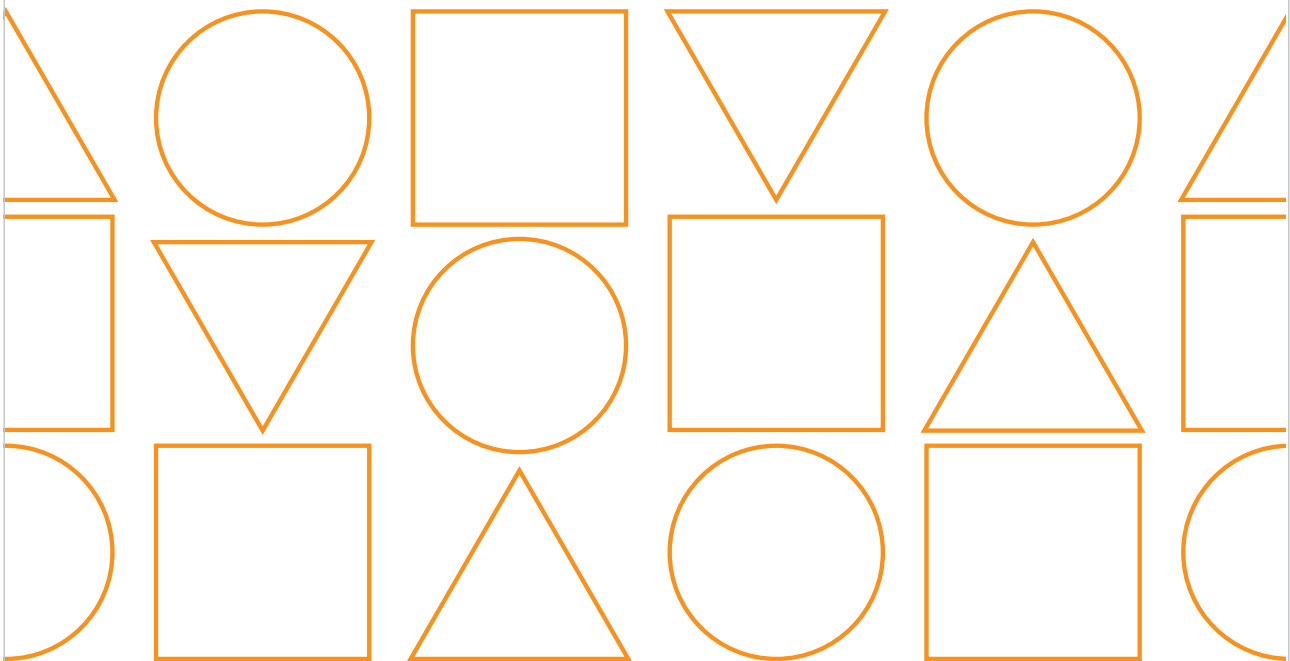




From principles to practice

The Common Basic Principles on integration and the Handbook Conclusions



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Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate how the successful exchange of experience and best practice contained in the two Handbooks on Integration can be used to provide valuable and practical guidance for implementing the Common Basic Principles on Integration (CBPs). To this end, this introduction provides a brief overview of the CBPs and the two Handbooks on Integration, and then looks at how these policy initiatives can be brought together to strengthen immigrant integration in Europe.

The Common Basic Principles

The Common Basic Principles on Integration (CBP) were agreed by the Justice and Home Affairs Council in November 2004. The purpose of the CBPs are:

- to assist Member States in formulating integration policies by offering a non-binding guide of basic principles against which they can judge and assess their own efforts;
- to serve as a basis for Member States to explore how EU, national, regional, and local authorities can interact in the development and implementation of integration policies; and
- to assist the Council to reflect upon and, over time, agree on EU-level mechanisms and policies needed to support national and local-level integration policy efforts, particularly through EU-wide learning and knowledge-sharing.

