Employing evidence-based approaches in programmes for children and families in Europe **European Platform for Investing in Children**

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RAND EUROPE

Outline

- General Introduction
- Introducing EPIC
- ‘Practices that work’ and evaluation framework
- Examples of practices
- Stakeholder engagement with EPIC

Why is evidence-based policymaking important?

RAND's mission is both simple and incredibly complex:

- We exist to help policymakers make decisions that are based on the **best available information**.
- Evidence allows decision makers and stakeholders to make **better judgements**, which often lead to **improved performance** and **outcomes**.

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What constitutes an evidence-based practice in social policy?

- Less consensus than in medicine ("evidence" is difficult to define and human interactions are complicated), thus inclusiveness about acceptable evidence is needed

- EBP definitions share elements of programme evaluation:
  - EBP is designed to maximize likelihood that impacts are due to programme itself
  - EBP has sufficient sample size
  - EBP shows effects that are statistically and practically significant
  - EBP utilises outcome measures that make sense

European Platform for Investing in Children (EPIC)

- Sponsored by European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL);
- Focused on child and family practices and programmes, within EC 2013 Recommendation on 'Investing in children - breaking the cycle of disadvantage'
- The go-to platform for policy makers and practitioners
- Identifies, selects, assesses, presents and disseminates practices that work
- EPIC aims to:
  - improve exchange of information
  - share best practices
  - foster cooperation and mutual learning

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Key policy objectives of EPIC

Support parents' participation in the labour market

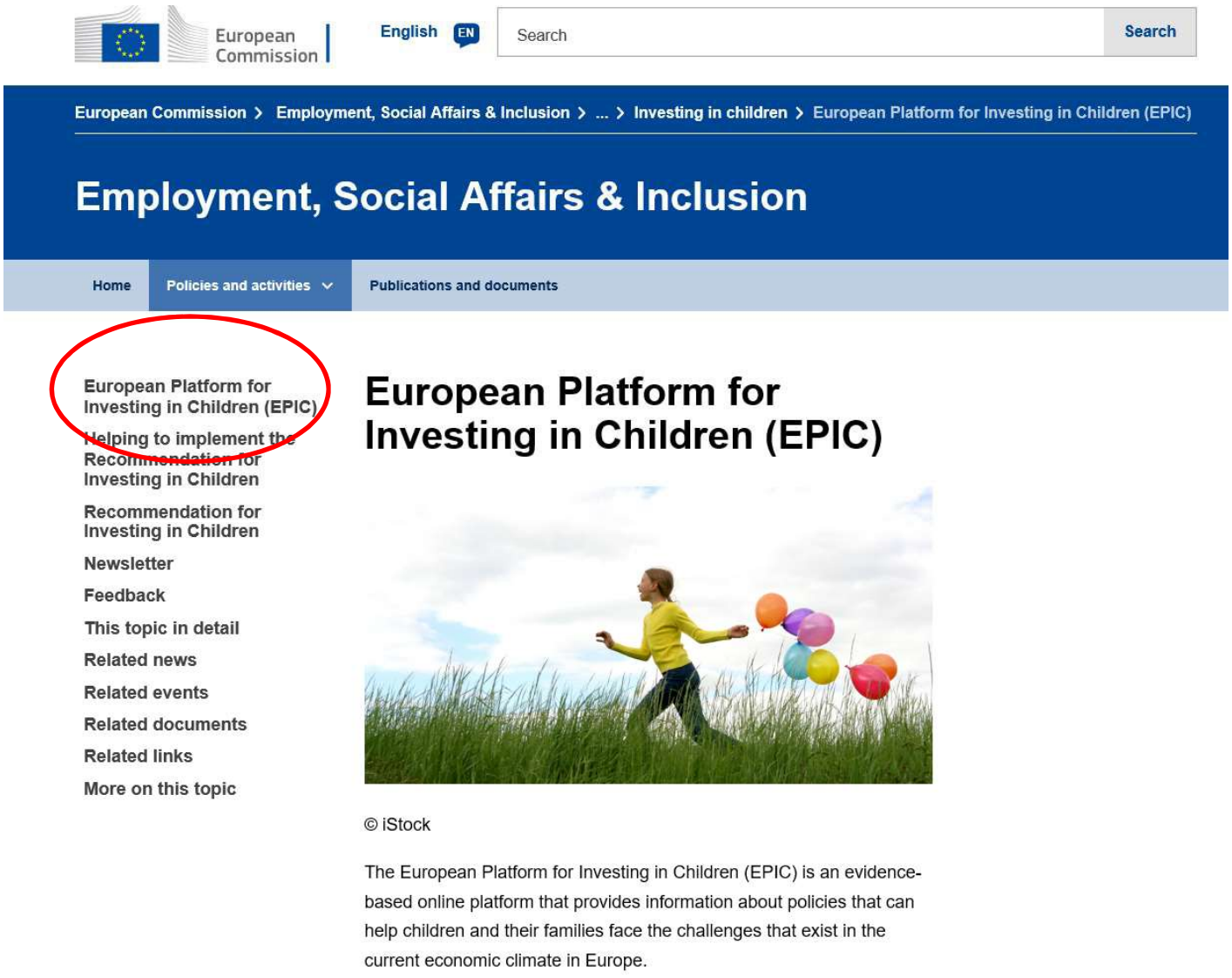
Invest in early childhood education and care

