

SPRING

Toolkit for Evidence-Informed Policymaking in Migrant Integration

By Jasmijn Slootjes and Maria Belen Zanzuchi



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101004635.





Toolkit for Evidence-Informed Policymaking in Migrant Integration

By Jasmijn Slootjes and Maria Belen Zanzuchi

January 2023



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101004635.



Title	Toolkit for Evidence-Informed Policymaking in Migrant Integration
Responsible Authors	Jasmijn Slootjes and Maria Belen Zanzuchi, Migration Policy Institute Europe
Version	Final

SPRING is a EU-funded project focusing on the integration of recently arrived migrants in the context of the large-scale arrivals of refugees and other migrants since 2014. It aims to develop a toolbox to improve the innovation, effectiveness and sustainability of the work done by Europe's integration stakeholders at national, regional and local levels. The project mobilises significant research, networks and communications capacity and gathers, summarises and shares the best available research and evidence on the effectiveness, innovation, transferability, sustainability and evaluation methods for integration policies and practice.

The SPRING Platform integrationpractices.eu is the main hub to make the project results available to practitioners as well as to the general public.

Acknowledgements



The SPRING project received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the grant agreement 101004635. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union. The European Commission and the European Research Executive Agency are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

The authors thank their Migration Policy Institute (MPI) colleagues Meghan Benton for her insightful comments and feedback that played a crucial role in shaping this toolkit and Lauren Shaw for the excellent edits. They also thank MPI Europe interns Ilaria Marconi, Johanna von Kietzell, Giovanni Penna, and Vilde Hefte for their invaluable research assistance. In addition, the authors are grateful for the support they received from their colleagues in the SPRING Consortium. The authors are particularly grateful for Guia Gilardoni's excellent leadership throughout the SPRING project, the interesting discussions with Peter Scholten about improving the research-policy-practice nexus, and the valuable insights from Alexander Wolffhardt and Sinem Yilmaz about the transferability of evidence.

Critical input on the design of this toolkit also came from the experts who participated in the March 2022 roundtable 'Implementing What Works: Promoting Evidence-Based Migrant Integration Policymaking' and the September 2022 workshop on the role of communities of practice and cooperation networks in supporting more inclusive and evidence-informed integration policy and practice, both organised as part of the SPRING project. Finally, the authors thank the following interviewees for their valuable insights: Helen Baillot, Peter De Cuyper, Renée Frissen, Jenny Phillimore, Meta Van der Linden, and Jürgen Wander.

MPI Europe is an independent, nonpartisan policy research organisation that adheres to the highest standard of rigour and integrity in its work. All analysis, recommendations, and policy ideas advanced by MPI Europe are solely determined by its researchers.

Content

1.	An Introduction to Evidence-Informed Policymaking and This Toolkit	1
1.1	What is evidence-informed policymaking?	2
1.2	What are the benefits of evidence-informed policymaking?	3
1.3	Why is a stronger evidence culture needed in migrant integration policymaking?	4
1.4	How to use this toolkit	5
2.	Finding and Assessing Evidence to Support Policy Design and Implementation	7
2.1	What types of evidence and data can be used to improve integration policy design and implementation?	9
2.2	Where can I find evidence?	10
2.3	Developing a search strategy	14
2.4	Assessing the quality and relevance of evidence	19
2.5	Conditions that facilitate the use of evidence	23
2.6	Further reading and resources	25
3.	Evaluation to Strengthen Ongoing and Future Integration Programmes	26
3.1	What is evaluation and why should I evaluate?	27
3.2	How do I choose the evaluation approach right for my work?	28
3.3	Assessing a policy's effectiveness using impact evaluations	30
3.4	Assessing bang for your buck with value-for-money evaluations	35
3.5	Overcoming methodological challenges when studying integration policy impacts	38
3.6	Commissioning policy evaluations	42
3.7	Further reading and resources	43
4.	Amplifying Impact through the Dissemination of Evidence	44
4.1	Define your communication goals, audience, and resources	45
4.2	Choosing the right communication tool(s) for your audience and purpose	48
4.3	Dissemination models that promote evidence-informed policymaking	49
4.4	Further reading and resources	54
5.	Using Funding to Promote an Evidence Culture	55
5.1	What are the obstacles to effectively funding evidence-informed integration policymaking?	57
5.2	Where to search for funding opportunities	58
5.3	Funding models to promote evidence-informed policymaking	63
5.4	Further reading and resources	69
6.	Engaging Stakeholders in Evidence-Informed Integration Policymaking	70
6.1	Why invest in stakeholder engagement?	72
6.2	Identifying your key stakeholders	72
6.3	Setting up a stakeholder engagement plan	76
6.4	Different models of stakeholder engagement	77
6.5	Promoting meaningful engagement, especially with migrant and refugee communities	81
6.6	Further reading and resources	84



1. An Introduction to Evidence-Informed Policymaking and This Toolkit

Key takeaways

- ★ Evidence-informed policymaking is a process that embraces evidence at each stage of the policy cycle. This requires policymakers to use evidence to inform policy design and implementation, to evaluate existing policies' effectiveness, and to disseminate evidence and recommendations from those policy evaluations. Effective evidence-informed policymaking also requires policymakers to engage relevant stakeholders and allocate sufficient funding throughout the process.
- ★ Evidence-informed policymaking can make policies more cost-effective, promote better policy outcomes and prevent failures, improve learning from contemporary and past experiences, optimise decisions between policy options, and strengthen accountability, legitimacy, and transparency.
- ★ This toolkit, which aims to promote an evidence culture in migrant integration policymaking, offers a range of essential resources and tools for policymakers and practitioners as they navigate each phase of the policy cycle.

Research, data, and lessons learnt from past experiences are powerful tools in any policy area. By putting important resources at the fingertips of immigrant integration policymakers and other stakeholders, this toolkit aims to help them embrace evidence at each stage of the policymaking cycle and thus make integration policies more effective. Importantly, though this toolkit refers to evidence-informed *policymaking*, many of the practices and resources it offers can also be used to make projects, programmes, and initiatives that promote migrant integration more effective and more strongly rooted in an evidence base.

In this section, you will learn...

- what evidence-informed policymaking is;
- why building a culture of evidence matters in the migrant integration field; and
- how this toolkit can help policymakers and other integration stakeholders embrace an evidence culture.

1.1 What is evidence-informed policymaking?

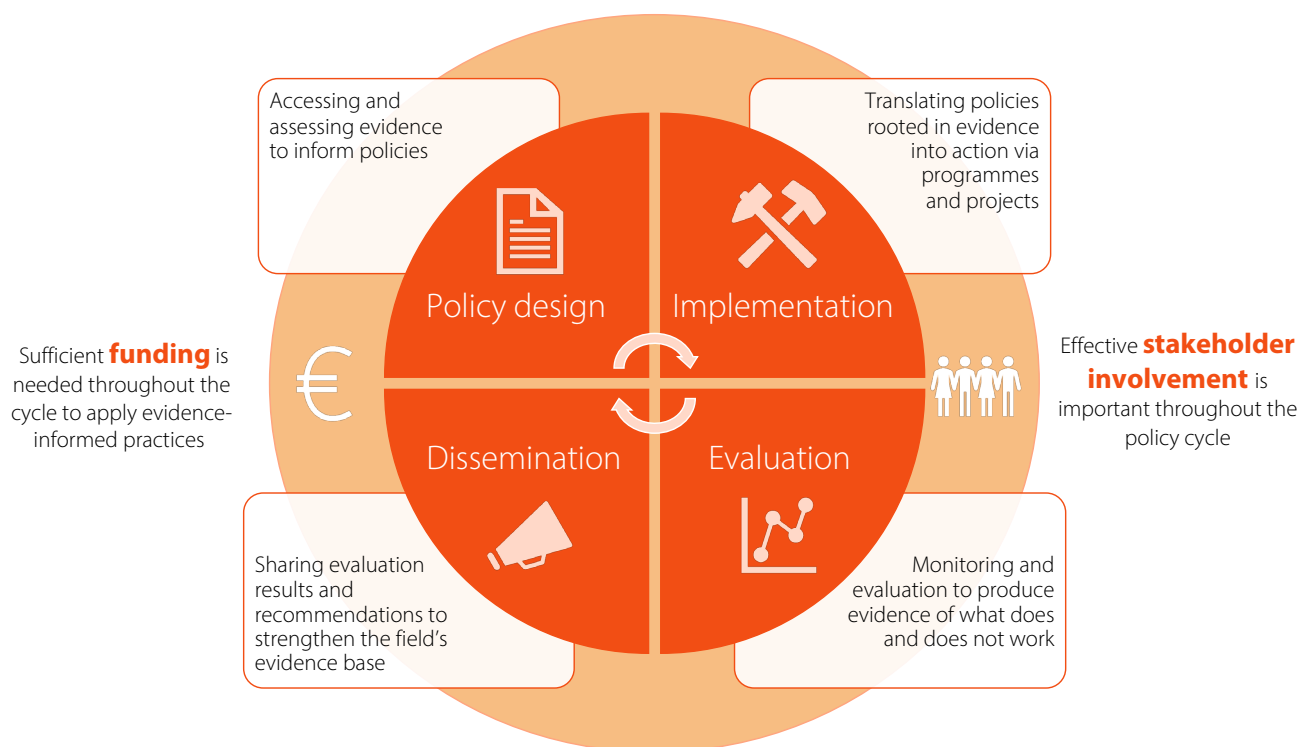
As described by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development,¹

‘Evidence-informed policymaking can be defined as a process whereby multiple sources of information, including statistics, data, and the best available research evidence and evaluations, are consulted before making a decision to plan, implement, and (where relevant) alter public policies and programmes.’

Most efforts to promote an evidence culture in the migrant integration field have focused on the evaluation stage of the policy cycle, but for evidence to truly inform policy, it needs to permeate each stage of the cycle (see Figure 1.1). First, in the **policy design** phase, policymakers should be able to easily access existing evidence, assess its quality and relevance, and use it to inform the design of new policies. Second, in the **implementation** phase, policymakers should be able to translate evidence-informed policies from paper into practice in ways that improve integration outcomes. Next, political willingness and specialised skills are needed to **evaluate** existing policies and create new evidence. And lastly, the evidence collected should be **disseminated** to fuel mutual learning among policymakers and other stakeholders that supports improvements to existing policies and shapes the design of future ones. Throughout this cycle, adequate **funding** and **stakeholder involvement** are crucial.

FIGURE 1.1

An evidence-informed policymaking cycle



¹ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making: Lessons from Country Experiences* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020), 9.

It should be noted that while Figure 1.1 presents the policy cycle as a neat process that is conceptually useful when discussing these elements, in reality policymaking is often more complex. The different stages of the policy cycle do not always take place sequentially, and some stages may take a longer time to complete than others, occur simultaneously, or be skipped altogether. Political, social, and economic factors can also affect how the policy cycle plays out. To add to the complexity, policymaking involves a variety of actors who, through their formal or informal involvement, aim to influence policy.²

1.2 What are the benefits of evidence-informed policymaking?

Using evidence to inform policymaking helps governments learn what works and under which conditions, and prepares them to meet policy challenges both old and new—all while ensuring that public funds are used as effectively and efficiently as possible. In the integration field, it can help promote the well-being of both migrants and the societies in which they live. Table 1.1 provides a brief overview of some of the main benefits of embracing an evidence culture.

TABLE 1.1

Key benefits of evidence-informed policymaking

Benefit	Description
Optimised decisions between policy options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence allows policymakers to weigh policy options and assess their potential impacts.
Enhanced policy learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policymakers can use evaluations to assess programme performance and identify how to improve or whether to suspend policies. Policy evaluation is an important tool for feedback and learning, both within and across policy initiatives.
Cost-effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy evaluation can reduce wasteful spending by establishing what works and what does not. When decisionmakers have information on the costs and cost-effectiveness of different measures, they can select those that make the best use of public funds and efficiently reach their policy goals.
Better policy outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies that are based on systematic evidence of what works produce better outcomes for the individuals and communities involved. Policy failures are more easily avoided when policies are rooted in evidence.
Strengthened accountability, legitimacy, and transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence-informed policymaking encourages transparency and accountability by comparing the initial goals of a policy or programme with its results, as determined through evaluations.

Sources: Michael Howlett, 'Policy Analytical Capacity and Evidence-Based Policy-Making: Lessons from Canada', *Canadian Public Administration* 52, no. 2 (2009): 153–175; Mark Bovens, Paul 't Hart, and Sanneke Kuipers, 'The Politics of Policy Evaluation', in *The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy*, eds. Robert Goodin, Michael Moran, and Martin Rein (Oxford, UK: Oxford Academic, 2008); Pew Charitable Trusts and MacArthur Foundation, *Evidence-Based Policymaking: A Guide for Effective Government* (Washington, DC: Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative, 2014); Andrew Feldman and Rebecca Maynard, 'The Evidence-Based Policy Revolution Waiting to Happen', *Government Executive*, 30 January 2020; Martin Baldwin-Edwards, Brad K. Blitz, and Heaven Crawley, 'The Politics of Evidence-Based Policy in Europe's "Migration Crisis"', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45, no. 12 (2019): 2139–2155; Sophie Sutcliffe and Julius Court, *Evidence-Based Policymaking: What Is It? How Does It Work? What Relevance for Developing Countries?* (London: UK Overseas Development Institute, 2005).

² International Network for Advancing Science and Policy (INASP), *Evidence-Informed Policy Making (EIPM) Toolkit* (Oxford: INASP, 2020).

1.3 Why is a stronger evidence culture needed in migrant integration policymaking?

Despite a surge in research and knowledge on immigrant integration, the integration field is far behind other policy areas when it comes to embracing an evidence culture and key evidence gaps remain. Some progress has been made in trying to establish a causal link between integration policies and outcomes, but these studies often have a narrow focus on specific aspects of integration (namely, labour market mobility, education, social inclusion, and political participation), leaving gaps in others (such as nationality and long-term residence, family reunification, and antidiscrimination).³ Most of these efforts are also taking place in just a handful of countries that already have a stronger national commitment to evidence-informed policymaking.

Throughout the integration policymaking process—from agenda-setting to policy design, and from implementation to evaluation—opportunities to learn from what works are still being missed. The barriers that have hindered integration policymakers’ embrace of an evidence culture include:

- **The politicised nature of migrant integration policymaking.** Fears that evaluations would draw more attention to an already contentious policy area have often dampened policymakers’ commitment to an evidence culture.
- **The need for a quick response in times of crisis.** This urgency makes it difficult to leverage existing knowledge for policy design and to set up a monitoring system for new policies.
- **Frequent shifts in policy aims and actors.** This can include changes to integration policy goals (e.g., assimilation vs. integration approaches), target groups (e.g., based on migrants’ nationality, background, or reason for moving), and government actors in charge of integration (e.g., which ministry and at what governance level), all of which can obstruct institutional learning and the measurement of policies’ long-term effects.
- **Insufficient stakeholder engagement.** Integration programme beneficiaries, practitioners, and other key stakeholders have valuable insights to share yet are often not consulted and involved in the evidence-informed policy cycle.
- **A range of methodological challenges.** This includes the frequent inability to establish a control group in studies, the potential overlapping effects of different policies and programmes migrants may benefit from, and challenges accounting for a high level of diversity in data collection tools—all of which make it difficult for evaluations to establish direct causality between a certain integration policy and observed outcomes.
- **The wide range of issues and actors involved in migrant integration.** The fact that integration cuts across policy areas (from housing and education to the labour market) and involves multiple levels of government, civil society, and other actors creates obstacles to mutual learning, both within and across countries.

³ Özge Bilgili, Thomas Huddleston, and Anne-Linde Joki, *The Dynamics between Integration Policies and Outcomes: A Synthesis of the Literature* (N.p.: Migrant Integration Policy Index, 2015).

- **Resource and capacity gaps.** These affect every stage of the evidence-informed policymaking cycle and are often particularly acute in organisations on the front lines of immigrant integration, leaving little capacity for data collection and evaluation.

Despite these obstacles, integration policymakers can draw from an ever-increasing body of evidence to design more effective policies and leverage the growing number of networks that facilitate mutual learning. This toolkit features many initiatives and resources that have pushed the field forward—from ambitious projects to map evidence and make it easily accessible (including the SPRING project), to the innovative use of (quasi-)experimental study designs to test whether integration policies are effectively meeting their goals.



Want to learn more about the state of play of evidence-informed policymaking in the integration field? Check out:

- ★ The Migration Policy Institute Europe’s policy brief [Promoting Evidence-Informed Immigrant Integration Policymaking](#), which is also part of the Horizon 2020 Sustainable Practices of Integration (SPRING) project, covers recent developments in the field, challenges to creating an evidence culture, and opportunities to address them.

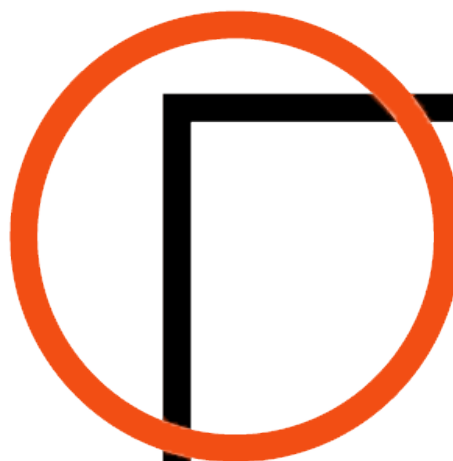
1.4 How to use this toolkit

This toolkit aims to promote an evidence culture in migrant integration policymaking by placing essential resources and tools at the fingertips of policymakers and practitioners. A wealth of resources and tools exist, yet these can be hard to find and are at times overly technical. This toolkit maps these resources, provides tips on how to use them, and suggests strategies to infuse evidence into all stages of the policy cycle.

The toolkit is organised into different sections based on the different elements of the policy cycle described above. It first presents tools and strategies to infuse evidence into each phase of the policy cycle (Sections 2–4), before turning to two issues that are important throughout the cycle: funding (Section 5) and stakeholder engagement (Section 6). The toolkit can be used in multiple ways, including chronologically as a training guide or as a reference document to look up information on specific topics. The sections of this document cover the following topics:

- **Section 1: An Introduction to Evidence-Informed Policymaking and This Toolkit.** This section introduces the aims and structure of the toolkit. It also provides an overview of what evidence-informed policymaking is and why it would benefit migrant integration policymaking.
- **Section 2: Finding and Assessing Evidence to Support Policy Design and Implementation.** This section provides an overview of different types of evidence and how users can search for and assess the quality and relevance of available data and information. In doing so, it highlights different databases that can be used to gather evidence on integration. Because these resources can support both the design and implementation of policies, and because these steps are closely linked, this section covers these two phases of the policy cycle together.

- **Section 3: Evaluation to Strengthen Ongoing and Future Integration Programmes.** This section highlights the benefits of policy evaluation, reviews the pros and cons of different approaches to and types of evaluation, and provides tools to help integration stakeholders carry out and commission evaluations.
- **Section 4: Amplifying Impact through the Dissemination of Evidence.** This section explores different strategies to maximise the impact of evaluation findings and other types of evidence, with a focus on ensuring that evidence reaches its target audience and creates change.
- **Section 5: Using Funding to Promote an Evidence Culture.** This section provides an overview of funding opportunities, a practical guide on how to most effectively use funding, and examples of how different funding models function and how they can contribute to the development of an evidence culture and to more effective integration policies.
- **Section 6: Engaging Stakeholders in Evidence-Informed Integration Policymaking.** This section explores why stakeholder engagement is essential in integration policymaking, who should be considered a key stakeholder, when to seek engagement, and what the ideal levels of engagement are. As part of this, the section offers practical examples and tips on how to improve stakeholder engagement.





2. Finding and Assessing Evidence to Support Policy Design and Implementation

Key takeaways

- ★ Different types of evidence, available from a variety of sources, can serve different purposes: evidence on existing migrant integration policies and practices to learn about the status quo, evidence on integration outcomes to identify policy gaps and needs, and evidence linking specific policies to specific integration outcomes to assess those policies' impact and cost-effectiveness.
- ★ Finding and assessing evidence takes time. Developing a search strategy can make it easier to identify evidence in a structured and efficient way. This involves determining search objectives and setting inclusion and exclusion criteria, including relevant time period, geography, target group, and policy focus.
- ★ Not all evidence is created equally. Evidence should be assessed based on quality, relevance, and transferability. Policymakers can use existing standards for evidence quality to identify high-value information; these usually rank meta-analyses and randomised controlled trials at the top of the list.
- ★ When weighing policy options, it is important to look not only at the evidence on a policy's impact but also evidence on how it achieves the desired outcomes and on its cost-effectiveness, transferability, and potential to be scaled up.
- ★ To improve the use of evidence, policymakers and implementers require easy access to research, collaborative relationships with researchers, capacity, funding, and an ever-improving evidence base.

Evidence about which migrant integration policies work and under which conditions is crucial to the design and improvement of integration policies. Solid evidence can also increase political buy-in and investment in improving policies that support migrant integration. Yet, the limited high-quality evidence that is available on what works in the integration field can be difficult to find, access, and interpret, hindering its impact on policies and the lives of migrants and other members of society.

It is thus important for integration policymakers and other stakeholders to hone their ability to navigate this uneven evidence landscape, gathering evidence that is available and knowing who to turn to for reliable information. It is also essential to be able to critically examine the origins, reliability, and relevance of evidence, keeping an eye out for assumptions and biases.⁴

In this section, you will learn...

- what the different types of evidence and data are, and what their advantages and disadvantages are when pursuing different goals;
- how and where to find integration-related evidence, including by developing a search strategy;
- how to evaluate the quality and transferability of evidence; and
- how to assess and strengthen key stakeholders' capacity to use evidence effectively.

BOX 2.1

Case study: Using evidence to build political buy-in and secure funding in the Netherlands

The VIA programme (Verdere Integratie op de Arbeidsmarkt, or Further Integration in the Labour Market) was launched by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment in the Netherlands in 2018. Using pilot projects, the programme aimed to promote the labour market integration of people with a migration background. In the programme, evidence played an important role:

- The collection of data from migrants before the start of the programme helped identify employment gaps between migrants and native-born individuals and was instrumental in securing political buy-in and funding for the programme.
- Evidence gathered during the pilot projects was used to ensure that those that were promising would be continued and scaled up, including by securing new funds from the ministry and other stakeholders.

Note: The VIA programme's full name was changed to Voor een Inclusieve Arbeidsmarkt (For an Inclusive Labour Market) in December 2022. Because most of the reports and other sources available still refer to the programme by its old name, this toolkit does as well to avoid confusion.

