I. INTRODUCTION

1. The integration of diverse societies is a multi-dimensional, long-term, and non-linear process. The many factors that come into play make the success or failure of policies a challenge for any policy actor to assess. Nevertheless, integration is a topic pushed higher and higher on political agendas across Europe. Recent countries of immigration are interested in learning from the ‘best’ practices of their more experienced neighbours, while some of these longstanding countries of immigration are promising a new ‘more effective’ approach in response to the ‘integration has failed’ partisans in public debates. In both cases, prioritising integration raises expectations that policy interventions can ‘manage’ integration by reaffirming certain principles and having a certain impact on this long-term process often in a limited period of time—between two elections, for example. Like it or not, there is a growing need in the design and

1 This paper has been prepared at the invitation of the secretariat.
evaluation of integration policy for not only comparable statistics, but also comparable indicators of success that are both policy relevant and scientifically robust.

2. My participation in this seminar comes as a result of the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), a research study managed by the British Council and the Migration Policy Group (MPG) and co-financed by the European Commission. MIPEX benchmarks national laws and policies according to a European normative framework for promoting integration. The MIPEX has generated significant media and political attention since the launch of the second edition in October 2007, precisely because it aims to be used as one of these European-wide tools for measuring success.

3. In the first part this seminar paper reviews MIPEX’s methodology, partnerships and specific contribution to a quantitative and comparable approach to integration policies. Drawing on MPG’s practical knowledge in this field, the paper will in the second part call for a ‘joined-up approach’ for measuring the impact of these integration policies. Stakeholders can begin to establish the causal links between policies, implementation, outcomes, and the other factors at play in integration processes by linking MIPEX with other potential statistical and analytical tools. These complementary ‘next steps’ to MIPEX—evaluations, indicators, public opinion polls, and further quantitative and qualitative surveys—are briefly introduced in their current policy context. The paper will then suggest which partnerships in the area of integration, including statistical bureaus, and which evaluation frameworks are most appropriate to execute each step. It will highlight the methodological challenges and consider where MIPEX could continue to develop in support of this joined-up approach to a more informed and effective integration policymaking.

II. MIPEX: FROM PRINCIPLES TO POLICIES

4. The goal of the MIPEX is to generate much-needed comparative and quantitative data on integration policy and present this sensitive information in a format that is clear, concise, and accessible to all the actors involved in public debates. To overcome existing data gaps, MIPEX uses policy indicators (also known in the literature as input or governance indicators) to compare the legal provisions in place across various European countries to promote the integration of third-country national migrant residents. Though comparing countries on the basis of robust indicators is commonly used in the private sector and increasingly in the public sector, the exercise remains a relatively new phenomenon for justice and home affairs in general and migration policy in particular. This second edition has established MIPEX as a reliable biannual stocktaking on a widening range of policy areas critical to a migrant’s opportunities to integrate. In this edition the policy areas totalled six: labour market access, family reunion, long-term residence, political participation, access to nationality, and anti-discrimination law. Future editions may consider additional realms relevant to integration.

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2 To download the publication and use the charting and mapping function, see www.integrationindex.eu
3 The Migration Policy Group is an independent think-and-do-tank based in Brussels with twelve years’ experience coordinating European-wide research projects on integration and anti-discrimination. The organisation aims to contribute to lasting and positive change resulting in open and inclusive societies by stimulating well-informed European debate and action.
5. The MIPEX project identified independent leading national legal experts and practitioners as the best equipped actors for comparing legal and policy frameworks. They have acquired not only in-depth knowledge and experience of their national context. As members of EC-supported Networks of legal experts and researchers, they have refined the ability to express their national context in a comparative vocabulary that can be applied across the European Union. Indeed indexes of national policies in other sectors are similarly conducted by small teams of leading independent national experts who regularly analyse their country’s performance on these topics and cross-check their conclusions through peer discussions.

