

SPRING

Sustainable Practices of Integration

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1 LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

Abbreviation	Definition
EU	European Union
MPI Europe	Migration Policy Institute Europe
SPRING	Sustainable Practices of Integration
CoP	Community of Practice

2 INTRODUCTION

Research and data can be powerful tools to inform how policies are designed and implemented, and help governments learn what works (and what does not) and under which conditions. They also help ensure that public funds are used as effectively and efficiently as possible. In the integration field, the smart use of evidence can promote the well-being of both migrants and the broader societies in which they live—key developments as Europe seeks to integrate several million displaced Ukrainians and other migrants and asylum seekers.

This Migration Policy Institute Europe toolkit, released as part of the EU-funded Sustainable Practices of Integration (SPRING) project, aims to help policymakers, program administrators and other integration actors more fully leverage evidence in their work. While governments, community organisations and others have exhibited significant innovation, there often has been little bandwidth for developing an evidence base in the heat of crisis to support improved integration policymaking going forward.

The Toolkit for evidence-informed policymaking in migrant integration offers policymakers tools and strategies to infuse evidence into different phases of the policy cycle — from policy design and implementation to program evaluation and dissemination of the evidence collected. It also offers resources on funding and stakeholder engagement, which are important at all stages of the policy cycle.

3 METHODOLOGY

This toolkit was written by the Migration Policy Institute Europe (MPI Europe) under the Sustainable Practices of Integration (SPRING) HORIZON project. This toolkit draws on material collected for the MPI Europe policy brief (D4.4), namely a literature review of academic and grey literature on evidence-based policymaking in general and in the policy field of migrant integration specifically, policy documents related to policy frameworks that promote evidence-informed policymaking, and project reports from innovative examples of evidence-informed policymaking. The toolkit also builds on the needs of CoPs in the area of evaluation as identified by WP 1 (Task 1.2), on feedback from DUK (based on findings from WP 2) as well as on the expert network’s advice (Task 4.2) and the findings from other relevant packages (e.g. WP 3 on sustainable and innovative practices, such as the validation grid designed under Task 3.2).

4 PRODUCTION OF THE TOOLKIT

MPI Europe’s deliverable 4.5 (“Evaluation toolkit”), planned for M21, was postponed to be released on M24 for two main reasons.

First, postponing the release of deliverable 4.5 allowed MPI Europe to incorporate and cross-reference to deliverable 3.6 (“Practitioner toolkit”) to be released by the Migration Policy Group (MPG) in M22 at the end of December 2022. Postponing MPI Europe’s toolkit to align it with the release date of MPG’s toolkit was also intended to avoid any potential overlap between the two publications, given the similarities in the topics they were to cover.

Another factor that contributed to the decision to postpone the deliverable date was the fact that the scope of the toolkit was considerably expanded from its original aims included in the SPRING project proposal. In the proposal, the toolkit was described as an ‘evaluation toolkit’. Yet after several bilateral

conversations held by MPI Europe with key stakeholders (including researchers, policymakers and practitioners), and following key insights shared in the roundtables (both, organised by MPI Europe and other SPRING partners), the MPI Europe team noticed that the results of these showed that enhancing evaluation alone is not enough to promote effective and sustainable migrant integration policies and to build an evidence culture. The team also noticed a more holistic and comprehensive approach guiding policymakers and practitioners on how to infuse evidence at the different stages of the policy cycle and how to overcome obstacles around funding and stakeholder engagement was missing. MPI Europe decided to fill this gap in available literature and toolkits (which typically focus on a single stage and/or are not focused on migrant integration) by substantially expanding the scope of the original deliverable.

The expansion of the toolkit's scope allowed MPI Europe to cover the entire policy cycle instead of a single stage of it (evaluation). The *Promoting an Evidence Culture in Migrant Integration Policymaking Toolkit*, instead guides policymakers and practitioners throughout the key stages and elements of the policy cycle, including:

- Accessing and assessing evidence: where to search for evidence and how to measure the quality, relevance, and transferability of existing evidence to make sure it informs the design and implementation of integration practices;
- Evaluation: the different types of evaluation that exist, for what they should be used, and how to carry out an evaluation (including how to overcome some of the challenges in carrying an evaluation);
- Dissemination: how to disseminate reports and evaluations to support the building of an evidence base in migrant integration practices and facilitate share learning, and to ensure that the recommendations in those reports and evaluations are translated in practice;
- Funding: how to access it and use it to support the creation of an evidence base;
- Stakeholders' engagement: why it matters and how to set a stakeholders' engagement plan identifying who to engage, for what purpose and what stages of the policy cycle to ensure they can inform and even shape the design and implementation of migrants' integration practices.

Each section of the toolkit zooms into each of the phases above and identifies existing tools and resources that can help stakeholders to make their work more evidence informed. By focusing on all stages of the cycle rather than a single one, the toolkit aims to ensure evidence is infused at all different stages, contributing to building an evidence culture and evidence base. Yet the expansion of scope meant that the MPI Europe research and communication team had to devote significantly more time to drafting and reviewing the toolkit, requiring a later submission date.

Despite the considerable expansion of the scope, MPI Europe team made sure to set the publication date of the toolkit on the 31 January 2023 to ensure it would be ready ahead of the final SPRING conference organised by SOLIDAR on the same day and also, ahead of the policy-research-practice event organised by MPI Europe under SPRING on February 1st 2023.

5 CONTENT

The toolkit is organised into different sections based on the different elements of the policy cycle. 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.

6 ANNEXES

- I. Access to the toolkit, published on the SPRING Platform, [here](#)



- II. Access to the press release on the toolkit, [here](#)

