

Proactive Social Payments Mechanism

<u>Organisation(s):</u>	The Agency for Sustainable and Operative Social Provision (DOST Agency), The DOST Digital Innovations Center	
<u>Country:</u>	Republic of Azerbaijan	
<u>Contact:</u>	policy@esn-eu.org	
<u>Theme:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ageing & Care <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum & Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Young People <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support for Children & Families <input type="checkbox"/> Community Care <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Care & Support <input type="checkbox"/> Co-Production <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Artificial Intelligence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digitalisation <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Labour Market Inclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Social Inclusion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce and Leadership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social benefits <input type="checkbox"/> EU Funding <input type="checkbox"/> Social Service's Resilience <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health <input type="checkbox"/> Person-centred Care <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
<u>Principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights:</u> <i>Check the 20 principles here.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Education, training, life-long learning <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Gender equality <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Equal opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Active support to employment <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Secure and adaptable employment <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Fair Wages <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Transparent employment conditions <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Social dialogue <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Work-life balance <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Healthy, safe work environment	<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Childcare and child support <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12. Social protection <input type="checkbox"/> 13. Unemployment benefits <input type="checkbox"/> 14. Minimum income <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 15. Old age income and pensions <input type="checkbox"/> 16. Health care <input type="checkbox"/> 17. Inclusion of people with disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> 18. Long-term care <input type="checkbox"/> 19. Housing and assistance to homeless <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20. Access to essential services
<u>Current status of the practice:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Concept and Design Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Execution & Monitoring Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidation Phase <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scaling Up and Transformation Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	
<u>Context/ Social issues addressed</u> <i>Please explain the problem you attempt to solve.</i>	The Proactive Social Payments Mechanism simplifies the rights of citizens by eliminating the need for explicit requests and paper-based documentation. The mechanism automatically identifies citizens' entitlement, verifies their information, and, if eligible, calculates and assigns the relevant social benefit, pension, lump-sum payment, or grants.	

	<p>Before the new mechanism, an individual was required to apply to the State Social Protection Fund (SSPF) under the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population (MLSPP) to request relevant social payments. Subsequently, after gathering the necessary paper documents (about 7) from the relevant authorities, the person could proceed to apply to the SSPF for social payments. During the stipulated timeframe, the MLSPP disbursed social payments to eligible citizens and furnished them with detailed information about the bank where they could obtain their bank cards.</p> <p>The new mechanism automated the identification and provision of citizens' rights without the need for explicit requests. Following the determination of relevant status (citizen's disability, retirement age, childbirth, etc.), the Centralised Electronic Information System (CEIS) electronically pulls important information from the information systems of other government stakeholders. After gathering the necessary information from data resources, the system automatically verifies eligibility, allocates social payments, and notifies citizens via SMS. Additionally, the system forwards this information to the banks to facilitate the issuance of a bank card for eligible recipients.</p>
<p>Objectives: Please provide a maximum of three objectives in bullet points.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To automate citizen's rights identification, so citizens no longer must initiate requests for social payments, making the process more efficient and citizen-centric; 2. To streamline the process and decrease the amount of documentation required from citizens, making it easier for them to access the services they are entitled to; 3. To minimise delays in the assignment of social payments to citizens by automating the process. This ensures that eligible individuals receive their payments promptly, increasing overall efficiency.
<p>Activities: Please summarise the activities put in place to achieve the objectives (maximum 200 words).</p>	<p>In Azerbaijan, significant efforts have been made to electronically implement services provided to the population, aiming to enhance modern and flexible management and increase transparency in state activities. However, in order to achieve transparency and efficiency in citizen services, it was necessary to take additional measures, including the complete digitalization of state services in labor, employment, social protection, and social security.</p> <p>The first step was the creation of the CEIS. This system serves as a centralised repository for electronic information related to social services.</p> <p>The next step involved the integration of data from various state bodies and institutions into the CEIS. This integration ensured seamless access to comprehensive and up-to-date information about citizens' eligibility and entitlements. The CEIS was mutually integrated with the databases of over 80 government and private institutions, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Justice, State Tax Service, Ministry of Health, and others.</p> <p>Services provided to citizens were transformed into electronic formats, enabling easier and more convenient access. This involved the electrification of various social services, such as old-age pensions, disability support, one-time allowances for specific circumstances, and others.</p> <p>A proactive service mechanism was developed as part of the project.</p>

<p><u>Evaluation of practice:</u> Please explain how you evaluate the practice, and what the results were/are so far</p>	<p><i>Quantitative data collected internally:</i> The proactive mechanism was initially introduced in 2019. Currently, out of 159 social services, 55 services are provided through the proactive mechanism, which represents an innovative and independent approach. As of 2023, the proactive appointment figures are detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pension:</i> 31,598 (retirement age, disability, special conditions, loss of the head of the family); • <i>Social benefits:</i> 180,684 (including childbirth lump-sum birth benefit among others); • <i>Social Insurance Number:</i> 219,686 • <i>Presidential Grants:</i> 25,350 <p>In 2023, the total number of proactive appointments reached 237,632. Currently, there is an average of 889 daily proactive social payment appointments. Notably, there was a significant peak in appointments, with 25,414 individuals scheduled in a single day. This surge was attributed to the appointment of pensions for war veterans.</p> <p><i>Other data:</i> According to experts from the EU's SOCIEUX+ project, Azerbaijan is notable as the sole country in the post-Soviet region to have implemented this mechanism on a significant scale. Several international and local awards in recognition of efforts in this direction were received. "Proactive service mechanism of pension, social benefits, and grants" was included in the list of 60 finalists of the "SDG Digital GameChangers Award" organized jointly by the ITU and UNDP, which featured 450 projects from 90 countries. The delegations from Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, and Uzbekistan on a ministerial level recently visited Azerbaijan and were greatly impressed by the extensive range of proactive services provided.</p>
<p><u>Links to supporting documents:</u> e.g. website or report of the practice</p>	<p>https://www.itu.int/initiatives/sdgdigital/gamechangers-award/peace/ https://youtu.be/r1qmh1ucRE8?si=Pgrn88I1oH3LVWRI</p>
<p><u>Comments and tips</u> i.e. for people willing to use your Practice</p>	<p>To replicate this good practice, having a robust and effective digital infrastructure is essential. This includes a CEIS and the integration of data from various government institutions. Without such infrastructure, it would be challenging to automate processes and provide proactive services. Also, strong commitment from the government, at various levels, is crucial. Implementing a proactive social payment mechanism requires collaboration between different government bodies and departments. This commitment is essential to overcoming bureaucratic challenges and ensuring a cohesive approach. Azerbaijan was able to identify these risks, and successfully consider them during the implementation of the project.</p>