

Report on the dissemination of Policy Briefs

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AspirE – Asian prospects in (re)migration to/within the EU – is a three-year research project (2023-2025) that examines the decision making of aspiring (re)migrants from selected Southeast and East Asian countries (China, Japan, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam) to and within selected EU member countries (Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Italy and Portugal).

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Report on the dissemination of Policy Briefs

INTRODUCTION

This report is dedicated to the translation of AspirE research findings into exploitable knowledge for policymakers concerned with European (im)mobility governance. The core of this report consists of six Policy Briefs developed across AspirE's research objectives.

[AspirE](#) [short for Asian prospects in (re)migration to/within the European Union] is a research project implemented between 1 January 2023 and 28 February 2026. It examined the decision-making processes of aspiring (re)migrants from selected Southeast and East Asian countries (China, Japan, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam) to and within selected European Union Member States (Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Italy, and Portugal). Through this multi-sited and comparative design, the project investigated how migration regimes in both origin and destination contexts interact with migrants' aspirations, intentions, and lived experiences of (im)mobility within the broader regulatory framework of the European Union (EU).

By combining policy content analysis with in-depth qualitative data collection techniques [interviews with aspiring (re)migrants and migration experts, social network mapping, longitudinal video diaries, and focus group discussions], AspirE provided a multi-level perspective on how regulatory environments shape mobility trajectories over time. Its six Policy Briefs draw on these methodological approaches to attain its three objectives: (1) to map the extent to which spatial mobility policies consider aspiring (re)migrants' behaviour, (2) to identify the micro- and meso-level drivers of mobility aspiration and/or intention, and (3) to determine the temporality of (non-)mobility decision-making. Each objective relates to a specific empirical work package.

Together, these Briefs offer evidence-based insights into the place of migrants within EU mobility policies, the ways in which regulatory frameworks influence aspiring migrants' decision-making, and the structural challenges that migration governance poses for European (im)mobility regulation. This report presents the key findings underpinning each objective, highlights their policy relevance, and documents the dissemination and mobilisation efforts undertaken to ensure their accessibility to relevant stakeholders.

PART I

RESEARCH INSIGHTS AND POLICY BRIEFS

1. How do migration regimes consider aspiring (re)migrants' behaviour?

Migration regimes can shape, constrain, and sometimes misunderstand the decision-making processes of those who wish to move. As its first objective, AspirE investigated through its work package 2 the extent to which the behaviour of aspiring (re)migrants are taken into account by national and supranational policy frameworks, in both countries of origin and destination. It interrogated whether migration policies recognise migrants as agents with aspirations, expectations, constraints, and adaptive strategies.

1.1 Methodology for work package 2

AspirE's work package 2 employed two qualitative methodological approaches: policy content analysis of legal and regulatory instruments across the 11 AspirE countries and semi-structured interviews with migration experts.

Policy content analysis was conducted on legal texts, implementing regulations, and governance frameworks that shape entry, stay, and mobility for third-country nationals. Across each country, researchers analysed the following policy domains: labour migration policies, family reunification frameworks, student mobility regimes, investment-linked migration channels, tourism, and free circulation under Schengen. This has led to the production of [11 country reports and an EU-level one](#). Complementing this thorough document review, 119 semi-structured interviews with migration experts (e.g., policymakers, legal practitioners, academics) provided contextual insights into how policies are interpreted and operationalised, how behavioural assumptions influence administrative practice, and where policy texts diverge from observed implementation.

The combined approach enabled researchers to assess not only the formal content of migration laws and policies but also their embedded behavioural assumptions and their perceived practical effects.