Provide for adequate living standards through a combination of benefits

Support children's right to participate in play, culture and decisionmaking

Enhance family support and the quality of alternative care settings

http://europa.eu/epic



EPIC incorporates standard features of platforms

- Provides information via a website
- Uses pre-established topic definition and evidence framework
- Employs researchers in topic areas as reviewers
  - RAND Europe staff execute searches and data extractions
  - Expert panelists from across EU serve as peer reviewers
- Updates information regularly
- Targets policymakers, practitioners and academics

But also tailors to needs of EU-28….

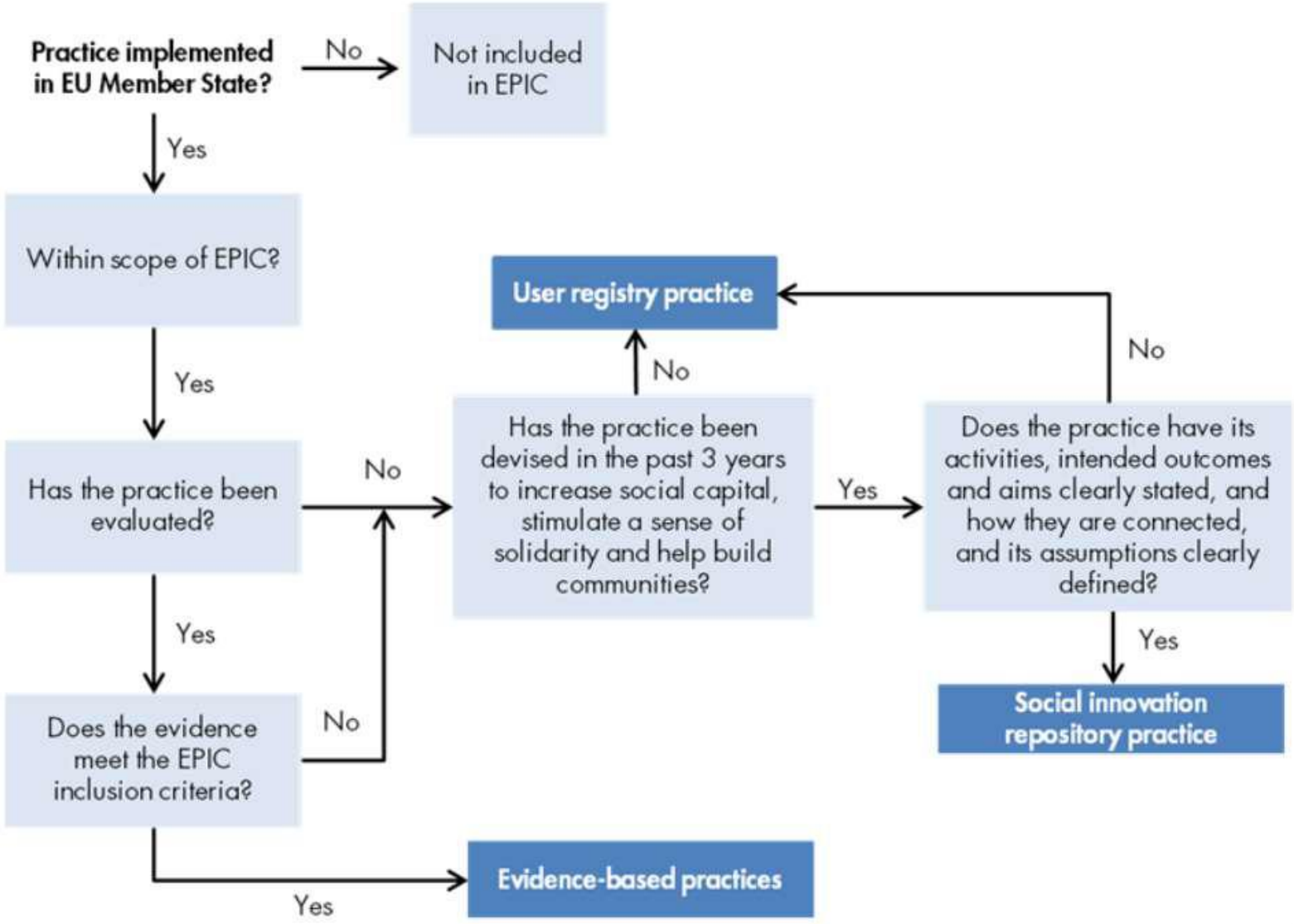
How do we identify practices that work?