Source: author interview with Jürgen Wander, Programme Manager, VIA Programme at the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 1 March 2022.

⁴ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 'Building Capacity for Evidence Informed Policy Making: Towards a Baseline Skill Set' (summary, OECD Publishing, Paris, n.d.), 4; OECD, *Improving Governance with Policy Evaluation: Lessons from Country Experiences* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020).

2.1 What types of evidence and data can be used to improve integration policy design and implementation?

People often use ‘evidence’ and ‘data’ interchangeably, but is there a difference? And what exactly qualifies as evidence and what as data?

Evidence is a body of information that proves whether a hypothesis is true—for example, whether an integration policy is effective. This toolkit uses a broad definition of what information constitutes evidence, including quantitative and qualitative data, stakeholder input, academic research, and many other forms of information that allow policymakers to assess whether policies are effective in improving integration outcomes.

Data, while a component of evidence, is raw information that has not been interpreted and is not necessarily being used to prove whether a specific policy is working or not.⁵ For example, data can tell us that 172 newcomers completed an integration course, but raw data cannot definitively say whether the integration course has had the desired positive impact on integration outcomes—that requires multiple sources of data, including on integration outcomes, and analysis and interpretation.

In the wide and varied world of evidence relevant to integration policymaking, there are three broad categories:

- 1 Evidence on migrant integration policies and practices (or policy input).** This type of evidence allows policymakers to compare what policies and practices have been used over time and across geographic contexts. This type of evidence only measures how policies look on paper; it does not cover how policies are implemented and whether these policies are effective in shaping integration outcomes.
- 2 Evidence on migrant integration outcomes (policy outcomes).** This type of evidence can be used to understand the baseline of migrants’ integration outcomes—how they are faring currently—and to identify the most pressing gaps for policymakers to address. Such evidence can be used to set policy priorities and encourage political buy-in, but it cannot establish whether improvements in migrant integration outcomes are being caused by policies.
- 3 Evidence linking migrant integration policies to migrant integration outcomes (policy impact).** This type of evidence allows policymakers to assess whether and under which conditions migrant integration policies are effective. This is the most valuable type of evidence—and the most rare and difficult to produce. It requires determining the extent to which certain integration outcomes (e.g., a specific refugee group’s local language proficiency) can be attributed to a specific policy (e.g., a new mandatory language training curriculum), while trying to isolate the impact of other factors (e.g., making local friends). For a more in-depth discussion of how to generate this type of evidence through evaluations, check out Section 3.

⁵ Gerhard Van de Bunt and Lorraine Nencel, *Social Research Methodology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Amsterdam: VU University Amsterdam, 2011).

2.2 Where can I find evidence?

The growing body of evidence on migrant integration can be challenging to navigate. Recent years have seen a proliferation of online databases, but it can still be difficult to find and access evidence on a specific topic. The list below highlights some of the main databases and portals through which you can find and access the three kinds of evidence described above. The final part of this subsection looks specifically at accessing relevant academic research.

Evidence on migrant integration policies

Integration policies, strategies, and practices vary widely across countries, regions, and cities. Using the databases below, you can assess information on how policies in one context compare to those in another, and how they have changed over time.

- ▶ The **Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX)** identifies and measures integration policies across 56 countries. Countries receive a score and are classified based on how well their integration policies cover issues such as securing basic rights, supporting equal opportunities, and leading to positive long-term outcomes. The index includes policies on labour market mobility, education, political participation, access to nationality, family reunion, health, permanent residence, and antidiscrimination. While this is a useful tool to compare how governments approach promoting the integration of migrants and to assess how integration approaches have changed over time, it does not provide specific information on the policies implemented and their outcomes.
- ▶ The **Regions for Migrants & Refugees Integration (REGIN) Project** adapted the MIPEX national framework for the regional level, creating **MIPEX-R**. It provides a set of indicators that can be used to evaluate regional governance models of integration. MIPEX-R focuses on eight policy areas: antidiscrimination, culture and religion, education, health care, housing, labour market, language, and social security and assistance. It also scores regional migrant integration governance systems (actions, actors and relations, and resources) and governance processes (policy formulation, output, implementation, and evaluation). The current version includes 25 regions from seven European countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden). Like MIPEX, MIPEX-R only considers policies as they appear on paper, not how they are implemented or how they affect integration outcomes.
- ▶ The **Intercultural Cities Index (ICC-Index)**, created by the Council of Europe, can be used by cities to assess progress on the intercultural integration model over time and learn from concrete best practices in other cities. **Reports** for more than 100 cities (many in Europe, but also some non-European countries) outline actions the cities have taken to promote integration. **Interactive charts** show how participating cities compare to each other on different dimensions of the index: commitment, education, neighbourhoods, public services, business and employment, cultural and civil life, public spaces, mediation and conflict resolution, language, media, international outlook, intelligence/competence, welcoming, and governance.

- ▶ The **National Integration Evaluation Mechanism (NIEM)** provides a standardised research tool for assessing migrant integration policies that target beneficiaries of international protection. NIEM also provides country profiles and assessments of policies related to socioeconomic integration, general conditions, legal integration, and sociocultural integration of this population in 14 European countries.
- ▶ The **Multiculturalism Policy Index (MCP)** monitors multicultural policies for immigrants, national minorities, and Indigenous groups on an annual basis from 1960 onwards for 21 Western countries. In a series of maps, graphs, and analyses, the MCP website highlights trends and developments in these policies. Raw data and evidence on multicultural policies for immigrant minorities are available on [this page](#).

Evidence on integration outcomes

Several databases and platforms measure migrants' integration outcomes—for example, their access to health care or education and labour market integration. However, they do not typically evaluate the causes of those outcomes and the context in which they take place.

- ▶ **Eurostat's migration and asylum resources** offer quantitative data on a range of migrant integration outcomes, including employment, education, social inclusion, health, and active citizenship. Data come from the [European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions](#), the [European Health Interview Survey](#), the [European Social Survey](#), and the [EU Labour Force Survey](#). Eurostat's high-quality data allow policymakers to compare integration outcomes across countries and over time, though the use of broad categories (e.g., all foreign-born individuals) means it is not always possible to explore diversity within immigrant populations (e.g., outcomes for migrants with different legal statuses). [Searching for data](#) and understanding the statistics require expertise on data and statistical categories, though [a guide](#) is available on how to use the site.



Tip: Eurostat's 'Statistics Explained' articles on migrant integration share key findings and interpretation of the data as well as useful graphs to provide annual information in an accessible way for people not trained in data analysis.

- ▶ The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)'s **Database on Immigrants in OECD and Non-OECD Countries (DIOC)** compiles data from population censuses. The data cover immigrants' demographic characteristics, duration of stay, labour market outcomes, and educational background and are available for 2000/01, 2005/06, 2010/11, and 2015/16.
- ▶ The **OECD's 'Settling In' series** provides survey data on the integration outcomes of migrants and their children in EU, OECD, and selected G20 countries. The survey has been held every three years since 2012 and collects information on 74 indicators related to labour market and skills, living conditions, and civic engagement and social integration. The analysis is shared as a report and is available in English, French, and German.

- ▶ The **Ethmig Survey Data Hub** aims to improve knowledge-sharing and to facilitate easy access to and sharing of survey data on the economic, social, and political integration of ethnic minorities and migrants. The database captures national and local surveys collected since 2000 in 28 EU Member States and 7 non-EU countries. As of early 2023, the hub was in development, but it plans to offer a survey registry, a survey question data bank, a post-harmonised survey data bank, and a survey data playground.
- ▶ The European Commission's **Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography (KCMD) Data Portal** presents information on migration and demography relevant to EU policies. Its **Data+ Catalogue** helps users to discover related datasets, web portals and platforms, stakeholder organisations, and networks and forums. The portal allows users to select key themes and the type of resource they are looking for, including [datasets on migrant integration](#).



Want to learn more about sources of data on both integration policies and outcomes? Check out:

- ★ The [Data Inventory on Integration Policies, Outcomes, Public Perceptions, and Social Cohesion](#) created by the [Whole-COMM project](#).

Evidence that links integration policies to outcomes

Evidence demonstrating a causal relationship between policies and integration outcomes is the most difficult kind of evidence to produce and, thus, the most limited. The databases and repositories listed below attempt to link policies to integration outcomes, but causal evidence of policy impact, cost-effectiveness, and/or potential transferability is typically missing. These databases also do not weigh policies based on the strength of the evidence (see Section 2.4 for information on how to assess evidence). But even with these limitations, the databases below provide a valuable starting point to identify effective integration policies.

- ▶ The **SPRING Consortium's Evidence on Integration Policy Practices repository** is an easy access point to the most relevant research on migrant integration, inclusion, and participation in Europe. The repository is based on an extensive review of research published between 2011 and 2022, with key findings on 11 topics translated into easy-to-read summaries and practical recommendations for different stakeholders such as governments, civil-society organisations, and social partners.
- ▶ The **OECD's 'Making Integration Work' series** summarises the main challenges and good policy practices for supporting the lasting integration of immigrants and their children. Each report focuses on a specific theme and presents relevant concrete policy lessons, along with supporting examples and comparisons of the integration policy frameworks in different OECD countries.
- ▶ The **IMMERSE Consortium's Database of Good Practices and Resources in Social Integration of Refugee and Migrant Children** helps users search for child-focused good practices, policy papers, tools, and resources, by country, language, and subtheme. These good practices are also analysed in a series of working papers in the database's [publication portal](#).

- ▶ The **European Website on Integration (EWSI)**, an initiative of the European Commission Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, collects up-to-date information and self-reported good practices on migrant integration. It also provides information on the European Union's work on integration, an overview of available EU funding, guidance on how that funding works, and country pages with further information about EU Member States' integration policies. Policies in the **good practices database** can be filtered by date; geographic area; theme; and target population age, gender, reason for migration, and residence status—but not by policy effectiveness. The site also lists contact persons for each good practice, which can facilitate information exchange.
- ▶ The **European Migration Network (EMN)'s Research Library** includes policy research reports related to migrant integration, migration, education, international protection, and other integration-related topics. The EMN is a European expert network that work together to share objective, comparable policy-relevant information.

Exploring academic research

When you are looking for evidence on a specific topic (for example, on a certain target group, type of policy measure, or context), academic research can offer a wealth of information. Yet, academic publications are unfortunately not always the most accessible forms of evidence. Many academic publications are written for an audience of other academics, not policymakers or practitioners, and therefore include few practical recommendations for policy design and implementation. In addition, academic research is frequently put behind a paywall, limiting who can read it in the first place. Still, academic studies can often complement the other forms of evidence discussed above.



Tip: To save time, prioritise literature reviews and meta-analyses that summarise and assess the findings of multiple other studies.

- ▶ The **Migration Research Hub** by IMISCOE gathers migration research, project information, and an **index of experts**. Its main audience is the research community, but it can also be a useful resource for policymakers seeking to access the most relevant academic literature. Its **research database** includes academic as well as grey literature—from scholarly journal articles and books, to reports, policy briefs, and datasets. Results can be sorted by different subthemes by using a **taxonomy system** and are easily filterable by type of publication, year, and country.



Want to learn more about how to use the Migration Research Hub? Check out:

- ★ **CrossMigration's YouTube video** on how to use the platform.
- ★ Melissa Siegel, a professor of migration studies, also offers **an introduction to this resource**.

2.3 Developing a search strategy

You need to find evidence to support a policy or project you're working on. Where do you start? This section presents a list of steps and key questions to help you develop a targeted search strategy.

Step 1. Determine the objectives of your search

The questions that you would like to answer and the goals you hope to achieve will determine what type of evidence you need. Which of the following do you aim to do?

- ☐ Put an issue on the policy agenda
- ☐ Convince stakeholders to allocate funding to an issue
- ☐ Build political buy-in to change existing policies
- ☐ Identify gaps in existing policies
- ☐ Improve existing policies
- ☐ Inform the design of new policies
- ☐ Other: _____

Step 2. Set inclusion and exclusion criteria for evidence

With your objectives in mind, you will next need to think carefully about what characteristics will make a piece of evidence relevant (or not). This will help you narrow down the pool of available evidence.

Temporal criteria

Does the evidence need to be recent?

If yes, what is the earliest relevant year? When deciding on the right cutoff date, think about significant changes in migration patterns and policies.

Geographic criteria

Do you need evidence to come from the same geographic area where you are working, or would evidence from other countries, regions, and cities also be useful?

How similar does another geographic area need to be (in terms of governance structures, immigration history, urbanisation, etc.) for evidence from that location to be relevant to your work?

Target group criteria

Which characteristics of the target population you are working with must be shared by the target population of a piece of evidence for that information to be relevant? You may wish to think about the population's legal status, duration of stay, country of origin, socioeconomic status, and migrant generation, among other factors.

Thematic criteria

Within the broad issue area you are interested in, which more specific topics are most closely related to your work? For example, when studying migrant health, are you looking for evidence on mental and/or physical health, the spread of communicable and noncommunicable diseases, or something else?

Quality criteria

What level of quality does a piece of evidence need to have for it to be useful to you? See Section 2.4 for guidelines on how to assess the quality of evidence.

Step 3. Reflect on concepts and terminology

Different terminology and synonyms can be used to describe the same or related aspects of migrant integration. For example, many terms are used to describe the process of migrants integrating into a receiving country's labour market and the policies and projects that address their participation. Searching for 'labour market integration' may help you find some useful information, but only using that term will mean overlooking other important pieces of evidence. Try creating a mind-map, like the one below, or even a simple list to brainstorm a set of terms relevant to your search.

FIGURE 2.1

Sample mind-map of key concepts and terminology

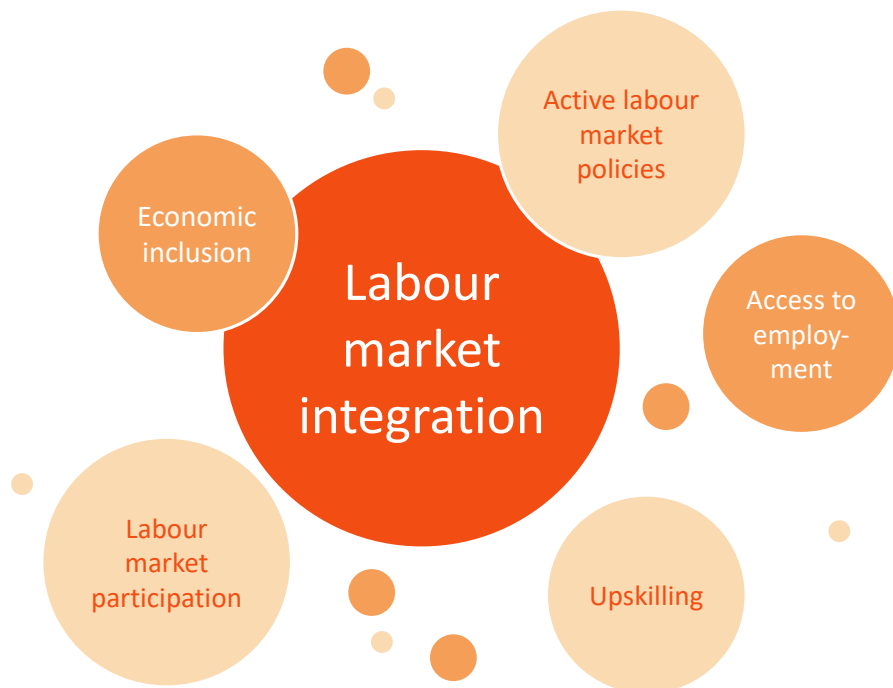
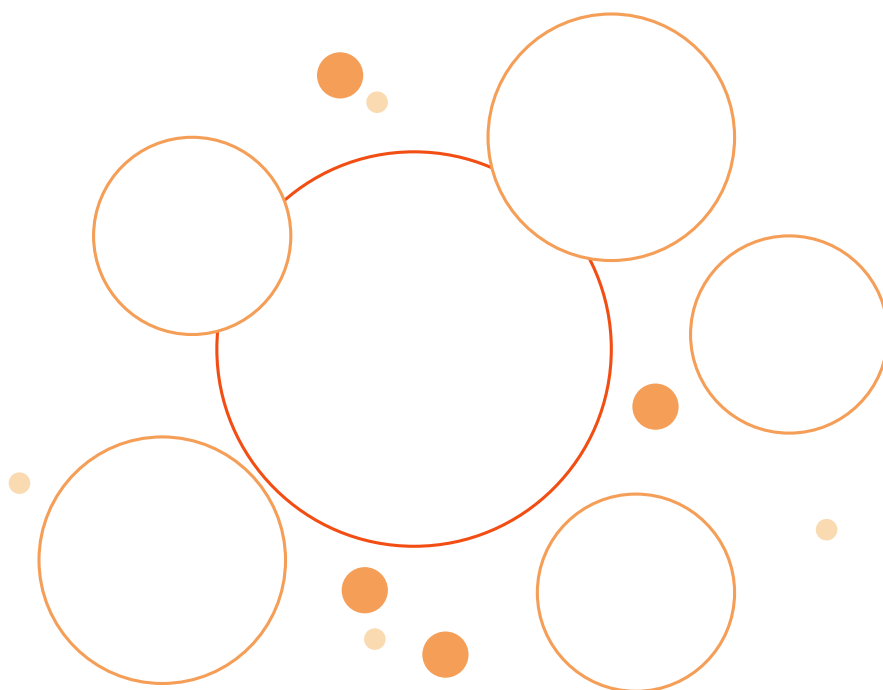


FIGURE 2.2

Blank mind-map of key concepts and terminology



Step 4. Determine where to look for evidence

You now have a strong idea of *what* you are looking for. But *where* should you look? The integration-related databases and evidence repositories described in Section 2.2 are often a good place to start. The search objectives, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and key terms you have identified can help you decide which of those resources to use.

Another strategy, particularly if you are having trouble finding information on specific policy questions, geographic areas, or population groups, is to reach out to individuals and organisations involved in migrant integration to learn from their expertise and experiences. This can include other policymakers and practitioners, nongovernmental organisations, researchers, and integration programme beneficiaries (such as migrants and receiving community members). Section 6 provides more information on effective stakeholder engagement more broadly, but some key questions to consider in this context are:


- What stakeholders are the most likely to have access to the type of evidence you are looking for? Think about their role in migrant integration policy. Are they involved with policy design, implementation, evaluation, or evidence dissemination, or are they affected by the policy?
- What stakeholders might be the most willing to contribute? Consider, for example, who might have an interest in helping you access the evidence needed to design or implement a policy well.
- If you are reaching out to migrant and refugee communities, can you ensure that you will engage with them in a transparent, well-planned and systematic, and nondiscriminatory way?

Step 5. Search online databases effectively

Knowing how to use databases well can make your search for relevant evidence easier and more effective. The tips below can help you use key functions of many databases.

Looking for a specific phrase? Put it in quotation marks.

If you enter more than one word in a search bar, the database may or may not interpret words written next to each other as a phrase. It may bring you results that include that phrase, or it may bring you results that include the words separately. Putting the phrase in double quotation marks will let you search for the whole phrase together.

Search: workforce training policies	
Employee Training Handbook An employee training handbook for new hires in the Office of Workforce Development, outlining key policies .	
Assessing Workforce Characteristics A training course agenda for researchers studying the characteristics of the workforce . It includes course policies .	
Search: "workforce training policies"	
UK Workforce Training Policies A report on workforce training policies implemented in the United Kingdom in the 1990s and 2000s.	
Jobs of Today and Tomorrow Presentation slides from a conference on workforce training policies in Europe and North America.	

Are multiple variations of a word relevant? Try truncation to find them all.

In most databases, you can use the symbol * or ? to replace multiple letters at the start or end of a word. This can make it possible to search for the root of a word and find results that use its variants.

Search: **child***

Unaccompanied children in the United States
A report analysing arrival numbers and services for **child** migrants in U.S. communities.

Early Childhood Education and Care Programmes
A guide to designing programmes for immigrant and native-born **children's** earliest years.

Search: ***migr***

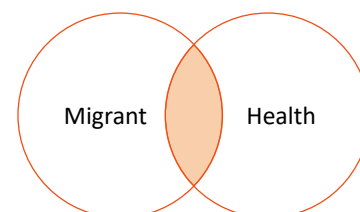
Migration Statistics
Interactive data tools with statistics on **immigration** and **emigration** around the world.

Humanitarian Migrants in Italy
A report on asylum seekers **migrating** to Italy and their first-instance asylum case outcomes.

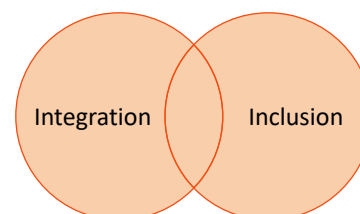
Want to make sure multiple words are included or excluded? Use Boolean operators.

Using the Boolean operators AND, OR, and NOT in database searches can help you broaden or narrow a search.

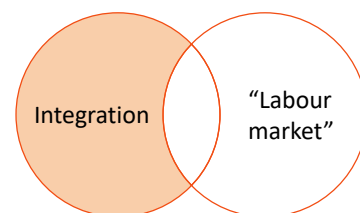
AND narrows the search to include only results that contain both search terms, excluding those that include only one or the other. This will produce fewer results. This is useful to connect unrelated terms that are important to your research. For example, a simple search for **migrant health** could yield some results that include only one or the other word, but adding AND to your search—**migrant AND health**—will ensure each search result mentions both words.



OR broadens the search to include one, the other, or both search terms. It will produce more results. This works well for synonymous or closely related words, for example **integration OR inclusion**. This search will yield results including either inclusion or integration, or both.



NOT will limit the search to results that contain the first term and do not contain the second term. This can help you avoid irrelevant results. For example, if you want to find information about aspects of integration other than labour market integration, you could search for **integration NOT "labour market"**.



Want to learn more about Boolean search operators? Check out:

- ★ [This YouTube video](#) on how Boolean searches work in databases and catalogues.

2.4 Assessing the quality and relevance of evidence

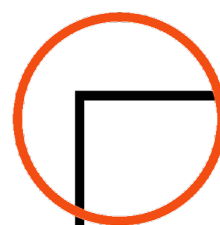
Although the amount of evidence available on immigrant integration is growing, not all evidence is created equally and not all evidence points in the same direction. Finding evidence is only the first step in using it to inform policy design and implementation. Next, you will need to assess the value of this evidence. This section provides tools to help you assess and rank evidence based on quality, impact, transferability, opportunities to scale policies up, and cost-effectiveness.