1.2 Key findings from work package 2

The analysis of the mentioned EU migration policies reveals a strong emphasis on facilitating regular migration for highly skilled or “economically attractive” third-country nationals, often at the expense of fair treatment and the rights-based approach enshrined in EU Treaties. This economic focus has produced a fragmented, sectorial, and highly selective legal framework with hierarchical rights that structurally advantage some migrants while disadvantaging others, creating both legal complexity and a lack of clarity. As a result, third-country nationals have limited capacity to adapt to real-life circumstances, transition between statuses, or exercise immediate agency over their mobility choices, which can inadvertently contribute to irregularisation.

Interviews with migration experts reveal significant gaps in the implementation of EU and Member State migration policies that affect aspiring (re)migrants' decision-making. Some non-EU nationals face far more information requirements and procedural conditions in visa applications than others, and the availability and clarity of information vary across

embassies and consulates. This creates quantitative gaps that can amount to unjustified differential treatment. Qualitative gaps in guidance and inconsistent application of Schengen visa criteria reinforce hierarchies among non-EU nationals, linking freedom of movement to privilege and undermining the predictability of migration pathways. Individuals at the bottom of this hierarchy are particularly affected because temporary statuses often offer little opportunity to transition to longer-term or different legal statuses. All in all, this increases the risk of irregularisation and legal uncertainty while challenging the effectiveness of EU irregular migration policies.

1.3 Policy Briefs stemming from work package 2

The findings from work package 2 have been synthesised into two Policy Briefs that examine how EU migration regimes conceptualise and regulate the behaviour of aspiring (re)migrants, highlighting structural, procedural, and implementation gaps.

Policy Brief 1: A Critical appraisal of the EU's regular migration system – Objectifying, structurally discriminatory and not aligned with basic EU and international standards focuses on how the EU's legal migration framework shapes the mobility of third-country nationals seeking to enter and reside in the EU through regular channels. Drawing on AspirE's policy content analysis at the EU-level and interviews with EU officials, this policy Brief points out to the fact that the current system tends to objectify migrants by prioritising economically "attractive" and highly skilled individuals, resulting in a fragmented, selective, and hierarchical set of rules that undermine fairness, legal certainty, transparency, and respect for fundamental rights. The Brief argues that, in practice, these structural features limit migrants' agency and can indirectly contribute to irregular migration by restricting status transitions and ignoring core standards of dignity, non-discrimination, and decent work. To address these issues, the authors recommend that the EU monitor compliance with its own decent work standards as well as the ones set by the [International Labour Organisation](#) to reduce constraints and discrimination. They also encourage the development of a horizontal legal instrument codifying EU migration rules through the lens of fair treatment in line with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Lastly, they advocate for more humanitarian exceptions and facilitated status transitions, in line with commitments under the UN Global Compact on Migration.

Policy Brief 2: Critical gaps in the implementation of EU and selected Member States' policies on migrating from Asia to the European Union examines how the implementation of migration policies across the EU and six Member States (Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Italy and Portugal) affects aspiring migrants from selected Asian countries by creating quantitative, qualitative, and temporal gaps in access to rights and procedural clarity. Based on policy content analysis at the studied country-level, the Brief highlights that non-EU nationals are categorised hierarchically in

ways that determine the amount and quality of information required and provided during visa procedures, as well as their capacity to transition between legal statuses, leading to differential treatment that can amount to structural discrimination under EU and international human rights standards. To address these gaps, it recommends that the European Commission uphold the EU Treaty principles of equal treatment and legal certainty, develop an independent evaluation model to assess how Member States implement visa and migration policies on the ground, and work towards a more flexible legal framework for status transitions, including by encouraging ratification of the UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and relevant human rights and labour standards.

These Briefs highlight the degree to which spatial mobility policies only partially account for migrants' behavioural dynamics. While Policy Brief 1 demonstrates that EU legal frameworks structurally prioritise certain categories of migrants and limit agency, Policy Brief 2 shows how implementation gaps and procedural hierarchies further shape decision-making in practice. Together, they reveal a persistent mismatch between policy assumptions and the complex, adaptive behaviours of aspiring (re)migrants.