Practices are identified through a combination of:

- Literature review
- Suggestions from our Sounding Board members, expert panel, stakeholders and Member States experts
- Practices submitted via website

- If documented evaluations are available, they will be subjected to the evaluation framework
- Further review by external experts
- If meeting criteria, they are included as evidence-based practices

EPIC: A three-pronged approach to sharing practices



Practices that work
Submit a practice
Evidence guide
Implementation guide
This topic in detail
Related news
Related events
Related documents
Related links

Practices that work

The 'Practices that work' section features **three collections of practices** being used throughout the European Union:

- The collection of Evidence-Based Practices aims to share **emerging, promising and best practices** for children and families which are being implemented across the EU.
- The Social Innovation Repository features practices that are **innovative and have a clear theory of change**, but as they have been developed in the past 5 years may not yet have sufficient evidence of their effectiveness.
- The User Registry provides an overview of practices being **implemented across Europe**, which are shared in the spirit of collaboration.

These three registries are designed to complement each other and to provide a comprehensive picture of the most effective practices being used throughout the European Union.

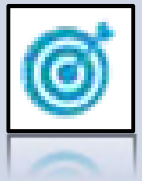
Users can search for practices by country, 2013 Recommendation Pillar, age group, target group, and type of implementing organisation.

Submit a practice

EPIC is an open platform: innovative child-related practices can be submitted on the website via an online form, and stakeholders and users can send an email for further information.

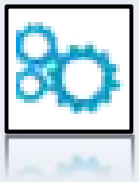
Evaluation framework: criteria designed with three aims in mind