Assessing the quality of evidence

The quality of pieces of evidence varies depending on the methodology that was used to create them. There is an ongoing debate about whether it is possible to create a fixed hierarchy or ranking of types of evidence based on quality.⁶ However, existing standards typically give more weight to randomised controlled trials (RCTs) and to systematic reviews, which make it possible to establish a causal link between an integration policy and its outcomes. Table 2.1 provides an example of a hierarchy of evidence quality, which you can use to weigh the available evidence and get a better sense of what evidence to trust or prioritise.

It should be noted that while quality of evidence is important, it is often not possible to conduct RCTs in real life because of ethical considerations, cost constraints, and gaps in expertise. For example, in the case of the VIA programme in the Netherlands, multiple organisations did not want to participate in RCTs because of ethical concerns; they did not want to deprive a group of people of access to a programme expected to benefit them for the sake of creating a control group.⁷

Standards for evidence quality, including the example in Table 2.1, often rank non-experimental quantitative methodologies and qualitative evidence lower in the hierarchy, but these types of evidence may still be very useful for policymaking. In the absence of experimental evidence, non-experimental quantitative evidence can point to the *likely* causal impact of policies while qualitative research is very effective in assessing the role of meaning and context in public policies.⁸



- 6 Mark Petticrew and Helen Roberts, 'Evidence, Hierarchies, and Typologies: Horses for Courses', *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* 57, no. 7 (2003): 527–529.
- 7 Gregor Walz, Auke Witkamp, Noortje Hipper, and Lennart de Ruig, 'Evaluatie Programma Verdere Integratie Op de Arbeidsmarkt: Derde Rapport Uitvoering, Opbrengsten En Impact van Het Programma' (programme evaluation, Rijksoverheid, The Hague, the Netherlands, November 2021), 43.
- 8 Joseph A. Maxwell, 'The Value of Qualitative Inquiry for Public Policy', *Qualitative Inquiry* 26, no. 2 (2020): 177–186.

TABLE 2.1

Example hierarchy of evidence quality

Level (highest to lowest)	Type of evidence
1	Systematic reviews and meta-analyses: These studies systematically assess the outcomes of multiple policies addressing the same issue.
2	Randomised controlled trials with definitive results: RCTs randomly assign individuals to either benefit from a policy or not, with the latter group acting as a control group. This allows researchers to isolate whether changes in specific outcomes were caused by the policy. (See Section 3 for more on RCTs.)
3	Randomised controlled trials with nondefinitive results: These RCTs have, for example, a limited sample that does not provide unequivocal proof of a policy's impact on integration.
4	Cohort studies: This is a type of longitudinal study in which a group of people (e.g., potential beneficiaries of a policy) are followed over a period of time.
5	Case-control studies: These are observational, not randomised studies comparing the integration outcomes of two groups, but they do not establish a link between outcomes and policy.
6	Cross-sectional surveys: These surveys are conducted at one point in time and target a specific group of interest (e.g., beneficiaries of a policy). It is not possible to use their results to establish causality between outcomes and policy.
7	Case reports: These are detailed reports produced using existing information on a policy, what it seeks to achieve, and the target beneficiaries.

Source: Julia Brannen, ed., *Mixing Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Research* (Aldershot, UK: Avebury, 1992).

Assessing what the body of evidence says about the quality of a particular policy

Understanding the quality of individual pieces of evidence, in terms of the rigorousness of their methods, is one thing. Understanding what those pieces of evidence tell us about the quality of the policy being studied is another. High-quality evidence may be available on a policy but show that the policy itself is of poor quality—ineffective, exorbitantly expensive to implement, nearly impossible to scale up, or difficult to transfer to another context.

To answer the question ‘how confident can I be that a certain policy is having the desired positive impact?’, you will need to look at what the full body of evidence has to say about the policy. Nesta, a UK-based innovation foundation, uses the standards of evidence in Table 2.2 for this purpose. It introduces a five-level hierarchy to help users assess the full body of evidence on a specific policy, with Level 1 providing the lowest level of evidence and Level 5 the highest level of evidence.

TABLE 2.2

Nesta's standards of evidence

Level (lowest to highest)	What evidence is required about the policy?	How can evidence be generated?
1	Information about the policy, why it matters, and why it could make an impact in a logical and convincing way (e.g., a logical framework).	Level 1 evidence can be generated using the theory of change and by using existing data from other sources.
2	All of the information from Level 1, plus evidence that shows a positive change in integration outcomes, though it cannot be confirmed that these changes are caused by the policy.	Level 2 evidence can be gathered through surveys conducted both before and after a policy change, panel studies (a type of longitudinal study), interval surveying, or qualitative research.
3	All of the information from Levels 1 and 2, plus evidence that can prove causality by isolating the impact of the specific policy on outcomes from that of other contextual factors.	Level 3 evidence can be generated using impact evaluation methods such as randomised controlled trials. Randomly assigning individuals to the control and the policy group and having a larger sample size will further strengthen the evidence.
4	All of the information from Levels 1–3, plus evidence on why and how the policy is having the observed impact and evidence on the policy's cost-effectiveness.	Level 4 evidence requires process evaluation and value for money evaluation, such as a cost-benefit analysis.
5	All of the information from Levels 1–4, plus evidence that the policy is transferrable to other contexts and able to be scaled up, while remaining impactful and cost-effective.	Level 5 evidence can be produced by replicating evaluations of a policy in different contexts or by producing future scenario analysis.

Note: More information on some of these methods for generating evidence, such as randomised controlled trials and value-for-money evaluations, can be found in Section 3.

Source: Ruth Puttick and Joe Ludlow, *Standards of Evidence: An Approach that Balances the Need for Evidence with Innovation* (London: Nesta, 2013).



Want to learn more about standards of evidence? Check out:

- ★ Nesta's [What Counts as Good Evidence?](#) report and [Standards of Evidence](#) short video offer an overview of the topic.
- ★ The OECD's [Mobilising Evidence for Good Governance](#) report includes information about [principles for the use of evidence](#) and [standards of evidence](#) in OECD countries. The overall report provides rich examples and assess the state of play of evidence standards in policymaking.
- ★ Nesta's [Using Research Evidence: A Practice Guide](#), in Section C, provides information on how to use standards of evidence as well as systematic reviews, research, and rapid evidence assessments.

Assessing the relevance and transferability of evidence

Evidence on effective migrant integration policies is being collected in varied contexts around the world, and what is effective in one may not be in another. Integration is a complex process that is influenced not only by the particular policy or practice that is being studied, but also by other factors—from the characteristics of the target group and the broader society, to differences in legal systems.

When seeking to gauge whether a piece of evidence collected in one context is relevant to yours, it can be helpful to consider:

- **Timeliness:** How recent is the piece of evidence? Have there been any major changes (migration trends, policies, etc.) since then that would make the evidence less applicable today?
- **Contextual similarity:** Do the legal, social welfare, health-care, educational, labour market, and other systems strongly shape the evidence on a certain policy? How comparable are the relevant systems in that context and yours?
- **Target group:** Is the target group in this piece of evidence similar to the one you are working with (e.g., with respect to legal status, socioeconomic background, demographic composition, duration of stay in the country, and country of origin)? Are there certain characteristics that must be similar for the evidence to be relevant to you and some that are less important?
- **Scalability:** How scalable is a policy within its own context? Are the lessons learnt from scaling the policy up in its own context and can they help answer questions about scalability in other contexts?
- **Capacity to adapt:** Would stakeholders in your context support the adaptation and implementation of this policy? Would they commit to making the policy sustainable over time?
- **Transfer conditions:** Are time and resources available to test and implement the policy in a new context? Can policy adaptation be monitored and evaluated?



Want to learn more about transferring and scaling up migrant integration practices? Check out:

- ★ The Migration Policy Group's report [How Can Good Practices Be Transferred/Upscaled? Trends and Key Features of Transferability](#) highlights trends, explains the process, and provides examples.

2.5 Conditions that facilitate the use of evidence

The growing body of knowledge and evidence can greatly improve policymaking, but only if it reaches the right hands. An elaborate review of 145 studies identified the main obstacles to and facilitators of using evidence in policymaking.⁹ To improve the use of evidence in policy design and implementation, policymakers require:

- **Easy access to research and evidence.** The various sources described in Section 2.2, including [the SPRING Consortium's evidence repository](#), make integration-related research available and offer tools to help policymakers access and navigate it. The dissemination of evidence through these platforms, as well as by the individual organisations that produce evidence, is discussed in more depth in Section 4.
- **Collaboration and relationships with other policymakers and researchers.** Effective partnerships and knowledge-sharing across stakeholders is key to promoting evidence-informed policymaking. Section 6 explores the importance of stakeholder involvement throughout the policymaking cycle, including for this purpose.
- **Capacity.** Certain research skills are needed to find, assess, and use evidence in policymaking. This toolkit, as well as the wealth of resources and other toolkits it highlights, aim to improve the capacity of integration policymakers and practitioners.
- **Funding.** Finding, assessing, and using evidence for policymaking take both time and money. Different sources of funding and funding strategies can be leveraged to increase the resources available for evidence-informed policymaking, as will be discussed in Section 5.
- **Further improvements in the clarity, relevance, and reliability of research findings.** While the evidence base for migrant integration policymaking is growing, there are still notable gaps. For example, many sources describe best practices without a thorough evaluation of their quality. Databases that collect good practices, including the European Website for Integration, should assess the quality of evidence and the broader cost-effectiveness, scalability, and transferability of these practices to make it easier for policymakers to identify those practices shown by high-quality evidence to be working well.

⁹ Kathryn Oliver et al., 'A Systematic Review of Barriers to and Facilitators of the Use of Evidence by Policymakers,' *BMC Health Services Research* 14, no. 2 (2014).

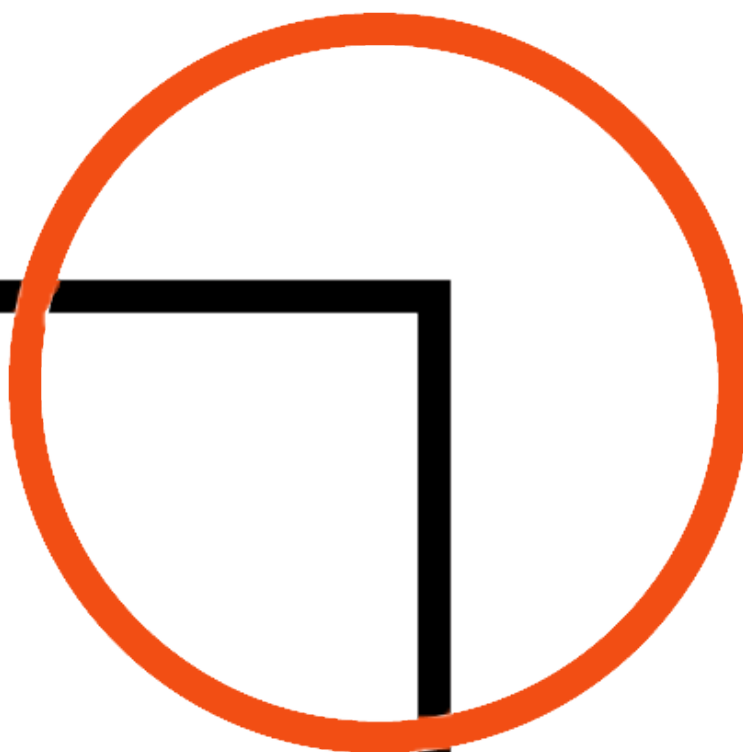
BOX 2.2

How do we know if evidence is being used in policymaking? A look at diagnostic tools

It is not always clear if an organisation lacks an evidence culture or the capacity to use data in policymaking. Diagnostic tools that assess policymakers' capacity to use evidence can help identify obstacles and inform strategies to improve the status quo.

The Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement has produced a self-assessment tool called [Is Research Working for You?](#) that organisations can use to gauge their capacity to find, assess, present, and apply research.

The Urban Institute's [Research and Evaluation Capacity: Self-Assessment Tool and Discussion Guide](#) is designed to measure organisational capacity to engage with research and evaluation. It considers how organisations perform in seven major areas, defines overarching goals for research and evaluation capacity-building efforts, and helps users formulate key questions they have about how to address the shortcomings and objectives they identify.



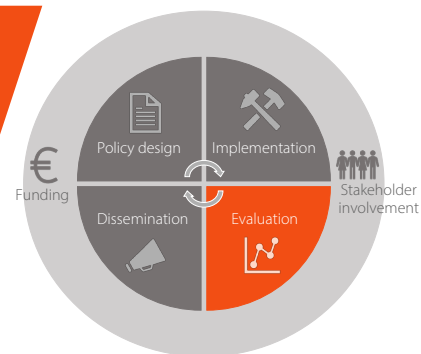
2.6 Further reading and resources

Resources on building capacity to find, assess, and use evidence in policymaking:

- ★ The International Network for Advancing Science and Policy (INASP)'s [Evidence-Informed Policy Making \(EIPM\) Toolkit](#) provides a complete search strategy (in Module 2) and an approach to critically assessing evidence (in Module 3).
- ★ The OECD report [Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making: Lessons from Country Experiences](#) guides policymakers through how to increase the use of evidence in their work (see Chapter 3).
- ★ The OECD and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) held a joint workshop in 2018 entitled 'Skills for Policymakers for Evidence-Informed Policy Making (EIPM)', from which the organisers posted [recordings of presentations](#) on the skills, processes, and institutional structures needed to incorporate evidence into policymaking.

Resources to improve how you assess evidence:

- ★ [Savvy Info Consumers: Evaluating Information](#) is a guide from the University of Washington that compiles different frameworks for evaluating sources of information.
- ★ [Critical Appraisal Tools](#) by the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine provides worksheets and other tools in several languages to help you critically review the findings of different types of studies (including systematic reviews, randomised controlled trials, and qualitative studies).
- ★ The Joanna Briggs Institute's [Critical Appraisal Tools](#) can be used to assess the quality of evidence from a wide variety of studies.



3. Evaluation to Strengthen Ongoing and Future Integration Programmes

Key takeaways

- ★ Evaluation—the structured assessment of a policy’s process, impact, and/or cost-effectiveness—improves policy outcomes, promotes good governance, helps save on costs, increases accountability, and aids with policy learning.
- ★ Decisions about which type of evaluation to use should be based on the evaluation’s goal, the resources available, and the characteristics of the policy. Some of the most common types are:
 - *Process evaluations* focus on how a policy was implemented. They identify any problems that were encountered and how they were solved, the resources used to deliver services (inputs), the type and quantity of services delivered (outputs), and the beneficiaries of those services.
 - *Impact evaluations* assess a policy’s effects, for example on integration outcomes. Doing so is complicated because it can be challenging or at times impossible to say what would have happened without the policy and to establish a direct causal link between a policy and an observed integration outcome, given other factors at play. Randomised controlled trials, quasi-experimental techniques, and theory-based impact evaluations are examples of this type of evaluation.
 - *Value-for-money evaluations* systematically assess whether the money, time, or other resources (inputs) invested in an intervention represent good value. This includes cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analyses.
- ★ Policymakers can leverage a range of existing tools and strategies to increase survey response rates among migrants, to overcome different forms of bias in how research is conducted and published, and to effectively commission an evaluation.

Evaluation is a structured and objective assessment of a policy, programme, or intervention. It is a crucial tool to understand whether policies are effective, for whom, and why. Evaluations create new evidence and help identify how policies can be improved and made more cost-effective.

In this section, you will learn...

- why policy evaluation is important;
- what the different types of evaluations are, what the advantages and disadvantages of each are, and how to choose the best type for your work;
- how to overcome some of the methodological obstacles that can make doing research among migrant and refugee communities challenging; and
- how to effectively commission an evaluation.

3.1 What is evaluation and why should I evaluate?

Evaluations differ in their scale and objectives, but all aim to answer questions¹⁰ such as:

- Is the intervention or policy working as intended?
- What is its overall impact?
- Is it working differently for different groups, and why?
- If we were to do it again, how could the policy be improved?
- Is it good value for money, or could we achieve the same goals in a more cost-effective way?

Evaluation is *not*¹¹...

- Spending reviews – studies of whether public interventions align with government priorities, with the goal of increasing available funds
- Monitoring – checking progress against established targets, with evidence reported in order to show that goals are achieved and resources are well spent
- Performance management – when an organisation involves its employees as contributors to the process of improving the organisation's effectiveness
- Audit – a review of whether established criteria, such as compliance with financial and legal requirements, are reflected in information collected about an organisation's operations

¹⁰ This list is adapted from Section 1.2 of UK Treasury, *Magenta Book: Central Government Guidance on Evaluation* (London: UK Treasury, 2020).

¹¹ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Improving Governance with Policy Evaluation: Lessons from Country Experiences* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020).

Done well, policy evaluation can improve policy outcomes, cost-effectiveness, policy learning, good governance, and decisionmaking. This holds benefits for government budgets, the lives of migrants and refugees, and the broader society. Some of the most important reasons to integrate evaluation into your work are summed up in Table 3.1.

TABLE 3.1

Policy evaluation's top benefits

<i>Why evaluate?</i>
Identify risks: Policy evaluation helps identify dependencies, uncertainties, and risks. It also supports policy design and implementation adaptations to account for uncertainties and minimise risks.
Facilitate accountability: Evaluations hold policymakers, practitioners, and other stakeholders accountable to the objectives they set for themselves.
Promote learning: Evaluations generate lessons about what works and under which conditions, which stakeholders can learn from and integrate into future work.
Respond to external scrutiny: Evaluations provide support during official audits but also crucial information that can be shared with citizens, taxpayers, and electorates about how policies are performing.
Improve stakeholder engagement and empowerment: Involving stakeholders in the evaluation process, in addition to resulting in higher-quality evaluations, is an opportunity for policymakers to strengthen stakeholder engagement and empowerment. It builds a shared understanding of what the policy is and aims to do, and policymakers benefit from stakeholders' expert knowledge.
Boost cost-effectiveness: Evaluations can identify whether policies provide value for money and point to ways to implement existing policies in a more efficient and cost-effective way, while achieving the same or better results.
Increase effectiveness of service delivery and implementation: Evaluations can improve the effectiveness of policy implementation and delivery of services by informing decisions about ongoing and future policies.
Strengthen understanding of the context and conditions under which a policy works: A policy may work for some groups and under specific conditions, but not in all cases. Evaluations help determine the context and conditions under which policies are most effective.
Informing decisions about ongoing and future policies: Evaluations play a key role in improving decisionmaking, for example about whether to discontinue, continue, or even scale up or expand a policy.

Sources: Michael Howlett, 'Policy Analytical Capacity and Evidence-Based Policy-Making: Lessons from Canada', *Canadian Public Administration* 52, no. 2 (2009): 153–175; Andrew Feldman and Rebecca Maynard, 'The Evidence-Based Policy Revolution Waiting to Happen', Government Executive, 30 January 2020; Pew Charitable Trusts and MacArthur Foundation, *Evidence-Based Policymaking: A Guide for Effective Government* (Washington, DC: Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative, 2014).

3.2 How do I choose the evaluation approach right for my work?

There are many different ways to approach evaluation. Each has advantages and disadvantages, and each will help you answer a different set of questions. Selecting the right evaluation approach—or combination of approaches—requires careful consideration of:

- the goals you hope to achieve (i.e., what questions you want to answer);

- the nature of the policy;
- the context in which the policy operates;
- the availability of data; and
- the resources and staff or external capacity available to support the evaluation.

Evaluation approaches, while there are many, can be grouped into the three broad categories shown in Figure 3.1, based on the goals they aim to achieve.¹² Figure 3.2 offers a set of questions and decision points that can help you think through which of these broad categories and which more specific evaluation types are right for a particular situation. Further information about different types of impact evaluations and value-for-money evaluations can be found in Sections 3.3 and 3.4.¹³ Even if you never use these methods yourself, understanding the requirements and advantages of different approaches can help you to better understand policy evaluations conducted by others and to commission high-quality evaluations from external evaluators.

FIGURE 3.1

Key characteristics of process, impact, and value-for-money evaluations



Process evaluation focuses on the implementation process to determine how it went and ways it could be improved.

Key questions:

- ✓ Is the policy being implemented as intended?
- ✓ Have any practical problems been encountered and how have they been addressed?
- ✓ What funding, staff, and other resources (inputs) are being used to implement the policy, and are they enough?
- ✓ What types and quantities of services have been delivered (outputs)?
- ✓ Who has benefitted from the services provided?
- ✓ What worked well and what did not? What could be improved?



Impact evaluation assesses the intended changes (objectives) and unintended changes caused by an intervention.

Key questions:

- ✓ Is the intervention effective in achieving the policy's goals?
- ✓ Did the intervention cause the change in outcomes, or would observed changes have occurred anyway without the intervention or as a result of other factors?
- ✓ Did the intervention result in unintended outcomes?



Value-for-money (VfM) evaluation systematically assesses whether an investment of money, time, or other resources (inputs) in an intervention represents good value by causing positive outcomes.

Key questions:

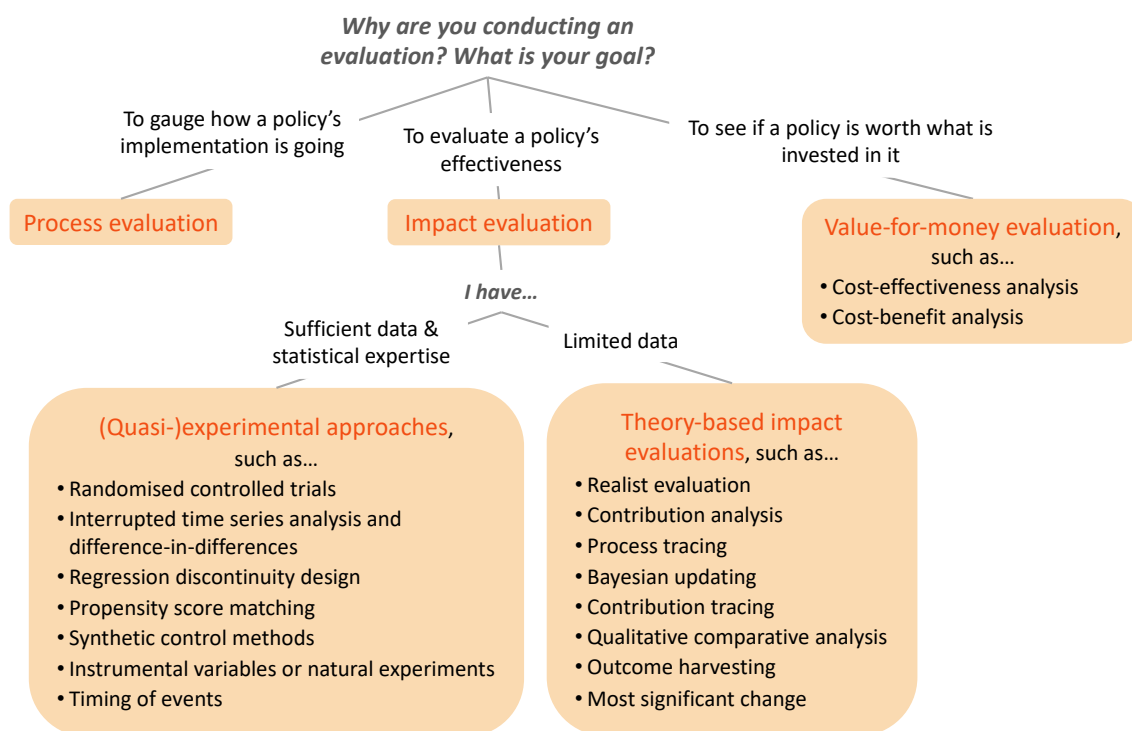
- ✓ Were resources used effectively?
- ✓ Is the intervention cost-effective, compared to alternative interventions or to doing nothing?
- ✓ Do the benefits outweigh the costs of the intervention?