2. Why do people decide to (re)migrate or to stay?

To understand why individuals decide to leave their country of origin, AspirE's work package 3 examines the drivers shaping mobility aspirations, intentions, and decision-making processes, focusing on both individual-level (micro) and social-network-level (meso) dynamics. Rather than treating migration decisions as purely economic or policy-driven outcomes, this objective investigates how personal motivations, lived experiences, perceived opportunities, and relational ties interact with mobility projects.

2.1 Methodology for work package 3

To capture the factors that shape aspiring (re)migrants' decisions to move, stay, or return, AspirE proceeded with 2 sets of data collections involving aspiring (re)migrants.

First, the project conducted 281 semi-structured interviews with 286 aspiring (re)migrants across the five Asian countries and six EU destinations studied. Interviews explored personal motivations, socio-economic considerations, risk perceptions, and the influence of social, familial, and professional networks on mobility intentions. Second, AspirE employed social network mapping using [Network Canvas](#), an open-source tool, to analyse the structure, composition, and influence of respondents' personal, familial, and professional networks. This approach allowed researchers to identify how relationships and connections shape migration aspirations, provide information and resources, and facilitate or constrain decision-making.

By combining interviews with social network analysis, work package 3 provides a multi-level understanding of the social, economic, and relational factors driving (re)migration intentions.

2.2 Key findings from work package 3

The interviews with aspiring (re)migrants highlighted the central role of administrative hurdles and procedural complexity in shaping the decision to migrate. Individuals with access to support from lawyers or intermediary agencies experienced smoother processes, whereas others faced delays, long waiting hours, and inconsistent procedures, particularly for visa applications from Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Vietnam. Language barriers, lack of information, and sole reliance on family networks further complicated administrative navigation, sometimes creating information silos and reducing migrants' agency. These delays and uncertainties not only influenced the choice of destination country but also affected psychological well-being, leading some to abandon migration plans, risk irregularity, or adopt temporary or secondary EU destinations as "plan B." Additionally, many migrants view the EU as a temporary hub rather than a permanent destination. Interviewees often preferred anglophone countries or economically developed Asian nations for long-term settlement. Opting for EU countries was described as a way to pursue short-term work, education, or investment projects. These findings underline that administrative procedures, perceived accessibility, and comparative attractiveness of destinations are key micro-level factors shaping (re)migration decisions.

AspirE's social network mapping shows that aspiring (re)migrants rely primarily on trusted personal networks (family members, friends, co-villagers, and spouses) when planning and executing their migration projects. These networks provide critical practical, emotional, and financial support. This includes guidance on administrative procedures, legal pathways, job opportunities, and access to resources, which helps potential migrants navigate uncertainties and reduce risks of exploitation. Intermediary actors, such as community organisations or recruitment agencies, play a facilitating role but are considered less trustworthy. This is salient where exploitative practices occur, as reported by Thai seasonal workers and some Chinese migrants. Digital networks and social media complement personal ties, offering peer-based information and reassurance, even though they can carry misinformation. Access to financial resources shapes both the choice of migration channels and the actors migrants engage with. For example, wealthier migrants often access formal, safer pathways through educational or professional networks while less-resourced migrants rely more heavily on informal personal ties or intermediaries, which increases vulnerability. Overall, social networks can shape many aspects of migration projects. This illustrates the relational nature of aspiring migrants' choices.

2.3 Policy Briefs stemming from work package 3

Upon finalising the data collection related to work package 3, two Policy Briefs have been published to shed light on the factors driving (re)migration decisions among Asian migrants to the EU. These Briefs examine how bureaucracy, social networks, and practical constraints influence mobility intentions, aspirations, and choices.