6. A second group of actors involved in MIPEX are independent national partners who are charged with bringing the results of the policy comparisons into national debates. These partners have the unique ability to bring together the various integration stakeholders who can use the MIPEX results in contributions to policymaking. These partners range from national foundations to NGO service-providers, migrant consultative bodies, and policy research institutes, including those specialised in population studies like INED in France.

7. The first steps in drawing up a scheme for policy comparison was the selection of the specific policy areas, or ‘strands’ in MIPEX terminology, and of a common evaluation framework based on the highest European normative standards for promoting integration. The choice was inspired by the positions taken by policymakers and civil society stakeholders at the European level. These standards on equality of opportunity and comparable rights and responsibilities are located in EC Directives, which EU Member States are obligated to transpose into their national laws, or Council of Europe Conventions, which ratifying countries have committed to implement. Where Directives and Conventions only provide minimum standards or allow numerous derogations, the normative framework draws on higher standards from EC Presidency Conclusions, proposals for EC directives and recommendations from EU-wide policy-oriented research projects.

8. One challenge endemic to policy comparisons is that such frameworks are by definition based on certain normative assumptions as to the principles and policies that best promote the overall goal, in this case immigrant integration. Although the mainstream inclusion principles expressed in European cooperation and academic discourse are also found in many government definitions of integration, these principles are translated into laws and policies to varying degrees, especially given the piecemeal creation of integration policies in many European countries. Policies deviating from general principles of equality may run the risk of becoming legal obstacles to rather than facilitators of immigrant integration. In some countries the normative framework may not correspond on every point to the public philosophy and priorities of the current government. In this light, MIPEX makes its normative framework fully transparent

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4 For instance, the European network of legal experts in the non-discrimination field, the Odysseus academic network for legal studies on immigration and asylum in Europe, the EU network of independent experts on fundamental rights, and the Network of Excellence IMISCOE (International Migration, Integration, and Social Cohesion).


6 Bauböck, Rainer, Erbsoll, Eva, Groenendijk, Kees, and Waldrauch, Harald, The Acquisition and Loss of Nationality in 15 EU Member States, (Amsterdam University Press; Amsterdam, 2006).
and open for discussion in its national launch events. Indeed the fact that the project has brought a normative framework to the realm of integration facilitates new debate about what principles lie behind different national integration policies, what justifications are made for changes in law, and what policy coherence has been attained.

9. The second step in MIPEX is the design of 140 policy indicators to compare national laws and policies according to the normative framework. To be precise, a policy indicator is developed relating to a very specific policy component of one of the six strands. For each the normative framework is translated into three possible answer options. The maximum of three points is awarded to policies that meet these highest European standards. A score of 1 and 2 points corresponds to some of the more restrictionist policy options observed in practices of EU Member States or the derogation clauses of Community directives. Individual indicator scores can then be aggregated together into dimensions and strands that provide a broad-brush overview for policy comparison. It is important to highlight that policy indicators do not replace in-depth research. Rather, MIPEX’s quantitative and comparable results make integration policies in Europe more accessible to a wider range of stakeholders and provide a framework for more comprehensive investigations.7

10. The contribution of MIPEX to a joined-up approach is the systematic provision of a quantitative, comparable, and updated database for evaluating integration policy in the following five respects. At the national level, users can assess the success of government policies in meeting the MIPEX’s normative framework for promoting integration. For instance, the labour market access strand in Sweden scores best practice (100%) since resident migrant workers have approximately equal access, security, and rights as Swedish workers as well as possibilities to take up labour market integration measures. Comparisons can also be made between areas of policy strength and weakness to check for policy coherence. Luxembourg’s policies score consistently halfway to best practice, except in the area of political participation where policies are found to be favourable for promoting integration. Published biannually the MIPEX has an additional longitudinal component to track policy changes over time. At the international level, a country’s successful performance can be compared to those of its neighbours as well as to the ‘average’ for the EU-25,8 EU-15, or EU-10.

