

Comparative Report on Integration Monitoring Mechanisms and Indicators

ASSESS

Integration of Vulnerable
Migrant Groups



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The People for Change Foundation



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Executive Summary

This report presents a comparative assessment of the ten national reports that have been conducted in European Union (EU) Member States to monitor and assess the effectiveness of integration measures for three vulnerable migrant groups, which are women, children and victims of trafficking. The ten EU Member States researched represent Europe's different migration patterns and experiences in dealing with migration and integration issues. The research was conducted in five "old" Member States with considerable immigrant inflow; Austria, Belgium, Greece, Italy, Spain and five "new" Member States with "evolving" immigration patterns and regimes; Bulgaria, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovakia.

This report identifies the recent measures undertaken by the EU and the efforts made towards the harmonisation of integration policies and measures. Most notably the report aims to highlight the strengths and weaknesses in the application of the Common Basic Principles on Migrant Integration, when it comes to the integration of vulnerable migrant groups, as well as the application by the ten Member States of the Handbook on Integration and the Zaragoza Indicators. Integration monitoring is still a particularly new concept, however governments are increasingly adapting their policies in order to respond to the needs of a rapidly diversifying European population. Policies are being drawn up by local and regional authorities with reference to EU framework policies leading to a multi-level governance approach, ensuring a partnership between the European institutions, the Member States and national, regional and local governments. However this report has found that vulnerable migrant groups such as women, children and victims of human trafficking, are not explicitly identified in the mainstream monitoring and evaluations of integration and integration policies of the ten Member States.

This report also provides an in-depth analysis of the various stages that the ten Member States currently find themselves in with regards to publishing, developing or even mentioning a set list of national indicators for migrant integration. The collection and analysis according to these indicators can go some way towards providing an assessment of integration policies and practices in the EU, as well as providing a solid knowledge base for the development of further policies and measures. The availability of these indicators is, moreover, a starting-point for more informed shared learning across the EU. The report discovered that those Member States who have more experience with migration are in a better position to develop indicators than those countries with who have experienced little or only recent migration. The creation of a uniform EU-wide monitoring system with a set-list of indicators is unlikely to materialise in the short term while Member States where indicators have been established or are in the process of being established, there is not much attention being paid to the vulnerable groups highlighted in this report. Although the importance of monitoring integration through indicators in Austria, Belgium and Italy has been acknowledged and efforts have been made, the monitoring of specific vulnerable groups is still very limited with the indicators focusing on

migrants in general. The research has found a noticeable lack of infrastructure for monitoring integration processes in a reliable and regular way. The availability of data on migration, especially the integration of migrants, is still limited and is usually inconsistent information, which varies from one institution to another. A lack of relevant data makes the creation of integration indicators problematic while statistics on migrant integration are not always available in the form, quality and accuracy required. Conversely in Member States where there exists a lot of data this needs to be systematically organised and more needs to be done to harmonise it. The monitoring systems in the ten Member States do not systematically look at vulnerable groups, however some of the data collected is disaggregated according to age and gender, which means that information concerning women and minors can be selected and organised with a view to creating a national monitoring system, which takes into account the needs of these particularly vulnerable groups.

Greater efforts need to be taken at a national level to develop sets of indicators to monitor migrant integration for specific vulnerable groups of migrants, in particular for migrant women, children and victims of human trafficking.

Part I of this report provides an overview of migration and integration in the European Union and the participating member states. Part II assesses the monitoring and evaluation of integration measures from the perspective of European Union policies and strategies adopted at the national level. This is supplemented by Part III which looks at the use of indicators in the monitoring of integration as well as data provided, and Part IV which addresses the impact of measures at European Union level on the developments at the national level. Part V engages with the impact of evaluations on the development of future policies and strategies. The information provided in this report is based on the national reports drafted within the ASSESS project, covering the five-year period of 2009-2013. Each of these reports is available (in English) at www.assess-migrantintegration.org.

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Introduction

Europe's economic prosperity, political stability and adherence to democratic principles and the rule of law make it an attractive destination for migrants from across the globe, whether they are migrating for work, to study, for family reasons or in search of international protection. EU Member States have experienced increased migration in recent years with migrants from third countries¹ representing 20 million people, equivalent to approximately four per cent of the total EU population.² As a result, Europe's population is continuously changing and its societies are faced with increasing diversity, creating a need to establish new conditions for social cohesion as well as for the authorities to address public concerns, which is critical if the EU is to benefit from the opportunities provided by migration.

At the same time, the EU is facing a number of demographic challenges, including an ageing population, longer life expectancy, and a shrinking workforce.³ Migration has the potential to assist in addressing these challenges not least by maximising the use of the labour force and skills already available whilst enhancing the productivity of the European economy. At the same time, complex and differential impacts of migration have evolved unevenly across the Member States of the EU as demographic trends vary from region to region, and therefore need to be addressed through tailor-made, carefully planned measures and solutions.⁴

Increased migration has required Member States to take steps towards the successful integration of migrants. Whilst some Member States have been dealing with integration challenges for decades, others have only recently begun experiencing increased migratory trends and are still coming to terms with both this influx, its management as well as the medium and long-term implications of migration. At the same time, the EU is also attempting to develop common approaches for integration with the promotion of the exchange of best practices. This report aims to draw some comparison between ten of the Member States and their national integration policies and practices, by contextualizing, identifying, presenting and assessing monitoring practices in the context of integration with a particular focus on how these measures focus (or otherwise) on particular vulnerable migrant groups. Whilst there is no commonly acceptable definition of 'vulnerability' under international and European law, a number of commonly used definitions exist. Overall, the term refers to a heightened risk of harm or disadvantage, or increased difficulty in achieving set goals.

¹ The term 'third country' is used in the EU Treaties, where it means a country that is not a member of the European Union. A third country national is therefore an individual that has migrated to the EU from a country outside of the EU.

² Eurostat, Population by Citizenship – Foreigners, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tps00157>

³ European Commission, (2011), 'European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals', Brussels 20 July 2011

⁴ Rinus Penninx, Dimitrina Spencer and Nicholas Van Hear (2008), Migration and Integration in Europe: The State of Research, ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) University of Oxford, 2008

Part I

1.1 Overview of Migration in Europe

European countries have a diverse history and experience of migration. While for some countries migration is a relatively new phenomenon, for others trends of immigration have existed for several decades. The size and composition of immigrant populations vary according to the particular historical, economic and geographic contexts, while even within the same State the immigration experience of particular groups of migrants, and of particular parts of the country, varies. Globalisation has not only led to an increase in migration over the past few decades, but also in significant migration diversity between EU Member States. The reaction to increased migration has also been diverse, with particular groups being welcomed and even encouraged to migrate to Europe, and others being deterred or even barred from such migration. This has been accompanied by what has been aptly termed the commodification of migrants, an approach in which migrants are seen as economic units, welcomed only when beneficial to the national economy.⁵ At the same time, a process of securitization has started, one through which various groups of migrants are presumed to be a threat to national security and public order, and within this approach excluded or limited in their enjoyment of their rights whilst in the EU. Negative public or political attitudes have led to an increase of anti-immigration sentiments and a high level of politicization of migration debates.⁶ These issues continue to provide the context within which integration policies and practices are developed, implemented and monitored throughout the EU.