The 11 Common Basic principles are:

1. Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of member states.
2. Integration implies respect for the basic values of the EU.
3. Employment is a key part of the integration process.
4. Basic knowledge of the host society's language, history and institutions is indispensable for integration.
5. Efforts in education are critical for preparing immigrants to be more successful and active.
6. Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is an essential foundation.
7. Frequent interaction between immigrants and member state citizens is a fundamental mechanism.
8. The practices of diverse cultures and religion as recognised under the Charter of Fundamental Rights must be guaranteed.
9. The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies, especially at the local level, supports their integration.
10. Integration policies and measures must be part of all relevant policy portfolios and levels of government.
11. Developing clear goals, indicators and evaluation mechanisms

to adjust policy, evaluate progress and make the exchange of information more effective is also part of the process.

The CBPs were further developed in the Commission Communication on 'A Common Agenda for Integration', which makes proposals for concrete measures to put the CBPs into practice. 'A Common Agenda for Integration' provides suggestions for action both at EU and national level. It encourages Member States to strengthen their efforts with a perspective to developing comprehensive national integration strategies, while new ways of ensuring consistency between actions taken at EU and national level are being proposed. The first Handbook on Integration, the INTI Preparatory Actions and the proposed European Fund for Integration form the foundations for the actions proposed in 'A Common Agenda for Integration'.

Handbooks on Integration

The aim of the two Handbooks on Integration is to promote cooperation at the European level by facilitating the exchange of experience and information, and to enable the development and promotion of policy initiatives. The Handbooks are targeted at policy-makers and practitioners at the local, regional, national and EU level.

The first edition of the Handbook (2004) covers introduction courses for newly arrived immigrants and recognised refugees, civic participation and integration indicators while the second edition of the Handbook (2007) addresses issues related to housing and urban issues, access to services, labour market and economic integration, mainstreaming, and integration infrastructure.

The Handbooks have been prepared in close cooperation with the National Contact Points on Integration and on the basis of the outcomes of technical seminars, which were hosted by ministries responsible for integration in various Member States. The first edition is based on seminars held in Copenhagen (February 2004), Lisbon (April 2004) and London (June 2004) and the second edition is based on technical seminars in Tallinn (May 2005), Rome (July 2005), Dublin (October 2005), Berlin (December 2005) and Madrid (March 2006). The technical seminars were supported by the European Commission.

The seminar participants are considered to be the 'authors' of the Handbooks, since the knowledge and examples presented in the chapters are largely based on their written and oral presentations and discussions.

National Contact Points on Integration and MPG are seen as the 'editors', preparing a conceptual framework for the seminars, taking stock of the information gathered at each seminar, selecting practices, and supplementing them with additional research.

In both of the Handbooks, the lessons learned from the practices are highlighted throughout the text and are also reproduced as Conclusions at the end of every chapter. In total, there are 101 Conclusions. These Conclusions reflect the wealth of knowledge of policy-makers and practitioners in Europe and provide sound advice and guidance on strengthening immigrant integration.

Linking the CBPs and the Conclusions from the Handbooks

This document builds upon the work of 'A Common Agenda for Integration' by proposing courses of action for, and offering insight to, the effective implementation of the CBPs. It also provides the means for incorporating the lessons from the second Handbook into the CBPs' existing policy infrastructure, which is important as the CBPs pre-date the second Handbook.

The document focuses on each of the CBPs in turn. It summarises the official explanation of each CBP and then goes on to list each of the Conclusions from the two Handbooks that are relevant to that CBP. If a Conclusion supports more than one CBP, it is listed under the CBP with the greatest relevance. The headings used in the Handbooks are reproduced in this document to ensure the context of the Conclusion is clear to the reader.

By linking each of the Conclusions to the most relevant CBP, this document provides policy-makers and practitioners at the local, regional, national and EU level with valuable and practical guidance on implementing the CBPs.

CBP 1

Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States

The integration process involves adaptation, not only by immigrants, but by the receiving society, which is responsible for creating opportunities for the immigrants' full economic, social, cultural, and political participation. Governments should consider and involve both immigrants and national citizens in integration policy and ensure that their rights and responsibilities are clearly communicated.