< PRACTICE NAME >



Evidence of Effectiveness

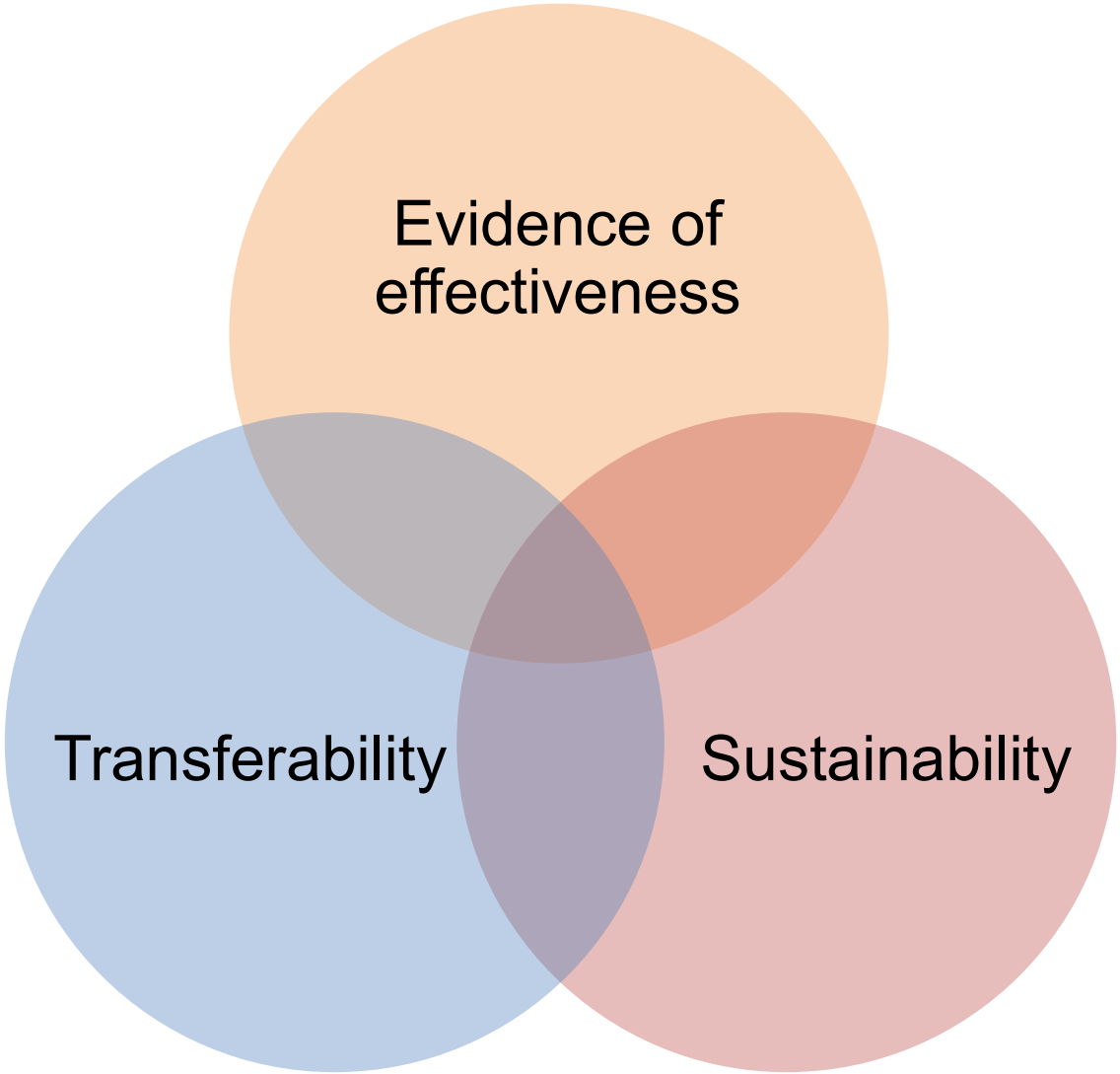
Transferability



Sustainability
(Enduring impact)

1. To provide a reference framework for evaluating child and family practice
2. To adhere to scientific standards of transparency and replicability
3. To provide an objective method of distinguishing between practices with differing levels of evidence and benefits

