



Instructions for using the Social Inclusion Meter

These instructions are intended to support you when using the Social Inclusion Meter. Below you will find tips on how to use the tool, but you can also apply it based on your organisation's needs. The tool was developed in the Osallisuuden osaajat järjestöissä project.

Background

The tool for measuring individuals' experiences on social inclusion is based on a need among civil society organisations, and more widely in society, to find uniform ways for impact measurement.

It is based on the definition of social inclusion drafted by the *Osallisuuden osaajat järjestöissä* project, which focuses on attachment and belonging to a community, personal agency and influencing decision-making, as well as access to information and its transmission. The tool is based on previous work with youth organisations at the Kentauri Youth Work Centre of Expertise, publications by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, and various articles and reports.

Social inclusion is a complex and difficult concept, especially if you are not familiar with it. When you use this indicator to collect information about the experiences of the people participating in your activities, you can call it something else, such as a mood survey.

What does the tool measure?

The purpose of the Social Inclusion Meter is to measure and assess the impact of your organisation's work as experienced by the participant. The statements have been drafted in a way that they rather emphasise their experience as a result of the activities than general well-being.

The indicator includes ten questions that cover different elements of social inclusion. The tool should be used as a whole. If necessary, you can also use parts of it, such as individual statements. However, the whole set of statements gives a comprehensive picture of the participants' experiences.





How do you use the tool?

The tool can be used in many ways: the questionnaire can be presented as an online or mobile survey, either independently or as part of a larger survey. It can also be printed out on paper, or it can be used in an interview or a feedback discussion.

We hope that you will use the scale of 1–4, as presented in the tool. This is because an even number of answer options guides the respondent to take a stand on the statements. In the analysis, you should pay attention to the distribution, mean values and dispersion of the responses.

Ideally, the meter is used both at the start and at the end of your activity. If the activity runs for a very long time (more than a year), it may be a good idea to conduct a survey every six months, for example. It is not always possible to measure the participants' experiences before and after the activity: for example, when the activity is very short (e.g. weekend training), a comparison may not be meaningful. We recommend using the meter according to the situation and your own discretion.

When the data you collect accumulate, you can use them later, for example, as a basis for project applications.

The information that is most useful for ex-post evaluation is often created after the activities have ended, but you are most likely to get respondents if you ask people to fill in a survey, for example, at the last meeting of a hobby group or directly after its completion. The survey can be answered in about five minutes, so please reserve time for instructions and answering.

For ex-post evaluation, you can also use the Social Inclusion Footprint tool, which provides a continuation for this one.

If the respondents are young (under 15 years of age), please ask for the consent of their guardian. Tell the respondents that answering and processing the answers will take place anonymously and make sure that this is respected.

Please also remember to store the responses in accordance with the [European General Data Protection Regulation](#). If they have been collected on paper, they should, for example, be electronically coded and then destroyed, or stored in a locked cabinet.





How to interpret the results?

Once you have collected the data, it should be analysed and interpreted.

There is no unambiguous guideline for interpreting the results, but take the following matters into account when analysing the responses:

- **Set goals for yourself.** What kind of result are you satisfied with? For example, if you measure the results of a new form of activity that is in its experimental phase, should the goals be set as high as for an established one, or can you be satisfied with less?
- **We can assume that not all activities produce the same experience of inclusion.** In a hobby group, the responses may emphasise belonging to a community, while in political or campaigning activities the ability to make a difference may count the most. Don't be upset if every statement doesn't produce a high mean value! For this reason, you should examine the results both by individual statement and on a more general level.
- The mean value of the answers does not always tell the whole story. **In a small group, even one respondent who disagrees with the others can affect the result. For this reason, it is also worth looking at the distribution and dispersion of the responses.**
- **However, some things can be assessed from the mean values:** If the value is below 2 on a scale of 1 to 4, something is wrong with the activity. Fortunately, this rarely happens. On the other hand, the indicator may produce extremely good results, which makes it difficult to choose areas for improvement.
- **To make better use of the answers in developing your activities, you can add 1–2 open-ended questions at the end.** For example, you can ask the respondent to justify their answers, or you can collect suggestions for improvement. This is especially helpful if the results are at an excellent level, but there is still a desire to improve the activity. Only ask one thing in each question.

Remember to set yourself some time for evaluation and think about how evaluation is integrated in your other activities. Also consider beforehand when and how the results are used in their planning and improvement.

More information about the tool:

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