Conclusions pertinent to the implementation of CBP 1 are as follows:

Integration Governance

- 1 Investing in building and maintaining an integration governance structure is well worth the effort as it helps to develop an integration vision and strategy, generate resources, mobilise people and organisations, forge partnerships and build trust, all being crucially important for the achievement of short and longer term integration goals.

Local integration structures

- 2 Structured communication and dialogue between European, national and local governance levels makes it possible to anticipate and assess the impact of measures taken at one level on another level. Equally, outcomes of integration programmes at one level could inform policies at other levels.
- 3 Strong and visible leadership of mayors and/or elected local officials on integration issues is instrumental to a coherent approach to integration across multiple policy areas and helps bridge gaps between government and residents with or without an immigrant background.

Integration strategies and goals

- 4 Local integration policies are more effective when they build on the support of the whole community. Rather than being directed at migrants only, they relate to all residents as well as the administration itself. Often, they require real changes across a number of departments and fields of municipal action. Political backing is therefore essential.

Networks and consultation

- 5 Local integration networks ideally have a clear status within the community's political and administrative set-up. Their mandate could be to raise issues of particular concern and to make

recommendations, without prejudice to the decision-making competences of elected representatives.

Resource management

- 6 Good resource management matches resources of different types. In a well-managed project financial capital is matched with human resources and other assets that participants bring to the table. Voluntary work is also an important resource.

Introduction of newly arrived immigrants and recognised refugees

- 7 Introduction programmes are an investment in the future which both the immigrant and society should be willing to make. They give immigrants a start enabling them to acquire vital skills to become self-sufficient and are therefore well worth the effort. The return on investment for society is that immigrants become better-equipped citizens capable of contributing to society.

Designing programmes

- 8 Offering courses at several levels using different formats and a range of teaching methods can help to achieve successful language training for immigrants with different educational backgrounds or previous knowledge of the country and language. This leads to usable qualifications. Ideally the programmes provide for tests after the courses in order to validate the learning level of participants.

Matching ambitions to resources

- 9 What governments ask of newcomers should be balanced with the sustained availability and quality of introduction programmes.
- 10 Compulsory programmes and the use of sanctions and/or incentives should be evaluated after some time so as to establish whether this enhances the quality of the courses and increases attendance.
- 11 Best practice suggests that programmes should be accessible, affordable and of high quality and that their impact should be assessed regularly.
- 12 It is practice in some countries to provide beyond the more extensive introduction programmes offered only to certain categories of newcomers, an appropriate level of introductory assistance to other groups of immigrants.

Working with partners

- 13** Integration is a shared responsibility and many actors work together to develop good policies and outcomes. It is crucial that all involved are responsive and open to feedback from those they work with as implementing partners, funders, or clients.
- 14** Partnerships between various levels of government are governed by shared responsibilities and consultations on policy design and budget allocations.
- 15** The social partners stand to gain from self-sufficient immigrants and are ideally involved in the design, financing and implementation of integration programmes.
- 16** Governments at all levels could engage companies more in the debates on immigrant integration linking governmental programmes with companies' corporate social responsibility programmes.
- 17** Governments could offer assistance to smaller companies and other business organisations as well as trade unions in sectors of the economy where many immigrants have found employment by complementing these organisations' training capacities.
- 18** Migrants' associations as possible sources of advice and information to newcomers can be built into introduction programmes by including them for the provision of training and as role models for successful integration. They could receive support for capacity building and be linked with professional organisations so as to ensure quality control.

CBP 2

Integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union

Members States are responsible for ensuring that all residents, including immigrants, understand, respect, benefit from, and are protected on an equal basis by the full scope of values, rights, responsibilities, and privileges established by the EU and Member State laws.