Policy Brief 3: Regular migration from Asia to Europe. Administrative obstacles, EU countries' desirability, and policy recommendations explores how administrative procedures and bureaucratic barriers shape the mobility intentions and experiences of aspiring (re)migrants interviewed. The Brief highlights that slow processing of documents, complex application requirements, and language barriers can discourage legal migration, push migrants toward temporary or second-choice destinations, and generate stress or risk of irregularity. To address these challenges, it recommends that relevant authorities regularly evaluate application processes using tools such as process mapping and time-motion studies, while engaging administrative staff to identify inefficiencies and optimise workflows. At the same time, administrative procedures should be simplified to facilitate the movement of regular migrants, particularly highly skilled and wealthy migrants. As such, the EU could become a primary rather than secondary destination, supporting its long-term competitiveness. Enhancing language support through multilingual information, translation assistance, and culturally sensitive guidance in collaboration with local NGOs and community organisations can further reduce barriers, improve migrants' access to services, and foster inclusion. These measures aim to make EU migration procedures more accessible, efficient, and fair. These recommendations would foster trust in legal pathways and support informed migration decisions.

Policy Brief 4: Enhancing migrant support systems – bridging gaps in pre-migration, integration, and institutional roles is built on the results of AspirE's social network mapping. The Brief examines how social networks, pre-migration information, and institutional support shape migration decisions and integration outcomes. The authors show that aspiring migrants rely heavily on personal networks for information, emotional support, and practical guidance. However, overreliance can create vulnerabilities, misinformation, and social isolation. To strengthen the regular migration system, the Brief recommends that embassies and consulates take a more proactive role in providing accessible, accurate, and up-to-date information on visa procedures, employment opportunities, and settlement services. Dedicated information hubs and collaboration with local organisations could be highly beneficial. Enhancing pre-migration orientation and skills development programmes can better prepare migrants for integration by providing legal, cultural, and labour market knowledge, as well as language and vocational training. Policies should also promote the diversification of social connections beyond co-national networks, for instance, through community hubs offering tailored services, and recognise social networks as complementary mechanisms to support integration. Finally, universities and educational institutions should be empowered to

provide comprehensive support beyond admission, including career services, administrative assistance, and pathways from study to employment, fostering both brain gain and smoother long-term integration. These recommendations would improve migrants' preparedness and reduce vulnerability.

These Briefs underscore that aspiring (re)migrants' decisions are shaped by a combination of administrative processes, access to information, and social support networks, which are only partially addressed by current EU migration policies. Policy Brief 3 highlights how procedural delays and complex requirements can redirect migration flows or create temporary pathways, while Policy Brief 4 emphasises the critical role of personal networks, embassies, and pre-migration support in facilitating informed and safe mobility. Together, they show that enhancing migration governance requires not just legal clarity but also practical, social, and institutional measures that align with the real-world strategies and needs of migrants.

3. When do migration decisions evolve?

Migration decisions rarely emerge at a single moment in time: they unfold gradually as aspirations, constraints, and opportunities shift. This section explores the temporal dynamics of (non-)migration, focusing on how intentions to stay, or (re)migrate are reconsidered, postponed, accelerated, or abandoned. By approaching mobility as an evolving process rather than a fixed choice, the analysis highlights the turning points, uncertainties, and critical events that reshape migration trajectories over time.

3.1 Methodology for work package 4

AspirE's work package 4 examines how migration aspirations and intentions evolve over time, recognising that (re)migration decisions are dynamic rather than fixed. To capture these temporal dimensions, AspirE employed a longitudinal qualitative design combining 2 sets of data collection.

Participating aspiring (re)migrants recorded a 10-minute video diary every three months over a period of one year, guided by open-ended questions addressing developments in their (non-)migration intentions, changing personal or structural circumstances, and reflections on their future plans. This approach generated a total of 284 video diaries, enabling researchers to trace how aspirations shifted in response to administrative processes, labour market developments, family situations, political contexts, and emotional considerations. Complementing the longitudinal migrant narratives, AspirE organised a two-step focus group discussion with a subset of migration experts previously interviewed or not in the project: in situ or online among at least six participants per country of the consortium and online among two local teams of different countries with at least three participants each (Asian-EU teams without Belgium team and Belgium-EU teams). These collective discussions allowed experts to reflect on preliminary findings

from the video diaries, exchange perspectives, and refine interpretations regarding the structural, institutional, and contextual factors shaping evolving migration aspirations and intentions.