Diverse migration trends amongst European countries have led to the adoption of different measures for migrant integration. Southern European country practices are far less burdened by historical experience and the path-dependency that it may entail. Member States like Italy and Spain have traditionally been considered emigrant countries and only until as recently as the 1980s have they shifted to become spaces of immigration. In Eastern European countries, such as Bulgaria, Hungary and Slovakia, the share of the migrant population remains low despite the potential for economic and social development. By contrast, due to constant immigration flows from as early as the end of Second World War, Northern European countries have had more time to adjust and formulate integration policies. Other states, such as France and the United Kingdom, have a colonial past, therefore leading to historical trends of immigration from colonial territories. This varied pattern of migration in Europe is reflected in the diversity of efforts made to substantiate integration policy quantitatively by means of registers, research and monitoring.⁷ Nevertheless, the EU as a political

⁵ Oliver Schmidtke, (2012), *Commodifying migration: excluding migrants in Europe's emerging social model*, *The British Journal of Sociology*, Volume 63, Issue 1, pages 31–38, March 2012

⁶ Evelyn Ersanili and Ruud Koopmans, (2013), 'The Six Country Immigrant Integration Comparative Survey (SCIICS) – Technical report', *WZB Berlin Social Research Center*

⁷ Rob Bijl & Arjen Verweij, (2012), 'Measuring and Monitoring Immigrant Integration in Europe; integration policies and monitoring efforts in 17 European countries', *The Netherlands Institute for Social Research*, The Hague, March 2012.

entity, has become an important forum for policy development through its initiatives to create a framework for common migration and integration policies.

Since the 1990s integration policies have become a central issue in politics in Europe, proving that integration policies inevitably go further than the idea of simply providing facilities for migrants to adapt and function in the new society. The basis of any integration policy will ultimately lead to questions on how the society in which newcomers ‘integrate’ essentially defines itself and whether it is able and willing to change. This has made integration policies as politically sensitive as immigration policies themselves.⁸

This increase in immigrant populations in European countries has led to substantial academic and societal interest in the study of migrant integration in the EU. While studies examining migrant integration in one locality or single Member State have mushroomed in recent years, cross-national comparative studies remain relatively uncommon. Comparative studies can be especially valuable because European countries have pursued different types of national-level integration policies and thus they can assess the effectiveness of integration policies and promote the sharing of promising practices between different social, economic, political and legal contexts. The research undertaken in the context of the ASSESS project clearly highlights the diverse approaches to migrant integration across the ten participating countries.

The description below provides a snapshot of the migration realities in the ten countries participating in the present project. The countries were selected on the basis of the diversity they provide in terms of migration histories, experiences and plans. Due to a lack of comparable data the descriptions below do not include population demographics with regards to the three vulnerable migrant groups being women, children and trafficked persons.

Austria

Austria has become a prominent country of immigration in Europe, and its population has become ever more diverse in recent years. There is a relatively high proportion of migrants compared to the total population, with approximately 16% of the Austrian resident population having been born outside Austria, and of these, approximately 60% originating from third countries.⁹

Belgium

Over the last three decades, Belgium has become a permanent country of settlement for many migrants. Migrants made up almost 18% of the entire population in 2010. However, people without

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ See Austria Assess report, Pg. 10

Belgian nationality represent only 10%, with a majority originating from EU27-countries. The top ten countries of origin are dominated by neighbouring countries such as France, and the Netherlands.

Bulgaria

Bulgaria has been predominantly a country of emigration and since 1989 has been dominated by a high outflow of emigrants and relatively moderate inflow of immigrants. Between 2007 and 2010 the number of migrants in Bulgaria was around 25,000 persons annually, the majority of whom are third country nationals (a total of 24, 402 persons in 2007 and 25, 327 in 2010).¹⁰

Greece

The number of legally residing third country nationals in 2014 stood at 473,124. The importance of Greece as a transit country for migrants has grown over the past 5 years, and estimates place the number of undocumented immigrants at around 350,000 in 2010 and 390,000 in 2011.¹¹

Hungary

Hungary has not transformed into a major destination country after its European Union accession or after joining the Schengen Zone, with migrants only making up around 2.2% of the Hungarian population. It continues to be a transit country, located along the East-West transit routes of both regular and irregular migration, due to its geographic position between the Baltic states and major Western European countries of intended destination.¹²

Italy

Migrants in Italy represent 7.4% of the Italian population with the number of migrants residing in Italy in 2013 standing at 4.387 million. Over 60 % of migrants reside in northern regions of the country, with around a quarter in central regions and the remaining 14 % in the south.¹³

Malta

EU nationals currently make up the majority of migrants in Malta. In 2013, EU nationals made up 3.05% of the total population, whilst Non- EU Nationals constituted 2.28% of the population. Within the last 5 years a total of 6,999 asylum seekers have arrived on Maltese shores, although a number have since been resettled to other countries.¹⁴

Poland

¹⁰ See Bulgaria Assess report, Pg. 6

¹¹ See Greece Assess report, Pg. 7

¹² See Hungary Assess report, Pg. 6

¹³ See Italy Assess report, Pg. 5

¹⁴ See Malta Assess report, Pg. 5

Poland is both a sending and receiving country, with a domination of the former. Polish citizens account for 99.8% (38,455,500 persons) of people residing in the state, and migrants account for 0.1% (56,300).¹⁵

Slovakia

It is estimated that 1% of the Slovak population are migrants, with approximately 68,000 migrants residing in Slovakia per year. However this percentage covers EU and EEA citizens, as well as third country nationals. The migration trends within the Slovak territory have varied, the country was exposed to flows of economic emigration to EU countries and after becoming a member of the EU it experienced new migration trends from other EU countries as well as third countries.¹⁶

Spain

In the last two decades, Spain has become a country of immigration, and in less than 10 years it received nearly 5 million new inhabitants, corresponding to 12 % of its total population.¹⁷

¹⁵ See Poland Assess report, Pg 10

¹⁶ See Slovakia Assess report, Pg. 4

¹⁷ See Spain Assess report, Pg. 6

Part II

European Measures on Integration and Monitoring

Over the past 15 years, the European Union has invested considerable effort towards the harmonization of integration policies and measures. The Tampere Programme in 1999 set in motion EU cooperation on the integration of Non-EU nationals, calling for the development of an EU policy that included, amongst other things; partnership with countries of origin, a Common European Asylum System, fair treatment of third country nationals and the management of migration flows.¹⁸ The Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the EU, adopted by the Justice and Home Affairs Council in 2004 and re-iterated earlier this year, stated *inter alia*, that developing clear goals, indicators and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to adjust policy, evaluate progress on integration and to make the exchange of information more effective.¹⁹ The principles place particular attention on access to employment, acquisition of basic knowledge of the host society's language, history and institutions, efforts in education, equal access to institutions, goods and services and non-discrimination. The monitoring tools, to which the principles refer therefore, would cover these fundamental aspects of migrant integration.

The conclusions of the expert meeting in Malmo in December 2009 set out a list of core areas and indicators, which built upon the Common Basic Principles.²⁰ The four core areas included employment, education, social inclusion, and active citizenship, which resulted in the creation of 14 core indicators being selected based on the availability and quality of comparable existing data. Member States identified these initial indicators because they were easily understandable, easy to communicate, comparable over time and for which a certain outcome is desirable.