The guidelines for implementation of Common Basic Principle 2 are as follows:

Civic content of introduction courses

- 19** Introduction courses ideally convey the message of a welcoming society which gives incentives to the newcomer to feel responsible for the community he or she is going to live in.
- 20** An introduction to values is best framed as a common endeavour in which both newcomers and the receiving society strive to meet the standards set by the country's norms and rules.

CBP 3

Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible

The integration of immigrants can be promoted by the recognition of qualifications acquired in another country, by training opportunities that provide skills demanded at the workplace and policies and programmes that facilitate access to jobs and the transition to work. It is also important that there are sufficient incentives and opportunities for immigrants, in particular for those with the prospect of remaining, to seek and obtain employment.

Conclusions pertinent to the implementation of CBP 3 are as follows:

From admission to labour market integration - matching supply and demand

- 21 Rules concerning admission can be seen as integration starting points which set crucially important conditions for the integration process.
- 22 The legal framework for admission should be examined in view of its impact on the (socio-) economic integration of immigrants, and obstacles to integration contained immigration rules should be addressed.

Skills and Qualifications

- 23 New arrivals, long-term resident immigrants and 'next generation' migrants are all faced with the challenge of establishing and maintaining their employability, and should have full access to general and specific support measures.

Skills assessment and accreditation

- 24 To overcome difficulties associated with the formal recognition of qualifications, employers, professional associations and governments can seek to develop more flexible ways of assessing and validating skills.
- 25 Good assessment methods succeed in making visible all of immigrants' competences: occupational, communicative, social, etc. They look at assets rather than deficits and focus concretely on a person's (potential) performance in the workplace.
- 26 Involving employers in skills assessment processes from the start can increase the likelihood of further employment following on from the assessment and accreditation stage.

- 27 Job descriptions in certain professions could be modified to include 'intercultural competence' as one of the qualifications sought in candidates. This involves a reshaping of skills profiles and could also have an impact on formal qualifications in the longer term.

Vocational content of introduction courses

- 28 Best practice suggests designing introduction courses in a flexible way, allowing for parallel teaching of language and labour market participation rather than relying on strict sequential models for language learning, vocational training and higher education. Ideally courses integrate language and vocational training and validate existing skills.
- 29 Dynamic ways of assessing the skills of newcomers, relying less on formal criteria and valuing different kinds of experience, are most useful for the validation of experience and knowledge obtained in the country of origin.
- 30 Offering part-time courses, distance or e-learning and similar models enables participants to continue with introduction programmes while at the same time taking on a job.
- 31 The pooling of resources enables adjacent municipalities to offer different types of courses. It also makes it possible for participants to live in one municipality and do training or work in another, in this way avoiding the loss of family contacts or networks in case of a move.

Immigrant entrepreneurship

- 32 Immigrant and ethnic minority businesses are increasingly acknowledged to be a vital part of Europe's entrepreneurial culture. In particular, they make an important contribution to job creation.

Supporting immigrant entrepreneurs

- 33 Targeted advice services should be developed for immigrant entrepreneurs. Banks are encouraged to give equal access to start-up capital and other business facilities and to build relationships with immigrant entrepreneurs.

Supplier diversity

- 34 Immigrant owned businesses should be included in supplier lists. In this way supplier lists become as diverse as the population.

CBP 4

Basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration

Programmes that provide basic linguistic, historical, and civic knowledge allow immigrants to quickly find a place in the key domains of work, housing, education, and health, and help start them to adapt to the host society.

Conclusions pertinent to the implementation of CBP 2 are as follows:

Language training

- 35 When course certificates are of a format which is known to employers and other educational institutions, they prove to be useful to the participants in accessing further labour market or training opportunities. The content and methods of teaching are to be designed with these opportunities in mind.

Broadening immigrants' housing choices

- 36 Immigrants, like all residents, develop housing strategies based on their needs and on the opportunities offered by the environment. Policies should seek to broaden their choices by ensuring equal opportunities in the housing market, in terms of access as well as quality.