Together, these complementary methods make it possible to analyse the temporal trajectories, turning points, and adaptive strategies that characterise (non-)migration decision-making processes.

3.2 Key findings from work package 4

The video diaries collected and analysed demonstrate that migration aspirations evolve over time through dynamic interactions between lived experiences, administrative realities, social relations, and external shocks. While intentions remained relatively stable in some contexts (e.g., Finland, Italy, Portugal), they could significantly shift in response to labour market uncertainty, family considerations, global instability, or changing personal priorities. Bureaucratic delays across several EU countries restricted migrants' agency by creating periods of legal limbo, limiting access to employment, services, and housing, and generating vulnerability and psychological stress. Intermediary actors strongly shaped expectations, which could produce mismatches between anticipated and actual conditions, leading to a change of plans. Sudden policy changes (e.g., visa suspensions, regulatory reforms) abruptly disrupted migration trajectories. Mobility projects are sensitive to political volatility. Across all cases, language barriers emerged as a pervasive structural constraint, contributing to what participants described as prolonged "waiting", while family obligations, social networks, and gender norms continuously influenced the timing, direction, and sustainability of migration decisions. Together, these findings show that (re)migration trajectories are adaptive, relational, and highly responsive to both institutional conditions and broader socio-political environments.

Focus group discussions conducted across the selected Asian and EU countries reveal that migration motivations are diversifying, but economic opportunity and family welfare remain central drivers across contexts. Children's education, long-term stability, and family unity were often mentioned as influencing both initial migration and re-migration decisions. Established diasporas and dense community networks (e.g., Vietnamese in the Czech Republic, Filipinos in Italy) facilitate access to jobs, housing, and information. It was pointed out that digital platforms and intermediaries increasingly structure decision-making while also creating dependency and exposure to misinformation or excessive fees. Across European destinations, bureaucratic delays, fragmented administrative systems, and shifting policy frameworks intensify uncertainty and directly redirect mobility trajectories. Institutional contexts can thus be a decisive factor in everyday well-being and long-term planning. Language barriers further constrain integration and autonomy, which can reinforce reliance on informal actors. At the same time, onward and return mobility are becoming more common, shaped by family transitions, career opportunities, rising living costs, and broader assessments of security. Overall, the discussions demonstrate that migration decisions evolve through the

interaction of macro-level policy volatility and selectivity, meso-level networks and intermediaries, as well as micro-level family-centered and gendered aspirations.

3.3 Policy Briefs stemming from work package 4

Building on the longitudinal insights generated through work package 4, a dedicated set of policy Briefs has been developed. Focusing on the temporal evolution of migration and re-migration intentions, the Briefs highlight how shifting life-course events, administrative uncertainties, network dynamics, and policy volatility reshape mobility projects over time. By synthesising aspiring (re)migrants' video diaries and expert discussions, they provide forward-looking recommendations aimed at fostering greater predictability, coordination, and responsiveness within European migration governance frameworks.

Policy Brief 5: *Tracing migration aspirations over time – Insights from Asia-Europe video diaries* draws on the longitudinal video diary dataset to examine how aspiring (re)migrants' intentions evolve. The Brief highlights the critical role of accurate pre-departure information, timely administrative procedures, policy predictability, language support, and family- and network-based considerations in shaping migration decisions. Key recommendations emphasise the need for coordinated action across EU institutions, national authorities, local service providers, and civil society actors. Prospective migrants should receive transparent, multilingual guidance through trusted intermediaries and digital platforms to prevent misinformation and exploitation. Structural waiting should be reduced by provisional access to work, housing, healthcare, and education while applications are processed. Legal and regulatory changes should be phased, clearly communicated, and accompanied by transition measures to limit disruption to ongoing migration plans. Accessible language training tied to vocational and community integration programmes is essential. Additionally, family reunification, caregiving responsibilities, and gender-sensitive mobility must be incorporated into migration support frameworks. These recommendations aim to enhance predictability, reduce vulnerability, and foster smoother, long-term integration trajectories for migrants.

