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Web-Platform: Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe

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Web-Platform: Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe

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1. Purpose of the activity

The web portal « Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe » was created as an integrated source of information on relevant activities in the field of social monitoring and reporting, such as new social reports or monitoring instruments, new issues of existing publication series as well as recent and forthcoming conferences and other events related to social monitoring and reporting. The web portal will be continuously updated and shall provide access to information on the activities itself (e.g. social reports, social indicator systems or composite indices) as well as the institutions behind (e.g. national or supranational organizations, research institutes or governmental institutions). Selected social monitoring and reporting activities will be presented in more detail. The platform will also showcase research results and outcomes from various monitoring and reporting activities on social progress, well-being and quality of life, e.g. pertinent scientific articles or research reports. The website also seeks to enhance and facilitate the cooperation between institutions and researchers enganged in social monitoring and reporting activities across Europe.

2. Set up of the activity and its execution

The TYPO3 based web platform is located within the internet presence of the Social Indicators Research Centre (ZSi) of GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences under the menu item « European Social Monitoring and Reporting ». The portal's content frame is structured by collapsible list items using the accordion widget of the jQuery UI framework. Additional information and references are placed at the right hand sidebar. The following screenshot gives an impression of the basic structure of the website. The clickable menu items contain various subitems providing access to further information.

http://www.gesis.org/en/social-indicators/products-of-the-zsi/european-social-monitoring-and-reporting/ (June 10th, 2014)

The individual menu items are structured as follows :

2.1 Main content

The menu item **Monitoring well-being in Europe** is meant for giving access to European social monitoring instruments. For the time being the European System of Social Indicators (EUSI) and the Social Indicators Monitor (SIMon) are listed here. EUSI has been developed by the Social Indicators Research Centre of GESIS (ZSi) and is used to monitor and analyze the individual and societal well-being of European citizens in terms of quality of life, social cohesion and sustainability as well as changes in the social structure of European societies. The online information system Social Indicators Monitor (SIMon) allows comfortable access to the time series of EUSI and the German System of Social Indicators, which is also a product of the Social Indicators Research Centre. Further European social monitoring tools will follow soon.

Under the menu item **European Social Reporting** the web portal provides access to articles and reports addressing issues of social progress, quality of life and well-being in Europe. Starting with contributions which had been published in the Social Indicators Information Service (ISI) articles from various (external) authors and sources will follow soon and be added continously.

The menu item **Conference series « Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe »** provides information on the conference series held at the German-Italian-Centre Villa Vigoni annually since 2006. The conferences were organized by H.-H. Noll (GESIS) in collaboration with C. Collicelli (Censis) and the European Commission. In March 2013 the e-Frame Workshop Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe: "The State of the Art and Future Perspectives" has taken place as part of this series. Programmes and presentations of the conferences are available for download.

The section **Conference Announcements and Recent Events** informs about recent conferences and events related to social monitoring and reporting, social indicators research, quality-of-life studies and the measurement of well-being and social progress. Announcements and reports cover conferences held by international organizations, research committees, networks as well as events related to projects engaged in social reporting and monitoring.

The item **New Releases** is considered as a newsticker and informs about new issues of existing national and supranational social reports as well as about social reports that have recently been

published for the first time. The information includes short descriptions of the publications released as well as weblinks to the original sources. This list of new releases will be continuously updated.

2.1 Additional content

The **Stocktaking Report on Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe** (Noll/Berger 2014), which is deliverable 5.2 of the e-Frame project, is also available for download on the web platform (currently as a draft version). The report provides a systematic overview of the variety of social monitoring and reporting activities currently going on in Europe, focusing on comprehensive reports and monitoring instruments. It identifies blind spots at the European map of social monitoring and reporting, presents and discusses different approaches and flags « good practices ». It also identifies common patterns and trends of European social monitoring and reporting activities and presents suggestions for future research agendas.

As another outcome of the stocktaking work carried out in WP 5 of the e-Frame project, an **interactive online database** has been created, which currently incorporates ca. 230 social monitoring and reporting activities. The interface has been programmed in Javascript and HTML and uses AJAX techniques to fetch the data from a Comma Separated Value (CSV) file, that was exported from our MS-Access database and saved on the server. The activities covered include:

- Social Reports
- Social (Well-being) Indicator Sets and Indicator Systems
- Composite Well-being Indices
- Sustainability Indicators and Indices (if social dimensions covered)
- Reports on Sustainable Development (if social dimensions covered)
- Projects and Strategies related to Measurement of Well-being and Sustainability

For each of the activities the database provides information on:

- Country, where activity is located
- Name of institution publishing/hosting activity
- Web-link to activity
- Year of first edition/launch of activity

- Year of latest edition/end of activity

- Periodicity

- Type of activity

- Scope of activity (e.g. national, supranational)

- Short description of activity

The database can be accessed via text search and/or by selecting specific basic characteristics (type of institution, type of activity, geographical scope) in drop down boxes. The search mask also allows to select specific European regions and countries on an interactive map. The online database can be accessed via the European Social Monitoring and Reporting Portal.

The following screenshot shows the web interface of the online database:

http://www.gesis.org/en/social-indicators/products-of-the-zsi/european-social-monitoring-and-reporting/database-activities-social-monitoring-and-reporting/ (June 10th, 2014)

Finally it should be mentioned, that the web platform invites visitors to contribute to the page by reporting relevant news and making suggestions for addional information offers and improvements of the portal.

3. The results achieved and the open issues

3.1 Results achieved

The basic structure of the web portal has been established and filled with initial contents. Some menu items are well-developed already, some of them need to be complemented and/or continuously updated.

One of the well-developed parts is the interactive online database. It contains basic information on the most important social monitoring and reporting activities in Europe and is designed in a user-friendly way. Suggestions for the improvement of the database handling, as well as information on new activities will certainly be accomodated. The database is going to be updated and continuously expanded.

Well-advanced are also the menu items which inform about new publications, recent events and conferences, which include activities from various national and international organizations and projects and will be continuously updated.

Also an integral component of the web platform is the Stocktaking Report on Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe, which – in a draft vesion - is available for download already.

3.2 Open issues

Some issues of the web portal need to be further developed. This concerns e.g. the section on « European Social Reporting », but also the section « Monitoring Well-being in Europe », which are going to be expanded and enriched successively.

Other issues to be enhanced include the development of tools for exchange of information and networking within the European social monitoring and reporting community.