Access to housing

- 37 More intensive use can be made of legislation banning discrimination in the field of service provision, including housing.
- 38 Housing codes of conduct can explain in practical terms what housing legislation means in practice.
- 39 Residence requirements should be assessed on their consistency with housing policies and on their impact on the position of immigrants on the housing market.

Quality of housing

- 40 National and local authorities should seek to identify serious problems with housing quality and base initiatives on reliable data about the housing situation of immigrants. Surveys can be used for that purpose. These surveys could be designed in such a way that they allow European comparison and enable European standard setting to take place.

- 41 Housing companies that proactively seek to improve service to immigrant clients will be more successful in meeting their needs and preferences. Housing companies can provide training to their employees for this purpose or employ staff with an immigrant background.

CBP 5

Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society

Education prepares people to participate better in all areas of daily life and to interact with others. Consequently, education not only has positive effects for the individual, but also for the society as a whole. Educational arrears are easily transmitted from one generation to the next, thus it is essential that special attention is given to the educational achievement of those who face difficulties within the school system. Given the critical role played by education in the integration of those who are new in a society – and especially for women and children – scholastic underachievement, early school-leaving and of all forms of migrant youth delinquency should be avoided and made priority areas for policy intervention.

No Conclusions specifically address mainstream education.
Related Conclusions include:

- 7-18 on introduction programmes
- 32-35 on the vocational content of introduction course
- 39 on language training
- 46-49 on training in intercultural competence

CBP 6

Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration

Immigrants must be treated equally and fairly and be protected from discrimination if they are to participate fully in society. Transparent rules, clearly articulated expectations and predictable benefits for law-abiding immigrants are prerequisites to better immigration and integration policies. Active steps must also be taken to ensure that public institutions, policies, housing, and services, wherever possible, are open to immigrants.

Conclusions pertinent to the implementation of CBP 6 are as follows:

Intercultural Competence

- 42 Tailoring services to the special needs of different groups among the population is a collaborative effort requiring the development of intercultural competence in public and private service.
- 43 Recruitment and training are complementary strategies in building up staff with intercultural competence. Ideally developing intercultural competence among employees is an ongoing priority rather than a one-time effort.
- 44 Best practices demonstrate that mainstream organisations which work closely with experts or specialist organisations greatly improve the accessibility of their services to immigrants.
- 45 Intercultural competence can be introduced as a (European) quality management standard which is considered when governments determine their support to organisations or in public tenders.

CBP 7

Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member State citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration. Shared forums, inter-cultural dialogue, education about immigrants and immigrant cultures, and stimulating living conditions in urban environments enhance the interactions between immigrants and Member State citizens

The frequency and quality of private interactions and exchanges between immigrants and other residents greatly influence integration. Interaction can be encouraged through common forums, intercultural dialogue, spaces, and activities in which immigrants interact with other people in the host society, and on the sustained education of the host society about immigrants and immigrant cultures. Active anti-discrimination policies, anti-racism policies, and awareness-raising activities to promote the positive aspects of a diverse society are also required. Efforts need to be made to improve the living environment in terms of decent housing, good health care, neighbourhood safety, and to increase opportunities for education, voluntary work and vocational training.

Conclusions pertinent to the implementation of CBP 7 are as follows:

Engaging citizens and immigrants

- 46 Active citizenship highlights immigrants' skills and suggests ways of making the most of them both for the immigrants and for society as a whole.

Religious Dialogue

- 47 Religion often plays a positive role in the integration process, which can be enhanced by facilitating a dialogue among immigrant faith communities and between them and mainstream society.
- 48 Governments should provide support for inter-religious dialogue by facilitating the establishment of dialogue platforms and contributing resources where appropriate.

Integration in the urban environment

- 49 Policies and practices seek to counteract the social exclusion and segregation that is a feature of deprived areas. At the same time, they can reinforce the positive aspects felt by many immigrant residents: support through social, family and ethnic networks, the possibilities provided by the ethnic labour market, quick help for new arrivals, and the presence of ethnic associations.