11. The MIPEX team believes that these five forms of comparison can serve as mirror that can help the EU Member States to evaluate their success in translating integration principles into concrete laws and policies, which create favourable conditions for individual integration processes. Although definitions and principles are evaluated in public debates preceding changes in legislation, subsequent government evaluations of the policies adopted are often dominated more by questions of efficiency. This focus in evaluation tends to favour recommendations to toughen, reinforce, or improve current measures and thus rules out new or different options. As noted by Professor Carl Dahlström in Swedish case on immigrant integration; “the conclusions for policymakers were, therefore, that they were doing the right thing, but just not enough.”9 As

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7 See forthcoming publication, “Learning to welcome: The integration of immigrant citizens in Latvia and Poland” (PROVIDUS Latvia and Institute for Public Affairs Poland, June 2008).
8 The second edition of MIPEX did not include Bulgaria or Romania.
noted in the European Commission’s second edition Handbook on Integration, evaluations that concentrate largely on effective implementation will not capture problems with the overall strategic direction and use of integration standards. One of the conclusions from the Handbook is that policies and their principles should themselves be made the subject of evaluations, since good governance indicators, like those in MIPEX, may bring significant improvements to the appropriateness and quality of a country’s integration strategy.

III. GOVERNMENT EVALUATION: FROM POLICIES TO IMPLEMENTATION

12. Policies found to be more favourable for promoting integration according to MIPEX may be implemented and budgeted poorly and vice-versa. However, this is not reason to abandon the policies and their principles. Rather, the link between policy and implementation substantiates the need for government evaluation in the field of integration.

13. The emergence of evaluation as an integration policymaking priority is strongly linked to European cooperation in this field, particularly the writing of the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union, adopted by the European Council as part of the Hague Programme in November 2004. The Commission’s interpretation of Common Basic Principle 11 can be characterised as the need for actions to enhance government’s capacity to evaluate the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of policies and practices, which were adopted as criteria for the selection of best practices in its Handbook on Integration series. Although the Commission considers that Member States are becoming increasingly aware of this need, it concludes that “further progress is necessary” for the set-up of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The new Fund for the Integration of Third-country nationals 2007-2013, which in some countries will be the key instrument for setting up an integration policy, will require ongoing project monitoring and evaluation to ensure the quality and effectiveness of implementation.

14. The first challenge for linking the legal framework to practice is building a partnership between state and non-state actors. Ombudsmen and equality bodies are critical agents for oversight and enforcement, as are the NGOs, legal practitioners, migrant associations that provide advice and services to their migrant clients. However, different cultures of government cooperation with civil society make effective partnerships for evaluating implementation a challenge in many Member States. Civil servants and project managers, those directly

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10 That said, the influence of international expert organisations like the OECD and outsourcing to private sector consultants cannot be discounted in explaining the migration of a performance-driven management culture to public sector work on integration.


15 See [http://www.equineteurope.org/](http://www.equineteurope.org/)
responsible for policy implementation, sometimes undertake evaluations with government-funded research centres (i.e. the Immigration Observatory in PT), implementing agencies (i.e. former Integration Board in SE), or external consultants or academics.

15. Input and performance indicators can be developed from these partnerships. They refer to the resources used to achieve integration principles. Policies are one form of resource because they set the stage in which integration processes take place. Budgets, staffing, goods, and services may also be categorised as resources, all of which aim to produce certain deliverables that, like the policies measured in MIPEX, aim to promote integration. The second type, performance or process indicators, refer to the processes of producing these resources. These two forms of implementation indicators measure a policymaker’s effort through the level of financial support and their allocation to different integration areas and their distribution among different beneficiaries and actors. They consider to what extent governments are equipped to respect, evaluate, and properly deliver on their national policies, however they score on promoting integration principles.