¹² TSNE, 'Process Evaluation vs. Outcome Evaluation', updated 14 June 2018; UK Treasury, *Magenta Book: Central Government Guidance on Evaluation* (London: UK Treasury, 2020).

¹³ There are no subtypes of process evaluation. For more information about how to set up a process evaluation, see the guidance provided by the Medical Research Council in Graham F. Moore et al., 'Process Evaluation of Complex Interventions: Medical Research Council Guidance', *BMC Public Health* 350 (2015): 1–7.

FIGURE 3.2

Decision tree for choosing the right evaluation type



3.3 Assessing a policy's effectiveness using impact evaluations

Impact evaluation is complicated. It is methodologically challenging to determine whether a policy (for example, an integration course) has a causal effect on immigrants' integration outcomes (for example, their labour market integration). There are different reasons why establishing impact is so difficult, including:

- **Unobserved counterfactuals:** When measuring the impact of a policy on an individual's integration outcomes, it is impossible to know what the outcomes would have been without the policy.

For example, in a study of the labour market integration outcomes of participants in an integration course, it is impossible to know what those individuals' labour market outcomes would have been had they not attended the course.

- **Spurious correlations:** Correlation is not the same as causation. More simply put, just because two things are related, that does not mean that one has caused the other.

For example, if after six months 80 per cent of the participants in Integration Course A have found a job whereas 30 per cent of participants in Integration Course B have found a job, it would be incorrect to simply assume that Course A is more effective than Course B.

There are two reasons for this:

- **Selection bias:** Ideally, participants for a study should be selected in a randomised way that creates either a sample representative of a broader population of interest (e.g., all refugee women) or a set of study groups that have roughly similar characteristics, making it possible to draw comparisons between their outcomes. Selection bias occurs when study participants are not randomly selected or allocated to different intervention and control groups, meaning they are not representative of the broader population or comparable to each other.

For example, if the participants of the two courses had very different characteristics, it may not be possible to compare their outcomes. If those in Course A had a higher level of education and skills in in-demand fields, while those in Course B had high levels of illiteracy and work experience that did not match local labour market needs, Course B participants would be less likely to find a job than Course A participants no matter the quality of their integration courses.

- **Confounding factors:** At first glance, two things (e.g., a policy and integration outcomes) may appear to be related, but what if there was a third thing affecting them both? That confounding factor artificially creates a correlation, even though there is no causal relation between the two.

For example, Integration Course A was based in a large city with plenty of employment opportunities and job vacancies, while Integration Course B was based in a rural area with almost no employment opportunities and job vacancies. In this example, a migrant's location is the confounding factor because it determines both which integration course the migrant participates in and shapes the migrant's labour market integration outcomes due to differences in the availability of jobs.

The process of determining whether there is a causal relation between, for example, a policy and integration outcomes is called **causal inference**. There is a wide—and growing—array of quantitative and qualitative research methods that can help you to establish evidence of a causal relationship. However, not all research methods create evidence of equal quality (see Section 2.4 for more on assessing the quality of evidence).

The rest of this section discusses research methods that can be used to establish causal impact: experimental methods, including randomised controlled trials; quasi-experimental methods; and theory-based impact evaluation.



Want to learn more about causal inference? Check out:

- ★ [This YouTube video](#), in which Professor Jens Hainmueller of Stanford University provides an overview of causal inference in migration studies. It was recorded at the Summer Institute in Migration Research Methods organised by the Berkeley Interdisciplinary Migration Initiative at UC Berkeley.

Experimental and quasi-experimental approaches

Experimental approaches are the gold standard in evaluation. *Randomised controlled trials (RCTs)* are a type of experimental approach that randomly assigns individuals to either be exposed to a policy or not exposed to it, with the latter making up the so-called control group. Because individuals are assigned to groups randomly and not based on their characteristics, the groups should be similar. Any observed differences between the groups could therefore be interpreted as policy impact. In practice, it is often impossible to do RCTs or to randomly assign individuals to be affected—or not—by a certain policy.

Quasi-experimental approaches allow evaluators to mimic the conditions of an RCT and create an artificial control/comparison group so they can infer the impact of a policy on specific outcomes as accurately as possible. Common types of quasi-experimental studies include:

- **Interrupted time series analysis** tests whether launching, ending, or changing a policy leads to causal change in integration outcome trends over time. This method assumes that trends (for example, a steady increase in employment rates) would continue over time, unless affected by a change in policy. This method aims to identify policy impact by comparing a population's integration outcomes following the introduction of a new policy to those that would have been expected if the existing trend were to continue as before. A *difference-in-differences* design further strengthens this type of study by comparing ongoing trends in a control group.¹⁴
- **Regression discontinuity design** compares the integration outcomes of individuals or groups just on either side of an arbitrary threshold that determines whether they are affected by a policy or programme, with those not affected acting as an artificial control group. For example, if a policy targets a specific age group (migrants older than age 35) or a specific geographic area (those in a specific municipality), a study using regression continuity design would compare the integration outcomes of migrants just below the threshold (those who are 34 years old or those living in a neighbouring municipality) with the outcomes of migrants who just made it into the group affected by the policy (those who are 35 years old or those who just barely live inside the municipality's borders).¹⁵
- **Propensity score matching** creates a comparison group that is as similar as possible to the group being exposed to the policy (the intervention) by using a statistical technique that matches the intervention group with individuals not in the intervention group. For example, to study whether an integration course is effective, this type of study might compare the integration outcomes of migrants in the integration course to those of a comparison group composed of individuals who are as similar as possible to the course participants, as determined using available data on relevant characteristics. However, not all relevant characteristics may be used to create the comparison group, and there are often structural

14 For an example of a difference-in-differences design in migrant integration studies, see Jens Hainmueller and Dominik Hangartner, 'Does Direct Democracy Hurt Immigrant Minorities? Evidence from Naturalization Decisions in Switzerland', *American Journal of Political Science* 63, no. 3 (2019): 530–547.

15 An example of a Regression Discontinuity Design in migrant integration studies can be found here: Jens Hainmueller et al., 'Protecting Unauthorized Immigrant Mothers Improves Their Children's Mental Health', *Science* 357, no. 6355 (2017): 1041–44.

differences between the group that is exposed to the policy and the group that is not not, which can make it difficult to use this method.¹⁶

Whether and which (quasi-)experimental approaches fit your work will depend on the availability of resources, the nature of the intervention, access to data, and other factors.

Advantages:

- Experimental approaches, and to a lesser extent quasi-experimental approaches, provide the most reliable way to assess whether policies are effective, and they create robust evidence.
- Impact is usually measured in a standardised and quantifiable way, which allows policymakers to more easily compare the effectiveness of different policies.

Disadvantages:

- Experimental and quasi-experimental approaches may not be possible, whether as a result of ethical concerns (e.g., about providing a potentially beneficial service to some people but not others in order to create a control group) or because it is simply not possible to create a control group.
- Experimental and quasi-experimental approaches are very resource intensive and require considerable statistical expertise, which may not be available in house.



Want to learn more about (quasi-)experimental approaches?

Check out:

- ★ The [Impact Evaluation in Practice](#) handbook by the World Bank (also available in Portuguese and Spanish) explains different experimental and quasi-experimental methods for assessing policy impact.
- ★ The [Magenta Book: Central Government Guidance on Evaluation](#), published by the UK government, provides an overview of experimental and quasi-experimental methods and their advantages and disadvantages (see page 48) and a decision tree to help you decide which method is the best option for your work.

¹⁶ Jens Hainmueller and Dominik Hangartner, 'Who Gets a Swiss Passport? A Natural Experiment in Immigrant Discrimination', *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 1 (2013): 159-187.

Theory-based impact evaluations

Theory-based approaches to impact evaluation focus on the questions of why and how policies are effective in causing changes to outcomes. Theory-based approaches often use a theory of change that explains how a policy is expected to produce certain outcomes. This theory of change includes a *logic model*—a hypothesised chain of causes and effects describing a sequence of inputs leading to outputs, and the mechanisms that translate inputs into outputs. Once developed, a theory of change is tested using evidence from multiple sources. This approach is often combined with other evaluation approaches because of its reliance on a wide range of evidence sources.



Tip: The [Ethnic and Migrant Minority Survey Question Data Bank](#) by Ethmig Survey Data is a collection of questionnaires you can use in quantitative surveys that target ethnic and migrant minority respondents.

Advantages:

- Theory-based approaches allow evaluators to explain why interventions are working or are not working.
- Theory-based approaches can be applied in all settings, unlike (quasi-)experimental methods.
- Theory-based approaches can be used as part of less resource-intensive evaluations and can add credibility to and increase the quality of these types of evaluations.

Disadvantages:

- Theory-based approaches do not provide a quantitative measure of a policy's impact on an observed outcome (effect size).
- In some cases theory-based approaches may end up being built on multiple theories of change, and evaluators may need to test and reconcile differences between them.



Want to learn more about theory-based impact evaluations?
Check out:

- ★ [Theory-Based Approaches to Evaluation: Concepts and Practices](#) by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat provides information on how to use theory-based approaches and their strengths and weaknesses.
- ★ The [Magenta Book: Central Government Guidance on Evaluation](#), published by the UK government, provides an overview of different types of theory-based impact evaluations (see page 45). These include realist evaluation, contribution analysis, process tracing, Bayesian updating, contribution tracing, qualitative comparative analysis, outcome harvesting, and most-significant change.

3.4 Assessing bang for your buck with value-for-money evaluations

Value-for-money evaluation approaches can serve several purposes. They can help you make smart decisions that improve a policy's efficiency, making it possible to reduce the amount of resources that need to be allocated while achieving the same or better impact. These approaches also make it possible to assess the broader financial impacts of a policy.

Cost-effectiveness analysis

Cost-effectiveness approaches focus primarily on reducing the costs (input) of a policy, generally while achieving the same or a better effect (output). Often, this type of analysis compares the outcomes and the costs of two or more policies to gauge which provides a better return on investment. The policy outcomes have usually already been established by impact evaluations and should be measured broadly, including different indicators of integration (such as health, well-being, employment, sense of belonging, social contact with the receiving-society population). With many integration policymakers operating in a context of limited funding, cost-effectiveness analysis is an important tool in efforts to get the same bang for fewer bucks.

Advantages:

- Cost-effectiveness approaches help policymakers to use limited funds in a more efficient way.
- The outputs (for example, learning the host country's language) do not have to be assigned a monetary value; instead, they can be measured in whatever way makes sense for the nature of the output (for example, increases in language proficiency levels), and then compared to the monetary costs of the policy. This makes this approach much easier to apply.

Disadvantages:

- Definitions of costs sometimes differ, and this may complicate comparisons between policies.
- What constitutes a one-unit increase in policy impact may not necessarily reflect a consistent amount of change. Taking the example of improvements in language proficiency, a language learner who advances from a very low to a moderate level will likely find it significantly easier to communicate in daily life, whereas a learner who advances from a moderate to a high level may not see as big of a difference in daily communication. Thus, the units of change (advancing one level) may not have the same amount of real-life impact.

Cost-benefit analysis

Cost-benefit analysis is a tool to calculate the broader social value of investments in integration initiatives. This approach promotes a more holistic view of policy outcomes, including the broader financial and social impacts. A cost-benefit analysis approach would, for example, look at the broader impact of promoting language acquisition among migrants, including improved access to the labour market and therefore reduced dependence on social welfare, but also better social integration and stronger social cohesion in the broader society.

Cost-benefit analysis can follow two models:

Predictive models use economic modelling methods to predict the net social value of a policy or intervention by making assumptions about its impact based on existing evidence. Such models can predict how initial outcomes could have broader effects, even when there is not enough evidence on whether an intervention achieves its objectives.

Evaluative models, instead of predicting, assess actual costs and outcomes. Ideally, these models also look at broader effects such as indirect positive impact on the rest of the household when one household member finds a job. These broader effects are often hard to measure and assign a monetary value, and most evaluative models therefore focus solely on the costs and initial outcomes.

The two models can also be merged. Evaluations can be used to test prior predictions, for example by designing a feedback loop where a predictive model improves over time thanks to the input of better evidence. The models should include an estimate of uncertainty and be periodically reviewed.

Advantages:

- Cost-benefit analysis captures both short- and long-term impacts in a systematic way.
- Cost-benefit analysis takes a more holistic approach to defining the impacts of a policy, which can be helpful in a multifaceted policy area such as migrant integration.

Disadvantages:

- It can be challenging to assign a monetary value to the broader impacts of a policy.

BOX 3.1

Case study: Cost-benefit analysis of refugee policy in Amsterdam

The City of Amsterdam, through an external consultancy firm (LPBL), carried out a cost-benefit analysis to evaluate and improve its 2016–18 Amsterdam Approach refugee integration programme. The cost-benefit analysis, carried out every six months, considered all extra costs for activities targeted to refugees, including client and programme management, language training, internships, and other activities. These costs were measured against all extra benefits, for instance a decrease in unemployment benefits, higher tax revenues, more long-term educational benefits, and better quality of life.

In the first year of programme implementation, costs and benefits were collected from a sample of 1,500 refugees participating in the programme. They were then compared with the results of a control group of 3,000 refugees who did not participate in the programme, collected from historical data. After one year in the programme, the employment of refugees was 15 per cent higher than for those in the control group. Programme participants also found jobs more quickly than the control group, with estimates that 50 per cent might not need unemployment benefits within three years of joining the programme. The programme's benefits were found to exceed its costs by 50 per cent in the most conservative estimate. For every euro invested, there would be a 1.50 euro gain.

Sources: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Working Together for Local Integration of Migrants and Refugees in Amsterdam* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020); European Social Fund, 'The Amsterdam Approach Fast-Tracks New Citizens', updated 10 July 2019.



Want to learn more about cost-benefit analysis? Check out:

- ★ The Migration Policy Institute Europe report [A Needed Evidence Revolution: Using Cost-Benefit Analysis to Improve Refugee Integration Programming](#) provides an overview of how cost-benefit analysis can be used to improve integration policies and introduces innovative ways to measure integration outcomes.
- ★ The [Supporting Public Service Transformation: Cost-Benefit Analysis Guidance for Local Partnerships](#), a technical guide published by the UK Treasury, walks through each step of conducting a cost-benefit analysis, different types of costs, how to calculate net present budget impact, financial return on investment, and net present public value. It also provides examples of cost-benefit analyses conducted in the United Kingdom.

3.5 Overcoming methodological challenges when studying integration policy impacts

Evaluating integration policies can be particularly challenging. Migrant and refugee communities may be hard to reach, linguistic barriers can hamper data collection, and integration is a long-term and complex process that can be difficult to measure. This section offers useful tools and best practices to help you overcome some of these methodological challenges.

Improving survey response rates

High response rates are important to find out whether policies have an impact on integration outcomes and to prevent bias (see the section below). Yet, language barriers, time constraints, distrust of government, and other obstacles can result in poor response rates.¹⁷

Strategies for improving response rates include:¹⁸

- ✓ Explain to people who respond to the survey how it may help improve policies and how they will benefit (for example, by improving the delivery of a service they receive).
- ✓ Use easy-to-understand language instead of formal or academic language when addressing survey respondents, whether in writing or verbally over the phone/in person.
- ✓ Offer financial incentives to participate, such as a one-time small payment or randomly selecting some respondents to win a prize.
- ✓ Send reminders to potential participants encouraging them to complete the survey.
- ✓ Leverage the benefits of paper-based surveys, even as online surveys become more common. Not everyone has a computer, internet, and the necessary digital literacy to navigate an online survey, and handing out paper-based surveys in person can allow respondents to ask questions about its purpose and contents.
- ✓ Keep surveys short.
- ✓ Collaborate with community organisations and representatives to reach respondents who distrust government agencies and who would be less willing to fill in a survey coming directly from one.
- ✓ Meet hard-to-reach communities where they are, including at schools, local markets, community centres, religious institutions, and other usual places of gathering.

¹⁷ Joan Font and Mónica Méndez, eds., *Surveying Ethnic Minorities and Immigrant Populations: Methodological Challenges and Research Strategies* (Amsterdam: IMISCOE Research and Amsterdam University Press, 2013).

¹⁸ Gerhard Van de Bunt and Lorraine Nencel, *Social Research Methodology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Amsterdam: VU University Amsterdam, 2011).

Dealing with bias

Selection bias occurs in surveys when participants are not randomly selected from the population they represent. For example, using an online survey advertised via social media to collect data about integration among migrant groups will create a bias toward migrants who have access to the internet and a digital device and who use social media. Those without social media and/or without access to digital tools, groups that are disproportionately likely to be older or less well integrated, will not have a chance to participate. This skews the survey results because the population surveyed is not an accurate representation of the broader population of interest.

Strategies to prevent selection bias include:

- ✓ Randomly select study participants. Depending on the goals of the evaluation and practical constraints, this could involve simple random sampling (randomly selecting individuals in population records, often using computer-generated sample), stratified random sampling (taking a random sample from different predefined groups, for example groups of migrants), or cluster sampling (selecting clusters, for example a geographic area, with a probability method and selecting all individuals within a cluster to be part of the sample).¹⁹
- ✓ If random selection is not possible, reflect on how the selection method(s) used may bias the sample and try to mitigate this by diversifying selection and recruitment methods.
- ✓ After completing the evaluation, always critically reflect on how the selection of participants for the study may affect its results and include this information in the evaluation report's discussion of the results.

Attrition bias occurs in longitudinal studies (those conducted at multiple points in time) when some people who initially join a study later drop out. People usually do not drop out of a study at random; it is especially likely among those with limited interest and those facing poverty or other circumstances that can make participation difficult, but it can also occur if participants move, migrate, or change contact details, which may be more common among some demographic groups than others. The result of this non-random loss of some participants is a shift in the demographic composition and characteristics of the study sample, making what was once a representative sample less representative of the broader population of interest.

Strategies to minimise attrition bias include:

- ✓ Provide easy ways for participants to update their contact details.
- ✓ Use additional and personal reminders via multiple communication channels to motivate those who are not responding to engage with the study, particularly in later waves of data collection.
- ✓ Offer financial or other incentives for study participants to remain in the study until its completion.
- ✓ Critically reflect on how people dropping out of the study may affect its results. This includes taking this into account when you are assessing evidence and explicitly reflecting on this in the evaluation report.

¹⁹ A brief overview of sampling techniques can be found at Qualtrics, '[Your Ultimate Guide to Sampling Methods and Best Practices](#)', accessed 16 January 2023.

Measurement bias occurs when the types of information a study collects paint an uneven or incomplete picture of what the study is trying to understand. Integration, for example, is complex, multi-faceted, and a long-term process, and using limited measures of it may lead policymakers to overlook important policy impacts on integration outcomes.

Strategies to avoid measurement bias include:

- ✓ Use holistic measures of migrant integration. For example, when a policy aims to promote language acquisition, it can be helpful to go beyond a standardised assessment of their proficiency level to also measure the impact of the policy on social inclusion, labour market integration, well-being, sense of belonging, health, and other integration outcome that may be related.
- ✓ Use longitudinal studies to capture longer-term integration outcomes whenever possible. When not possible, be aware that a policy's full impact on integration outcomes may take a longer time to become visible.
- ✓ Combine different measures and research methods (including both qualitative and quantitative) to create a more complete picture of migrant integration outcomes.

Cultural measurement invariance is a specific form of measurement bias that occurs when the same data collection tools are used with culturally different groups. A question may mean different things to different people. For example, in Western cultures health is often conceived of as a dichotomy between mental and physical health, while some other cultures have a more holistic concept of health. Questions that distinguish between mental and physical health may therefore not collect comparable information across cultural groups because respondents' answers will be shaped by their culture's underlying understanding of health. Given the high level of diversity within migrant and refugee populations, policymakers and evaluators should be aware of how different concepts and questions will be understood by the different groups they work with.

Strategies to overcome cultural measurement invariance include:

- ✓ Use survey questions that have already been validated to reliably measure a specific construct across different groups. Those available in Ethnig's [Ethnic and Migrant Minority Survey Question Data Bank](#) are one example.
- ✓ Use pilot tests to try out draft survey questions. This could include using cognitive interviews, a technique for identifying problems in surveys by pretesting them with a small group of respondents and asking the respondents to verbally describe how they go through the process of interpreting and answering the questions.
- ✓ Test for cultural measurement invariance after collecting the data by using multigroup confirmatory factor analysis. This statistical method allows researchers to assess whether the survey questions (also called items) have equally measured an underlying concept that is not directly measurable, such as mental health, across cultural groups. For example, this type of analysis may determine that one out of ten questions that was used to measure mental health may not measure it accurately among some cultural groups, creating bias in the overall measurement/score on a depression assessment and making

the results incomparable across cultural groups. Recognising this can help evaluators and policymakers understand what the data can—and cannot—tell them.

Publication bias is very common and occurs as a result of biases within publication processes that affect what evidence is published. A well-known pattern is that studies that prove that a policy is effective are more likely to be published than studies that show that a policy is *not* effective. This is problematic because it can lead to a body of evidence on an issue that misrepresents reality and the true spectrum of evidence available. It is thus crucial that evidence about what does not work is also published and made available to policymakers and practitioners.