The evidence levels are tiered



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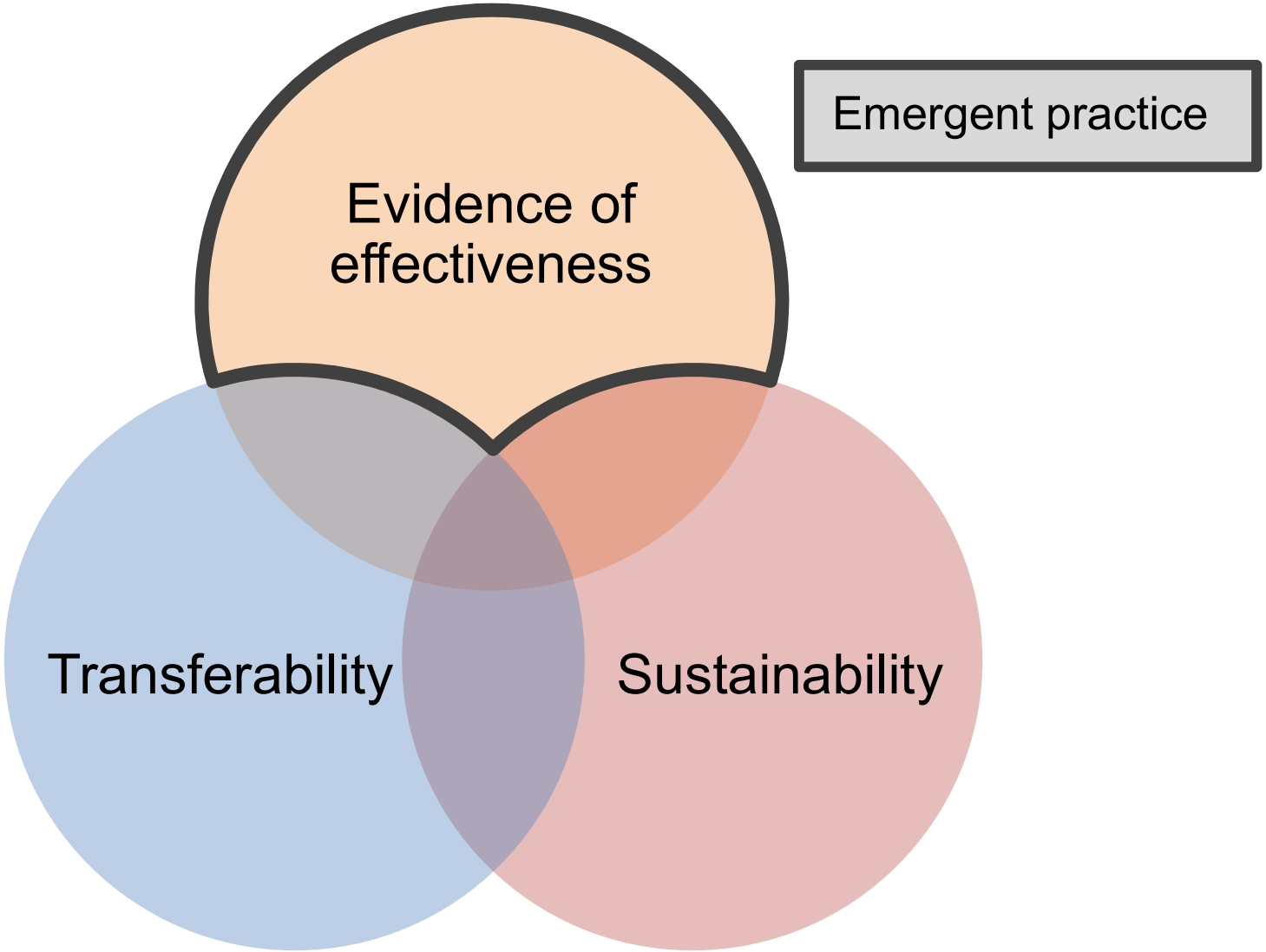