16. A second challenge is constructing an evaluation framework for implementation, namely setting the bar for success. Although public debates are quick to stress when resources are insufficient, what is a sufficient level and type of service? Is it the same for Luxembourg or Poland as it is for Sweden? Here the framework can be built on the principle of “fair and equal access and outcomes in services,” a concept borrowed from performance indicators on integration service delivery in Ireland. Fairness can be understood as the transparent implementation of government commitments ‘on paper’ into mainstream services or targeted measures, the latter being one-stop shops, language courses, naturalisation procedures, etc. Equality can be understood as having the same access to, participation in, and satisfaction with services for migrants as for a comparable segment of the rest of the population (i.e. in terms of socio-economic profile or living conditions). In more frank terms, access and outcomes to services are as good or as bad for migrants as they are for natives with the same socio-economic profile or living conditions. Here statistical bureaus can help bring about an evidence-based approach to designing input and performance indicators by collecting data or developing methodologies.

17. Returning to the case of Sweden which scored 100% on the MIPEX labour market access strand, implementation indicators can ensure that for instance access involves no hidden conditions, integration measures are relevant, properly resourced and cost-effective, and that procedures for the recognition of skills and qualifications are accepted among private and public employers.

18. The MIPEX team aims to contribute to the development of further input and performance indicators. The first edition included questions on time delays and fees, whilst the second edition introduced others on the enforcement mechanisms for anti-discrimination law and the measures to limit administrative discretion in family reunion, long-term residence, and naturalisation procedures. Future editions could incorporate input and performance indicators on topics such as reporting and evaluation mechanisms, codes of conduct, and cooperation with Ombudsmen and civil society.
IV. FROM IMPLEMENTATION TO RESULTS? THE ‘SIREN SONG’ OF OUTCOME INDICATORS

19. Outcome indicators refer to policy and implementation goals and express them in terms of the quality and quantity of the work accomplished as well as its ultimate impact in this case on integration processes. Policies are deemed effective when they can be linked to desired changes ‘on the ground’ that have occurred since their implementation. Policymakers’ desire for outcome indicators is often behind the request to statistical bureaus for improved migration and integration statistics that capture multiple areas of life and multiple generations. This section will first sketch the context behind the emergence of integration outcome indicators at the European level. Instead of outlining the various critical success factors for outcome indicators aiming to measure successful integration, this seminar paper will set out an evaluation framework for selecting appropriate outcome indicators that can be linked to policy and implementation indicators. It ends with a word of caution about making direct causal links between inputs and outcomes.

20. Whilst the adoption of the Common Basic Principles brought greater prominence to the use of indicators, the first discussions occurred in the Council of Europe’s Steering Group on Migration. Despite a lack of consensus on reference groups and data, the Steering Group as far back as 1997 suggested a range of integration indicators: from access indicators dealing with the legal framework (which was one source of inspiration for MIPEX), to attitude indicators (see next section) and outcome indicators describing migrants’ actual conditions of settlement. The Council of Europe has continued to develop outcome indicators for policymakers around its eight key areas of life: employment, housing, healthcare, nutrition, education, information, and culture. At the EU level, few integration outcome indicators have been mainstreamed into the relevant open methods of cooperation on employment, social inclusion, and education. Furthermore, the European Commission’s Handbook on Integration draws conclusions for the development of the various types of indicators, rather than providing EU-wide integration indicators.

21. The most critical partners in identifying outcome indicators are statistical bureaus. Without reliable and internationally aligned statistics, indicators can only be used to identify areas of data deficiency and formulate priorities for future statistical development. If this sizeable and sometimes politically-charged challenge can be overcome, policymakers are most likely to take the lead, since the demands for measuring social outcomes can in many cases only be met by state budgets and official data sources. Indicators can be developed in cooperation with the other relevant partners like colleagues from various ministries, civil society organisations, and migrant representatives. These stakeholders are needed to build consensus around how indicators can and cannot describe societal realities. Should local or national outcome indicators become

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17 Council of Europe, Concerted Development of Social Cohesion Indicators: Methodological Guide (Strasbourg, 2005) and Council of Europe, Proposed Indicators for measuring integration of immigrants and minorities with a view to equal rights and opportunities for all, (Strasbourg, 2003) MG-IN.
18 See footnote 15, Chapters 8-10.
sufficiently comparable at the European level, the MIPEX partners could agree on outcome indicators that directly correspond to the MIPEX policy indicators, for instance the extent to which labour markets benefit from migrants’ full employment potential or political systems from their active participation.