During the 2010 Zaragoza Ministerial Conference Member States agreed on a set of core outcome indicators, which remain the key source of indicators at European level until the present time. The Council also agreed for the Commission to launch:

“a pilot project with a view to the evaluation of integration policies, including examining the indicators and analysing the significance of the defined indicators taking into account the national contexts, the background of diverse migrant populations and different migration and integration policies of the Member States, and reporting on the availability and quality of the data from agreed harmonised sources necessary for the calculation of these indicators.”²¹

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Council of the European Union, (2004), *The Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the EU*, Justice and Home Affairs Council, 19 November 2004, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf#zoom=100

²⁰ Presidency Conference Conclusions on indicators and monitoring of the outcome of integration policies, 14-16 December 2009 in Malmö, Sweden, Meeting No. 597

²¹ Council of the European Union, (2010), Zaragoza meeting, Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on Integration as a Driver for Development and Social Cohesion, <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st09/st09248.en10.pdf>

In 2007 the European Commission produced *'The Handbook on Integration'* which was viewed as a tool for mutual learning in the field of integration. It aimed to promote the exchange of good practice being drawn from the experiences of policy makers, experts and practitioners across Europe.²² By collecting and presenting concrete examples from different aspects of migrant integration, the handbook aims to feed into a larger policy process in the field. The second edition of the handbook provides that:

Evaluations look chiefly at the appropriateness and quality of integration policies themselves, for which good governance indicators can be developed, rather than attempting to measure the 'degree of integration' of individuals or immigrant groups, which remains a challenge.²³

It therefore differentiates between the monitoring of integration and the evaluation of integration practices, creating a distinction between the two, which is often difficult to maintain. It also recalls how 'common standards for evaluating projects are being developed' and that 'the EU could also help to raise the profile of evaluation as a key component of good administration and planning.'²⁴

Whilst monitoring has not been prioritised in any of the three editions of the handbook, the third edition 'provides a tool for policy makers and practitioners who want to learn from and with each other, with the aim to systematically and continuously improving their working methods, standards and service delivery'. The tool goes some way into providing guidance on benchmarking programmes and projects at the planning, research, analysis and implementation. These guidelines can help to inform the monitoring and evaluations of specific projects and programmes.

Beyond the measures at the EU level, a number of projects initiated by the third sector have also been particularly promising in the field of integration monitoring. The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), created by the Migration Policy Group and the British Council, is widely recognised as a key tool in the assessment of integration policies across the various European Union Member States. Indeed as the national reports from Malta, Hungary and Slovakia indicate, the policy assessment undertaken by MIPEX is the only assessment of integration policies applied in the respective countries. MIPEX is not without limitations; not least that it assesses integration policies but does not purport to address integration outcomes. Neither does it address the specific situation of vulnerable migrant groups.

Even so, with its 148 policy indicators, based on seven policy areas which track a migrant's journey to full citizenship, it provides a comprehensive tool, which can be used to assess, compare and improve integration policies between different countries. MIPEX is also useful for up-to-date, comprehensive research data and analysis on which to base policies, proposals for change and projects to achieve

²² European Commission, (2007), *'Handbook on Integration for policy-makers and practitioners'*, Directorate-General Justice, Freedom and Society, Third Edition

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

equality in a country. Overall, MIPEX is very well regarded internationally because it is a robust peer-reviewed tool with a consistent track record established over a number of years.²⁵

EU standards, principles and priorities have influenced the formulation of the national plans, closely reiterating the priorities and language of the relevant EU documents, such as the Common Basic Principles of Integration and European Agenda for the Integration of Third Country Nationals among others. However the ease with which the EU priorities and principles are often accepted nationally depends on the difficulty in mastering the political will, as well as the institutional resources and capacities to put those integration principles into practice. Such difficulties have been particularly visible in regard to the emphasis placed on monitoring and evaluating the results of integration policies for migrants.

2.2 Defining and Understanding Integration

While the term 'integration' can be understood in different ways depending on the country and context, it is generally defined as the process of mutual adaptation between host society and migrant. Integration is essential to not only help provide for economic and cultural benefits, but also for ensuring the security and stability of societies as a whole. In the EU integration is defined and understood as a way in which both migrant and host society retain their own identities and only limited adaptation is required.²⁶ When integration is viewed as a two-way process it is defined more broadly, targeting society as a whole, as a mutual process characterised by mutual appreciation and respect. The Common Basic Principles outline integration as a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all migrants and residents of Member States, representing a fundamental feature of the EU's policy approach to integration and one of its most defining elements.²⁷ In the ten countries studied, integration is viewed as a two-way process in Austria, Belgium, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia and Spain, although the research has found that the actual implementation of this principle varies from one country to another.

Austria's integration policy seeks to include migrants, providing them access to the different societal dimensions while at the same time it is the task and responsibility of every individual. The integration policy found in Belgium's Flanders region targets the active participation of all citizens in society irrespective of their origin. In Italy integration is viewed as a process of transformation of the society as a whole, implying an active involvement of the society in which the migrant is placed, along with the obligation on their part to respect some universally valid principles.

²⁵ 'Evaluating Mipex III; Results of the MIPEX III Quantitative & Qualitative Evaluations', Migration Policy Group.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Op. Cit. The Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the EU',

Spain bases its definition of integration on the Common Basic Principles, which consider integration as a “bi-directional, dynamic and continuous process of mutual adaptation affecting all citizens, immigrants and indigenous people and the institutions of the host country.”²⁸ Similarly Slovakia’s national integration policy also understands integration of migrants in the context of the EU, defining integration in terms of the self-sufficiency and empowerment of the migrants. Slovakia opted for an integration model that is based on mutual interaction, in which migrants contribute to the formation of common culture whilst the majority population respects these differences and even supports their diversity.

Hungary’s *Migration Strategy* declares that integration is a two-way process, in the course of which the society fosters inclusion of migrants, and migrants accept and respect laws and values prevalent in the country with an emphasis put on coexistence, common activity, mutual recognition and communication. At the same time, the strategy speaks about integration measures almost exclusively in relation to asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors, and does not mention integration regarding other migrant groups. Integration of migrants is not regarded as a key issue, as it is understood that most migrants are ethnic Hungarians who do not need special integration measures.²⁹

Despite the acknowledgement that integration is a two way process of mutual accommodation, the practice is all too often to place the burden of responsibility of integration on the migrants themselves. Other European countries participating in this study adopt an approach that compares very differently to this vision of a two-way process. Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Malta, and Slovakia may have no explicit integration policy at all or may not be implementing these policies as they should, either because there are few migrants residing within the state or because there is a lack of political will to deal with migration issues.

Greece’s *National Strategy for the Integration of Third Country Nationals* adopts the notion of integration as a two-way process however its definition and understanding of integration is not fully developed.³⁰ This is because Greek migration policy has been exclusively concerned with controlling the entry of migrants and criminalising migration, rather than aiming to successfully integrate migrants. In 2005 issues of migrant integration reached the domestic policy agenda mainly in response to obligations stemming from the country’s EU membership, rather than as a result of genuine policy interest. Greek legislation has gradually granted more rights to migrants but nonetheless integration has been a contested policy field, with the political elites for years being thoroughly ambivalent as to the extent to which immigrants should be allowed to settle in the country, which has resulted in a lack of a coherent approach to migrant integration.

²⁸ See Spain report, Pg 12.

