for the first time, the national coordination team managed to conduct fieldwork

⁵ Institute for Social Sciences (Belgrade), Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory (University of Belgrade), Faculty of Philosophy (University of Novi Sad), Faculty of Philosophy (University of Niš) and the Faculty of Political Sciences (University of Belgrade).

with high efficiency and quality. The country is currently participating in the 10th ESS round, one that was subject to delays due to COVID-19-related restrictions. A novelty of this round was the testing of the self-completion approach in Austria, Hungary, and Serbia.

Due to the promising test results, eight countries, including Serbia, have decided to use self-completion for finalizing fieldwork for this round⁶. Data collection in Serbia will begin next year, with the questionnaire being ready to be mailed in collaboration with the Serbian Post. Fieldwork is expected to be completed in 2022. ESS data is mostly used by representatives of academia in Serbia and there are some nascent initiatives to improve the visibility of the ESS data, and to create a strategy for data driven advocacy.

Overall, experiences from all countries exhibit similar patterns regarding the use (or lack thereof) of data for policymaking and data-driven advocacy. Demand for data and analyses from policymakers is low. Although mechanisms for public consultation of laws and/or policies – a good entry point for data-driven advocacy – might be in place, these are not sufficiently or adequately used. On the supply side, the variety and quality of data gathered at the national level further inhibits advocacy practices, as do low skills on data analysis. Notwithstanding the challenges, there are civil society organizations in WB6 that engage in evidence-informed advocacy and have had some success in influencing policy outcomes. The task at hand is to learn from these experiences, to pinpoint what made them successful and how can that be replicated in other contexts.

6 Self-completion countries have implemented a sequential web-paper design, with initial invitations requesting respondents complete the survey online. For those who do not respond online after two mailings, paper questionnaires are sent by post. In most countries, the letters will be sent by post with no fieldworker involvement

3. Main challenges for successful data-driven advocacy

Deliberations during the group meeting concluded that challenges to successful data-driven advocacy can be grouped as follows:

a) Low willingness of policymakers

Policymakers' reluctance to engage with data could result from:

- A lack willingness on using data, leaving them overtly focused on unsystematic, opportunist (and often populist) decision-making which does not yield sustainable policy outcomes, causing consultations or requests for data to be merely performative, tick-the-box actions, and/or
- Limited abilities to understand data and incorporate it in analysis (i.e., low 'data literacy' skills). In turn, this leads to an inability to articulate needs for data, as well.

b) Skills and capacities of researchers and academia

Researchers and academics tend to have very specialized research skills (comparatively more specialized than researchers/analysts in civil society organizations), but relatively low advocacy skills (comparatively lower than civil society organizations).

In part, this is due to the rigid academic tradition still in place in the WB6, according to which researchers/academics are expected to focus mainly on teaching and research that counts towards their academic career. As a result, they don't sharpen the abilities necessary for science communication or the application of modern data analytics and visualization techniques, which would make their research results more easily digestible to non-expert audiences. In fact, data visualisation has become a crucial feature of data-driven advocacy, as it makes complex information more intuitively understandable to the broader audiences.

At the same time, there is no culture of openness in WB academia, which makes researchers reluctant to embrace new ways of engaging with stakeholders outside academia. Combined with the lack of platforms to publish open data, as well as the lack of intermediary units in universities (such as Knowledge Transfer Units, Project Offices, etc.), connecting to external stakeholders becomes very difficult.

c) Skills and capacities of civil society organizations

Civil society organizations in WB6, particularly those that operate as think tanks, produce most of the policy-oriented research across the region. These reports are typically published online and publicized in media outlets. However, despite the better skills and positioning for successful advocacy, researchers in civil society tend to have comparatively lower research skills than those in academia. Similarly, data analysis skills are limited. As such, data-driven advocacy efforts might not always hit the mark. There is a strong argument to be made about the complementarities between academia and civil society for successful data-driven advocacy.

d) Attitudes in media

[Recent research](#) suggests that journalists in media have the lowest data literacy skills compared to other above-mentioned groups. On the bright side – journalists also had the highest willingness to learn and improve their data use. Yet, they are bound by the immense pressures that media organizations face in today's attention market, where success is measured by number of clicks.

As such, journalists are subject to the inherent tension between the aspiration to preserve integrity of reporting vs. the pressure of sensationalising information to attract viewers. In this context, catchy, sensational titles/articles may eclipse investigative reporting that is data-intensive and cognitively challenging for the average reader. This becomes a disincentive for media to engage with data.

e) Overarching structural Issues

Structurally, the group agreed that there are two overarching issues that hinder data-driven advocacy efforts:

- **Lack of funding**, an issue that affects academia, civil society, and, to a lesser extent, media.

As mentioned earlier in this document, WB6 academia obtains research funding either from national budgets or through international research funds – both sources which are typically dedicated to scientific research. It is harder for academia to raise the necessary funding for policy- or advocacy-oriented research, as it lacks the comparative advantage vis-à-vis civil society organizations. On the other hand, civil society organizations in WB6, though better placed to access policy-oriented research funding, are virtually entirely dependent on donor funding and their agenda. This limits their options for working with specific topics at given times, depending on the funding they're able to obtain. Finally, media organizations operate as private sector entities, with profit as their bottom line. As such, their editorial policies tend to reflect an orientation toward sales rather than research, thus limiting the opportunities to engage with the research sphere.

- **Limited access between the above-mentioned groups**, referring to the ease with which connections and linkages can be made to pursue collaborations related to research, data, and data-driven advocacy. Typically, organizations find it hard to identify who and how to set up contact with possible collaborators in other domains. This is true for academia wanting to connect to other stakeholders, but also, for e.g., for media wanting to identify which researchers to contact for a particular issue.

