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# KING

Knowledge for INtegration Governance

## Monitoring integration at local level: examples from multiple European countries

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KING Project – Demography Unit  
In-depth Study n.19/October 2014



# KING - Knowledge for INtegration Governance

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The KING project's objective is to elaborate a report on the **state of play** of migrant integration in Europe through an interdisciplinary approach and to provide decision- and policy-makers with **evidence-based recommendations** on the design of migrant integration-related policies and on the way they should be articulated between different policy-making levels of governance.

Migrant integration is a truly multi-faceted process. The contribution of the insights offered by different disciplines is thus essential in order better to grasp the various aspects of the presence of migrants in European societies. This is why **multidisciplinarity** is at the core of the KING research project, whose Advisory Board comprises experts of seven different disciplines:

**EU Policy** – Yves Pascouau

**Political Science** - Alberto Martinelli

**Public Administration** – Walter Kindermann

**Social Science** – Rinus Penninx

**Applied Social Studies** – Jenny Phillimore

**Economics** – Martin Kahanec & Alessandra Venturini

**Demography** – Gian Carlo Blangiardo

The present paper belongs to the series of contributions produced by the researchers of the “Demography” team directed by Gian Carlo Blangiardo

The project is coordinated by the **ISMU Foundation**.

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## Monitoring integration at local level: examples from multiple European countries

The contribution “**Monitoring integration at local level: examples from multiple European countries**” was aimed to identify existing national experiences aimed to monitor the process of integration of the migrant population.

Our final recommendations were meant to be a call for the EU Community to focus international efforts on the monitoring process being considered a prerequisite for effective local, national, and European key actions.

In view of the information and evidence collected we suggested the following specific key actions (for the detailed recommendations see the desk document):

- 1) Develop permanent Observatories in targeted areas;
- 2) Catalyse the transfer of knowledge supporting a strong connection between observatories within and between countries through the following actions:
  - a. Carry out a census of the Observatories currently active on the EU territory
  - b. Incentivise the connection (e.g. meetings, exchanges, common portal)
- 3) Strengthen the interaction between the observatories, the national statistics agencies, parliament, and national-regional governments;
- 4) Focus on the public opinion;
- 5) Guarantee to both local observatories and national entities independence and ensure unbiased, objective, and neutral evidence.

We believe that such recommendations need to incorporate the point of view of people directly working with such complex phenomena as migration and in particular those dedicated to analyse the process of integration.

To make this possible we sent a short questionnaire to five different Experts in five different countries (mainly those whose work has been used as example in the desk document).

We developed a questionnaire (see Box 1) mainly focusing on the concepts of “accountability”, “geographical unit of work (Local vs. National)”, and “networking”.

The rationale behind the first dimension was to understand if the concept of integration can or cannot be easily converted in a metric and how this can hinder the activity of the Observatories.

The second dimension investigates the Experts opinion on our first key action, that is the identification of targeted area as the unit of analysis/work of the Observatories.

The last dimension, “networking”, has been the main focus of our consultation with the Experts. In the process of identifying the Observatories across Europe and their activities we found a lack of networking

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and comparability. We believe that given the complexity of the process of migration this can't be thought as a local/national phenomenon and that interaction and co-learning between Observatories is essential.

#### Box 1 - Questionnaire

\* Please for each question feel free to provide additional information.

\*\* With the terms Observatories we intend any permanent academic/non-academic institution aimed to monitor the process of migration in a country.

(Answers: 1=highly disagree, 2=disagree, 3= neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=highly agree)

##### **Topic: Monitoring integration (accountability)**

1. How to measure integration is a clear and well defined concept which can be easily implemented.
2. Comparing the level of integration across different geographical areas is straight forward.

##### **Topic: Local vs national**

1. How strongly do you agree with the idea of establishing permanent Observatories in targeted areas (i.e. with high presence of immigrant population, low levels of integration, and high level of inequalities)?

##### **Topic: Networking**

1. Do you think that a higher interaction between the Observatories present in your country would help to improve the activity of your institution?
2. Do you think that there is a lack of networking among Observatories within your country?
3. Do you think that there is a lack of networking among Observatories in Europe?
4. Do you believe that through a stronger connection among Observatories the monitoring process could improve?
5. Do you think that a network of European observatories should be supported (i.e. economically, organizationally) by the EU Community?
6. How strongly do you agree that rotational meetings among European Observatories could improve the activity of you Observatory?
7. How strongly do you agree that there is a need to strengthen the interaction between the Observatories, the national statistics agencies, parliament, and national-regional governments in general?