²⁹ See Hungary, Pg. 11

³⁰ See Greece, Pg. 40

In Poland, state institutions understand integration in line with the European Union definition of a two-way process but in spite of this, Poland does not have an integration policy that can be understood as a comprehensive, cohesive strategy. Rather integration is primarily viewed as the requirement for migrants to ‘assimilate’ themselves into Polish society.³¹ In Bulgaria integration is defined as the process of granting foreigners equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities and the policy of migrant integration is discussed and conceptualised in the framework of the Common Basic Principles of Migrant Integration. However, migrant integration is not the first priority of Bulgaria’s migration management policy and neither has it been well elaborated into concrete measures and programmes to guarantee that the declared Common Basic Principles are adequately pursued. In Malta integration in practice is not understood as a two-way process in accordance with the Common Basic principles, instead the onus of integration is placed on the migrants as existing policy and legislation currently sets no concrete targets with respect to integration. Therefore the expectations with regards to migrant integration are that migrants should be able to generate the necessary social capital and cultural know-how independently.

Different understandings of integration are reflected in the national integration policies of the ten member states studied, and it is inevitable that governments will pursue different approaches when designing their own policies. But whatever definition or concept of integration applied, the integration of migrants into their respective host societies has at least three basic dimensions that concern the social, economic and cultural role migrants play. The research found that the aspects considered to be most important for successful integration are language skills, employment, education and housing.

An important aspect of integration that is prevalent in all the countries is the requirement of basic knowledge of the host society’s language. Proficiency in the language of the host country has become a central part of the integration policy in several countries in Europe. Language is mentioned in the EU’s Common Principles, as even basic knowledge is essential to successful integration. Just a few examples of this can be found in Austria, where learning German is the most important basis for successful integration, and in Bulgaria where the integration of third country national children is understood as a process of improving the command of the Bulgarian language for children whose mother tongue is not Bulgarian, in order to protect them from discrimination and facilitate equal participation in the education process. In Slovakia the Ministry of Education’s efforts also focus on integration in the area of language, coordinating the provision of Slovak language courses. In Greece, the conditions for integration into the Greek society are considered fulfilled when they can prove a level of language proficiency and knowledge of history and civilization.

Another key feature is the integration of migrants into the labour market of the countries into which they have settled. The Common Basic Principles provide that employment is a key part of the

³¹ See Poland Assess report, Pg. 19

integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants. The failure of migrants to enter the labour market early, in occupations in line with their skills, and in sectors that offer opportunities for upward job mobility, can have a negative effect on the worker and the host society.³² Here the integration policies of Member States such as Austria and Belgium follow the premise that employment is an important way for migrants to be economically independent, and to make a visible contribution to Member State societies and to their participation in other aspects of the host society.

2.3 Framework of Integration and Monitoring

It is not until very recently that the measurement or monitoring of integration of migrants has received more systematic attention in Europe. Integration monitoring is still a particularly ‘young’ field both for policy makers and researchers, however governments are increasingly aware of the need to adapt their policies in order to successfully respond to the needs of a rapidly diversifying population.³³ When drawing up their specific policies, local and regional authorities usually rely on national legislation but also refer to EU framework policies such as the Common Basic Principles, the Common Agenda on Integration and the Integration Handbooks. This leads to a multi-level governance approach, ensuring a partnership between the European institutions, the Member States and national, regional and local governments.³⁴

Due to the federal system in countries such as in Austria, Belgium and Spain, migration and integration policies are often shaped by a complex structure of legislative and executive responsibilities shared between different institutional levels and actors. While the federal structure pose challenges to these Member States, other Member States still face numerous challenges, such as insufficient national resources, institutional fragmentation or a lack of political will in trying address integration in an effective way. Therefore the monitoring of the integration of migrants is problematic due to the lack of resources or a low number of migrants and a belief that integration of migrants is not a crucial issue.

- In Austria recent efforts have resulted in the adoption of national integration indicators, published in 2010 by the Federal government, while that same year Vienna also launched its own official integration monitoring system. Austria’s *National Action Plan for Integration* is the result of a process involving different Federal Ministries, all Federal Provinces, the Associations of Austrian Local Authorities and Cities, the Social Partners, the Federation of Industry and organisations from civil society. In parallel, discussions were held with 150

³² International Labour Office, (2014) *The Labour Market Integration of New Immigrants in Europe: Analysis and Policy Evaluation*, International Labour Office (ILO) and Migration Policy Institute (MPI), October 2012-October 2014

³³ Elizabeth Collett & Milica Petrovic, (2014) ‘The Future of Immigrant Integration in Europe; Mainstreaming Approaches for Inclusion’, Migration Policy Institute, March 2014

³⁴ Ibid.

national and international experts and with migrants' organisation and citizens on the seven fields of action described in it.³⁵

- In Belgium, the communities at sub-federal level primarily carry out the monitoring of integration, which leads to significant divergence between the communities and the extent to which monitoring mechanisms are in place. The coordination of local integration policy in Flanders is in the hands of local government. Their main goal is to improve accessibility of municipal services for people with a migration background. The Flemish authorities formally attribute significant importance to the role of evaluations of current integration policy and measures, and consistently list the monitoring of integration and policy evaluations as one of the policy priorities in its *Integration Policy*. Integration in the Walloon Region is the competence of the *Walloon Commission on Integration* and unlike the Flanders region does not describe its mandate nor does it establish a co-ordination structure that contributes to the harmonisation of local integration centre policies. Integration practices in Wallonia exist in a voluntary and non-organised capacity and monitoring migrant integration is still in its infancy, however it has recently voted a new decree that is comparable to the Flemish Decree, which might cause significant change in their evaluation and monitoring practices in the future, bringing them in line with those currently found within the Flanders region.
- In Spain, due to the territorial subdivision and the high level of autonomy that some regions are characterised by there is lack of coordination and coherence in integrating immigrants.³⁶ Spain's national Strategic Plan recognizes the importance of an evaluation process in order to guarantee the efficiency of the actions while the central government promotes the integration of migrants but shares responsibility and competences with the different levels of the public administrations. Every autonomous community has the responsibility to manage issues such as women and children protection at the local level, as well managing the design and implementation of specifically addressed strategic plans in the field of integration. The territorial subdivision of responsibilities and competences gives rise to the presence of multiple plans and policies to tackle issues such as trafficking, children and gender equality.³⁷
- In the recent decades numerous projects have been rolled out in Italy, both at the national and local level, with the aim of constructing systems to monitor the migration phenomenon and draw up measurable integration indicators. These projects have been managed by public and private organisations and funded using public resources, generally from the EU. The first attempt at an institutional level that can lead to the construction of a single monitoring system emerged in 2013 and is being financed by the European Integration Fund (EIF). A Technical Committee which is basing its actions on the recommendations of the Zaragoza Ministerial

³⁵ See Austria Assess report, Pg. 20 & Pg.23

³⁶ See Spain Assess report, Pg. 45.

