

Priorities for Research on Social Services: Perspectives from Users, Policy-Makers and Practitioners

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<https://www.sbu.se/en/publications/Prioritisation-of-scientific-evidence-gaps/priorities-for-research-on-social-services/>

For which topic were research priorities identified?

social services

In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

Europe - Sweden

Why was it conducted at all?

Previous investigations and reports have highlighted significant gaps in evidence within the social services. The Swedish Government therefore initiated a 10-year national programme for applied welfare research in its Research Bill "Collaborating for knowledge - for society's challenges and strengthened competitiveness" 2016 (Government Bill 2016/17:50, in Swedish). Applied welfare was defined primarily as operations in the field of social services. The Government commissioned the Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare (Forte) to set up and run the programme (Government Decision U2017/02404/F). The purpose of the programme is to strengthen client and practice-oriented research within the social services, to facilitate collaboration between researchers and practitioners and to increase the participation/involvement of service users¹ and their relatives.

What was the objective?

to get a more comprehensive understanding of the needs for research as seen by those who work in social services and recipients of social services

What was the outcome?

a list of 10 research questions

How long did the research prioritization take?

Spring 2018 - March 2019

Which methods were used to identify research priorities?

JLA method

How were the priorities for research identified exactly?

Step 1: survey: participants were asked what research needs they saw in social services based on their professional or personal experience. Step 2: data processing: questionnaire responses were analyzed and collated into general research questions and more specific underlying questions, resulting in a total list of 159 general research questions and a shortlist of 32 research questions. Step 3: interim ranking: online survey featuring the research topics that been collected, participants were asked to choose 10 research questions from the list, any research question that had received 45 or more votes moved forward to the workshop, 45 research questions originated from the top 10 research questions from each group. Step 4: workshop: participants held discussions in small groups and drew up their own list of top 10 priorities, this was followed by a whole group discussion during which the participants argued their way towards a final top 10 list of research questions

Which stakeholders took part?

People who work in social services, people with professional or private experience of social services, service user organizations and interest groups, patients and carers. Survey: 124 social services managers and 44 service user organizations and interest groups. Interim ranking: 584 participants: 372 representatives of social services, 65 representatives of service user organisations and interest groups, 24 users or their relatives. Workshop: 12 people: 6 representatives from social services and 6 representatives of service user organizations and interest groups.

How were stakeholders recruited?

The survey was sent to all 290 municipalities in Sweden.

Were stakeholders actively involved or did they just participate?

Stakeholders were mere participants of the research prioritization process; they were not actively involved in the process.