22. These measurements of societal realities take the form of output and outcome indicators. Output indicators are directly linked to evaluations of a policy or project, and therefore, tailored to its specific goals. They set the targets that policymakers believe the policy or project must reach so as to have a direct and short-term impact on a specific situation. For instance the Danish government paired its goal of 25,000 new jobs for refugees and immigrants in 2006 with a regular output-driven benchmarking of Danish municipalities, where follow-up qualitative analysis would clarify the reasons for high or low rankings. The second type is outcome indicators. They measure changes in the overall situation in terms of the specific outcomes measured. Outcome indicators may prove useful in identifying areas for improvement, designing policy interventions, and estimating their impact in the medium- and long-term.

23. What then would be an evaluation framework for integration targets and indicators? Since output and outcome indicators do not provide a full enough picture of societal reality, they can determine whether or not an individual, a group, or society is ‘integrated.’ Integration is a process that runs parallel to work on social cohesion—that is immigrants enter and become part of societies that contain their own inequalities and dynamics. Outcome indicators can therefore compare immigrants to a similar segment of the native population and, as for implementation indicators, capture movements towards or away from equality. Successful integration according to outcome indicators can then be defined as various convergences of societal outcomes between ‘like’ residents with and without an immigrant background.

24. Outcome indicators can capture the multi-generational, non-linear and multi-dimensional nature of integration, particularly at the local level where, as stated in the European Commission’s interpretation of the first Common Basic Principle, “in reality integration takes place.” Various indicators can be incorporated into so-called integration and diversity monitoring systems, which have been recently established for example in Berlin, Stuttgart, Wiesbaden and soon Vienna. They can also be assembled into barometers, which set the status quo as zero and track convergence or divergence by ‘taking the temperature’ at different points in time.

25. The risk in adopting outcome indicators is the irresistible urge to draw parallels between input and outcome indicators. It seems reasonable that the equality of government inputs (in terms of policy and implementation) should lead to a convergence of outcomes between immigrants and the rest of the population. According to this logic, a policy or law could be deemed successful when outcome indicators demonstrate that since its entry into force, the desired societal outcomes have been met (i.e. lower unemployment rates since the introduction of more intensive labour market integration measures).

19 See footnote 10, page 15.
V. WEIGHING THE FACTORS AT PLAY IN THE INTEGRATION PROCESS

26. One must keep in mind that government policy is only one of a number of factors that impacts on integration processes, meaning that successful integration outcomes may or may not be attributable to government policy interventions. Countries with unfavourable labour market integration policies may end up with satisfactory outcomes, as migrants find ways around the significant legal barriers and into employment. Counterwise, countries with favourable and well implemented policies can still suffer from unfavourable outcomes, depending on migrants’ skill levels, education, cultural attitudes, and so on. Before policymakers begin to hold input indicators directly responsible for outcome indicators, they need to weigh the influence of various factors on outcomes, among them public perceptions, migrants’ experiences and capacities, levels of discrimination, and a country’s general labour market, societal, and political structures.

27. An evaluation framework should consider how certain factors serve as a facilitator of or obstacle to desired integration outcomes in a particular societal context. For example, certain Member States have adopted integration and citizenship tests with the rationale that they act as integration incentives to learn the language and basic knowledge necessary for daily life and political participation. Other Member States have removed or simplified such tests, viewing them as legal obstacles to migrant participation that serve policy goals other than integration. A number of factors can be evaluated to determine whether and for whom certain policies constitute an incentive or an obstacle for promoting integration.20

28. The most appropriate actors are researchers and scholars from a wide range of academic disciplines, including statistical bureaus and polling agencies. Relying on literature reviews, stakeholder interviews, and ultimately their own expert opinion, researchers often adopt theoretical or qualitative approaches with the aim of identifying possible factors.21 Yet they can increasingly draw on more quantitative tools to weigh the influence of these factors on outcomes and construct the causal links from policies to societal realities. Academics have begun to make basic comparisons between a few integration factors through multivariate analysis involving the MIPEX results.22 They make the argument for example that a country’s general labour market policies may have more of an effect on certain socio-economic outcomes than targeted integration policies23 or that the combination of the two may have unintended adverse effects.24 The methodologies of such quantitative studies of integration factors merit further debate in this rather nascent field.