³⁷ See Spain Assess report, Pg. 15

Conference, is made up of members with experience of previous monitoring activity and was set up to discuss theories for the construction of a method for evaluating integration policies with the aim of laying the foundations for a national monitoring system.³⁸

- In Greece, *The Ministry of Interior* has a key role in the development and implementation of a migrant integration policy however this policy framework is still under-developed and is suffering from a lack of institutional resources to put integration principles into practice. A functional integration strategy has not been devised and as a consequence a system of monitoring migrant integration has not been created while legislative interventions have also proved ineffective.³⁹ Due to the limited influence or even absence of a technocratic approach in Greek public administration, and the fact that multiple institutional actors are involved and the Greek *Integrated Action Plan for Migrant Integration*, that was formally established in 2007, has remained inactive along with the provisions for institutional coordination.⁴⁰
- Migrant integration in Bulgaria is designed and managed at the central level and although attempts to formulate coherent migration and integration policies have been undertaken in a more consistent manner after the country's EU accession, this policy field is still in the process of being developed.⁴¹ The Bulgarian *Ministry of the Interior* is the leading institution in the management of migration in the country and is also involved in the coordination of policy with regard to the broad migration field, including integration and monitoring activities.
- In Hungary on a national level, general and comprehensive monitoring of migrant integration has not yet been undertaken and at the political level efforts attempts are not being taken to move beyond EU requirements. The most exhaustive policy document on migration is the *Migration Strategy*, which deals with the broader issue of migration management including management of borders, counteracting illegal migration, international protection as well as integration and monitoring.⁴² The state actors in Hungary view their role primarily as a supervisory body in distributing EU funds and outsourcing the task of integration monitoring to the civil sector.⁴³
- In Malta, migration management has evolved fairly rapidly in the last decade and in 2013, the Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs, and Civil Liberties expressed a commitment and intention to develop a migrant integration policy.⁴⁴ Whilst this political will was welcomed by a number of relevant stakeholders, at the time of writing, no such national policy has yet been developed, and thus no official definitions of integration are currently in

³⁸ See Italy Assess report, Pg. 16.

³⁹ See Greece Assess report, Pg. 9

⁴⁰ Ibid, Pg. 6

⁴¹ See Bulgaria Assess report, Pg. 21

⁴² See Hungary Assess report, Pg. 10

⁴³ Ibid, Pg. 13

⁴⁴ See Malta Assess report, Pg. 14

place on a national level. There are therefore no specific provisions in place within national law or policy to monitor and/or evaluate existing integration practices. The policy documents in themselves have not been subject to evaluation as yet, nor are there any plans currently in place to do so.

- Similar to Malta, Poland does not have an integration policy in place while integration measures are included in the responsibilities of various state and non-governmental institutions. Poland is a new migration country with a low number of migrants, therefore the state authorities are more concerned with the control of migration flows than with the integration of migrants, however there have been some improvements in migration monitoring in the last five years. Strategy documents developed by the Polish government in recent years include some integration measures and their monitoring. This monitoring is based on gathering statistical data on migration and the main goal is to define the number of migrants, their areas of employment and regularity of employment and stay.⁴⁵
- In Slovakia the *Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family* is the main state actor responsible for the *New Integration Policy*, however the tasks are also split with other ministries. In 2009, a new strategic document was adopted on migration entitled *Conception of Integration of Migrants in the Slovak Republic* that lasted until the end of year 2013, and has been replaced by the *Integration Policy of the Slovak Republic*. Monitoring and evaluation of public policies, strategies and action plans in Slovakia is developing and slowly improving. The Conception itself dedicated a subchapter to the formulation of indicators of the integration policies however the law does not stipulate any provisions on evaluation or monitoring, nor obliges the state authorities to review the indicators or any data on integration measures.

All too often, any monitoring of integration is done in a fragmented way, in various policy domains, by various actors, and at various levels in a coordination vacuum. This constitutes one of the biggest challenges for optimizing integration monitoring and policy evaluations amongst the ten Member States. This institutional complexity translates itself into a wide proliferation yet little coordinated of monitoring and evaluation practices with different actors involved, different sets of indicators and definitions of target groups and integration, and data collection mechanisms used.

It is clear that the processes of integration, and the institutional policies and structures can take extremely diverse forms. The ten Member States only began focusing specific attention on integration policy in the last decade or two and the lack of a coherent approach to migrant integration in many of the Member States results in a lack of integration monitoring at the central level, or if any monitoring takes place it is project-based and implemented by independent entities mostly through EU funds.

⁴⁵ See Poland Assess report, Pg. 10 & 17

As the EU integration framework stands, Member States have no obligation to comply with the guidelines of the Common Agenda, but nonetheless such a policy document is helping to strengthen national integration policies in order to ensure a more coherent approach throughout the EU. The EIF is also helping the ten Member States by contributing towards national efforts to provide a response to the multi-faceted issue of migrant integration, creating mutual solidarity and enabling migrants to actively participate in all aspects of European societies. However these efforts should not substitute national measures to promote migrant integration but should supplement and improve national endeavours, while more attention needs to be focused upon vulnerable migrant groups.

Vulnerable migrant groups such as women, children and victims of human trafficking, are not explicitly identified in the mainstream monitoring and evaluations of integration and integration policies of the ten Member States. The extreme regional fragmentation makes the governance of the migration phenomenon and the drawing up of integration policies that deal specifically with vulnerable migrants fairly complicated. However this does not necessarily mean that special integration initiatives directed towards these groups do not exist, such as national programs dedicated to their protection or national data that take these groups into account. Furthermore policy documents make specific references to the issues of gender and children, and give particular importance in the fight against forms of discriminations and violence. Therefore when National Strategies make a general reference to gender equality and the special needs of young migrant people and children there is need for further discussion as to how special attention to and care of these vulnerable groups should materialise in practice.

Part III

3.1 The Use of Indicators in Monitoring Integration

In the European Union context, indicators of migrant integration have become increasingly important due, in large part to growing political commitment on integration policies at all levels of governance. Over the past decade, the EU has promoted and developed a system for monitoring the integration of migrants through the collection and use of indicators. It has done so with the aim to collect empirical evidence in order to assess similarities and differences in integration policies and their results across countries, as well as their development over time. Integration indicators have three key policy purposes: to understand integration contexts and immigrants' integration outcomes, to evaluate the results of policies, and finally to mainstream integration into general policies.⁴⁶ The EU has identified indicators in the policy areas of employment, education, social inclusion, and active citizenship. Collection and analysis according to these indicators can go some way towards providing an assessment of integration policies and practices in the European Union, as well as providing a solid knowledge base for the development of further policies and measures. The availability of these indicators is, moreover, a starting-point for more informed shared learning across the EU.

The ten EU Member States studied demonstrated varying degrees to which their governments have begun using, creating or even simply mentioning a set of national indicators for migrant integration. The little effort made to establish a set of indicators in order to properly assess the level of migrant integration in Bulgaria, Hungary, Malta, Poland and Slovakia can be attributed to the low levels of migration or due to their having only recently begun experiencing increasing levels of migration. Conversely countries such as Austria, Belgium, Greece, Italy, and Spain have been experiencing increased migration from as early as the 1980s, and should be in a better position when it comes to indicators, although this is not always the case and certainly greater efforts need to be taken particularly in Greece and Spain.

Austria has developed a full set of national indicators, Belgium has developed a set of indicators in the Flanders region, Italy is currently in the process of developing its own set of indicators, and Spain has presented the initial elaboration of a system of integration indicators. Both Austria and Italy adopted the same implementation strategy for the development of national sets of indicators namely the creation of a Technical or Expert Council. In Austria the *Expert Council for Integration* is mandated to support the development of policy through expert advice and the implementation of the action plan as well as to draft recommendations. The Council selected 25 integration indicators in seven thematic areas (language and education, labour and work, social issues and health, security, habitation and spatial context, identification, subjective questions on the integration climate).