50 Policy targets for deprived areas should be compatible with citywide planning, and urban concepts should privilege the building of 'bridges' between city districts. Any inequality in service provision across different areas should be addressed as a priority.

51 Because housing issues directly affect the personal lives of individuals and families, interventions in this field must be particularly careful to respect privacy, to consult with those affected and to avoid discrimination.

Inclusive institutions and services

52 Neighbourhood schools can be used as integration sites and education venues for the district as a whole – adults included.

Communication and participation

53 Experience suggests that immigrants are more likely to get involved as members of a group (e.g. parents) than as individuals. Groups based on ethnic background can also facilitate involvement, raising individuals' self-confidence by giving them the opportunity to discuss issues with peers and come to a consensus.

Exchanging good practices on housing

54 Because so many practices on housing and integration in cities are local, it is particularly important to establish good mechanisms for the exchange of local experiences and ideas.

CBP 8

The practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be safeguarded, unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law

Member States have an obligation to safeguard the right to practice one's religion and culture, which is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and to enforce EU law prohibiting discrimination in employment or occupation on the grounds of religion or belief. Member States also, however, have a responsibility to ensure that cultural and religious practices do not prevent individual migrants from exercising other fundamental rights or from participating in the host society.

Conclusions pertinent to the implementation of CBP 8 are as follows:

Anti-discrimination and diversity

- 55 Anti-discrimination provisions concern all stages of immigrants' labour market integration. In terms of access, the focus is on directly or indirectly discriminatory recruitment practices. Once an immigrant is employed, harassment or discriminatory barriers to promotion can be tackled.

Recruitment

- 56 Governments should scrutinise their own practices as employers and, where possible, remove obstacles such as nationality requirements.
- 57 Positive action measures of different kinds can be used to actively promote diversity in the workforce. They could be voluntary or statutory.

Diversity management

- 58 Comprehensive diversity management policies include positive action initiatives on recruitment and promotion as well as cultural adaptations at the workplace and a strong anti-discrimination element.

CBP 9

The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration

Allowing immigrants a voice in the formulation of policies that directly affect them may result in policy that better serves immigrants and enhances their sense of belonging. Wherever possible, immigrants should become involved in all facets of the democratic process.

Conclusions pertinent to the implementation of CBP 9 are as follows.

Civic participation

- 59** Strategies responding to immigrants' special needs and circumstances and capitalising on their skills enhance their sense of belonging and participation in society. Public and private organisations should base these strategies on equality and anti-discrimination. Ideally they are tailor-made, flexible and subject to regular evaluation.
- 60** Participation in political processes is one of the most important elements of active citizenship. Political participation of immigrants provides opportunities for integration and should be supported in its different forms, including acquisition of nationality, local electoral rights and consultative structures.

Electoral rights

- 61** The representativeness and democratic legitimation of policies is enhanced by extending formal political rights to immigrants. Where formal rights exist, they need to be put into practice with commitment from all sides including political parties.
- 62** Governments should grant electoral rights to all residents at least at local level and minimise obstacles to the use of these rights, such as fees or bureaucratic requirements. Immigrants can be encouraged to make use of electoral rights through information campaigns and capacity building, relying in particular on the networks offered by immigrant organisations.

Consultative bodies

- 63** Consultative bodies at the local and national level have a potential to stimulate political participation by immigrants and to improve integration policies by communicating the views of immigrant representatives to governmental and other stakeholders. Ideally their work is proactive and their members are supported in producing high quality contributions.

- 64 Flexibility in the composition of consultative bodies will best serve the purpose of consultation, keeping in mind that representativeness can be achieved in different ways. Allowing observers or non-voting members to take part in sessions can increase transparency and trust in consultative structures.

Naturalisation

- 65 The attribution of nationality can be an integration tool. Facilitating naturalisation diminishes the rights gap between citizens and long-term resident immigrants and can open up a fuller range of opportunities for participation.
- 66 Where tests for naturalisation are used, they can be linked to the particular circumstances of the persons concerned. Preparatory courses should be available to immigrants and should be affordable and of good quality.