Policy Brief 6: *Mapping Asian migration to Europe – Policy insights from two-step focus-group discussions* synthesises insights from focus group discussions to examine how evolving migration systems, administrative frameworks, and social networks shape the trajectories of Asian migrants to the EU. AspirE's research in that regard emphasises that stable, predictable, and well-communicated legal frameworks are essential to avoid abrupt disruptions in seasonal, student, investment, and family migration pathways. Recommendations stress the need for administrative coherence and digital accessibility, including interoperable platforms, streamlined procedures, and adequately resourced local administrations to reduce reliance on informal brokers. Diaspora and informal support networks, alongside NGOs, should be formally recognised as part of the migration infrastructure, offering culturally grounded guidance and mentoring. Language training and integration pathways must be expanded and linked to employment, vocational, and social services with the support of intercultural mediators and local hubs. The Brief also calls for strengthened ethical recruitment standards, cross-border oversight of intermediaries, and measures to protect migrants' social security and

professional recognition. Finally, family reunification, children's education, and long-term security are highlighted as central to migration decisions, necessitating policies that respond to migrants' multidimensional needs and align governance with lived realities.

Work package 4 shows that migration decisions are shaped by evolving aspirations, social networks, administrative processes, and policy environments. The two Policy Briefs highlight the need for predictable legal frameworks, accessible information, and support for integration, language, and family reunification. Building on these findings, the next section explores cross-cutting insights for policymakers that integrate lessons across all work packages.

PART II

Cross-cutting insights on European (im)mobility governance

4. AspirE's overall insights across empirical work packages

Building on the evidence collected across work packages 2, 3, and 4, as well as the associated Policy Briefs, this section presents key lessons on how Asian migrants' aspirations, decision-making, and mobility trajectories unfold. The goal of this section is to synthesise patterns across methodologies, contexts, and countries to inform more responsive and effective European migration governance.

4.1 Migration aspirations are formed early and evolve dynamically

Evidence from work package 3 interviews and work package 4 video diaries shows that aspiring (re)migrants begin shaping their mobility intentions long before actual migration, often guided by family strategies, social networks, and prior experiences. Aspirations can remain stable, shift gradually, or change abruptly in response to administrative, economic, or social stimuli.

Policy relevance: Early-stage interventions (e.g., accurate, multilingual pre-departure information, skills orientation, and guidance) can shape realistic expectations and reduce exposure to exploitative intermediaries. Policy Briefs 5 and 6 emphasise the importance of reliable, coordinated information channels and phased policy changes.

4.2 Complex bureaucracy redirects migration intentions

Work package 2 policy content analysis and work package 3 interviews show that EU and Member State migration policies often prioritise “desirable” migrants while restricting pathways for others. Complex, selective, and fragmented procedures tend to redirect migration aspirations rather than suppress them, sometimes resulting in irregular stays, temporary residence, or secondary destination choices.

Policy relevance: Procedural clarity, harmonised administrative processes, and predictable regulations are essential for enabling fair and legal migration. Policy Briefs 1, 2, 3, and 4 emphasise that simplifying procedures, enhancing transparency, and aligning admission criteria with migrants' capacities can reduce irregularity and support more predictable mobility pathways.

4.3 Social networks and intermediaries mediate migration pathways

Across work packages 3 and 4, social network mapping and focus groups demonstrate that family, peers, diaspora communities, and intermediaries shape mobility decisions. Trust in these networks mitigates uncertainty, provides practical, emotional, and financial support, but overreliance on informal channels can reinforce dependency and expose migrants to exploitation.