4. Recommendations for improving data-driven advocacy practices in WB6

Recommendations for addressing challenges and improving data-driven advocacy practices in WB6 are grouped based on functional areas. They take into account the limitations as to what the authors believe can be impacted as opposed to what is beyond their control and can only be managed or factored in.

Specifically, the authors are cognizant that they are not able to immediately change the attitudes of policymakers or practices around the policymaking process. Similarly, while they consider the media a powerful ally, it is also one with different incentives compared to academia and civil society. Thus, the following recommendations bear direct application primarily in academia and civil society but seek to encourage policymakers and media to join the efforts.

- At the framework level, it is necessary to introduce regulations that recognize applied research work, which serves advocacy or policymaking purposes, as relevant to the progress in academic careers. This would encourage academics to engage more frequently and more meaningfully with other stakeholders, while simultaneously rewarding the work that many researchers already do through individual-level partnerships with civil society organizations.
- Public funding for research should be increased, in alignment with requirements of the EU integration process. Calls for the distribution of public research funding should be aligned with national policy priorities and diversified to encourage collaboration between academia and other domains. These would serve to make the use of research in policymaking more systematic.

Similarly, investment in national statistical offices should be increased, in line with and in preparation for the EU accession negotiations.

- Leverage strengths of each actor to build communities of practice around data-driven advocacy and the use of data for decision making by:
 - Encouraging the creation or continuing to expand national and regional networks around the importance and use of data. Networks such as WBESS are a good start. However, it is important to expand these partnerships using stakeholder analysis techniques to plan the process. National statistical offices and other institutions that produce official statistics would be great allies.
 - Making use of alliances with civil society organizations and think tanks at the national level that would help to improve advocacy skills of other groups, particularly academia. A starting point to foster such alliances could be to identify organizations that are willing to and have an interest in using ESS data.
 - Establishing networks at the regional and international level, as well. WBESS is a successful example of how national and regional level cooperation can work – members have conducted activities in their respective countries, as well as jointly. They share challenges and learn from each other. In the same vein, seek to establish relationships with:

- Other regional initiatives, e.g., WBF, RCC, RYCO, and regional developments, e.g., Open Balkans/Common Regional Market,
- Western organizations that work in the region and conduct research on the region (such as, BiEPAG),
- EU institutions at the local and central level.

■ **Improve data literacy and analytics skills of all stakeholders – albeit with specific targeting for each group.**

For academia:

- Organize knowledge exchange between academia in the WB6, through dedicated events for sharing practices and know-how,
- Organize periodic regional academic conferences on the use of data. These can be organized in partnership with national statistical offices, as well as other international partners. They may focus on selected surveys. ESS and its data can be a good starting point,
- Provide advanced technical training for data analytics (R, STATA, SPSS, etc.). These could be organized in partnership with partner universities in the region, and with support from partner institutions in the EU,

For academia and Civil Society:

- Arrange mentoring opportunities for civil society organizations in WB6 by organizations outside WB6 that are part of ESS and that successfully conduct advocacy using ESS data,

For policymakers:

- Develop curricula for data literacy and capacity building for articulating needs for data, to be delivered through the Schools of Public Administration.

■ **Improve communication between data producers and wider audiences.**

- Train researchers in academia in science communication, storytelling through data, and data visualisation,
- Improve academic curricula to educate a new generation of data analysts,
- Foster partnerships between academia and civil society organizations/think tanks in order to improve communication with media and increase outreach of research results,
- Create open access databases and repositories for research financed through public research funding, and sources such as ESS, where participation is possible because the fee is paid by the country's government.

Bibliography

- Amar Numanović - Why policy advocates should pay more (Policy Hub.Net: 2017)
- EU Commission - Five Western Balkan partners join Horizon Europe research and innovation programme (EU Commission: 2021)
- Eurostat - R&D expenditure in the EU at 2.19% of GDP in 2019 (Eurostat: 2019)
- Florin Zubaşcu - Interest in EU research mobility schemes growing in the Western Balkans (Science and Business: 2021)
- Klaus Schuch - Patterns of Geographical Mobility of Researchers from Six Western Balkan Countries in Regional and European Mobility Based Training Programme Vol. 52 (Journal for Research and Technology Policy Evaluation JULY 2021) pp. 19-35 DOI: 10.22163/fteval.2021.516
- OECD - Trust and Public Policy: How Better Governance Can Help Rebuild Public Trust, OECD Public Governance Reviews, (OECD Publishing, Paris: 2017)
- Poland Statistics - Meeting with the representatives of Western Balkan National Statistical Offices within the framework of the Berlin Process (Poland Stats: 2019)
- RCC Balkan Barometer 2021 - INFOGRAPHICS 24 Jun 2021 | BROCHURE
- The Civil Society Facility, Media Freedom and Accountability Programme, EuropeAid/134613/C/ACT/MULTI - Media Literacy and Education Needs of Journalists and the Public in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia - Project "Partnership in Southeast Europe for the Development of the Media" (Regional Report - March: 2017)
- Tim Judah & Alida Vracic - The Western Balkans' statistical black hole (European Council for Foreign Relations: 2019)
- World Bank - Research and development expenditure (% of GDP) Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia (Unesco.Org: 2021)



Improving Data-Driven Advocacy in the Western Balkans

Experiences and Recommendations from Members of
the Western Balkans European Social Survey Regional Network

Policy Document

This policy document is jointly prepared by the [Center Science and Innovation for Development](#) (SCiDEV) and the [Western Balkans European Social Survey Regional Network](#) with the support of the Project [“Protecting Civic Space – Regional Civil Society Development Hub”](#) implemented by the [Balkan Civil Society Development Network](#) (BCSDN) and financed by the [Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency](#) (Sida).

© SCiDEV

Tirana, December 2021