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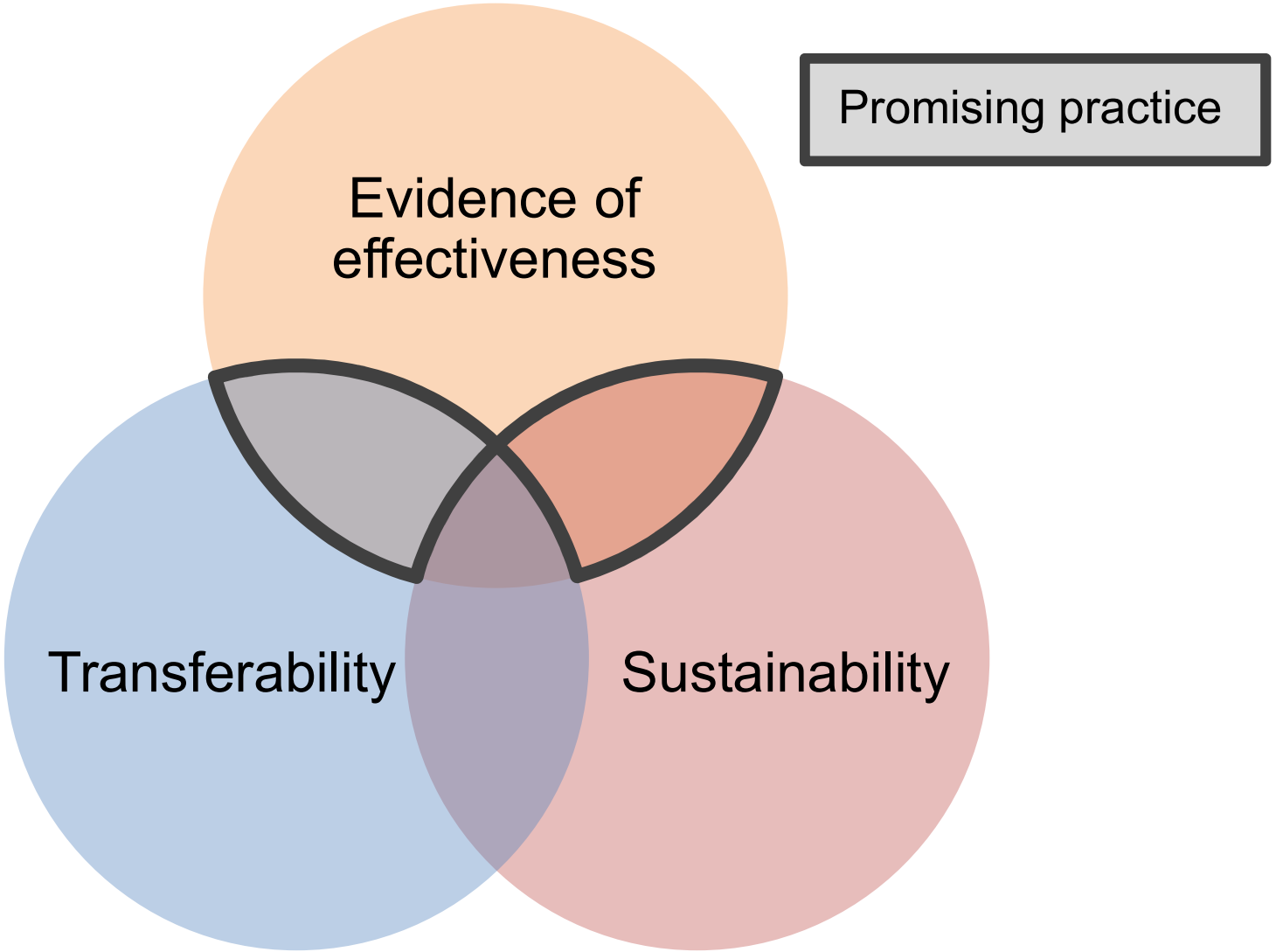