Policy relevance: Policies should recognise and support these networks as complementary infrastructure rather than informal additions, providing official guidance, oversight, and partnerships with NGOs, community organisations, and consular services. Policy Briefs 4 and 6 underline this recommendation.

4.4 Bureaucratic delays and policy volatility disrupt migrant trajectories

Video diaries, interviews, and focus group discussions show that slow processing, fragmented administration, and abrupt policy changes cause “limbo states” that hinder integration and long-term planning. This can be illustrated with delayed residence permits, tax and health number issuance, but also with the sudden suspension of visa programmes.

Policy relevance: Streamlined procedures, digital interoperability, provisional access measures, and phased legal changes reduce vulnerability, improve agency, and support stable migration outcomes. Policy Briefs 3, 5, and 6 provide concrete recommendations on enhancing predictability and administrative coherence.

4.5 Migration decision-making is relational and context-sensitive

Gender, family obligations, social networks, and cultural norms significantly influence both migration timing and destination choices. Decisions are not purely individual but embedded within broader household strategies and social environments.

Policy relevance: Integration and mobility policies should account for relational and gendered dimensions of migration, including family reunification, caregiving responsibilities, and support for women and children. Language learning, vocational training, and local community engagement are critical complements. Related key recommendations are shared in Policy Briefs 4, 5, and 6.

Taken together, these lessons illustrate that migration is a dynamic, relational, context-situated, and multi-level process. AspirE’s findings stress that EU mobility policies need to move beyond static assumptions and a one-size-fits-all policy framework, embracing procedural clarity, predictive policy design, and support for networks and social realities.

PART III

Dissemination of policy briefs

5. Publication and dissemination

The dissemination of AspirE's policy briefs was designed to ensure broad accessibility, strategic visibility, and targeted engagement with policymakers, practitioners, civil society organisations, and academic audiences. The project adopted a multi-channel dissemination strategy to maximise both reach and policy relevance, combining open-access publication, digital outreach, and events.

5.1 Website publication

All Policy Briefs were first published on AspirE's official website, which serves as the central open-access platform for project outputs. Making the Briefs publicly available ensured transparency, accessibility, and compliance with open science principles. No paywalls or registration barriers restrict access, allowing policymakers, researchers, journalists, and civil society actors to download and circulate the documents freely.

Each Policy Brief was released according to a publication timeline aligned with the completion of the relevant empirical work package. To assess their impact, download statistics were monitored through the website's analytics system. The table below provides an overview of downloads per Brief since publication.

Policy Brief	Title	Publication date	Downloads (as of February 2026)
1	A critical appraisal of the EU's regular migration system – Objectifying, structurally discriminatory and not aligned with basic EU and international standards	20/04/2024	382
2	Critical gaps in the implementation of EU and selected Member States' policies on migrating from Asia to the European Union	06/06/2024	76
3	Regular migration from Asia to Europe – Administrative obstacles, EU's countries desirability, and policy recommendations	19/12/2024	33
4	Enhancing migrant support system – Bridging gaps in pre-migration, integration, and institutional roles	20/12/2024	26
5	Tracing migration aspirations over time – Insights from Asia-Europe video diaries	05/12/2025	13
6	Mapping Asian migration to Europe – Policy insights from two-step focus group discussions	08/12/2025	10

5.2 Social media dissemination

The publication of the Policy Brief was accompanied by coordinated announcements across AspirE's social media channels (Facebook, X/Twitter, LinkedIn, and project newsletters), ensuring visibility among academic, policy, and practitioner networks.

The project maintained active social media channels to support the timely dissemination of outputs and events. To ensure regular and coordinated communication, a structured internal process was established: consortium partners submitted updates (e.g. events, publications) via Google Forms, allowing for the planning and development of a content calendar. This facilitated the strategic scheduling of Policy Brief announcements, which were typically aligned with their publication on the website. In the days following online release, Policy Briefs were shared across the project's social media accounts to maximise visibility and consistency of messaging.

