

Measuring Outcomes for Children

<u>Organisation(s):</u>	Tusla, Ireland's Child and Family Agency	
<u>Country:</u>	Ireland	
<u>Contact:</u>	policy@esn-eu.org	
<u>Theme:</u> Choose at least one option	☐ Ageing & Care ☐ Asylum & Migration ☒ Young People ☒ Support for Children & Families ☐ Community Care ☒ Integrated Care & Support ☐ Co-Production ☐ Disability ☐ Housing & Homelessness ☐ Artificial Intelligence ☐ Digitalisation ☐ Quality Care	☐ Labour Market Inclusion ☐ Social Inclusion ☐ Technology ☐ Workforce and Leadership ☐ Social Benefits ☐ EU Funding ☐ Social Services' Resilience ☐ Mental Health ☐ Person-Centred Care ☒ Research & Use of Evidence ☒ Management & Planning ☐ Other, please specify:
<u>Principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights:</u> <i>Which principles does your practice cover? Check the 20 principles here.</i>	☐ 1. Education, training, life-long learning ☐ 2. Gender equality ☐ 3. Equal opportunities ☐ 4. Active support to employment ☐ 5. Secure and adaptable employment ☐ 6. Fair Wages ☐ 7. Transparent employment conditions ☐ 8. Social dialogue ☐ 9. Work-life balance ☐ 10. Healthy, safe work environment	☒ 11. Childcare and child support ☒ 12. Social protection ☐ 13. Unemployment benefits ☐ 14. Minimum income ☐ 15. Old age income and pensions ☐ 16. Health care ☐ 17. Inclusion of people with disabilities ☐ 18. Long-term care ☐ 19. Housing and assistance to homeless ☐ 20. Access to essential services
<u>Current status of the practice:</u>	☐ Concept and Design Phase ☐ Testing or pilot phase ☐ Temporary practice that has terminated ☐ Temporary practice that is ongoing and has a termination date ☐ Established and ongoing practice ☒ Scaling Up and Transformation Phase ☒ Other (please specify): The Tusla Outcomes Framework is being implemented internally in Tusla and externally to commissioned services, government departments and the wider public.	
<u>Summary:</u> <i>Please summarise the practice in maximum 3 sentences. This</i>	Tusla, Ireland's Child and Family Agency, has developed its first Outcomes Framework for children, young people, parents and families using its services. The framework provides a shared, outcomes-focused foundation for all 5,700 Tusla staff and more than 500 commissioned services, aligning practice with Ireland's five national outcomes for children	

<i>will be the disclaimer of your project on our website. Example here.</i>	and young people. It supports integrated working, clearer accountability and a stronger focus on the real-world difference services make in the lives of children and families.
<u>Context/ Social issues addressed</u> <i>Please explain the problem you attempt to solve with your practice.</i>	Social services aim to improve outcomes for people who use services, but these outcomes are not always clearly defined, consistently understood or systematically measured. In child protection and family support, this can make it difficult to show how interventions improve children's safety, wellbeing, development, family relationships and long-term life chances. Tusla developed the Outcomes Framework to address this gap by setting out a clear and shared set of desired outcomes for children, young people, parents and families attending its services, in line with Ireland's five national outcomes: being safe and protected, active and healthy, achieving, economically secure, and connected and respected. The framework also responds to the need to strengthen public confidence in child and family services by shifting attention from inputs, activities and outputs towards the real-world changes that matter to families.
<u>Objectives:</u> <i>Please provide a maximum of three objectives in bullet points.</i>	1. To establish a single, agency-wide outcomes framework that defines the changes Tusla seeks to achieve for children, young people, parents and families. 2. To embed an outcomes-focused approach across existing service provision, supporting practitioners to consider the difference interventions make in children's and families' lives. 3. To develop a shared outcomes measurement approach that enables Tusla and commissioned services to evidence impact, strengthen accountability and support learning at local and national levels.
<u>Activities:</u> <i>Please describe the activities put in place to achieve the objectives (maximum 400 words).</i>	The Tusla Outcomes Framework was developed over a three-year period through a whole-organisation process: 1. An Outcomes Framework Implementation Team engaged with Tusla's Executive Management Team, National Operations Management Team and frontline practitioners during 2022, 2023 and 2024 to design, test, refine and agree the framework. The final framework was approved by the Tusla Board in early 2024 and launched across the Agency, with external partners and commissioned services, in July 2025. 2. The framework translates Ireland's five national outcomes into Tusla-specific outcomes, including a children and young people's version using accessible "I want-statements". It is intended for use by all Tusla professionals and staff, as well as more than 500 commissioned services, so that services can describe the outcomes they aim to improve and provide evidence of progress. Implementation is taking place alongside a wider agency-wide structural and practice reform process due to take effect in January 2026. 3. A key activity is the development of a Shared Outcomes Measurement Framework. Tusla has established a group of internal and external experts to identify suitable measures, taking account of the large volume of referrals, the different lengths of engagement with families and the range of interventions provided. Measurement will operate at different levels, from post-attendance satisfaction questions to collaborative goal setting, outcomes-focused measures and pre- and post-intervention questionnaires. Measures will be selected according to criteria such as international recognition, reliability, validation, fit with the outcome areas, suitability across childhood age ranges, and ease of use and scoring. Tusla's internal ICT system will support dissemination, data collation, aggregation, verification, central analysis and reporting.

<u>Outcomes:</u> Please explain what the results were/are so far and how you evaluated this (i.e. statistics, a study, or feedback)	The framework is currently in the implementation stage following its launch in July 2025. • Its main result to date is the establishment of a common outcomes language and structure across Tusla and its commissioned services, creating a shared basis for integrated working, service planning, accountability and future evaluation. It has also positioned outcomes as central to how practitioners, managers and partner services understand the purpose and impact of child and family support. • Evaluation and impact measurement are being developed through the Shared Outcomes Measurement Framework. Given the scale and complexity of Tusla's work, including approximately 105,000 referrals in 2025 and varied levels of engagement with children and families, the Agency will not measure the impact of every contact in the same way. Instead, it will use a tiered approach to measurement, including satisfaction feedback, collaborative goal setting, outcomes-focused tools and validated pre- and post-questionnaires where appropriate. Data will be collected and analysed through Tusla's internal ICT system, with reporting structures designed to demonstrate accountability to funding bodies and support learning and decision making locally and nationally.
<u>Funding Source</u>	EU Funds: ESF+ ☐ INTERREG ☐ ERDF ☐ ERASMUS ☐ RRF ☐ other ☐ ☒ National Government Funds ☐ Regional Government Funds ☐ Local Government Funds ☐ Private Sponsorship / Public-Private Partnership ☐ Financial contribution of People using Services ☐ Other, please define:
<u>Links to supporting documents:</u> e.g. project website or report of the practice, articles	Tusla - Child and Family Agency https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Our_Outcomes.pdf
<u>Comments and tips</u> i.e. for people willing to implement your Practice in their service	It is important to provide clarity for your agency and stakeholders, most importantly children and families, about what you are trying to achieve and how you intend to support families. Adopting an outcomes focused approach to this shifts the thinking from the actions of the Agency to the target of your intervention - children and families. 'The outcome determines the intervention', not the other way round.