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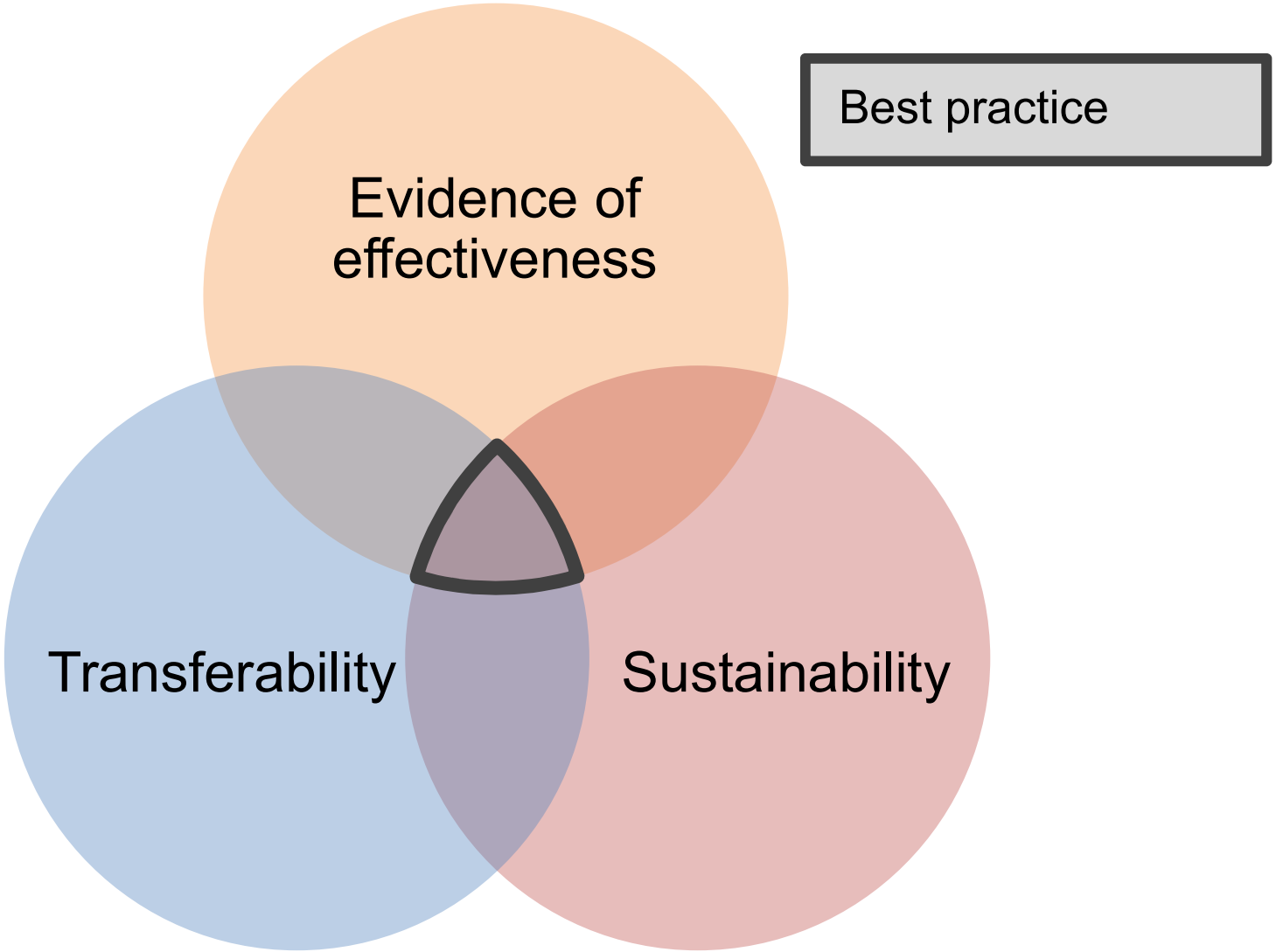

‘Smokefree Class Competition’: an example of a Promising Practice

Smokefree Class Competition

Project overview

Practice category

Countries that have implemented practice

Age groups

Target groups

Years in operation

Scope of practice

Type of organisation implementing practice

Rationale of practice

Evidence of effectiveness

Transferability

Practice Materials

Cost information

Enduring impact

Evaluation details

Issue to consider

Available resources

Bibliography

Smokefree Class Competition

Evidence level:	Best Practice	Promising Practice	Emergent Practice

Evidence of effectiveness:	?	-	0	+	++
Transferability:	?	-	0	+	++
Enduring impact:	?	-	0	+	