Social Participation

- 67 Volunteering is a form of social participation in which immigrants play an important role as active citizens. Facilitating their participation and valuing their contribution promotes their inclusion and mobilises their skills.
- 68 Immigrant involvement in mainstream volunteer organisations should be promoted. Ideally, recruitment strategies for volunteer members take into account cultural diversity.
- 69 Governments at all levels can give a good example by applying techniques and tools for becoming open and inclusive to themselves and by making openness and inclusiveness requirements for organisations receiving subsidies or participating in public tenders.

CBP 10

Mainstreaming integration policies and measures in all relevant policy portfolios and levels of government and public services is an important consideration in public policy formation and implementation

Action is needed to ensure that integration is a mainstream consideration in policy formulation and implementation, while simultaneously developing specific policies for integrating immigrants. As numerous non-governmental actors influence the integration process of immigrants, mainstreaming should extend beyond governments and public institutions.

Conclusions pertinent to the implementation of CBP 10 are as follows.

Mainstreaming Immigrant Integration

- 70 Policy-makers, service providers and non-governmental organisations active in a wide range of fields need to look critically at their own activities. To what extent do programmes recognise, respond to, and plan for immigrants' particular needs and circumstances? Can processes and structures be adapted to improve accessibility to immigrants on the basis of equality?

Government

- 71 Experience demonstrates that mainstreaming practices are more effective if they are based on a coherent political message, namely that considering immigrant integration is not a 'luxury' but simply an element of an institution's mandate when its clients, members or stakeholders are becoming increasingly diverse.

Service providers

- 72 Service providers use different instruments to determine whether existing services adequately serve all parts of the population. One way of making such an assessment is by looking at the services themselves: are they used in the manner that they were designed for, or are they used inappropriately, suggesting that there are communication gaps or mismatches between needs and offers?
- 73 Targeted services are sensitive to the specific circumstances even of small groups. They respond quickly as needs arise, and they are flexible in the way they are implemented. Once mainstream providers become aware of service gaps, the challenge is to find a good balance between targeted services and general ones. A clear division of roles and tasks can help to avoid service overlaps and lack of coordination.

Balancing general and targeted measures

- 74 In the light of the constant inflow of information about their target audience, service providers need to make judgments about whether the usual organisational processes, policies, practices and structures can be adjusted or whether additional measures are needed.
- 75 Various criteria can be used to decide between general or targeted measures in a given situation. Timing is important, as is the number of people affected by a certain measure. In considering these factors, those involved should be guided by a concern for proportionality.
- 76 Knowledge about immigrant and refugee clients can be gained in different ways: by analysing and generating data, by making intercultural competence a priority in the selection, training and evaluation of staff, by involving outside experts, by consulting with community groups or individual citizens, and by learning from targeted initiatives.

Connecting people and institutions

- 77 NGOs can act as intermediaries and help to change perceptions that service providers and users have of each other. For instance, community support groups can have an effect on what immigrants know and expect from service provision.
- 78 Of particular importance are the attitudes of staff members in service providing institutions that have to adapt their working processes to accommodate diversity. Can they be motivated to listen to users, review their methods and work on their competences?
- 79 Political will is one of the drivers of mainstreaming. The more connected political organisations and bodies are with immigrants, the more active they will be in pushing for mainstreaming.

Non government organisations

- 80 Targeted activities geared towards immigrants are a key source of knowledge for mainstream organisations. Policy-makers should be proactive in soliciting information from voluntary and community organisations directly in touch with particular groups.
- 81 Foundations generally do not want to substitute for the state but want to take on a complementary and innovative role. Beyond their role in supporting concrete initiatives, they may also bring together specialists, build coalitions of interest, commission and publicise relevant research, fund immigrant advocacy, or contribute in other ways to policy development.