We limited and simplified our recommendations in a way that the experts could answer with a simple 1 to 5 scale (from highly disagree to highly agree). Experts have been contacted by email and requested to answer the questionnaire. Out of the five institutions contacted, four (different institutions in different countries: Italy, Germany, Spain, Greece) have kindly agreed to answer our short questionnaire.

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## CONSULTATION RESULTS

### Topic 1 - Accountability

1. How to measure integration is a clear and well defined concept which can be easily implemented.

Answers*	Neither agree or disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Highly disagree
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\*Note: answers are provided in the same order for each questions. This means that the first answer to each question refers to the same subject/observatory

There is not a clear agreement among the Experts on the easiness of the numeric implementation of the concept of integration. Agreement/disagreement can be linked to the main field of research of the Expert and the associated institution. Those that already set up a system for measuring integration may have a more positive view. The point raised by one of the Expert is that *“It depends on the country and the data available (both statistical data and administrative data)”*. This comment raises an important point: the lack of data represents a limit to the implementation of the concept, as was also highlighted in the desk document.

2. Comparing the level of integration across different geographical area is straight forward.

Answers*	Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
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Three out of the four experts think that the comparison between different areas is not straight forward. This applies also to the Expert who provided a very positive answer to the concept of measuring integration. Only one Expert agreed on the feasibility of the geographical comparison. It is important to remember that the Experts belong to major institutions in their respective countries, therefore is plausible to believe that the perception of smaller institution would be even more negative.

### Topic 2: Local vs national

1. How strongly do you agree with the idea of establishing permanent Observatories in targeted areas (i.e. with high presence of immigrant population, low levels of integration, and high level of inequalities)?

Answers*	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree
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All the experts agree on the idea of permanent Observatories in targeted area. The finer geographical unit we suggested in our recommendation may improve the quality of the Observatory activities that consequently would be reflected in the effectiveness of the social and policy actions.

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### Topic 3: Networking

1. Do you think that a higher interaction between the Observatories currently active in your country would help to improve the activity of your institution?

<b>Answers*</b>	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Neither agree or disagree
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The Experts agree on the relevance of a national network of Observatories within the country as a mean to improve the activity of its own institution.

2. Do you think that there is a lack of networking among Observatories within your country?

<b>Answers*</b>	Agree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Agree
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With the exception of one Expert (which probably reflects the reality for that specific country), the others agree on the absence of a proper network of observatories within the territory. Together with the answers to the first item of this session, this suggests the need of connection as a way to improve the activities of the observatories.

3. Do you think that there is a lack of networking among Observatories in Europe?

<b>Answers*</b>	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
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The Experts opinion on the lack of networking across Europe is more robust: all agree/strongly agree that currently the networking across Europe is inadequate.

Looking at the following question:

4. Do you believe that through a stronger connection among Observatories the monitoring process could improve?

<b>Answers*</b>	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Neither agree or disagree
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The Experts view is that a better connection would benefit not only the activity of their own institution but it would also benefit the monitoring process.

5. Do you think that a network of European observatories should be supported (i.e. economically, organizationally) by the EU Community?

<b>Answers*</b>	Strongly agree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Agree
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The contribution of the EU Community is seen as important for the process of creating a Network, with only one Expert not having any positive or negative opinion.

6. How strongly do you agree that rotational meetings among European Observatories could improve the activity of your Observatory?

<b>Answers*</b>	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree
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When asked about a practical action to improve the networking, as for example rotational meetings, all the Experts agree or strongly agree about the positive effects this would have on the activity of the Observatories.

7. How strongly do you agree that there is a need to strengthen the interaction between the Observatories, the national statistics agencies, parliament, and national-regional governments in general?

<b>Answers*</b>	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
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Finally, all the Experts strongly agree on the need of connecting all the different relevant actors in monitoring integration.

## DISCUSSION

This additional document linked to the desk document “**Monitoring integration at local level: examples from multiple European countries**” was meant to further discuss the key actions provided in our recommendations to find if these resonated with the institutions involved.

Despite the limitation in the number of responses (which doesn’t allow any proper statistical analysis) we consider the Experts’ point of view an interesting starting point for future discussion and possibly for guiding future research.

The general idea emerging from the Experts’ responses is that Europe is characterized by a lack of networking among migration Observatories. This is probably limiting the potentiality of each institution and the possibility to analyse the phenomenon at the European level.

Interestingly this result emerges despite the existence of the well-established European Migration Network, which has been mentioned by only one of the Experts responses. Is unclear where and why the connection between these interested parties is not working as it should.

Based on this consultation to a small group of Experts (nevertheless representing most of the important Observatories across Europe), we confirm the validity of our recommendations. We believe that the contribution of the EU Community in supporting the connection across countries is key to improve the monitoring process, a more comprehensive way to study migration, and to provide support for better public policies.