⁴⁶ Op. Cit. EU Commission, 'Using EU Indicators of Immigrant Integration'

However areas of monitoring where there is no reliable data are left out, resulting in failure to establish a set of indicators with regards to non-discrimination, political participation or intercultural dialogue. Experts have argued that particularly in the areas of non-discrimination and political participation, no reliable data is available, leaving the primary core indicators relating to issues focusing on education, employment, income situation, and risk of poverty.⁴⁷ Still Austria managed to develop its integration indicators in the context of the *National Action Plan for Integration* rather quickly in comparison to the other ten EU Member States. The purpose of the indicators is to evaluate the various dimensions of the integration process and to monitor this process over the long term. Through the 25 integration indicators, in particular, the five core indicators, which take into account demographic parameters and subjective views, the current status of immigration and integration in Austria and the main changes that have occurred are to be evaluated and presented.

In Italy, the *Technical Committee* was created in 2013 and has been charged with identifying the indicators to be monitored. It was created with the aim of drawing up a set of integration indicators to be monitored year by year, while it has already identified the following as priority areas: employment and living conditions, social relations and linguistic integration, second generations and school inclusion, health and access to healthcare services, active citizenship, and territory. The *Zaragoza Indicators* have also been used to shape the first phase of activity of the *Technical Committee*, with the dimensions and indicators taken from the EU recommendations with the aim being to expand in accordance with national and specific needs, going beyond those in the Zaragoza indicators.⁴⁸

In order to link up national action plans and possible integration indicators it is advised by Austria's *Expert Committee* that indicators are defined as simply as possible and that outcomes are targeted rather than the input of resources and policy to ensure sustainability.⁴⁹ For this purpose the selection of indicators in Austria was guided by the availability of data sources in order to ensure the continuous implementation of the monitoring. In order to achieve this level of sustainability numerous data sources, offering extremely wide-ranging information potential, on migration flows and the traits of residing foreign nationals is necessary.

Regional and provincial developments can also be noted. The city of Vienna in Austria has also developed, independently of the development of indicators at national level, an alternative model for integration monitoring in the form of an integration and diversity monitor, based on a total of 75 indicators and with a specific format designed to support the systematic monitoring of diversity policies at the city level. This list of indicators goes further than the national list established by the federal Austrian government and currently no other provinces have an integration monitoring system.

⁴⁷ See Austria Assess report, Pg. 28

⁴⁸ See Italy Assess report, Pg. 30

⁴⁹ See Austria Assess report, Pg. 28.

A contributing factor towards this is the fact that Vienna has been found to have the highest proportion of migrants in Austria.

Similarly, the Flanders region of Belgium has played an active role and devoted resources and attention to the monitoring of integration. Research has been conducted and instruments have been developed to measure the state of integration. Currently there are several indicators available, with a special focus given to socio-economic indicators, which are applicable to the entire society, including third country nationals. On the other hand in the Walloon region monitoring of the integration of migrants is still in its infancy, which can partially be explained by a history of different approaches towards integration in the Belgian regions.⁵⁰ The Walloon region has also been conducting research on issues related to social cohesion and integration, but this is very limited.

A problem of indicator construction for assessing migrant integration relates to the understanding of integration itself. In spite of the fact that integration is understood by most policy documents as a two way process, the policy documents of Malta and Poland in particular, place the responsibilities on migrants, meaning that most of the indicators constructed to measure integration are dominated by measures assessing only one side, that of the migrant's integration with very few indicators taking into account the side of the mainstream society. However, if integration is seen as a bilateral process and understood as a consequence of interactions between migrants and the host society, the assessment of integration necessitates an additional approach to the present practice, namely the measurement of interethnic interactions: interpersonal, community and official relationships. Evidently, such an approach to assessing the level and processes of integration would trigger a huge methodological challenge.

In Member States where indicators have been established or are in the process of being established, there is not much attention being paid to the vulnerable groups highlighted in this report. Although the importance of monitoring integration through indicators in Austria, Belgium and Italy has been acknowledged and efforts have been made, the monitoring of specific vulnerable groups is still very limited with the indicators focusing on migrants in general. Austria and Belgium have extensive amounts of data at their disposal and are still not in a position to be able to provide a possible monitoring system for vulnerable groups such as women, children and trafficked persons. This means that it is extremely difficult for the countries such as Bulgaria, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland and Malta, some of which still need to either successfully implement or even establish national integration policies, to even begin constructing instruments and indicators which monitor vulnerable groups and their integration.

⁵⁰ See Belgium Assess report, Pg. 48

The creation of a uniform EU-wide monitoring system with a set-list of indicators is unlikely to materialise in the short term. Amongst the ten countries studied only some similarities have emerged due to the great diversity that Europe is characterised by, for example there is relatively broad consensus about the great importance of a good education and having work in the ability to play a full part in the host society, while Member States also view the ability to have a good command of language as crucially important integration indicator. Moreover, although the integration indicators set out by the EU such as employment, education, social inclusion, and active citizenship are comparable to the indicators used in Austria, Belgium and Italy, some variations in sets of indicators used by the monitoring actors exists depending on the specific targets and target groups of the policies under review. This bears the risk of creating data sets and monitoring systems which are not easily comparable.

3.2 Data Collection Mechanisms for Monitoring Migrant Integration

Integration monitoring and evaluation cannot be effectively carried out unless reliable, relevant data is collected. Countries need to anticipate the diversity and dynamics of migration, settlement and integration, which can be challenging for both new and old migration countries, while policymakers need relevant research and adequate data for a timely, appropriate and informed policy response. In order for indicators to be applied the data collected needs to be capable of being aggregated and disaggregated, to provide a hierarchy of measures, and to allow corrective policies to be applied at the level of the institution.⁵¹ Central and local governments need indicators at different levels, to target resources effectively and to gauge progress. The data needs to be cross-referenced with characteristics, such as age, sex, educational attainment, and income in order to compare as well as to identify the gaps among particular groups and the majority.

The European Commission undertook a pilot study to examine proposals for common integration indicators and to report on the availability and quality of the data from agreed harmonised sources necessary for the calculation of these indicators.⁵² The study aimed to identify to what extent existing harmonized data sources can provide adequate data on migrant populations and to identify where the indicators cannot reliably be produced. The pilot was a first step towards finding agreement about the most relevant and available indicators in Europe however the study demonstrated that many countries still have a very long way to go to in developing a solid statistical infrastructure. The report included calculations for each Member State of the proposed common indicators of migrant integration based on data currently available from the European Union Labour Force Survey (EULFS), the European

⁵¹ Council of Europe, (1997), Measurement and Indicators of Integration, Strasbourg

⁵² Eurostat, (2011), Indicators of Immigrant Integration, A Pilot Study

Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EUSILC), Eurostats migration statistics as well as the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).

Austria, Belgium, Italy and Spain demonstrate a good understanding of the necessity to collect representative and comparable data that is based on official statistics as well as quantitative data gathered from administrative sources and surveys, both at the national and European level. However the remaining Member States studied are still in the early stages and unfortunately still rely on European data to monitor integration in their countries, as national monitoring mechanisms are remain underdeveloped.

The research conducted in Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Malta, Poland and Slovakia has found a noticeable lack of infrastructure for monitoring integration processes in a reliable and regular way. A number of national institutions collect information on various aspects of migration, depending on the remit and principle work of each entity or organization. A problem that often arises is that it is unclear where responsibility to gather this data lies, as there is not always a single particular ministry, charged with coordinating the information and prescribing what information is needed, instead the task of collecting data is in the hands of a number of institutions. The availability of data on migration, especially the integration of migrants, is still limited and is usually inconsistent information, which varies from one institution to another. There is potential to fill in the gap of missing data if greater transparency on what data is collected is provided and more easily shared. Moreover, the institutions do not always make this information publicly accessible.