Strategies to address publication bias include:

- ✓ Publish all evaluations, including those that show a policy or intervention has no or a negative impact.
- ✓ When searching for evidence, be aware of this type of bias and try to find conference reports and other reliable sources of evaluation results that may not be formally published and that may discuss a wider range of ineffective as well as effective policies.



Want to learn more about overcoming methodological challenges when doing research among migrant populations? Check out:

- ★ The IMISCOE book [Surveying Ethnic Minorities and Immigrant Populations: Methodological Challenges and Research Strategies](#) provides strategies to design high-quality surveys, improve the representativeness of samples, and address many other topics. It also provides examples from surveys that target migrants and ethnic minorities.

3.6 Commissioning policy evaluations

When an organisation does not have the in-house capacity to conduct policy evaluations, these are often done by external evaluators on commission. The following tips can help you commission policy evaluations efficiently.

- ✓ Keep a pool of evaluators on file.
- ✓ Encourage potential evaluators to form consortia so all of the skills required for an evaluation are covered in one bid.
- ✓ Organise ‘supplier days’ where potential evaluators can learn more about your intervention and the requirements you have for the evaluation.
- ✓ Create clear assessment criteria to be used when selecting which evaluators will win the bid.
- ✓ Use a two-step assessment process:
 - 1 Assess bids against minimum quality criteria that have been established prior to launching the bid (your must-haves).
 - 2 Assess all bids that pass these minimum criteria based on their quality in proportion to the costs. Decisions at this stage should be based on the goals of the evaluation and the available resources.
- ✓ Plan sufficient time (at least multiple months) for the commissioning process, given it involves multiple steps—from gaining procurement sign-off and providing sufficient time for evaluators to put in a bid, to allowing time for careful assessment and the awarding of the contract.
- ✓ Consult departmental experts on which commissioning route fits best with your evaluation plan.
- ✓ Include information in the request for tenders (RFT, also known as a request for proposals, or RFP) or terms of reference (TOR) about the policy or programme’s logic and about key internal and external stakeholders and their anticipated involvement in the evaluation.



Tip: You can use the free [BetterEvaluation GeneraTOR](#) to easily create the terms of reference (TOR) or request for proposals (RFP) for evaluation projects.



Want to learn more about commissioning evaluations? Check out:

- ★ The chapter [Commission the Evaluation Project](#) in the Evaluation Toolkit published by the Government of New South Wales in Australia provides a concise overview of best practices on how to develop a request for tenders, handle procurement, and choose the right evaluators, plus tips on contracting.

3.7 Further reading and resources

Resources on picking an evaluation method and conducting an evaluation:

- ★ [The Green Book](#), published by the UK government, provides policymakers with guidance on the design and use of monitoring and evaluation.
- ★ [The Magenta Book](#), also from the UK government, includes an overview of the stages of evaluation as well as guidance on how to choose the right evaluation method (see Chapter 3).
- ★ The European Evaluation Society provides lists of [Guidelines and Handbooks](#) and [Tools and Checklists](#) that cover a wide range of evaluation information and practical resources in different languages.
- ★ [World Bank Group Evaluation Principles](#) is a handbook that illustrates the steps to follow when selecting, planning, and conducting evaluations.
- ★ The OECD report [Improving Governance with Policy Evaluation: Lessons from Country Experiences](#) provides an overview of policy evaluation approaches in and practical examples from OECD countries.
- ★ The SPRING Consortium's [Evaluation Tool](#) allows policymakers to quickly self-assess the quality of migrant integration practices and to identify both strengths and areas for improvement.

Resources on platforms promoting evaluation:

- ★ [BetterEvaluation](#), part of the Global Evaluation Initiative, aims to support the creation, sharing, and use of knowledge about how to plan, manage, conduct, and use evaluation. Their work covers a knowledge platform, evaluation capacity-strengthening activities, and research and innovation projects.
- ★ The [International Initiative for Impact Evaluation \(3IE\)](#) offers impact evaluation services as well as examples of evidence impact summaries.
- ★ [Knowledge for Policy](#), the European Commission's platform for evidence-based policymaking, provides support to policymakers and researchers working on evidence-informed policy.
- ★ The European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy's [Impact Evaluation Centre](#) offers policymakers information on policy evaluation, support, and training opportunities.



4. Amplifying Impact through the Dissemination of Evidence

Key takeaways

- ★ Simply producing high-quality evidence will not ensure improvements in policy. To do that, evidence needs to be effectively shared and disseminated.
- ★ Too often, evaluation reports are not made publicly available or actively disseminated to a wide audience. This prevents key stakeholders from learning from valuable evidence and translating it into practice.
- ★ When developing a dissemination strategy, it is important to identify the objectives of your outreach, understand who your target audience is and what their information needs and communication preferences are, and what resources are available to support disseminate activities. Different audiences and dissemination objectives may require different communication formats and channels.
- ★ People are some of your greatest assets when it comes to effective dissemination. Securing policy advocates, becoming a policy entrepreneur, and working with knowledge brokers are effective strategies to amplify the dissemination of evidence and influence policy.

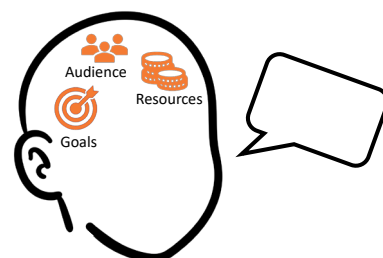
Policymakers are increasingly using evaluations to find out whether policies are effective and how they can be improved. Yet the impact of these evaluations generally remains quite limited. Too often, evaluation results and policy recommendations are circulated with only a small audience of actors directly involved in a policy or programme. Most are inaccessible to other policymakers and practitioners who could leverage this evidence to strengthen their own work. In short, conducting high-quality evaluations is not enough. Policymakers and others involved in the creation of evidence must also invest in its dissemination to a wider audience if they wish to amplify its impact.

In this section, you will learn...

- how to get started with evidence dissemination by setting objectives, understanding your audience, and identifying the resources available to you;
- how to select the most effective way(s) to present and communicate evidence; and
- what dissemination strategies can help you to inject evidence into the policy cycle.

4.1 Define your communication goals, audience, and resources

Simply creating high-quality evidence does not guarantee that it will reach the right audience or have the desired impact. That takes careful planning and effort. To begin, it is important to define your objectives clearly, determine who your target audience is, and understand what resources are available to support your dissemination activities. The questions in this section can help guide you through this planning process.



Step 1. Know your goals

- What are you trying to achieve with your research and dissemination activities?

- What are your short-term objectives? For example, to get relevant stakeholders to read and talk about the results, measured through the number of meetings with other policymakers and practitioners, through social media interactions, or other forms of engagement.



Tip: Decisions about how to share evidence are often left to the final stage of a project, when time and resources are limited. Instead, try to start thinking early on about the objectives of your evidence dissemination strategy, so related activities can be built in throughout the life of the project.

- What are your medium- to long-term objectives? For example, shaping an integration policy's design, measured through additional funding allocated to a specific activity based on your recommendations.

Step 2. Know your audience

- Which key stakeholders do you need to inform about a project evaluation's results? And from whom do you need buy-in to continue to implement or scale up the policy? Think about the local, national, and even international level, and stakeholders with different profiles (other policymakers, practitioners, etc).

- What are your priorities when sharing evidence with those stakeholders? What do you hope each will do once the evidence is in their hands?

- What do these stakeholders need and want to know?

- Given your priorities and your stakeholders' information needs and preferences, what type of communication will be most effective? Does your audience have the skills to interpret complex statistical evidence, sufficient interest to read a long report, or would a more concise and accessible summary be more appropriate?

- When is the opportune moment to reach out to each stakeholder?



Tip: Knowing the needs and skills of your target audience is critical to understanding how to communicate evidence effectively. Different audiences may require different key messages, shared in different formats, and delivered through different channels. In this toolkit, Section 6 on stakeholder engagement provides an overview of how to map stakeholders and plan a communication strategy, which takes many of these same factors into account.

Step 3. Know your resources

- Who will be in charge of leading dissemination activities?

- What resources are needed and available to support dissemination? Is there a budget within the project for dissemination? How much time should different team members invest in implementing the dissemination strategy?

- Are there any actors within your network or community or any policy leaders with whom you are well connected who are also well connected to your key audience? Could they help you share your evidence with them?



Tip: Allocate funding, staff time, and other resources for dissemination early on. If you will need to draw on the expertise of consultants to design or carry out dissemination activities, those costs should be factored in too.



Want to learn more about developing the pillars of your communication strategy? Check out:

- ★ The report [Using Evidence: What Works?](#) by the Alliance for Useful Evidence sets out six effective ways to promote the dissemination and uptake of evidence, based on a review of more than 150 interventions.

4.2 Choosing the right communication tool(s) for your audience and purpose

Effectively presenting evidence to different audiences in ways that engage and inspire them is the key to ensuring that research findings are translated into practice. Evidence can be presented in a wide range of ways, from concise fact sheets and infographics to long, detailed reports, and from short videos to one-on-one meetings, private roundtables, and public events. Often, it will be necessary to present evidence in multiple formats to maximise impact and reach different goals and audiences (see Box 4.1). For example, decisionmakers may have limited time to read an entire report, so a compelling summary or memo with key takeaways and recommendations on how the evidence should inform their work and how they can implement recommendations is more likely to have the desired impact.

BOX 4.1

Case study: The Canadian Health Services Research Foundation and the 1:3:25 rule

The Canadian Health Services Research Foundation uses the 1:3:25 rule for dissemination. This means that for every 25-page report they publish (the maximum length allowed), they will also produce a 1-pager covering the report's main findings and key lessons for policymakers and a 3-page executive summary with slightly more detail. Each output has different goals and is targeted to different audiences with more or less time. Variations of this rule have been used by organisations and government departments in other countries as well.

Source: Canadian Health Services Research Foundation, 'Reader-Friendly Writing – 1:3:25', accessed 9 January 2023.

Tips for disseminating evidence

- ✓ **Explore different formats for communicating and summarising research.** Because different audiences prefer to receive information in different formats, it is important to think carefully about the communication tools you use and for what purpose. Some examples to consider are: policy briefs, reports, memos, press releases, podcasts, infographics, 'information nuggets',²⁰ presentations with slides, and storytelling.
- ✓ **Understand the channels through which your audiences look for information and learn about what works.** Different stakeholders may have different ideas about what constitutes a trusted source and different go-to places to search for



Tip: Using existing online platforms can help you boost dissemination of policy findings and recommendations by facilitating the sharing of evidence and supporting peer-learning. Consider using: the [European Website on Integration](#), [IMMERSE](#), the [SPRING Consortium's Evidence on Integration Policy Practices](#) repository, and the other databases described in Section 2 of this toolkit. Uploading evidence on these platforms takes relatively little time, and some have country rapporteurs who can help you submit best practices and potentially have them translated.

²⁰ For a discussion of 'information nuggets', see Chapter 4 of Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making: Lessons from Country Experiences* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020).

evidence. These may include social media and traditional media (TV and radio), intermediaries who convey information in private conversations, and conferences and research repositories.

- ✓ **Tailor and frame the information based on what you know about your audience.** Communications should not only focus on key findings, lessons learnt, and recommendations, they should also seek to create momentum and engage the audience. Framing the evidence in the right way promotes uptake. Consider:
 - Why is this issue and information important for your target audience? Why should they care?
 - What are the most important pieces of information for your audience? How can you highlight these key messages?
 - What actions do you expect your audience to take based on the findings and the situation? What actionable recommendations can you offer the audience?
- ✓ **Identify language barriers and other obstacles to accessibility.** If you aim to reach audiences with a different linguistic background to your own, translating the entire piece of research or at least the key findings and recommendations can help you do so. Thinking about other ways to make your research more accessible—including in terms of how technical text is and where evidence is made available—can also boost dissemination.



Want to learn more about how to create a communication strategy? Check out:

- ★ INSAP's [Evidence-Informed Policymaking Toolkit](#) includes a module on communication (Module 4) that helps policymakers determine the three key aspects of the communication strategy: the audience, content, and channel. This toolkit also provides guidance for developing effective written and oral communications.
- ★ The UK Overseas Development Institute's [ROMA \(Rapid Outcome Mapping Approach\) toolkit](#) is a guide to policy engagement and influence, based on more than 100 case studies. The toolkit provides information on how to create a communication strategy and how to promote evidence uptake.

4.3 Dissemination models that promote evidence-informed policymaking

This section introduces three models that promote and facilitate evidence-informed policymaking. Applying these models in the field of migrant integration policymaking could enhance communication of results and help bridge the gap between research, policy, and practice.

Securing policy advocates by engaging people of influence, including policy leaders and (communities of) practitioners

Identifying people and organisations that both share an interest in the subject you are working on and are in a position that would allow them to help promote your research findings to their networks can help you reach new audiences.²¹ Working with these influential actors can also help enhance the credibility of research findings, build trust, and facilitate the use of evidence. In some cases, representatives from communities of practices and other influential people have been engaged to act as ambassadors for evidence-based policymaking and disseminate research findings (see Box 4.2). Ideally, specific guidance should be provided to ambassadors on what is expected of them (that is, their role and target audience) and how they should engage (bilateral meetings, a presence on social media, etc.).

BOX 4.2

Case study: What Works for Children's Social Care's evidence ambassadors

What Works for Children's Social Care, a UK-based research organisation, introduced an Evidence Ambassador Programme to bring evidence to social work teams and encourage its application in practice. In doing so, the organisation aims to help social workers who are busy working with children and families and may not have time to explore new research themselves integrate the latest evidence into their work.

The programme's ambassadors are practitioners who already work with local authority social work teams. In addition to sharing evidence from What Works for Children's Social Care with their colleagues, the ambassadors also share evidence produced by other organisations within the What Works Network. The role of the ambassadors includes:

- organising events (such as lunch and learns, discussion groups) to share research findings and facilitate discussions with social workers;
- sharing practitioner feedback with What Works for Children's Social Care about how the practitioners receive the research and what research they would like to see undertaken in the future; and
- fostering an evidence culture by promoting the use of research evidence in every practice.

Sources: Anna Bacchoo, 'Introducing Our Evidence Ambassadors', What Works for Children's Social Care, 23 June 2021; UK Government, Evaluation Task Force, 'What Works Network', updated 28 June 2013.

Working with knowledge brokers

Knowledge brokers are individuals and organisations that aim to promote interaction and dialogue between researchers and end users (in this case, mostly policymakers and practitioners). They do so by making sure that information reaches the target audience in a clear, accessible, and appropriate way, tailoring information to end users' concerns, culture, and goals. They also often ensure researchers receive feedback from end users and incorporate it into their work in order to support the production of timely and relevant evidence. By acting as intermediaries, knowledge brokers are one of the most immediate and effective ways to bridge the

²¹ Jonathan Breckon and Jane Dodson, *Using Evidence: What Works?* (London: Alliance for Useful Evidence, 2016).

gap between experts who produce evidence and the various parties involved in the policy cycle who are in a position to apply it.²²

For instance, policy-oriented research institutes can act as knowledge brokers to close the research-policy gap. The Migration Policy Institute Europe (MPI Europe) is one example, in that its researchers work with policymakers to engage them in the research process, facilitate their access to evidence, and inform the design of policies. Similarly, MPI Europe researchers have worked and collaborated with other researchers to ensure they understand policymakers' priorities on certain issues and the context in which they make decisions. Several other organisations within the SPRING Consortium also act as knowledge brokers, including the Migration Policy Group (MPG) and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

The role of knowledge brokers can be institutionalised by creating coordination bodies or mechanisms that facilitate the alignment and sharing of practices across institutions, within and beyond the government, or by simply setting bilateral meetings with relevant stakeholders. A case study illustrating lessons learnt from working with knowledge brokers can be found in Box 4.3.

BOX 4.3

Case study: Using knowledge brokers to improve Canadian policies on children's health

In 2005, a study conducted in Canada sought to test the effectiveness of knowledge brokers in enhancing policymakers' uptake of effective public-health strategies for promoting healthy body weight in children. The knowledge brokers in the study were in charge of making sure relevant research evidence was put in the hands of public-health decisionmakers in the way that was most useful for them, and of assisting them in adapting evidence to their local context and practice. Interactions took place through online and telephone discussions as well as some site visits. The knowledge brokers documented these interactions in a journal, and the impact of working with knowledge brokers was measured using a randomised controlled trial.

Key lessons from the study include:

- Early and one-to-one interactions were key to building relationships between knowledge brokers and decisionmakers.
- Setting up mechanisms (e.g., networks) for interaction between knowledge brokers and decisionmakers facilitated knowledge-sharing and collaboration on literature searches, critical appraisals, and discussions on the interpretation and implications of the research evidence.
- Building trusting relationships and capacity for evidence-informed policymaking often takes more time than anticipated.
- The way knowledge brokers interact with policymakers and their knowledge about context matters. Face-to-face interactions were an important part of developing relationships and promoting capacity. Knowledge brokers' understanding of competing priorities, political and organisational issues, and confidentiality considerations also helped in this regard.

Source: Maureen Dobbins et al., 'A Description of a Knowledge Broker Role Implemented as Part of a Randomized Controlled Trial Evaluating Three Knowledge Translation Strategies', *Implementation Science* 4, no. 23 (2009).

²² OECD, *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making: Lessons from Country Experiences* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020).



Want to learn more about knowledge brokers? Check out:

- ★ [Engaging with Knowledge Brokers](#), published by the University of Cambridge, is a booklet containing information on what knowledge brokers are and how to engage with them.
- ★ The article [Knowledge Brokering: The Missing Link in the Evidence to Action Chain?](#) provides more information about how knowledge brokering works, three different brokering models, and some of the challenges involved.

Becoming a policy entrepreneur to raise awareness of evidence and enhance its implementation

Policy entrepreneurs are political actors who seek to change the status quo in certain areas of public policy. They can come from various backgrounds. They may be representatives of international, nongovernmental, or private organisations, politicians or civil servants, or even independent researchers.²³ Policy entrepreneurs are distinct from knowledge brokers and policy advocates in that they typically invest resources and take risks on something because they expect something in return. For instance, a policy entrepreneur involved in implementing an integration programme may seek to convince policymakers that the programme is having a positive impact in order to secure greater resources and buy-in to scale the programme up.

Becoming a policy entrepreneur typically requires collecting and disseminating evidence about the positive impact of a specific programme. This can be done through videos, outreach campaigns, speaking at events or seminars, or simply by having one-on-one chats with policy leaders to advocate in favour of a programme. Unlike knowledge brokers, policy entrepreneurs do not typically work with policymakers at the design stage of the policy cycle but rather focus on setting the agenda. Box 4.4 highlights an example of how policy entrepreneurs can increase evidence-related outreach and impact.

²³ Andrew Gunn, 'Policy Entrepreneurs and Policy Formulation', in *Handbook of Policy Formulation*, eds. Michael Howlett and Ishani Mukherjee (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2017).

BOX 4.4

Case study: The VIA programme in the Netherlands and the use of policy entrepreneurship to build interest in a cause

The VIA programme (Verdere Integratie op de Arbeidsmarkt, or Further Integration in the Labour Market) in the Netherlands aimed to promote the labour market integration of people with a migration background. Evidence experts involved in the programme acted as policy entrepreneurs to promote the programme. They raised awareness among policymakers about the problem the programme aimed to tackle by compiling and sharing data on how labour market opportunities differed between Dutch natives and people with a migrant background. By doing this, they created momentum and interest around their programme and facilitated discussion on how relevant stakeholders could help address the gaps the research showed. The success of this communication strategy was also due to the fact that money was allocated early on for dissemination and a plan was created, supporting activities such as this.

Note: The VIA programme's full name was changed to Voor een Inclusieve Arbeidsmarkt (For an Inclusive Labour Market) in December 2022. Because most of the reports and other sources available still refer to the programme by its old name, this toolkit does as well to avoid confusion.

Source: author interview with Jürgen Wander, Programme Manager, VIA Programme at the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 1 March 2022.



Want to learn more about policy entrepreneurship? Check out:

- ★ The chapter on [Policy Entrepreneurs and Policy Formulation](#) from the *Handbook of Policy Formulation* offers a collection of examples of policy entrepreneurship.
- ★ The article [So You Want to Be a Policy Entrepreneur?](#) analyses the role and skills needed to become a policy entrepreneur.

4.4 Further reading and resources

Resources on influencing policy through evidence dissemination:

- ★ The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)'s [Policy Advisory Systems: Supporting Good Governance and Sound Public Decision Making](#) describes the set-up and role of policy advisory systems (see Chapter 2). Understanding how policy advisory systems work may help you to identify not only your audience but also third parties that could facilitate your access to them.
- ★ The [Framework for Skills for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making](#), by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, describes the set of collective skills needed for the research community to inform policy through evidence.
- ★ The UK Overseas Development Institute's [Tools for Policy Impact: A Handbook for Researchers](#) provides researchers with a comprehensive selection of tools, including communication tools, that can be used when attempting to turn research into policy influence.

Resources to help you set and advance a communication strategy:

- ★ [Plan Your Pathway to Impact](#) by the UK National Institute for Health and Care Research provides links to toolkits that help users devise an engagement and impact plan.
- ★ The toolkit [How to Communicate Research for Policy Influence](#) addresses different aspects of and tools for research communication designed to have policy influence, including engaging with the media, writing policy briefs, and creating online tools and data visualisation. It is also available in [Spanish](#).
- ★ The UK Overseas Development Institute's [Tools for Policy Impact: A Handbook for Researchers](#) includes chapters on communication tools and on policy influence tools, providing guidance on developing a communication strategy and strategies to secure policy impact.
- ★ The UK Treasury's [Magenta Book: Central Government Guidance on Evaluation](#) includes a chapter on the use and dissemination of evaluation findings that provides a list of key questions to create a dissemination plan (see Chapter 6).
- ★ [The Complexity Evaluation Toolkit](#), from the Centre for the Evaluation of Complexity across the Nexus (CECAN), provides guidance on how to achieve impact and build connections with other policy leads who want to apply evidence-based lessons in their own areas (see Chapter 5).
- ★ [Communicating Research for Evidence-Based Policymaking](#), published by the European Commission Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, covers how to write a policy brief, communicate findings in a carefully thought-out way, and leverage various means to engage an audience (e.g., websites, flyers, conferences).