20 See forthcoming publication by Groenendijk and van Oers, University of Nijmegen.
21 See recent OECD working papers on labour market integration.
23 Fleischmann, Fenella and Dronkers, Jaap, “The Effects of Social and Labour Market Policies of EU-countries on the Socio-Economic Integration of First and Second Generation Immigrants from Different Countries of Origin,” (ISA Research Committee conference paper; May 2007).
29. Migrants’ and natives’ perceptions of the integration process, discrimination, citizenship, well-being, and so on can also be compared through quantitative means. The public discourse, like policies, has an impact on the integration climate by shaping how people interpret policies and outcomes: what do migrants and the public think are the real goals of integration policies? Are immigrants indeed integrated? Attitudes can be measured through indicators depending upon the availability of standardised, reliable, and genuinely comparable quantitative public opinion data. Recent analysis of EU-wide Eurobarometer surveys and national polls among migrants has revealed some individual factors, including policies, which influence and can in the future change attitudes.25

30. The analytical tool most favoured in international research literature is the longitudinal (also known as representative) survey. Longitudinal surveys are timely, tailored instruments to assess the effectiveness and outcomes of integration policies by tracing one disaggregated group of adult immigrants over a three to four year period. Researchers can use both their quantitative and qualitative results to investigate what factors most influence an immigrant’s living conditions and well-being at different life stages. These surveys have been established in traditional countries of immigration like Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States, while similar exercises have emerged in the Germany, the United Kingdom, and France. Where an ongoing longitudinal survey cannot be conducted due to insufficient resources, a one-off retrospective survey can be used to analyse the impact of various factors, including policies, on a migrant’s past experiences in a particular domain.26 Smaller-scale series of migrant interviews, though not representative, can also highlight trends and challenge policymaking assumptions.27

VI. CONCLUSION

31. This seminar paper aimed to provide a vision for evaluating integration success, so that those with a stake in informing policymaking can find their place in the process of developing indicators. The road to successful integration leads from principles to the comparison of policies and other governmental inputs and from there to the more complicated measurements of outputs, outcomes, and impact. It is a bumpy road with many challenges, yet indicators and analytical tools can illuminate where policies match high principles, are efficient and effective, produce clear results and have an impact on the convergence of outcomes despite the various other factors at play.

32. Realistically speaking, this joined-up approach requires significant time and investment from its partners in addition to favourable policymaking conditions, timing, and political will. Piecemeal progress has been achieved through contributions like the MIPEX in various local, national, and European circumstances. The Migration Policy Group hopes in its own way to

25 For instance in terms of EU-wide polls, for migrant attitudes, see EUMC, Migrants’ experiences of racism and xenophobia in 12 EU Member States: pilot study (Vienna, May 2006), for public attitudes, see EUMC, Attitudes towards migrants and minorities in Europe: Key findings from the Eurobarometer and the European Social Survey, (Vienna, March 2005) and for comparable attitudes, see Dijk et al, European Crime and Safety Survey EU ICS (January 2007).
26 See Berry et al., Immigrant Youth in Cultural Transition: Acculturation, Identity, and Adaptation Across National Contexts, (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, New Jersey, 2006)
27 See Vogel, Dita (ed.), Highly active immigrants: a resource for European civil societies (Peter Lang; Frankfurt am Main, 2008) or forthcoming project Civic Stratification, Gender and Family Migration in Europe (2008).
facilitate new partnerships in this joined-up approach, as part of its mandate to enhance European cooperation between and amongst governmental agencies, civil society organisations, and the private sector.

### VII. FROM INTEGRATION PRINCIPLES TO OUTCOMES

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