CBP 11

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

Integration indicators, goals, evaluation mechanisms and benchmarking can assist measuring and comparing progress, monitor trends and developments. The purpose of such evaluation is to learn from experience, adjust policy accordingly and to enable comparative learning and knowledge-sharing.

Conclusions pertinent to the implementation of CBP 11 are as follows:

Planning and evaluating integration policies

- 82 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.
- 83 Evaluation ideally goes hand in hand with planning, or at least informs any major changes to programmes that are already in place. Evaluations of pilot projects can also be used to shape and modify ongoing programmes.

Evaluation methods

- 84 Self-evaluations can build the capacity of administrations and promote organisational learning and the identification of best practices. On the other hand, external evaluations provide an outside view and can make an independent and credible assessment of policies' actual impact.
- 85 The means employed should be proportionate to the aims and to the prospective function of the evaluation in the overall process of policy-making and implementation. Methodology and data collection should be adapted to the circumstances.

Evaluating and adapting introductory programmes

- 86 Programmes are ideally based on evaluations showing what has worked and what has not worked with previous groups of newcomers.
- 87 Evaluations made in various countries could be brought together and on the basis of experiences in as many countries as possible, a series of voluntary quality standards could be designed for language and civic training. Ideally this would be done in close consultation with internationally operating educational organisations.

Indicators

- 88 To better measure integration and the impact of integration policies governmental and non-governmental organisations could develop sets of integration indicators.

Data collection and use

- 89 On the one hand, the possibility of including immigrant integration related indicators in existing mechanisms of indexing and benchmarking could be explored. On the other hand, a mechanism uniquely for immigrant integration could be developed incorporating the socio-economic, cultural and civil and political dimensions of integration.
- 90 Benchmarking works through setting standards for comparison. Indicators should have a clear and explicit normative interpretation: users should know which direction of change represents progress.
- 91 Extensive stakeholder consultations should be organised regarding the priorities and targets connected to indicators, and should include in particular immigrants and immigrant-assisting organisations.
- 92 Ideally indicators are used in the planning as well as the evaluation phase of integration programmes and projects. In publicly funded projects, evaluation should be a part of project implementation and should receive a realistic budget share.
- 93 The improvement and expansion of data collection on issues related to immigrant integration must be in line with international and European guidelines (including those on data protection). Indicators can be used to identify areas of data deficiency and to formulate priorities. Where particular immigrant groups are singled out for examination, the criteria for their choice and definition should be clear, and the information collected should not be used for discriminatory purposes.

Selecting indicators

- 94 Ideally a mix of different indicators is used and governmental and non-governmental actors are encouraged to use similar indicators.
- 95 Both objective and subjective indicators can be developed to address the different aspects of integration, and definitions and methods of data collection can be refined for both categories. Particular consideration could be given to developing innovative survey methods which can capture the perspectives of immigrants and host populations.
- 96 Policy indicators can be employed in particular to monitor legal standards, entitlements and policy arrangements which facilitate

integration, and outcome indicators can be used to track the situation of immigrants and the achievement of targets set for integration. Caution should be used in establishing connections between policies and outcomes. Regular reviews should be held of the performance and suitability of indicators, assessing their reliability, any technical difficulties and the availability of data.

- 97 Indicators used for international comparison need to allow for diversity in definitions and data availability.
- 98 It is necessary to differentiate between levels of indicators. For European or international comparisons, the higher-level indicators should have the greatest degree of uniformity regarding definitions and data formats.
- 99 As data availability increases and monitoring systems become more dynamic, targets can be set to give direction to integration policies and to demonstrate political will for improving integration.

European cooperation

- 100 When employing indicators on immigrant integration, use can be made of the innovative potential of cross-country comparisons. EU-wide comparisons can be undertaken on a limited number of core indicators. Countries with similar preconditions can engage in more far-reaching comparisons using lower-level indicators.
- 101 The benchmarking of integration policies can be closely linked to the legislative agenda. This would strengthen the overall impact of Justice and Home Affairs policies on third country nationals.



Strategic thinking on equality and mobility

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