5. Using Funding to Promote an Evidence Culture

Key takeaways

- ★ Funding plays a crucial role throughout the policy cycle. Funding is essential to cover policymakers' time and build capacity to find and assess evidence to inform policy design, to implement policies in line with evidence-informed recommendations, to evaluate policies, and to disseminate evidence so it supports future policymaking. In all of these steps, funding is also needed to support stakeholder engagement activities.
- ★ EU institutions, national and local governments, foundations, and other actors provide different funding opportunities. These can be challenging to find and navigate, but dedicating time and effort to diversifying funding sources can make funding for evidence-based policymaking more sustainable. Improving access is particularly pressing at the local level, where both funding opportunities and capacity to pursue them are generally most limited.
- ★ Long-term funding is not only desirable but also critical to secure enough time and resources for proper use of evidence throughout the policy cycle. Short-term funding, while also useful, can be less effective as it might only cover the upfront costs of setting up a policy but not the costs of implementing it over time. It might also be insufficient for institutional learning, policy evaluation, and evidence dissemination.
- ★ Different funding models offer different ways to support evidence-informed policymaking. **Funding pilot projects** makes it possible to test an innovative policy while keeping costs and risks low and to secure buy-in before scaling policies up; **tiered-evidence grantmaking** gives grants of different sizes depending on the strength of the evidence supporting the policy in question; and **social impact bonds** provide upfront funding to test interventions, with payment dependent on proof of success.

‘By choosing what and who to fund, funders wield tremendous power in shaping research priorities, and in turn, evidence-based policymaking.’ – Urban Institute²⁴

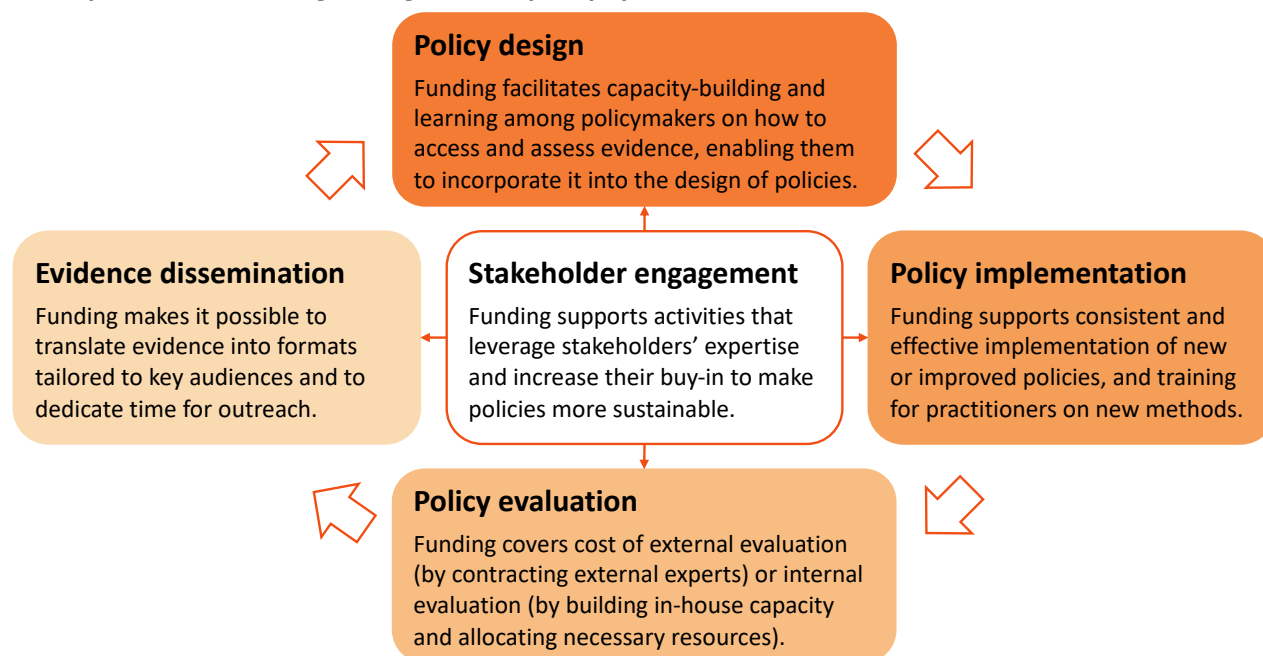
Access to funding is a prerequisite for promoting the use of evidence throughout the policy cycle. Sufficient funding is needed to build policymakers’ capacity to access and assess evidence as they design policies, to implement smartly adapted and improved policies, to carry out effective evaluations, and to share key findings with others in a way that feeds into future policymaking and practice. Funding is also an essential part of creating the infrastructure for evidence-informed policymaking—from building and maintaining databases that facilitate access to data and evidence, to investing in capacity-building among policymakers and other stakeholders whose work on migrant integration can be strengthened through better use of evidence. Funding opportunities are often context specific and many of the examples in this section come from the European Union, but the principles and funding models discussed hold promise in other contexts as well.

In this section, you will learn...

- what role funding plays in different parts of the evidence-informed policy cycle;
- where to search for funding opportunities for migrant integration projects, programmes, and policies in the European Union; and
- how you can use different funding models (including pilot projects, tiered-evidence grantmaking, and social impact bonds) to support the development of an evidence culture in integration policymaking, with examples of how they are already being used in this field to promote policies that work.

FIGURE 5.1

The importance of funding throughout the policy cycle



24 Martha Fedorowicz and Laudan Y. Aron, *Improving Evidence-Based Policymaking: A Review* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2021), 20.

5.1 What are the obstacles to effectively funding evidence-informed integration policymaking?

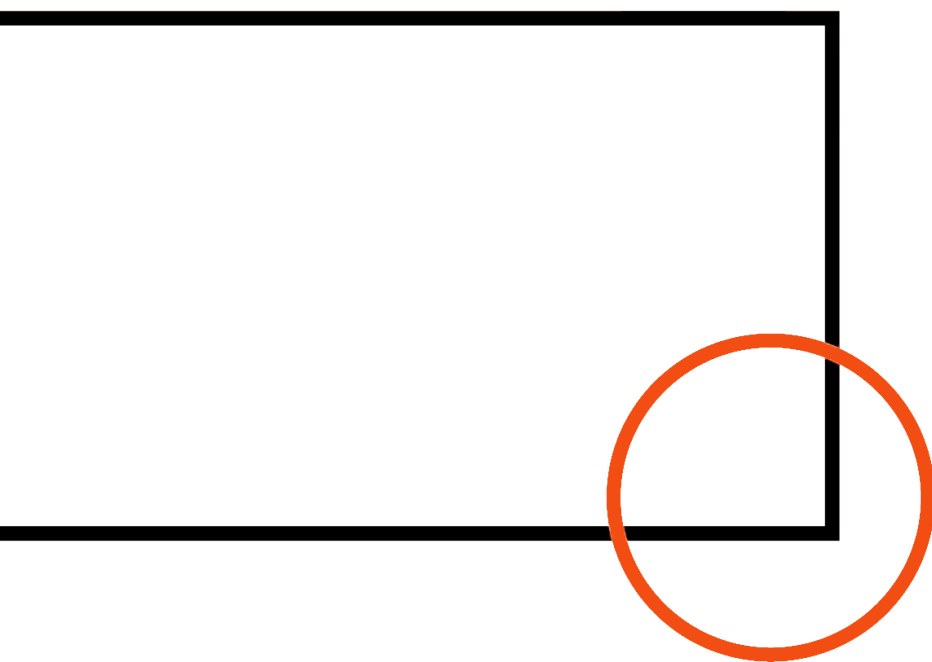
Policymakers often mention a lack of funding as one of the main obstacles to embracing an evidence culture in the field of migrant integration. Yet, funding evidence-informed policymaking can help save money in the long run by ending funding for ineffective policies and allocating more funding to those that are most effective. In short, while evidence-informed policymaking may require a significant investment, the payoff for policymakers, funders, and entire societies in the long term is worth it.

Existing financial resources and budget mechanisms in the field of migrant integration have typically been insufficient to support or incentivise the use of evidence throughout the policy cycle. The obstacles that contribute to this situation²⁵ include:

- **Existing budget allocation mechanisms reinforce the status quo and do not prioritise evidence-informed policymaking.** In general, funding allocation is not based on whether a policy or programme is effective, and it often remains the same year on year. If evidence is used to allocate funding, it is often only required for new programmes or additional funding. This system offers few incentives for policymakers and practitioners to assess the effectiveness of existing policies or to introduce evidence-informed policy changes.
- **Key information is often lacking to assess policy effectiveness.** The status quo described above means that many governments lack information on the cost and the performance of activities they fund. Without such information, they cannot make informed decisions to (re)distribute funding to the most effective programmes, creating a vicious cycle.
- **When policies are evaluated, there is often no funding to implement recommendations.** Funding for integration tends to be project based. Short-term projects often lack the time and resources to measure impact, making it difficult to carry out evaluations, and those that do may end before they can implement the resulting recommendations.
- **Short-term funding often results in more ineffective use of funds.** Setting up a new programme or policy often entails significant upfront costs. A new integration programme, for example, may incur one-time costs related to designing the programme, creating course materials, and training teachers. If a programme only runs for a few years, a relatively high proportion of the funding will go to its preparation and launch instead of day-to-day operating costs, compared to a programme that runs for a longer period.
- **Short-term funding hinders institutional learning.** During the lifetime of a policy, policymakers and practitioners become increasingly familiar with how to effectively implement it. If funding for the policy ends within just a few years and is not renewed, this institutional learning is cut short and, often, lost.

²⁵ Pew Charitable Trusts, 'A Guide to Evidence-Based Budget Development: How to Use Research to Inform Program Funding Decisions' (issue brief, Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative, Washington, DC, July 2016).

- **Limited budgets for integration are the rule, not the exception, in most countries.** The highly politicised debate about migrant integration and competition for scarce government resources often mean limited funding is available to implement integration policies,²⁶ let alone to dedicate to evaluating existing policies and designing new ones based on a thorough assessment of the evidence base.
- **Poor access to funding and resources is most pressing at the local level.** Local stakeholders are taking on increasing responsibilities in the migrant integration arena. Yet, many face barriers to accessing funding due to their limited capacity and expertise in how to apply for funding and their ineligibility for many EU funding opportunities, which are often reserved for Member States.²⁷



5.2 Where to search for funding opportunities

Funding for migrant integration programmes is often limited, let alone funding to inject more evidence into these policies. This section highlights resources that can help you devote more funds to the use of evidence in your work, including activities such as mapping evidence to inform integration policy design, evaluating policies, and disseminating best practices.

²⁶ Meghan Benton and Alexandra Embiricos, *Doing More with Less: A New Toolkit for Integration Policy* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2019).

²⁷ Raphael Garcia, 'Cities Seek to Fund Migration', Eurocities, 24 August 2022.

EU funding opportunities

While funding for integration measures is typically allocated at the national level (discussed below), several EU funds are available for those working to support migrant integration. Depending on the aspect of integration your work focuses on and whether you are planning a national or transnational project, you may want to explore some of the EU funds and resources in Table 5.1.

TABLE 5.1

EU funding opportunities and resources for migrant integration activities

Name	Description	Integration areas	Scale of projects funded
European Website on Integration	The site's funding section provides an overview of EU funds for migrant integration for the 2021–27 period. It is also possible to identify funding opportunities by Member State.	All	Transnational and national
Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF)	AMIF funding supports third-country nationals in the early stages of integration and actions that support Member States' integration capacity.	Education, training, employment, housing, social integration, health care, child care	Transnational and national
Erasmus+	Erasmus+ funding goes to individuals and organisations to support initiatives that equip participants with the skills and qualifications to meaningfully participate in society.	Culture, sports, education, training, and youth (e.g., integration of migrants into school system through sport, youth work, etc.)	Transnational and national
Citizens, Equality, Rights, and Values (CERV) Programme	CERV funding promotes equality and civic and human rights to sustain and further develop open, rights-based, democratic, equal, and inclusive societies based on the rule of law.	Social inclusion, violence prevention, antidiscrimination	Transnational
European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)	Funding aims to have a longer-term impact on access to inclusive mainstream services.	Education, employment, housing, social integration, health care, child care	National
European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	Funding aims to support economic, social, and territorial cohesion within the European Union.	Regeneration of marginalised neighbourhoods, education infrastructure development for migrants and refugees, and access to mainstream services in education, employment, housing, social care, health care, child care	National
Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)	Funding aims to support disadvantaged populations, such as migrants experiencing homelessness.	Access to food and basic material assistance	National
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)	Funding to support rural areas and the European Union's agrifood and forestry sectors.	Housing, health care, education, and employment	National

BOX 5.1

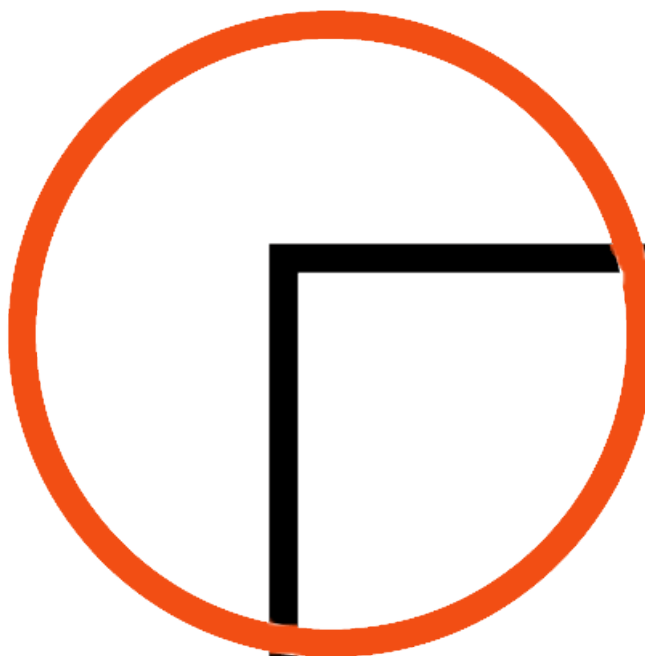
Efforts to facilitate local stakeholders' access to EU funding

Local governments are increasingly responsible for migrant integration but face many challenges to approaching the issue in an evidence-informed way, including limited funding opportunities and capacity to apply for funding.

Recognising this, the European Commission's Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion for 2021–27 calls on Member States to support local and regional authorities' access to EU funding. Member States are asked to launch calls for proposals from local and regional authorities and to involve local and regional authorities, civil-society organisations, and social and economic partners in applying for EU funding. This is an improvement, but these calls often do not include dedicated funding for evaluation or evidence dissemination.

Other opportunities to improve local actors' access to funding for migrant integration and for the promotion of evidence-informed policies include projects run by Eurocities, a network of hundreds of European cities. For example, Eurocities' CONNECTION project (2020–22) provided seven cities that had limited integration experience with the opportunity to learn about best practices from other cities as well as grants and support to help them develop a new integration strategy.

Sources: European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, *Toolkit on the Use of EU Funds for the Integration of People with a Migrant Background: 2021–2027 Programming Period* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2021); Eurocities, 'Integrating Cities—CONNECTION (2020–2022)', accessed 9 January 2023.



National-level funding opportunities

The European Website on Integration provides an overview of potential sources of funding for migrant integration in each EU country. This includes a list of foundations, private funds, banks, tender portals, and other funding opportunities. In Figure 5.2, click on a country you are interested in to read the site's page on national (and EU) funding opportunities available in that country.

FIGURE 5.2

Funding opportunities available to support migrant integration, by EU country



BOX 5.2

Case study: Using foundation funding to support evidence-informed integration policies for Syrian refugees in Rotterdam

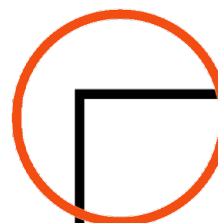
The project: The Stichting Nieuw Thuis Rotterdam (New Home Rotterdam Foundation, or SNTR) provided 200 Syrian refugee families with housing, intensive language courses, social support, and career guidance in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. The funding for all of these activities came from the Stichting De Verre Bergen, a foundation based in the city.

Funding evidence-informed practices: The semi-random allocation of Syrian refugee families to receive support from either the SNTR programme or the standard municipal integration programme created a unique opportunity to compare their effectiveness. In addition to funding the programme, Stichting De Verre Bergen also funded an external process evaluation of the project and commissioned the Erasmus University Rotterdam to carry out the BRIDGE research project, a five-year assessment of the SNTR's effectiveness that included a comparison with the municipal integration programme. The results showed that, in the end, there was no difference between the regular and the SNTR integration programmes in terms of migrant integration outcomes.

Takeaways:

- Foundations can play an important role in promoting evidence-informed integration programmes and policymaking by funding not only programmes themselves but also impact evaluations.
- Foundations can amplify the impact of the programmes and projects they fund through funding evaluations and research projects that assess the programmes' effectiveness.
- Even when evaluations show that one programme is not more effective than another, as was the case with SNTR, this is helpful information that can make future funding decisions more cost-effective.

Sources: Nieuw Thuis Rotterdam, '[Home](#)', accessed 9 January 2023; Erasmus University Rotterdam, '[EUR Bridge Project](#)', accessed 9 January 2023; Meghan Rens, Adriaan Oostveen, and Jeanine Klaver, '[Procesevaluatie Stichting Nieuw Thuis Rotterdam](#)', Regioplan, 2021.



5.3 Funding models to promote evidence-informed policymaking

While not the case for all funding models, some actively seek to promote and facilitate evidence-informed policymaking. This section looks at three such models. This information can be useful both to funders looking to ensure their allocation of resources supports evidence-informed integration policymaking and to funding recipients looking to make smart use of the money they receive.

Pilot projects

In policymaking, a pilot project is a mechanism to test a new policy on a small scale, with the aim to scale it up or extend its life if it is successful.²⁸ Pilot projects can reduce the risks and costs involved with launching new large-scale programmes, in part because it can be less costly to discontinue them if they are unsuccessful. This makes pilot projects a great tool in situations with limited funding. While funding to scale up pilots is often lacking, the evidence generated by the project can still be used by policymakers as a proof-of-concept to secure funding in the future. In addition, because pilot projects are smaller and less costly than launching a full-fledged programme, they are great for testing innovative integration approaches that are not yet supported by evidence and for testing policy options in a context with limited political buy-in.

Requirements:

- Pilot projects are usually small but should reach a large enough population that the impact of the policy is measurable.
- A theory of change that explains how the policy is supposed to have an impact on integration outcomes. (See Section 3.3 for more information on theories of change.)
- Successful evidence-informed pilot projects allocate funding to each stage of the policy cycle, including design, implementation, evaluation, dissemination of best practices, and in this case, the scaling up of successful projects.
- A clear strategy that describes what happens if the pilot project is successful (or not); for example, a plan to scale up or continue the successful pilot project.

²⁸ Partners for Health Reform Plus, *The Role of Pilot Programs: Approaches to Health Systems Strengthening* (Bethesda, MD: PHRplus, Abt Associates Inc., 2004).

BOX 5.3

Pilot projects in practice: The VIA Programme in the Netherlands

The VIA programme (Verdere Integratie op de Arbeidsmarkt, or Further Integration in the Labour Market) in the Netherlands is an evidence-informed programme that uses pilot projects to promote the labour market integration of people with a migration background. The programme, launched in 2018, has enjoyed political buy-in and support from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, which has helped it secure a 10 million euro budget for pilot projects, evaluations, and the scaling up of effective pilots. Stakeholder engagement has also featured prominently in the programme, with some stakeholders funding parts of the projects' implementation. Notably, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment has pledged to continue funding the monitoring and evaluation of project activities and the launch of learning networks for municipalities and other stakeholders—steps that amplify the VIA programme's impact.

Takeaways:

- Political buy-in is often key to ensuring continued access to funding.
- Successful evidence-informed pilot projects allocate funding to each stage of the policy cycle.
- Involving stakeholders at each step of the policy cycle and making them responsible for a portion of the funding facilitates shared ownership of the pilot project and strengthens its sustainability.
- Funding for continued monitoring and evaluation, even after the pilot phase, is essential to the creation of a stronger evidence base.

Note: The VIA programme's full name was changed to Voor een Inclusieve Arbeidsmarkt (For an Inclusive Labour Market) in December 2022. Because most of the reports and other sources available still refer to the programme by its old name, this toolkit does as well to avoid confusion.

Sources: Jasmijn Slootjes and Maria Belen Zanzuchi, *Promoting Evidence-Informed Immigrant Integration Policymaking* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2022); Gregor Walz, Auke Witkamp, Noortje Hipper, and Lennart de Ruig, 'Evaluatie Programma Verdere Integratie Op de Arbeidsmarkt: Derde Rapport Uitvoering, Opbregsten En Impact van Het Programma' (programme evaluation, Rijksoverheid, The Hague, the Netherlands, November 2021); Auke Dennis Wiersma, 'Kamerbrief aanbieding Werkagenda Verdere Integratie op de Arbeidsmarkt (VIA)' (Dutch Chamber piece, Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, The Hague, the Netherlands, December 2021).



Want to learn more about pilot projects? Check out:

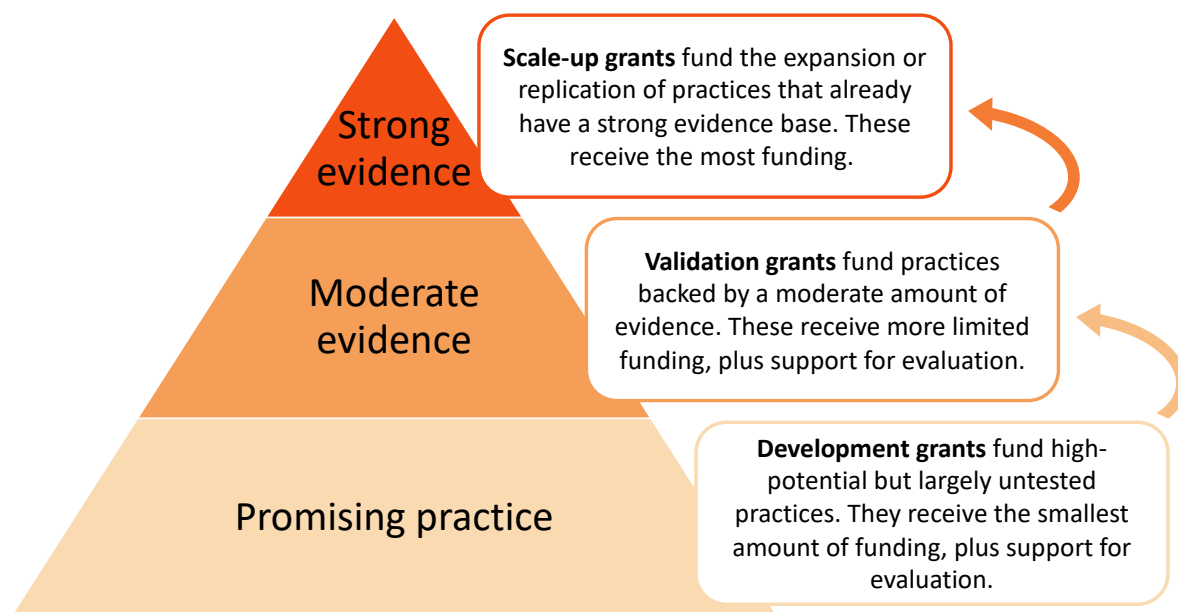
- ★ [Designing Better Pilot Programs: 10 Questions Policymakers Should Ask](#), a brief written by a U.S. fiscal analyst, helps policymakers to design better pilot programmes by guiding them through key questions.
- ★ The Harvard Business Review article [How to Scale a Successful Pilot Project](#) provides suggestions on how to leverage the work of successful pilot projects and how to avoid common pitfalls by adopting a customised approach.