A lack of relevant data makes the creation of integration indicators problematic while statistics on migrant integration are not always available in the form, quality and accuracy required. The data at hand is often not up to date or simply does not exist because it would be too difficult, expensive or time-consuming to gather. As has been mentioned in the previous section, the selection of indicators needs to be guided by the availability of data sources in order to ensure the continuous implementation of monitoring integration.

Hungary is attempting to tackle these issues through a large-scale governmental project, which involves the participation of authorities collecting migration data with the aim of developing methods and infrastructure to harmonize data. In Hungary the greatest problem of data collection is the duplication of data, which arises because data, which is anonymous and collected by the various departments, may be repeated. In Slovakia there are important areas of data that are completely missing, such as the extent to which migrants are integrated into the labour market. Since the employment rate of third country nationals is missing the extent to which the potential of migrants is used in the labour market is not considered, along with the business activity conducted by migrants, or how relevant their education was to the job position taken. There is also no measurement of the

success of migrant children in the Slovak education system. In Austria a lack of data in the area of active citizenship and political participation of migrants as well as equality and non-discrimination renders it impossible to monitor these important aspects of. In Greece it is only relatively recently that the need for regular data collection on immigration has been recognised at the political and administrative level, therefore there is still an urgent need for further improvement in data collection so as to make effective monitoring of integration processes and policies possible.

A lack of data is not always a problem, such as in Austria, Belgium, Italy and Spain, where there is considerable variety of data on immigration from different sources and more long-term data can be expected since the data situation is improving. However while there exists a lot of data it is not systematically organised and more needs to be done in order to harmonise it. Although many mechanisms may be developed for monitoring migrant integration at national and local levels there is a lot more to do in order to monitor the effectiveness of these actions. Data collection should be centralised in order to guarantee the collection of similar data on similar target populations, and in order to guarantee the collection of data in all the areas that are considered as fundamental when talking about migrant integration. Responsibility is often spread across different levels of government, with independent roles for regions or cities, which leads to confusion of interpretation due to the lack of a single, coherent structure.

Even where data is available, a critical concern is the reliability of that data. If data deriving from sample surveys are used, samples must have a certain size to be reliable especially if the target group is a rather small one such as persons with migrant backgrounds. This becomes even more difficult if even smaller sub-groups are targeted, as would probably be also the case for vulnerable migrant groups.

The lack of mechanisms for the assessment of integration amongst specific groups of the population represents a big gap. As was often the case with the ten Member States being assessed, while vulnerable groups have been referred to in the context of integration policy documents, their integration experiences are still not monitored or evaluated. No specific requirements or indicators for monitoring integration of vulnerable groups have been developed nationally and any existing data is not formally used to measure and report on integration. At integration policy level, there are no specific groups defined as particularly vulnerable, and no mention is provided on the necessity to implement specific measures for its achievement.

In the countries that have a wealth of data available on the subject of migration, notably Austria, Belgium and to a lesser extent Italy, since available data is broken down by age and gender, information concerning women and minors is also available. These databases are now in the process, or in need of being selected and organised with a view to creating a national monitoring system,

which takes into account the needs of these vulnerable groups. There appears to be even less focus on the gathering of data and information on the integration of trafficked persons.

The monitoring systems do not systematically look at vulnerable groups and even though some of the indicators created are disaggregated according to age and gender, experts argue that the introduction of a monitoring system for these vulnerable groups would currently not be possible due to a lack of reliable data.⁵³ Generating new data would require considerable resources and probably legislative amendments in most countries. Apart from that, in order to develop indicators for vulnerable groups, it would be necessary to define the specific vulnerable group in detail. Austria is currently systematically collecting and aggregating data on children. In this context, data on migrant children are being included and at the end of 2014 the first results of the data collection process will be made available. Once this process is complete, data gaps will be identified, and maybe data collection in these areas will be further encouraged.

Finally, in countries where there is a lack of a coherent and co-ordinated national integration policy, any subsequent monitoring of integration becomes fragmented at best. The lack of a national strategy for integration gives rise to a number of gaps and dissimilar voices in implementing and monitoring such efforts. Therefore when a more generic approach is still lacking in a particular country, vulnerable migrant subgroups such as women, children and trafficked persons have less of a chance of being considered.

⁵³ See Austria Assess report, pg. 4

Part IV

4.1 Impact of Evaluations

Evaluations and impact assessments are rather new to some of these Member States and their relevant institutions, while they are completely non-existent in others. In Austria and Belgium, evaluations of integration are still new and it is hard to tell if integration measures and initiatives are informed by evaluations in the past. In Austria integration measures are usually evaluated by goal attainment, resource effectiveness and performance. However, the core instrument of integration in Austria, the integration agreement, has not yet been subject to a comprehensive evaluation. Integration policy and its impact are also analysed in research but it has been argued that more could be done with regard to the analysis of longer-term impacts of integration policy measures. In Belgium, the Flemish government at least formally attributes significant importance to the role of evaluations of the current integration policy and measures to improve, adjust or otherwise feed into future policy strategies and measures. In its annual Integration Policy Briefs, the Flemish government consistently lists the monitoring of integration and policy evaluations as one of the policy priorities while its Integration Policy states that: ‘An inclusive and coordinated policy that aims to be effective and efficient, must from the phase of planning and development be grounded in the reality. This supposes an intensive systematic follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of policy.’

In the other Member States there is still no official monitoring and evaluating system at the national level, although it should be noted that the experiences acquired in the past years, to measure the inclusion and integration of migrants, can help to lead to the creation of indicators, while reports and observations will help to form valuable sources of information for policy-makers. The results of monitoring activity, especially in more advanced contexts can be used to draw up local policies and actions in favour of the migrant populations. These instruments can be particularly useful if one considers that in many countries integration is a process that occurs at the local level and that various regions have achieved different results. Local initiatives can make a positive contribution, alongside the Government, to the programming of the EIF and through extensive consultations involving central and local institutional stakeholders.

4.2 Impact on and of European Standards

The EU plays a leading role when it comes to monitoring, evaluating and policy-making. Although some of the Member States analysed in this project still have a long some work to do in terms of their monitoring and evaluating of integration policies, EU standards and regulations have played a considerable purpose in either pushing these countries in the right direction or at the very least establishing a level of awareness amongst governments that more needs to be accomplished. Due to EU influence the ten Member States studied are to a certain extent examining the level of integration

in their territories, making comparisons on a European level possible. The EU has also played a role in the discourse of best practices, providing recommendations to the Member States and financial support through such institutions as the EIF, which have been created to deploy EU directives on the national level.

EU standards are a continuous reference for the ten Member States policy documents, playing an important role in the formulation of the national strategies of Austria, Italy, Belgium and Spain. Here EU standards had profound influence over the establishment of strategies to monitor and evaluate migrant integration. The technical and expert committee's created in Italy and Austria respectively have taken into due account the considerations and recommendations of the EU on the subject of integration, in particular the Zaragoza policy areas and indicators as well as basing their national strategies on the Common Basic Principles.

The EU also has a strong influence on the information collected by the Member States, in the context of income and living conditions (EU-SILC) and the labour force survey (LFS). The integrated approach, which combines data from administrative archives and those of sample surveys, reflects what Eurostat is promoting at the European level on migrant integration based on the Zaragoza indicators. In certain Member States the process of developing migration management institutions and the correspondent data collection systems became more prominent under the influence of EU standards and regulations in the context of EU accession.

In Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary Malta, Poland and Slovakia, no national monitoring or evaluation has been undertaken and indicators have not been set making it difficult to determine to what extent EU criteria is followed. In Bulgaria a number of improvements have been noted and the process of development of the country's migration management institutions and the correspondent data collection systems became more prominent under the influence of EU standards and regulations in the context of Bulgaria's EU accession. One such improvement was that the National Statistical Institute started providing data on third country nationals in accordance with the Zaragoza indicators for the assessment of migrant integration. The EU has also exerted positive influence with regard to the conduct of national census in Bulgaria.

In Hungary, both the *Migration Strategy* and the *Anti-Trafficking Strategy* explicitly declare the need for annual monitoring on the implementation of each respective strategy. However here there are still no clear methodologies or bodies appointed to undertake this monitoring, meaning that with the exception the MIPEX policy indicators there is no monitoring taking place on a national level.

In Malta the limited monitoring that is carried out is due to the requirements of the EU including the provision relating to the Zaragoza Indicators and participation in MIPEX. While data gaps still persist

in both countries the information currently allows for some monitoring on integration progress, however national monitoring mechanisms still need to be developed.

In Poland due to the small scale of the migration phenomenon, and the fact that its implementation would require substantial financial resources, integration and monitoring are not perceived as an urgent need.

In Slovakia the creation of a new integration policy tries to make some progress on this matter, which is yet to be created in Malta. This new integration policy in Slovakia makes some progress firstly by acknowledging the importance of clear indicators and thorough monitoring and evaluation of integration measures and secondly by directly referring to the EU instruments on integration monitoring. The EU's influence has also been strong in the legislative area with most of the changes having been initiated by the EU, especially the adoption of directives aimed on entry of the migrants to the EU territory, equal treatment of foreigners, and also clearer procedures in case of asylum seekers, however the practical application of EU integration standards is yet to be implemented.

The EU has played an important role in directing the Member States towards a more common approach, however since Member States such as Austria, Belgium, Italy and Spain have been dealing with the issue of migration for longer they are in a better position to adapt. The particular national circumstances also need to be taken into account when assessing to what extent EU standards have played a role and in this context we have seen that countries have been influenced to varying degrees. Migrant populations are varied not only throughout Europe but also within the states themselves and therefore Member States need to find an approach that adequately tackles the issues it is directly confronted with.

The EU has played quite a considerable role in engaging with Member States on the need for the creation of national monitoring mechanisms in the field of migrant integration, however it should now attempt to influence Member States to focus their attention on vulnerable migrant groups and in particular women, children and trafficked persons.

Conclusion

The EU has played an influential role on Member States and their integration policies, albeit to varying degrees between new and old States. EU standards have been vital in moving Member States towards the formulation of national strategies, which have taken into account the Zaragoza policy areas and indicators as well as the Common Basic Principles. In all of the ten Member States studied, to varying degrees, the process of developing migration management institutions and the correspondent data collection systems became more apparent under the influence of EU standards and regulations.

The setting up of integration indicators can be seen as a positive development in Austria, Belgium and soon Italy, since they serve as a basis for fact-based discussions, and since it helps to demonstrate how they are finally dealing with the topic of integration. The Zaragoza indicators published by the EU should only be viewed as a minimum list of indicators and although indicators may vary from country to country according to the composition of the population and the legal and policy framework, it is possible to identify some key economic, social and political areas. The long-term use of indicators will give policy actors a new lasting perspective for policy planning and the availability of these indicators is therefore a starting-point for more informed shared learning across the EU.

The research conducted has discovered that in the countries which have been able to establish monitoring and evaluating mechanisms there is still no focus on vulnerable migrant groups and in particular women, children and trafficked persons while Member States existing national monitoring mechanisms in the field of migrant integration are still relatively new or in the process of being set up. One of the biggest challenges for optimizing integration monitoring and policy evaluations is the strong fragmentation done in various policy domains, by various actors, and at various levels in a coordination vacuum. Due to the complex structures of the larger Member States, migration and integration policies are shared between different institutional levels. This multilevel context leads to confusion regarding the practices and the approaches and these issues need to be managed more uniformly, with minimum standards of application and with minimum rules of acting.

In order to link up national action plans and possible integration indicators it is advised that indicators are defined as simply as possible in order to ensure sustainability and that outcomes would be targeted rather than the input of resources and policy. The lack of a coherent approach to migrant integration in many of the Member States results in a lack of integration monitoring at the central level. This has proved to be the case with many of the Member States with no specific indicators for monitoring integration as yet developed at the national level and existing data in the field not being formally used to measure and report on integration.

There is still a noticeable lack of infrastructure for monitoring integration processes in a reliable and regular way. The availability of data on migration, especially the integration of migrants, is still

limited and is usually inconsistent information, which varies from one institution to another. Conversely, in some cases there is an extreme variety of data on immigration from different sources. Where there exists plenty of data it is not systematically organised and more needs to be done in order to harmonise it. Data collection should be centralised in order to guarantee the collection of similar data on similar target population, and in order to guarantee the collection of data in all the areas that are considered as fundamental when talking about migrant integration.

Data in the ten Member States studied does not specifically take vulnerable groups into account but since available data is often broken down by age and gender, information concerning women and minors can be selected and organised with a view to creating a national monitoring system, which takes into account the needs of these particularly vulnerable groups.

Recommendations

National Level

- Greater efforts and attention need to be taken at a national level to develop sets of indicators to monitor migrant integration for specific vulnerable groups of migrants, in particular for migrant women, children and victims of human trafficking.
- Initiation of discussions amongst local stakeholders on the need to introduce indicators for vulnerable groups, definition of such groups and data requirements.
- Investigate and identify specific problems of vulnerable groups and develop more detailed indicators, which take into account the vulnerable groups in this study.
- Where needed, integration policies and strategies should be developed, adopted and implemented at a national level. Such policies should include concrete targets and monitoring mechanisms to track the progress towards, and achievement of the policy's objectives.
- Data collection should be centralised in order to guarantee the collection of similar data on similar target population, particularly sub-categories of migrant women, children and victims of human trafficking, and in order to guarantee the collection of data in all the areas that are considered as fundamental when talking about migrant integration.
- National governments must recognize the need for local representativeness and inclusivity in relation to data used for monitoring. Since the migrant integration process happens at a local level, it is necessary to have a precise picture of single situations in order to plan for local actions that are as specific as possible.
- NGOs need to continue examining national and EU developments in the field of integration, putting forward recommendations to the relevant authorities for the development, implementation and monitoring of integration measures.

- Promote the involvement in the monitoring process of migrant communities and the various categories of foreign nationals in order to benefit from the point of view of those directly involved in the integration process.
- European efforts should be viewed as support to improve national endeavours and not as a substitute for national measures to promote migrant integration.

European Level

- Improve coordination and the streamlining of monitoring and evaluation with the aim to create more comparable sets of indicators amongst the EU Member States, which would also make it possible to compare the impact of integration policies across the different communities. Utilize the European Union indicators of integration to introduce effective monitoring, however some variations in the sets of indicators being used will exist due to the differences between Member States.
- Databases to measure the impact of the integration of migrants, even for vulnerable groups, should be more accessible for research centres, government departments and other relevant stakeholders for monitoring.



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