During most of the project, dissemination took place primarily through Facebook (428 followers) and X/Twitter (58 followers). In early February 2025, the project transitioned from X/Twitter to LinkedIn in order to strengthen engagement with professional and policy-oriented audiences. The LinkedIn account currently counts 174 followers. Engagement metrics vary across platforms due to different measurement methodologies (e.g. impressions, reach, or views as defined by each platform). On Facebook, individual Policy Brief posts appeared on screen between 120 and 496 times; on X/Twitter, views ranged between 23 and 944; and on LinkedIn, posts generated between 66 and 359 views. While these figures are not directly comparable across platforms, they provide an indicative measure of the Briefs' digital visibility and audience exposure. In addition to social media, a bi-monthly newsletter (106 subscribers) served as a structured communication tool to circulate a consolidated overview of recent achievements (including Policy Briefs publication) and upcoming activities. The edition originally scheduled for January 2025 was deliberately postponed to align with the formal end of the project and provide a comprehensive final update. As a result, Policy Briefs 5 and 6 had not yet been disseminated through the newsletter channel at the time of writing. The numbers provided are from February 2026.

Consortium partners amplified these announcements through their own institutional accounts, mailing lists, and professional networks, extending the Briefs' reach beyond the project's audience. This decentralised amplification strategy increased cross-country exposure and strengthened engagement with stakeholders in European and Asian contexts.

5.3 Events

Beyond digital dissemination, the Policy Briefs were actively mobilised in dedicated events and stakeholder exchanges. They served as background documents and discussion catalysts in a [policy laboratory](#), expert roundtables, and locally organised dissemination events across partner countries.

During these events, findings from the Briefs were presented, debated, and contextualised with policymakers, migration practitioners, civil society representatives, and academic experts. This format enabled direct feedback, clarification of recommendations, and discussion of implementation challenges.

In several instances, the Briefs informed thematic meetings, guided structured debates, or were circulated in advance to participants to anchor discussions in evidence-based findings. This interactive mobilisation ensured that the Briefs functioned not only as publications but as practical tools for policy dialogue and reflection.

6. Reflections on the impact of Policy Briefs

The impact of AspirE's Policy Briefs has been shaped by how they were integrated into the project's activities. Dissemination was most effective when the briefs were actively presented, discussed, and contextualised during events such as the policy laboratory, expert roundtables, and other locally-based events. In these settings, engagement with policymakers, practitioners, and civil society actors was particularly strong, as participants could explore the recommendations in relation to their own contexts and challenges. In addition, partners were encouraged to produce Policy Briefs tailored to their national context, debates, and stakeholder needs. This was put forward by [Vietnam](#), [Thailand](#), and the [Philippines](#), which further strengthened the contextual relevance and outreach of the project's outputs on a local level.

At the same time, systematically tracking policy uptake beyond these interactions remains challenging. While download statistics and social media metrics provide indications of reach and visibility, measuring the direct influence on policy design, implementation, or legislative processes is inherently complex and may become visible over time. Nevertheless, during AspirE's lifetime, developments occurred in contexts where the project actively engaged policymakers. In Italy, following a press conference at the Italian Senate, the government introduced reforms to its labour migration framework in late 2024 and 2025 aimed at limiting abuses and exploitation of migrant workers. In the Finnish–Thai context, sustained exchanges on trafficking risks in seasonal work contributed to legislative changes: as of 17 February 2025, foreign berry pickers are covered by Finland's seasonal work regulations. While direct causality cannot be claimed, these examples suggest that AspirE's research and stakeholder engagement have contributed to ongoing policy discussions and reforms. This highlights the potential of Policy Briefs to support informed dialogue, while also pointing to the need for continued engagement and monitoring to fully assess their longer-term impact.

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