Tiered-evidence grantmaking

It takes time and effort to build a solid evidence base for policymaking. Tiered-evidence grantmaking is a funding model that, recognising this fact, supports both innovative, less-proven projects as well as those backed by robust evidence—but with a different approach to each.²⁹ Larger grants are allocated to projects with more evidence of success to help them expand or replicate their work; those backed by moderate evidence receive validation grants to support their evaluation; and smaller grants go to high-potential but relatively untested approaches the funder wishes to encourage (see Figure 5.3). This funding model promotes evidence-informed policymaking by creating incentives for organisations seeking funding to design their approaches based on evidence and by ensuring that projects taking a novel approach will have funding for evaluation, thus bringing new evidence to the field.³⁰ As more evidence is produced for a policy or programme, it may move to a higher funding tier.

FIGURE 5.3

Tiered-evidence grantmaking



It should be noted, however, that tiered-evidence models risk disincentivising innovation if funding is allocated based only on evidence, since innovative policies and projects often have yet to develop a solid evidence back. Moreover, this funding model can raise barriers that hinder access to funding among stakeholders with limited capacity to evaluate or gather evidence, such as local governments and smaller civil-society organisations. To address these issues, funders could combine tiered-evidence funding with the pilot project model. Supporting pilot projects would foster innovation, while tiered-evidence grants would promote policies proven to be effective.³¹

29 Erika Poethig et al., 'Supporting Access to Opportunity with a Tiered-Evidence Grantmaking Approach' (policy brief, Urban Institute, Washington, DC, August 2018).

30 Andrew Feldman and Ron Haskins, 'Tiered-Evidence Grantmaking' (evidence toolkit, Evidence-Based Policymaking Collaborative, Washington, DC, September 2016).

31 U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), *Tiered Evidence Grants: Opportunities Exist to Share Lessons from Early Implementation and Inform Future Federal Efforts* (Washington, DC: GAO, 2016).

Requirements:

- Funding applicants should use well-defined outcome measures when compiling evidence for their proposed policies to increase their chances of getting funding and so that funders can properly assess which evidence tier proposals fit into.
- Applicants need to have the expertise and capacity to conduct evaluations and assess available evidence in order to design policies that are likely to be funded. (See Sections 3 and 2 for more information on building capacity to conduct/commission evaluations and to assess the quality of evidence.)
- An evidence base compiling effective programs and interventions is needed to support applicants' proposals and funders' assessment of them, especially in the higher tiers of this model. (See Section 2 for information on mapping evidence and using it in policy design.)

BOX 5.4

Tiered-evidence funding in practice: Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund in the United States

The Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund was established in 2009 by the U.S. government to award grants to implement and evaluate educational interventions across the United States. Through the fund, the U.S. Department of Education launched the i3 programme, which allocates funding based on available evidence on the impact of such intervention and on the expected scale of implementation. In line with the tiered-evidence approach, small development grants are awarded to interventions with scarce or no evidence, and larger validation grants are used to support interventions with moderate evidence of effectiveness. The largest sums, scale-up grants, are awarded to interventions with strong supporting evidence to fund their implementation and testing on a large scale. Because credible evidence, which is necessary to identify effective interventions, is challenging to produce, an external agency supports the evaluation process.

Of the 67 evaluations conducted under the programme, 73 per cent met the previously established What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards, providing credible evidence for local decisionmakers on whether to adopt specific interventions.

Takeaways:

- High-quality evaluations are costly but produce invaluable and reliable evidence for local decisionmakers and policymakers.
- Evidence requirements to secure funding can encourage and help organisations to build their capacity to conduct or commission evaluations and support the further development of evidence-based practices.
- Where necessary, resources should be made available to contract external evaluation agencies to thoroughly assess the evidence backing funding proposals to avoid overburdening (or outright excluding) smaller programmes that may not be able to do this themselves.

Sources: Beth Boulay et al., *The Investing in Innovation Fund: Summary of 67 Evaluations Final Report* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, 2018); What Works Clearinghouse, 'Overview—Standards', accessed 9 January 2023.



Want to learn more about tiered-evidence grantmaking?
Check out:

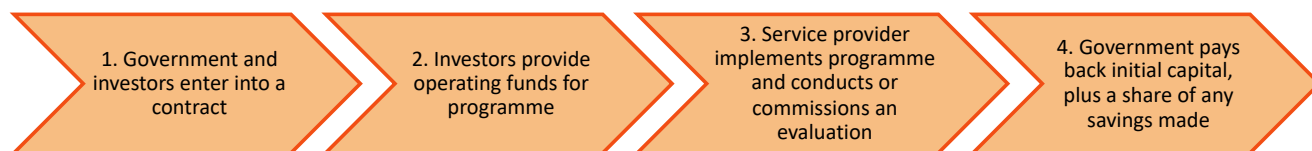
- ★ The Evidence-Based Policymaking Collaborative's [Tiered-Evidence Grantmaking toolkit](#) provides a clear overview of the advantages of and requirements involved in using this funding model.
- ★ The policy brief [Supporting Access to Opportunity with a Tiered-Evidence Grantmaking Approach](#), also published by the collaborative, provides a more in-depth analysis of examples and good practices.

Social impact bonds

Social impact bonds (SIBs), also called pay-for-success funding models, are outcome-based contracts where an outside funder, on behalf of a government, provides capital to cover the upfront costs of a programme. A service provider implements the programme and, if it meets pre-agreed outcome targets, the government repays the funder with interest. The use of bonds fosters multistakeholder partnerships and knowledge-sharing by bringing different actors together for the implementation of a programme, such as financial intermediaries, commissioners, investors, social service providers, and public authorities. SIBs are a great tool to test new interventions because they provide practitioners and project managers with upfront capital.³² A UK-based study also found that SIBs may promote better data collection by incentivising practitioners to handle data with greater rigour and attention to detail because payouts—which often support ongoing programme operations, in addition to paying back funders' upfront investments—depend on proof of success.³³

FIGURE 5.4

Social impact bonds



32 UK Government Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport, Cabinet Office, and Office for Civil Society, 'Guidance: Social Impact Bonds and the Life Chances Fund', updated 10 November 2022; Julie Rijpens, Marie J. Bouchard, Emilien Gruet, and Gabriel Salathé-Beaulieu, 'Social Impact Bonds: Promises versus Facts. What Does the Recent Scientific Literature Tell Us?' (working paper, CIRIEC International, Liège, Belgium, 2020).

33 Rachel Wooldridge, Neil Stanworth, and James Ronicle, *A Study into the Challenges and Benefits of Commissioning Social Impact Bonds in the UK, and the Potential for Replication and Scaling: Final Report* (Birmingham, UK: Ecorys, 2019).

Requirements:

- SIBs require investors who are willing to take on a considerable financial risk.
- Organisations that implement the programme need to have the capacity (including expertise and staff) to evaluate the programme's impact.
- Strong evidence that a programme will deliver the projected outcomes is generally required to convince external investors to invest in the programme. More innovative projects backed by a limited evidence base are therefore usually not the best fit for the SIB model.

BOX 5.5

Social impact bonds in practice: The Kotouttamisen (KOTO) Project in Finland

Launched in 2017 in Finland, the nationwide KOTO SIB project aims to promote the labour market integration of 2,500 migrants. The project assists immigrants in finding a job by providing them with vocational and language training tailored to help them fill shortages in the Finnish labour market. It used outcomes-based contracting and brings together stakeholders from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors. Funding is provided upfront by the European Investment Fund, the European Fund for Strategic Investments, Sitra (the Finnish Innovation Fund), and other investors.

Impact evaluations will be carried out through a randomised controlled trial that will look at differences in tax collection and unemployment benefits between a control group (nonparticipants) and intervention group (KOTO participants). The project will be considered successful in improving immigrants' integration if the KOTO participants rely less on unemployment benefits and contribute more in taxes than the control group. When this is the case, the Finnish government will have saved money (potentially up to an estimated 70 million euros over six years), and it will pay 50 per cent of any money saved back to the investors.

In 2020, the KOTO SIB entered its monitoring period. The Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment published preliminary results: about two-thirds of the participants had received training for more than 70 days, and more than 50 per cent of participants who completed the training were successfully employed. The final results will be published in 2023, after which the outcome payments will be made.

Takeaways:

- By involving external investors, the Finnish government did not have to pay money upfront for the training courses and other project costs when the project's level of success was still uncertain.
- Funding from nongovernmental actors resulted in a more efficient, outcomes-based approach focused on finding jobs, with a very short training period, while traditional training programmes set up without SIBs would usually last for up to five years.

Source: University of Oxford, Government Outcomes Lab, '[Kotouttamisen \(KOTO\) Social Impact Bond](#)', updated 26 January 2022.

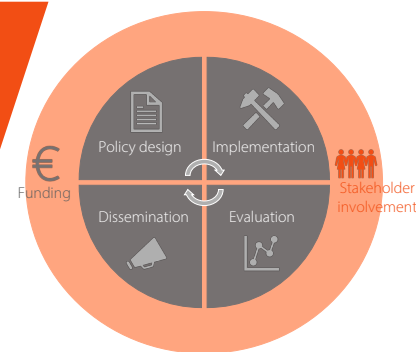


Want to learn more about social impact bonds? Check out:

- ★ The UK government's [guidance on social impact bonds](#) provides a general overview of SIBs and their advantages and challenges.
- ★ The [Social Impact Bond Provider Toolkit](#) offers guidance on how to set up SIBs, build capacity to manage them, contract commissioners, handle stakeholder involvement, and monitor and evaluate SIB performance.
- ★ The Urban Institute's [website on pay-for-success models](#) is a useful introduction to this type of funding tool and reviews examples of pay-for-success models.
- ★ The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) working paper [Understanding Social Impact Bonds](#) provides a detailed explanation of how SIBs work.

5.4 Further reading and resources

- ★ [The Guide to Evidence-Based Budget Development](#), published by the Pew Charitable Trusts, outlines key steps to incentivise the use of evidence in policymaking through budget development. It includes detailed instructions on how to create an inventory of programmes and embed evidence in funding requirements, and also provides case examples.
- ★ [Using Data and Evidence to Make Strategic Budget Decisions](#), published by the National Conference of State Legislatures in the United States, guides policymakers through six questions that help them use data and evidence to more effectively allocate funding.
- ★ The European Commission's [EU Funding & Tenders Online Manual: EU Funding Programmes 2021–2027](#) is a guide that aims to assist applicants and beneficiaries of EU funding with applying for and managing EU grants.
- ★ [The Toolkit on the Use of EU Funds for the Integration of People with a Migrant Background](#) provides an overview of how EU funding sources can be used for migrant integration activities in the areas of education, housing, employment, social care, health care, reception, basic mainstream services, and fighting discrimination and misrepresentation.



6. Engaging Stakeholders in Evidence-Informed Integration Policymaking

Key takeaways

- ★ Stakeholder inclusion can have a wide range of benefits. It can help policymakers learn about and more effectively address migrants' and refugees' needs, ensure policy recommendations match the reality on the ground, and facilitate effective policy implementation by building trust and transparency between actors. Meaningful involvement also fosters stakeholders' greater ownership over and commitment to a project, and it supports the collection, sharing, and use of evaluation results.
- ★ Stakeholder mapping is a good starting point. It can help you identify who should be involved in the policy cycle, determine how much and how to engage, and understand what considerations should be built into the process (including expectations management).
- ★ Diversify your key stakeholders. Those selected for engagement should include not only policymakers and researchers but also programme beneficiaries (migrants and refugees) and practitioners. Doing so can give you access to a broader range of (lived) experiences and expertise, more buy-in on policies, a wider set of funding opportunities, and a broader network for evidence dissemination, all of which contribute to better policies and better policy outcomes.
- ★ Stakeholder engagement should be more than a box-ticking exercise. Key stakeholders should be involved in a meaningful way throughout the entire policy cycle. This can be achieved by setting clear guidelines on how input from stakeholders will be used and by developing modes of engagement that go beyond simply inviting stakeholders to provide information.

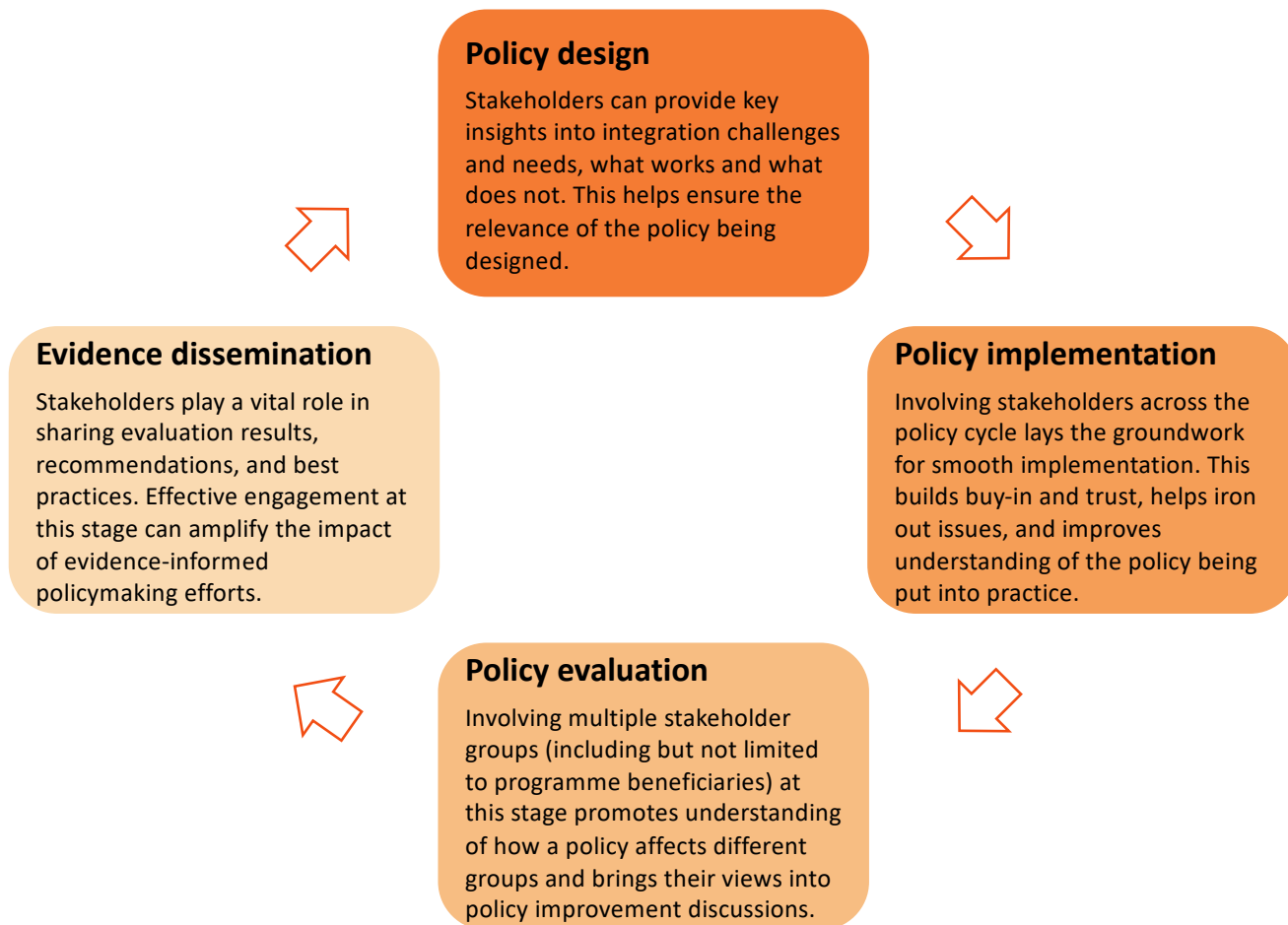
A variety of stakeholders, both organisations and individuals, have a significant and specific stake in any given policy and its outcomes. Engaging these stakeholders effectively can contribute to the improved use of evidence at each stage of the policymaking cycle (see Figure 6.1). All too often, however, policymakers do not involve stakeholders when designing, implementing, and evaluating policies and when disseminating the evidence gathered.

In this section, you will learn...

- what the benefits are of stakeholder involvement and how it can make migrant integration policies more effective;
- why a variety of stakeholders should be involved in the policy cycle;
- who should be considered a key stakeholder; and
- what steps you can take to promote stakeholder involvement.

FIGURE 6.1

The importance of stakeholder involvement throughout the policy cycle



6.1 Why invest in stakeholder engagement?

Involving stakeholders throughout the evidence-informed policy cycle is essential to ensure the effectiveness and relevance of migrant integration policies. Stakeholder engagement throughout the policymaking cycle contributes to:³⁴

- Facilitating a deeper and more holistic understanding of the needs and experiences of the population a policy targets (such as migrants and refugees), which can be used to improve the policy's design, implementation, and evaluation as well as dissemination of evidence collected about it.
- Ensuring that new policies or recommendations to improve existing ones match the reality on the ground by taking into account factors such as service provider capacity, resources, and obstacles; this makes it easier to translate policies and recommendations from paper into practice.
- Increasing the legitimacy of policies, as it helps build broader consensus around them and earn stakeholder buy-in.
- Strengthen implementation of new policies by building trust and transparency between actors, and fostering greater ownership over and commitment to the process among engaged stakeholders.
- Promoting the uptake of recommendations and better dissemination of evidence across different audiences, which can amplify the impact of evidence-informed policymaking.

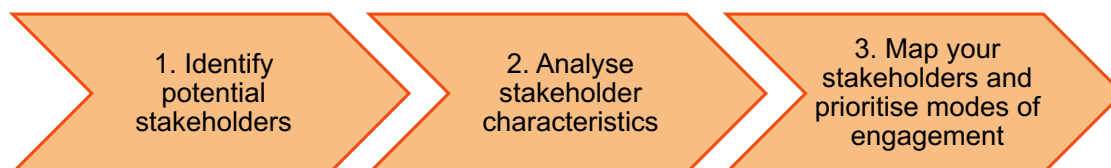
6.2 Identifying your key stakeholders

So stakeholder engagement is important, but which actors should be involved? To answer this question, you can conduct a **stakeholder mapping**. This activity facilitates the identification of relevant stakeholders who should be involved in the policy cycle and how. It will help you decide how much is the right amount of engagement, what modes of communication will work best, and what other factors it is important to consider when planning this process (such as the need to manage stakeholders' expectations about what their role will be).

A stakeholder mapping consists of the three steps shown in Figure 6.2. You can use the questions that follow to begin your own stakeholder mapping.

FIGURE 6.2

Stakeholder mapping steps



34 Brian W. Head, 'Reconsidering Evidence-Based Policy: Key Issues and Challenges', *Policy and Society* 29, no. 2 (May 1, 2010): 77–94.

Step 1. Identify potential stakeholders

To identify the potential stakeholders for a policy or project, consider:

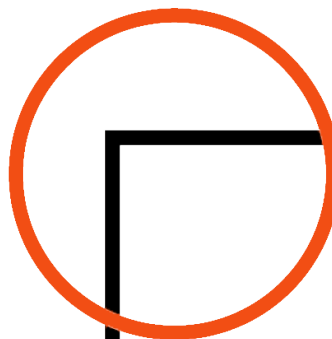
Who will be affected by the policy?

Who will be involved in implementing the policy?

Who will influence the policy's design, implementation, evaluation, or evidence dissemination process?

Who has a positive interest in the development of the policy and who may oppose it?

Who may (fully or partially) fund the policy?



Step 2. Analyse stakeholder characteristics

Next, you will need to develop a better understanding of what perspective each of these potential stakeholders brings to the policymaking process. This involves analysing stakeholders' profiles and potential roles. Based on your answers to the question above, consider:

How would you group the organisations and individuals you have identified into different categories? Are there any gaps in your list of potential stakeholders (e.g., practitioners or beneficiaries of the policy)?

How much do you think each stakeholder might be willing to contribute or commit to engaging with the policy cycle?

How much influence do these stakeholders have on different parts of the policy cycle?

What purpose should engagement with each stakeholder have? And how should they be involved in the policy cycle?



Tip: Try using this Excel [template](#) to analyse potential stakeholders.

