



**Evidence-informed Policy Network (EVIPNet) Europe
Virtual Meeting for countries from
Eastern Europe and Central Asia
on using research evidence for policy-making**

Mode: online

Original: English

Date: September-October 2020

Scope and purpose

Background

Evidence-informed policy-making (EIP), which aims to ensure that decision-making processes are systematically and transparently informed by the best-available scientific evidence, has increasingly been recognized as an important means globally to accelerating the achievements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Policies influenced by sound scientific evidence and best practices can significantly improve public health outcomes, especially in low-and middle-income countries.

The need to bridge the research-policy divide has gained international attention in the last decade. Three high-level international resolutions - the Mexico Action Statement on Health Research in November 2004; the 58th World Health Assembly resolution in May 2005; and the Bamako Call to Action on Research for Health in November 2008 - called on researchers, policy-makers and other research users to join efforts to close the research-to-practice gap. In response, WHO launched the Evidence-informed Policy Network (EVIPNet) in 2005.

In the WHO European Region, the Evidence-informed Policy Network (EVIPNet) Europe was established in 2012 under the umbrella of the WHO European Health Information Initiative and in support of the “Action plan to strengthen the use of evidence, information and research for policy-making in the WHO European Region” through knowledge translation¹ (KT) processes. EVIPNet envisions a world in which the best available and context-sensitive evidence is used to inform health policy-making.

The Network pursues its goal by fostering the implementation and institutionalization of EIP activities in its member countries. Knowledge Translation Platforms, promoted by EVIPNet, are a recognized mechanism for institutionally linking research to action. With the understanding that each country needs to develop its own capacity in EIP, EVIPNet Europe supports national stakeholders in gaining knowledge, skills and experience in EIP.

The EVIPNet Europe multicountry meetings offer the opportunity to all EVIPNet Europe member countries to increase their technical capacity in EIP through targeted workshop sessions, discussing the opportunities of and lessons learned with regard to institutionalizing EVIPNet Europe at country level, and providing a platform for network peer-exchange and -support.

To further strengthen network-wide organization, support the implementation of EIP at national level, building on an EVIPNet Europe multicountry meeting for Eastern European and Central Asian (EECA) countries that took place in February 2020 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, EVIPNet Europe organizes its 2nd multicountry meeting for EECA countries in Tashkent, that was originally planned for 21-23 September 2020. However, due to epidemiological situation worldwide the decision was to conduct

¹ WHO defines knowledge translation as: “The exchange, synthesis, and effective communication of reliable and relevant research results. The focus is on promoting interaction among the producers and users of research, removing the barriers to research use, and tailoring information to different target audiences so that effective interventions are used more widely.” (World Health Organization, 2004. World Report on Knowledge for Better Health – Strengthening Health Systems. Geneva: World Health Organization, p. 140)

the event virtually via a series of webinars. This time the focus will be given to the following:

- acquire new skills in developing an evidence brief for policy (EBP) - research synthesis in a user-friendly format; and
- building on the SWOT that was performed in Bishkek meeting, continue discussing institutionalization of KT in the respective countries.

Invited countries are: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Meeting objectives

A primary objective of the second 2nd meeting is to bring together EVIPNet Europe network members to build capacity in evidence-informed policy-making, strengthen network-wide communication and collaboration, as well as to exchange experience and lessons learned with regard to approaches and activities fostering research utilization at country-level. Members will also get the opportunity to become familiarized with EVIPNet Europe, its approaches and tools within the context of the new European Programme of Work (EPW) and COVID-19.

The meeting will have the following main objectives:

1. To increase understanding of and commitment to EIP and EVIPNet Europe;
2. To build technical capacity in drafting an EBP to inform policy-making;
3. To discuss and explore strategies to institutionalize EIP and EVIPNet teams work in each invited member country;
4. To facilitate exchange of experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including the successful experiences of countries.

Workshop approach

Based on these objectives, the webinars will consist of a mix of plenary sessions and 'hands-on' sessions. The hands-on sessions will be supported through real-time individualized feedback from facilitators.

Meeting outputs and outcomes

We expect to achieve the following with your contribution after the meeting:

- Increased knowledge and skills of participants in accessing, appraising, synthesizing and translating evidence into policy;
- Draft problem description and diagnosis addressing important health-system issues as identified by network member countries; and
- EIP country workplans for 2021.

Participants' profile

This meeting will bring together EVIPNet Europe members and national champions of the network's member EECA countries.

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