- Project overview
- Practicecategory
- Countries that have implemented practice
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- Rationale of practice

The Family-Friendly Workplace programme: a practice from the Social Innovation Repository

The Family-Friendly Workplace Programme

Overview

Practice Category

Recommendation pillar

Countries that have implemented practice

Age groups

Target groups

Years in operation

Scope of practice

Type of organisation implementing practice

Mode of delivery

Location of practice

Rationale of practice

Elements of Social Innovation

Outcomes of the Practice

Key lessons learned

Practice Materials

Cost information

The Family-Friendly Workplace Programme

- Overview
- Practice Category
- Recommendation pillar
- Countries that have implemented practice
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- Years in operation
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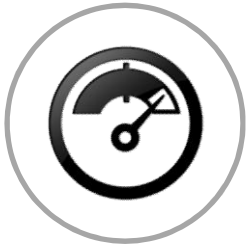
- Rationaleof practice
- Elements of Social Innovation
- Outcomes of the Practice
- Key lessons learned
- Practice Materials
- Cost information
- Evidence of effectiveness

Why engage with EBP Platforms?



Gaining momentum and scale

The sharing of new and untested practices, through the User Registry and the Social Innovation Repository, can help new ideas to gain momentum and scale

Reaping the low hanging fruit

If a practice is known to be effective, sharing that information can help improve outcomes for a wider population

Recognition

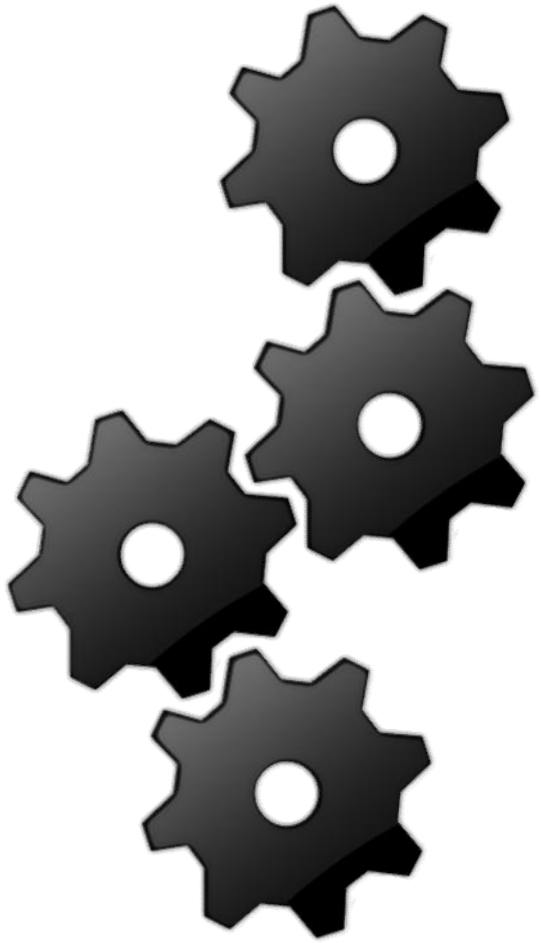
EBP platforms can help your practice gain recognition, and in some cases, help to ensure continued funding

Responsible decision-making

EBPs provide confidence that practices are effective

The platform is only as good as its users' input

- 'Practices that work' sections depend on input from stakeholders – currently 74 EBP, 16 SIRP and 190 UPR
- Stakeholders can help EPIC gain exposure to experts, policymakers and practitioners
- We encourage you to submit practices to the 'Practices that Work Section', to interact with EPIC and to suggest improvements
- We solicit feedback on how to improve the reach and leverage of the platform



Further options for involvement

- Notifying us of (new) reports, events and further news items on the EPIC website
- Submission of practices
- Feel free to interact with EPIC and to suggest improvements and feedback!

http://europa.eu/epic

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