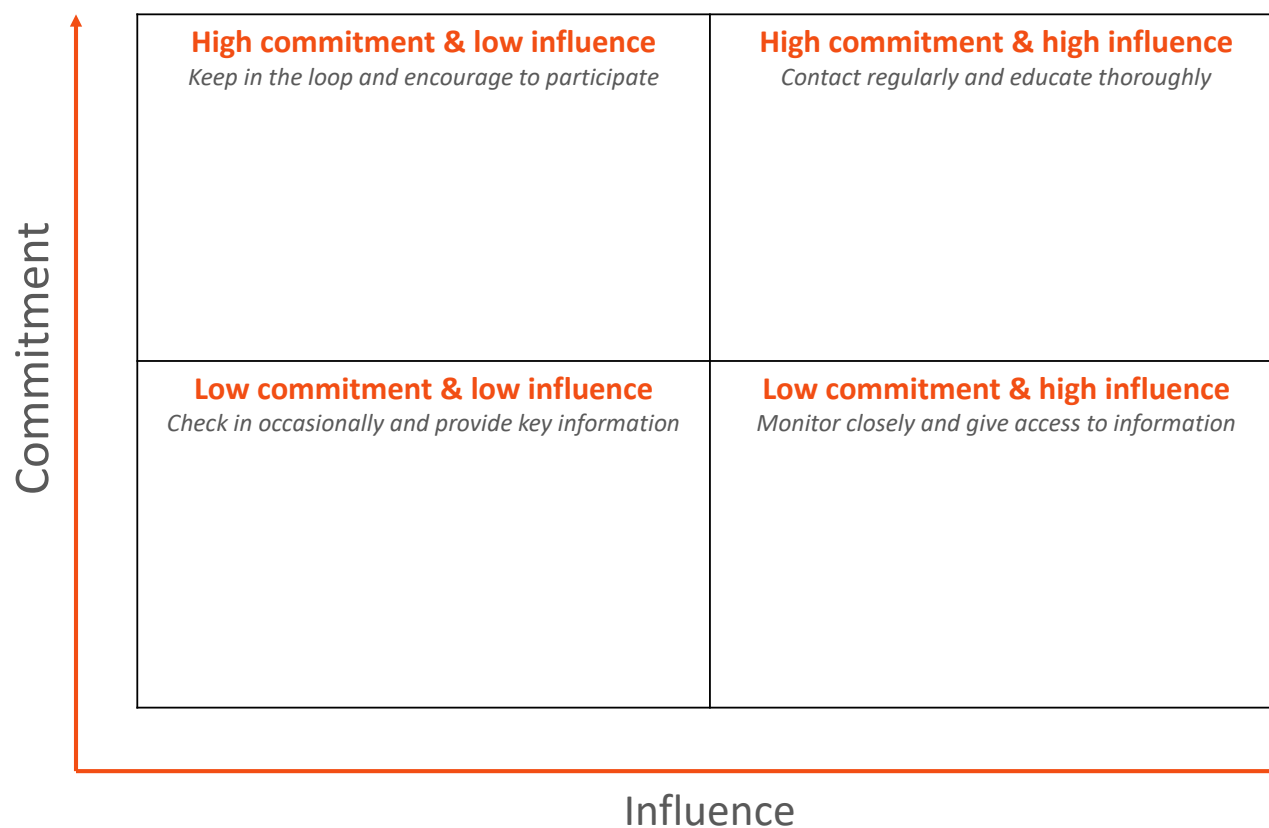
Step 3. Map your stakeholders and prioritise modes of engagement

Finally, you may find it helpful to create a visual map that organises the stakeholders you have identified based on their commitment to and influence in the policymaking process. This exercise can help you decide how to engage with different stakeholders.

You can use your answers from Step 2 to sort your different potential stakeholders into the categories in the chart below in Figure 6.3.

FIGURE 6.3

Stakeholder mapping template



Want to learn more about stakeholder mapping? Check out:

- ★ The World Health Organisation's [Stakeholder Mapping Guide](#) walks you through the process in easy steps and provides a more detailed stakeholder mapping grid than the template above.
- ★ The article [Involving and Engaging Stakeholders in Perception Studies](#) provides an example of how stakeholder mapping was used in the PERCEPTIONS project, which analysed how Europe and the European Union are seen by people who have immigrated or intend to immigrate there.

6.3 Setting up a stakeholder engagement plan

The best way to engage and communicate with stakeholders will depend on the type of stakeholder, their interest in the policy, and the purpose of the engagement. Creating a stakeholder engagement plan, based on the stakeholder mapping exercise in the Section 6.2, can help you to determine how to engage key stakeholders throughout the policy cycle. Promoting and coordinating stakeholder engagement can be resource intensive, but creating a plan can help you do this in the most effective way while taking resource constraints into account.

To kickstart the planning process, it can be helpful to organise the information you gathered in the stakeholder mapping into a table like the one below. Section 6.4 discusses different modes of engagement and may help you answer some of these questions.

TABLE 6.1

Key questions for a stakeholder engagement plan

Type of stakeholder	What level of commitment & influence do they have?	What type of information should be shared?	What is the best mode of engagement?	What is the ideal frequency of engagement?



Want to learn more about creating a stakeholder engagement plan? Check out:

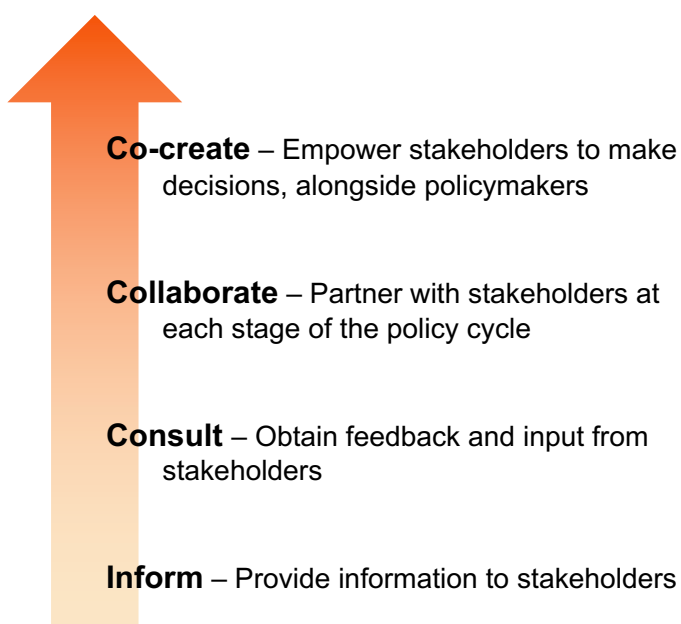
- ★ The World Bank's [stakeholder engagement guidance](#) walks users through each step of the stakeholder mapping process and helps them create an engagement plan by using guiding questions.
- ★ The UK National Health Service's [Stakeholder Engagement Strategy Template](#) asks users to consider who their stakeholders are, what current engagement is like, and what it should look like going forward.
- ★ The working paper [Engaging Communities of Practice with a Participative Approach](#), published by the SPRING Consortium, offers examples of how these tools can be applied in the integration field.

6.4 Different models of stakeholder engagement

Engagement of key stakeholders occurs at the different stages of the policy cycle and for different purposes (see Figure 6.1), depending on the expected level of engagement (see Figure 6.4). Policymakers should seek to involve stakeholders as much as possible throughout the cycle to reap the full benefits of stakeholder engagement. This section explores several models and examples of stakeholder engagement from the field of migrant integration.

FIGURE 6.4

Level of stakeholder engagement



Stakeholder consultation through workshops

Consultations give stakeholders the opportunity to share input and feedback, whether to support identification of community needs, to understand how they view the impact of a specific policy, or even to gauge how they could further contribute to its implementation. Continued and structured dialogue can build trust, lead to better results, and ensure ownership over and acceptance of the policy.³⁵ To reap these benefits, this engagement generally works best when it starts early in the policy cycle (i.e., during the design stage).³⁶ It is also good practice to explain to stakeholders how their input will be used and to follow up with them after receiving the input, as this can help build trust and buy-in in the process.

BOX 6.1

Case study: The Quality Sponsorship Network's multistakeholder transnational workshops

The Quality Sponsorship Network (QSN), a project by the SHARE Network, brings together actors running community sponsorship programmes for refugees in Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom, with the goal of supporting pilot and ad hoc sponsorship initiatives and turning them into sustainable, community-driven programmes. Its work is co-funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF) and coordinated by the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) Europe.

QSN uses a variety of strategies to foreground multistakeholder approaches and grassroots voices at the EU level, including organising transnational workshops. These workshops bring relevant stakeholders together to discuss cross-country challenges and identify best practices to address them, while accounting for contextual differences. In addition, these workshops make it possible to capture rich, community-level evidence in a short amount of time.

Beyond the workshops, the SHARE Network also promotes the engagement of newcomers and local actors in creating, implementing, and evaluating integration policies at the local, national, and EU level through a variety of methods, including the Refugee Sponsorship Mobilisation Platform. The SHARE Network is thus an excellent example of how meaningful stakeholder engagement, pursued using different strategies, can be achieved in the field of migrant integration.

Sources: Share Network, '[Participation: Refugees and Local Actors](#)', accessed 20 December 2022; Share Network, '[Share Refugee Advisor Programme for Community Sponsorship](#)', accessed 15 January 2023; Share Network, '[Refugee Sponsorship Mobilisation Platform](#)', accessed 15 January 2023.

35 Daria Huss, '[The Migration Policy Cycle: Making the Case for Evidence-Informed and Inclusive Policy-Making](#)', International Centre for Migration Policy Development, 17 October 2019.

36 Reidar Kvam, '[Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement: A Joint Publication of the Multilateral Financial Institutions Group on Environmental and Social Standards](#)' (Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank, 2019).

Systematic and high-level collaboration through advisory groups

Advisory groups can be an effective mode of collaboration and means of ensuring key stakeholders have a say in decisionmaking processes. Setting up an advisory group requires carefully selecting a few stakeholders to participate and to work closely with a project's managers and lead decisionmakers. Typically, such groups are made up of external stakeholders who represent a broad variety of actors, such as experienced practitioners, academic experts, representatives of migrant and refugee groups with lived experience, and others capable of providing valuable insights at different stages of the policy cycle. Advisory groups should ideally be established at the beginning of the project or policy cycle to ensure members have a chance to offer suggestions and recommendations to improve its design. The advisory group's organiser should then provide members with information regularly throughout the policy cycle to ensure they can actively participate in subsequent steps as well.

BOX 6.2

Case study: Engaging immigrants and refugees in policymaking through the European Migrant Advisory Board and in Larissa, Greece

The European Migrant Advisory Board, established by the Urban Agenda Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees, is a self-led group of advisors with refugee and immigrant backgrounds. As board member Namarig Abkr noted, 'The people who are actually affected by migration policies need to be invited to the table and included in the structure.' The board's four objectives are:

- to represent the interests of refugees and immigrants through participation in policy debates and processes at the local, national, and European level;
- to ensure refugees' and immigrants' access to rights;
- to contribute to building a positive narrative on immigration and asylum; and
- to advise policymakers on refugee- and immigrant-related policies.

Similar efforts to include immigrants in policymaking can also be found at the local level. In 2021, the Municipality of Larissa, Greece, introduced the Immigrant and Refugee Integration Council, an advisory group composed of six government officials and five migrants. The group aims to strengthen the integration of migrants and refugees in the municipality and has the following three main goals:

- mapping barriers to the integration process;
- providing a space where migrants and refugees themselves can make recommendations; and
- organising awareness-raising events to strengthen social cohesion in the local population.

The Integration Council introduced a formal platform for migrants and refugees to be part of the solution to migrant integration challenges and to secure their involvement in the integration process.

Sources: Urban Agenda for the EU, '[European Migrant Advisory Board](#)', accessed 9 January 2023; Konstantinos Vlachopoulos, '[Greece: Immigrant and Refugee Integration Council Established in Larissa](#)', European Website on Integration, 23 March 2021.

Participatory collaboration through co-design

Co-design or co-creation is a collaborative approach that uses creative and participatory methods to engage stakeholders actively in the design process. There is no standard co-design process, but the central philosophy is that stakeholders, as co-designers, not only provide suggestions but are also included in decisionmaking. It is a way to empower stakeholders individually and collectively to design part of a project or policy, while creating opportunities for synergy between different groups or teams that sometimes work in silos. Throughout the process, ideas are continually tested, evaluated, and reshaped by the people involved.³⁷

BOX 6.3

Case study: The Share SIRA project's participatory approaches to engaging newcomers and local community members

The Strengthening and Expanding Social Orientation and Integration for Newcomers in Rural Areas (SIRA) project, run by the SHARE Network and co-funded by the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF), aims to improve migrants' social integration in ten rural areas in France, Greece, Poland, and Spain.

The project employs participatory approaches that involve both locals and newcomers. For example, the Rural Ambassadors for Inclusive Territories project in France works with refugees, migrants, and locally elected representatives from small and rural communities who have direct experience with integration. Ambassadors are involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of integration initiatives and in advocacy at the local, regional, national, and EU levels.

Taking a participatory approach can not only improve the design, implementation, and evaluation of integration policies, it has advantages for everyone involved:

- Refugees and migrants can share their knowledge and challenges and develop new skills that support their integration in local communities.
- Organisations and government authorities can improve their integration programmes and better engage migrants.
- Policymakers and decisionmakers can develop a stronger understanding of the needs of refugees, migrants, and receiving communities that enables them to better tailor their policies and funding frameworks.
- The European Commission, indirectly the funder through AMIF, benefits by advancing one of the main goals of the EU Action Plan for Integration and Inclusion (2021–27): fostering civil-society participation in integration.

Sources: Share Network, 'Better Policy, Stronger Communities, Improved Integration: Exploring Meaningful Participation for the Integration and Inclusion of Newcomers in the EU' (policy brief, Share Network, October 2022); Share Network, 'Rural Ambassadors for Inclusive Territories', accessed 9 January 2023.

37 NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS), 'Principles of Co-Design' (issue brief, NCOSS, Darlinghurst, New South Wales, Australia, 2017).



Want to learn more about how different types of stakeholder engagement work in practice? Check out:

- ★ The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report [Multi-Stakeholder Approach for Better Integration of Refugee Students](#) includes practical examples and guidance on how to engage multiple stakeholders to secure refugee students' integration (see page 21 of the report).

6.5 Promoting meaningful engagement, especially with migrant and refugee communities

Several tried and tested techniques can help you involve stakeholders in the policymaking cycle. This section provides both general strategies to promote overall stakeholder engagement and specific suggestions to increase the meaningful engagement of migrants and refugees.

Strategies to maximise overall stakeholder engagement

General tips to strengthen engagement include:

- ✓ Incorporate formal requirements for stakeholder engagement into policy proposals; this could include requiring the creation of formal and informal communication channels and dialogue structures, such as forums and facilitated information exchanges, or committing to several rounds of consultations.³⁸
- ✓ Always engage stakeholders in a transparent, systematic, and nondiscriminatory manner. To do so, you should review and confirm that your engagement strategy is in line with legal and other requirements on informed consent and personal data protection. You should also keep careful and systematic records of all exchanges that occur throughout the stakeholder engagement process.³⁹
- ✓ Designate a person within your team to be responsible for coordinating the stakeholder engagement process from the outset and make sure the individual has the appropriate skills, resources, and support to perform this task.⁴⁰
- ✓ Assess the costs related to stakeholder involvement early on in the policy process. This should include costs related to training staff, data collection and analysis, and staff fieldwork and/or stakeholder travel to engagement activities.

38 OECD, *Improving Governance with Policy Evaluation: Lessons from Country Experiences* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020).

39 Dimitar Markov and Maria Doichinova, 'Involving and Engaging Stakeholders in Perception Studies', PERCEPTIONS, accessed 29 November 2022.

40 Reidar Kvam, *Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement: A Joint Publication of the Multilateral Financial Institutions Group on Environmental and Social Standards* (Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank, 2019).

- ✓ Follow up with stakeholders after receiving their input. You may want to consider providing feedback to them on how their interests and suggestions were addressed in the implementation phase of a project. This may help build trust and buy-in.

Strategies to meaningfully engage migrants and refugees

Migrants and refugees, though the beneficiaries of integration policies, are often overlooked by policymakers in the policy cycle. And even when migrants and refugees are involved, there are often barriers that prevent their successful engagement or they are not involved in a meaningful way.

One reason for this is that refugees and migrants are often viewed as being vulnerable and in need of assistance, and their agency and expertise on integration issues are not acknowledged. They may be invited to participate in high-level events and meetings, but they are typically not informed afterwards of what will happen next or what has been done with their contributions. Too often, those who participate in the policy process are also not financially compensated or formally acknowledged for their input.

Migrants' and refugees' participation can only be considered 'meaningful' if it gives them power over decisions affecting their lives. The Global Refugee-led Network defines meaningful participation as:

*'When refugees and migrants — regardless of location, legal recognition, gender, identity, and demographics — are prepared for and participating in fora and processes where strategies are being developed and/or decisions are being made (including at local, national, regional, and global levels, and especially when they facilitate interactions with host states, donors, or other influential bodies), in a manner that is ethical, sustained, safe, and supported financially.'*⁴¹

In order to meaningfully engage refugee and migrant stakeholders, you will need to:

- ✓ Engage migrants and refugees throughout the policy cycle, especially prior to amending any integration policies affecting their well-being.
- ✓ Foster a culture that values migrants' and refugees' unique knowledge and perspectives and how they can improve integration policies, taking their insights into consideration in decisionmaking processes.
- ✓ Promote sustained engagement by establishing structures where migrants and refugees can express their ideas, opinions, and suggestions on a regular basis. These could be consultations or co-design workshops, forums at the local or regional level, or advisory boards.
- ✓ Ensure migrants and refugees know about opportunities to influence decisions that affect them, including by advertising these opportunities in a variety of communication channels and working closely with community members to spread the message.

41 Global Refugee-led Network, *Meaningful Refugee Participation as Transformative Leadership: Guidelines for Concrete Action* (N.p.: Global Refugee-led Network, 2019), 7.

- ✓ Ensure migrants and refugees can participate in engagement opportunities, for example by providing interpretation and translation support, transportation, preparation activities (e.g., skill development workshops, peer support, and mentoring), and digital support (if meetings are being held virtually).
- ✓ Compensate migrants and refugees for their time, expertise, and work, while also acknowledging the value of volunteering.

BOX 6.4

Case study: The National Intercultural Health Strategy's adaptation of stakeholder engagement to include migrant and ethnic minorities in Ireland

In Ireland, the Health Service Executive's National Intercultural Health Strategy is responsible for the implementation of ethnic equality monitoring. To make health policy more evidence-based, the strategy involved a consultation process with migrants and ethnic minorities. The strategy coordinators used a flexible and less conventional approach to reach out to people who may not feel comfortable or be available to join traditional consultation processes, such as migrant workers, irregular migrants, and women from a conservative cultural background.

Strategies that helped them engage migrants and refugees include:

- organising consultations during the evening to prevent conflicts with work;
- using different consultation formats, including big workshops, surveys, small focus groups, and individual interviews;
- providing transport and child care to overcome some of the practical barriers that can hinder participation; and
- providing interpreters to overcome potential language barriers.

Sources: Jan Niessen and Thomas Huddleston, *Handbook on Integration for Policy-Makers and Practitioners, 3rd Edition* (Brussels: European Commission Directorate-General for Justice, Freedom, and Security, 2010), 90; Jane Pillinger, *Consultation Report: HSE National Intercultural Health Strategy* (Dublin: Irish Health Service Executive, 2008).



Want to learn more about engaging migrants and refugees as stakeholders in integration processes? Check out:

- ★ The European Network of Migrant Women's guide to [Meaningful Engagement and Integration of Migrant Women](#) recommends ways to engage migrant women in the integration field and discusses how to overcome specific barriers to engagement.
- ★ The SHARE Network's [10 Key Principles for Refugee and Migrant Participation](#) sets out the network's core principles for how to enhance migrant and refugee engagement.

6.6 Further reading and resources

Resources on stakeholder engagement strategies:

- ★ [Improving Governance with Policy Evaluation: Lessons from Country Experiences](#), published by the OECD, discusses evaluation frameworks from OECD countries that include different stakeholder engagement models (in Chapter 3, see the subsection ‘Involving stakeholders throughout the evaluative process’).

Resources on participatory approaches and co-design:

- ★ [Effective Inclusion of Refugees: Participatory Approaches for Practitioners at the Local Level](#) is a toolkit designed by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Migration Policy Group to help local authorities use participatory approaches to find practical solutions to the problems refugees face. The toolkit includes a printable and interactive handbook, scorecard, and explainer video.
- ★ [Engaging Citizens in Policy-Making: Information, Consultation, and Public Participation](#) is a policy brief published by the OECD that illustrates the guiding principles for engaging citizens in policymaking and describes tools and strategies to use in this process.
- ★ [Principles of Co-Design](#), published by the NSW Council of Social Service in Australia, is a short summary of what to aim for when setting up a co-design process.

Resources on self-evaluating stakeholder engagement practices:

- ★ [MIPEX – R Handbook for Self-Assessment: A Step-by-Step Practical Guide for the Improvement of Regional Integration Practices](#) includes a section on actors and relations that aims to help policymakers evaluate stakeholder engagement practices.
- ★ UNHCR’s [Accountability to Affected People \(AAP\) Self-Assessment](#) tool can be used to measure a project’s performance in terms of communication and transparency, feedback and response, participation and inclusion, learning and adaptation, and work with partners and stakeholders.

About the Authors



JASMIJN SLOOTJES  @JasmijnSlootjes

Jasmijn Slootjes is a Senior Policy Analyst with the Migration Policy Institute Europe (MPI Europe), primarily working on immigrant integration. Her research areas include migrant health, evidence-informed policymaking, migrants' access to services, integration policies, receiving-society responses to migration, and the use of innovative research methods to study migration.

Before joining MPI Europe, Dr. Slootjes was Executive Director of the Berkeley Interdisciplinary Migration Initiative at the University of California, Berkeley. Previously, she completed her PhD research on how migrants overcome health problems as obstacles to labour market integration. During her PhD, she was Coordinator of the Migration Diversity Centre and a Pat Cox Fellow at the Migration Policy Group. She also studied the impact of budget cuts on integration courses and migrant language attainment at the Municipality of Utrecht, the Netherlands.

Dr. Slootjes holds a PhD in sociology (migration studies) from VU University Amsterdam, a MSc in migration studies from Utrecht University, and a BA in political science and international relations from Utrecht University.



MARIA BELEN ZANZUCHI  @BelenZanzuchi

Maria Belen Zanzuchi is a Research Assistant at MPI Europe, where she focuses on refugee policies, including complementary pathways to resettlement and durable solutions for refugee settlement and integration.

Previously, she worked with the Humanitarian Corridors Initiative at the University of Notre Dame, which examines humanitarian corridors in Italy and assesses whether these programmes could serve as a model for migrant integration elsewhere in Europe. Ms. Zanzuchi also worked as an Economic Advisor to the Secretary of Commerce of Argentina, focusing on issues related to anti-trust policies, trade agreements, and sectorial policies and coordinating with private and public stakeholders.

Ms. Zanzuchi has a master's degree in sustainable development from the University of Notre Dame, with a focus on refugee and migrant studies, and a bachelor's degree in economics from the Universidad Torcuato di Tella in Buenos Aires.

© 2023 Migration Policy Institute Europe and SPRING Project.
All Rights Reserved.

Layout: Liz Hall
Cover photo: iStock.com/Valentyna Ivashchenko

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, or included any information storage and retrieval system without permission from Migration Policy Institute Europe. A full-text PDF of this document is available for free download from www.mpieurope.org.

Information for reproducing excerpts from this publication can be found at www.migrationpolicy.org/about/copyright-policy. Inquiries can also be directed to communications@migrationpolicy.org.

Suggested citation: Slootjes, Jasmijn and Maria Belen Zanzuchi. 2023. *Toolkit for Evidence-Informed Policymaking in Migrant Integration*. Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe and SPRING Project.

